## **Journal of Language Teaching and Research**

ISSN 1798-4769

Volume 7, Number 1, January 2016

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# Examining Critical Pedagogy with Drama in an IEP Context

Eunseok Ro University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, Honolulu, USA

Abstract—The practical implications of critical pedagogy (CP) have not been well reported despite its educational potentials in English language teaching contexts. Moreover, although CP practitioners have been emphasizing the importance of improving the social equality and justice for those who are oppressed, how social action could be facilitated in second language (L2) classrooms have not been well explored yet. The main purpose of this research is to investigate the implementation of CP with a drama approach in an Intensive English Program (IEP). Ample incidences of critical dialogue and English learning opportunities were found. In addition, students responded positively to the use of drama in terms of learning critical perspectives and English. In the end, this teacher research showed that CP with drama could have a place in an IEP context.

Index Terms—critical pedagogy, theatre of the oppressed, language learning through drama, second language classroom, intensive English program, teacher research

#### I. Introduction

In this report, I respond to the suggestions and advice of Akbari (2008) concerning the need for critical pedagogy (CP) to be investigated in English language teaching contexts and the recommendations of Fairclough (1995) that language education should contain a component for developing critical language awareness. Taking a teacher research approach (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004) and following the fundamental educational goal from critical multicultural education (i.e., promoting social justice and equity through critical examinations of power, e.g., Freire, 2000; Freire & Macedo, 1987), I designed and implemented a CP course at a university-based Intensive English Programs (IEP) in the United States.

According to Canagarajah (2005), CP is not a theory but a way of doing learning and teaching. It is a pedagogy that takes steps towards social change to include and represent those who are oppressed (Akbari, 2008). Therefore, CP incorporates discourses of liberation and hope as it questions the socially accepted power relations and provides potentials for marginalized groups to explore ways of changing the status quo. Crookes (2013, p. 1) further defines CP as a form of education with

a perspective on teaching, learning, and curriculum that doesn't take for granted the status quo, but subjects it to critique, creates alternative forms of practice, and does so on the basis of radical theories of language, the individual, and society that take seriously our hopes for improvement in the direction of goals such as liberty, equality, and justice for all.

CP aims to lead students to become critical agents "who will be prepared to seek out solutions to the problems they define and encounter, and take action accordingly" (Crookes, 2013, p.77). Although the implementation of CP and critical multicultural education is not a new idea and have been extensively discussed and applied to English language teaching (e.g., Canagarajah, 1999; Lin, 1999; Norton & Toohey, 2004; Pennycook, 2001), in the project to be reported here, drama was combined with CP in line with the early integration of drama with critical pedagogy devised by Boal (1985). My goal was to create an environment where students could identify social issues that were relevant to themselves, reflect on these issues among themselves through the process of critical dialogue, and deliver their critical messages to as well as brainstorm possible solutions with their audiences through the forms of drama. The purpose of this study was to examine the IEP context as a potential site for practicing critical pedagogy that recognizes the need for critical awareness and realizes this need through a performance process.

#### II. INTRODUCING CRITICAL PEDAGOGY WITH DRAMA INTO AN IEP CONTEXT

#### A. Theoretical Background for the Course

Grounded on the notion of *praxis* (i.e., learning through critical reflection and action; Freire, 2000) and Boal's (1985) *Theatre of the Oppressed*, I developed a course entitled 'English through drama,' which manipulated "theatre forms to provide opportunities for participants [students] to act, reflect on their actions, and transform the status quo" (Goldstein, 2004, p. 323). According to Burgoyne et al. (2005, p. 2), participants in Theatre of the Oppressed "recognize, analyze, and overcome social oppression" by exploring and acting out solutions to social problems that are relevant to themselves and their communities. This line of curriculum theory expects teachers to engage in *critical dialogue* with the students so they can "identify issues they themselves see as problematic ... and reflect back these problems (problem-posing) as the driving force for a process of collaboratively constructed knowledge. ... [This way,] students

can gain control over their learning and a critical view of their learning and the society" (Shin & Crookes, 2005, p. 114). Consistent with these ideas, the course, 'English through drama,' was learner-centered and focused on dialogue instead of on a one-way transmission of knowledge. Moreover, it aimed to empower individuals as agents for social change.

This course also aimed to facilitate students' oral communication skills by encouraging them to cooperatively develop script-writing and acting skills (cf. Miccoli, 2003). According to Even (2008), there are a lot of opportunities for second language (L2) learners to use and practice English when negotiating to fulfill the task during the collaborative process of making a play. From a sociocultural perspective (see Leont'ev, 1981; Vygotsky, 1978, 1981), it is in this participation in social interaction of the learners that fosters language development with or without the guidance of more competent member. In addition, this course focused on "social, emotional, and kinesthetic learning that is traditionally neglected in instructional settings" (Even, 2008, p. 161) through the process of play making and performing. With this 'critical drama approach', my aim as a teacher was to lead the students to be able to engage with critical dialogue and prepare for social action through the forms of drama while improving their English skills.

#### B. The Institution

The institution where I implemented this CP with drama approach is an IEP, part of a US university with substantial populations of Asian students. The IEP generally uses "skill-based" language teaching methods. Classes are divided into four levels (100 to 400, 400 being the most advanced) with skill areas of English reading, writing, listening, speaking, and grammar as well as some other elective courses (e.g., TOEFL preparation and story reading). The institution aims to prepare ESL students for academic work at university level in the United States. Typically, terms are scheduled for six (summer) or eight (spring and fall) weeks and most of the students are from East Asia (Japan, Korea, and China). This course, like all the others in the summer term, was a six-week course. Classes met four times a week (Monday to Thursday), 65 minutes a class, and the ages of students were early 20s to 30s.

The class was comprised of eight students (three males and five females; four Japanese, one Chinese, one Thai, one Chilean, and one Iraqi) at the 300-level (intermediate-advanced). 'English through drama' was offered as one out of four of their mandatory courses. The students had not experienced a course focused on critical perspectives or drama and they had never participated any kinds of social actions or social movements before (e.g., boycott, demonstration, and campaign) except one (Jennifer<sup>1</sup>). She had taken a class on social issues once in Thailand.

#### C. The Course

CP does not have a fixed model of teaching and lesson planning. In this exploration, I drew on Wallerstein's (1983) four steps: (a) listening to the learners and identifying their problems; (b) providing codes (i.e., concrete physical expressions that represent the aspects of a theme surrounding a problem on social issues that are relevant to the students); (c) engaging students in understanding, generalizing, and suggesting alternative forms of problems; and (d) aiding the learners to take action for change.

Moreover, as the course aimed to develop critical perspectives the goals for the course were that students would

- pose problems and engage in critical dialogue
- develop critical perspectives on social issues
- produce reflections on social issues that would lead to action
- engage in decision-making processes in class
- learn and practice English

I facilitated critical discussions with a skit on racism that I wrote myself for the first three weeks. This was followed by student-made group plays on their own topics. One group (three students) ended up doing a play on 'lookism<sup>2</sup>' and the other (five) on 'gender inequality' for the remaining three weeks. The topics, 'racism' and 'discrimination,' were chosen based on the students' responses to a pre-course questionnaire. I used the topic for the first two weeks to model how to come up with codes, critical discussion questions (e.g., how to make questions that problematize the status quo), write a critical skit (a skit that has a critical message), practice acting, and lead critical discussions. After that, in the third week, students were required to lead a critical discussion on a topic that they wanted to engage with. They ended up choosing 'income inequality,' 'lookism,' and 'Big Brother' (government surveillance) issues. Then for the remaining weeks, groups of students cooperated to write a critical play and to stage the play-script.

In implementing a course and an approach that was unfamiliar to the students and unusual at this institution, I naturally wanted to look for evidence of success or even failure. Could I tell other teachers that this course was successful at a basic level? That is, did I have evidence of L2 learning opportunity? Was this approach acceptable, even if unfamiliar to the students? At a more serious level, in respect to CP itself, was this really CP? Was this good dramabased CP? As mentioned earlier, critical dialogue is central to CP and the Theatre of the Oppressed. In this respect, did the course lead the students to produce enough critical dialogue? To answer these questions, I decided to focus on the following three main areas:

- 1. Evidence of language learning opportunities
- 2. Students' attitudes towards the course

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> All the names of the participants are pseudonyms

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Discrimination based on physical appearance

#### 3. Evidence of critical dialogue

#### III. DATA AND ANALYSIS

Following IRB approval, I audio-recorded the classroom interaction throughout the six-week term. All the recorded data (24 hours) was transcribed. A basic qualitative content (thematic) analysis (see Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Patton, 2002) was used to extract the systematic phenomena appearing in the transcripts. By following the qualitative content analysis approach, my aim for this paper was not only to identify important themes and categories in the body of content, but also to illustrate and understand a rich description of the themes and categories in a subjective but scientific manner. The transcripts were reviewed in light of a priori concern with manifestations of critical dialogue and language learning opportunity moments through the procedure of constant comparison.

A pre-post questionnaire was also used to examine students' perspectives and attitudes about the course. The questionnaire focused on the following two areas: a) the students' attitudes towards the course, given its IEP academic English setting; and b) their attitudes towards the use of drama for the purpose of English learning and social actions. Six items on a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire, from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*), addressed the students' attitudes towards the course (the use of drama in learning English and critical aspects), acting (and script-writing), and critical engagements (and social movements). To supplement the questionnaire data, semi-structured interviews (based on the questions from the post-questionnaire; e.g., 'tell me one thing you liked and one thing you disliked about this course'), self-reflection papers (reflecting the course; collected on the fifth week), and student diaries (their own perceptions towards the each lesson throughout the term) were analyzed.

#### IV. FINDINGS

#### A. Language Learning Opportunities

First, I wanted to investigate whether, regardless of the critical elements or perspective of the course, it was at least as potentially productive a course as others in my IEP. One would not wish to implement a CP approach if it offered inadequate opportunities for students to learn the L2. In analyzing the audio-recorded data, I identified many English learning opportunities throughout the six weeks. During the *pre* script-writing period (weeks 1–3), students encountered many new words and expressions while reading newspaper articles and watching YouTube videos. Students asked questions and answered each other's questions to figure out the meanings. I also implemented explicit instruction on the new expressions by asking questions to the students (e.g., "Let's look at some of the vocabulary here...what's 'jeopardize'?' and 'In the sentence here where Tom says 'I'd be where he is gone,' what could be the underlying meaning here?'') and by responding to student-initiated questions (e.g., "What is the difference between 'everyone' and 'everybody'?''). In addition, some of the readings led the class to discuss metacognitive reading strategies such as the use of context in guessing the meaning of unknown words and topic sentences to understand the gist of the readings.

During the script-writing period (weeks 4–6), various forms of written feedback (both explicit and implicit) were provided to the students. In fact, students had to write not only their scripts, but also student diaries and self-reflection papers about the course. I gave them individual feedback on their writings. I also explicitly elaborated on the script feedback in the class by going over their mistakes and providing other alternative forms. Students also created learnable moments over the course of the classes. An example of how students create a learnable moment in a small group script-writing session is provided below.

(During one of the small group script-writing sessions)

**Matthew**: What about 'hang out' the phone. Is it all right?

**Teacher:** Hang out hang out means you are going out with somebody

Matthew: ...Yeah I know

**Teacher**: Yeah?

**Teacher**: Hang up hang up is

Amelia: Up?
Teacher: Hang up
Amelia: Oh...

**Teacher**: Hang up is the...the thing...an action you actually

Matthew: Up?

**Teacher**: Yeah hang out is like you are going out with somebody. "Let's hang out!"

means like "[let's go out together",

**Matthew**: [let's go to...

**Teacher**: and up **Amelia**: up

**Teacher**: hang hang up the phone.

This feedback excerpt shows how a student in a small group creates a learning opportunity during a script-writing session. It starts by Matthew explicitly seeking a confirmation of the use of 'hang out' to mean ending a telephone conversation. In response, I corrected it by first providing the meaning of 'hang out', and then by introducing the

correct phrasal verb 'hang up'. Instead of just providing the correct form, I also explain what 'hang out' means, thereby orienting to Matthew's L2 competence. Amelia also orients to this correction by seeking another confirmation. She repeats the partial correction 'up?' I then confirm by saying the whole phrase once again ('hang up'). Amelia treats my language support as new information with the change of state token 'oh' (Heritage, 1984). When I try to elaborate the meaning of 'hang up' in the next turn, Matthew also displays his lack of knowledge by seeking a confirmation. I confirm once again and provide examples of how 'hang out' and 'hang up' can be used in a conversation. Although the data above show no evidence of learning *in situ* being accomplished (see Markee, 2000), they do show the students creating a learning opportunity by doing self-initiation of repair during the script-writing sessions. Such evidence of students creating learning opportunity was prevalent throughout the six-week CP course.

When students were developing their scripts and the plays, they had to use English to negotiate among themselves to accomplish the given tasks. The following excerpts illustrate some of the student-to-student negotiations that took place while they were developing their plays.

[Developing a line for a character]

**Stella**: "She has a wonderful husband and children, and she feels very happy with her family" (reading out the line she made). What do you think about this?

**Tim**: ...If you say that, the character might be...more confusing. If you write that just for her, you are saying that the other female are not feeling happy about their families.

[Developing the title for the play]

Amelia: How about gender inequality?

**Tim**: Umm...that's too broad? Let's make it...more creative?

Amelia: What should we do?

Tim: Let's brainstorm ideas first. Say anything now that comes your mind.

[Acting practice]

(Monica practices her lines and Matthew watches her)

**Matthew**: When saying your lines, try to think about the others, audiences. Help them understand the situation, what's going on.

...(Monica tries again)

**Matthew**: When saying your lines, you should be more caring, maybe you might want to hug her. You are worried about your daughter...

Here we see how, instead of relying on the teacher as the sole source of knowledge, the students turn to each other as they are developing the lines, content, and acting strategies they need for the plays; they recognize and orient to each other as sources of knowledge. Such recurrent practices of negotiating and engaging with the tasks could have developed their communication skills and institution-specific interactional practices over time. As Richard and Rodgers (2001) noted, the process of negotiation of meaning in doing a task is at the heart of L2 learning.

In the 1,430 minutes of the course, the students were actively engaged in using English most of the class time. They produced and revised a skit and a group play, wrote student diaries and a self-reflection, modified a teacher-produced skit, led critical discussions, and performed two skits and a play in the end. The implementation of the drama-based activity was able to provide learning opportunities for oral communicative skills (Miccoli, 2003); furthermore, the process of developing the scripts and plays provided a natural context for the integration of the four skills, as students had to write the plays themselves and negotiate about their writing with their group members through reading, listening, and speaking (Elgar, 2002). From a sociocultural point of view (e.g., Vygotsky, 1978, 1981), all these encounters and experiences are environments for understanding and learning. These opportunities do not mean that the students were able to learn and acquire everything that they encountered in the classroom, but they at least show that there were plentiful learnable moments in the CP with drama course.

#### B. Student Attitudes towards the Course

1. Things students liked and disliked about the course

In general, the self-reflection and open-ended questionnaire data showed that the students liked discussions (eight students), acting practices (six), acting performances (four), the classroom atmosphere (eight), the use of YouTube videos (three), and the use of forum theatre (four; i.e., a form of theatre involving audience members, who suggest different actions for the actors to carry out on-stage in an attempt to brainstorm possible solutions to the problems that the drama presents). More than 85% of their individual reflections regarding CP leaned towards the positive side more than the negative. However, it is possible that they expressed positive views out of courtesy or kindness towards the teacher. Although they were assured that their reactions would not affect their grades or personal relations with the teacher, a wish to affiliate with the course and/or teacher might still have affected their behavior.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The numbers represent the numbers of students who mentioned the activity, but do not indicate that the others did not like the activity; the other students did not mention the activity.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> This percentage was calculated by coding and counting students' semantic choices for expressing attitudes towards the CP course and/or CP-oriented classroom activities.

Students also expressed some negative opinions towards the CP course: things they disliked or things they wanted to improve about the course. Three mentioned that they disliked the topics that were difficult or not relevant to them. For instance, though Monica liked all the other topics, she said she did not see 'Big Brother' as a problematic issue and that it was not relevant to her. In addition, Melisa said she did not feel comfortable expressing 'sad feelings' when acting in a critical play on racism. Although she saw the value of focusing on social problems, Melisa suggested including other topics (e.g., culture and society) for the sake of variety to discuss in the class. Furthermore, both Jennifer and Melisa stated that six weeks was not enough time to learn deeply about the social issues and to learn how to act at the same time, particularly when the students did not have much free time after class. In short, the topic selection and time were the issues that were raised by the students.

The following examples from the student diaries also illustrate their different attitudes towards the course:

**Stella** (2<sup>nd</sup> week): Today we played several acting games [acting practice]. They were really fun. The activities not only helped us to practice English, but also helped us to relieve stress.

**Melisa** (3<sup>rd</sup> week): I think racism is a good topic to deal with because it is real. However, I don't want to act this script on racism. I feel so sad. I want to learn about other topics like cultural differences between America and other countries.

The diverse stances taken by these students regarding how the course was implemented suggest the importance of CP teachers being aware that it may not be possible to satisfy all the students with the chosen topics. I thought about dividing the class into groups with different topics, but I realized it would just create more work for the students when they were already putting so much effort into this course. Future studies should investigate this issue—the choice of topics—so we can further understand what would be the best for the students.

#### 2. Students' attitude changes throughout the term

The pre-post questionnaire was implemented at the beginning and the end of the term. In general, the Likert-scale data showed that students' attitudes improved in respect to the following three categories: the course itself, acting, and the course's critical aspects (see Table 1).

TABLE 1
STUDENTS' ATTITUDE CHANGE TOWARDS THE COURSE, ACTING, AND CRITICAL ASPECTS

Pre/Post	Course	Acting	Critical aspects
Pre	4	3.2	2.8
Post	4.5	4.1	3.7

Note. Two items for each category; the scores are averaged by number of items and students.

In fact, one student, who indicated that she strongly disliked acting (scoring this as 1 out of 5), writing a script (1), and being involved in critical actions (1) at the beginning of the term stated that she strongly liked acting (5) and writing the script (5), and was neutral on being involved in critical actions (3)—at the end of the term. Specifically, in the post-course open-ended section, the student wrote, "I liked developing plays and performing with my classmates." The sixweek CP with drama course was able to change the student's attitude about the course.

Furthermore, students expressed positive attitudes towards learning and being deeply engaged with social issues. In the interview, for example, Stella mentioned that the course was able to help her to deeply think about social issues:

**Teacher**: What did you think about the course? Particularly in regards to critical discussions we had?

**Stella**: Umm...I think this class helped me to critical thinking about the social issues. And uh help me thinking deeply for this for these issues. I know the issues. But never know if I might meet these issues, what should I do. This class helps me...to thinking about if I might meet this issues, what should I do...what will I do. The course helped me positively.

Stella talked about the usefulness of the course and how the course helped her to deeply think about social issues and to think about what she would do if she became involved in a situation like one of the hypothetical situations we discussed in class. As this example suggests, the students started to consider human rights when discussing various social problems. However, when the discussions got deeper, many still prioritized other values (e.g., materialistic values) over justice to those who are oppressed. A six-week course might not have been enough to bring students to truly question socially constructed power relations and the status quo (as is also implied by the comments of Jennifer and Melisa, mentioned above). Moreover, Melisa, in the interview, added that she had a difficult time expressing her ideas and feelings because of her limited English proficiency. This raises the perennial question of whether a CP approach is feasible with low proficiency English users.

The six weeks was, however, able to at least aid the students to "think about the social issues" (Monica), "think deeper about the issues" (Melisa), and have "a priceless experience" (Jennifer, in the student self-reflection):

**Monica**: This class gave us a chance to show the audiences how we think about the social issues. Without this course, I wouldn't have thought about the issues on inequality and human rights.

**Melisa**: Though I already knew about most of the topics that we focused in our class, the course made me to think deeper about the issues, which was very helpful to me.

**Jennifer**: This class really gave me a priceless experience. I developed my English skills and social knowledge, which will be definitely useful in the future.

Though there were some areas that needed to be improved to fit with the students' needs and wants, the analysis above shows that in general, students positively perceived the CP-approach drama course in an IEP context.

#### C. Critical Dialogue

As mentioned earlier, critical dialogue is a collaborative act in which students talk together, with help from the teacher, to reflect on and perhaps reach mutual understanding on social problems. This is important because it could facilitate students to become 'critical agents' who might challenge the status quo and seek to transform social inequalities. The audio-recorded data showed many instances where students engaged in sophisticated critical dialogue on social issues. The following data extract is an example of a student-to-student critical dialogue that was typical of what often occurred during class discussions.

Jennifer: I think equality is...how can I say...it's only idea. What is the ideal? Ideal

terminology?

**Teacher**: ...Ideal terminology?

Jennifer: Um...Utopia? Teacher: Oh, utopia?

**Jennifer**: Only utopia has that quality.

**Tim**: Oh okay. so...equality is...utopia for you?

**Jennifer**: Yeah, it's not real. You can't. ... We can't have our equality of opportunity

unless that government help this...

(a few lines omitted)

We can't have everyone in the equal in the physical or something because we are born in the different way but we can have our equality in opportunity that government have to provide for that populations. For example, in Finland, they have uh...very...uh...tax rate...very high...but welfare is very good. ...The government give the money to the every student... (Continues to talk)

As shown here, the students articulated their own critical views when they discussed social topics. In the excerpt above, Jennifer critically problematizes the prevalent income inequalities in our societies, and even offers a possible solution to the problem. For reasons of space I have not shown how the discussion developed into everyone sharing their own ideas for solving income inequalities. Some students further elaborated Jennifer's idea of involving government, and talked about how governments should increase taxes for those who make more money. There were some disagreements regarding this idea, too. Tim, for example, said that if governments took more money from those who made more money, people might not be motivated to work harder. He argued that education is a better and safer solution to make positive changes. As in the discussion above, the students had various viewpoints and they freely shared their ideas. Usually, they used specific details (e.g., 'welfare system in Finland' above) or even personal examples such as things that they had experienced in the past to support their arguments or stances. Although it did not happen in every discussion, the students often ended up reaching a consensus. In that case, they were able to come up with more concrete alternatives to the problems. For example, when they talked about issues of racism in high school, they all agreed that racism is a serious social problem. They ended up brainstorming various ideas for actions towards positive change by schools (e.g., international festivals where people share and learn about other cultures), parents (overnight invitations: inviting international students or being invited to stay overnight at each other's places), and students (e.g., making a critical play on racism).

One particular activity that inspired the entire group of students to engage in critical dialogue was the forum theatre that was implemented in the fourth week. I adapted Boal's (2002, pp. 17-21) forum theatre activity with the belief that it would "facilitate the generation of serious and fruitful discussion" (p. 18) and create an environment in which the students could try out new solutions to solve the obstacles that they created in their play plots. I implemented the forum theatre activity by first introducing and discussing two related YouTube videos: "Using theatre for social change" (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NbYx01re-ec) "Theatre and of the Oppressed (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vi1HfSiMxCU). After a discussion of what the forum theatre is, what it does, and how to do it, I modeled the activity with a racism skit I created. I played the protagonist and had other students be the bullies. After doing one scene of the skit, I had volunteers (George, Tim, and Amelia) play the protagonist while trying out their own strategies to overcome the locally constructed oppression. Afterwards, we not only critically discussed the emerged strategies as a class, but also shared our feelings about the oppression that was represented in the skit.

In addition, once the students became familiar with the activity, I had them choose their favorite scenes from their own plays and lead the class in a forum theatre activity. To illustrate, Tim's group led their forum theatre on racism. The scene was about a Chinese customer (Monica) getting discriminated against by an English bartender (Tim). Unlike the other students' forum theatres where students waited for the group to finish the scene so that they could try out new solutions, Matthew stopped the play and started to complain to Tim that it is wrong to discriminate against people because of race. Soon after, George jumped in to support Matthew and to protect Monica from the discriminators (Tim and Stella, who played a customer who also discriminated against Monica). Amelia also joined the scene and calmed everyone down by alerting them that there were other people in the bar who were trying to have quality time with their

families. Then, the scene naturally ended. It was the students who voluntarily participated in the scene to help the oppressed character and to take social action.

Everyone shared their own feelings and opinions as an actor and an observer when the scene ended. In brief, Matthew emphasized that people need to be aware that all humans are equal. George mentioned that he felt sorry for Monica's character and argued that there should be no discrimination. Amelia said that although she also felt sorry for the character, she thought it was morally wrong to fight in public spaces. She said if she were in that situation (i.e., experiencing discrimination at a business), she would just have left the place. As the oppressee, Monica said she felt great that people helped her, and she would do the same for people being discriminated against in the future. As the oppressor, Tim shared that he could not act as mean as he had planned to because he felt powerless when Matthew and George intervened to help Monica. Stella was supposed to help Tim oppress Monica's character, but she decided not to become further involved when others stood up for her. Melisa said it was good that it worked out well for Monica's character, but she questioned whether there would be people like Matthew or George in real life situations. Finally, Jennifer said that she felt uncomfortable as a customer in the bar and did not want to be involved. In the end, the students were able to co-construct the forum theatre and, through it, create a space where they were able to not only critically talk about racism issues, but also reflect on their own engagement in diverse ways, thus naturally creating an environment for critical dialogue.

Overall, the course seems both to have created an environment where students freely discussed critical aspects of social issues, sharing their thoughts and views, and also to have aided them to think about and even take part in representing those who are oppressed. Some of the students further shared their thoughts and interests in regard to critical issues in their student diaries as well:

**Jennifer** (3<sup>rd</sup> week): In my opinion, 'Equality' is impossible thing to achieve in our real world; it's an ideal concept. **Melisa** (3<sup>rd</sup> week): I knew about the issues on 'racism,' but didn't know about 'lookism'. So this topic was very interesting to me. In Japan, we have many lookism problems as well.

Moreover, students further revealed how much they were engaged with the social topics throughout the course:

**Matthew** (3<sup>rd</sup> week): My group presented and led the discussion on lookism today. I think the resources we used were very relevant to all of us, and the class got very engaged about the topic.

**Monica** (6<sup>th</sup> week): I really felt sense of accomplishment through developing and performing the play. Though I have to say good-bye to everyone after the end of the term, this experience will stay as a great memory.

Analysis of the student diaries again confirmed that the course was able to stimulate deep discussions on social issues. If nothing else, these reflections and dialogue showed that the students actively participated in class and were engaged with the classroom activities on social issues.

#### V. CONCLUSION

This CP-approach course provided many opportunities for the students to negotiate and interact during the collaborative process of making the plays, as well as to be critically engaged in the discussion of social issues. In fact, as the teacher, I found that the students seemed very engaged with the course. One of my colleagues confirmed this perception; he taught the same students right after me, and one day he came to me and asked what I was doing with them. He said the students were so involved in talking about my class that they lost track of time and did not realize when the next class had begun.

Although six weeks may not have been enough time to lead the students to become 'critical agents' who can represent those who are oppressed in their own lives, it was enough to have them start thinking about oppression and justice. Before I end, I want to encourage further research to take on the effects of teacher intervention in critical dialogue, particularly considering the degree to which teachers should intervene and direct students' critical dialogue. On one hand, as CP pedagogues who know about the existence of inherent power asymmetries in classroom settings, we do not want to 'force' our beliefs and values on the students. On the other hand, some students in certain contexts might benefit from direction and strong encouragement. The degree to which such teachers' engagement might be useful needs further investigation.

All in all, this teacher research showed that a six-week critical drama approach course in an IEP context was generally positively perceived by the IEP students, and demonstrated the potential to increase the students' critical perspectives and language learning. As a final note, I hope that in providing evidence of students' positive perspective on the CP-approach course and their educational development, this study can encourage more teachers to design and offer various kinds of CP-approach classes for their own students' educational development. Moreover, I hope that this study inspires teachers to adapt drama-based activities to use in CP-oriented language learning contexts, specifically because drama provides learners the experience of what it would be like to be oppressed, and thus perhaps increases their critical awareness. In addition, it creates an environment for students to not only freely discuss possible alternatives to problems, but also take part in the social action of spreading critical messages to others through the form of drama, thereby being 'critical agents' in their target language.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thank Dr. Graham Crookes for his insightful and constructive suggestions and comments on earlier drafts of this article. I would like to also thank Dr. Christina Higgins for introducing me to the importance of critical pedagogy. I am also grateful to the institution where this study took place for allowing me to create, teach, and conduct this teacher research.

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**Eunseok Ro** is currently in a PhD program in the Second Language Studies at University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. He is also an assistant editor for the *Reading in a Foreign Language* journal. His research interest is in second language pedagogy, second language use, and teacher education.

## Language Awareness of Teacher Trainees

Osnat Argaman Gordon College of Education, Israel

Vered Vaknin-Nusbaum Western Galilee College, Israel; Gordon College of Education, Israel

Abstract—Knowledge of language is the basis of every teacher's daily work. After completing their training, teacher trainees will utilize their knowledge of language as both the basis and the setting for their future educational decisions regarding reading, writing, and language communication. Insights into the importance of language in teaching indicate that teaching language knowledge should occupy a prominent position in teacher-training programs. Accordingly, courses in applied linguistics have been added to courses on academic writing and constitute an essential part of teacher-training programs throughout the world. However, despite the acknowledged importance of language classes in teacher training, there is little systematic research into the changes that occur in teacher trainees' language knowledge following completion of these courses in applied linguistics. This study investigates the change in teachers' phonological and morphological awareness in Hebrew following their participation in a course entitled "Language Sound and Form". In a test conducted at the beginning and end of each year, teacher trainees were asked to choose the correct morpho-phonemic structure out of two or three options. The words were inserted into sentences consisting of pseudo-words and real words. Significant improvements were found between students' skills at the beginning of the academic year and its end, indicating that participation in the course apparently helped augment teacher trainees' linguistic knowledge. Furthermore, this improvement was shown to enable the application of this knowledge to new forms. These findings form the basis of a discussion about the importance of linguistic knowledge in teachers' training.

Index Terms—language awareness, language learning, language education, knowledge about language, first language learning, teacher training, teacher trainees, Hebrew

#### I. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The prior literature indicates that there is a connection between a literacy environment and linguistic knowledge and academic achievement at school and at academic institutions. Students with poor literacy backgrounds are generally expected to encounter difficulties utilizing both spoken and written language (Carlisle, 2003; 2010; Green, 2009), which indicates that linguistic development and language awareness should be core subjects in the educational curricula of teacher training and that such programs should be accompanied by evaluation and research (Fillmore & Snow, 2002; Van Essen, 1997). Language and reading researchers currently recommend that all teachers, regardless of their specialty, should exhibit clear mastery of language (Fillmore & Snow, 2002). Because many of these teachers will be required to teach language lessons (language, linguistics, reading, reading comprehension – language arts), they must have complete basic command of a language's grammatical rules, usage, structure, and historical changes. Moreover, when students become teachers, they may not be called on to teach these subjects directly; instead, they will use them as basic knowledge or as the setting for educational decisions involved in teaching reading, writing, and oral communication (Andrews, 2008; Attardo & Brown, 2005; Bigelow & Ranney, 2005; Hislam & Cajkler, 2005; Harper & Rennie, 2009). For example, knowledge about language (KAL) will help a teacher make intelligent choices regarding study materials, tasks and teaching goals, including adjustments for students' overall literacy capabilities and their morpho-syntactical skill levels (Bigelow & Ranney, 2005; Fillmore & Snow, 2002).

A teacher's KAL includes awareness of a body of language knowledge and the ability to use it and is the core or the basis of the daily work of every teacher who engages with language (Bigelow & Ranney, 2005). KAL includes phonetic knowledge, knowledge of the sound system of the spoken language, phonological knowledge of the mental structure of the language's words and how phonemes are represented in the writing system, and morphological knowledge of the language, i.e., how the language's words are inflected and/or conjugated. Another aspect of KAL is communications skill, which involves recognition of the variety of expressions in the language and the ability to apply them appropriately in a given situation (Harper & Rennie, 2009). For example, teachers should be able to foresee problems that might crop up in the course of a lesson and to adapt their language to their students' linguistic capabilities (Bigelow & Ranney, 2005). The language awareness of teachers might play a decisive role in their students' learning process (Glasgow 2008). Therefore, the teacher must be aware of his or her language and to nurture this awareness through all stages of his or her professional development to improve it (Andrews & McNeill, 2005; Wright & Bolitho, 1997; Wright, 2002). The more teachers are aware of their language, the more confidence they will have in their speech and

writing (Wright & Bolitho, 1993, 1997), and they will be able to more successfully analyze their students' knowledge and to use their language to advance their students' learning (Cots, 2008; Fillmore & Snow, 2000).

However, although researchers agree that language and KAL are keys to teaching, some teachers know little about the development of the applicable language, its changes over time, or its structure. From that perspective, it is easy to understand the importance of teaching these subjects to all teacher trainees, regardless of specialty. Researchers in this area agree that language training programs should be developed that probe sensitivity and awareness to linguistic structure (Baca & Escamilla, 2003; Fillmore & Snow, 2002). This special importance arises from the fact that schoolchildren's language knowledge largely depends on their teachers in general and not solely on their language teachers (Andrews, 2008). These considerations highlight the function of teaching language knowledge in teacher training programs (Attardo & Brown, 2005; Lantolf, 2009). Thus, it is not surprising that courses in applied linguistics are an integral part of teacher training programs worldwide; moreover, theories abound that posit what level of KAL or language competence (Cots & Arn 6, 2005) should be required of teachers engaged in language, and what type of teaching practice will help them develop this knowledge (Bartels, 2005). Nonetheless, although substantial theoretical work on KAL has been widely undertaken (Stern, 1983; Widdowson, 1990; Bardovi-Harlig & Hartford, 1997; Fillmore & Snow 2002), only a small amount of systematic research has investigated how teacher trainees' studies have influenced their theoretical and practical knowledge (Bartels & Borg, 2003; Angelova 2005). It is possible that some of the language knowledge taught to teacher trainees may indeed not be of use to them (Bartels, 2003, 2006; Bolitho, 1987; Clarke, 1994) and may thus constitute an unnecessary burden (Bartels, 2006). Accordingly, any change in teacher trainees' language knowledge resulting from their applied language courses must be assessed (Angelova, 2005) by an array of research methods aimed at collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data (Bartels, 2002, 2005; Borg, 2011). In Israel, much has been written on the semantic aspects of language education, on students' vocabulary and on the written discourse of students, and these have been tested mainly on students' academic writing (see, e.g., Schwarzwald, 1996; Ben Shahar, 2003; Argaman, 2010); thus, the phonological-morphological field has not yet been examined and neither has its relation to teaching abilities.

The few studies that have examined changes in teacher trainees' KAL (Peacock, 2001; Brown & McGannon 1998; Breen, 1991) have commented that a follow-up is warranted on the development of the trainees' and new teachers' KAL and on their attitudes toward the use of language. This follow-up might reveal changes in teacher trainees' language awareness (Horwitz, 1985) and changes in their beliefs about the importance of KAL for the teacher in the classroom.

Similar findings have been obtained by studies with teachers of a second language: KAL, i.e., explicit knowledge of the language system and its rules, was shown to greatly influence the practical side of their teaching and pedagogical systems (Andrews, 1999; Borg, 1999, 2003). Andrews (1997) argued that KAL included teachers' declarative knowledge about language and their procedural knowledge of language awareness. The combination of these two types of knowledge is called meta-linguistic awareness, and it plays a decisive role in language teaching and learning (Xiao, 2005).

This study probes the changes in student teachers' language knowledge and awareness (their ability to apply knowledge about new language structures). In addition, it examines these student teachers' positions on the use of language in teaching after they have completed a course on the structure and pronunciation of Hebrew.

#### Rationale of the present study

As discussed above, linguists and researchers in the field of applied linguistics maintain that teachers should study theories and research findings on language and on its use in the classroom to be able to transmit language knowledge to language activities and to teaching in the classroom. The problem with this argument is that academic institutions use it as a rationale for instituting language courses in the teacher-training program without empirical tests to determine the effectiveness of these courses (Freeman, 1994; Bartels & Borg, 2003; Bartels, 2005; Borg, 2011). It has been suggested that systematic studies should be conducted on students' and teachers' language education (Borg 2011). The contribution of the present study is its systematic empirical examination of the change in language knowledge experienced by teacher trainees – and of their views regarding language – following completion of an applied language course.

The knowledge examined in this study includes phonological and morphological aspects, including formal knowledge about the structures of Hebrew words and their pronunciation. The ability to use morphological characteristics, which also includes conscious phonological changes, is called morphological awareness (Carlisle, 2003, 2010; Kuo & Anderson, 2006), which merits a central place in the language preparation of teacher trainees (Baca & Escamilla, 2003; Fillmore & Snow, 2002). Grasping linguistic knowledge of a word's phonological and morphological structure will in the end help to process high language levels (Bick, Frost & Goelman, 2010; Carlisle, 2010; Green, 2009; Kuo & Anderson, 2006). This processing is one of the aims of language education because it makes more efficient instructional work available to the teacher who is emerging from the educational-linguistic discourse.

This discourse among leading linguists in various colleges in Israel has centered on aspects of language amelioration (see the detailed survey in Harlap, 2008) from the understanding that elevating student teachers' KAL would improve their abilities to utilize this knowledge and apply it in teaching. In a special issue of the journal *Mofet* (2010) that was dedicated to "Language in Teacher Training," many authors concur regarding the importance of the utilizing educator

precisely for language. For example, Borstein (2010) holds that "the function of the teacher is to serve as a role model for speech... The teacher's rich, exact and correct language greatly influences her students who listen to her..." In the same issue, Margolin and Merav (2010) likewise aver that language is an essential and fine-tuned tool in educational work, so "the teacher's language is the foremost in teacher training".

Maintaining this perception, despite the reduction in the number of hours for language teaching in teacher-training colleges, the means to better language knowledge remain part of the new framework of academic colleges for education. To achieve the objective of nurturing language as part of educators' preparation, students are required to take two hours per week in academic year language courses in the field of "language education." In all these colleges, this framework also contains a course titled 'Language Sound and Form' or 'Phonological and Morphological Awareness', whose primary aim is to heighten trainees' awareness of the structure of words in the language. The assumption is that development of phonological and morphological awareness will in the end result in correct pronunciation and precise use of linguistic structures and will thus form the basis for correct language usage (see Appendix 1 for syllabus).

The aim of this study was to test whether – and the extent to which – a change occurred in student teachers' phonological and morphological language awareness following completion of the Language Sound and Form course as a result of the KAL acquired in the course. The test was conducted using real words from Hebrew to allow the application of language knowledge to be examined and by using pseudo-words to allow language awareness to be examined, i.e., application of the learned rules of language to new forms that do not actually exist (see more on this technique in the Method section). Use of pseudo-words enables an in-depth examination of the ability to transpose the language rules learned in the course to new and unknown language forms. Another question was whether there was any change in students' views regarding the importance of the correct usage of language in social and professional interactions that might be attributed to their participation in the Language Sound and Form course.

#### II. METHOD

#### **Research population**

The participants included 110 students at the beginning of the academic year and 74 at its end, and 95% of these participants were women. The age range spanned 20-41 years, with an average age of 24.56 years (SD = 3.35). All of the participants reported that Hebrew was their mother tongue. The students were from five different classes; there were 19 to 40 students in each class, and there was an average of 28 students per class.

Of these participants, 44 (40% of the participants at the beginning of the year) completed the test papers at the beginning and at the end of the year, before and after the course, and were identified. All these participants were women, aged 20-35 years, with an average age of 23.44 years (SD = 2.53).

#### **Instruments**

A two-part word test was administered involving pseudo-words and real words. Participants were asked to choose the correct morpho-phonemic form out of two or three possibilities. The incorrect forms represented common errors by Hebrew speakers in routine uses of words in different language categories. The words were inserted into sentences consisting of 32 pseudo-words and real words as detailed below. The score for each measure was calculated according to the number of correct answers and was given across a range of 0 to 1, where a higher score signified higher accuracy, i.e., more knowledge.

At the conclusion of the test, the students were asked to grade their perception of the importance of the use of proper language in social interactions with friends as opposed to professional interactions at work. Grading was on a scale from 1 (not important at all) to 5 (very important).

#### Lists of words

#### a. Real words

Altogether, 16 words representing 4 categories, i.e., 4 words in each category: formative letters, influence of gutturals, verbal types and *dagesh lene* (a dot in certain consonants denoting their occlusive phonation).

- 1. Formative letters: words that contain formative letters are voweled according to these rules: conjunctive *vav* before *sheva* with *shuruq*; and *lamed* and *bet* before *sheva* with *hiriq*, e.g., *vemevugarim umevugarim* ('and adults').
- 2. The influence of gutturals: words in which there is an influence of gutturals: vowel lowering with gutturals and non-lowering with other consonants. E.g., *koraxat/korexet* ('is wrapping').
- 3. Verb types: quiescent *lamed-he* group/quiescent *lamed-alef* group, where there is a tendency to confuse these two groups and to make incorrect analogies in their usage. E.g., *lemalot/lemale*.
- 4. Dagesh lene: words containing letters that have dagesh lene according to the rules of the latter (bet, gimel, dalet, kaf, pe, tav). These letters always appear with dagesh at the beginning of the word and after quiescent sheva; there is no reason to stress these letters when they are not at the beginning of a word or syllable: e.g., ktav/xtav.

#### b. Pseudo-words

A total of 16 words were presented, representing the four categories discussed above, where real words formed the basis for devising pseudo-words by means of transposing one root letter.

Here is an example of pseudo-words invented in this way:

- 1. Formative letters: vemetugarim/umetugarim
- 2. Influence of gutturals: lonaxat/lonexet

3. Verbal types: *ledalot/ledale*4. Dagesh lene: *knaš/xnaš* 

#### **Procedure**

The study was conducted within the Language Sound and Form course. This course is required for each first-year student teacher and involves learning correct pronunciation, which is one of the requirements of an educator. In this framework, basic Hebrew language rules are taught and learned, such as the four categories above.

The course is offered by a team of four lecturers, who teach according to a standard program with an identical syllabus (see Appendix 1). The syllabus was drawn up by the lecturer team jointly, and the contents of the course were determined after general discussion and joint decision making.

The test was given at two time points (experiment/intervention: before-after), i.e., at the beginning of the academic year, before the course, and at end of the year, following completion of the course.

The two lists of words inserted into the sentences were handed to the participants as one part of one test in a larger test consisting of two parts. The pseudo-words list always appeared first, and only after the participants had completed this part of the test did the experimenter ask them to move on to the following part of the test, which contained the real words.

Before answering the test paper, participants were given the following instructions:

This test paper is part of a research project and is not connected to your score for the course.

We ask for your full name only because in the future we may want to compare more test papers that you will answer. In front of you are Pseudo-Words that do not exist in the Hebrew language. Choose the word that sounds to you more natural/suitable for Hebrew (make use of vowel signs to show correct pronunciation).

The test had no time limit. In addition to their full names, the participants were asked to add several particular pieces of information: mother's name, their age, and a name for identification (see Appendix). Test papers of participants whose mother tongue was not Hebrew were removed from the study.

#### III. FINDINGS

The findings below apply solely to the data of the students who submitted identified test papers at both the beginning and end of the year (N=44). Nevertheless, similar findings were obtained for all test papers collected in the different course groups (N=184).

Students with complete data according to time of test

Table 1 shows means and SDs of the research variables for students with complete data according to word type and time. To examine the differences between word types and according to time, these were defined as intra-testee variables. No correlations were found between participants' age and the study variables. A Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted according to word type and time (2x2) for the four measures (voweling formative letters, gutturals, verbal root stems (lamed heh/lamed alef), dagesh lene), and an ANOVA for the overall score was also conducted, as presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1.

MEANS, SDS AND F VALUES FOR THE STUDY VARIABLES, ACCORDING TO WORD TYPE AND TIME (N = 44)

	Word type x time	Time	Word type	Real word	Real words		ords
	F(1,43)	F(1,43)	F(1,43)	After	Before	After	Before
	(η2)	(η2)	(η2)	M	M	M	M
			·	(SD)	(SD)	(SD)	(SD)
Voweling	3.97*	21.03***	18.30***	0.86	0.73	0.79	0.54
formative letters	(.085)	(.328)	(.299)	(0.20)	(0.27)	(0.27)	(0.30)
Guttural letters	4.09*	27.88***	45.41***	0.81	0.69	0.68	0.44
	(.002)	(.393)	(.514)	(0.18)	(0.20)	(0.25)	(0.24)
Verb types	1.16	3.71	0.74	0.72	0.73	0.67	0.74
	(.026)	(.079)	(.017)	(0.15)	(0.17)	(0.20)	(0.21)
Dagesh lene	0.15	6.11*	2.65	0.76	0.67	0.80	0.72
-	(.001)	(.124)	(.058)	(0.20)	(0.21)	(0.22)	(0.26)
Total	2.33	29.79***	33.36***	0.79	0.70	0.74	0.60
	(.051)	(.409)	(.437)	(0.10)	(0.11)	(0.16)	(0.14)

\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.001

The Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) for the four measures was significant for word type (F (4, 40) = 20.09, p < .001,  $\eta^2 = .668$ ) and for time (F(4, 40) = 9.28, p < .001,  $\eta^2 = .481$ ), but non-significant for interaction between word type and time (F(4, 40) = 2.15, p = .092,  $\eta^2 = .177$ ). Likewise, the ANOVA for the overall score was significant for word type and time, but non-significant for the interaction between word type and time.

For the overall score, voweling of formative letters, and guttural letters, level of knowledge of real words was higher than that of pseudo-words at the beginning and at the end of the year, and there was a significant rise from the year's beginning to its end for both word types.

The improvement in knowledge of pseudo-words from the beginning of the course to its end was significantly greater than the improvement in knowledge of real words (voweling of formative letter in pseudo-words  $\eta^2 = .302$  as against  $\eta^2 = .198$  in real words, and guttural letter in pseudo-words  $\eta^2 = .332$  as against  $\eta^2 = .207$  in real words).

For the verb types (*lamed heh/lamed alef*), no significant differences were found for word type or time. Regarding *dagesh lene*, an overall difference was found for time, with a significant rise from the year's beginning to its end, with no size difference between pseudo-words and real words.

The overall student body and the students with complete data were found to exhibit a similar pattern in the differences between the pseudo-words and the real words, as well as in the pattern of change between the year's beginning and its end.

Table 2 shows means and SDs for the study variables for students with complete data, according to time, regardless of word type. Time was defined as a within-subject variable. A Multivariate analysis of variance was conducted for time for the four measures (voweling formative letters, gutturals, verbal types (lamed hehh/lamed alef), dagesh lene) and an ANOVA for overall score, as shown in Table 2.

 $TABLE\ 2.$  Means, SDs, and F values for study variables regardless of word type, according to time (N = 44)

	Time	All words	
	F	After	before
	(1,43)	M	M
	$(\eta^2)$	(SD)	(SD)
Voweling formative	21.19***	0.83	0.63
letters	(.330)	(0.22)	(0.23)
Guttural letters	27.61***	0.74	0.56
	(.391)	(0.19)	(0.16)
Verb types	3.44	0.69	0.74
	(.074)	(0.13)	(0.15)
Dagesh lene	6.13*	0.78	0.69
	(.125)	(0.17)	(0.18)
Total	29.79***	0.77	0.65
	(.409)	(0.11)	(0.11)

Note: Findings in the table show knowledge level 0-1. \*p<.05, \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.001

The Multivariate analysis of variance for the four measures proved significant for time (F(4, 40) = 9.25, p < .001,  $\eta^2 = .481$ ), as did the ANOVA for time. For the overall score, voweling of formative letters, gutturals, and *dagesh lene*, knowledge level at the end of the year was higher than at the beginning. No difference was found between the start and end of the year in the knowledge level for verb types (*lamed heh/lamed alef*). The overall student body and the students with complete data evinced a similar pattern of changes from the year's beginning to its end.

#### The importance of correct language usage

As noted above, measurements were taken of the students' perception of the importance of correct usage in language with friends and at work, on a scale from 1 (not at all important) to 5 (very important).

Table 3 shows the distribution of the perceptions of students with complete data regarding the importance of correct language usage, at the beginning and at the end of the year.

TABLE 3.

PERCEPTION OF STUDENTS WITH COMPLETE DATA OF THE IMPORTANCE OF CORRECT USAGE OF LANGUAGE (%), BY TIME

	Before (n=41)			After (n=44)				
	Not	Quite	Important	Very	Not	Quite	Important	Very
	important	important		important	important	important		important
With	2	10	12	20		5	18	18
friend	(4.5)	(22.7)	(27.3)	(45.5)		(12.2)	(43.9)	(43.9)
At work			4	39			7	34
			(11.4)	(88.6)			(17.1)	(82.9)

The findings in Table 3 indicate that the pattern of importance attributed to the correct usage of language was similar for these students and for all the students who wrote answers (Table 1 above). At the beginning of the year, almost half the students (45%) reported that speaking correctly with their friends was very important for them, whereas 27% reported that it was important. At the beginning of the year the remainder of the students (approximately 27%) indicated that correct language usage was less important. By contrast, most participants (approximately 89%) reported that it was very important for them to use correct language at the workplace. At the end of the year, the findings were similar: approximately 44% reported that it was very important for them to speak correctly with their friends, and approximately 44% stated that it was important. The remainder (approximately 12%) said that it was less important. However, the majority, approximately 83%, reported that it was very important for them to speak correctly at work. Indeed, the difference between the degree of importance ascribed to the usage of correct language at work and with friends was significant: Z = 4.34 at the beginning of the year, and Z = 4.00 at its end (p < .001). Time differences in the degree of importance ascribed to use of correct language were non-significant (with friends: Z = 1.52, p = .129; at work: Z = 0.71, p = .480).

No significant correlations were found between the degree of importance ascribed to the use of correct language and students' age or level of knowledge of words generally, whether for pseudo-words or real words.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The purpose of the present study was to test whether and the extent to which a change occurred in language awareness (phonological and morphological) of student teachers who completed the Language Sound and Form course. This test examined language knowledge learned during the course (application) and the ability to use this knowledge with new forms that do not exist in the language (transposition).

The findings indicate that regardless of word type (real word/pseudo-word), students who took the course differed significantly in their achievement from the beginning of the year to its end; thus, the course may have contributed to the student teachers' KAL. The interaction between word type (real word/pseudo-word) and time (before/after the course) was found to be non-significant. This finding demonstrates that attending the course influenced the students' achievements similarly with respect to both real words (application of language knowledge) and pseudo-words (knowledge transposition). There was a significant improvement in the students' achievements at the end of the year compared with the beginning of the year in both word types regardless of category (formative words / gutturals / verb types / dagesh lene). Thus, in general, students' achievements were greater with real words than with pseudo-words at both the beginning and the end of the course.

As for the category (regardless of the word type), for voweling formative letters, gutturals, and *dagesh lene*, the knowledge level at the end of the year was significantly higher than at the beginning of the year. No significant difference appeared between the beginning and the end of the year in knowledge level for verb types (*lamed heh/lamed alef*). These findings were also obtained for each word group (pseudo-words/real words) separately.

These findings run counter to those of Bigelow and Ranney (2005), who examined the degree of change in linguistic knowledge and phonological awareness of students after completion of a course in teaching Spanish. That study found that the students did not remember the material learned in the course when they were asked about its content at its end, and these students did not perceive the relevance of the linguistic knowledge studied in the course for their future teaching. In our study, conversely, the students certainly did improve their linguistic knowledge. Thus, it may be said that the course achieved its goal because it heightened sensitivity to the language structure of Hebrew words, which is considered a major and important component of knowledge in teacher training (Baca & Escamilla, 2003; Fillmore & Snow, 2002). This component proved significant because it ultimately enabled flexibility in language usage and its adaptation to students' needs and encouragement of their learning (Fillmore & Snow, 2000; Cots, 2008).

With respect to students' attribution of importance to correct use of language with friends and at work, significant differences were found between the two situations: correct language use at work was deemed more important. However, participation in the course does not seem to have changed the students' opinions regarding this matter, which remained the same at the end of the year.

The improvement in students' achievements due to their participation in the Language Sound and Form course matches Andrews' (1997) claim about teachers' language knowledge structure – which includes factual knowledge and applied knowledge of language awareness – as their achievements were better in both real words and in pseudo-words. This improvement attests to the fact that the students integrated the linguistic knowledge they acquired throughout the course with the ability to use it outside the inbuilt contexts of the course. This combination reflects the development of meta-linguistic awareness in the teacher trainees (Xiao, 2005), which consists of, among other things, both phonological and morphological awareness, which were specifically examined in this study. The fact that the improvement in pseudo-words was similar to that in real words indicates that the students not only acquired linguistic knowledge but also developed awareness of this knowledge and were able to use it in new and unfamiliar contexts.

The students' application of their linguistic knowledge to real words was higher than to pseudo-words at both the beginning and at the end of the course. The task during the course was with real words, so this difference in application of their knowledge is natural. However, the very improvement in linguistic knowledge application to pseudo-words, which the students were not used to analyzing, attests to their understanding of the phonological and morphological structure of Hebrew words and to their awareness of these structures. The improvement exhibited with respect to the pseudo-words due to the students' participation in the course was in fact significantly greater than their improvement in real words in voweling formative letters and the influence of gutturals, and this finding indicates the depth of learning and the awareness that developed in these subjects. In addition, the very success in contending with pseudo-words highlights an ability to understand the structure of the language and to perform linguistic analysis so that the future teacher can explain language features to others (Andrews, 2008; Cots & Arn \( \preceq \) 2005; Cots, 2008; Fillmore & Snow, 2000).

The improvement in students' achievements as a result of participating in the course was found to be significant compared with their overall score, and also in three of the four categories that were tested: formative letters, guttural influence, and *dagesh lene*. No significant improvement was found in either real or pseudo-words in the verb types category. It is difficult to precisely determine the reason for the difference in this category from this study's findings, but it may be surmised that there is a connection between the structure of the course, the order of subjects taught, the time devoted to each, and students' achievements. Verb types was the last subject studied on the course (see Appendix

1), and it is possible that on that account there was relatively little practice time on this subject, and therefore no improvement was found in students' achievements in this category.

To test this issue, the lecturers who taught the Language Sound and Form course in the different groups of research participants were asked to grade the different subjects according to the amount of time dedicated to each category. The results supported the possibility that the verb types category was accorded the least time of all. A further possibility is that the students' achievements in this category were higher from the outset (see Tables 1, 3) and that the knowledge acquired on the course thus did not add to prior knowledge.

The students found the correct use of language highly important from the start of the course. Most ranked its importance among friends or at work as important or very important (see Table 3). Nevertheless, the importance they attributed to correct language use varied with respect to use with friends and at work as teachers and educators, and they ranked the importance of the latter higher than that of the former. This difference was found to be significant at both the beginning and at the end of the year. No change occurred in the students' perception of the importance of correct language use as a consequence of their participation in the course. Their positive perceptions regarding correct language use form the basis of their professional development, and can serve the teachers with respect to improving their future teaching (Owen & Edwards, 2005; Gerb, Stroller & Tandy, 2000).

To summarize, at the beginning of the year and the course there was a wider gap between their positions on the importance of correct language usage and in their language knowledge and in their ability to use it. Although the students graded correct use of language as important and very important, both with friends and at the workplace, they had inadequate knowledge of correct linguistic usages on a relatively high level. This gap narrowed following their completion of the course and the improvement in their achievements. According to Andrews and McNeill (2005), teachers' language awareness covers not only their language knowledge but also their beliefs as to its importance. These beliefs can guide the teacher to success in the manner in which he or she uses language in teaching and therefore to successful teaching in general.

In conclusion, the present study presented an opportunity to evaluate the change in language knowledge of student teachers as a result of their participation in an applied linguistics course. The importance of conducting such an evaluation has been noted by several researchers in the field (Angelova, 2005; Bartels, 2011; Bartels & Borg, 2003). Our study showed that the course imparted to its participants the skill to handle language challenges in a manner that gives practical expression to the instruments mastered during the course.

This research project is of applied importance with respect to its evaluation of change in knowledge acquired in a language course. Although there is ample theoretical engagement in the importance of linguistic qualification of future teachers, no systematic empirical test has been conducted on the efficacy of the courses for their participants (Bartels 2005, 2006). Researchers (e.g., Angelova, 2005; Bartels, 2002; Borg, 2011) have suggested that any change in the language knowledge of student teachers due to their participation in applied linguistics courses must be assessed by a range of research means and tools. Another unique aspect of this study is how it combined an evaluation of a program (a language course for student teachers) with linguistics measures, which include addressing phonological and morphological awareness of native speakers of the language.

The present study has educational importance for both theory and practice. For theory, the study examined the broad question of whether it is possible to change language patterns in the mother tongue of adult speakers, whereas for practice, it investigated whether a course in language education improves student teachers' language awareness. The research findings can also indicate the weak points of the course and can thus serve for designing future courses on language nurturing. Nonetheless, one should also consider that students are exposed to a variety of academic content during their first year of academic studies, and these other types of academic content may also contribute to a change in the trainee students' language knowledge and awareness. It might be interesting to compare this change with students who did not participate in this obligatory course (which cannot be found in the current trainee courses' program).

As further study, we propose tracing students' language knowledge and language awareness three years following completion of the course, and testing whether and to what extent the knowledge gained is preserved in the long term. It is also important to investigate how student teachers use the tools and language awareness developed in this course in the framework of their classroom teaching and throughout their work as teachers advancing in their careers.

#### APPENDIX 1

Syllabus for Language Sound and Form – a year's course: 2013

Course name: Theory of Sound and Form

Lecturer's name: xxx

Course aims:

Number of weekly hours per year: 2
Admission requirements: None
Type of course: Lesson and practice
Course classification: Language Education

• The student will know basic concepts in the field of phonology and morphology

• The student will know the rules of voweling

- The student will nurture language correctness in the domain of pronunciation
- The student will know the modes of expanding language in the present day

#### **Study subjects:**

#### First Semester

- 1. Phonology theory basic concepts: consonants, vowels (names and types) forms of sheva, dagesh, stress, syllables
- 2. Rules of syllable voweling
- 3. Word patterns
- 4. Language processes in contemporary Hebrew: rules of stress separation, breaking consonant cluster, added dagesh
- 5. Pointing formative particles and formative letters
- 6. Rules of use of name of number
- 7. Correct pronunciation

#### Second semester

- 1. Morphology theory basic concepts: forms of inflection and forms of verb types
- 2. Modes of enlarging the language
- 3. Word transparency
- 4. The strong verb: root groups
- 5. The verb system: root groups
- 6. Verb derivation
- 7. Correction of pronunciation
- 8. Fluent reading of modern voweled and non-voweled texts

#### **Requirements:**

Active participation in classes

Attendance (80%)

A test each semester (20% of the semester score)

An examination at the end of the semester (80% of the semester score)

Passing score for the course: 70

#### Bibliography – all works are in Hebrew (\*obligatory reading)

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Osnat Argaman, Ph.D. (Hebrew Language Department, Haifa University, 2006), is a Senior lecturer and a researcher in the department of Hebrew Language, Gordon College of Education. She is also the Dean of Graduate Studies and Vice President in the College. Her Research interest areas are Language Education, The Psychology of language: Language and emotion, Language and cognition; Language and society, the research of Hebrew as a mother tongue, the research of discourse as a reflection of culture and Lexical Semantics.



**Vered Vaknin-Nusbaum**, Ph.D. (Education Department, Haifa University, 2004), is a Senior lecturer and a researcher in the department of Education, Western Galilee College and Gordon College of Education. She is also the chair of the division of learning disabilities and literacy in Western Galilee College. Over the last two decades she systematically studied questions related to the processing of written language by typical and poor readers and the way specific characteristics of the Hebrew orthography and morphology modify the reading process.

# The Impact of English-only and Bilingual Approaches to EFL Instruction on Low-achieving Bilinguals in Cameroon: An Empirical Study

Patrick R. Belibi Enama Department of English, University of Yaound & I, Yaound & Cameroon

Abstract—The aim of this paper is to investigate whether low-achieving bilingual EFL learners perform better in grammar and speaking when French, their first language of literacy, is used in the EFL classroom. A two-phase experiment involving teaching two grammar lessons and two speaking lessons to a control group in English only and to an experimental group with the use of French where appropriate was carried out for the purpose. Each group's mean percentage improvement after each phase of the experiment was compared to their respective scores in the baseline. The analyses of data revealed that the experimental group obtained the higher mean improvement in the two experiments, both in grammar and speaking tests. This led to the conclusion that the use of French in the EFL classroom does not hinder learning. Rather, French is an effective scaffolding tool in the EFL classroom in Cameroon.

Index Terms—low-achieving bilinguals, English-only approach, bilingual approach, EFL pedagogy, scaffolding

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Owing to its colonial legacy, Cameroon adopted French-English bilingualism as the official language policy. A consequence of this historical act is that Cameroonians born and cultured in the former British-occupied Cameroon learn English as a second language (henceforth L2) whereas those cultured in Eastern Cameroon, formerly administered by the French, learn English as a foreign language (henceforth EFL). However, the majority of Cameroonians are not fluent bilinguals. In fact, most Cameroonian EFL learners neither reach conversational fluency nor academic language competence. Those who are educated usually display a dominant French language and underdeveloped English language skills, which will likely decrease, resulting in the individual backward movement on the bilingualism continuum, passing from the stage of incipient bilingual to that of recessive bilingual (Baker, 2011).

In the context of secondary education in Cameroon where none of the two languages of the EFL learner is developed yet, there is very little chance to reach advanced proficiency in English. In fact, most learners do not have course materials, attend overcrowded classrooms and have poor attitudes and motivations towards learning English (Tegang, 1993; Esou, 2002; Owingo, 2005). Bilinguals who display limited proficiency in their two languages due to deficiencies in competences including size of vocabulary, correctness of language, degree of automatism, ability to create neologisms, meanings and imagery and mastery of the emotive and cognitive functions have been referred to as semilinguals (Hansegard, 1968 cited in Valadez et al., 2000). However, since the term "semilinguals" has received much criticism over the years (see Baker, 2011), we shall use the term low-achieving bilinguals (henceforth LAB) instead.

Looking at pedagogy, a point of controversy in EFL teaching is whether or not the learner's first language of literacy (henceforth L1) should be allowed in the classroom. There are different policies regarding this issue, as they range from encouragement, allowance, discouragement to total prohibition of code-switching in classrooms (Martin-Jones, 2000). While learners need maximum exposure to English in order to develop their language skills, it is also vital that they understand teacher talk and linguistic data addressed to them. If human beings learn systematically by relating new knowledge to prior experience, then, the learning of any additional language takes place within the framework of the L1, and, therefore, the L1 should have a place in the EFL classroom.

In the Cameroonian context, however, the majority of EFL teachers prohibit the use of French— the students' L1— in their classes, and teach in English only, even when some of them have a working proficiency in French. Very often, EFL learners are made to feel ashamed of themselves when they cannot produce the language structures required by their teachers, or when they fail to comprehend and follow instructions for various tasks. Such rejection undoubtedly affects learner motivation and is probably the cause of early fossilization that grips many learners before the end of their middle school years. In reality, many EFL students lack the motivation to learn English because their teachers do not make the input comprehensible. For instance, instructions in EFL tests are in English only, and, unfortunately, many students are not taught how to deal with various types of instructions on tests before they take exams. Without a well-developed cognizance of classroom instructions related to testing, and because testing always takes place in context-reduced environments filled with anxiety, most EFL students fail the English language paper in Cameroon. The

situation has become critical to the point that many students today believe that they need divine intervention to pass the English paper at national exams (Focho, 2011). There might be historical, cultural and political reasons behind the rejection of French, given that a considerable number of TESOL professionals in Cameroon are Anglophones, a term used to refer to English-speaking Cameroonians. Anglophones constitute a minority group that has always felt disenfranchised by the Francophone majority (Echu, 2004; Anchimbe, 2006). Most of these teachers adopt an interactionist approach (Krashen, 1982; Nation, 2003; Ellis, 2008), arguing that although Cameroon is officially bilingual, EFL learners are, in reality, exposed to English language input in the classroom only, thus the need to maximise target language (henceforth TL) use in the classroom. Meanwhile, French could be used judiciously as a scaffolding tool in the EFL classroom.

This paper investigates whether code-switching in the EFL pre-intermediate classroom hinders or facilitates learning. More specifically, the paper compares EFL learners' performances in specific grammar and speaking tasks when taught with the use of the L1 (French) and when taught with English only. Therefore, the following two research questions will be addressed:

- (1) Do LAB EFL learners perform better in grammar and speaking when French, their L1, is used in the classroom?
- (2) Does the use of French in the EFL classroom in Cameroon hinder learning or does it rather facilitate it?

#### II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Research on using English only or code-switching in the EFL classroom has been very rich and productive in the last three decades. Researchers in second language acquisition have succeeded in raising the awareness of classroom teachers that they must "understand the implications of language acquisition research so that they can provide the scaffolding necessary for their students to be successful in the classroom" (Herrell & Jordan, 2012, p.1). Scaffolding here refers to the assistance provided by the teacher to the learners so that they become able to perform on their own, at some future point in time, the tasks which they cannot do today. For optimal results, teachers should scaffold language acquisition within the learner's zone of proximal development (henceforth ZPD). According to Vigotsky's ZPD, language learning is a social process that occurs through collaboration and mediation between a novice (learner) and an expert (teacher or advanced learner). This means that interaction is an essential force in acquisition. Children learn better when there are adults or experts (including teachers) around who provide them with the assistance they need (Vygotsky; 1962). However, before they provide scaffolded assistance, teachers must know the level of language development of their learners (Shrum & Glisan, 2010). Also, they should understand that scaffolding is contingent on learner output and not on the expert's choosing, and know when to stop providing assistance to the learner (McCormick & Donato, 2000). In the language classroom, scaffolds, defined as "temporary supports, provided by more capable people, that permit learners to perform a complex process before they are able to do so unassisted" (Peregoy & Boyle, 2013, p. 114), are informed by two main factors: comprehensible input and input processing by bi-and multilinguals.

#### A. Comprehensible Input

Drawing from Chomskyan innatist theory of SLA, notably the idea that human beings are born with a language acquisition device housing a mental grammar which can be triggered in language-rich environments, Krashen (1982) proposed the Monitor Model, a "collection of five hypotheses which constitute major claims and assumptions about how the L2 code is acquired" (Saville-Troike, 2012, p. 47). Central to the Monitor Model are two hypotheses: the input hypothesis and the affective filter hypothesis. The former hypothesis comprises two main points: (1) input must be comprehensible by the learner and (2) should contain language features a little beyond the learner's current level of competence (hence i + 1). In other words, learning and/or acquisition is effective when the learner is able to process linguistic data addressed to him successfully into intake. Meanwhile, the latter hypothesis holds that a low-anxiety learning environment with considerable learner self-esteem, motivation and self-confidence are unconditional variables for effective L2 acquisition. Though Krashen's claims have been criticized on the grounds that his theories are not the result of empirical research (Lightbown, 2004; McLaughlin, 1987), his perspectives are used in this work because of their remarkable influence on classroom practices.

Using a different approach from Krashen, Cummins (1981) devised a model to categorize the range of contextual support teachers ought to give in relation to the difficulty of the various tasks assigned to learners. The model, which consists of a diagram with four quadrants, categorizes tasks along two continua: on the vertical continuum, tasks range from cognitively undemanding to cognitively demanding while on the horizontal continuum, they range from context-embedded to context-reduced. Cognitively demanding tasks are, as the name suggests, more difficult for the learner to do than cognitively undemanding tasks. Context-embedded tasks are those that provide contextual additional information consisting of visual and/or oral cues (examples: diagrams, illustrations) to help the learner complete the task at hand. These visual and oral clues are scaffolds that facilitate instruction. Meanwhile, a context-reduced task is one in which the learner has access to fewer visual cues (examples: listening to a lecture or reading a text without illustrations), hence less scaffolding.

Cummins equally developed the linguistic developmental interdependence hypothesis (1978, 2000) to explain how bilinguals and multilinguals use and acquire additional languages. This hypothesis suggests that a learner's L2 competence is dependent to some extent on his/her L1 development. Therefore, the more developed the L1, the easier it

is to acquire additional languages. Meanwhile, when the L1 is underdeveloped, it becomes difficult for the L2 learner to achieve both conversational fluency and academic competence in the two languages.

The implications of Cummins' theories for EFL teachers are three-fold: first, teachers need to be aware of students' difficulties to understand academic language, the language of the classroom, in context-reduced tasks. Second, teachers should promote L1 development, given that conceptual knowledge in L1 is very useful in L2 acquisition insofar as it helps to make L2 input more comprehensible (Cummins, 2000). Third, teachers should always be prepared to scaffold instruction, that is, provide support to learners in terms of classroom practices, classroom language and content knowledge.

#### B. Language Processing by Bilinguals and Multilinguals

In this work, we follow Grosjean's (2010) theoretical framework on bilingualism, which places focus on the regular use of two or several languages, rather than fluency. Therefore, this work proposes an understanding of bilinguals and multilinguals within the bilingualism framework. In so doing, "bilinguals are those who use two or more languages (or dialects) in their everyday lives" (Grosjean, ibid, p. 4).

Research on the bilingual and/or multilingual brain tells us that bilinguals and multilinguals are different from monolinguals in the way they process input (see Perecman, 1989; Cook, 1991, 1992; Kecskes & Papp, 2000; Bialystok, 2009; Bialystok et al., 2012). It is vital to start with the principle that bilinguals display a distinctive state of mind or competence, which Cook (1991) called multicompetence. This multicompetence, defined as the "compound state of a mind with two [or more] grammars" (Cook, ibid, p. 112), or, as the knowledge of two or more languages in one mind (Cook, 2007), is distinguished from monocompetence, the knowledge of only one language, as found in monolinguals. Cook (2011) argues that L2 users (bilinguals) think differently from monolinguals, use their languages in different ways, have an increased awareness of language and a different brain structure. These differences between monolinguals and bilinguals do not necessarily suggest that bilinguals are two monolingual failures in one body (Cook, 1992; Grosjean, 1985, 1998).

Perecman (1989), Kroll (1993), Kecskes & Papp (2000), Bialystok (2009) and Bialystok et al. (2012) argue that the main difference between monolinguals and bilinguals is that the two language channels of bilinguals are constantly available during speech, and interact to some extent at all times, even when the context requires the use of one language only. The consequence of this joint activation is that bilinguals have an attention problem which monolinguals do not have: linguistic selection. Choosing a language depends on the knowledge of the context and participants, and requires that the bilingual mind inhibit the non-target language to some extent. However, the success of inhibition of the non-target language depends on the degree of fluency of bilinguals. Then, fluent bilinguals have better executive control at inhibition, either globally, i.e. by suppressing an entire language system, or locally, by suppressing a specific element of the non-target language, such as refusing to translate a concept from its original language to the target language (see de Groot & Christoffels, 2006). Meanwhile, low-achieving bilinguals have lesser executive control, which reduces their ability to inhibit the non-target language, leading to code-mixing, code-switching, and sequences of dominance of each language.

Establishing a link between multicompetence and emotions in the speaker's selection of languages, Dewaele & Wei (2014) argue that specific emotional states can either trigger code-switching or produce special effects in bilinguals' use of their languages. Then, the phenomenon of code-switching is common in bilingual and EFL classrooms where learner anxiety and lack of self-confidence can be very high at times. Ferguson (2003) illustrates the above when he argues that code-switching "is not only very prevalent across a wide range of educational settings, but also seems to arise naturally, perhaps inevitably, as a pragmatic response to the difficulties of teaching content in a language medium over which pupils have imperfect control. Moreover, because teaching is an adrenalin-fuelled activity, making numerous competing demands on one's attentional resources, much switching takes place below the level of consciousness. Teachers are often simply not aware of when they switch languages, or indeed if they switch at all" (p. 46).

As this work studies the use of French in the EFL secondary classroom, our target population consists of LABs who code-switch frequently. The work seeks to find out whether LABs who are taught in a context where conscious inhibition of the non-target language is rewarded perform better than those taught in classrooms where non-target language inhibition is not particularly demanded from them.

Studies of code-switching in the EFL classroom have led to the development of a theoretical framework that shall be called in this work the bilingual approach to EFL instruction. Developed by Atkinson (1987) and Auerbach (1993), this approach draws essentially from Cummins' (1978) linguistic interdependence hypothesis which holds that success in L2 acquisition depends on L1 development and competence. A key point in the bilingual approach is that human beings learn an L2 within the framework of the L1, and, therefore, the L1 should have a place in the EFL classroom. But first, we shall briefly review literature on the English-only approach.

#### C. The English-only Approach

The Monolingual approach or English-only policy is built around three points. First, the EFL teacher is not likely to know all his students' L1s in a multilingual classroom. Hawks (2001) argues that unless the teacher is capable of using all the L1s, she must not venture in such a difficult task lest she could compromise her authority in the classroom. Besides, a failed attempt to use the L1 in a constructive way only inhibits learning.

The second point opposes the idea that the L1 is an indispensable scaffold for teaching difficult language structures in the EFL classroom. Proponents of this argument (Pachler & Field, 2001; Willis, 1981) believe that visual aids, appropriate body language and modelling speech according to learners' level of language development can help teach in English even the most difficult aspects of language structure.

The third point is built around the idea that maximum exposure to the TL is the determining factor in SLA. Krashen (1982) holds that the TL should be used to the most in the classroom, given that most EFL learners are exposed to English only in the classroom. This point draws from the behaviouristic view that learner's language develops through imitation and habit formation.

#### D. The Bilingual Approach

Vigotsky, one of the earliest proponents of this approach, argued that "success in learning a foreign language is contingent on a certain degree of maturity in the native language" (1962, p. 110). In the same line of thought, Cummins' linguistic developmental interdependence hypothesis (1978) emphasized that success in L2 acquisition depends on L1 development and competence. However, the bilingual approach really garnered attention only after researchers provided a comprehensive outline of L1 use in the EFL classroom.

When Use the L1 in the English Classroom?

The first scientific attempt to define instances under which the L1 could fit in the EFL class was made by Atkinson (1987). He suggested nine instances under which the L1 could be used in the EFL classroom, including eliciting target language, checking comprehension, giving complex instructions to basic levels, co-operating in group work situations, explaining classroom methodology at basic levels, highlighting a recently taught item, checking sense, explaining testing instructions and developing circumlocution strategies. These points were later applied to several studies including Auerbach (1993), Macaro (1997), Franklin (1990), Cook (2002), Bradshaw (2006), just to name a few. A slight difference in approach was found in Balosa (2006) who suggested that the L1 be used in the English class as a self-esteem booster for shy students, a teacher strategy for clarifying complex instructions or language items, and as a method for promoting intercultural intelligibility among learners.

Why Use the L1 in the English Classroom

There are two main reasons for the use of the learner's L1 in the EFL classroom. First, the L1 facilitates both teaching and learning. For instance, "judicious use of the L1 can build an atmosphere of confidence and friendship in the classroom" (Balosa, 2006, p.31), develop harmony and cooperation, and provide learners with feelings of security and self-confidence that motivate them and make them feel more comfortable (Peregoy & Boyle, 2013; Schweers, 1999). Furthermore, the L1 saves teaching time and makes input much easier to understand (Cook 2002, Temple et al. 2005).

Second, the L1 contributes to the learner's cognitive and socio-professional development. At the cognitive level, the L1 prepares and stimulates the learner's brain to perceive and relate new knowledge to prior knowledge, with the aim of activating that prior knowledge (Paradowski, 2008; Caine & Caine, 1994). Auerbach (1993) highlights this point when she says: "starting with the L1 provides a sense of security and validates the learners' lived experience, allowing them to express themselves. The learner is then willing to experiment and take risks with English" (p. 29). Using the L1, therefore, is a means for teachers to build learner confidence and self-esteem. When learners' identities are not rejected, they do not feel as choosing between their own language habits and English (see Halliday 1968, Rinvolucri 2001), and this makes learning a more enjoyable experience. Also, judicious use of the L1 in the EFL classroom sharpens the learner's metalinguistic awareness (Cook 2002) and "allows the fullness of the learner's language intelligence to be brought into play" (Rinvolucri 2001, p.44).

From a socio-professional perspective, L1 use in the EFL classroom allows both teachers and learners to achieve some educational and occupational goals. For instance, L1 use in the English classroom can develop students' passion for translation – likely leading to careers in the areas of translation and interpretation – without necessarily hampering on the teacher's classroom objectives (Malakoff & Hakutta, 1991). Moreover, translation in the language classroom can contribute significantly to the promotion of bilingualism.

How to use another language in the English classroom

Supporters of the bilingual approach have proposed ways of using the L1 efficiently in the EFL classroom. These strategies include the L1 break to summarize content in the students' L1 either at the middle or end of the class (Reis, 1996), "sandwich stories", "bilingual vocabulary tennis" and "semantic flip-flops" (Rinvolucri, 2001) which all consist in juggling English with the L1 regularly.

#### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Setting and Participants

This study involved 22 EFL students enrolled in a private technical secondary school in Yaounde. In this school, French is the main language of instruction whereas English language is a mandatory subject. Participants were freshmen aged between 11 and 16 years old. Although French has been their main language of instruction since kindergarten, these students still lacked the academic language proficiency required to be considered as proficient French language users. Participants majored in professional courses including car engineering, masonry, carpentry, electrical engineering,

sewing and tailoring. Therefore, language proficiency courses (French and English) were minor subjects, looking at the weekly hour load (03) and the number of credits (03), which were smaller than the 05 hours and 06 credits assigned for major courses. Prior to this study, the participants were taught with the English-only approach. The informants of this study are pre-intermediate EFL learners who were introduced to the English language in primary school. They showed mastery of basic competencies such as reciting the alphabet, days of the week and months of the year, responding to greetings, information and yes/no questions, reading simple texts and performing other low level speech acts. Apart from French and English, all the participants used one or two more languages among the 247 indigenous languages spoken in Cameroon (Echu, 2004). From that perspective, participants were all multicompetent.

A technical secondary school was selected because the researcher observed that the majority of technical secondary school students in Cameroon have very low motivation and negative attitudes towards learning English. However, technical secondary freshmen were selected because their L2 learning experience up to that point was additive; they had not yet developed negative attitudes and low motivation towards learning English. Then, the researcher thought that a study carried out on such population could provide more reliable results on student performance in English-only and bilingual EFL classes.

#### B. Instruments

#### The Baseline

Prior to this study, the teacher opened a portfolio to document students' performances in grammar and speaking tasks. A portfolio, according to Tierney, Carter & Desai (1991), is a "collection of evidence used by the teacher and learner to monitor the growth of the learner's knowledge of content, use of strategies, and attitudes toward the establishment of goals in an organized and systematic way" (p. 41). Therefore, a portfolio provides reliability in data that cannot be obtained with a pretest. Because classroom activities were conducted in English only before this study, the researcher calculated each student's mean scores in the last three grammar tasks and last three speaking tasks. The mean scores obtained were then used to place students in two groups, namely the control group (henceforth CG) and the experimental group (henceforth EG), depending on individual performance. CG was composed of the first eleven students in the class whereas the remaining eleven students made up EG. The placement test scores of the students were later used as a baseline for the study.

#### Grammar and Speaking Tests

Participants were taught four lessons, among which two grammar and two speaking lessons. The four lessons were designed by the teacher himself, who used content material from the students' coursebook. The experiment was carefully designed: each grammar lesson was paired with a speaking lesson, so that by the end of both lessons, students acquire both proficiency and accuracy in the language items they were taught. Then, the first grammar lesson was on using the present continuous whereas the first speaking lesson was on describing an event that is happening at the moment of speaking. The teaching and assessment of the first grammar lesson and the first speaking lesson were referred to as Phase 1 of the experiment. Meanwhile, the second grammar lesson was on asking information questions using wh- words whereas the second speaking lesson was on role-playing a conversation at the market between a seller and a potential buyer. The teaching and assessment of the second grammar lesson and the second speaking lesson were referred to as Phase 2 of the experiment. Each lesson was taught in 55 minutes. While CG was taught in English only, EG was taught with the use of French following Atkinson's (1987) nine-point model.

CG students were taught separately from those of EG. After each lesson, the teacher administered a classroom test and students' performances were recorded as data for this study. The grammar and oral tests were structured following a prochievement format. Prochievement tests measure student proficiency and their achievement of the objectives of a particular lesson or thematic unit at the same time (Gonzalez Pino, 1989). Scoring rubrics were used to evaluate students' oral performances.

#### C. Method of Data Analysis

The method of analysis consisted in comparing each group's mean scores in each phase of the study with that group's mean scores in the baseline. Then, depending on the results obtained, three possible conclusions could be drawn. First, if EG obtained the higher improvement than CG in their mean scores of the experiment, then the researcher would conclude that EFL students perform better when code-switching is allowed in the classroom, and eventually that the use of French in the EFL class facilitates learning. Second, if EG mean scores were lower than those obtained in the baseline, then the researcher would conclude that the use of French in the EFL class hinders learning. Finally, if CG obtained the higher improvement in mean scores than EG, then it would be concluded that French does not matter in the EFL class.

#### IV. RESULTS

#### A. Placement Test Scores

Students' performances in their last three grammar and speaking tests before the start of this study were recorded on a scale from 0 to 100, and the researcher calculated each student's mean scores in grammar and speaking. Those mean

scores served to place students in either CG or EG. Figure 1 below shows CG's baseline scores whereas Figure 2 shows EG's baseline scores.

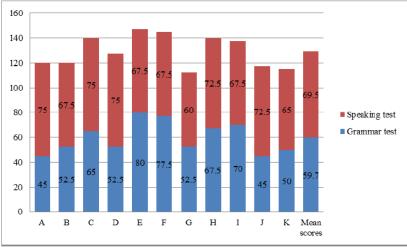


Figure 1: Control group placement test results

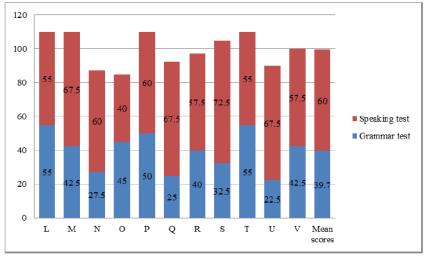


Figure 2: Experimental group placement test results

As the above charts indicate, there are 11 students in each group. Also, there are noticeable differences in the two charts. In fact, students of CG have higher mean scores in both grammar and speaking than those of EG. For instance, while CG's mean score in grammar is 59.7, EG's mean score is 39.7. In the same way, CG's mean score in speaking is 69.5, while EG's is 60. This makes a gap of 20 percentage points in grammar and 09.5 percentage points in speaking between the two groups.

#### B. Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Experiment

Phase 1 consisted in teaching and assessing student performance on using the present continuous and describing students' activities at school during the break. Meanwhile, Phase 2 of the experiment consisted in teaching and evaluating students on asking questions using wh- words and role-playing a conversation between a buyer and a seller in the market. Students' scores in both phases are shown in the appendices. Table 1 below presents mean scores obtained by the two groups in Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the experiment.

 $\mbox{Table I.}$  Control group and experimental group mean scores in phase 1 and phase 2

	CG			EG		,
	Grammar	Speaking	Mean	Grammar	Speaking	Mean
Phase 1	63.6	70	66.8	56.4	64.3	60.35
Phase 2	69.5	69.5	69.5	55.5	63.9	59.7

As the above table shows, CG performs better than EG in the two phases of the experiment. In fact, CG gets mean scores of 66.8 and 69.5 respectively in Phase 1 and Phase 2, whereas EG obtains 60.35 and 59.7 respectively. Also, we can infer from the table the gaps between the two groups in both phases of the experiment. For instance, the gaps

between CG and EG in Phase 1 are respectively 7.2 in grammar and 5.7 in speaking. Meanwhile in Phase 2, the gaps are 14 in grammar and 5.6 in speaking. Then it can be noticed that Phase 2 replicates the results obtained in Phase 1, with negligible differences.

#### C. Differences between Baseline Mean Scores and the Mean Scores Obtained in Phase 1 and Phase 2

In order to assess the impact of the bilingual approach to EFL instruction on student performance, it was necessary to compare baseline mean scores with Phase 1 and Phase 2 mean scores obtained by each group. The results consistently show three things: first, CG got higher mean scores in both grammar and speaking. Second, EG obtained higher improvement percentage points in all tests and all phases of the experiment. Third, while EG's progress in speaking was arithmetic, its progress in grammar was geometric. Table 2 below presents differences between baseline mean scores and Phase 1 mean scores of each group.

 $\label{table II.} \mbox{Differences between baseline mean scores and mean scores of phase 1}$ 

	CG			EG		
	Grammar	Speaking	Mean	Grammar	Speaking	Mean
Baseline	59.7	69.5	64.6	39.7	60	49.85
Phase 1	63.6	70	66.8	56.4	64.3	60.35
Improvement % points	+ 3.9	+0.5	+2.2	+16.7	+4.3	+10.5

The above table indicates that both groups performed better than they did in the baseline. However, it is clear that EG obtained the higher mean improvement percentage points in both grammar and speaking. While CG's improvement percentage points do not reach 4 per cent, EG obtains improvement percentage points above 10 per cent. Another important remark is that the EG got their most noticeable improvement in grammar, as they scored 16.7 percentage points more than they did in the baseline.

Table 3 below presents differences between baseline mean scores and Phase 2 mean scores of each group.

 $\label{thm:table III.}$  Differences between baseline mean scores and phase 2 mean scores

	CG			EG		
	Grammar	Speaking	Mean	Grammar	Speaking	Mean
Baseline	59.7	69.5	64.6	39.7	60	49.85
Phase 2	69.5	69.5	69.5	55.5	63.9	59.7
Improvement % points	+9.8	00	+4.9	+15.8	+3.9	+9.85

The above table indicates that CG outperformed EG in grammar and speaking, as it obtained higher mean scores. However, EG obtained higher improvement percentage points in both grammar and speaking. Also, the magnitude of progress in the performance of EG is much higher in grammar than in speaking.

#### D. Student Performance in Grammar and Speaking Tasks

This study aimed at finding out whether students perform better in grammar and speaking when French is used in the EFL class. Figure 3 below compares CG and EG's performances in grammar while Figure 4 compares both groups' performances in speaking.

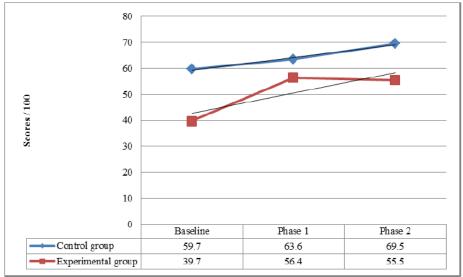


Figure 3: CG vs. EG grammar performances

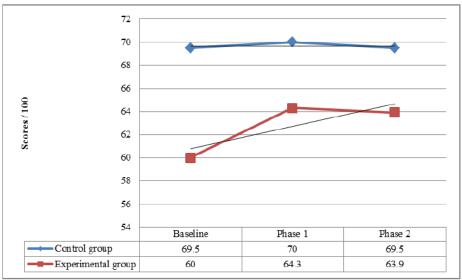


Figure 4: CG vs. EG performances speaking performances

As the above graphs indicate, there are significant changes between EG's baseline, Phase 1 and Phase 2 scores whereas the changes between CG's baseline, Phase 1 and Phase 2 scores are less significant. In fact, EG shows faster trend line growth than CG in both figures. This suggests that students perform better in English speaking and grammar when they are taught with the use of French.

#### V. DISCUSSION

This study set out to examine whether LAB EFL students perform better in grammar and speaking tasks when they are taught using French, their L1. The study started with a baseline, which consisted of mean scores obtained by each student in their last three grammar and speaking tests. Three tests were used to determine placement in either group for purposes of reliability in placement. A single test score is not reliable enough to reveal trends in student performance in a particular language skill or sub skill. As the researcher expected, CG got higher mean scores in grammar and speaking because it was composed of the best students throughout the school year.

Phase 1 of the experiment showed that CG still outperformed EG in grammar and speaking, although the latter obtained the higher mean improvement in percentage points. This is certainly not surprising, provided that the gap between both groups in the baseline was about 20 percentage points in grammar and 09.5 percentage points in speaking. However, both groups got better mean scores than they did in the baseline; while CG improved of 3.9 and 0.5 percentage points in grammar and speaking respectively, EG improved of 16.7 and 4.3 percentage points respectively. A closer look at the differences between the baseline and Phase 1 scores allowed us to infer that the gap between the two groups reduced to 7.2 percentage points in grammar and 6.7 percentage points in speaking. Another inference we could make was that EG's progress vis à vis CG after Phase 1 was about 12.8 percentage points in grammar against 3.8 in speaking. Progress is calculated by subtracting CG's mean improvement from EG's.

Phase 2 of the experiment produced similar results. For instance, CG still got better mean scores, whereas EG obtained higher mean improvement in percentage points. Here too, the scores obtained by the two groups were better than the baseline. Compared to the baseline, CG improves of 9.8 percentage points in grammar and 3.9 percentage points in speaking. Meanwhile, EG obtains 15.8 and 3.9 improvement percentage points in grammar and speaking respectively. From these numbers, we were able to infer that the gap between CG and EG narrowed from 20 percentage points to 14 in grammar and 09.5 to 05.6 in speaking. We could also infer that EG progressed of about 6.0 and 3.9 percentage points in grammar and speaking respectively vis à vis CG.

The fact that EG got higher mean improvement scores and made considerable progress towards CG's performance indicates that students perform better in grammar and speaking when code-switching is allowed in the EFL classroom. In all probability, switching codes constantly from English to French sharpened learners' cognitive abilities and metalinguistic awareness and lowered their anxiety, making them more disposed to comprehend linguistic input and respond to test instructions better. By using French in a judicious way, the teacher was able to scaffold linguistic input within learners' ZPD, resulting in better comprehension and improved performance in tests.

EG performed better in grammar than speaking probably because the transfer of grammar rules between two configurational languages — that "have bound word order governed by grammatical rules" (Kecskes & Papp, 2000, p. 92) — such as French and English is much easier to occur than the transfer of speaking skills from one language to another, as this type of transfer depends much more on pragma-linguistic and sociolinguistic competence than metalinguistic competence. Then, looking at the Cameroonian EFL learning context, it is possible to posit that the transfer of grammar sub-skills from French to English follows the following path:

English grammar rule → French grammar rule equivalent → English grammar sub-skill

From the above discussion, it can be inferred that there is consistency in the causal relationship, given that the cause—the use of French in the EFL class consistently produces the same effect (improvement) with a considerable magnitude of correlation. Therefore, French is useful in the EFL classroom.

#### VI. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

An experimental study requires controlling as many variables as possible. However, the researcher could not control a few variables including lesson difficulty, students' physical and mental dispositions on the day of the experiment and testing quality, probably because these are not quantifiable. Such variables could have affected the results in some way. Moreover, the study is not concerned with vocabulary, reading comprehension, listening or writing. Such areas need to be investigated before arriving at a comprehensive conclusion on whether French inhibits or facilitates learning in the EFL classroom in Cameroon.

#### VII. IMPLICATIONS FOR EFL PEDAGOGY

Given that most EFL students lose motivation in learning English when they do not understand what their teachers say, the National Inspectorate of English could amend the current teaching methodology so as to allow quotas of French use in the EFL classroom depending on learner level of study. However, officially allowing French use in the EFL classroom would imply that Cameroonian EFL teachers are bilingual, and that their level of proficiency in French is quite acceptable to permit them play between the two languages. This is not always the case. Nevertheless, it is our belief that a successful EFL teacher in Cameroon should be able to anticipate learners' errors resulting from French interference so as to better teach those areas of language that are likely difficult to learn (see Paradowski, 2008).

There is also a need to corroborate the role of French awareness in EFL pedagogy regarding course materials. EFL course materials should include activities that take into account the relationship between students' common background linguistic identity, culture and the TL. Thus, a truly foreign language pedagogical grammar should be contrastive, displaying with clarity and accuracy the relationship between the TL and the learner's L1.

Teachers should not ban the learners' L1 in the EFL classroom. Rather, they should encourage the use of TL (Willis, 1996). This implies that they should develop a systematic use of French alongside English, first as an aid to learning and teaching, and second, as a reflection of the ecological realities of the classroom. Furthermore, teachers should bear in mind that there is a clear-cut distinction between standards of L1, L2 and FL teaching. Then, EFL learners should neither be compared with L2 learners nor native speakers. Nonetheless, should a comparison be made, the models of EFL teaching should correspond to successful EFL users and not to low-level native speaker users or intermediate L2 users (Cook 2002).

#### VIII. CONCLUSION

The results of this study show that low-achieving bilingual EFL learners in Cameroon perform better in grammar and speaking when French is allowed in the classroom. Code-switching allows learners who lag behind to close the gap with their more advanced classmates. Also, students taught with the bilingual approach make much more noticeable progress in speaking despite fears that using L1 in the EFL classroom would reduce their exposure to English and subsequently inhibit oral language development. From the above, using French in the Cameroonian EFL classroom does not hinder learning. Rather, it facilitates learning, insofar as French appears as an effective scaffolding tool.

We fully understand the need to expose learners to rich linguistic data in TL as often as possible so that they rapidly acquire the appropriate patterns of interaction of their speech communities. However, L2 acquisition of English can be turned into a simpler and more enjoyable experience for learners if teachers choose to develop the new language on the conceptual base provided by the learners' L1. This study shows that a structured bilingual approach that takes advantage of the official bilingualism policy would likely improve Cameroonian EFL students' learning experience.

#### APPENDIX

#### PHASE 1 SCORES

Control group	Control group			Experimental group		
Student	Grammar	Speaking	Student	Grammar	Speaking	
A	90	70	L	50	62.5	
В	40	65	M	50	65	
С	80	80	N	70	67.5	
D	40	67.5	0	40	55	
Е	90	67.5	P	40	72.5	
F	80	70	Q	10	65	
G	60	62.5	R	80	50	
Н	60	77.5	S	60	77.5	
I	50	70	T	50	52.5	
J	60	67.5	U	90	75	
K	50	72.5	V	80	65	
Mean	63.6	70	Mean	56.4	64.3	

#### PHASE 2 SCORES

Control gro	oup		Experimenta	al group	
Student	Grammar	Speaking	Student	Grammar	Speaking
A	52.5	75	L	45	62.5
В	60	65	M	75	70
C	62.5	72.5	N	62.5	70
D	65	70	0	45	50
Е	97.5	72.5	P	55	67.5
F	72.5	65	Q	50	67.5
G	77.5	57.5	R	45	52.5
Н	60	77.5	S	50	70
I	95	72.5	T	52.5	60
J	50	70	U	70	65
K	72.5	67.5	V	60	67.5
Mean	69.5	69.5	Mean	55.5	63.9

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The researcher is grateful to Prof. Bonaventure Sala for supervising his 2010 unpublished thesis at the Higher Teacher Training College of the University of Yaounde I. This paper mostly derives from that academic milestone. The researcher is equally grateful to Dr. Jaime Puccioni of SUNY at Albany for the helpful guidance she provided on an earlier draft of this paper.

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**Patrick R. Belibi Enama** earned a BA in English Studies and a Postgraduate Teacher's Diploma with a specialization in TESOL from Cameroonian universities. In 2014, Mr. Belibi obtained a Master of Science in TESOL from the State University of New York at Albany, New York, USA. He is currently enrolled in the Ph.D. program at the University of Yaoundé I with a specialization in TESOL.

He has worked as an ESOL teacher in Cameroon, and as a volunteer literacy tutor in Albany, NY. His interests include TESOL pedagogy, bilingualism and multilingualism, intercultural pragmatics and non-native Englishes.

# The Theory of Planned Behavior and Chinese ESL Students' In-class Participation

Davide Girardelli<sup>1</sup> Wenzhou-Kean University, Wenzhou, China

Vijay K. Patel Wenzhou-Kean University, Wenzhou, China

Abstract—Chinese demand for American-style education is on the rise as many Chinese students seek opportunities to gain a true global education in China. However, importing US education style in China is challenging. American education emphasizes the importance of students' in-class participation; however, Chinese students' reluctance to communicate in class is notoriously strong. To explain such reluctance, scholars have focused their attention on constructs such as "willingness to communicate" and "communication anxiety" (Ellis, 2012). In our study we proposed a different approach to understand Chinese ESL students' in-class participation, by using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB; Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). TPB applies to any human behavior under volitional control and has been successfully applied in several fields, such as health psychology, sports, and marketing. Our theoretical TPB-based model was tested by administering a questionnaire to 133 Chinese university students enrolled in a Sino-American university located in South-East China. Data were analyzed using partial least squares (PLS) path modeling method (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2014). Overall, our findings provided some initial support to our proposed model. The model accounted 39% of explained variance in intention to participate in class. The stronger predictors for students' participation were attitudes toward participation and self-efficacy. Gender also appeared to play a role: Female students reported statistically stronger intentions to participate in class. In our future research we plan to further test our model and expand it by considering the contribution of additional constructs, such as face-saving and communication anxiety.

Index Terms—theory of planned behavior, SEM, partial least squares, in-class participation, willingness to communicate, Chinese ESL students

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Chinese demand for English-based and in particular American-style education is on the rise. According to the Institute of International Education (2014), China is the leading place of origin of international students in the US. In the academic year 2013/2014, 274,439 Chinese students made up 31% of the total of international students in the United States, up by 16.5% from the previous academic year and by roughly 500% from 2000. Travelling to the United States is not the only option for Chinese students who seek opportunities to gain an American-style education: China is in fact the second largest importer of branch campuses (IBCs²) after the United Arab Emirates. Out of the 29 ICBs currently active in China, 11 result from partnerships with US educational institutions, making the United States the largest exporter of branch campuses in China.

Importing American-style education style in China has been shown to be challenging. On a macro level, Sino-American partnerships require several factors - such as sustained leadership, aligned organizational infrastructures, faculty support – to be in place in order to allow meaningful, long-term relations between Chinese and US institutional partners (Fazackerley & Worthington, 2007; Julius & Leventhal, 2014). On a micro level, we can also observe major challenges in the instructor-students interactions. American education emphasizes the importance of "conversational style lectures", where students' participation and interactions with the instructor are regarded as crucial component of the learning process (Bain, 2004; Morell, 2007). For instance, interactivity is considered particularly important in English-as-second-language (ESL) classrooms because it facilitates learners' communicative competence in the target language, supports the active use of English, increases learning quality, and promotes an overall better student performance (Hsu, 2015; Weaver & Qi 2005). Executive education is another area where in-class participation is relevant. To be better prepared for their future managerial roles, business students need in fact to "think through problems, organize concepts, analyze information, formulate arguments, synthesize and evaluate evidence, and respond to diverse points of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Corresponding author: Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Davide Girardelli, Wenzhou-Kean University, 88 Daxue Rd, Ouhai, Wenzhou, Zhejiang Province, China (325060). Email: dgirarde@kean.edu.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> An International Branch Campus is "an entity that is owned, at least in part, by a foreign education provider; operated in the name of the foreign education provider; engages in at least some face-to-face teaching; and provides access to an entire academic program that leads to a credential awarded by the foreign education provider" (Cross-Border Education Research Team, 2015, March 6).

view" (Dallimore, Hertenstein, & Platt, 2010, p. 615). These are a set of core skills that are supported and developed by interactive-style classrooms.

Despite the recognized importance of in-class participation, non-native English Asian and in particular Chinese students are notoriously unwilling to communicate orally and tend to be passive in class (Hsu, 2015; Peng, 2012). This reticence leads to challenging in-class interactions. On one hand, US-trained instructors promote and expect a high-degree of students' in-class participatory behaviors, such as asking questions or clarifications, engaging in group work, presenting opinions in class, and volunteering to participate in class activities. On the other hand, Chinese students often consider these participatory behaviors demanding. They find themselves uncomfortable with American-style classroom norms, not only because of their lack of confidence in their English skills, but also because such norms are not deemed relevant or even appropriate in traditional Chinese education (Hsu, 2015).

To explain such reluctance, scholars have focused their attention on constructs such as "willingness to communicate" and "communication anxiety," producing an extensive literature (Ellis, 2012). The present study extends the existing literature by applying the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB; Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010) to explain Chinese ESL's university student in-class participation. TPB is one the most frequently cited and employed theoretical approaches used to predict human social behavior (Ajzen, 2011a). TPB also provided the theoretical rationale to develop and evaluate behavioral change interventions in different fields such as weight-loss, exercise, use of public transportations, and AIDS/HIV preventions.

In a recent article, Zhong (2013) first used TPB to explain Chinese students' in-class participation, providing some evidence of the viability of applying TPB in this novel area. However, Zhong's (2013) study used a qualitative method on a small sample, whereas TPB-based studies call for a large scale, survey-based approach. In the present paper, we are attempting a more traditional, quantitative approach to test whether TPB can explain ESL Chinese students' in class participation. Our TPB-based theoretical model was tested by administering a questionnaire to 133 Chinese university students enrolled in a recently established Sino-American university located in South-East China. Data were analyzed using partial least squares (PLS) path modeling method (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2014).

#### II. THEORY DEVELOPMENT

#### A. An Overview of the Theory of Planned Behavior

Fishbein and Ajzen's (2010) Theory of Planned Behavior (see fig. 1) was developed to explain any specific human behavior under volitional control. TPB is one of the most influential theories in Social Psychology and has underpinned more than one thousand empirical papers (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). TPB has been successfully applied in several fields, such as health psychology, politics, sports, marketing, education and organizational behavior. The theory has been used to predict a wide range of behaviors, such as pro-environmental behaviors (de Leeuw, Valois, Ajzen, Schmidt, 2015), consumers' intention to visit green hotels (Chen & Tung, 2014) and suggestion making behaviors in large organizations (Girardelli, 2014).

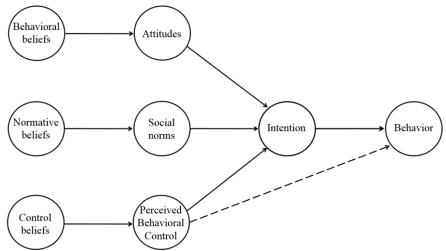


Figure 1. The theory of planned behavior.

In its basic form, TPB assumes that any behavior can be predicted by an individual's intentions to perform such a behavior. In turn, behavioral intentions are in a function of: a) attitudes towards the behavior; b) subjective norms; c) behavioral control/self-efficacy.

According to Fishbein and Ajzen (2010), a behavior is best predicted by TPB when the following four components are clearly defined: *action, target, context*, and *time*. For instance, if we consider as the target behavior of our investigation "attending a yoga class at the University of Kentucky Fitness Center on Thursday night," this behavior can be parsed into: "attending" (actual performed *action*); "a yoga class" (*target* of the action); "at the University of Kentucky

Fitness Center" (context where the desired action should take place); "on Thursday night" (time when the desired action should take place). According to the goal of the research, target behaviors can be defined at different levels of generality. Generality can go from a narrower level of individual discrete actions (for instance, "attending yoga classes") to a broader level of behavioral categories that encompass several discrete actions (for instance, "exercising", which includes "attending yoga classes" as well as other behaviors, such as "practicing body building"). Broader behavioral categories tend to be more significant from a theoretical level than specific discrete behaviors; at the same time, behavioral categories are more challenging to measure and they need to be clearly defined to the study participants. For instance, "exercise" can be defined as "participating in active sports or vigorous physical activities long enough to get sweaty at least twice per week" (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010, p. 36).

Behaviors are predicted by *behavioral intentions*. Behavioral intentions are defined as "indications of a person's readiness to perform a behavior" (p. 39) or "the subjective probability of performing a behavior" (p. 40). The higher the subjective probability of performing a behavior is, the more likely the behavior under consideration will be in fact performed. According to Fishbein and Ajzen (2010), TPB's behavioral intentions include both "behavioral expectations" (self-prediction of performing a behavior despite possible obstacles or impediments) and "willingness to perform a behavior" (a more reactive component associated with a lack of planning or premeditation in performing a behavior).

#### B. Determinants of Behavioral Intentions

Behavioral intentions are in turn in a function of three constructs: Attitudes toward the target behavior, perceived norms and perceived behavioral control/self-efficacy. *Attitudes toward the target behavior* are defined as a "latent disposition or tendency to respond with some degree of favorableness or unfavorableness to a psychological object" (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010, p. 76). Attitudes are a "bipolar evaluative dimension" (p. 76), namely they can range from positive to negative, with a neutral intermediate point. Attitudes include two major facets: An *instrumental* aspect that refers to the behavior's perceived usefulness in terms of anticipated positive or negative consequences (beneficial vs. harmful or useful vs. useless); and an *experiential* aspect that covers the anticipated positive or negative feelings expected by performing such a behavior (boring vs. interesting or pleasant vs. un pleasant).

Perceived norms refer to what is considered an acceptable or permissible behavior in a group or society. Perceived norms capture the total social pressure that the environment exerts on an individual to perform (or not perform) a given behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). This second antecedent of behavioral intentions also encompasses two subcomponents, namely injunctive norms and descriptive norms. The former refers to perceptions concerning what ought or should be done. The latter describes instead perceptions that significant others, such as family members, peers, friends and classmates, are actually performing (or not) the behavior under consideration.

Perceived behavioral control (PBC) is the third and last antecedent of behavioral intentions. PBC are defined as "the extent to which people believe that they are capable of performing a given behavior, that they have control over its performance" (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010, pp. 154-155). This construct is conceptually similar to Bandura's (1997) perceived self-efficacy, defined as "people's beliefs about their capabilities to exercise control over their own level of functioning and over events that affects their lives" (p. 257). PBC includes the following two aspects: Capacity, namely an individual's perception of having adequate external or internal sources to perform a given behavior; and autonomy, namely perceptions that possible obstacles that may be encountered in performing such behavior can be overcome. According to Fishbein and Ajzen (2010), PBC is independent from the fact that skills, sources or obstacles are internal (for instance, willpower) or external (for instance money or time). Finally, it should be noted that according to TPB (see Fig. 1) PBC can also provide a small yet significant contribution in predicting behavior together with intentions when an individual's perceptions of control accurately reflect his or her skills or resources. Similarly, self-efficacy has been found to be positively related with actual behavior (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998).

The most important prerequisite for improving the prediction of behaviors from intentions is the *principle of compatibility*. Fishbein and Ajzen (2010) state that "an intention is compatible with a behavior if both are measured at the same level of generality or specificity" (pp. 44-45). In other words, intentions must be assessed using the same components (action, target, context, and time) and the same *level of generality* used in defining the target behavior. In the same manner, to improve the prediction of behavioral intentions, attitudes, perceived norms and PBC must be measured with the same level of generality used in defining behavioral intentions.

#### C. Determinants of Attitudes, Social Norms, and Perceived Behavioral Control

The next level of the theory of planned behavior, the level of beliefs, deals with the determinants of attitudes, social norms, and perceived behavioral control, which are behavioral beliefs, normative beliefs, and control beliefs respectively. Fishbein and Aizen (2010) define beliefs as "the subjective probability that an object has a certain attribute" (p. 96). For instance, a person may believe that "yoga" (the object) "improves one's flexibility" (the attribute). Beliefs can be acquired not only by direct observation, but also by indirect sources, such as media, peers, teachers, and so on and so forth. Fishbein and Aizen (2010) clarify that only salient beliefs serve as determinants of attitudes, social norms, and perceived behavioral control, namely "beliefs about the object that come readily to mind" (p. 98). Whereas the level of attitudes, social norms, and perceived behavioral control refers to subjective overall assessments, the level of beliefs is more specific and includes "the substantive considerations that guide people's decisions to perform or not to perform the behavior of interest" (p. 23). The level of beliefs is therefore particularly relevant in behavioral intervention design.

A limited set of salient *behavioral beliefs* is assumed to determine *attitudes*. *Behavioral beliefs* include *belief strength*, namely the strength of the belief that an object has a certain attribute, and *attribute evaluation*, a subjective evaluation. For instance, the statement "yoga improves one's flexibility" can represent as a salient behavioral belief and we can determine the strength of such belief (how likely does the object possess such an attribute?) and evaluate the desirability of the attribute (is possessing such attribute good or bad?).

Just as *attitudes*, social norms are assumed to be based on a set of salient *normative beliefs*. In this case we distinguish between *beliefs strength* ("people's beliefs about the prescriptions of their salient referents", p. 137), and *motivation to comply*, or the specific perceived pressure to comply with a normative referent. For example, in the normative belief "my best female friend thinks I should join a yoga club" we can assess on one hand the strength of the belief and on the other hand the subjective evaluation to comply with that specific normative referent ("my best female friend").

Lastly, perceived behavioral control is determined by a group of salient control beliefs. In particular, a list of specific control factors that may enable or interfere a given behavior should be first defined. Then, we distinguish between belief strength and each control factor's power to facilitate the behavior under consideration. For instance, in the control belief "I will have enough time in the evening to attend yoga classes" we can evaluate the strength of the belief and the power of that specific control factor ("my having enough time in the evening would facilitate my ability to attend yoga classes").

#### D. Predictive Validity of the Theory of Planned Behavior

TPB's meta-analytic reviews covering a wide range of different target behaviors reported an overall correlation between behavior and intentions ranging from .45 to .62 (equivalent to R<sup>2</sup> .20-.38). The role of PBC is in this sense limited, explaining only an additional 2% of variance in behaviors (Armitage & Conner, 2001). Multiple correlation between attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control with behavioral intentions was in the .59-.66 range (equivalent to R<sup>2</sup> .35-.44; Ajzen, 2011a, Armitage & Conner, 2001, Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). The relationship among TPB's constructs is therefore quite substantial with the strength of the overall correlation in the moderate area (Taylor, 1990).

In addition to the strong theoretical rationale that contributed in TPB "having the highest scientific impact score among US and Canadian social psychologists" (Ajzen, 2011a, p. 113), TPB has also been successfully used to design and evaluate several interventions intended to promote behavioral change among a target population. Example of behaviors include among others: promoting fruit and vegetable consumption (Kothe, Mullan, & Butow, 2012); reducing overweight and obesity (Knowlden & Sharma, 2012); preventing binge drinking (French & Cooke, 2012); and reducing sexually transmitted infections (Tyson, Covey, & Rosenthal, 2014). Such interventions usually involve the development of persuasive messages that target critical TPB components and the measurement of the effects of the intervention on a cognitive as well as a behavioral level (Ajzen, 2011b; Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010; Hardeman *et al.*, 2002).

In sum, Fishbein and Ajzen's (2010) Theory of Planned Behavior provides a solid theoretical framework not only to explain and predict a variety of behaviors under volitional control, but also to design and evaluate targeted interventions in a systematic manner. The use of TPB to understand communicative volitional behaviors, such as in-class participation, has been very limited so far. The only exception is Zhong's (2013) qualitative study, which did not however include any statistical evidence.

As we have seen, previous research highlighted a list of key constructs such as "willingness to communicate" and "communication anxiety" (Ellis, 2012) to explain Chinese students' in-class participation. Recently, researchers such as Peng (2012) proposed comprehensive models intended to understand willingness to communicate in EFL classrooms by integrating many of these constructs in a unified framework. Despite the interesting findings, scholars argue for a more "theory-driven" approach in Social Science instead of creating "ad-hoc" models from an eclectic collection of constructs (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). More importantly, such "ad-hoc" models do not have a proven record that demonstrates their ability to provide effective insights in designing and evaluating in-class interventions.

Expanding Zhong's (2013) findings, in the present study we use TPB to explain ESL Chinese students' in-class participatory behaviors, providing some preliminary statistical evidence based on a sample of Chinese students from a Sino-American institution.

#### E. Research Hypotheses

The goal of the present exploratory study is to explain Chinese students' in-class participation by applying TPB. Following Zhong (2013), the target behavior under consideration is *in-class participation*, namely *in-class communicative voluntary behaviors* such as volunteering an answer to a question (including raising a hand), asking the professor a question or a clarification, presenting opinions in class, and taking the initiative to participate in class activities. Using TPB's terminology, our target behavior is therefore a broader *behavioral category* that encompasses several different specific behaviors.

As we have seen, TPB includes five major constructs: target behavior, behavioral intentions, attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control/self-efficacy (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). In our study (see Fig. 2), we focused our attention on the last four core constructs. In particular, we studied the immediate predictors of intentions, namely attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control/self-efficacy.

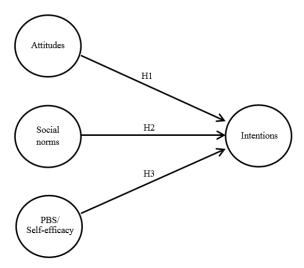


Figure 2. Research hypotheses.

As we have seen in the previous section, *attitudes* are defined as an individual's overall evaluation regarding a given behavior. In our specific case, we hypothesize that the more a student feels that in-class participation is important, useful and rewarding, the more likely he or she will actually participate in class.

Hypothesis 1: The strength of a student's intention to participate in class is a function of the student's attitudes toward in-class participation.

Subjective norms refer to an individual's perceived pressure to perform the target behavior. If a student perceives that his or her peers (e.g., classmates) support his or her in-class participation, we expect that the student will more likely participate in class.

Hypothesis 2: The strength of a student's intention to participate in class is a function of the student's subjective norms regarding in-class participation.

Perceived behavioral control (PBC)/self-efficacy is the third antecedent of intention and refers to an individual's perceived control over a given behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). As we have seen earlier, PBC overlaps with Bandura's (1997) concept of self-efficacy. We hypothesize that a student will more likely participate in class if he or she perceives to have adequate skills and resources to do so.

Hypothesis 3: The strength of a student's intention to participate in class is a function of the student's self-efficacy in in-class participation.

#### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Conceptual Design

The extant literature supports a conceptual design that integrates the constructs of attitude, norms, and self-efficacy as related to intention to participate in class. As previously noted, there is however limited empirical work directly relating the constructs under study to intention to participate. The data collection and analysis was aimed at providing empirical insights into drivers of intention to participate.

Independent variables. Attitudes towards participation are central to the intention to participate. Anecdotal observation and empirical research both point to the importance of attitudes to the intention to participate. Where the attitudes are open and comfortable, students display a higher intention to participate and ultimately actual level of participation. The same viewpoint holds for norms – whether cultural or institutional – as potential enablers or barriers of in-class participation. Finally, where the level of self-efficacy and confidence in participating is high, a self-reinforcing and virtuous cycle of participation and experience is engaged.

Outcome variable. TPB applies across a wide range of behavioral contexts. Following Fishbein and Ajzen (2010), we posit that in the classroom context intention to participate is most likely the ultimate driver of the level of participation displayed by students. Simply put, where the intention is formed, the consequent participatory behavior will align with the intention.

#### B. Research Design

Wenzhou-Kean University in Wenzhou, Zhejiang Province (China), was selected as a research site. The university is a Sino-American ICB between Wenzhou University and Kean University, Union, New Jersey (USA). It is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. All core classes at WKU are taught in English. The study followed a single-time-point observational research design, which involved the administration of a questionnaire to a sample of Chinese sophomores.

Research procedure, respondents, scale items and final sample. In order to create an authentic context for responses, we administered the survey within a classroom context in courses undertaken by Chinese students for whom English is a second language. Participants received a consent form containing basic information regarding the study on the first day of class. Five extra credits (equivalent to .5% of the final grade) were used as an incentive. Participants were informed that their participation was voluntary. All enrolled students agreed to participate in the study. After having signed the consent form, participants received the study questionnaire. The surveys were administered manually and results were compiled and cross-checked to create a data file in Excel for further analysis.

A total of 133 students completed the questionnaire. Chinese Mandarin was the first language for the entire sample. 74.4% of the respondents were female, 25.6% were males. The average age of the respondents was 20 year-old (SD=.52). Participants have been studying English for an average of 10 years (SD=1.87). They were undergraduate sophomores majoring in accounting (77.4%), English (14.3%), and International Business (8.3%).

Study variables were measured with the following scales. The *intention to participate in class* three-item scale was based on Ajzen (2002). The scale included the following items: "1) I intend to regularly participate in English in class during the coming semester"; "2) I will regularly participate in English in class during the coming semester"; and "3) I plan to regularly participate in English in class during the coming semester." The items were intended to evaluate participants' general readiness to engage in the target behavior.

Attitudes toward in-class participation was operationalized with a five-item scale based on Ajzen (2002) and included the following items: "1) In my opinion, regularly participating in English in class during the coming semester is use-less" (reverse scored); "2) In my opinion, regularly participating in English in class during the coming semester is important"; "3) In my opinion, regularly participating in English in class during the coming semester is rewarding"; "4) In my opinion, regularly participating in English in class during the coming semester is boring" (reverse score), and "5) In my opinion, regularly participating in English in class during the coming semester is good." Following Ajzen's (2002) guidelines, items 1 and 2 cover the instrumental aspect of attitudes, items 3 and 4 refer to the experiential aspect, whereas item 5 was used as an overall evaluation of the target behavior.

Subjective norms regarding in-class participation were measured with a four-item scale developed by Armitage and Conner (1999), which included the following statements: "1) The large majority of my classmates thinks that I should regularly participate in English in class during the coming semester"; "2) The large majority of my classmates would approve of my participating regularly in English in class during the coming semester"; "3) The large majority of my classmates expect that I participate regularly in English in class during the coming semester", "4) The large majority of my classmates will regularly participate in English in class during the coming semester". Items 1, 2, and 3 cover the *injunctive* aspect of subjective norms, whereas item 4 the *descriptive* aspect.

A four-item scale adapted from Midgley *et al.* (2000) was used to measure *self-efficacy in in-class participation*. The items included in the scale were the following "1) I am sure I have mastered the skills required to regularly participate in English in class"; "2) I am certain I have a good grasp on how to regularly participate in English in class"; "3) I find regularly participating in English in class very difficult" (revere scored); "4) I have not been prepared enough to regularly participate in English in class" (reverse scored). The four items mainly focused on the *capacity* aspect of *perceived behavioral control/self-efficacy*.

Respondents were instructed that the term "participation" in the items of the questionnaire referred to "in-class behaviors such as volunteering an answer to the professor's question (including raising a hand), asking the professor a question or a clarification, presenting your opinion in class, and volunteering to participate in class activities". Respondents were asked to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement with the items on a six-point Likert-type scale anchored by "strongly disagree" (1) and "strongly agree" (6). A composite score was obtained by averaging the values of the items of each scale, with listwise deletion of entries with one or more missing responses, resulting in a final N=130 respondents. Following Mak's (2011) recommendation for similar samples of Chinese ESL students, a neutral point was not included in the scales to force respondents to commit themselves; in this manner we tried to avoid having most responses clustered in the neutral mid-point. Before the administration of the questionnaire, the full research instrument was reviewed by a Chinese member of the University's Writing Center to assure that the items were understandable for the research participants. A full correlation table including all study variables is reported in Table I. Visual inspection of the correlations among the constructs suggests that multicollinearity is not at issue in the dataset.

TABLE I. CORRELATION TABLE.

CORRELATION TRIBLE.								
Variables	M	SD	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
1. e	20.37	.52						
2. Gender <sup>a</sup>	1.26	.44	.23**					
3. Years of English	10.65	1.87	08	.14				
4. Intentions	4.75	.79	.01	18*	03			
5. Attitudes	4.99	.63	03	05	.11	.42**		
6. Norms	4.33	.75	.10	06	.08	.43**	.43**	
7. Self-efficacy	3.67	.87	.06	.02	07	.46**	.29**	.38**

<sup>a</sup> Gender: 1= female 2 = male

\*p < .05; \*\*p < .01. Two-tailed Pearson's correlations. Listwise N = 130

#### IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

#### A. Structured Equation Modeling and Theory Development

Early theory development is demanding. The relationships are unconfirmed and under investigation. The constructs are subject to scale items that are adapted from previous scales, which have been developed in other contexts as is the case here. Increasingly researchers are using structured equation modeling (SEM) for theory development (Hair, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2011). A study completed by Babin and Boles (1996) showed not only an increase in the use of SEM, but also that SEM-based research tended to be highly regarded by academics. SEM techniques represent an advance on existing multiple linear regression methods. In general, SEM has evolved into two major approaches: Covariance based (CB-SEM) and partial least squares based (PLS-SEM). CB-SEM optimizes path relationships among all constructs simultaneously, while minimizing model error. PLS-SEM is directed more towards maximizing the R<sup>2</sup>, namely the level of variance explained in the model, while minimizing the overall error term (Astrachan, Patel & Wanzenried, 2014; Hair *et al.*, 2014). The two approaches are complementary in general; however, for early theory development PLS-SEM is recommended (Astrachan, Patel & Wanzenried, 2014; Hair *et al.*, 2014). The advantage offered by PLS-SEM is that it enables retention of direct observable measures in contrast with the CB-SEM approach, which in the process of maximizing path relationships globally can result in elimination of measures that may still have meaningful face and/or content validity (Hair, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2011).

A CB-SEM analysis also calls for larger sample sizes compared to PLS-SEM because CB-SEM assesses the relationships among all variables. As a rule of thumb, CB-SEM requires a sample size that is five times the number of indicators in the original model. For instance, our tested model (see Fig. 3) includes 4 constructs marked with blue circles and 16 indicators marked with yellow rectangles. Therefore the required minimum sample size for a CB-SEM analysis would be in our case 80 (16 x 5) observations. Instead, PLS-SEM can work efficiently with smaller sample sizes because the analysis proceeds in smaller components. In particular, PLS-SEM requires at least ten observations for each arrow pointing at a construct. Going back to the example based on our model in Fig. 3, the minimum required sample size for a PLS-SEM analysis is 30 (10 x 3) observations (Astrachan, Patel & Wanzenried, 2014).

Consequently, we have chosen PLS-SEM for our analysis of the empirical data collected. Fig. 3 provides the initial model and path coefficients using the software SmartPLS 3.0 (Ringle, Wende, & Becker, 2014).

#### B. Evaluation of the PLS-SEM Model

Both the outer model and the inner model as shown in Fig. 3 need to be evaluated. The outer model consists of the indicators (measures) and corresponding latent constructs. The inner model consists of the outcome variable and the path coefficients and the extracted R<sup>2</sup> or variance explained among other key parameters that need to be checked for acceptable and significant results. A series of steps are undertaken to validate the structural model as shown in Fig. 3. The indicator loadings and average variance extracted from the indicator items are examined as well as the composite reliability and its analog to Cronbach's alpha.

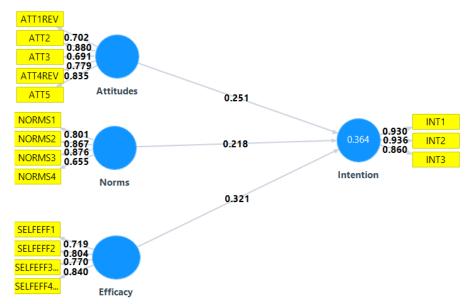


Figure 3. PLS-SEM based Model.

Fig. 3 illustrates that all indicator loadings exceeded the .7 criterion as suggested by Hair *et al.* (2014), except for one of the items related to norms, which was nonetheless retained since it was a borderline .655. Table II shows the composite reliabilities, Cronbach's alphas and average variance extracted (AVE) for each of the constructs.

TABLE II.
COMPOSITE RELIABILITY, CRONBACK'S ALPHA, AND AVES.

	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE
Attitudes	.886	.840	.610
Norms	.879	.816	.647
Efficacy	.865	.793	.616
Intention	.935	.895	.827

Both composite reliability and the more conservative Cronbach's alpha are indices of internal consistency of the measures, i.e. all items are interrelated and measuring a similar latent construct. Indices between .6 and .7 are considered reliable (Hair *et al.*, 2014). In this case, all items range between .793 and .935 exceeding the benchmark of .7. The AVEs measure the convergent validity of the items and relevance to the latent construct. AVEs must exceed .5 to be meaningful (Hair *et al.*, 2014). The range of AVEs for the constructs is .61 to .827, hence they satisfy the requirement.

An important aspect of any model is to ensure that the constructs display discriminant validity. This ensures that the correlation between constructs (interconstruct correlations) does not exceed the AVE for each construct and is generally measured by the Fornell-Larcker criterion as shown in Table III. Discriminant validity is satisfactory as the square root of AVEs is larger than the interconstruct correlations in each case (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair *et al.*, 2014).

TABLE III.
FORNELL-LARCKER CRITERION FOR DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY.

	Attitudes	Norms	Efficacy	Intention		
Attitudes	.781					
Norms	.451	.805				
Efficacy	.293	.382	.785			
Intention	.444	.478	.478	.909		

Note: The square root of AVEs is shown on the diagonal. The interconstruct correlations are shown off-diagonal

The next step is to examine the path coefficients and significance between the independent and the proposed outcome variable. Table IV shows the path coefficients, relevant t-statistics and corresponding significance for each hypothesized relationship in the conceptual model. As can be seen, each of the proposed hypotheses is accepted at comfortable levels of significance. The overall  $R^2$  .364 is moderate-low suggesting the model is meaningful in providing an explanation of the intention to participate concept.

One advantage of PLS-SEM based analysis is the ability to measure predictive relevance by a blindfolding procedure. Predictive relevance or  $Q^2$  measures the ability of the model to predict the outcome variable indicators reliably, thus suggesting a degree of robustness. Values of  $Q^2$  above zero suggest acceptable predictive relevance. In this case the  $Q^2$  is a moderate .274.

TABLE IV. HYPOTHESES AND SIGNIFICANCE.

	Path Coefficients	T Statistics ( O/STERR )	P Values	Hypotheses - accept/reject		
Att> Int.	.251	3.022	.003	Accept		
Norms -> Int.	.218	2.696	.007	Accept		
Eff> Int.	.321	4.56	0	Accept		
Overall R <sup>2</sup>	364					

Controls are a valuable refinement to the base conceptual model. While the sample size is small, it is still possible to check for gender effects and the number of years of English as potential influencers. This analysis was carried out as illustrated by the following PLS model shown in Fig. 4. We tested for the potential impact on the dependent variable, intention to participate, and the significance of the path coefficients as shown in Table V. The T-statistics and equivalent p-values are provided. The gender control variable improved the  $R^2$  somewhat from .364 to .394. The improvement is meaningful. The path coefficient at -.161 is significant to p < .05. The number years of English study on the other hand did not make any improvement to the overall  $R^2$  and in any case the path coefficient is not significant. We can therefore conclude that gender has an appreciable effect on the student's intention to participate, with female participants reporting significant stronger intentions. Gender also improves the predictive relevance  $Q^2$  of the model marginally from .274 to .300.

TABLE V.
HYPOTHESES AND SIGNIFICANCE (MODEL WITH CONTROLS)

	TITIOTIESE	TITIOTHESES AND SIGNIFICANCE (MODEL WITH CONTROLS)					
	Path Coefficients	T Statistics ( O/STERR )	P Values	Hypotheses - accept/reject			
Att> Int.	.251	3.164	.002	Accept			
Norms -> Int.	.222	5.096	0	Accept			
Eff> Int.	.315	2.614	.009	Accept			
Gender -> Int.	161	2.268	.024	Accept			
Years Eng> Int.	029	.379	.704	Reject			
Overall R <sup>2</sup>	.394						

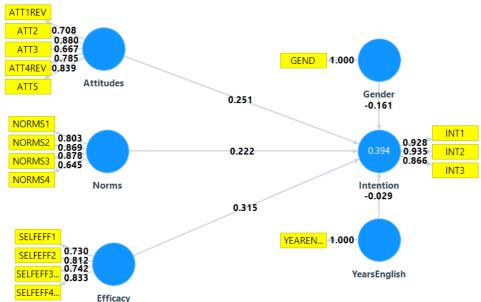


Figure 4. PLS-SEM based model with controls.

#### V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results are significant and meaningful. The empirical data, albeit derived from the limited context of a single university, provided empirical support to the Theory of Planned Behavior as applied to intention to participate in a Chinese ESL context. All of the hypothesized drivers of intention to participate, namely attitudes, norms, and self-efficacy, have been shown to have meaningful path coefficients to intentions. As an additional significant aspect, our results validated the scales used for the present study and adapted from Aizen (2002), Armitage and Conner (1999), and Midgley *et al.* (2000). Such validation in a Chinese ESL context speaks well for the robustness of the scales and their potential wider applicability.

Additional insights have been provided by the use of gender and years of English study as controls. We would expect to find a positive relation between the number of years students have been studying English (as a proxy for English communication competence) and intentions to participate in class; however, the data did not support our expectation. On the other hand, gender appears to have a meaningful impact on intentions: Female students reported significantly stronger intentions to participate in class compared to their male colleagues. This aligns with observations by instructors in ESL contexts: Female students are generally more active communicators. If further supported in future research, this gender dimension may have significant pedagogical implications and call for differentiated, gender-based behavioral interventions to improve in-class participation in Chinese ESL contexts.

The R<sup>2</sup> at .394 with gender control, while satisfactory, suggests that further constructs may add to the explanatory power. In our future research, we intend to extend our TPB-based model by including additional relevant constructs, in particular "willingness to communicate" (MacIntyre *et al.*, 1998) and "communication anxiety" (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986), which are two of the most studied constructs in the ESL literature (Ellis, 2012), as mentioned earlier. We are also interested in considering the role of "face-saving," an indigenous Chinese personality construct that has also been found to contribute to Chinese students' in-class participation (Zhong, 2013). Other potential control variables may also be tested, for instance teaching styles, seniority, and student background in terms of prior contact with English or immersion. By using the theoretical framework provided by the theory of planned behavior, it will be possible to understand in a systematic manner the effect of those control variables on intention to participate.

The most important limitation in the present study regards the relationship between intentions to participate and actual in-class participation (see Fig. 1). Intentions have been found to predict behavior quite well across many studies (Armitage & Connor, 2001; Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). Therefore, we assume here a positive, causal relationship based on the premises of TPB. However, we did not provide any empirical evidence to support this fundamental assumption. In future research we need to address this limitation by including either direct observations or self-reports.

The level of beliefs has also not been covered in this exploratory study. In their comprehensive model of willingness to communicate in English in Chinese ESL context, Peng and Woodrow (2010) found that students' beliefs "on how to learn English and what learning and communication behaviors are appropriate in the English classroom" (p. 841) have an impact on classroom participation and willingness to communicate in class. Compared to Peng and Woodrow's (2010) ad-hoc model, we intend to study the effects of beliefs following TPB (see Fig. 1). TPB offers a theory-driven, comprehensive explanation on how learner's beliefs can impact student participation. Also, future research should systematically distinguish learners' beliefs in *behavioral beliefs*, *normative beliefs*, and *control beliefs*, as recommended by Fishbein and Aizen (2010).

Larger and more diverse samples of students from American, Asian, and European universities would enable further empirical evidence to make significant cultural comparisons and to inform and potentially improve pedagogical approaches. We expect that larger diverse samples would also support a more thorough multi-group analysis to identify gender and other controls and interaction effects more precisely. Particularly interesting would be to analyze how effective international exchange programs are and the effect of interacting with English native speakers within the class environment. Early observation shows that effects are positive in terms of participation and shifts in both attitude and perception of appropriate norms. Whether empirical evidence would support anecdotal observations remains an important question in this context.

#### Pedagogical Implications

Drawing from Fishbein and Ajzen's (2010) Theory of Planned Behavior, in this paper we have outlined and tested a model that captures the factors that influence Chinese ESL students' in-class participation. The findings from our exploratory study provided an encouraging support to the application of TPB to ESL contexts and encourages further TPB-based investigations. Differently from other ad-hoc theoretical models, TPB is also intended to serve as a basis for behavioral interventions that should eventually promote better, namely more open and collaborative, classroom environments

Our proposed model shows that attitudes, norms and perceived behavioral control/self-efficacy jointly influence Chinese students' intentions to participate in class. In particular, self-efficacy turned out to have the stronger correlation to intentions. Perceived behavioral control/self-efficacy refers to students' perceived confidence in their ability to display participatory behaviors in class, which we have operationalized in our study in their ability to execute actions such as volunteering an answer to a question, asking the professor a question or a clarification, presenting opinions in class, and taking the initiative to participate in class activities.

From a pedagogical point of view the results suggest that teaching approaches, which help build self-efficacy and improve attitudes and perspective of norms, would result in higher intent to participate and consequent actual participation. Other factors, including gender, influence learners' decision-making process to communicate proactively in class, therefore instructors should be able to motivate students' participation using a variety of strategies that aim at fostering students' intentions to participate. Our results highlight the importance of building students' self-efficacy and confidence as an effective way to boost participation. Instructors, who wish to re-create the "conversational style lectures" typical of American education with their ESL Chinese students, should therefore continuously reinforce their students' perceived competence in participating class, despite the expected initial frustration associated with dealing with reticent students, who often grew up in a cultural context that downplayed the importance of class interactivity.

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**Davide Girardelli** received his Ph.D. in Communication from the University of Kentucky, Lexington (KY), USA, in 2006. He is currently Assistant Professor of Communication at Wenzhou-Kean University, Wenzhou, China.

**Vijay K. Patel** obtained his Ph.D. in Business Administration from Kennesaw State University, Kennesaw (GA), USA, in 2012. He serves as Assistant Professor of Marketing, Department of Management, Marketing and International Business, Wenzhou-Kean University/Kean University.

## A Study on Language Learning Strategy Use of Young Turkish Learners

Selen Tezcan English Language Department, Trakya University, Edirne, Turkey

Selma Deneme English Language Department, Trakya University, Edirne, Turkey

Abstract—In this study, language learning strategies (LLS) of 111 8th grade students learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in three private primary schools in Edirne are initially investigated. The effect of gender and the achievement of students on the use of LLS are also examined. The data are collected through the Turkish version of SILL of Karahan (2007) adapted from Lan's (2005) Taiwanese Children's SILL and are analysed through SPSS (17.0). At the end of the study, the most commonly used LLS by the 8th grade students were investigated. Beside this, the ten most and the least frequently used LLS were also examined. Among these strategies metacognitive, social and affective strategies were found to be the most frequently used language learning strategies whereas memory and cognitive strategies are found to be rarely used ones. In the study, the effect of gender on the use of LLS was identified. Females were found to use LLS more widely than males. Yet, no significant difference was found on the use of LLS between successful and average students.

Index Terms—language learning, language learning strategies, language learning strategy use, gender, achievement of the students

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Teachers and researchers have noticed that there is not any single research and method that would provide universal achievement in second language teaching. As Brown (2007) suggested, regardless of any teaching methods or techniques, successes of certain learners in language learning have been a source of inspiration for teachers as well as researchers. Such inspiration enabled them to facilitate invaluable research shedding light on language learning strategies. Such strategies were identified and described in many different ways by different researchers. Wenden and Rubin (1987) define language learning strategies as "any sets of operations, steps, plans, routines used by the learners to facilitate the obtaining, storage, retrieval and use of information". According to Oxford (1992/1993), language learning strategies are "specific actions, behaviors, steps or techniques that students (often intentionally) use to improve their progress in developing L2 skills (p.18).

Language learning strategy research dates back to the 1970s. Most of the research focused primarily on the strategies used by successful language learners. Many studies that explored the strategy preferences of learners also investigated how proficiently the learners used these strategies. Rubin (1975), Bialystok (1981), Wenden (1987), O'Malley and Chamot (1990) and many others researched on learning strategies. Among these, Bialystok (1981) conducted a study on high school students learning French in Toronto, Canada. The results showed that, the students employed four models of learning strategies: inferencing, monitoring, formal practising, and functional practising. Bialystok also found that these strategies promoted positive attitudes toward learning.

In a study among English learners in Puerto Rico, Green and Oxford (1995) reported that successful students employed strategies more frequently than less successful ones. Lan and Oxford (2003) conducted a study among 6<sup>th</sup> grade EFL learners in Taiwan. They found that high proficiency level students employed more strategies and more higher level strategies than poor students used. The successful language learners also employed strategies more frequently and efficiently.

Other researchers investigated the LLS of younger learners (see for example, Chamot & El-Dinary, 1999; Chesterfield & Chesterfield, 1985; Filmore, 1985 and Lan & Oxford, 2003). Bautier-Castaing (in Lan & Oxford, 2003) carried out a study on 60 Francophone children learning French syntax and 75 foreign children learning French as SL. This study found that both groups frequently used cognitive strategies such as analogy and error correction strategies such as simplifying structures.

Wong Filmore (1985) studied 50 bilingual English and Chinese ESL kindergarten students. The Chinese pupils were found to be reluctant to start conversation with the English speakers. They often wanted their native English speaking peers to start the conversation. This study clearly indicated that the learners who tended to interact with others and use their language skills during the interaction process become more successful in the language learning process.

Chamot and El-Dinary (1999) conducted a six year longitudinal study in the United States on 44 third and fourth grade students in French, Spanish and Japanese immersion programs. The learning strategies employed by successful

and unsuccessful young learners were examined. The researchers found that the students at every level tended to explain their thinking and learning process in detail once their metacognitive awareness emerged.

Lan (2005) conducted a study on 1191 English as a Foreign Language (EFL) elementary school students from major geographical areas of Taiwan in order to find out the relationship between their language learning strategies and factors affecting their strategy choices. The results indicated that two metacognitive strategies, namely "noting progress in learning English and analysing errors to avoid making the same errors again", were the most frequently used strategies by Taiwanese students (Lan, 2005, p. 107). Besides metacognitive strategies, some compensation strategies such as "asking for help when a word is not known in English, social strategies such as asking people to slow down, repeat, or clarify what was said", and affective strategies such as trying to relax when stressed by the idea of speaking English were found to be the most frequently preferred language learning strategies (Lan, 2005, p.108). He also identified the least frequently preferred language learning strategies by Taiwanese children. Only a few memory strategies such as "using flashcards to memorize new words and learning new words in sentences" were the least frequently preferred (Lan, 2005, p. 109)

A great deal of research has been conducted on language learning strategies and the common purpose of these studies including the present work is to identify how the use of LLS by students and teachers provide an efficient language teaching and learning process.

In this study, language learning strategies preferred by the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students (13 to14 years old) in primary schools in Edirne were investigated. The effects of gender and of language proficiency on the use of language learning strategies are also investigated.

#### II. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Research Design

The basic purpose of this study was to identify the LLS of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students learning English as a foreign language. The study aimed at identifying the most and the least frequently used language learning strategies by the young learners, and the effects of gender and language level on strategy choice. The study was conducted on the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students of three private primary schools in Edirne, namely Beykent College, Edirne College and Serhat College to investigate the LLS of these students and sought answers to the following research questions: 1) What are the specific language learning strategies preferred by the 8<sup>th</sup> grade EFL students? 2) Is there a significant difference between language learning strategies used by male and female students? 3) Is there a significant difference between language learning strategies used by successful and average students?

#### B. Participants

The sample of the study was not an even distribution of female and male samples (51 females, 60 males). All 111 students were similar in socioeconomic status with the majority of them coming from similar social environments and cultural backgrounds.

#### C. Data Collection Instrument

In the present study, Lan's (2005) Taiwanese Children's SILL adapted to Turkish children by Karahan (2007) was used. The inventory adapted by Karahan consists of 31 items in 5 parts: In part A, there are seven items which aim to identify the memory strategies of the students; In part B, there are nine items to investigate the cognitive strategies of the students: In part C, there are four items to find out compensation strategies of the students: In part D, there are five items in order to detect the meta-cognitive strategies of the students: In part E, there are three items to find out the affective strategies of the students: In part F, there are three items to identify the social strategies of students The five-point Likert-scale responses are as follows:

1= Never or almost never 2= Usually not 3= Sometimes 4= Often 5= Always and almost always

#### D. Data Collection Process

Lan's (2005) Taiwanese Children's SILL adapted to Turkish children by Karahan (2007) was used as the data collection instrument. This inventory is a five point Likert scale consisting of 31 items in 5 parts. After permission was guaranteed by the Provincial Directorate of National Education of Edirne and by the schools, the Turkish version of Taiwanese Children's SILL was circulated. Before conducting this inventory, the participants were informed about the inventory and the importance of their contributions for the success of the study. It was clearly explained to the students that this was not an examination; it was a study that needed carefully considered answers. Only one English lesson (40 minutes) was allocated for the students to answer 31 items of the Turkish SILL. A separate sitting was conducted for the absentees later.

#### III. FINDING AND RESULTS

To find the frequency of strategy use, the ordering key introduced by Oxford (1990) was used during the analysis of the SILL results with a scale ranging from 1 to 5.: Low-Use from 1.0 to 1.4 (never or almost never used) and 1.5 to 2.4

(usually not used); Medium-Use from 2.5 to 3.4 (sometimes used); and High-Use from 3.5 to 4.4 (usually used) and 4.5 to 5.0 (almost always or always used).

The responses were scored as (1) Never or almost never, (2) Usually not, (3) Sometimes, (4) Often and (5) Always or almost always. Then, the frequency analysis was performed on these scores. With the help of this calculation, the mean scores were obtained and ranged according to different levels of frequency from high to low use. The frequency of each language learning strategy use is listed below in accordance with the mean scores of the participants.

TABLE 1
THE FREQUENCY OF MEMORY STRATEGIES USE

Strategy No	Strategy	Means	Comment
3	I learn new words in sentences.	3.55	High-use range
1	I associate new English words with what I already know.	3.37	Medium-use range
5	I review often.	3.14	Medium-use range
7	I often review newly learned vocabulary or expressions by repeatedly mouthing.	3.11	Medium-use range
6	I often review newly learned vocabulary or expressions by repeatedly writing.	2.95	Medium-use range
2	I make drawing, either in my head or on paper, to help me remember a new word.	2.78	Medium-use range
4	I use flash cards to memorize new words.	2.23	Low-use range

In Table 1, it is apparent that participants preferred to use memory strategies at different levels of frequency (mean scores from 3.55 to 2.23). They highly preferred to learn the new words in sentences (mean score= 3.55). They widely tended to associate new English words with what they had already known (mean score = 3.37). They often selected memory strategies such as reviewing newly learned vocabulary or expressions by repeatedly mouthing (mean score= 3.11) and writing (mean score = 2.95). They sometimes preferred to make a drawing to remember a new word (mean score = 2.78). Although the participants claimed that they sometimes used all these memory strategies, they seldom preferred to use flashcards for remembering a new word (mean score = 2.23).

TABLE 2
THE FREQUENCY OF COGNITIVE STRATEGIES USE

Strategy No	Strategy	Means	Comment
16	I try to discover grammar rules of the English language.	3.52	High-use range
10	I often watch TV in English or I listen to English tapes or CDs.	3.45	Medium-use range
8	When I speak in English, I try to imitate English-speaking people, in order to pronounce the words correctly.	3.32	Medium-use range
15	I make an effort to understand the sense of what I read or hear without translating word for word.	3.32	Medium-use range
13	I try to find opportunities outside the school to practice my English.	3.10	Medium-use range
12	I work with English computer programs.	3.16	Medium-use range
14	I find similarities in pronunciation between Turkish and English.	2.87	Medium-use range
11	I read books in English.	2.75	Medium-use range
9	I often practice English alphabet sounds.	2.38	Low-use range

According to Table 2, young learners in this study preferred to use cognitive strategies at different levels of frequency (mean scores from 3.52 to 2.38). As mentioned above, the participants highly preferred to discover grammar rules of the English language (mean score = 3.52). Besides this highly used strategy, they claimed they widely watched TV in English or listened to English tapes (mean score = 3.45). They often preferred to imitate English-speaking people, in order to pronounce the words correctly and they generally tended to make an effort to understand the sense of what they read or hear without translating word for word (mean score = 3.32). In addition to this, they often marked some specific cognitive strategies such as finding opportunities outside the school to practice their English and working with English computer programs (mean score = 3.10- 3.16). They sometimes preferred to find similarities in pronunciation between Turkish and English (mean score = 2.87) and they rarely tended to read books (mean score = 2.75). Even though the young learners in the study preferred to use these cognitive strategies with high and medium frequencies, they claimed that they rarely practiced English alphabet sounds (mean score = 2.38).

 ${\bf TABLE~3}$  The Frequency of Compensation Strategies Use

Strategy No	Strategy	Means	Comment
17	When I hear or read a new word in English, I try to guess the meaning by	3.64	High-use range
	looking at the rest of the sentence.		
19	When I don't know a word in English, I ask for help.	3.59	High-use range
18	When I have trouble in making myself understood in English, I use	3.53	High-use range
	gestures to express what I want to say.		
20	When I can't find an expression in English, I try to find another way to	3.14	Medium-use range
	say what I mean.		_

The responses reveal that compensation strategies such as guessing the meaning of a new word without looking at the rest of the sentence (mean score = 3.64), asking for help when the word was unknown and using gestures to make

themselves understood were highly preferred (mean scores = 3.59,5.53). Besides these highly used compensation strategies, the students often tended to find other ways to express themselves in English (mean score = 3.14).

TABLE 4
THE FREQUENCY OF METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES USE

Strategy No	Strategy	Means	Comment
23	When someone speaks to me in English, I listen attentively.	3.86	High-use range
25	I analyse the errors I have made and try not to repeat them.	3.80	High-use range
24	I am concerned about my progress in learning English.	3.72	High-use range
22	I look for occasions to speak English.	3.10	Medium-use range
21	I organize my time to study English.	2.63	Medium-use range

The study found that the participants preferred metacognitive strategies at different levels of frequency (mean scores from 3.86 to 2.63). For instance, they claimed they highly used metacognitive strategies such as listening attentively when someone speaks in English, analysing their errors in order not to repeat them (mean scores = 3.86, 3.80) and being concerned about their progress in English (mean score = 3.7). Besides these highly used metacognitive strategies, they rarely preferred to look for occasions to speak English (mean score = 3.10). They seldom tended to organize their time to study English with a mean score of 2.63.

TABLE 5
THE FREQUENCY OF AFFECTIVE STRATEGIES USE

Strategy No	Strategy	Means	Comment
27	I will still encourage myself to speak English even if I am afraid to make mistakes.	3.67	High-use range
26	Whenever I am stressed by the idea of speaking English, I try to relax.	3.24	Medium-use range
28	When I succeed, I reward myself.	3.23	Medium-use range

The participants preferred to use affective strategies at different levels of frequency (mean scores from 3.67 to 3.23). For instance, they highly preferred to use affective strategies such as encouraging themselves to speak English (mean score = 3.67). In addition to this highly used affective strategy, the participants generally tended to relax in order to speak English and they often preferred to reward themselves when they succeed (mean scores = 3.24, 3.23).

TABLE 6
THE FREQUENCY OF SOCIAL STRATEGIES USE

Strategy No	Strategy	Means	Comment
29	If I don't understand what is said to me in English, I ask the person to help me by	3.70	High-use range
	speaking slowly, repeating, or clarifying what has been said.		
31	I am interested in and willing to learn the culture of English speaking countries.	3.23	Medium-use range
30	I practice English with my parents, sibling or my classmates.	2.82	Medium-use range

Social strategies such as asking for help, repetition and clarification when something wasn't understood were highly preferred by the participants (mean score = 3.70). Besides these highly used social strategies, they often tended to learn the culture of English (mean score = 3.23) and preferred to practice English with the people around (mean score = 2.82).

An independent-samples t-test was applied to discover any possible significant difference between male and female students on the use of language learning strategies. According to t-test results, a significant difference between the males and females in terms of overall strategy use was found  $[t_{(109)}=0.900, p<.05]$ . All these analyses indicate that females, on average, prefer to use more language learning strategies than males do.

A *t*-test is also used to determine the homogeneity of the variance between the successful and average students. The t-test results found that the mean values for successful students (M = 100.089) are only slightly higher than the scores of the average (M = 99.545) students. This means that no significant difference is observed between successful and average students in terms of overall strategy use [ $t_{(109)}$ =0,076, p>.05].

#### IV. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The language learning strategy preferences of young Turkish learners were initially investigated in this paper. A frequency analysis was performed in order to find out the frequency use of language learning strategies among young learners. The result of the analysis revealed that as the learners had difficulty in memorizing and remembering the new words, they created lots of memory strategies. The participants frequently tended to associate new English words with what they had already known, so they could easily remember the new words without spending too much effort. In addition, they often reviewed newly learned vocabulary or expressions by mouthing and writing, so they easily kept the words in mind and discovered some connections among words.

The participants seldom preferred to use visuals such as drawings and flashcards to memorize and remember a new word. It was also found that the young learners developed some language learning strategies which affected their cognitive skills positively. For instance, they usually preferred to discover the grammar rules by themselves rather than wait for transmission of information. They generally tended to watch TV in English or listen to English tapes or CDs in order to create awareness towards the target language. They often preferred to understand the general sense of what they

read or heard without translating word for word, so they not only developed their comprehension abilities but also improved their guessing skills.

The private schools generally organize some out of school activities such as trips to foreign schools, connecting with other foreign school students via the internet and student exchange programs. As the participants in the current study had a chance to join these activities, they often preferred to use these out of school activities to practice their English.

They often tended to work with English computer programs so they had an opportunity to learn the language in a visually supported language learning environment.

The findings of this study are consistent with the findings of previous studies. In Boutier-Castaing (in Lan & Oxford, 2003), cognitive strategies such as error avoiding and overgeneralization of linguistic rules were reported as frequently used strategies among the children learning French as a second language. Hopper (1972) expanded on this fact and said that young learners try to discover grammar rules with unsuccessful overgeneralization. In another study, Wong Fillmore (1985) indicated that learners frequently encourage themselves to speak English with native English speakers even if they have imperfect English skills, which shows that they effectively use their social strategies.

In the current study, metacognitive strategies and compensation strategies are found to be widely preferred strategies by the young learners. The findings show similarity with the other research results. Yang (1992) found that compensation strategies were found the most frequently used strategies by the young learners, whereas memory strategies were found the least frequently used ones. Similarly, Karahan (2007) found in his research that compensation strategies (with 90.83%), metacognitive strategies (with 89.17%) and social strategies (with 82.50%) were the most frequently used by the participants of his study; however, cognitive strategies (with 62.50%) and memory strategies (with 35.83%) were the least frequently used ones.

Fleming and Walls (1998) conducted a study which had similarities and differences with the present study. They found that young learners more frequently applied metacognitive strategies such as planning. Contrary to our study, they found that those young learners used cognitive strategies more frequently in order to understand and use the target language.

The findings of this study also reveal a significant difference between the male and female students in terms of their language learning strategy use. According to the t-test results, females employed more language learning strategies than males did.

Consistent with the findings of the current study, in a majority of studies in the field, females were reported as applying far more language learning strategies than males did (Green & Oxford, 1995; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989; Oxford, 1993; Zoubir-Shaw & Oxford, R., 1995).

The results, on the other hand, are not consistent with several other studies which indicated that male learners applied language learning strategies more frequently than females did. For instance, Tran (1988) found that Vietnamese male immigrants applied more strategies than females did. Wharton (2000) conducted research on 678 university students who were learning Japanese and French in Singapore, and unexpectedly found that male students frequently applied LLS. Similar to these studies, Tercanlıoğlu (2004) also found the same result and concluded that "A possible explanation for this result may be that in the male-dominated Turkish society, female students may have lower self-esteem in reporting the strategy they use" (p. 190). As to the effect of language level on language strategy preference, the follow up t-test result revealed that there wasn't any significant difference between the successful students and the average students in terms of their language learning strategy preferences. Unlike the current study, most of the research reports that there is a significant relation between strategy use and L2 achievement and that students with high language proficiency tend to apply strategies more often (Bruen, 2001; Drayer & Oxford, 1996; Gan, Humprey & Hamp-Lyons, 2004; Kayad, 1999; Lan & Oxford, 2003; Sheorey, 1999). In contrast to these studies, Nisbet, Tindel and Arroya (2005) found minimal correlations between language learning strategy preferences of the students and their proficiency level.

In this study, memory and compensation strategies were found to be the least frequently preferred language learning strategies. In order to increase students' use of these strategies, some specific innovations can be made. Semantic mapping, word charts and word maps are suggested in order to organize, construct and remember the new words. Dictionary use should also be encouraged as it helps learners to find the common underlying meaning of the words and to relate them to already known words. Besides memory strategies, cognitive strategies are also found to be rarely used by the young learners. In order to improve the use of these strategies, visual and audio-lingual materials that have positive contributions to language learning should commonly be used during the language learning process. Teachers should also encourage their learners to read books in the target language and work with English computer programs.

On the basis of the results, it is highly recommended that the language learning environment should be carefully designed in order to stimulate learners' natural interest towards language learning. Because teachers have an important role in the language learning process, they should be aware of what language learning strategies their students prefer to use and accordingly they should deliver strategy instruction to their students as an important part of the foreign language curriculum. They should also integrate strategies into everyday classroom activities and materials while considering their students' LLS selections (Cohen, 1998).

Memory strategies such as drawing to remember a new word and reviewing newly learned vocabulary or expressions by repeatedly writing and practicing English with friends and relatives are less frequently preferred by the participants.

In order to improve these strategies, more interactive activities may be selected for memorizing and remembering the new words. More effective techniques are also suggested for reviewing newly learned vocabulary.

The study also discovered that the participants rarely prefer to use social strategies such as practicing English with their parents and classmates. In order to improve social strategies, it is advised that more playful learning environments be designed for practising English.

The research was conducted only on private primary school students; further research should be carried out to find out the possible similarities or differences between state and private primary school students in terms of LLS preferences.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to pass my sincere thanks to Dr. Rae L. LAN who gave me consent to use the inventory of Taiwanese Children's SILL. I would also express my sincerest thanks to Volkan KARAHAN, an English teacher, who gave me consent to use the Turkish version of Taiwanese Children's Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (Taiwanese Children's SILL) as a data collection instrument. I am grateful to the Trakya University Scientific Research Projects Unit (TÜBAP) which financially supported my thesis under the project no 2010/137.

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Selen Tezcan was born in 1982 in Edirne, Turkey. She completed her secondary school education in Edirne Anatolian High School. She graduated from Anatolian University English Language Teaching Department in 2005 and completed her post graduate in ELT at Trakya University in 2011. She is studying PhD in department of Interdisciplinary Disabled Studies at Trakya University now. She worked as an English Instructor at Edirne College. She married in 2012. Her professional interests include teacher preparation, teaching methodology, culture learning, second language acquisition.

**Selma Deneme** initially graduated from Gazi University and earned her PhD from Ankara University in the field of FLT. She is mostly interested in ELT methodology, language learning strategies, academic writing, teaching English to young learners and teacher training. She teaches in the ELT Department at Trakya University, Turkey.

# English as the Medium of Instruction in Saudi Higher Education: Necessity or Hegemony?

Abdallah H. Al-Kahtany English Department, King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia

Syed Md Golam Faruk English Department, King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia

Abdul Wahed Q. Al Zumor English Department, King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia

Abstract—English has been implemented as the medium of instruction of engineering, medicine and science in Saudi universities. This decision was taken by some universities without consultation with students or teaching staff, and stands in violation of the Saudi policy that states that Arabic should be the language of instruction. This study investigates the attitude of 702 Saudi students and 162 instructors towards English as the medium of instruction, and towards Arabic as an alternative. The Component of Attitude and the Theory of Reasoned Behavior were adopted to analyze the findings. It explores the consequences of these choices based on theories regarding functions of attitude among students and instructors of the Science Colleges in King Khalid University, Saudi Arabia. Sub-themes include the effectiveness of English as the medium of instruction for Saudi students; the consequences of imposing English as the medium of instruction; the potential of Arabic as the medium of instruction in higher education, and students' right to be taught in their own mother tongue. Both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection were used based on a questionnaire survey. Findings show strong attitudinal differences between students and instructors, which may be attributed to the degree of hegemony affecting the groups.

Index Terms—hegemony, Saudi Arabia, English, Arabic, attitudes, higher education

#### I. INTRODUCTION

The Saudi government, like other globalizing states, has been rapidly expanding English language teaching and the use of English in education in the last few decades. This policy, along with other globalizing forces, has exerted an immense influence on the highly educated, privileged sector of Saudi society. This educated class desires the government to move even more rapidly in its implementation of English and its inclusion in the state's language policies. This attitude is reflected in the decision of some universities in Saudi Arabia to use English as the only medium of instruction (MOI) without considering stakeholders' opinions and without taking the Saudi language policy, which states that Arabic should be the MOI at all levels of Saudi education into consideration (Alamri 2008). Regardless of choosing English as an MOI because of superficial simplicities of such an alternative, substantial problems at the pedagogical level of a more significant effect have emerged. Such problems include linguistic incompetency that resulted in lower student achievement, confusion among Arabic and non-Arabic speaking instructors, little attention to the transformation of scientific knowledge in both term and concept into Arabic. Similar studies were conducted in other ESL contexts reported similar findings (Pennycook, 1994). This study investigates the viability of English as the sole MOI in higher education by describing teachers' and students' attitudes towards the language; appraising their perception of the potential of Arabic to replace English as MOI; predicting the acceptability of English to Saudi students in the future in light of the 'theory of reasoned action' (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975); and assessing the influence of linguistic hegemony in the choice of English as MOI. The paper concludes with a call for the necessity of revising the current fussy practices regarding English MOI in colleges of Engineering, Medicine and Science in Saudi Arabia. More rigorous language planning in the form of upgrading the status of Arabic as the MOI for Engineering, Medicine and Science is required; while enhancing the teaching of English as an ESP to boost students' linguistic abilities to keep in touch with advances in these fields of study.

Point of Departure

Components of Attitude

In this paper attitude is approached from a mentalist perspective. This view suggests that attitude may have cognitive, affective and conative components (Gardner, Lalonde and Moorcroft 1985). The cognitive component encompasses an individual's beliefs about the world that might result in stereotyping of the attitudinal object. For example, if a strong cognitive component is further strengthened by affective and conative components, an individual may stereotype English as good or bad, which may or may not be close to the reality. According to Tajfel (1981) an individual

stereotypes the attitudinal object for three reasons: a) to make the complex social world more coherent; b) to create and maintain group ideologies; and, c) to differentiate between the ingroup (to which the individual belongs) and outgroup (to which the individual does not belong). For an individual, the stereotype might become the repository of commonsense beliefs through which they conduct and interpret their social life. The affective component involves an emotional response to the attitudinal object. Sometimes an individual's belief is overwhelmed by their emotions so that a strong affective component may exist even if there is no cognitive aspect (McKenzie, 2010). A student who is unable to comprehend an English lecture or textbooks may evaluate the language negatively. Once a negative attitude towards English has developed, they might dislike every aspect of the use of English in education. The conative component refers to a person's predisposition to behave in certain ways. For example, a teacher might be predisposed to use English for their long stay abroad or for being spellbound by the hegemony of the English language.

The advantage of this tripartite model is that it can deal with the complexity of the human mind and explain the ambivalence that individuals often report. An attitude becomes ambivalent when there is uncertainty, incongruity or a clash between attitudinal components. For example, students might believe that English should be the MOI in science colleges, but at the same time when considering of their own incompetence in the language, they may fear failure and think otherwise. Here, the conflicting cognitive and affective components might cause ambivalence.

Attitude and behavior

In social psychology, attitudes are considered to be the major determinants of behavior (Bohner and Wanke, 2002). Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) developed the 'theory of reasoned action' (TRA) to predict specific behavior. In this theory, the investigation of attitude is not focused on the attitudinal object but on the action, e.g. to investigate students' attitudes towards English as MOI, the focus should be on their performance as English medium students not on the English language *per se*. TRA has four major components: a) attitudes towards behavior: the individual's judgment of whether the behavior is good or bad, e.g., whether learning through English is effective or not; b) subjective norms: the individual's perception of pressure from society to perform a particular act, e.g., whether there is pressure from Saudi society to use English as MOI; c) behavioral intention: the individual's plan to perform the behavior, e.g., whether Saudi students plan to use English as MOI in the near future; and d) behavior: the actual performance of the individual's intent, e.g. the materialization of the intention of using English as MOI.

Hegemony

The term 'hegemony,' conceptualized by the Italian thinker Antonio Gramsci, means domination through consent and persuasion (Gramsci 1971). It consists of three concomitant processes: a) domination without coercion; b) domination through legitimation; and c) domination through consensus. In the first process (a), the dominant group has ascendancy over the subordinate group by creating consciousness, rather than exerting force over it. For the second (b), the subordinate group takes it for granted that the rule of the dominant group is legitimate, just, right, and unquestionable. In the third process (c), the majority of members of the subordinate group think that they are in that position by choice because they get as much benefit as the dominant group receives for having common needs and concerns (Collins 1989; Fontana 1993; Fontana 2001; Gramsci 1971; Gramsci 1985; Gramsci 1995).

Research Questions

This study aims to answer the following questions:

- 1. What are teachers' and students' attitudes towards English as MOI?
- 2. What are their perceptions of the potential of Arabic to replace English and the significance of this?
- 3. Will English be increasingly acceptable to students in the near future?
- 4. Has English been chosen as MOI under the spell of linguistic hegemony?

#### II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

#### A. Sampling

Our sample consisted of teachers and students from the science disciplines at King Khalid University, Assir in the southern province of Saudi Arabia. They were regarded as representative of the national population of science teachers and students as King Khalid University is one of the biggest Saudi universities and its teachers and students hail from all over the country. The Deans of all the Science Colleges of the University were requested to distribute a total of 1500 questionnaires randomly among students of all levels and instructors of all ranks. The questionnaires were distributed using the random sampling method. After checking the questionnaires returned, 864 (702 from students; 162 from staff) were accepted as complete and valid. The questionnaires were then grouped into three categories: a) Science: Natural Sciences, Applied Sciences, Computer Science, and the science departments of the Faculty of Education; b) Engineering; and c) Medicine: Dentistry, Pharmacology, Medical Sciences, Medicine, and Nursing.

#### B. Students

There were 702 completed student questionnaires. The distribution of the students in terms of college, level, sex, and Grade Point Average (GPA) is shown in Table 1.

 $TABLE \ 1$  Distribution of students (n=702) participating in the study

Independent Variables	Categories	N. of Subjects	%
	Science	285	41%
College	Engineering	162	23%
	Medicine	255	36%
Level	1-6	303	43%
Level	7–12	399	57%
Sex	Male	577	82%
Sex	Female	125	18%
	1-1.99	426	60.7%
Grade Point Average (GPA)	2-2.99	65	9.3%
Grade Form Average (GFA)	3-3.99	124	17.7%
	4–5	87	12.3%

#### C. Teachers

The number of questionnaires filled-in by teachers was 162. As the teachers are not as homogenous as students, in addition to the variables like college and sex, the instructors are described in terms of age, mother tongue (L1), rank, and the country in which their degrees were obtained (see Table 2).

 $TABLE\ 2$  Distribution of instructors (n=162) participating in the study

Independent Variables	Categories	N. of Subjects	%
	Science	52	32%
College	Engineering	29	18%
	Medicine	81	64%
Acc	Below 40	45	28%
Age	40 and above	117	72%
Sex*	Male	100	62%
Sex	Female	60	37%
Mother tongue (L1)	Arabic	111	69%
Wiother tollgue (L1)	Non-Arabic	50	31%
Country in which degrees were obtained	Arab	46	28%
Country in which degrees were obtained	Non-Arab	116	72%
Rank	Faculty Members	48	30%
Kalik	Teaching Assistants	112	69%

<sup>\*</sup> One respondent did not specify his/her sex.

#### D. Research Tools

The questionnaire items comprised a Likert scale with twenty-five statements. Participants were requested to make a decision about their level of agreement with each statement by selecting one of the following four points: Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Agree (A), and Strongly Agree (SA). A range of 2.5 was used as the cut-off point between agreement and disagreement. The first point, Strongly Disagree, began with 1 and the last point, Strongly Agree, ended with 4. The difference between the points is .75 and they were arranged as follows: SD (1–1.75); D (1.75–2.5); A (2.5–3.25); and SA (3.25–4).

The questionnaire was prepared in two languages for the two different groups. Arabic was used for the students to rule out any comprehension difficulty that might influence their responses, while English was used for the teachers since they were all considered to be proficient in the language. Prior to administration, the questionnaire was reviewed by five professors. First, the Arabic version was sent to a professor in the Arabic department to review and revise its linguistic accuracy and appropriateness. Secondly, the revised questionnaire was translated into English and slightly modified to suit the university instructors. Finally, the two English sets (one for the students and the other for the teachers) were reviewed by four other professors. The reviews were discussed and many of the suggestions incorporated in the final version of the questionnaires.

In addition to the process described above, the internal consistency of the survey was measured by Cronbach's Alpha with a resulting value of 0.80, sufficiently high to make the survey reliable. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) provided evidence for the validity of the research instrument. The three components generated by EFA were in harmony with the major research questions. The research tool's validity and reliability were also tested by inserting rephrased versions of the same statement into different parts of the questionnaire. The mean, standard deviation, and level of significance of the responses prove that they are reliable. Even the slight shift of the mean for the similar statements can be explained by the slight change in the content of the statements.

#### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data were analyzed using version 16.0 of the SPSS and interpreted in three phases. First, data were organized and grouped through EFA. Then they were grouped by research questions, and finally interpreted to derive at answers.

#### **EFA**

Principal Component Analysis, the first phase of EFA, is a variable reduction procedure used to determine the main themes and compute factor weights with a view to extracting the maximum possible variance (Williams, Brown and Onsman 2010). EFA grouped the statements into three components (shown in Table 3). As all components were not found to be relevant to the research questions, they were not given similar importance: the first (principal) and second components are focused on more than the third one.

TABLE 3
COMPONENTS GENERATED BY EFA

Component Titles	Statements from questionnaire
Preference of using Arabic as a medium of instruction (1st or principal	6, 11, 13, 14, 24, 5, 23, 12, 20, 1, 10, 7, 19, 2.
component)	
Usability of English as the medium of instruction (2nd component)	18, 8, 3, 9, 22, 15, 17.
English for future professional development (3rd component)	4, 16, 25, 21.

The three components produced and a one-sample t-test for comparing the two groups' mean values are shown in the following tables.

#### **Interpretation of responses to the statements**

The Likert scale statements were categorized into nine themes (shown in Table 4). These are interpreted group-by-group to answer the research questions.

 $\label{table 4} Table \ 4$  Grouping of themes and statements according to research questions

GROOTING OF THEMES AND STATEMENT	5 ACCORDING TO RESEARCH QUESTIONS
Research Questions	Themes and the no. of statements
What are the teachers' and students' attitudes towards	The effectiveness of English as the medium of instruction
English as MOI?	for Saudi students (3,5, & 20); English is an obstacle for
	the students (1, 2, 10, & 19); the use of English should be
	limited to terminologies only (12); English as a medium
	of instruction would be a threat to Arabic (7).
What are the teachers' and students' perceptions of the	The potential of Arabic as the medium of instruction
potential of Arabic to replace English, and the	(11,14, & 24); replacing English with Arabic as the only
significance of this?	medium of instruction (6); students' right to be taught in
	their own mother tongues (13); using Arabic for the sake
	of national interest (23).
Will English be increasingly acceptable to students in the	English for the students' future life (16).
near future?	
Is the Saudi higher education spellbound by linguistic	All the themes and statements.
hegemony?	

Almost all the statements of the Likert scale (except the first statement of Theme 1) are worded and structured in different ways but inherently designed with a single purpose: to elicit the attitude of the instructors and students towards Arabic and English as MOI. The resulting responses fall either into a pro-Arabic or a pro-English category. Moreover, the attitudinal object—either English or Arabic—is stereotyped: in all the statements, the instructors and students consistently favor either English or Arabic.

All the statements (except the first one of Theme 1) of the first four themes of the first group aim to measure the respondents' attitudes towards English/Arabic as MOI. The statements of the last four themes of the second group appraise their perceptions of the potential of Arabic to replace English. The last group consists of only one statement to predict the students' willingness to use English as MOI in the near future. The responses to these statements also reflect the respondents' attitudes towards English/Arabic as the medium of instruction, albeit in a different way.

Research Question 1: What are the teachers' and students' attitudes towards English as MOI?

Theme 1: The effectiveness of English as the medium of instruction.

 $\label{eq:table 5} TABLE \, \mathbf{5}$  Statistics of the statements of Theme  $\mathbf{1}$ 

Subjects	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean Diff.	Sig.
	3. I think the intensive English courses students take	2.43 (Disagree)	0.91	0.44	0.00
Instructors	in the first levels are adequate to study their majors.				
Students	3. I think the intensive English courses I took in the	1.99 (Disagree)	0.86	0.44	0.00
	first levels were adequate to study my major.				
	5. It is better and more suitable if Arabic is used as a	1.94 (Disagree)	0.77	0.47	0.00
Instructors	medium of instruction in university education.				
	5. It is better and more suitable if English is not used	2.41 (Disagree)	1.05	0.47	0.00
Students	as a medium of instruction in university education.				
	20. I feel it is better to teach the difficult courses in	1.90 (Disagree)	0.90	1.15	0.01
Instructors	my specialization in Arabic rather than in English.				
	20. I feel it is better to teach the difficult courses in	3.05 (Agree)	0.80	1.15	0.00
Students	Arabic rather than in English.				

The first statement of Theme 1 (Table 5) is different in content from the other statements of the study. This was included in the questionnaire to gauge the respondents' perceptions of the quality of English language teaching and the students' proficiency in English, which may act as one of the determining factors in the formation of the affective component of attitude towards the language. In the case of the students it does, but it fails to do so for the instructors.

Teachers and students agree that English courses are inadequate for students. This suggests that the students are inefficient in English. However, teachers and students look at the issue from two different angles. Teachers consider the problem to be temporary and assume that students can and should overcome this obstacle if and when they are provided with better English language teaching programs. This is clear from the students additional comments they provided in the questionnaires. They want to continue to teach all of their courses in English, whether easy or difficult. Meanwhile, the students speak more plainly about removing English as the MOI from the difficult courses (in their responses to the 3rd statement above), but they do not mind using the language in easy courses (2nd statement). This suggests that teachers want English as MOI, no matter what, irrespective of the students' English language ability. Teachers' avoidance of the students' biggest hurdle to learning can be explained by the spellbinding influence of the hegemony of English. In contrast, the students consider English with a strong awareness of the learning challenges it creates for them. English serves as a barrier that makes their learning more difficult, and thus they do not want the language to be their MOI. However, they are ready to accept the minimum use of English as long as it is not an obstacle to learning.

The teachers' attitude towards English is represented in each of the three attitudinal components. From a cognitive perspective, there is the belief that English as MOI is essential in higher education. In terms of affect, they are motivated by the supposed efficiency of English which is used in most universities in English speaking countries. Conatively, they are under the influence of the hegemony of English and are predisposed to use it as MOI. With the exception of the cognitive component, the students' attitudinal components are in contrast to their teachers'. Like their teachers, they have a belief that they need English to survive in this globalized world and are ready to accept English wherever they can. Nevertheless, their affective component (promoted by limited English competence and a strong attachment to their mother and religious tongue) is overwhelming and often overpowers their cognitive perspective. Many of their responses indicate that they want to get rid of English by replacing it with Arabic as MOI as soon as possible. The teachers sent a strong positive message about their overall attitude towards English. In the case of the students, only the cognitive component favors English, but that is significantly weakened by affective and conative components.

Theme 2: English is an obstacle for the students

TABLE 6
STATISTICS FOR THE STATEMENT OF THEME 2

Subjects	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean Diff.	Sig.
Instructors	I. I think using English as a medium of instruction is an obstacle preventing outstanding students in the secondary school from maintaining their distinction when they join university.	2.10 (Disagree)	1.18	0.96	0.00
Students	1. I think using English as a medium of instruction is an	3.07 (Agree)	0.91	0.96	0.00
Students	obstacle preventing outstanding students in the secondary school from maintaining their distinction when they join university.	3.07 (rigide)	0.51	0.50	0.00
	2. I feel some outstanding students quit their favorite	2.44 (Disagree)	0.82	0.41	0.58
Instructors	majors due to the use of English as a medium of instruction.				
Students	I feel some outstanding students quit their favorite majors due to the use of English as a medium of instruction.	2.85 (Agree)	0.85	0.41	0.58
Instructors	10. I believe using English as the medium of instruction makes the study more difficult for students.	2.21 (Disagree)	0.75	0.68	0.27
Students	10. I believe using English as the medium of instruction makes my major more difficult.	2.89 (Agree)	0.90	0.68	0.27
Instructors	19. I think using English as the medium of instruction is one of the main reasons behind students' weak performance.	2.33 (Disagree)	0.79	0.62	0.18
Students	19. I think using English as the medium of instruction is one of the main reasons behind students' weak performance in my major.	2.95 (Agree)	0.91	0.62	0.18

As the responses of both teachers and students to the statements in Table 5 show the inadequacy of the English language teaching programs and imply that students struggle with English, one might logically conclude that English is an obstacle for the students. In their responses to all four statements of Theme 2 (Table 6) the students make it clear that English is indeed an obstacle. However, the teachers, perhaps under the spell of English hegemony, contradict their own responses to the first statement of Theme 1 and turn a blind eye to the difficulties the students face when they have to learn and take tests in English.

It should be noted that in the case of the first two statements, the teachers' responses might be given more credibility than the students as teachers usually know their outstanding students well. However, the word 'outstanding' might have different connotations for the teachers. To a teacher, an outstanding student may mean the student who achieves high grades because of his/her proficiency in English. So, in this case, there is every possibility that students who are otherwise outstanding, but low-achieving because of English inefficiency, are excluded.

Theme 3: The use of English should be limited to terminologies only

TABLE 7
STATISTICS FOR THE STATEMENT OF THEME 3

Subjects	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean Diff.	Sig.
Instructors	12. I prefer that English is only used for some required terminologies in scientific majors and not as the only medium of instruction.	2.27 (Disagree)	0.89	0.57	0.00
Students	12. I prefer that English is only used for some required terminologies in my major and not as the only medium of instruction.	2.84 (Agree)	1.06	0.57	0.00

The students want to limit the use of English to terminologies only which means they want to avoid English wherever it seems unnecessary to them. In contrast, the teachers want English as the sole MOI, and do not want to use Arabic even though they admit that it is difficult to communicate with students using English only (in their responses to the first statement of Theme 1 [Table 5).

Theme 4: English as a medium of instruction would be a threat to Arabic

 $\label{eq:table 8} TABLE~8$  STATISTICS FOR THE STATEMENT OF THEME 4

Subjects	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Sig.
				Diff.	
	7. I feel that the English language has displaced	2.33 (Disagree)	0.76	0.53	0.05
Instructors	some of the educational functions of Arabic.				
Students	7. I feel that the English language has displaced	2.86 (Agree)	0.90	0.53	0.05
	some of the educational functions of Arabic.				

Here the teachers' view goes against the widely accepted view that the use of English or any other foreign language as the sole MOI tends to marginalize the native language (Kontra et al. 1999). The students' responses are commensurate with this widely held theory, but the teachers' do not concur. This disagreement most likely originates as the teachers are blinded by the hegemony of English.

On the whole, teachers and students are sharply divided in their attitudes towards English as MOI. The teachers want English no matter the cost to their students, while the students would prefer to get rid of it.

Research Question 2: What are the teachers' and students' perceptions of the potential of Arabic to replace English, and the significance of this?

Theme 5: The potential of Arabic as the medium of instruction

TABLE 9
STATISTICS FOR THE STATEMENT OF THEME 5

Subjects	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean Diff.	Sig.
	11. I think it is possible to use Arabic rather than	1.86	.787	.827	.000
Instructors	English in teaching of scientific discipline.	Disagree			
Students	11. I think it is possible to use Arabic rather than	2.69	1.033	.827	.000
	English in teaching of scientific discipline.	Agree			
	14. I think if university textbooks were Arabized,	2.21	.930	.888	.000
	more students will join the university and the	Disagree			
Instructors	outcomes will be of better quality.				
Students	14. I think if university textbooks were Arabized,	3.10	.930	.888	.000
	more students will join the university and the	Agree			
	outcomes will be of better quality.				
	24. I think it is possible to replace the present English	2.01	.823	.757	.000
Instructors	textbooks in scientific majors with Arabic ones.	Disagree			
Students	24. I think it is possible to replace the present English	2.76	.974	.757	.000
	textbooks in scientific majors with Arabic ones.	Agree			

The teachers and students are consistent in their opinions. Even the slight shift of the mean across the scale can be explained by the slight change in the content of the statements. For example, though the mean of the instructors' response to the 1st statement containing the possibility of teaching in Arabic falls at Disagree (the 3rd point of the scale), it is near to the 2nd point (Agree). In contrast, when the issue is the improvement of the quality of education through Arabized textbooks (the 2nd statement), the mean moves to the other direction, towards Strongly Disagree. Regarding the possibility of translating English textbooks into Arabic (the last statement), the mean is in the middle. The responses

to the above statements are not only consistent with each other, they also agree with the teachers' additional comments where they constantly hold that to make their teaching effective, they have to use Arabic along with English. All the same, they do not mean that Arabic is more suitable than English as MOI and in fact, most of them suggest moving towards more English and providing the students with better English language teaching.

The students consistently show preference of Arabic rather than English textbooks. Most of them are not in the position to give opinions about the viability of the replacement of English with Arabic textbooks. However, their attitudes toward this statement may be formed mainly by the affective component. Their attitudes toward English are perhaps affected by their lack of competence in English (see Theme 1, Table 5). Their natural proficiency in their mother tongue, along with the religious and emotional responses to it, might have formed the positive attitude towards Arabic as MOI.

Theme 6: Replacing English with Arabic as the only medium of instruction

### $\label{eq:table 10} Table \ 10$ Statistics for the statement of Theme 6

Subjects	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean Diff.	Sig.
Instructors	6. I think it is better to use Arabic only as the medium of instruction in teaching all courses in my major	1.65 Strongly Disagree	.654	.957	.000
Students	6. I think it is better to use Arabic only as the medium of instruction in teaching all courses in my major	2.61 Agree	1.055	.957	.000

The statement in Table 10 is a repetition of the second statement of the first theme (Table 5). The teachers are consistent in their responses, but the students are not. In the first table the students did not agree with removing English as the MOI, but here they want Arabic as the sole MOI. Ambivalence occurs in their responses, due perhaps to the conflict between the cognitive and affective components of their attitudes towards English. On the one hand they are influenced by the status given to English as the language of science—by the world in general and the Saudi state in particular. The cognitive component persuades them to accept the foreign language. On the other, they are constrained by their inefficiency in the language, and the affective component dissuades them to accept English as MOI.

Theme 7: Students' right to be taught in their own mother tongue

 $\begin{tabular}{ll} Table 11 \\ Statistics for the statement of Theme 7 \\ \end{tabular}$ 

Subjects	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Sig.
				Diff.	
	13. I believe it is the right of university students to	2.02	.830	1.034	.000
Instructors	study in their own native language.	Disagree			
Students	13. I believe it is the right of university students to	3.05	.940	1.034	.000
	study in their own native language.	Agree			

All the students of the world, irrespective of their creed, culture or geographical location, have the right to be taught in their mother tongue (Kontra et al. 1999). Interestingly, the teachers go against the declared right of the students although perhaps they are aware of it. In contrast, the students perceive that it is their right to be taught in their own mother tongue, although they may not all be aware of this constitutional right. Their teachers' cognitive component: the belief that English should be the MOI, is so strong that they can sacrifice not only the students' academic performance but also their human rights.

Theme 8: Using Arabic for the sake of national interest

TABLE 12 STATISTICS FOR THE STATEMENT OF THEME 8

	STATISTICS FOR THE STATEMEN	1 OF THEME 0			
Subjects	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean Diff.	Sig.
Instructors	23. I believe it is for the national interest of the Kingdom to use Arabic only as the medium of instruction	1.96 Disagree	.725	.763	.000
Students	23. I believe it is for the national interest of the Kingdom to use Arabic only as the medium of instruction	2.72 Agree	.969	.763	.000

All universities in Saudi Arabia use English as MOI in their science colleges. The views of the state and the higher education authority are in contrast with each other, and similarly, the differences between the students' and teachers' opinions follow the same contrasting pattern. The parallelism between the higher education authority and teachers is easy to explain: the decision makers in higher education are comprised of these senior and highly educated teachers. Conversely, the students, the new blood of the Saudi citizens, are represented by the state. The state language policy rightly accommodates students' constrained demand for Arabic as MOI.

In summary, teachers along with the Saudi higher education authority do not think that Arabic has the potential to replace English. However, students along with the state authority firmly believe Arabic should be the sole MOI in Saudi

higher education. It should be noted that these are their beliefs only, i.e. the cognitive components of their attitudes towards English as MOI.

Research Question 3: Will English be increasingly acceptable to students in the near future?

	TABLE 13
STATISTICS FOR	THE STATEMENT OF THEME 9

Subjects	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean Diff.	Sig.
Instructors	16. I believe that proficiency in English during university education will assist students in their future profession.	3.57 Strongly Agree	.629	21.60	0.000
Students	16. I believe that being proficient in English during my university education will assist me in my future profession.	3.17 Agree	0.892	19.96	0.000

The possibility of students using English as MOI in the near future can be predicted by considering the four components of TRA. According to the first component, attitudes towards behavior, the students would be willing to use English as MOI if they think that it is good for them. The data analyzed above show that there is ambivalence in students' attitudes. Though most of the time they favor Arabic over English, in some of the responses it is clear that, following the global trend, they have a vague belief that English as MOI is necessary as long as it does not affect their academic performance. TRA's second component, the subjective norm, does not favor students' willing use of English at all because there is no social pressure for using English as MOI. In fact, the reverse may be true as there is a constitutional commitment and some pressure from Saudi society to replace English with Arabic as MOI. It has been noted that the "ideological and cultural backgrounds of English threaten the Islamic world" (Al-Haq and Al-Masaeid 2009: 274), and that the majority of Saudi citizens will share the same affective and conative components as the students.

Students' willing use of English as MOI also seems very unlikely if TRA's third component, behavioral intention, is considered. Most of the students do not have any plans to move to English speaking countries for higher education or employment. Being strongly attached to their own country, culture, and religion and being financially solvent and socially secure, they desire to remain in their homeland (Al-Kahtany 2013). TRA's fourth component, behavior, the actual use of English as MOI, cannot be applied here. The students currently have no choice but to use English and, of necessity, must suppress their intention of using Arabic as MOI.

In short, TRA's first three components predict that the students are not going to accept English as MOI willingly in the near future unless they are influenced by the hegemony of English like their teachers.

Research Question 4: Is the Saudi higher education spellbound by linguistic hegemony?

The decision of the Saudi higher education authority to use English as MOI, and the participants' responses to the Likert scale in this study, can be explained in light of Gramsci's theory of hegemony. Here the dominant group is represented by English, currently the most powerful language in the world. The subordinate groups are the two groups of respondents in this study, the teachers who will eventually become the decision makers of higher education and the students. In the case of the higher education authority and the teachers, the hegemony of English is exerted through all the processes that Gramsci describes. The fact that the first process, domination without force, has smoothly taken place is clear when one considers that the higher education authority and teachers have selected English as MOI without being forced to do so. Acting like agents of so-called "linguistic imperialism" (Phillipson 1992), they have enforced the use of English as sole MOI going against the state language policy and sacrificing students' academic achievement.

Hegemony's second process, domination through legitimation, seems to be observed when teachers give uncritical support to English, turning a blind eye to the students' incompetence in the foreign language, their unwillingness to use it, and the consequent poor academic performance. They legitimize English as MOI, even though it has no place in Saudi language policies. They think that it is right to use English although they admit in their responses to the first statement of Theme 1 (Table 5). They believe that English is unquestionably the best MOI, even though their own students raise questions regarding its role in the displacement of the educational functions of Arabic (see Table 8) or in the violation of their own linguistic human rights (see Table 11).

The third process, domination through consensus, has probably arisen when the teachers have studied in English speaking countries or used English as MOI in their student lives. This consensus must be sustained if they are to continue to receive the benefits as a member of the recently formed English educated privileged class of Saudi society. The agreement serves to create and maintain group ideologies, and to make a differentiation between the ingroup and outgroup (Tajfel 1981: 147–162). So, the teachers concur that, for better or worse, English as MOI is the best choice for the Saudi students, not an imposition of linguistic imperialism.

For students, the processes mentioned do not apply. They have a vague belief that English is necessary as MOI. That the first process, domination without force, does not work is obvious when in their responses they make it clear that they have no choice but to use English as it has been imposed on them. The second process, domination through legitimation, does not take place as the students tend to legitimize Arabic as MOI rather than English. The students have never used English as MOI in their pre-university education and have not received any effective English language teaching. Most of them do not have any intention of going abroad for higher education, employment or immigration;

and as most of them do not belong to the newly formed English educated privileged class (Al-Kahtany 2013) the third process, domination through consensus, has not occurred yet.

For teachers, the effects of English hegemony can be clearly observed. For students, exertion of hegemony is still in its early stages. English is, of course, dominating the students but not by securing the students' consensus, rather by imposing itself on them through its loyal agents.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

It is difficult to choose either English or Arabic as the sole MOI in Saudi higher education considering the sharply contrasting views of teachers and students. In today's learner-centered democratic education system, students' views should be given at least equal importance as teachers'. Though the teachers can be considered to be mere agents of the so-called "linguistic imperialism", it is very difficult to remove English as MOI from Saudi higher education without enriching the linguistic capability of Arabic. Moreover, neither the exponential growth of English in the arena of scientific knowledge, politics and economy nor the Saudi higher education policy makers' and teachers' choice of English as MOI can be totally ignored. A thoughtful blend of policy and practice, and curriculum and pedagogy, is required. Critical deconstruction of existing policies and practices must take place in combination with a detailed understanding of everyday realities, so that constructive suggestions for a time-befitting Saudi higher education language policy can be made. This research aimed to contribute to this process.

This state of linguistic insecurity that has resulted in conflicting attitudes among teachers and students at fields where English is used as an MOI necessitates well-planned practical solutions. One of the measures is revising the current fussy practices regarding English MOI in colleges of Engineering, Medicine and Science. An immediate step can be recognizing the state-of-affairs where English and Arabic are interchangeably used as MOI at different frequencies depending on the teachers' preference and competence on Arabic and English. This conclusion echoes Canagarajah's (2005) call to establish 'more inclusive and egalitarian language policies and practices' (p. xxix) and calls for adopting strategies that can develop policies and practices that "enrich rather than replace local languages" (Guo and Beckett 2007). More rigorous language planning in the form of upgrading the status of Arabic as the MOI for Engineering, Medicine and Science; while enhancing the teaching of English as an ESP to boost students' linguistic abilities to keep in touch with advances in these fields of study.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This research was funded by the King Khalid University Deanship of research and carries the number 46, first phase.

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**Abdallah H. Al-Kahtany** is a Professor of Applied Linguistics at King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia. He received his PhD from Michigan State University. He held the position of the Director of College of Languages and Translation Research Center. Currently, he is the dean of faculty and administration staff in the university. His areas of interest include Language Policy and Planning, Discourse Analysis and Linguistic Hegemony. He has presented in many international conferences worldwide.

**Syed Md Golam Faruk** received his PhD in Applied Linguistics and English Language Teaching from Chittagong University, Bangladesh. He has been teaching English language, Applied Linguistics and English Literature in some Saudi and Bangladeshi universities for more than 20 years. His research interests are English language teaching and language policy.

**Abdul Wahed Q. Al Zumor** is an Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics, previously worked in Sanaa University, Yemen and is currently working in the department of English, faculty of Languages & Translation, King Khalid University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. His areas of interest include Language and Education, Interlanguage Pragmatics, Discourse Analysis Sociolinguistics, and Technology-enhanced Language Learning. He has participated in many international conferences worldwide.

# Clicking Behaviour with Computer Textual Glosses and Vocabulary Knowledge

Mohamad Ali Yusuf Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, University of Malaya, Malaysia

Su'ad Awab Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, University of Malaya, Malaysia

Tam Shu Sim
Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, University of Malaya, Malaysia

Abstract—Framed within the interaction approach (Mackey, 2012) in second language acquisition, this study investigates if learner-computer interactions can facilitate vocabulary development. Chapelle (2003) considers human-computer interactions as one form of interaction besides the well-documented conversational interaction and the interactions that take place inside the language learner's mind. Specifically, the study looks at students' interactions with a computer-aided textual gloss and if the use of such glosses are able to aid the students in their vocabulary development. The purpose of the study is to explore and describe how English as a second language learners use a computer-aided vocabulary gloss in an online reading text to develop their vocabulary knowledge. To track the vocabulary development of the students, tests measuring vocabulary knowledge were designed to evaluate the students' recognition and productive vocabulary knowledge. Using descriptive statistics together with ANOVA, and correlation measures to analyse data, it was revealed that there were no significant differences in the students' clicking behaviour and their proficiency levels. Furthermore, it was found out that with more clicks on the glosses, students were able to maintain their vocabulary knowledge after three weeks. The findings seem to auger well for using computer textual glosses for vocabulary development in a second language context.

Index Terms—learner-computer interactions, vocabulary development, computer-aided textual gloss, recognition and productive vocabulary knowledge

#### I. Introduction

There is wide acceptance that the interaction approach is facilitative for language learning. Mackey (2012) writes that "it is not currently claimed to be sufficient for second language learning but it provides a useful perspective on language learning" (p. 4). Presently, interaction is said to be facilitative for second language learning. The question that arises now is how interaction affects L2 learning. There has been substantial research on the interaction and learning (Hatch, 1978 & Long, 1983) which focused on face-to-face or conversational interactions. Apart from this kind of interactions, Ellis (1999) extended interaction to mean interactions that go on within the learners mind in dealing with language learning. With the current computer technology and its related area of computer assisted language learning (CALL), Chapelle (2003) has extended the realm of interaction to include human-computer interactions.

In human-computer interactions, a ubiquitous feature that most web-users are accustomed to when interacting with a computer is clicking. Therefore, a major factor in any online interface is the act of clicking of the mouse and in computer interaction literature this is commonly referred to as clicking behaviour. The act of clicking usually leads to further engagement with the icons, images or the links in the interface. Clicking in this study is defined as the clicking of the computer mouse to initiate interactions with a textual gloss. This is the similar definition given by Chapelle (2003, p.58). It indicates that the learner is aware that some form of modified input is available in this case, it is the glosses that form the modified input and the clicking denotes that the learners intend to obtain this input.

Nation and Meara (2002) comment that for first language vocabulary learning, a lot of input is derived from reading and listening. They continue that for this type of learning can also occur amongst non-native speakers though certain conditions need to be in place. The conditions are firstly, the unknown vocabulary has to be in small amounts; secondly, there is a lot of input and; thirdly, there is more deliberate attention to the unknown words (pp. 40-41). These conditions are set up in this study where a small number of unknown words are presented to the students, while the condition of deliberate attention is created when these words are glossed with their meanings in different type and language combinations. However, the condition for a large input cannot be met in this study because of research constraints.

Research has shown that the relationship between reading, comprehension and vocabulary is a complex and tangled one (Eskey, 2005). In other words, vocabulary load is seen as a strong indicator of text difficulty. Haynes and Baker (1993) concludes that the main reason that L2 learners find it difficult to comprehend text is because of their lack of

vocabulary and not because they lack reading comprehension strategies. This suggests that the threshold for reading comprehension is to a large extent, lexical. Second language learners not only differ in the amount of knowledge of and exposure to the target language but they are also affected by cross-language factors. Read (as cited in Yusuf, Sim & Awab, 2014) makes the observation that second language learners realize that their insufficient vocabulary impedes their communication in the target language as vocabulary carry the meaning of what they comprehend and wish to express in their communication. Hence, Read points out that vocabulary is a prime element of the language for students to learn as compared to other aspects of the language.

It is documented that vocabulary plays a critical role in reading and conversely reading also lends itself to vocabulary acquisition. Vocabulary knowledge is complex and wide. It has also been "... defined differently by different researchers" (Laufer & Goldstein, 2004, p. 400). According to Nation (2001), it involves knowing its form, meaning and use. Some researchers (Faerch, Haastrup, & Phillipson, 1984; Palmberg, 1987) have looked upon vocabulary knowledge as a continuum comprising several layers. To them, the first layer can be considered as superficial familiarity of the words. Knowing vocabulary in this study refers to *know* a word and its meaning at two levels – recognition and production. One of the most common distinction of vocabulary knowledge is recognition and productive knowledge (Schmitt, 2010, p. 80). Vocabulary knowledge can also be identified as recognition and productive knowledge. Recognition knowledge is sometimes termed as passive knowledge and it is used in listening and reading. Conversely, productive knowledge is also termed as active knowledge used for writing and speaking (Nation as cited Yusuf et al., 2014).

The current study focused attention on the aspect of form and meaning of words. Learning in this instance is in the form of meaning-focused input, where the input in the online reading text. It operationalised vocabulary knowledge development as the students' knowledge of the target words, as measured in specifically developed recognition and productive vocabulary knowledge tests.

#### II. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Procedure

The students were first stratified into low, medium and high proficiency level based on their English results of the SPM examinations. Next, they were randomized into the four different gloss conditions: Word Bahasa Melayu, Sentence Bahasa Melayu, Word English and Sentence English. The students were placed in a computer laboratory where they accessed the online text in which the unfamiliar words were glossed. After reading the text, the recognition and productive vocabulary knowledge tests were administered. After three weeks the students were given the same recognition and productive vocabulary knowledge tests in class

#### B. Participants

A total of 99 diploma students whose ages range from 18 to 19 years old from a Malaysian public university took part in this research. They were from 4 intact ESL classes in the university. They were initially stratified into three proficiency levels: low, mid and high based on their English results in a national examination, *Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia* (SPM). Next these students were randomised into 4 different gloss conditions: L1 word Bahasa Melayu (WBM), L2 word English (WEN), L1 sentence Bahasa Melayu (SBM) and L2 sentence English (SEN).

#### C. Materials

This study adapted a text titled "Scary Night" that was previously used by Yoshi (2006) in his study on glosses and vocabulary knowledge. In the text thirteen words which were deemed unfamiliar to the students were then glossed in both the students' L1, Bahasa Melayu and L2, English. The unfamiliarity of the words was judged by two instructors teaching English at the university. Then glosses were created at word and sentence levels, that is, the meaning of the words were given at word level and in context as in sentence definitions. The glosses and tracking were developed using Hypertext Pre-processor (PHP) and MYSQL tools.

To measure the effect of the interactions on vocabulary acquisition, vocabulary tests were designed and administered to the students. These tests measured the students' recognition and production vocabulary knowledge of the students at set intervals, namely, immediately after experiment and post experiment. The glosses (word and sentence/L1 and L2) were the independent variables in the study, while the outcome was measured by the students' vocabulary knowledge (recognition and production) test scores which formed the dependent variables. The other moderating variables are the students' proficiency and their language developmental levels.

Data for the study were collected at two levels. The first was data which was related to the interaction of the students of different proficiency levels with the glosses. It has to be declared here that the data for the clicking behaviour of students was used in a previous study "Students' proficiency and textual computer gloss use in facilitating vocabulary knowledge" published in *English Language Teaching*, Vo.7, No.11, 2014 by the same authors. In that study, clicking behaviour was related to proficiency levels to facilitate vocabulary knowledge. The focus of the previous study was the use of glosses in the teaching of vocabulary and the clicking behavior. In this current study, the data were used to provide a framework of clicking behaviour before deeper analysis of their interactions with specific type of glosses.

With a built-in tracking device in the online reading text, clicking behaviour of the students was documented. It contained information such as the type of gloss clicked and the language of the gloss. At another level, data were in the form of vocabulary test scores. Two tests were developed for the study. One was to measure the recognition vocabulary knowledge of the students. It was a multiple-choice question format with four options. The productive vocabulary knowledge was measured by a gap-filling test where students filled in the gaps of sentences with the correct words. The purpose of the tests was to show evidence of vocabulary acquisition from the interaction of the students with the glosses.

#### D. Research Questions

- 1. What is the clicking behaviour of the learners of different language proficiency levels in the different gloss conditions?
- 2. What is the relationship between the clicking behaviour of the students on the different types of vocabulary knowledge?
  - 3. Is the vocabulary knowledge maintained after three weeks?

#### III. RESULTS & ANALYSIS

#### A. Number of Clicks and Proficiency Levels

A one-way analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to find out if there were differences between the total number of clicks in different proficiency levels. The dependent variable was the total number of clicks and the independent variable was the proficiency levels. Tuckey post-hoc multiple comparisons will be undertaken if significant results were obtained in order to determine the differences between the gloss conditions.

Checks for normality and homogeneity of variance of the dependent variable were carried out. There was no marked deviation from the two assumptions for the different proficiency levels. Table I depicts the mean and standard deviation of the number of clicks at different proficiency levels while Table II shows the ANOVA results.

TABLE I.

MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION FOR NUMBER OF CLICKS AND PROFICIENCY LEVEL.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
LOW	30	10.2333	7.01566	1.28088
MID	39	11.6923	6.32103	1.01218
HIGH	30	9.5667	5.27638	.96333
Total	99	10.6061	6.25613	.62876

The results show that the mid proficiency group had the most number of clicks (M=11.70, SD= 6.3)and high proficiency level had the least number of clicks(M=9.57, SD=5.28). Nonetheless, the differences are not statistically significant. The results are presented in Figure I.

Both ANOVA and post-hoc comparisons revealed that in low proficiency level there was no statistically significant difference between different proficiency levels in the number of clicks. F (2, 96) = 1.0 56 P-value=0.352. Therefore this means that the clicking behavior of the students in the different proficiency levels is almost similar.

TABLE II.

ANOVA FOR CLICKS AT DIFFERENT PROFICIENCY LEVELS

	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
Between Groups	2	41.298	1.056	.352	
Within Groups	96	39.094			
Total	98				

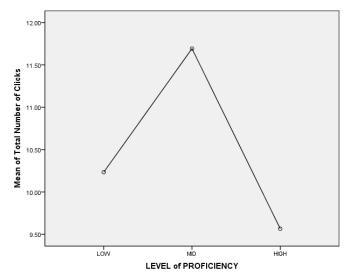


Figure I. Mean number of clicks and levels of proficiency

#### B. Effect of Gloss Conditions on Clicking Behavior

A one-way analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was carried out to find out if there were differences between total number of clicks in the 4 gloss conditions. Checks for normality and homogeneity of variance of the dependent variable were undertaken and revealed that the two assumptions were met for all proficiency levels. Table III shows the mean and standard deviation for all tests in four gloss conditions for total number of clicks. Figure III depicts the number of clicks and gloss conditions.

TABLE III.

MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION FOR THE NUMBER OF CLICKS IN EACH GLOSS CONDITION

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	
Word BM	22	13.4091	4.90538	
S-BM	23	12.2609	7.05960	
Word En	24	8.4583	5.80089	
S-En	30	9.0000	5.97697	
Total	99	10.6061	6.25613	

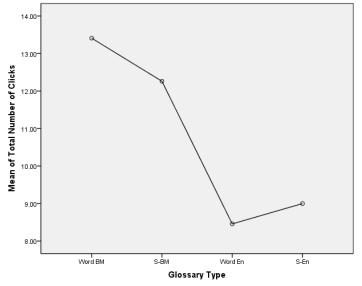


Figure II. The total number of clicks and gloss types

Figure II shows that students in the word-Bahasa Melayu gloss had clicked most on the glosses. This followed by the sentence-Bahasa Melayu gloss. The least clicked glosses were the word-English glosses.

TABLE IV.

ANOVA FOR NUMBER OF CLICKS AT FOUR GLOSS CONDITIONS

7111	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
Between Groups	3	141.308	3.935	.011	
Within Groups	95	35.913			
Total	98				

The results of one way ANOVA for the vocabulary knowledge test are presented in Table IV. The ANOVA test revealed that there was a statistically significant difference in the mean total click numbers of the four gloss conditions F(3, 26) = 3.93, p=0.011.

The Tukey HSD post-hoc multiple comparisons (Table V) show a statistically significant difference in the following pairs:

Word-BM gloss (M=13.40, SD =4.90) and Sentence-English gloss (M= 9.00, SD = 5.97) with a mean difference (MD =4.4) and the p-value of 0.31

Word-BM gloss (M=13.40, SD =4.90) and Word-English gloss (M= 8.45, SD = 5.80) with a large mean difference (MD =4.95) and the p-value of 0.04

TABLE V.

	TUKEY POST-HOC COMPARISONS RESULTS					
_	(I) Glossary Type	(J) Glossary Type	Mean Difference	(I-J) Std. Error	Sig.	
Tukey HSD	Word BM	S-BM	1.14822	1.78713	.918	
		Word -En	$4.95076^*$	1.76883	.031	
		S-En	4.40909*	1.68211	.049	

#### C. Correlation between Number of Clicks and Recognition and Productive Vocabulary Knowledge Test Scores

In order to investigate the relationship between clicking behavior of students and their recognition and productive vocabulary knowledge test scores, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was used. Preliminary analyses were carried out and showed that the assumptions of normality and linearity were not compromised.

TABLE VI.

PEARSON'S CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS OF NUMBER OF CLICKS AND TYPE OF VOCABULARY KNOWLEDGE						
		VOCABULARY	WORD RECOGNITION			
		PRODUCTION TEST 2	TEST2			
Total Number of Clicks	Pearson Correlation	+0.260**	+0.302**			
	P-value	.009	.002			

As shown in Table VI, the highest linear relationship was found to exist between number of clicks and word recognition test 2 (delayed test) scores (r = .302, p < .001). The positive correlation coefficient of 0.302 indicates that the score for word recognition test increases by increasing the number of clicks. In addition, there existed a weak positive correlation between word production test scores and number of clicks (r = .260, p = 0.009).

As a result, it would seem logical to say that the scores of different tests are more likely to increase when the number of clicks increases. This seems to suggest that the more clicks that the students make, the likelihood of them enhancing their vocabulary knowledge increases.

In other words, the more interactions the students make with the textual glosses, the more they gain on vocabulary knowledge. It also appeared that the interactions with the glosses can be maintained over time, in the case of this study, it was within three weeks. This is because the delayed vocabulary tests were conducted three weeks after the experiment with the glosses.

#### IV. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

From the aspect of proficiency level, there were no significant differences clicking behaviour and students' proficiency levels. Closer inspection of the data however revealed that the high proficiency learners clicked the least on the target words, while mid proficiency learners clicked the most. The low proficiency learners were moderate in their clicking behaviour.

In the literature of computer clicking, Murphy (1999) categorises web-users as "surfers" and "searchers". He defines the "surfer" as one who clicks from link to link mainly for amusement and it can be inferred that a "surfer" is one who clicks without any direction or purpose. On the other hand, there is the "searcher" who is focused in seeking specific information. What this means is that a "searcher's" clicking behaviour is purposeful.

Both these traits were possibly manifested in the study where mid proficiency students had the tendency for "surfer" clicking behaviour, while high proficiency students displayed more purposeful clicking behaviour.

What can be seen from the clicking behaviour of the learners in this study seems similar to clicking behaviour in other studies. For instance, Hulstijn, Hollander and Greidanus (1996) observed that advanced L2 learners when reading for comprehension did not interrupt their reading process by looking-up unknown words. They presumed that the concern of such readers were for comprehension and did not use their time and mental effort to look-up the meaning of

unknown words. Again the same phenomenon was seen in a study by Hulstijn, (1993) who found that learners with greater vocabulary knowledge generally looked-up fewer words than learners who had less vocabulary knowledge. The same situation probably existed in this study. The learners with higher proficiency level clicked less on the target words as compared to the low and mid proficiency level learners. If this kind of logic rules, then it would make sense that low proficiency learners would have clicked on more words if compared to the higher levels.

In this study, however, an anomaly seems to have occurred where the mid proficiency learners had clicked the most. What could have occurred with this group of learners is what Robb (1999, p. 98) terms as "click happy behaviour". The mid proficiency students in this study may have displayed surfers' characteristics as described by Murphy, (1999). Therefore, the learners of mid proficiency level clicked on the words more compared to the other learners given the ease and convenience of looking-up the target words. The words were clicked as the students were aware of them and the glosses attended to. After clicking the glossed words, the students may have processed the words, thus making the form-meaning link (Van Patten, 2012). What has probably transpired was that the targeted words were clicked by these students because the words were made visually salient. Hence, saliency which was created by highlighting the words in the text may have triggered the students to click on them. This may have resulted in students being able to develop their vocabulary knowledge.

The data on the clicking behaviour of the learners in the study suggest that clicking behaviour did not vary much between the different gloss conditions and proficiency levels. However, from closer inspection of the data, it was observed that learners in the word BM gloss condition had clicked most on the target words, followed by the learners in the sentence BM gloss condition. The lowest number of clicks was made by learners in the word English gloss condition. Therefore, this would suggest that word BM can be considered useful for the students. Next, it was also seen that sentence BM gloss was clicked on frequently. Thus, this suggests that Bahasa Melayu or the students' L1 appear to be mostly likely preferred type of language of the gloss for these students. At the other end of the scale, it was seen that students in the word English condition had clicked the least. What can be speculated here is that the students probably felt that such glosses may not be of much use to them; hence they clicked the least on such glosses.

The data also showed that vocabulary knowledge was able to be maintained three weeks after the interactions of the glosses. In particular, it was seen that recognition vocabulary knowledge was better maintained when compared to productive vocabulary knowledge. This may mean that computer textual gloss may benefit students in retaining vocabulary knowledge. The researchers are however cautiously optimistic of this pattern as a period of three weeks is not a long period of time. In future studies, the delayed vocabulary tests should be held after a longer period of three weeks before claims of robust vocabulary retention can be made.

In relation to maintaining vocabulary knowledge what has been found out was dissimilar to what has been reported in Watanabe's (1997) research where it showed that words which have been previously learnt would fade away if there was no reviewing process. Schmitt (2010) also made a similar claim where vocabulary attrition is a common occurrence in learning, more so for vocabulary. Hence, it did seem that this situation may not have been played out in this present study. The students' vocabulary knowledge was retained after three weeks of the gloss use. What could have transpired in this study is that the more clicks made on the glosses, there was the possibility that vocabulary knowledge can be sustained. Therefore, this researcher concurs with Pimsleur (1967) and Cheng and Good's (2009) view that new vocabulary items have to be reinforced by frequent reviews after they have been presented in order for the items to be retained over time.

The discussion next is on the implications of the study to pedagogy. It appears that textual type of computer glosses as used in this study can promote vocabulary learning in the short term (Yusuf et al., 2014). Perhaps, for more long-term learning and retention, direct vocabulary teaching may have to be carried out even though Parry (as cited in Yusuf et al., 2014) believes that direct vocabulary teaching for low frequency words is a time-consuming task. Therefore, it would seem that textual glosses and direct teaching may aid students more efficiently in the vocabulary learning process.

From the perspective of gloss conditions, the results from this study indicated that students maintained their recognition vocabulary better in the word-Bahasa Melayu gloss condition compared to other gloss conditions. From the research, albeit cautiously, the researchers sum up that interactions with glosses in word and sentence level in Bahasa Melayu or learners' L1 may benefit the learners' vocabulary knowledge. Nonetheless, for stronger long—term vocabulary gains more vocabulary learning tasks have to be created to induce the elements of noticing, interaction and processing. These are required to maintain and develop the initial vocabulary knowledge gained (Yusuf et al., 2014).

Picking up the point of look-up behaviour, the researchers suggest that when dealing with CALL, teachers should also guide students on their look-up behaviour. For instance, teachers should encourage students to develop more "searcher" kind of look-up behaviour instead of "click-happy" or "surfer" kind of look-up. It would be useful for teachers to inculcate a more "searcher" type of look-up behaviour when dealing when computer aids such as glosses. Although, the study did not show any significant difference between clicking behaviour and proficiency levels, closer observation of the results do suggest that there may be an inherent pattern linking these two variables of look-up behaviour and proficiency.

Pedagogically, it is also proposed that if computer textual-glossing in an online reading context is used to teach vocabulary, it is best for teachers to be explicit in their instructions whether the lesson is for reading comprehension or

vocabulary learning. This would in a way direct the students for the learning activity ahead and their attention can be channeled appropriately – either reading for meaning or form.

Finally, this study has shown that students of different proficiency levels did not differ significantly in their clicking behaviour. It was also documented that vocabulary knowledge may be related to clicking behaviour; more clicks allowed for retention of recognition vocabulary knowledge followed by productive vocabulary knowledge. This may mean that computer textual glosses in Bahasa Melayu and English can be utilized to develop students' vocabulary knowledge.

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**Mohamad Ali Yusuf** is a lecturer with the MARA University of Technology (Perak campus) who is currently pursing his Phd at the Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, University Malaya.

Su'ad Awab is an associate professor with the Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, University Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Tam Shu Sim is a senior lecturer with the Faculty of Languages and Linguistics, University Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

### Analysis of Professional Competence of Bahasa Teachers of Senior High School in Jeneponto Regency after Certification

#### M. Agus

Universitas Negeri Makassar, Jln. Bonto Langkasa, Kampus Gunung Sari, Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia

#### Zainuddin Taha

Universitas Negeri Makassar, Jln. Bonto Langkasa, Kampus Gunung Sari, Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia

#### H. M. Ide Said DM

Universitas Negeri Makassar, Jln. Bonto Langkasa, Kampus Gunung Sari, Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia

#### Muhammad Saleh

Universitas Negeri Makassar, Jln. Bonto Langkasa, Kampus Gunung Sari, Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia

Abstract—This study was conducted in State Senior High School at Jeneponto which aims: (1) to describe and analyze the implementation of the professional competence of Bahasa teachers of State Senior High School in Jeneponto regency after certification; (2) to describe and analyze the results of competency tests of Bahasa teacher of State Senior High School in Jeneponto; (3) to describe and analyze the results of the national exam (UN) of Bahasa subject in the last 5 years after certification of Bahasa teacher of State Senior High School in Jeneponto; and (4) to describe and analyze the development of appropriate models in improving the professional competency of Bahasa teachers of State Senior High School in Jeneponto after certification. This type of research used in this research is mixerd because this study combines three types of research, namely qualitative research, quantitative research, and expostfacto research. The results showed that: (1) the professional competence of Bahasa teachers of State Senior High School in Jeneponto after certification have not been implemented optimally; (2) the results of competency tests of Bahasa teacher in Jeneponto after certification is in the middle category; (3) the results of the national exam data analysis of Bahasa subjects in State Senior High School at Jeneponto in the last 5 years shows that the national test scores fluctuated generally; and (4) the right model of coaching professional competence of Bahasa teachers of State Senior High School in Jeneponto after certification is MGMP model.

Index Terms—professional competence, Bahasa teacher, after certification

#### I. Introduction

Education is a process of delivering cultural heritage from one generation to the next generation. The delivery process includes a process of socialization and acculturation process. Therefore, changes or educational development is something that must occur along with changes in the culture of life. Along with that, Statute Number 20 Year of 2003 on National Education System stated that the national education serves to develop the ability and character development and a dignified civilization in order to educate the nation. The education aims to develop students' potentials to become a faith man and fear of Almighty God, noble, healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become citizens of a democratic, and accountable.

In the world of education, the teacher is an educator, mentor, coach, and curriculum developers who can create conducive conditions and atmosphere in learning. Learning environment is fun learning, interesting, and gives a sense of security, providing space for students to active thinking, creative and innovative in exploring and elaborating ability. Along with that, we need a professional teacher as a critical success factors of education quality. To be able to become professional teachers, they should be able to discover the identity and actualize themselves in accordance with their capabilities and rules of professional teachers (Rusman, 2010, p. 19).

The low quality of education today is an indication of the need for the presence of professional teachers. Teachers are expected not only as a profession, but also teachers must have a strong interest to carry out their duties in accordance with the principles of teachers' professionalism that have been required. Teachers in the era of technology and communications today is not just to teach (transfer of knowledge), but must be the manager of learning. It means that every teacher is expected to create a learning conditions that challenging the student's creativity and activity, motivate students using multimedia, multi methods, and multi sources that learning objectives is expected to be achieved. Putra (2007, p. 3) suggests that there is undeniable that the professionalism of teachers is a necessity that cannot be postponed,

along with the fierce competition that growing increasingly in the era of globalization. Professionalism is not just because of the demand for the development of the times, but also a must for every individual in terms of improvement of the quality of human life. So, we need a teacher certification program in order to improve professionalism.

Birth of the Statute of the Republic of Indonesia No. 14 Year of 2005 on Teachers and Lecturers is the government's commitment to improve the quality of teachers, especially in the academic qualifications and professional competence of educators as agents of learning. Academic qualification for educators acquired through higher education degree program or D-IV, whereas the professional competence of educators, include: pedagogical competence, personal competence, professional competence and social competence. The fourth competencies that must be owned by a professional teacher also stipulated in Government Regulation No. 19 Year of 2005 on National Education Standards (SNP). With a professional certificate obtained by passing the portfolio certification test (performance recording) and training through PLPG, then a teacher is entitled to a professional allowance amounting to one month basic salary. The Statute on Teachers and Lecturers is an effort to improve the quality of teacher's competence in line with the increasing in their welfare through teacher certification program. Teachers who pass the certification is expected to be the pioneer of the revival of education in this country with a monumental work, creativity, and productivity, as well as his/her example in attitude and behavior that reflect themselves as being a professional teacher. Professional teachers are required to have academic qualifications and competence, that have the knowledge, skills, and behaviors that must be owned, internalized and mastered in carrying out the task of professionalism.

#### The Profesional Competence of Bahasa Teacher

In the Statute of the Republic of Indonesia No. 14 Year of 2005 on Teachers and Lecturers said that competence is a set of knowledge, skills, and behaviors that must be owned, lived, and controlled by teachers and lecturers in carrying out the duties of professionalism. According to Payong (2011, p. 17) stated that competence is the ability of a person, as a result of education and training, or specific informal learning experience acquired, causing a person to carry out certain tasks with satisfactory results.

Competence can be defined as the ability, expertise, and skill that is absolutely owned by a person or capabilities that include cognitive, affective, and action (psychomotor), and binding someone in scientific disciplines that have been practiced (Janawi, 2012, p. 34). Similarly, Len Holmes defining competencies, namely "A competency is description of something which a person who works in a given occupational area should be able to do. It is description of an action, behavior or outcome which a person should be able to demonstrate (Suyanto and Djihad, 2012, p. 47).

A professional Bahasa teacher should has a vision in carrying out its duties and responsibilities. There are three visions that must be owned by professional Bahasa teachers, namely (1) the long-term vision of the end goal-oriented in every step that is done. Doing something optimally and earnest self-control and social because it has a knowledge of the ultimate goal of this life, the certainty of the future and tranquility will be the purpose of life; (2) medium-term vision, which is always oriented to the success of all that is done, the desire to achieve the best performance has always been the ideals and objectives of teachers; (3) short-term vision that is always oriented at all times to do our best to promote the activities of learners and the success and achievement of the aspired (Saondi and Suherman, 2010, p. 56).

In the Minister of National Education Republic of Indonesia (Permendiknas RI) No. 16 Year of 2007 on Teachers Competency Standards Qualifications mentioned that the competence of Bahasa teachers at SMP/MTs, SMA/MA, and SMK/MAK that must have as a professional teacher are (1) understanding the concepts, theories, and material of various linguistic associated with the development of language learning materials; (2) understand the nature of language and language acquisition; (3) understand the position, function, and a variety of Bahasa; (4) mastering the rules of Bahasa as a reference to use Bahasa well and correctly; (5) understand the theory and literary genres of Indonesia; and (6) to appreciate literary works receptively and productively (National Education Department, 2007, p. 218).

#### The Principles, Objectives and Benefits of Teacher Certification

Certification is the process to obtain a certificate of professional teachers by collecting a portfolio numbering 10 elements. Ministry of National Education Regulation No. 18 Year of 2007 states that certification for teachers are implemented through competency test to obtain a teaching certificate. The competency test conducted in the form of portfolio assessment, which is the recognition of teachers' professional experience in the form of an assessment of the document that reflects the teacher competence. The portfolio competence assessment include: (a) academic qualifications; (B) education and training; (C) teaching experience; (D) the planning and implementation of learning; (E) the assessment of the employer and supervisors; (F) academic achievement; (G) professional development work; (H) participation in scientific forums; (I) the organization's experience in the field of education and social; and (j) awards relevant to the field of education (Depdiknas 2007, p. 227).

Asmani (2009, p. 49) points out the main principles of the implementation of teacher certification, namely openness, honesty, accountability, objectivity, professionalism, and goal-oriented instead of allowances. Khoiri (2010, p. 17) argues that the principle of implementation of teacher certification, namely (a) carried out in an objective, transparent, and accountable; (B) lead to improving the quality of national education through the improvement and welfare of teachers: (c) carried out in accordance with regulation and legislation; (D) carried out in a planned and systematic; and (E) the number of participants teacher certification set by the government.

The purpose of certification is to improve the quality of graduates and the quality of education through improvement of quality teacher. The purpose is to determine the feasibility of teachers in carrying out duties as agents of learning,

improving the professionalism of teachers, improve processes and outcomes, and accelerate the realization of national education goals. There are two target implementation of teacher certification, namely increasing personal competence, professional competence, pedagogical competence and social competence of teachers; and increasing professionalism, performance and welfare of teachers. In other words, the purpose of certification is to improve the quality of teachers and improving the welfare of teachers (Asmani, 2009, p. 29). While Suyanto and Djihad (2012, p. 41) argues that the purpose of the certification is to determine the feasibility of a teacher in carrying out duties as agents of learning in school and realize the goal of national education, improve the process and quality of education, and promoting the dignity of teachers, as well as improving the professionalism of teachers.

Suyanto and Djihad (2012, p. 41) points out the benefits of certification is to protect the teaching profession of incompetent practices, thus damaging the image of the teaching profession itself; protect the public from educational practices that are not qualified and professional; improve the welfare of teachers; and make teachers as professionals. The same opinion was expressed by Muslich (2007, p. 9) that the beneficial teacher certification, namely (a) protect the profession of teacher from incompetent practices, thus damaging the image of the teaching profession itself; protecting the teaching profession of incompetent practices, thus damaging the image of the teaching profession itself; (B) protect the public from educational practices that are not qualified and professionals that will hamper efforts to improve the quality of education and preparation of human resources; (C) be a quality assurance mode of LPTK that tasked to prepare prospective teachers and serves as a quality control for users of educational services; and (d) be the organizer of educational institutions from internal and external desires that can potentially deviate from the provisions applicable.

Asmani (2009, p. 31) stated that the benefits of the implementation of the certification is to protect the teaching profession from incompetent practice, which can damage the image of the teaching profession, protecting the public from practices that are not educational and professional qualified, and keep the educators institute education providers (LPTK) of the desire of the internal and external pressure to deviate from the provisions in force. The benefit from the implementation of the teacher certification by Mulyasa (2010, p. 35) is the quality control and quality assurance. Quality control aims to define a set of competencies that are unique, developing competency levels in a sustainable manner, development career, and achieve the increased level of professionalism. The quality assurance aims to provide a guarantee or protect the users of educational services and provide valuable information for users of educational services on specific areas of expertise and skills.

#### The Professional Bahasa Teacher Performance

Performance is the level of success of a person or group of people in carrying out their duties and responsibilities, as well as the ability to achieve the goals and standards that have been established (Saondi and Suherman (2010, p. 20). Furthermore, Smither (1998, p. 43) interpret the performance as something that is achieved by a person as a form of embodiment of the work on the job, activity, and behavior during the specified time limit. Dharma (1985, p. 21) defines performance similar with job achievement which is something that is done or the products/services produced by a person or group, how the quality of work, thoroughness, and neatness of work, assignments and work field, the use and maintenance of equipment, initiatives and activities, discipline and morale (honesty, loyalty, a sense of unity and responsibility), as well as interpersonal relationships.

Assessment of the performance of the teacher is reviewing the ability of teachers in performing their duties. Assessment of the performance of teachers is an attempt to determine the maximum skills possessed by teachers regarding the process and the work is done on the basis of certain criteria (National Education Department, 2000, p. 21). In relation to aspects of performance, Wexley and Yulk (1997, p. 21) argues that a person's performance is influenced by three interrelated aspects, namely skill, effort, and external conditions. The skill level is the raw material that brought someone to work like experience, ability, and technical abilities. Efforts can be expressed as shown by the level of employee motivation in completing the work. While external conditions is the level of the extent to conditions outside work supports labor productivity as a psychological condition, organizational communication, organizational climate, and so on. With the existing support conditions, a person can work optimally.

A professional teacher also had time to recognize and utilize multimedia in each implementing learning. Therefore, Bahasa teachers who are appropriately professional should be able to use ICT-based learning. ICT-based learning model can foster students' independence in learning and help teachers in efficienting power and time. To determine the success of students in achieving competencies that have been planned in advance, a professional Bahasa teacher should do the evaluation at the end of learning. Besides, an evaluation is done to know the learning difficulties faced by the students so it is necessary to do follow-up measures in the form of remedial programs to assist students in overcoming problems or difficulties in learning.

#### **Models of Professional Teacher Development after Certification**

One way to develop the professionalism of teachers is to engage the teachers in a variety of scientific activities in order to stay updated with the knowledge they need. The forms of scientific activities, among others: the upgrading program, workshops and seminars. Principals should be able to include subject teachers in a workshop activity. Mujtahid (2011, p. 80) argues that there are three attempts should be made by a teacher in developing professional, namely (1) mastering and developing materials; (2) developing learning method; and (3) fostering the attitude of the student's personality.

The professional teacher development efforts should always be made at any time through scientific activities to stimulate and add new insights or knowledge for teachers. The professional model development of teachers should be poured in a sustainable schools policy. The educators (teachers) are given the opportunity to participate in scientific activities. Scientific activity is meant the overall activities related to the teaching profession, such as the development of educational insights, skills of teachers, materials or curriculum, school administration, and others. The scientific activity can be done in various forms of activities, such as (1) a program of workshops; (2) workshops; and (3) seminar (Mujtahid, 2011, p. 72-73).

To improve the quality of the profession, the principal needs to encourage teachers to be active in the forum activities of professional organizations, such as the Subject Teachers Council (MGMP) or the Teachers Working Group (KKG). The involvement of teachers in the forum is an important step for teachers to build a professional attitude that teachers can explore and master their material. To improve teacher competence in his/her field, the school must put the MGMP as a strategy to improve the ability of expertise on an ongoing basis. Improving the professionalism of teachers in the MGMP used, among other: (1) for the meeting among the teaching profession have same expertise to know each other, exchange ideas, and discuss related to their field; (2) as a special forum which functioned to solve the various problems related to the professionalism; and (3) as a mode for improving the quality of the profession in their respective fields (Mujtahid, 2011, p. 74).

By enabling teachers on MGMP, teachers can quickly determine the problem that has always faced in their profession and able to find the alternative ways to solve itself. As subject teachers, a problem that often arises is how to educate students in the class, how to deal with students who are experiencing barriers to learn and how good the cooperation between the components that are responsible for education. Emerging problems with the teacher can be solved through MGMP. The process of professional development of teachers through MGMP is directed to be able to share experiences regarding about how to teach and teaching materials. Something that is obtained through MGMP teacher is applied to the learning activities at school. MGMP also has a very important role in order to solve the various problems experienced by the teachers.

Saondi and Suherman (2010, p. 78) suggests some alternative development program of professional teacher, namely (1) a program to improve teacher education qualifications; (2) equivalent and certification programs; (3) integrated competency-based training program; (4) educational supervision programs; (5) MGMP (Subject Teachers Council) empowerment program; (6) symposium teacher; and (7) conducts research.

#### II. RESEARCH METHODS

#### Type and Design of the Research

This type of research is the mixerd study because this research is a combination of three types of research, i.e qualitative research; quantitative research and qualitative research; and expostfacto research. This research is used to describe the phenomenon that are associated with the professionalism of Bahasa teachers in planning, implementing, and evaluate learning. The quantitative research is used to obtain the data about the professional competence of Bahasa teachers of State Senior High School in Jeneponto that have passed certification by using the test. The expostfacto research used to describe the national exam (UN) of students in Bahasa subjects from year to year, since teachers are certified until recently. This study uses descriptive qualitative research design and quantitative research used non experiment design in the form of teacher competency tests.

#### The Variable Operational Definition

Professional competence is the ability or the ability of Bahasa teachers in mastering the learning material broadly and exhaustively that enable learners (students) can be guided through the learning activities which includes the ability to open learning, implementing the learning, and closing the learning.

The teacher competency tests are tests that contain linguistic competence, literature, and language skills that must be mastered by Bahasa teacher as an evidence of profesional teacher after certification.

The value of National Exam (UN) at Bahasa subjects is the value obtained by the students after the national exams from year to year, which is obtained through school or education department documents, by comparing the student's value of the last 5 years after the Bahasa teachers has been certified.

#### Population and Sample

The population in this study is Bahasa teacher of State Senior High School in Jeneponto who has passed the certification of 20 people that shown in Table 3.1 below.

TABLE 3.1
THE POPULATION CIRCUMSTANCES

No.	School Name		Teacher who passed certification		Teacher who has not passed certification yet	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	
1	SMA Negeri Khusus Jeneponto	1	-	-	-	
2	SMA Negeri 1 Binamu	2	1	-	1	
3	SMA Negeri 2 Binamu	1	3	-	1	
4	SMA Negeri 1 Kelara	1	2	-	2	
5	SMA Negeri 1 Batang	-	1	1	1	
6	SMA Negeri 1 Tamalatea	2	2	1	-	
7	SMA Negeri 1 Bangkala	1	1	-	1	
8	SMA Negeri 1 Bangkala Barat	1	1	1	-	
Total		9	11	3	8	

Source: Department of Education Youth and Sports Jeneponto

Based on the population mentioned above, this research used total sample. The researcher only take teachers who pass certification which has small numbers and do not do sampling, so the sample used in this study is 20 people.

#### The Research Instruments

The research instrument is chosen tools and used by researcher in his/her activities in collecting data for the activity to be systematically developed and made by him/her (Riduan, 2002, p. 21). The instrument used in this study are as follows:

- 1. The interview guide is used to obtain data or information of Bahasa teachers regarding the implementation of professional competence.
- 2. Guidelines observation is used to obtain the data on the implementation of professional competence through learning activities in the classroom.
- 3. The test is used to get an overview of competence or language abilities (linguistic), literature, and language skills of Bahasa teachers after certification.
- 4. Questionnaire used to obtain the data or information regarding the description of the implementation of profesional competence and coaching model of Bahasa teacher of Senior High School in Jeneponto after certification.

#### **Technique of Data Collection**

The interview techniques used to obtain data or information regarding the implementation of professional Bahasa teacher competence after certification. The documentation technique used to obtain data relating to the value of the students' national exam (UN) on the Bahasa subjects on the last 5 years. The observation techniques used to obtain data on the implementation of learning that reflects the professional competence of Bahasa teachers. The test techniques used to obtain the data about linguistic competence, literature, and language skills of Bahasa teachers who pass as a proof of professional competency mastery. The questionnaire technique used to obtain the data or information regarding the implementation of professional competence and coaching model of Bahasa teacher of Senior High School in Jeneponto after certification.

#### **Techniques of Data Analysis**

The data has been collected processed using descriptive analysis qualitative techniques and descriptive statistical analysis techniques. The data obtained through interviews used a qualitative descriptive analysis technique. The steps to be taken in analyzing the data is done through three stages, namely reducing the data, presenting the data, and verification of the data. At this stage of data reduction, the researcher selecting, focusing, and simplify the data, and then formulate the data to be ready presented in their entirety. The activity data presentation is done by organizing the data reduction results. Furthermore, the inference and data verification carried out after reduction activities and presentation of the data. The data has been reduced and presented then made conclusions and recommendations.

The data obtained through the questionnaire were processed using descriptive statistical analysis techniques through SPSS. Similarly, the data regarding Bahasa teacher competency tests who are passed the certification is processed with data analysis techniques using SPSS. Furthermore, for the variable value of Bahasa subjects of national exam (UN) is performed using techniques of data analysis, which compare the average value of the students' national exam (UN) of Bahasa subjects from year to year for 5 years, then summed to describe whether or not the increasing in national test scores of students.

#### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The Implementation Description of Professional Competence of Bahasa Teachers of Senior High School in Jeneponto after Certification

Based on the results of the analysis of a questionnaire distributed to 20 Bahasa teachers of Senior High School in Jeneponto consisting of 9 indicators, can be described, namely (a) to recognize the characteristics of learners as the first indicator shows at the high category, so the conclusion is to know the characteristics of learners achieved by Bahasa teachers of Senior High School in Jeneponto after certification at the high category; (B) control of learning theory and principles of learning that educates as a second indicator shows at the high category, so it can be concluded that mastery theory and principles of learning achieved by educating Bahasa teacher of Senior High School in Jeneponto after

certification are at high category; (C) the development of the curriculum as a third indicator shows at the high category, so it can be concluded that the curriculum development achieved by Bahasa teacher of Senior Hgh School in Jeneponto after certification are at high category; (D) communication with the students as the fourth indicator shows at the high category, so the conclusion is communication with learners achieved by Bahasa teacher of Senior High School in Jeneponto are at high category; (E) the assessment and evaluation as a fifth indicator shows at the high category, the conclusion is reached assessment and evaluation by Bahasa teacher of Senior High School in Jeneponto after certification at the high category; (F) the acquisition of materials, structures, concepts, and mindset scientific support of teaching subjects as the sixth indicator shows at the high category. Thus, it can be concluded that the mastery of materials, structures, concepts, and scientific thought patterns that support achieved by Bahasa teacher of Senior High School in Jeneponto are at high category; (G) to develop professionalism through reflective action, interesting learning activities seventh shows at the high category, so it was concluded that developing professionalism through reflective action achieved by Bahasa teacher of Senior High School in Jeneponto after certification are at high category; (H) the educating learning activities are at the high category, so it was concluded that the learning activities that educate achieved by Bahasa teachers of Senior High School in Jeneponto after certification at the high category; (i) the professional competence is at the high category, so it was concluded that the professional competence achieved by Bahasa teachers of Senior High School in Jeneponto at the high category.

Based on the data that has been obtained through a questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS program, it can be concluded that the professional competence of Bahasa teachers are in the medium category. This means that the professional competence of Bahasa teachers of Senior High School in Jeneponto after certification has not been implemented optimally or not much increased, so they need to be encouraged to follow many scientific activities related to the profession, among others: workshop, seminars, training, and MGMP. The results of the observation of the implementation of learning shows that generally, teachers already implementing the learning well, demonstrated by mastery learning materials well, the attitude of teachers has been shown well, already presents the lessons in accordance with the objectives/indicators in the Lesson Plan, the ability to use the method and learning media well, as well as the ability to open and close the learning well. The results of interviews on the implementation of professional competence of Bahasa teachers of Senior High School in Jeneponto are not much increased. This shows that from the 26 indicators that were examined contained 15 indicators that show the respondents who said the same, meaning that there is no increasing teacher competence after certification and there are 11 indicators that show no increasing competence respondents. Thus, it can be described that the implementation (execution) professional competence of Bahasa teachers of Senior High School in Jeneponto is not optimal, so it is necessary to do the guidance in depth because there is a lot of professional competence increased after certification.

#### The Results Test of Teacher Competency

The results of Bahasa teacher competency tests showed that the highest value is 57 that achieved by the teacher of SMA 1 Bangkala Barat with respondents code is H2, and the lowest score is 28 that achieved by SMA Negeri Khusus Jeneponto with respondents code is A. The frequency distribution test data competency of teachers by categories of low, medium, high and highest frequency of the data showed that the test results are in the low category of teachers with the number of 18 teachers, and the gain was only 2 categories of teachers, and none of the teachers who earn higher category. Thus, it can be concluded that in general the results of Bahasa teacher competency tests of Senior High School in Jeneponto that has passed certification are in the low category. This shows that Bahasa teachers who passed the certification should be encouraged to participate in various scientific activities in order to develop professional competence. Scientific activities that need to be followed by the Bahasa teacher after certification is a professional workshop development of teachers, training in the form of teacher competence development that leads to mastery learning materials based on their respective sectors, seminars on teacher professionalism, and most importantly, follow MGMP of Bahasa, as well as other activities that are developing competence of Bahasa teacher after certification.

The teacher competency test results into consideration for education department in regency and province, and the Ministry of Education to consider appropriate measures in order to develop and professional development of teachers. Therefore, the government program through continuous professional development (PKB) for all teachers who pass the certification must be followed up quickly through the Institute for Education Quality Assurance (LPMP) or other professional institutions. In addition, the government of Jeneponto need budgeting the coaching teachers through APBD, especially those who have passed certification by activating or scheduling routine activities of teachers through the Teachers Council (MGMP). Thus, teachers who have passed the certification needs to be fostered and closely monitored in order to increase their professional competence after certification and not happen otherwise, that is the poor quality of teachers who have passed the certification. The government needs to move quickly with the budgeted cost of coaching competence of teachers for the costs incurred as a certification allowance make them more optimal and raised full of awareness to do the job as a profesional teacher in order to educate the children of the nation or to create the human resources (HR) quality.

#### **Analysis of the National Exam Results**

The results of the national exam data analysis of Bahasa subjects started in the school year of 2009/2010 to 2013/2014 shows that in general, the national test scores in each school is fluctuated. Every school have ups and downs, sometimes get increasing national test scores in a certain year, and next year has decreased, then the following year get

another increasing, up and down again, and so on. But there is one school, namely SMAN 1 Bangkala Barat that increased in the last 4 year start from the academic year 2009/2010, but in the fifth academic year 2013/2014 this school also decreased.

SMA Khusus Jeneponto shows that the national test scores of Bahasa subjects in the academic year 2009/2010 was 7.65, then the academic year 2010/2011 increased to 8.35, then the academic year 2011/2012 decreased to 8.27 and academic year 2012/2013 also decreased reaching 7.85, and the last academic year 2013/2014 increased to 8.12. This fact shows that the average value of the national exam subjects in SMA Khusus Jeneponto decreased from year to year, but in academic year 2013/2014 has increased although the increase is very low, only 0.27.

The average value of the national exam Bahasa subject at SMA Negeri 1 Binamu can be described in academic year 2009/2010 is 7.22 then decreased to 6.96 in academic year 2010/2011. However, the academic year 2011/2012 has increased, so that the average becomes 8.51 and then decreased to 8.29 in academic year 2012/2013. Recently, has increased from the previous year so that the average becomes 8.31 in academic year 2013/2014. This shows that the average value of the national exam of SMA Negeri 1 Binamu also decreased and increased from year to year intermittently.

The average value of the national exam student of Bahasa subjects in SMAN 2 Binamu can be stated that in academic year 2009/2010, the average score was 7.37 then decreased in academic year 2010/2011, the average was 7.34. The academic year 2011/2012 had decreased with the average was 7.15 and had increased, so the average was 8,62 in academic year 2012/2013, and finally decreased, so that the average value was 7.72 on a national exam academic year 2013/2014. This illustrates that the academic year 2009/2010, 2010/2011, and 2011/2012 had decreased and in the last academic year 2013/2014 had increased.

The average value of the national exam (UN) of Bahasa subjects in SMA Negeri 1 Kelara can be described that the academic year 2009/2010 was 6.11 which increased in academic year 2010/2011, so the average was 7.83. In academic year 2011/2012 had decreased with an average just 6.90, then increased in academic year 2012/2013 with an average of 8.73. Finally, in academic year 2013/2014 has decreased, with the average was 8.56. This illustrates that from the academic year 2009 / 2010 to academic year 2010 / 2011 the average national exam had improved, but from the academic year 2011/2012 to 2012/2013 had decreased again, and the last of the academic year 2012/2013 to 2013 / 2014 has increased.

Furthermore, the average value of the national exam students SMA Negeri 1 Batang can be described that the academic year 2009/2010, the average score was 7.99 and decreased in the academic year 2010/2011 so that the average was 7.14. However, the last 3 years is constantly increasing began in 2011/2012 to 2013/2014, the average start 8.15 to 8.71, and the last on the average to 8.73. This illustrates that the achievement of learning achieved by the students of SMAN 1 Batang through the national exam is pretty good because it is only in the academic year 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 had decreased and since the last academic year 2011/2012 until 2013/2014 has increased.

The average value of the national exam (UN) of Bahasa subjects in SMA Negeri 1 Tamalatea in academic year 2009/2010 was 6.32, then had increased in academic year 2010/2011, so that the average was 8.26. Furthermore, in academic year 2011/2012 also had increased, so the average was 8.39. However, the academic year 2012/203 had decreased so, the average was only reached 8.30, and the last had increased in the academic year 2013/2014 so that the average became 8.57. Based on the data from national test scores for 5 years, it can be concluded that only once has decreased, from academic year 2011/2012 to 2012/2013 and the rest is good enough to increase even though still fluctuating.

The average value of the national exam (UN) of Bahasa subjects in SMA Negeri 1 Bangkala in academic year 2009/2010 was 6.21, then had increased in academic year 2010/2011 so that the average reached 6.41, but had decreased in academic year 2011/2012, so the average was 6.30. Then, in the academic year 2012/2013 had increased with average 7.20. Similarly, in the academic year 2013/2014 has increased, so the average was 8.13. This condition shows that the average value of the national exam of Bahasa subjects in SMA Negeri 1 Bangkala for the last 5 years was pretty good, even though had decreased once, i.e from academic year 2010/2011 to 2011/2012 and the rest had increased, but still can be categorized fluctuated.

The last school was SMAN 1 Bangkala Barat. It can be described that the average value of the national exam of Bahasa subjects for the last 5 years has increased from year to year, but decreased in 2013/2014. The average value of the national exam in academic year 2009/2010 was 8.02, then had increased so that the average became 8.10 in the academic year 2010/2011. Similarly, the academic year 2011/2012 had increased by the average became 8.12, in academic year 2012/2013 also had increased, so the average was 8.51. However, the academic year 2013/2014 had decreased very significantly, so the average was 7.24. This condition shows that during four years the average value of the national exam (UN) of Bahasa subjects in SMA 1 Bangkala Barat got a significant increasing, but very disappointed because in the fifth year, the academic year 2013/2014 had decreased significantly.

Based on the statement above, it can be stated that the Bahasa teachers who have passed the certification does not guarantee the rising student achievement, especially the national test scores. This is showed by the average value of the national exam students from 8 Senior High School in Jeneponto that was studied showed the fluctuative value or have up and down from year to year for 5 years starting from the academic year 2009/2010 to 2013/2014.

### The Development Model Competence of Professional Bahasa Teachers of Senior High School in Jeneponto after Certification

The results of the data analysis is based on interviews show that generally, the respondent stated that MGMP can be used as a mode and as well as a coaching model to improve the professional competence of teachers, both in planning, implementing, and evaluating learning, and can be used as a forum to discuss problems or find solutions to problems arose in the study. Thus, it can be concluded that the MGMP model can be used as coaching mode and development competence of Bahasa teacher of Senior High School in Jeneponto after certification. To optimize the function and role models of Bahasa MGMP as language coaching model professional competence of teachers after certification, it is recommended a few things, namely: (a) MGMP's serious attention of government in regency, especially the Ministry of Youth and Sports to provide continuous guidance and supervision through Special Allocation Fund (DAK) in the budget; (B) MGMP must be activated again and actively, and effectively with the serious attention of the Department of Education, Youth and Sports through budget allocations; (C) MGMP should perform routine activities programmed in the Ministry of Youth and Sports Jeneponto and programmed in schools through School Work Plan (RKS); (D) Working Group activity must be carefully set by presenting speakers who are competent (experts, lecturers or professors), media support, inviting teacher directly by mentioning his/her name, that carried out regularly and continuously, and there is evaluation (assessment) for MGMP participants.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Based on analysis of data obtained through questionnaires, observations, and interviews showed that the implementation of the professional competence of Bahasa teachers of Senior High School in Jeneponto after certification has not been implemented yet optimally, so that it needs to be improved because it has not been increased. The teacher competency test results showed that the highest frequency teacher test result data are in the low category with 18 teachers, and only gain 2 categories of teachers, and none of the teachers who earn higher category. This illustrates that the results of competency tests of Bahasa teacher of Senior High School in Jeneponto that have passed certification are in the low category.

The results of the national exam data analysis of Bahasa subjects at all high schools in Jeneponto for the last 5 years, starting with the academic year 2009/2010 to 2013/2014 shows that generally, the national test scores in each school were fluctuated. Every school have up and down, sometimes get the increasing national test scores in a certain year, and in the next year had decreased, then increased again in the following year, get down and up again, and so on. Thus, it can be argued that Bahasa teachers of Senior High School in Jeneponto who passed the certification not assure the rising student achievement, especially the national test scores.

The right model coaching professional competence of Bahasa teachers of Senior High School in Jeneponto after certificationi is MGMP. The result showed that respondents see MGMP is the right choice to be used as a mode and can be used as a coaching model and development competence of professional teachers after certification because MGMP can be used as a forum to plan, implement, and evaluate learning, as well as mode to discuss the problem or the solution of the problems faced in the learning process.

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M. Agus was born on 11 May 1972. He graduated in SD Inpres No. 133 Mangepong in 1985, SMP Negeri Pokobulo Bontoramba in 1988, SPG Negeri 136 Jeneponto in 1991. And then he continued his bachelor in Department of Education of Language and Literature, Universitas Muhammadiyah in 1996, then his magister in Department of Education of Bahasa Indonesia, Universitas Negeri Makassar, then he continued his doctoral program in Universitas Negeri Makassar, Department of Language Education in 2010.

He is a Lecturer in Kopertis Wil. IX Dpk STKIP YAPTI Jeneponto since 2011 until present. He takes on Chief Assistant I (2013-present). He becomes Secretary I of Pengurus Pusat Ikatan Alumni (IKA) Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar in 1997-1999, General Secretary Ikatan Alumni Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar, Jeneponto Regency in 1998-2016 (two periods). Chief assistant of Redaction Majalah Gema Suara

Guru PGRI, Jeneponto Regency in 2005-2009. Secretary Assistant II Association of Lembaga Pendidik dan Tenaga Kependidikan (PTK) Private of Sulawesi in 2010-2014. Seretary Assistant II Ikatan Sarjana Turatea (IST), Jeneponto Regency in 2013-2017.



**Zainuddin Taha** was born in Soppeng, on 5 April 1937. Indonesia citizenship. Head Teacher of Post Graduate Program of State University ofm Makassar. He graduated his formal education in Sekolah Rakyat in 1948, Sekolah Sambungan in 1951, Bhg Junior High School in 1964, Sekolah Guru Atas in 1957, BI (B One) Bahasa Indonesia Negeri in 1961, *Bachelor of Arts* (B.A) in FKIP UNHAS in 1962, Bachelor of Indonesia Language and Literature in IKIP Makassar in 1965, *Postgraduate on General and Austronesian Linguistics* in Rijks University, Leiden in 1978, and PhD (S3), of Sosiolinguistic in UNHAS in 1985.

He has follow some courses/training/upgrading such as: (1) Upgrading of Sosiolinguistic, Center of Language of Depdikbud in 1975, (2) Upgrading and Lokakarya (PENLOG) P3G Depdikbud RI, (3) Achievement Motivation Training, Yayasan Pembina Insani Makassar in 1993, and another some

courses/training/upgrading. Scientific result is generated such as: (1) Penelitian Bahasa dan Dialek dalam Rumah Tanggadi Kota Makassar, in 1975, (2) Pengertian dan Fungsi Bahasa Indonesia pada Populasi Tertentu di Desa Tugu Selatan Jawa Barat, in 1975, (3) Satu Wacana Dua Bahasa: Faktor-Faktor Sosiolinguistik Alihkode Bahasa Bugis-Bahasa Indonesia, in 1985, and another scientific works. Many books, articles, n papers has published and in book/scientific newspaper.

Prof. Dr. H. Zainuddin Taha has experience as instructor in schools and universities (Present, he is professor of UNM, UNHAS, dan UIM), working experience in structural/assignment in teams (Present, he is Ketua Umum Asosiasi Professor Indonesia of Sulawesi Selatan), working experience in government/society, and experience as consultant. He achivements has acquire such as:some Satya Lencana, some another achievement in government organization, and some another achievements.



**H. M. Ide Said DM**, was born in Mare, Bone Regency in 1936. He graduated his Elementary school in 1951 and then his Junior High School in SGB in 1954. He graduated his Senior High School in 1957 in SGA in Pare-pare. He graduated his diploma of BI Bahasa Indonesia in Ujung Pandang in 1962. He continued his bachelor in 1963 and he graduated his bachelor of education in 1967 in Department of Indonesian Language and Literature in IKIP Ujung Pandang. He achieves his doctoral in 1983 in IKIP Malang. In 1963 until present he actives as lecturer in State University of Makassar, Muhammadiyah University, Institute of Agama Islam Negeri Makassar, both degree of Undergraduate, Graduate, and Postgraduate.

Ide Said assumed as Assistant Dean III in 1970, as Assistant Dean I in 1971-1972, as Dean in 1972-1974 in Faculty of Literature and Art in IKIP Ujung Pandang. Scientific Paper that has been published is local language dictionary *Bugis-Indonesia* and *Makassar-Indonesia*. The results of the research that has been done there are ten types, generally related to Indonesian and regional language (Bugis). Present assume as director of Postgraduate in Muhammadiyah University, Makassar.



Muhammad Saleh was born in Ujung, Bone Regency, South Sulawesi. He was born on December 31, 1975. He graduated his elementary school in SD Inpres 377 Patangkai, Bone Regency in 1987, he continued his junior high school in SMP Negeri Lappariaja, Bone Regency in 1990, and then he continued his senior high school in SMA Negeri Lappariaja, Bone Regency in 1993. He continued his bachelor in Department of Indonesia Language and Literature, IKIP Ujung Pandang in 1999, he continued his magister in Department of Indonesia Language and Literature, Universitas Negeri Makassar in 2004, and he continued his doctoral program on Department of Bahasa Education, Universitas Negeri Malang in 2009.

He is a lecturer of Department of Language and Literature of Universitas Negeri Makassar since 2000 until present. He is a Head of Department of Language and Literature. His scientific research are: (1) Wujud

Kesantunan Berbahasa dalam Wacana Akademik in 2011. Makassar: Jurnal Retorika. (2) Tindak Ekspresif Kesantunan Berbahasa Mahasiswa Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra Fakultas Bahasa dan Sastra Unversitas Negeri Makassar in 2012 Makassar: Jurnal Retorika. (3) Pengembangan Bahan Ajar Keterampilan Menyimak yang Berwawasan Pendidikan Karakter dengan Memanfaatkan Cerita Rakyat Bugis dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia Kelas V SD di Sulawesi Selatan in 2013. Jakarta: DP2M Dikti Kemendikbud Republik Indonesia (RI) and he is active in organizations of Masyarakat Linguistik Indonesia (MLI).

# Integration of Technology into Language Teaching: A Comparative Review Study

#### Mehmet Fatih Ür ün

Department of Educational Sciences, Faculty of Education, Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey

Abstract—The purpose of this study was to monitor the effectiveness of earlier and contemporary practices in the application of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in language learning/teaching. It was revealed that current literature on the effectiveness of technology uses in language education is very narrow and there are three aspects that stand out: (1) The number of well-structured and comprehensive studies about the effects of technology uses on language education was very diminutive, (2) the settings where the studies were handled were restricted to higher education, (3) the experiments were often short-term and they mostly focused on only one or two aspects of language learning (e.g., vocabulary acquisition). However, the existing studies based mostly on experimental data showed a pattern of positive effects when compared to the conventional methods of language instruction. In terms of differences between the research done outside and in Turkey, the theme that was studied in international literature was based on technology use for providing opportunities for communication while in Turkey the studies concentrated on providing access to materials.

Index Terms—information and communication technologies (ICTs), language education, Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL)

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Today, nobody can claim that a language class that does not use some forms of technology serves for effective language learning/teaching. Recently, starting from kindergarten and reaching to higher education, technology has been used both to support and to enhance language education. Therefore, current language education policies show tendency toward utilizing different forms of technology to support instructional processes, to involve language learners in the learning process, and to provide authentic patterns of the target culture and different cultures as well. Furthermore, some forms of technological tools permit teachers to differentiate instruction (Tomlinson, 2001) and adapt classroom activities and homework assignments according to different needs and expectations of the language learners to be able to foster language learning experience. In sum, technology continues to grow in importance as a tool to assist instruction of foreign languages in facilitating and mediating language learning for the students.

Technology plays a supplementary role, which is determined and shaped by the human dimension, namely, students and teachers. It is an undeniable fact that integration of old and new ways of learning within a comprehensive way is highly crucial to be able to adequately meet the students' needs and expectations. For this purpose, technology provides various authentic sources for teaching four skills of language (reading, listening, writing, and speaking); thus, the use of technology in language instructions has become vital in contemporary language education.

Through this study, it was aimed to seek for the effect of technology use on language instruction. To be able to pursue the quest for this claim, the following part will provide a historical perspective about the evolution of technology use in language teaching together with foremost attempts for integrating technology into the classrooms in Turkey. After that, a theoretical framework will be outlined to make the discussion more clear by mentioning about some important functions that are important for the use of technology in language teaching such as providing access to materials, providing communication opportunities, and fostering motivation. Later on, research conducted both abroad and Turkey will be given in detail to support the outlined theories. At the end, future directions for research on integration of technology into language instruction will be presented following the conclusion part in which a comparison between research in other countries and in Turkey will be offered.

#### II. A BRIEF HISTORY OF INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

There have been two major phases in technology supporting language instructions: audio media and visual media.

Audio materials are accepted as the first examples of technology used in language teaching. First of all, audiotape has a history dating back to the late 1950s. The first audiotape machines were bulky and heavy, yet it only became a universal medium with the emergence of audiocassette in the 1970s which created a great effect for the enhancement of language teaching. The common use of audio after 1970s resulted in the establishment of the audio language laboratories and this allowed both teachers and students to control the access to audio materials. After that, new forms of digital audio, called as the audio compact disc or CD, was introduced in the early 1980s and quickly caught on. Most importantly, a final type of digital audio was computer-based digital audio in 1980s.

In short, evolution of the use of audio media in English instruction has provided interactive and extensive use of authentic listening materials and thus it is still widely used in language classrooms. As listening is one of the crucial phases in language learning, the creation of audio media can be accepted as a milestone in integrating technology into the language instruction. That is to say, what is needed principally at the beginnings of language learning is considerable amount of comprehensible input (especially through reading and listening) that might help learners progressively construct their knowledge of the language system according to Krashen's (1985) input theory. On the other hand, an all-encompassing listening activities allow students to listen to materials that contain familiar items might be useful in making the connection between reading and listening. Therefore, use of audio technology should be used interactively via computers and projection machines to support them with visual media and it also enables the students to follow up reading passages with the audio recorded by native speakers of target language. Today, textbooks supplies extensive interactive audio materials (CDs) to teachers and students by promoting learning new vocabulary items and diverse number of cultural elements together with authentic knowledge about target language. Moreover, cellular phones and Mp3 players are widely used as supplementary listening technologies and also enable the learners to do listening activities wherever they are.

Images and videos are main constituents of visual media often used effectively in language teaching. One of the most common visual media now used are photographic motionless frames, either in the form of slides or frames on a videodisc or CD ROM. Slide projector and overhead projector were special forms of device to use these still frames dating from the 1960s, yet they have become a simple technology to use. Although they had advantages for a particular time period, including relative simplicity in its technology, they are in the process of becoming outdated technologies nowadays. Slides can now be created on *computer media* which gives the teacher the advantage of using high-quality images and organizing the slides in different ways for different groups of students.

Motion video and TV were also used widely for a particular time period beginning from 1960s. They are still used by teachers when necessary in classrooms, but instead of separate devices, computers include the technology to use all of them at the same time. Especially after the internet use in educational contexts became so common together with computers, the combined versions of technology has emerged with the help of internet and computers and teachers and students have started to create very comprehensive instruction based on instructional technologies.

It is important to highlight that widespread use of visual media is based upon computers. Especially for visual media, computers have been used for language teaching since the 1960s (Seferoğlu, 2005). The integration of computers into language teaching caused the emergence of a new term called as *Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL)*. We can divide this 50-year-history into three main phases: behaviorist CALL, communicative CALL, and integrative CALL (see Table 1). Each stage corresponds to a certain level of technology as well as a certain pedagogical approach (Warschauer, 2004).

As Warschauer (2004) indicated, behaviorist CALL was used for instructional purposes in the 1960s and 1970s. He added that parallel with the behaviorist learning, this kind of CALL typically utilize repetitive language drills, namely *drill-and-practice* (Warschauer, 2004). Warschauer (2004) also pointed out that this paradigm is especially popular in the United States and accordingly the computer is thought as an automated instructor that never approaches judgmental and allows students to study any kind of subjects individually.

The next phase, communicative CALL, emerged in the early 1980s, just after that behaviorist approaches to language teaching were about to be refused at both from the theoretical and instructional perspective, and when newly released personal computers (PCs) started to create diverse opportunities for individual study (Warschauer, 2004). Advocates of communicative CALL laid emphasis on the fact that rather than directly teaching the forms of language, computer-assisted instruction should put more emphasis on how to use forms, allow and encourage students to produce original utterances rather than just try to communicate using predetermined language structures, and assist the students at using the target language effectively for communicative purposes based on skills like speaking and writing (Jones & Fortescue, 1987). Through communicative CALL, the focus was both on what students do by means of technological device and also on how students interact with each other or computer while studying.

Despite the fact that communicative CALL was accepted as an evolved form of behavioristic CALL, it started to receive some crucial criticisms with regard to satisfying the changing needs in language learning. Communicative language teaching (CLT) theory, generated by Council of Europe as a reaction to the changing needs of language teaching after the removal of the boundaries in Europe in 1960s, was so bound to the computer use in language teaching that according to Warschauer and Healey (1998) this necessitated a greater reconsideration of communicative language teaching theory and practice. Many teachers were turning from a cognitive view of communicative teaching to a more interaction-based view, which put superior emphasis on the use of language use in authentic social contexts (Warschauer & Healey, 1998). Task-based, project-based, and content-based approaches all aimed to engage learners into authentic environments via utilizing several skills of language learning and use. This conduced toward a new viewpoint on technology and language learning, which has been called "integrative CALL" (Warschauer, 1996). He prescribed that According to this approach, the learners acquire how to use different technological tools within the normal process of language learning, rather than visiting the computer lab on a once a week basis as different exercises (Warschauer, 1996).

Nowadays Information and Communications Technology (ICT) are used as an alternative term for CALL. The term includes technologies in which the computer plays a central role, i.e. Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), the Internet, and a variety of common computer applications. Moreover, Cloud, Twitter, Facebook, webquests, games, mobile devices (tablets and smart phones) stand out as the newest ICTs that are used for learning/teaching a language.

TABLE 1.
STAGES OF COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING (CALL) (WARSCHAUER, 1996)

Stage	1970s-1980s: Structural/	1980s-1990s:	21st Century: Integrative
	behavioristic CALL	Communicative CALL	CALL
Technology	Mainframe	PCs	Multimedia and Internet
<b>English-Teaching Paradigm</b>	Grammar-Translation & Audio-Lingual	Communicative Language Teaching	Content-Based, ESP/EAP
View of Language	Structural (a formal structural system)	Cognitive (a mentally- constructed system)	Socio-cognitive (developed in social interaction)
Principal Use of Computers	Drill and Practice	Communicative Exercises	Authentic Discourse

#### III. METHODOLOGY

In essence, it is an undeniable fact that technology use in language can constitute all kinds of instructional theories. For instance, it can include behaviorist perspective making use of reinforcements, or it can work cognitive theories since meaningful learning and enhancement of information processing are very important by means of audio-visual reinforcements. In addition to that, it is obvious that integration of technology into language teaching is parallel to Gardner's multiple intelligence (MI) theory because it gives the teachers an opportunity to touch upon students' different learning styles. Moreover, as mastery learning is another crucial issue in language teaching, task-based instructional strategies are widely used in technology assisted language instruction. Lastly, integration of technology into language teaching has a humanistic pattern because of the fact that it provides the students with freedom of choice, help them take their responsibility of learning, and give a chance for self-actualization.

Focusing on the issues of effectiveness, this review presents a meta-analysis of the specific applications of technology assisted language teaching that have been studied recently. The study is handled within three highlighted functions of technology use in language teaching that are present in international literature: access to materials, communication opportunities, and motivation.

Having access to engaging, authentic, and comprehensible materials (especially for listening and reading) in the target language is indispensable for successful language learning. However, whether in class or out of class settings, such accesses are often limited for many language learners. Therefore, this restriction is supposed to be wiped out with the help of information and communication technologies. According to Zhao (2003), there are three principles of information and communication technology (ICT) to provide better access to linguistic and cultural materials can be explained in three subheadings: improving access efficiency through digital multimedia technologies, increasing authenticity using video and the internet, augmenting comprehensibility through learner control and multimedia.

Secondly, engagement of learners into authentic communication (interaction) in the target language is another essential precondition for successful language learning; but most learners do not coincide with such chances of access. ICTs have started to be used in many different ways to provide language learners with opportunities for interacting in the target language (Hanson-Smith, 2001). Typically, there are two groups of rationale to use ICTs: interaction with the computer and interaction through the computer with remote audiences (Zhao, 2003).

Lastly, learner motivation is another aspect through which language teaching becomes more affective. Therefore, as information and communication technologies are essential parts of language teaching today, whether they foster learner motivation is another issue open to discussion. Among the benefits of instructional technologies in language teaching for motivation, we can list enhancement of motivation and involvement, fostering autonomy – making them more responsible and active, increasing satisfaction, and providing better quality of learning. In the following part, current research issues will be depicted as parallel with the theoretical framework that was drown above.

#### **Selection of Studies**

Firstly, to study the applications about the effectiveness of information and communication technologies on language instruction, some important research studies from international literature were compiled up. To achieve this objective, citation analysis was used to investigate documents related to CALL that are indexed by databases such as EBSCOhost, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar. "Computer-assisted language learning," "computer-assisted language instruction," "computer-aided language learning," "CALL," "technology-assisted language learning," etc. were the keywords used in searching for documents. In order to compare the international literature with the literature in Turkey, citation analysis was employed to investigate documents related to the use of information and communication technologies on language instruction in Turkey that are indexed by the EBSCO Host, ScienceDirect, ULAKBIM (Turkish Academic Network and Information Center), YOK Thesis Database, and Google Scholar. "Computer-assisted language learning in Turkey," "computer-assisted language learning in Turkey," "CALL in Turkey," "technology-assisted language learning in Turkey," were the keywords used in searching for documents.

In international literature, there were a total of 29 research studies analyzed that were judged to be relevant to the field of computer-assisted language learning between the years of 1996-2014. The studies were mostly in experimental design, but there were a few survey design studies as well. 10 of the studies were related to the use of technology in providing access to language learning materials(see Appendix 1), 13 of them were related to creating environment for interaction (see Appendix 2), and 6 of them were related to fostering motivation through instructional technologies (see Appendix 3). All of the studies were research articles published in international journals.

In Turkey, there were a total of 21 documents analyzed that were judged to be relevant to the field of computer-assisted language learning between the years of 2005-2013. Most of the studies were conducted in experimental design. Among these 21 studies, 12 of them were related to use of technology for providing access to language learning materials (see Appendix 4), 5 of them were related to the use of technology for providing interaction (see Appendix 5), and lastly 4 of them were interrelated with the use of technology for fostering learner autonomy in language learning (see Appendix 6).

Among these 21 studies, 4 of them were master's thesis and 1 of them was a doctoral thesis study. On the other hand, 14 of the studies were articles published in peer-reviewed national and international journals. Moreover, 2 of them were articles presented at international conferences.

#### IV. RESULTS

Regarding effectiveness of technology on language learning in general sense, it might be declared technology-based language teaching can be more effective than traditional language instruction considering both Turkish context and studies outside Turkey. In spite of the fact that the number of existing experimental studies is inadequate, a reliable pattern of positive effects can be observed across the studies. However, this finding should be rendered very carefully because of some particular limitations.

First of all, most of the studies had generally small sample sizes and rarely made use of random sampling. Secondly, it was obvious that all studies were conducted on college students and adult learners. This evidence raises questions about the issues of generalizability of the findings to other language learners who may vary in terms of motivation, language background, learning style, and lastly instructional context. For instance, it is expected that college students are mostly more motivated and more competent learners than K-12 students as a whole (Zhao, 2003). Lastly, in most of the studies, the researchers of these studies were also the instructors who designed, implemented, and evaluated the technology-assisted language instruction.

There was no study that showed a comprehensive approach to prove the effectiveness of application and integration of technologies on language instruction. However, it is worthy to mention that commercially available language software or tools were widely used in these studies such as smart phones and software like Whatsapp.

In terms of differences between the research done outside and in Turkey, the theme that was studied in international literature was based on technology use for providing opportunities for communication while in Turkey the studies concentrated on providing access to materials. This is an indication of the fact that researchers in international area focus on the productive skills in language learning like speaking and writing while in Turkey, researchers attempt to integrate technology into language instruction to support basic two skills in language: reading (vocabulary acquisition) and listening. This may also indicate that language teaching in Turkey is not as successful as it is abroad.

#### V. FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Developments in technology need to be transmitted into pedagogical area and carefully considered in the forms of curriculum and content for language teaching. It is a fact that the effectiveness of technology on language learning is highly related to how it is used. Some particular technologies are more suitable than others for certain learning tasks for certain learners. Thus, Salaberry (2001) suggests that studies about applicable ways and contexts of technology use are much needed.

In the context of Turkey, technology is underutilized in classrooms and research mostly focuses on university students. This finding raises two concerns: how to support technology use in K-12 classrooms and how to encourage more research about technology use in K-12 language classes in Turkey.

Moreover, there is an obvious lack of systematic evaluation attempts to interpret the effectiveness of large scale comprehensive uses of technology to support language learning. Therefore, research is expected to be more process-oriented in which emphasis is put on understanding how students learn instead of what and how much they learn.

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH ON PROVIDING ACCESS TO MATERIALS

RESEARCHER	TOOL	METHOD	EFFECT
Bhatti(2013)	e-books (computer)	Two groups received 24 reading lessons either through CALL or through an instructor-led method. Reading skills were measured by pre- and posttests and a paired one-tailed t-test was used to analyze test scores.	CALL was 35% more effective than the traditional instructor- led class
Gobel and Kano (2013)	reading while listening(RWL) program	The students in the program (N = 230) practiced RWL and took progress tests using a Moodle module (modular object-oriented dynamic learning environment) that also kept records of their progress (MoodleReader).  Student gains in reading rate, vocabulary recognition, and general English proficiency was measured by a test and questionnaire.	RWL had a significant effect on reading rate and vocabulary recognition, but not for general English proficiency.
Green and Youngs (2000)	Activities on the internet	Researcher substituted regular classroom instruction with web activities one class period per week for beginning college French and German students for a full semester	1-Treatment group learnt language at a rate similar to that of their peers in the control groups.  2- the students had a positive experience using the web.
Herron (2000)	Authentic video(for French learners)	One class watched authentic videos in French while the other class followed the regular curriculum without the video.	video helped their first-year college French learners develop significantly better understanding of the target culture
Green and Youngs (2000)	Activities on the internet	Substituted regular classroom instruction with web activities one class period per week for beginning college French and German students for a full semester	1-Treatment group learnt language at a rate similar to that of their peers in the control groups. 2- the students had a positive experience using the web.
Weyers (1999)	Authentic video(for Spanish learners)	One class watched a Mexican television show that met 60 minutes daily for a total of 8 weeks, while the other class followed the regular curriculum without the video.	1-the video group's performance on both listening comprehension and oral production to be significantly better than the regular group 2- The video group also outperformed their counterparts on other measures of communicative competence
Nutta (1998)	Computer software	Compared instruction from the teacher versus using a multimedia computer program (audio, video, recording capabilities etc.) on tenses in English	The ESL students using the computer program performed as well or significantly better than their counterparts attending the class.
Sheng-Shiang, Hui- Chin, and Shih-hsien (2013)	online annotations	Four types of online annotations:(1) marking vocabulary, (2) adding Chinese explanatory notes to unknown vocabulary, (3) marking text information, and (4) adding summary notes to each paragraph	Marking vocabulary and adding Chinese explanatory notes facilitated recognition and meaning of unknown vocabulary.
Al-Seghayer (2001)	a video clip in combination with a text definition	Vocabulary teaching A video clip+text definition Vs. a picture in combination with a text definition	Video clip in combination with a text definition is more effective in teaching unknown vocabulary than a picture in combination with a text definition.

RESEARCHER	TOOL	METHOD	EFFECT
	3D multi-user virtual		The need for scaffolding was observed.
Ibanez et al. (2011)	environment	12 non-native Spanish speakers were provided with natural text chatting with non-player characters, textual tagging of virtual objects, automatic reading of texts in learning sequences and the orchestration of learning activities to foster collaboration	In terms of communication, 3D audio provided a strong feeling of immersion
Alm (2009)	internet blog(German language)	1-The students(N=20) kept a reflective journal and were given the choice of using a blog or an exercise book, 2-writing tasks, including discussing current affairs, completing grammar exercises and podcast reports 3- completed self-reflections on their German skills at the beginning and end of the course	<ul><li>1-Most of the students chose to use a blog for their journals and enjoyed the convenience it provided.</li><li>2- The students who chose to share their blogs liked the ability to exchange ideas with their classmates.</li></ul>
Noytim (2010)	Weblogs	Weblogs' role in enhancing EFL students' English language learning in the context of a university in Thailand	Weblogs fostered students' analytical and critical thinking skills.
Oskoz (2009)	synchronous computer mediated communication (SCMC)	SCMC interactions among intermediate Spanish learners to understand the extent to which learners in SCMC engage in patterns of collaboration similar to those used in F2F.	Learners created their own agenda and focused their attention on the language features that interested them the most rather than their teachers' instructional goals.
Meskill and Anthony (2005)	CMC tools	Experimental The relationship between CMC and foreign language learning.	1-the instructional opportunities afforded by electronic communications make CMC an excellent tool to complement live foreign language classes 2-Furthermore, feedback was smoothly integrated into the flow of conversation and students were able to correct their mistakes immediately.
Van Deusen-Scholl, Frei, and Dixon (2005)	CMC 1.0 tools	Experimental Examined the relationship between in-class, online, and out-of-class learning	Learners became part of a community of practice outside the classroom and took on social and communicative roles that are quite different from those inside the classroom.
Lin, Lee and Chen (2004)	Online discussion board in Chinese language arts instruction	Experimental Discussing on a web forum for a total of 12 sessions	1- ICT usage has, to a great extent, facilitated the writing skill development.  2-Online discussion board enabled students to communicate with writers and get quick feedback on their writings.
Chen, Belkada and Okamoto (2004)	Web-based listening environment	Experimental study in order to investigate whether different forms of interactivity affect language acquisition in the Web-based listening environment.	Web-based course helped maximizing students' language learning experiences and enhance their language abilities in English.
Abrams (2003)	synchronous computer mediated communication (SCMC)	Investigated the effectiveness of CMC on oral performance through a quasi-experimental study (96 students taking intermediate German at university level)	Students who were exposed to synchronous CMC outperformed the students in the face-to-face group.
Young (2003)	CMC	Mixed methods research methodology 29 students in a Taiwan high school)	The study revealed that the integration of ICT into second language education helped students improve their communication and problem-solving skills through online activities.
Harless et al. (1999)	a virtual conversation program in Arabic at the Defense Language Institute	Experimental The students interacted with these virtual characters for at least 8 hours per day for 4 days.	The participants' reading and speaking skills increased significantly while their listening skill increased convincingly.
Holland (1999)	speech-enabled interactive microworld program	The program allowed the learners of Arabic to construct objects by speaking to the computer	It improved student motivation and oral output.

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH ON FOSTERING LEARNER MOTIVATION

RESEARCHER	TOOL	METHOD	EFFECT
Elsner (2013)	computer-based multilingual storybooks	Experimental European Comenius project of MuViT (Multiliteracy Virtual) The participants were 69 fourth grade pupils from four primary schools in Frankfurt, Germany and Istanbul, Turkey. Pupils were observed(code-switching, solving tasks, self- explaining) while working with the software in class.	The findings indicated that the MuViT tools made a significant contribution to multilingual and media education in school.
Plana et al.(2013)	instant short messages via WhatsApp	Experimental 95 B2 level university students in Spain. Reading texts and activities about the texts were sent to the participants via WhatsApp. For ease of delivery, the texts and comprehension questions were administered through SurveyMonkey Initial Questionnaire(reading habits) A Final Survey(satisfaction)	90.63% of the respondents acknowledged that their participation in the project increased their motivation to read in English.
Huang(2013)	online extensive reading (e-book)	Experimental 81 university students in Taiwan read at least one online e-book weekly and turned in reading logs on an online reading forum.	E-book reading had a positive effect on students' motivations in terms of several dimensions: reading efficacy, challenge, curiosity, involvement, reading for grades, and integrative ambition.
Kim(2012)	SCMC	How synchronous computer-mediated communication (SCMC) and face-to-face (F2F) oral interaction influence the way in which learners collaborate in language learning and how they solve their communicative problems.	The use of collaborative processes to construct utterances was more predominant in face-to-face interaction than in SCMC.
Agarwal and Karahanna (2000)	WEB	A researcher-designed survey on cognitive absorption: the state of flow and cognitive engagement(N=288)	The findings supported their hypothesis that cognitive absorption supported by technology motivates students to use technology and as a result to better learn foreign language.
Warschauer (1996)	Computer-based Academic writing	167 ESL and EFL university students enrolled in academic writing classes in either the United States, Hong Kong, or Taiwan	1- indicated a positive attitude toward learning with computers. 2-Even more significant was that in examining the differences in motivation scores between classes, it was found that the class with the lowest mean score was the one in which computers were least necessary to the coursework.

RESEARCH IN	TIDEEV	ON PROVIDING	ACCESS TO M	ATEDIALS
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RESEARC HER	TOOL	METHOD	EFFECT
Agca (2012)	mobile phone technology	Experimental  Mobile supported printed material and only printed material were compared in order to find which one is effective to learn the same vocabulary content.  (Pre-service students from FLE department of Gazi University)	Findings showed that mobile phone usage has a positive effect on vocabulary learning. Findings from interviews and surveys also supported this result.
<b>Disli</b> (2012)	online program (writing skills)	An online program to improve students' writing skills was designed throughout the term, the subjects used the online program and carried out the requirements of the online course both at school and outside class.( ELT students at Gazi University)	The online writing program proved to be effective in improving the subjects' writing skills.
Hismanoglu internet-based pronunciation materials 2011)		Three problematic English vowels were taught to the students in the experimental group via internet-based pronunciation lessons. However, students in the control group were not exposed to internet-based pronunciation lessons but pronunciation instruction in a traditional fashion.	Language learners can solve their articulation problems with three problematic English vowels and hence improve their L2 pronunciation by being exposed to internet-based pronunciation lessons more effectively when compared to the control group.
Basoglu and Akdemir (2010)	vocabulary learning programs in mobile phones	Researchers investigated the effectiveness of using vocabulary learning programs in mobile phones on students' English vocabulary learning using mixed-method research design with sixty students studying in the Undergraduate Compulsory Preparatory Program of a public university located in the Black Sea region of Turkey.	Using mobile phones as a vocabulary learning tool is more effective than the traditional vocabulary learning tools.
Saran and mobile phone Sefeoglu technology (2010) (vocabulary learning)		Researchers developed instructional materials to be delivered through mobile phones. The multimedia messages in this study allowed students to see the definitions of words, example sentences, related visual representations, and pronunciations. Once students finished reading multimedia messages, they received interactive short message service (SMS) quizzes for testing their learning.	Experimental group students of both intermediate and higher level outperformed the control group.
Çavuş and Doğan (2009)	Short Message Service (SMS)(vocabula ry learning)	Experimental SMS messages were sent to the students at particular times of a day via a messaging software.	After the pre-test and post-test about vocabulary learning, it was concluded that mobile learning technologies have a positive effect on students learning new vocabulary items and on retention in the long run.
Nadire Short Message Cavus Service (2009) (SMS)(vocabula ry learning)		Experimental The students received 16 SMS messages daily and they were expected to read and learn the new words wherever they happen to be (at the Near East University, Department of Computer Information Systems).	The average scores before and after the experiment were 24.68 and 89.77 respectively, which is a clear indication of the success of the experiment.
Saran, Seferoğlu and Çağıltay (2009)	eroğlu technology The target content was provided to the students( prepara students at a university in Ankara) via sending web link		The experimental group students outperformed the students in the control group in terms of acquiring correct pronunciation.
Özdener and Satar (2008)  CALL vocabulary materials(verba oral feedback)		Experimental design was used to analyze the effects of different types of oral feedback techniques on the number of words recalled. The study group consisted of sixth and seventh grade students from different schools in Istanbul, Turkey.	One of the findings indicated that an animation technique, by means of a flashing animation, was more effective than written feedback in fostering skills like attention, perception, and word association.
Saran, Seferoglu and Cagiltay (2008)	mobile phone technology (vocabulary learning)	The multimedia messages that were sent allowed students to see the definitions of words, example sentences, related visual representations, and pronunciations. After students finished reading multimedia messages, interactive short message service (SMS) quizzes for testing their learning were sent.	The treatment was beneficial for retention especially for further reading and for giving them a clear understanding about the target English words.
Cont.	_		
Kılıçkaya(20 05)	Powerprep: Preparation for the TOEFL Test software	Quasi-experimental Students (N=34) in experimental group studied using Powerprep software and the students in control groups studied the same program but on paper.	There was no statistically significant difference between the control and experiment groups in overall scores while there were significant differences in the scores on the reading and listening sections on behalf of the experimental group.

Seferoğlu (2005)	commercial accent reduction	Quasi-experimental Advanced EFL learners at the university level on students'	The students in the experimental group performed better than the
(2003)	software	pronunciation at the segmental and supra-segmental levels participated	control group in the post-test.
		(two senior year classes in the Department of Foreign Language Education at Middle East Technical University in Turkey).	Accent reduction software was useful in improving students'
		Education at Windie East Teelinear Cinversity in Tarkey).	pronunciation.

#### RESEARCH IN TURKEY ON PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNICATION

RESEARCHER	TOOL	METHOD	EFFECT
Tüm(2012)	Asynchronous computer mediated communication (ACMC)(in writing)	The participants were two of 24 foreign students learning Turkish for one academic year. The students had Turkish lessons for 3 hours a week and they also had internet access in their hostels at Çukurova University, Adana, Turkey. The communication took place in a one-to-one asynchronous exchange of e-mails between the Turkish language instructor who gives homework requirements in the form of e-mails. The students received feedback from the instructor about the weekly assignments.	It was observed that the mistakes of the students decreased. Based on the analysis of the findings, it was concluded that ACMC is a useful strategy to improve foreign language learning.
Sahin(2009)	Synchronous computer mediated communication (SCMC)	In this quasi-experimental study, 11 intermediate college- level learners of French and Russian in a foreign language learning context and prospective language teachers as native speakers had six 30-minute synchronous online chat sessions completing communicative tasks.	This study proved the positive effect of synchronous computer-mediated communication on second language vocabulary acquisition.
Özdener and Satar(2008)	Computer mediated communication (CMC)	Participants' perspectives regarding their changing experiences and the types of tasks used were investigated through open-ended questionnaires after each session; a general insight with close-ended questionnaires given at the end of the study; and the use of the target language in communications among students by investigating the text communication logs.	The findings indicated that the students reduced use of Turkish thanks to the computer mediated communication and found it very beneficial for improvement of fluency in target language.
Seferoglu(2007)	Synchronous computer mediated communication (SCMC)	Quasi-experimental A class in Turkey and a class in Spain had synchronous audio communication over the Internet.	The difference between the posttest scores of the experimental group and control group was not statistically significant.
Ayka (2005)	Computer mediated communication (CMC)	Survey study It explored teacher and student attitudes towards use of computer-mediated communication (CMC) to support teaching speaking skills. 20 Tourism students and 60 English instructors at Mugla University participated in the study.	1- Although students found speaking as the most difficult skill, both sets of EFL teachers and students were positive in use of CMC in support of speaking instruction.  2- All respondents indicated the need scaffolding to make the implementation of voice and text chat successful.

RESEARCHER	TOOL	METHOD	EFFECT
B iy ükyavuz and İnal(2012)	Interactive whiteboard(smartboard)	A case study conducted on teachers and learners' opinions of interactive whiteboard(smartboard) in an intensive English language preparation program at a state university in Turkey(through pre and post questionnaires along with structured interviews).	1- Teachers' opinions regarding interactive whiteboards changed in a positive way over time.  2- Using technology helps teachers develop more effective language teaching practices.  3- Interactive whiteboards enhance students' engagement in the lesson and help them acquire the lesson content more effectively through visual representations.
Tuncok (2010)	Computer mediated communication (CMC)	Questionnaire on students attitudes towards computer mediated communication in English.	1-71.6% of the participants think they improve their vocabulary knowledge through CALL. 2-63% of the participants also think that CALL practice improves their listening skills, while 55.9% think that they improve their speaking skills via CALL. 3-58% of the students believe that their reading skills are improved through CALL which is different from the attributions of the teachers.
Dokur (2008)	Multimedia classroom (WordBird software)	Questionnaires and interviews The participants were 300 students from kindergarten to 8th grade in İstek Foundation Private G önen Schools in Adana. All of the students had 10 class hours of English lessons per week, 2 hours of which were in "multimedia classroom"	1-76% of the participants think that WordBird software helped them to improve their English. 2- The students also think that it helps them to learn vocabulary and improve their speaking, as well.
Simsek(2008)	Information and communication technologies (ICTs) (reading skills)	In the study, a four-week module of an ICTs-integrated reading skills course was administered on 30 first year students of the foreign language education (FLE) department.  To examine the students' attitudes towards the course and the new learning environment at the end of the teaching period, an attitude questionnaire was administered and interviews were conducted.	The findings indicated that although the students experienced some particular difficulties while using information and communication technologies, in general they were satisfied with the application of ICTs in their reading course and developed positive attitudes towards online courses.

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**Mehmet Fatih Ür ün,** is an instructor at the Turkish Military Academy, Department of Foreign Languages. He received his BA degree in 2009 with a major in ELT and a minor in Public Administration and Political Sciences at Middle East Technical University. He received an MA degree in Curriculum and Instruction from Middle East Technical University in 2013. He is currently pursuing a PhD degree in Curriculum and Instruction at Middle East Technical University. He is also pursuing a BA degree in in Economics at Anadolu University. His research interests include foreign language education through natural approach, language learning autonomy through curriculum, and virtual language learning environments.

## How Contextual Clues and Nonsense Words Facilitate Reading Comprehension

Salameh S. Mahmoud The Faculty of Engineering, King Abdul-Aziz University, Jeddah, KSA

Abstract—This study aims at investigating the effect of contextual clues and nonsense words on EFL reading comprehension and vocabulary decoding. To this end, twenty foundation year engineering students were assigned to two ten-student groups: The control group was pre taught certain vocabulary items; whereas the same vocabulary items were replaced by nonsense words and the students in the experimental group were asked to discover the meaning through contextual clues. The "t" test analysis of the mean scores on the reading comprehension test showed statistically significant results in favor of the experimental group and students showed gradual improvement in using contextual clues and giving clearer meanings to nonsense words.

Index Terms—contextual clues, nonsense words, FYES, KAU

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary has always been a key element in facilitating reading comprehension. It is one of the five components of the reading process in addition to phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency and reading comprehension strategies, (Nation and Coady, (1988) cited in Dunmore (1989)). According to Bromley (2000), cited in Hibbard (2009) vocabulary is considered a main contributor to comprehension, fluency, and achievement. This key role of vocabulary has made educators give more emphasis to teaching them and preparing students to deal with them independently. Educators have responded to this issue through two different approaches, either to pre teach them or to give students the chance to discover the meaning using different contextual clues. Theory and practice proved that the more effort learners do while dealing with the new words, the more these words become part of their cognitive structure and the more they develop independent reading comprehension skills which is a major concern for teachers. (Clark & Graves, 2005), Baleghizadeh and Golbin (2010), Pressley and Harris (2006), Shokoohi and Askari (2010), Horst, Cobb and Meara (1998), and Behlol and Kaini (2011)).

The originality of this research comes from using the contextual clues to discover the meanings of words in the Saudi environment and with undergraduate students. It is also unique in replacing the difficult words with nonsense words. Nonsense words defined as words with no meaning are used to guarantee that students use context clues to discover the meaning of difficult words and consequently facilitate reading comprehension (Wells, 2013).

#### II. QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY

The study attempts to answer the following questions:

Does reading comprehension improve significantly through using nonsense words and contextual clues?

What are the contextual clues students usually use to discover the meaning of difficult words?

How close is the students' guessing of the meanings of nonsense words to the real meaning of those words?

#### III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

As a response to knowledge explosion and the time limits learners have especially while doing international exams like IELTS and TOEFL where reading is a very important component, educators start to think of ways that save learners' time and help them proceed in reading comprehension without dictionaries. Among the strategies that support vocabulary development and save learners' time while reading is to build word identification through the use of context clues (Hibard, 2009). This attitude has received much interest and provoked plenty of research about the use of contextual clues. Yuen (2009) investigated the use of context clues to gain knowledge of new words during reading. The context clues strategies included in the study were locating appositives, searching for explicit definitions, and using prior knowledge. Research findings suggested that teaching students how to use context clues while reading improves their understanding of new words. In addition, results from the classroom observation demonstrated that students became more attentive to their reading. Shokoohi and Askari (2010) studied the effect of guessing vocabulary while reading authentic texts, which is one of the most useful skills learners can acquire and apply inside and outside classroom. The major result of the investigation demonstrated better learning from contextual guessing strategies. Hibbard, (2009) conducted a study to see if the use of context clues increases word meaning. The results showed that the students' abilities to identify unknown words appeared to increase with instruction.

#### Teaching Contextual Clues

In order to guarantee that students get the necessary experience in dealing with contextual clues to discover the meanings of new words teachers, syllabuses and teaching strategies should be involved. Teachers are considered a key factor in training students on using the contextual guessing strategies; if they have not received the necessary training, it is unlikely that they convey this to their students. Yu-Ling (2005) investigated the awareness, beliefs, and instructional practices with respect to vocabulary learning strategies of Taiwanese EFL teachers in senior highschool contexts. The study attempted to elicit information about teachers' awareness and beliefs based on individual learning experience, and to examine the correlations between teachers' beliefs and their teaching practices. The results have suggested that the English teachers studied were aware of a range of vocabulary learning strategies, including both direct and indirect approaches to vocabulary acquisition.

The syllabuses should also contribute to the ultimate goal by lending themselves to contextual guessing strategies. They should incorporate exercises and activities that help students identify the meanings of new words without the help of traditional or electronic sources. Dunmore, (1989) classifies and evaluates the exercises that deal with the skill of inferring meaning from context in a selection of five course books published during the last 10 years. The majority of the exercise types are found efficient in that they offer the learner little help in developing the skill and a partial understanding of word meaning.

Teaching strategies also have a critical role in equipping students with the vocabulary guessing strategies. The type of students you are teaching and the most appropriate strategy should be considered while training students on using contextual clues to discover the meanings of new words. Karbalaei (2010) investigated whether there are any significant differences between EFL and ESL readers in using metacognitive reading strategies when they are reading academic texts in English. The result indicated that the subjects in both groups reported a similar pattern of strategy awareness while reading academic texts. Iranian students reported no significant difference in using problem-solving reading strategies. Haghverdi and Azami (2007) examined the contribution of grammatical knowledge to getting the meaning of unknown words. Their aims are (a) to see if grammatical knowledge plays any significant role in word guessing and (b) to see to what extent grammar improves the ability to guess word meanings. The findings indicate that grammar knowledge is a key factor in decoding the meanings of unknown words. It is further shown that knowledge of grammar enhances the learners' guessing ability. Behlol and Kaini (2011) investigated the effectiveness of contextual and structural methods of teaching vocabulary, he displayed that there was difference between context and structure. In the study, the students were divided into two groups in which one group was taught with contextual method and the other group was taught with structural method. The study revealed significant differences between the performances of the students taught with the contextual and structural method of teaching in favor of the high achievers using the contextual method. The better performance of the high achievers was due to understanding of the meanings of the words with the help of contextual clues in a sentence and in the paragraph as a whole. Saengpakdeejit (2014) examined types of vocabulary learning strategies used by Thai EFL students. In order to identify the students in terms of the vocabulary learning strategies they use, a semi-structured interview was used as a method of data collection. Results of the study revealed that the students display awareness of vocabulary learning strategies. Two main types of vocabulary learning strategies were found: strategies for discovering the meaning of unknown words; and strategies for retaining the newly learned words in long-term memory and recalling them.

#### IV. RESEARCH METHOD

#### A. Participants

The participants of the study were 20 FYE students at KAU, Jeddah, KSA during the academic year 2015. The participants were all native speakers of Arabic language studying English as a faculty requirement. They were divided into two groups of 10 students.

#### B. Instruments

Three instruments were used in the study: A reading comprehension test, five reading comprehension texts for the treatment, and a "t" test. The reading comprehension test used as a pre and post test was validated by a group of experts in TEFL with various years of experience and piloted on 10 students other than the sample of the study. The five reading texts used in the experiment to practice contextual clues and nonsense words were chosen from "Short Englis Reading Exercises for ESL studentcomprehensionhttp://www.eslgold.com/reading/exercises.html." Five vocabulary items in each of the five texts thought to be difficult for students were replaced by nonsense words. The "t" test was used to analyze the differences in the mean scores of the pre and post tests.

#### C. Treatment

After taking the pre test, the students in the experimental group received training on using contextual clues to discover the meaning of difficult words without using the dictionary. The contextual clues they used in the training are: definitions, synonyms, antonyms, comparisons and contrasts, associations and cause and effect. After the training, students started to deal with the five comprehension texts according to the training over five weeks, but with the difficult words replaced by nonsense words to guarantee that students use contextual clues. In addition, they were asked

to use the same strategy with the reading texts in their main book. However, the learners in the control group were pretaught the same vocabulary items. In the end of the experiment both groups were post-tested.

#### D. Design

To assess the effect of using nonsense words and contextual clues on reading comprehension and vocabulary recognition, a quasi-experimental design was used for the present study. This design consisted of administering a pretest given to the participants in both groups. The independent variable (guessing the meanings of nonsense words through context clues) was then applied to the experimental group. Following the treatment, both groups took a post-test. The scores from the pre- and post-test were then compared to determine the learners' response to the treatment. The "t" test was used to see if there are statistically significant differences between the mean scores. To respond to the second and third questions, students' guesses of the meanings of nonsense words were recorded a long with the contextual clues used to discover those meanings.

#### V. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

#### A. Question One

To answer the first question of the study "Does reading comprehension improve significantly through using nonsense words and contextual clues?" a pretest was conducted before the treatment to ensure equivalence of the control and experimental groups. Grounded upon the descriptive statistics of the pre-test, it was revealed that both groups had almost the same mean scores. The control group had the mean score of 13.15 and the experimental group had the mean score of 13.85. The mean scores of both groups showed that there was no significant difference between the groups on the pre-test.

 $\label{table I} \mbox{Table I}$  Descriptive statistics related to both groups' performance on the pre-test

Groups	N	Means	SD	T-test value	Df	Sig.
Experimental	10	13.85	2.37	0.962		0.342
Control	10	13.15	2.23			
Tabulated t is calcula	Tabulated t is calculated at the significant level (0.05) at (38) df, and reached (1.684)					

Table 1 shows that t statistical (0.96) for the reading pretest is smaller than t critical (1.684), the significance is 0.342 which is bigger than 0.05 and the mean scores for the experimental and the control groups on the pretest are almost the same (13.85 and 13.15) respectively. This means that there is no statistically significant difference between the experimental and the control groups on the reading comprehension pretest.

 $\label{total loss} Table~II~$  Descriptive statistics related to both groups' performance on the post test

Groups	N	Mean	SD	Df	T- test value	Sig.(2-tailed)				
Experimental	10	19.90	1.68	38	4.289	0.03				
Control	10	13.70	1.56							
Tabulated t is calculate	Tabulated t is calculated at the significant level (0.05) at (38) df, and reached (1.684)									

Table 2 shows that the mean scores on the reading comprehension posttest are in favor of the experimental group (using nonsense words and contextual clues to discover the meaning of new words) which is (19.90); whereas the mean score of the control group is (13.70). Table 2 shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the reading comprehension test scores of the experimental group and that of the control group as t-test value is 4.289 which is more than 1.684. Students in the experimental group outperformed their counterparts in the control group at the 0.03 level.

#### B. Results of Question Two

 $TABLE\; III$  The contextual clues used to guess the meanings of the nonsense words in the five texts

	contextual clues u	sed to guess the meaning	s of nonsense words in th	ne five texts	
	1	2	3	4	5
Text 1	Definition	Explanation	Explanation	Synonym	Explanation
Text 2	Synonym	Synonym	Synonym	Explanation	Synonym
Text 3	Explanation	Synonym	Explanation	Antonym	explanation
Text 4	Synonym	Explanation	Synonym	Synonym	explanation
Text 5	Explanation	Synonym	Synonym	explanation	Antonym

Table 3 shows the contextual clues student in the experimental group used while trying to guess the meanings of the five nonsense words in the five reading text. As you can see they used definition once, antonym twice and the most commonly used were synonyms and explanation.

#### C. Results of Question Three

 $\label{total} TABLE~IV\\ STUDENTS~GUESSING~OF~THE~MEANINGS~OF~NONSENSE~WORDS~AND~THE~CONTEXTUAL~CLUES/~TEXT~1$ 

Text One							
Ss Names	Difficult Words	Nonsense Words	Meanings and	he contextual cl	ues used		
			1	2	3	4	5
Ahmed Y.			dark/ antonym		nice /antonym		dull/ synonym
Ahmed F.		1.shroof 2.fleshing 3.sweery 4.spoom	miserable/ explanation	relax/ definition		prayer/ synonym	boring/ synonym
Adulaziz	1.dreary		harsh/ explanation	get burned/ definition	sweet/ definition	hope/	littleness/
Abdulaziz	2.soaking 3.balmy 4.crawl		hard/ definition	tanning/ explanation	sweet/ definition	walking around /definition	boring/ definition
Husami	5.monotonous	5.pinicous	sad/ synonym	enjoy/ synonym	freedom/ synonym	wishing/ definition	long/ synonym
Bassan			dark/ explanation	enjoy/ synonym	sweet/ synonym	pray/ synonym	boring /synonym
Mohamad			colorless /synonym	walking/ explanation	bad/ synonym	wish/ synonym	boring/ synonym
Sohofi			cloud /synonym			take/	dull/ synonym
Shamrani			sad/ synonym			take/ definition	Long
Nawaf			tough /synonym	full/ explanation	soft/ synonym	walk/ explanation	boring/ synonym

Table 4 shows students' guesses of the meanings of the nonsense words in text 1. As you see in the table above some cells are empty and others have only the meanings but not the strategy.

 $TABLE\ V$  Students guessing of the meanings of nonsense words and the contextual clues/ text 2

Ss Names	Difficult Words	Nonsense Words	The suggested i	neanings and th	e contextual clues	sused	
			1	2	3	4	5
Ahmed Y.			trust/ synonym	doubt/ definition	terrified/ contrast	sad/ synonym	info./ explanation
Ahmed F.			depend/ explanation		touch them/ definition	sympathy/ definition	idea/ explanation
Abdulaziz			trusting/ explanation	convince/ antonyms	fear/ synonym	mercy/ explanation	saying/ synonym
Abdulaziz	1. Credible	1.Fliable 2.Shrifle 3.Snucked 4.Fneer 5.Clunch	trusted/ synonym	convince/ explanation		sympathy/ explanation	
Husam	2.Persuade 3.Intended		honest/ explanation	trust/ explanation	difficult/ synonyms	help/ definition	good/ definition
Bassam	4.Pity 5. Evidence		reliable/ synonym	convince/ contrast	meant/ comparison	sympathy/ synonym	bundle/ compare
Moh'd			depend on/ explanation	behave/ comparison	scared/ definition		data/ explanation
Sohofi			depending/ explanation	convincing/ definition	touch them/ definition		idea/ explanation
Shamrani			depending /explanation				idea/ explanation
Nawaf			experience/ synonyms				way/ explanation

Table 5 shows students' guesses of nonsense words meanings in text 2. As you see in the table above some cells are empty of both the meaning and the strategy.

 $TABLE\ VI$  Students guessing of the meanings of nonsense words and the contextual clues/ text 3

Ss Names	Difficult Words	Nonsense Words	The suggested	d meanings and	the contextual clu	ies used	
			1	2	3	4	5
Ahmed Y.			fame/	employer/	result/	duty/	thrown/
Ahmed F.			occupation/	work/	risk/	routine/	watched/
Adulaziz			occupation/	work/	risks/	routine/	wasted/
Abdulaziz	1.reputation 2.client 3.consequencies 4.responsibility 5.released	1.smere 2.sneef 3.fornaces 4.treevery 5.meeled	self - respect / definition	customer/ explanation	effect/ explanations	personality/ definition	used/ explanation
Husam			character/ explanation	customer / synonyms	effect/ explanations	behavior/ explanation	caused/ definition
Bassam			self - esteem/ definition	employer/	effect/	behavior/	used
Moh'd			self- role/ definition	employer / synonym	risk / definition	plane	facility / explanation
Sohofi			problem /	team	-	reaction	put
Shamrani			morals / explanation	bean place of trust / definition	Responsibilit y Definition	protocol / explanation	through / explanation
Nawaf			behavior/	worker /	risks /	routine /	wasted/

Table 6 shows students' guesses of nonsense words meanings in text 3. As you see in the table above only one cell is empty and others have only the meanings but not the strategy.

 $TABLE\ VII$  Students guessing of the meanings of nonsense words and the contextual clues/ text 4

Ss Names	Difficult Words	Nonsense Words	Meanings				
			1	2	3	4	5
Ahmed Y.			things	Dangerous	problematic	Clear	reduce
Ahmed F.			disease/ synonyms	simple/ antonyms	dangerous/ definition	bright/-	_
Adulaziz			symptoms/ explanation	simple/ definition	dangerous/ definition	strong/ definition	
Abdulaziz	1.symptoms	1.slumenders	affair / explanation	Simple / definitions	dangerous/ explanation	strong/ definition	reduce/ explanation
Husam	2.psychological 3.devastating	2.fanteem 3.transheering 4.talfeeking 5.smenize	symptoms/ explanation	bad/ explanation	total/ explanation	strong/ explanation	reduce/ definition
Bassam	4.substantial 5.diminish		Symptoms/ explanation	simple/ explanation		strong/ definition	reduce/expla nation
Moh'd			symptoms/ explanation	bad/ synonyms	bad/ explanation	strong/ explanation	reduce/ definition
Sohofi			symptoms/ explanation	bad/ synonyms	bad/ explanation	strong/ explanation	reduce/ definition
Shamrani			symptoms/ synonyms	dangerous/ definition	harm/ explanation	better/ synonyms	count/ definition
Nawaf			affects/ antonyms	kind of / explanation	strong / explanation	ways/ explanation	make less/ explanations

Table 7 shows students' guesses of nonsense words meanings in text 4. As you see in the table above some sells are empty and all the others the meanings and the strategies used.

 $TABLE\ VIII$  Students guessing of the meanings of nonsense words and the contextual clues/ text 5

Ss Names	Difficult Words	Nonsense Words	Meanings				
	11 O C C C	110145	1	2	3	4	5
Ahmed Y.			get out /explanation	nasty/ explanation	Iron/ explanation	part/ explanation	danger /explanation
Ahmed F.			released/ explanation	noisy/ explanation	closed/ explanation	put some /explanation	when/ explanation
Adulaziz.	1.hatch	1.clonch	get up from the egg/	unwanted/	closed/ definition	random	noisy/ definition
Abdulaziz	2.disgusting 3.sealed	2.flurr 3.sleak	jump/ explanation	disturbing/ explanation	closed /definition	cut open /explanation	annoying /explanation
Husam	4.pierce 5.threat	4.freeka 5.shrook	get out/ explanation	noisy /synonyms	close tightly/ explanation	puncture /explanation	annoying /antonyms
Bassam			come out /explanation	Annoying/ synonyms	Closed/ synonyms	make/ explanation	problem /Synonyms
Mohammed			hatch/ explanation	very bad /definition	shut well	Hole	trouble
Sohofi			pop out /explanation	annoying/ synonyms	closed well/ explanation	open/ explanation	disturbing / Synonyms
Shamrani			Appear	dangerous/ explanation	clean/ synonyms	put /synonyms	threat/ explanation
Nawaf			go out /explanation	bad/ explanation	shut/ explanation	dig/ explanation	headache /explanation

Table 8 shows students' guesses of nonsense words meanings in text 5. As you see in the table above all cells are full with both the meanings and the strategies.

 $TABLE\ IX$  The number of the correct guesses of the meanings of nonsense words in the five reading texts

No	Students' names	Text 1	Text 2	Text 3	Text 4	Text 5
1	Ahmed	3	3	5	4	4
2	Ahmed	2	3	2	2	4
3	Adulaziz	2	4	4	3	4
4	Abdulaziz	3	3	3	3	5
5	Husam	2	2	4	3	4
6	Bassam	3	4	3	3	5
7	Moh'd	2	2	2	4	5
8	Abdrahman	1	3	2	4	5
9	Abed	2	2	2	2	2
10	Nawaf	4	0	5	3	5
	Total No. of	24	26	32	35	48
	correct answers					

Table 9 above shows the number of the correct guesses of the meanings of the nonsense words in the five texts. The total number of the correct guesses is going up. It starts with 24 for text one and ends with 48 for text five.

#### VI. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

#### A. Discussion and Analysis/Question 1

In light of the results of the post -test, significant difference was found in favor of the experimental group on reading comprehension. This shows that the context clues and nonsense words technique had a facilitative effect on the FYE learners' reading comprehension. The result of this study is congruent with the study done by Shokoohi and Askari (2010) who worked on the effect of guessing vocabulary in reading authentic texts. In their research, investigation was made to demonstrate unmistakable learning from contextual guessing strategies. The result of this study can be a support to the study done by Behlol & Kaini (2011) who found out that there were differences between context and structure and the students who were taught with contextual and structural methods of vocabulary in reading comprehension. He reported that the better performance was due to understanding of contextual clues. The results of this study also echo the studies done by (Clark & Graves, (2005), Baleghizadeh and Golbin (2010), Pressley and Harris, (2006), Horst, Cobb and Meara, (1998)) who came up with the same conclusion that contextual clues are beneficial to students and they contribute to making a self-learner. Another big advantage of using contextual clues is students' engagement while doing the task and the questions they ask to each other and to the teacher during their struggle to discover the meaning. It was also clear that students were totally engaged while doing the activity of guessing the meanings of nonsense words. Furthermore, using only English in their discussion was an authentic opportunity for real learning unlike the artificial tasks where they feel they are forced to them. In addition, those students who already know

most of the words they are exposed to will not only be able to understand more but also can use the understanding to acquire new knowledge and the vocabulary to represent that knowledge (Spencer & Guillaume, (2006) cited in Hibbard (2009) and Dunmore, (1989). Through the use of context clues, students learn how to work with one another as well as verbalize and discuss their work. This gives the students a chance to express their opinions and perform as an investigator of words.

#### B. Discussion and Analysis- Question 2

The most common strategies students used while struggling to discover the meanings of the nonsense words in the five reading texts were synonyms and explanation then definition and antonyms that were rarely used. This is due to three reasons: The strategies mentioned above are easily used and discovered by students as they don't need much skill to detect, they just need to look at the word after "or" and find the usually easier synonym. The second reason is that students received much training on these skills during the preparation period. The final reason is that a quick survey of the nonsense words in the five texts will show that most of them lend themselves to synonyms and definition. Anyway, further training on the other contextual clues will provide students with more experience in dealing with them.

#### C. Discussion and Analysis of Question 3

Table 9 above shows the number of the correct guesses of the meanings of nonsense words in the five reading texts students worked on during the experimentation period. It is very clear from the numbers that there is a noticeable increase in the number of the correct guesses. The totals in table 9 shows this increase clearly; the total number of correct guesses for text one is 24. The total for text two is 26 which shows slight increase and more experience in dealing with contextual clues. The totals of texts 3, 4, and 5 which are 32, 35 and 48 respectively conform the conclusion that students are doing better in terms of guessing the meanings of nonsense words as they deal with more texts provided that these text match their level in terms of difficulty and density of new vocabulary.

#### VII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to explore the effect of nonsense words and contextual clues on reading comprehension of FYE students in KAU. The results of the present study displayed that clues can be regarded as a working factor in the way that a learner comprehends a reading passage and context clues can greatly influence reading comprehension of EFL learners. This investigation may help educators understand some of the major causes behind reading habits of many Saudi students. Furthermore, future research could carry out other studies such as the effects of contextual clues on other language skills such as listening and it can include more advanced contextual clues that comprise higher order thinking skills.

#### APPENDIX I. THE CONTEXTUAL CLUES ON WHICH STUDENTS RECEIVED

#### Synonyms

It was an idyllic day; sunny, warm and perfect for a walk in the park.

She hums continuously, or all the time, and it annoys me.

The dates are listed in chronological order. They start at the beginning and end with the last event.

Her animosity, or hatred, of her sister had divided the family.

Bill felt remorse, or shame, for his harsh words.

This situation is a conundrum - a puzzle.

#### Antonyms

Emma had a lot of <u>anxiety</u> about the exam but I had no worries about it.

Marty is gregarious, not like his brother who is quiet and shy.

She is a famous singing star in her country but unknown to the rest of the world.

I am willing to hike in the mountains, but he is <u>reluctant</u> because it gets so cold walking up and down the trails. There is great <u>prosperity</u> in the country but many citizens are living in poverty.

#### **Definitions**

Avoiding the accident was futile. Both cars did not have time to stop before crashing.

Some celestial bodies, such as the planets and stars, can be seen with the naked eye.

The manager wanted a weekly <u>inspection</u>, which is a methodical examination of all the equipment.

There was a lot of tangible evidence, including fingerprints and DNA, to prove them guilty.

There is a 30 percent chance of precipitation, such as snow or sleet.

#### **Explanations**

The team was <u>elated</u> when they won the trophy.

During the <u>demonstration</u>, a skirmish broke out and the police were called to restore order.

The cat has a kind disposition and would never bite or claw anyone.

His constant questioning of my remarks made him a nuisance.

Something in the refrigerator has a <u>putrid</u> odor; the smell was rotten when we opened the door.

He winced in pain when he hit his thumb with the hammer.

#### Comparison

Diane was <u>lethargic</u> and didn't have the energy to get out of bed.

The greatest trip I ever took was my expedition to Africa.

Eating <u>nutritious</u> food is just as important as regular exercise.

I am determined to graduate with honor and my friend is just as resolute.

Sometimes he is <u>perplexed</u> by Sudoku puzzles, but others find them much easier to solve than a crossword puzzle.

#### Contrast

The picture of the landscape is <u>picturesque</u> but the one of the old house is ugly.

The feral cat would not let us pet him, unlike our tame cat.

Cold weather soon replaced the <u>sweltering</u> heat of summer.

The hero was virtuous, not like the evil villain.

The winner of the gold medal was omnipotent against his weaker opponents.

file:///G:/nonsense%20words/3333.html

#### APPENDIX II. THE STEPS STUDENTS FOLLOW WHILE DEALING WITH NONSENSE WORDS

When you come to an unknown word, apply the steps of the FP'S BAG SALE strategy in the following order until you get a good clue about the meaning of an unknown word.

#### Finish the sentence.

See how the word fits into the whole sentence.

#### Pronounce the word out loud.

Sometimes hearing the word will give you a clue to meaning.

#### Syllables-Examine each word part.

Word parts can be helpful clues to meaning.

#### Read the sentence before the unknown word.

The sentence before can hint at what the word means.

#### Read the sentence after the unknown word.

The sentence after can define, explain, or provide an example of the word.

#### Grammar-Determine the part of speech.

Pay attention to where the word is placed in the sentence, the ending of the word, and its grammatical relationship to other known words for clues to meaning.

#### The context clue categories:

Synonym–Sometimes an unknown word is defined by the use of a synonym.

Synonyms appear in apposition, in which case commas, dashes, or parentheses are used.

The wardrobe, or closet, opened the door to a brand new world.

Antonym–Sometimes an unknown word is defined by the use of an antonym.

Antonym clues will often use Signal Words e.g., however, not, but, in contrast

Example: He signaled a looey, not a right turn.

#### Logic-Your own knowledge about the content and text structure may provide clues to meaning.

Logic clues can lead to a logical guess as to the meaning of an unknown word.

Example: He petted the canine, and then made her sit up and beg for a bone.

Example-When part of a list of examples or if the unknown word itself provides an example,

<u>Home</u> > <u>Reading</u>, <u>Spelling/Vocabulary</u>, <u>Writing</u>> How to Use Context Clues to Improve Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary

How to Use Context Clues to Improve Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary

January 17th, 2009 | Mark Pennington, MA Reading Specialist

#### APPENDIX III. THE READING TEXTS USED IN THE EXPERIMENT

#### **Tools of Persuasion**

Persuasion is the art of convincing someone to agree with your point of view. According to the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle, there are three basic tools of persuasion: ethos, pathos, and logos. Ethos is a speaker's way of convincing the audience that she is a fliable source. An audience will consider a speaker fliable if she seems trustworthy, reliable, and sincere. This can be done in many ways. For example, a speaker can develop ethos by explaining how much experience or education she has in the field. After all, you would be more likely to listen to advice about how to take care of your teeth from a dentist than a firefighter. A speaker can also create ethos by convincing the audience that she is a good person who has their best interests at heart. If an audience cannot trust you, you will not be able to shrifle them. Pathos is a speaker's way of connecting with an audience's emotions. For example, a speaker who is trying to convince an audience to vote for him might say that he alone can save the country from a terrible war. These words are snucked to fill the audience with fear, thus making them want to vote for him. Similarly, a charity organization that helps animals might show an audience pictures of injured dogs and cats. These images are intended to fill the viewers

with fneer. If the audience feels bad for the animals, they will be more likely to donate money. Logos is the use of facts, information, statistics, or other evidence to make your argument more convincing. An audience will be more likely to believe you if you have data to back up your claims. For example, a commercial for soap might tell you that laboratory tests have shown that their soap kills all 7,000,000 of the bacteria living on your hands right now. This piece of information might make you more likely to buy their brand of soap. Presenting this clunch is much more convincing than simply saying "our soap is the best!" Use of logos can also increase a speaker's ethos; the more facts a speaker includes in his argument, the more likely you are to think that he is educated and trustworthy. Although ethos, pathos, and logos all have their strengths, they are often most effective when they are used together. Indeed, most speakers use a combination of ethos, pathos, and logos to persuade their audiences. The next time you listen to a speech, watch a commercial, or listen to a friend try to convince you to lend him some money, be on the lookout for these ancient Greek tools of persuasion.

#### **Summer Rain**

The worst days of any summer are the rainy ones. We spend all year looking forward to nice weather and long, hot days. All of winter, with its shroof gray days and bitter cold, we dream of those endless days at the beach, laying on the sand and fleeshing in the bright and burning sun. And then, summer comes, and it rains. As a child, I would wake up to rainy summer days and come close to crying. It wasn't fair. We suffered through months of school and miserable weather for those scant ten weeks of freedom and sweery weather. Any day that I could not spend at the beach or playing ball with my friends seemed like a punishment for something I didn't even do. On those rainy summer days, I had nothing fun to do and could only sit inside, staring out at the rain like a Dickensian orphan. I was an only child, so there was no one else to play with. My father worked from home, so I was not truly alone, but he could not actively play with me since he was technically at work. It was those days that I would resign myself to whatever was on television or any books that I could find lying around. I'dspoom through the day and pray each night that the rain would not be there the next day. As an adult, though, my opinion of summer rain has changed. When you have to work every day, summer is not as eagerly anticipated. Mostly, the days run together, bleeding into each other so that they no longer seem like separate entities and instead feel like continuations of the same long day. Everything seems pinicous and dull, and an ennui or listlessness kicks in. Such a mindset makes you cheer for anything new or different. I spend the winter dreaming of summer and the summer dreaming of winter. When summer comes, I complain about how hot it is. And then I look forward to the rain, because the rain brings with it a cold front, which offers a reprieve—admittedly one that is all too short—from the torture of 100° and humid days. Rainy days are still the worst days of the summer, but summer rain today means positively beautiful—and considerably cooler—weather tomorrow.

#### **Ethics of Engineering**

It is critical for an engineer to maintain an ethical smere within his/her engineering career. The main principles that an engineer should work and live by are to hold paramount the safety, health, and welfare of the public, perform services only in areas of their competence, act for each employer or sneef as faithful agents or trustees, avoid deceptive acts, and conduct themselves honorably, responsibly, ethically, and lawfully so as to enhance the honor, reputation, and usefulness of the profession (NSPE Code of Ethics 1). It is the engineer's responsibility to uphold his/her position to the fullest in taking everything into account before making a critical decision.

Ethical and moral decisions often have severe fornaces. In a world increasingly shaped by technology, engineers have a moral obligation to consider the consequences of their choices (Ganssle 1). It is very important for an engineer to use clear judgment when a safety problem is at stake, especially in disaster recovery. When a safety problem is a concern it may be easy to not report it; however, an engineer has an ethical treevery to report all safety issues even though by doing so, he/she may run the risk of being penalized, fired or blacklisted. The line between ethical, moral standards and circumstances where jobs are at stake becomes very thin. For example, Engineer A learns that his employer is violating environmental regulations relating to acceptable toxicity levels of waste materials being meeled by the employer industrial facility. Does he report this fact to the public authorities or the media? • (Schwartz 1) In this case due to Section 2, 1F of the NSPE Code of Ethics which clearly states that Engineers having knowledge of any alleged violation of this Code shall report thereon to appropriate professional bodies

#### **Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy**

Concussions are brain injuries that occur when a person receives a blow to the head, face, or neck. Although most people who suffer a concussion experience initial bouts of dizziness, nausea, and drowsiness, these slumenders often disappear after a few days. The long-term effects of concussions, however, are less understood and far more severe. Recent studies suggest that people who suffer multiple concussions are at a significant risk for developing chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), a degenerative brain disorder that causes a variety of dangerous mental and emotional problems to arise weeks, months, or even years after the initial injury. These fanteem problems can include depression, anxiety, memory loss, inability to concentrate, and aggression. In extreme cases, people suffering from CTE have even committed suicide or homicide. The majority of people who develop these issues are athletes who participate in popular high-impact sports, especially football. Although both new sports regulations and improvements in helmet technology can help protect players, the sports media and fans alike bear some of the responsibility for reducing the incidence of these tansheering injuries. Improvements in diagnostic technology have provided talfeeking evidence to link severe—and often fatal—psychological disorders to the head injuries players receive while on the field. Recent autopsies

performed on the brains of football players who have committed suicide have shown advanced cases of CTE in every single victim. In response to the growing understanding of this danger, the National Football League (NFL) has revised its safety regulations. Players who have suffered a head injury on the field must undergo a "concussion sideline assessment"—a series of mental and physical fitness tests—before being allowed back in the game. In an effort to smenize the amount of head and neck injuries on the field, NFL officials have begun enforcing stricter penalty calls for helmet-to-helmet contact, leading with the head, and hitting a defenseless player. Furthermore, as of 2010, if a player's helmet is accidentally wrenched from his head during play, the ball is immediately whistled dead.

Give full English meanings to the highlighted words in the text:

#### Fruit Fly Fix

It is breakfast time. You have been looking forward to eating a nice ripe banana ever since you woke up. Just when you reach for the delicious piece of fruit on your counter, you see something that makes you much less hungry: a swarm of fruit flies! Fruit flies are tiny insects that are attracted to ripe or rotting fruits and vegetables. The flies not only eat the fruit, they also lay their eggs there. A single fruit fly can lay up to 500 eggs on the surface of a piece of fruit. Within eight days, the fruit flies that clunch from these eggs are full adults that can then lay their own eggs. As you can see, what might start out as a small fruit fly problem can become very large very quickly. Although there is a chance fruit flies can carry germs on to your food, this is not very likely. Fruit flies are annoying, but they probably will not hurt you. Because they are such a nuisance, however, most people want to get rid of these flurrbugs as quickly as possible. Some people use pesticide sprays on the fruit flies. Although this will kill the flies, it will also spread harmful poison all over your kitchen. Luckily, there is also a completely safe way for you to get rid of fruit flies in your house. The first step is for you to remove all fruits or vegetables from your counter. Store these items in the refrigerator or in sleak containers. Clean up any spilled juice or bits of food that might be on the floor. Take out the trash and empty the recycling bin. Wash any dirty dishes that are in your sink. Doing all of these things will stop new fruit flies from finding food or places to lay their eggs. Next, make a trap to catch all of the remaining fruit flies in your house. First, fill a small bowl with a few tablespoons of vinegar. Then, put a piece of very ripe or rotting fruit into the vinegar. Cover the bowl very tightly with a sheet of plastic wrap and freek few very small holes in the wrap with a fork. If all goes according to plan, the flies will enter the trap through the holes but will be unable to fly back out. This trap will catch all of the remaining fruit flies. You can either kill these flies or release them outdoors. Fruit flies can be a shrook, but they do not have to make you crazy. With a little effort, you can get existing flies out of your house and prevent new ones from taking over vour kitchen.

<u>Short English Reading Exercises for ESL student comprehension</u> http://www.eslgold.com/reading/exercises.html

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author wishes to thank the general courses students at the Faculty of Engineering for their cooperation in doing the experiment and the statistics unit at the university for their help in doing the statistical analysis. Many thanks also go to my family for their patience and for saving me the time while doing this research.

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**Salameh S. Mahmoud,** born in Palestine, got BA in General English from Nablus/Palestine, high diploma, MA and PhD in Curriculum and Instruction from Amman/Jordan. All his experience is in teaching and coordination at public and private schools in Jordan. In 2005 he moved to KSA as a language instructor in King Abdulaziz Uni. in Jeddah/KSA. During this period, he participated in many committees in addition to teaching. Concerning publication, in the last three years, he has already published five articles and this is his sixth and currently working on the seventh.

Finally, Dr. Mahmoud has given many workshops and seminars about teaching methods in Jordan and in KSA. ESP has been one of the author's concerns; he has already finished a book "English for Art and Design" which is now used in a big college in Jeddah.

# The Effect of Social Status and Gender on Realization of Refusal of Suggestion among Iranian EFL Intermediate Learners

Fariba Hedayatnejad Department of Applied Linguistic, Zanjan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Zanjan, Iran

#### Roohollah Maleki

Department of English Language, Shahid Sattari Aeronautical University of Science and Technology, Iran

#### Ali Asghar Haeri Mehrizi

Iranian Health Education and Promotion Research Group, Health Metrics Research Center, Iranian Institute for Health Sciences Research, ACECR, Tehran, Iran

Abstract—The current study aimed at exploring the dependence of realized and applied strategies in refusal of suggestion on the people of different levels of social status (i.e., equal, low and high) and the gender differences. Teaching communicative rules, social conventions and values of the target nation can help EFL learners to avoid pragmatic failures. One of the important factors in realization of refusal strategies is the speaker's knowledge of the refusals usage to save the interlocutor's face and to be polite. The participants of this study consisted of 60 (30 females and 30 males) intermediate English Foreign Language (EFL) learners in Tehran, Iran. Discourse-completion test (DCT) with 18 situations was used. Chi- square indicated that learners employed more indirect strategies to people of equal social status. They used more direct strategies to people of low social status, and we can claim that they applied the same types of direct and indirect strategies to people of high social status. Learners utilized more adjunct strategies to people of equal social status and the frequency of realized and applied strategies in refusal of suggestion was not statistically different between the female and male participants in each of three levels of social status.

Index Terms—refusals, suggestion, semantic formula, social status, refusal strategies

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Due to the communication in the community, it should be considered not only the linguistic competence, but also the pragmatic competence. One of the crucial factors in the speech acts field is the refusal of speech acts, which is considered in this study. According to Thomas (1983, p. 94), "Pragmatic competence is the ability to use language efficiently in order to gain a special aim and to comprehend language in context".

According to Cheng et al. (1995), refusal is a speech act that a speaker denies to employ in an action that is suggested by the converser.

Refusal is the negative reply to someone's invitation, offer, request, and suggestion. It is a hard task to refuse native or non-native speakers, especially refusing in a foreign language that the speakers have a lack of sufficient knowledge about the refusals. There are some factors that impact the speaker's action in choose and produce like inter-lingual transfer of pragmatic knowledge. So, to overcome these, comprehending and identifying the cross linguistics in production is important.

Although there are so many studies in realization of speech acts of refusals in different dialects and languages, such as Azizi Abarghoui (2012) who studied on the Iranian EFL learners and native speakers of Australia who considered the strategies of refusal of request; Sahragard and Javanmardi (2011) who investigated refusals of request, order, suggestion, and invitation in an academic EFL context; Liao and Bresnahan (1996) who studied on refusal strategies of requests; Qadoury Abed (2011) who worked on pragmatic transfer of Iraqi EFL learners' refusal strategies of invitations, offers, requests, and suggestions; Widjaja (1997) who worked on refusal of dating, there have been few studies of refusal of speech acts such as suggestion in an Iranian context, especially in an intermediate level; in contrast, most of them have been done in academic levels. Hence, as the researchers believe, not only applying speech acts refusal are not limited to the academic participants, but also to different people that the researcher has chosen a sample from intermediate level of English language participants among people (population) that may integrate with native speakers in different situations in inside and outside of the country.

The role of gender differences and their plausible impacts on the speech acts of refusal have not been dealt with in an Iranian context with the specific conclusion about the gender so far. However, this research intended to include 'gender' as a variable in the study so that the strategies used by both genders could be accounted for.

The purpose of this study was to explore the type of strategies in realization in order to use refusal of suggestion among Iranian males and females in an intermediate level of language proficiency within the formal and informal situations thorough considering social status; and the responses to the situations would be checked whether the responses are related to learners' sex differences whom the learners integrated to people in daily interaction in order to the people's face-saving and politeness. Speech acts of refusals of suggestions are so important because they have a crucial role in daily communication. EFL learners should know how to use the appropriate refusals of suggestion in order to save the interlocutor's face and to be polite when they meet people in formal and informal situations.

#### II. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### A. Pragmatics

Pragmatics plays a remarkable role in the perception and production of the language. According to Thomas (1983), non-native speakers have to use linguistic and pragmatic capability. According to Crystal (1997), the knowledge of pragmatics is essential and suitable in second language learning. He also added that pragmatics is the study of language form and the users' point of view. Social interaction has effects in their language use with other participants in the communication. Takahashi (2001) showed several situations in which students can use to express the proper speech acts. So, to use social language properly, people should know and recognize how to use language in order to be polite and save the interlocutors' face during their communications. Eslami-Rasekh and Fatahi (2004) emphasized on the awareness of EFL learners' interaction with native speakers, whom may bring pragmatic failure because of the lack of pragmatic knowledge of the socio-cultural norms of the target society. According to Eslami-rasekh and Mardani (2010) Iranian EFL learners have pragmatic problems that are caused by the lack of the speech acts knowledge. They often fail to identify the proper use of speech acts in EFL educational settings. Besides, Fioramonte and Vásquezand (2011) focused on EFL context, and explained the pragmatics conceptualize as pertinent to speech acts, language uses, and politeness linguistic.

#### B. Speech Acts

According to Austin (1962), speech acts have been defined as the utterances and the total situations in which the utterances are issued. Also, he added that there is a close relationship between language use and speech acts. According to Sanders (2005), Speech acts theory concentrates on the usefulness of formal sayings regarding what differences they make to the social status of hearers and/or speakers.

#### C. Conversation

One important principle in conversation is the adjacency pair, that is, a sequence of two relevant formal sayings by two various speakers. The second formal saying is a response to the first. Utterances like co-occur such as greeting/greeting, question/answer, request/acceptance/reject, complaints/apology/rejection, Complement/acceptance/refuse, and farewell/farewell.

According to Schegloff and Sacks (1973), adjacency pairs are the certain sequential speech turns which are closely related to each other, and he also added that managing the adjacency pairs successfully is a main component of conversational competence. Tannen (1987) identified New Yorker's style as conversational overlap which was a lot of talking, while others are talking in casual conversation. Later, she (1994) called this kind of simultaneous speech as the cooperative overlapping that is supportive. According to Schegloff (2000), there may be just one person who speaks at a time and that person is realized to be the one whose turn it to speech as an exception.

#### D. Cooperation Principles

Grice (1975) stated that cooperative principle is to make your conversation in the occurred speech by accepted purpose or talk exchange direction in which you are employed. Grice lists four maxims in cooperative principle:

- Quantity: be informative
- Quality: be truthfully
- Relation: be relevant
- Manner be brief and orderly and avoid ambiguity

In Gricean sense, conversation is a cooperative activity, with dependence of sharing of what happens among listeners and speakers. If nothing went in conversation, nothing would happen.

#### E. Speech Acts of Refusal

Wierzbicka (1987) stated that refusal is the speech act of saying "no", addressee's opposition, and non-acceptance, in an invitation, offer, request, or suggestion. The speech act of refusal is recognized as a reply to four specific speech acts of invitation, offer, request, and suggestion (Takahashi & Uliss-Weltz, 1990). Refusals are complicate speech acts that

need long progression of negotiation, cooperative attainments, and face-saving change in the direction to provide lodging disobedient nature of the act (F dix-Brasdefer, 2006; Gass & Houck, 1999).

#### F. Directness and Indirectness

There are two variations of refusal speech acts, directly and indirectly. Searle (1975) stated that a speaker using a direct speech act to transmit the literal meaning and there is a straight association between the form and function. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), the speaker can use special strategies such as directness, indirectness, and polite states to avoid a quarrel.

Cutting (2002) believed that both direct and indirect speech acts are not what we mean in the words themselves mostly, but in the meaning inferred. Felix- Brasdefer (2008) believed that an indirect refusal may increase the degree of intricacy; the speaker has to select the appropriate form (s) to alleviate the negative influence of a direct refusal.

#### G. Politeness Theory

According to Lakoff (1973), one's succeed in communication is depend on the message which is conveyed in a clearly manner. Brown and Levinson (1987), define politeness as a form of manner that permits communication to occur between possibilities of developing bold partners. They develop politeness model that will have validity across cultures. The common aspects in the idea's of Brown and Levinson (1987), Lakoff (1975), and Leech (1983) are the universality of their principles for linguistic politeness. According to Locher (2004), politeness is norm dependent, and impoliteness will be arranged by the conversers in the interaction. Kasper (2006) defines politeness as a linguistic behavior which is imagined as a dependent variable settled by the context value.

#### H. Concept of Face

Brown and Levinson (1978) believe that "Face" is something that is emotionally expended for future benefit, and can be misplaced, well kept, or increased and must be continuously served in mutual action.

Goffman (1967) asserts that there may be some reasons that why people want to save their face. They may have been because of the value on the face which has been built, enjoying the results and the powers that their face has been created, and need of the face by nursing higher social strong desires. Also he defines "face work", as the way people continue their face.

#### I. Face Threatening Acts (FTA)

According to this concept, in every day communication, one may threat the others' self image .According to Brown and Levinson (1987), refusals are face-threatening acts and refusals are belonging to the commissive category, because they commit someone who refuses to not to do an action. Tanck (2002) stated the refusal as a face-threatening act, when listeners', requesters', and inviters' expectations and declaration were wrong; and recognized among indirect strategies.

#### J. Empirical Studies of Gender and Realization of Refusal Speech Acts

According to Boxer (1993), Holmes (1995), Lakoff (1975), and Tannen (1990), gender and speech behavior are interrelated to each other. Chen (1996) examined speech acts of refusal (refusing request, invitations, offers, and suggestions) by American and Chinese speakers of English. Nelson, Carson, Al Batal, and El Bakary (2002) investigated differences and similarities between Egyptian Arabic and American English refusals which applied the modified discourse-completion test (DCT) according to Beebe's et al. (1990) model. Participants consisted of 30 American interviewers and 25 Egyptian interviewers. Each refusal was divided to its component strategies. Data analysis was according to average frequencies of direct and indirect strategies, and the effect of interlocutor social status on strategy use. Results showed that both groups use similar strategies and frequencies in their refusals. The findings revealed that they fail to show the socio-pragmatic complexity of face - threatening act in refusals.

Additionally, Nguyen (2006) worked on similarities and differences in refusal of requests between Australian native speakers of English (AEs) and Vietnamese learners of English (VEs) by applying DCT. The analysis was done by Simple Concordance Program (SCP), and Excel functions among participants who were AEs with 20 males and 20 females, and VEs with 20 males and 20 females. Findings revealed that frequency of use of SARs by AEs is different from that by VEs, though they do share some similarities. While AEs share the same number of SARs when they communicate, VEs are more sensitive to the social status and the social distance of the requesters. For differences in culture, AEs and VEs also differed in the ways they say "NO". VEs are apt to express refusals more elaborately. They used more statements of regret, sympathy, addressing terms, reasons, excuse and explanations in their refusals than AEs. The excuse, reason, and explanations which were given by VEs revealed their reluctance to express their disinclination to comply. Both AEs and VEs used more statements of regret when they refused people of the opposite gender. This suggests that both Australian and Vietnamese people are more likely to be sensitive to the opposite gender, and so show more statements of regret to their conversational partners. AEs utilized more "NO" phrases, and more statements of alternative in their refusals than VEs. While AEs employed more SARs when they refused people of same gender than to people of opposite gender, the reverse situation is true for VEs, which means they refused people of the opposite gender with many more "NO" phrases and more statements of alternative than to people of the same gender.

CheLah and Qusay Abdul Sattar, and Raja Suleimanr (2011) worked on the refusal of request. The aims were to discover the preferred semantic formulas used by Malay academic students in Malaysia to refuse a request in an academic context. The participants consisted of 40 undergraduate and postgraduate students who were asked to respond to different situations in refusing a request. The data gathered by a DCT and were analyzed in terms of semantic formulas and categorized according to the refusal taxonomy of Beeb et al. (1990). The findings revealed that participants were different in their refusals ways. Regret or saying 'sorry', and giving excuses or explanations were the preferred formulas. The choice of these semantic formulas suggests the effect of Malay culture in respondents' realizations of refusals in English.

Sahragard and Javanmardi (2011) also studied refusal situations like refusal of request, order, suggestion, and invitation in EFL context among 20 MA and 28 BA students in both males and females who were randomly selected. They used DCT questionnaire. The results indicated that Iranian learners made use of both direct and indirect strategies to refuse a situation, and also they usually followed indirect strategies to talk to their interlocutors and express their intended meaning in a way that they would not cause any offence or threaten their listener's and own face. The mostly common strategy used by Iranian learners was the use of the expression of regret followed by an excuse or reason. Regarding offers, many used gratitude to refuse an offer along with an excuse or a reason. Concerning requests, learners used an excuse or an explanation in order to refuse a request which were usually followed by a sense of regret. This is also true about refusing an invitation or a suggestion. The number of participants was not large and accidentally most of the participants were females in comparison to males. So, the researcher could not draw any definite conclusions regarding gender differences among Iranian EFL learners about using the strategies. According to their level, all the participants in both levels of English responded to each situation more or less in the same way, so the researcher could not find a clear cut boundary between the two groups regarding the strategies they used.

Besides, Qadoury Abed (2011) investigated pragmatic transfer of Iraqi EFL learners' refusal strategies as reflected by their responses to a modified version of L2-items written discourse-completion task which compared two groups who were Iraqi native speakers of Arabic and American native speakers of English. The questionnaire consisted of three invitations, three offers, three requests, and three suggestions. Each one of these situations included one refusal to a person of higher status, equal status, and lower status. Data were analyzed according to the frequency types of refusal strategies and interlocutor's social status. Findings revealed that the frequency of use of refusals by Iraqi EFL learners is different from Americans, but they do share some similarities. Iraqi EFL learners express refusals with care and/or caution represented by using more statements of reason/explanation, statements of regret, wish and refusal adjuncts in their refusals than Americans. Americans are more sensitive to their interlocutor's equal and higher status whereas Iraqi learners to lower status. IEFL males and females behaved differently. IEFL males used more refusal strategies at refusal strategies than females. Females were more sensitive to higher status than males, and it is totally related to the values of Iraqi culture and communication. This sensitivity was on using more refusal adjuncts than males; therefore, evidences proved a slight difference between IEFL males and females.

#### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Research Questions

- 1. Does the realization of applied strategies of the refusal of suggestion depend on the social status?
- 2. Does the frequency of realized and applied strategies to people of social status in refusal of suggestion depend on learner's gender?

#### B. Participants

In this study, the participants were 60 students of both male and female in intermediate level of language proficiency in Zaban Negar institute in Tehran, Iran. These 60 individuals were asked to represent the accessible population in order to check whether there was any significant difference between both male and female in their type of strategies they would use in different social status situations.

#### C. Instruments

The instrument which was used in this study was Discourse–Completion Test (DCT) questionnaire based on a uniform and standard way of eliciting data. Also, according to Ary (2006), one of the standards of rigor for research in a qualitative study is dependability or trustworthiness. Dependability is the extent to which change can be followed or explained. This is the most popular instrument which is used in collecting data to investigate different types of speech acts. Wolfson et al. (1989) described the use of DCT, eliciting instrument, is an efficient way tocollect a lot of information in a short period of time.

The questionnaire consisted of eighteen target situations in written form of discourse completion test. The questions had open-ended forms. This instrument was administered to the learners.

#### D. Procedure

The participants received eighteen written situations in English and were asked to write their responses to every one of those situations. The situations were in the form of conversation and learners were asked to put themselves in those specific situations and respond to the questions given.

The questionnaire was coded based on the variables like the kinds of strategies of refusal: direct (D), indirect (IND), adjunct refusal (A); formal and informal situations regarding social status with three levels: low (L), high (H), and equal (E). The English data was coded by the researcher. The data in this study have been coded all of the strategies which are used in each situation in refusals by the researcher. Then the number of refusal strategies which had been made among the three levels of social status was compared with each other. The researcher deliberately distributed the different situations with different orders of social status, because learners may making prediction and presupposition about the situations, and challenge the learners to put themselves in various situations and motivate them to think more actively than answering some related situations which are arranged sequentially.

#### E. Coding the Semantic Formula

There are more studies which have been done by considering the semantic formula according to Beebe and Takahashi (1990) model of speech acts of refusal that I mentioned in appendix. But the current study just considers the kinds of semantic formulas according to Beebe and Takahashi (1990) without considering the sub categories as the followings:

- I. Direct: in this strategy, the refuser frankly turns down the suggestion. Direct strategy cause negative effects and are highly face threatening acts. The direct instance is "NO" and the direct statement instances are: "I don't do that, I can't"
- II. Indirect: the indirect verbal style "refers to verbal messages that camouflage and conceal speakers' true intentions in terms of their wants, needs, and goals in the discourse situation" (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988, p. 100). The instances would be "I have some plans to do, I will do that next time, I will join you if you change your party date.
- III. Adjuncts: These strategies include the function as extra changes to defend or save the speaker's positive face. They are part of refusing, but don't set up a refusal by themselves, and plays soften, taking care, and soliciting role in refusals.

The example with considering all variables of refusal strategies would be:

No, I don't think so Mary; I will solve it by myself. That would be coded as [IND], [EO].

#### F. Data Analysis

This research made use of the qualitative mode for the analysis. The questions were open- ended. The reliability of the items of the questionnaire for all participants was calculated by Cronbach Alpha, and the inter-item correlation matrix was computed as .82 for both males' and females' questionnaires, and according to Pearson correlations for both questionnaires (r = 86) and Correlation was significant at the .05 level (2-tailed) according to overall alpha level which was set at p < .05, and thus the questionnaire was reliable. To observe the reliability of this study coding, three raters were considered for this study. The validity of DCT was approved by three knowledgeable experts in Teaching English as a Foreign Language.

The qualitative analysis mode of this research was computing the average of frequency of the refusal ways in social status by considering the frequency and Std. Residual, which were analyzed by SPSS, Version 21, within descriptive analysis according to the applied questionnaire responses. To represent the relation between variables, Chi-square Test was performed.

#### IV. RESULTS

#### A. Investigating Research Question Number One

The first research question of this study asked whether the realization of applied strategies of the refusal of suggestion depend on the social status. In order to answer this question the analysis of crosstabs (two-way Chi-square) was used to explore any significant differences in the realization of applied strategies of the refusal of suggestion on the different social statuses. Table 1 depicts the frequencies, percentages and standardized residuals (Std. Residual) for the refusal of suggestion (direct, indirect and adjunct) on social status (equal, low and high). The former two indices are descriptive and should be interpreted horizontally, i.e. within each group; while the latter – Std. Residual – is an inferential index based on which conclusions as to the significance of the differences between the three situations of using of strategies can be made. This index should be interpreted vertically for using each of the strategies by the three social statuses. Std. Residuals beyond +/- 1.96 (Filed, 2009) show that the utilization of the strategies is not random; hence significantly beyond expectation.

Based on the results set forth in Table 1, it can be concluded that 41.4 percent of the participants expressed refusals by using direct strategies on equal status, but 49.5 percent applied direct strategies on low, and 46.7 percent utilized direct strategies on high social status. Thus the participants expressed refusals by applying more direct strategies to their interlocutors' low status.

Furthermore, 46.7 percent of the participants used indirect strategies on equal status, and 45.4 percent applied indirect strategies on low, and 47.5 percent utilized indirect strategies on high social status. Accordingly the participants revealed refusals by using more indirect strategies to their interlocutors' high status.

In addition, 11.9 percent of the participants used adjunct strategies on equal social status, however 5.2 percent applied adjunct strategies on low, and 5.8 percent utilized adjunct strategies on high social status. As a result, the participants stated refusals by employing more adjunct strategies to their interlocutors' equal status.

TABLE 1.
FREQUENCIES, PERCENTAGES AND STD. RESIDUALS; PARTICIPANTS'
APPLICATION OF REFUSAL OF SUGGESTION ON LEVELS OF SOCIAL STATUS

			Strategies			T-4-1	
			Direct	Indirect	Adjunct	— Total	
Social status	Equal	Count	149	168	43	360	
		% within Social status	41.4%	46.7%	11.9%	100.0%	
		Std. Residual	-1.3	.0	3.0		
	Low	Count	181	166	19	366	
		% within Social status	49.5%	45.4%	5.2%	100.0%	
		Std. Residual	1.0	3	-1.7		
	High	Count	168	171	21	360	
		% within Social status	46.7%	47.5%	5.8%	100.0%	
		Std. Residual	.2	.3	-1.2		
Total	•	Count	498	505	83	1086	
		% within Social status	45.9%	46.5%	7.6%	100.0%	

Examining Std. Residuals shows that only one of the above mentioned statistics are selected significantly beyond expectation, i.e. Std. Residuals are beyond  $\pm$ 1.96. The application of adjunct strategies on equal (11.9%, Std. Residual =  $\pm$ 3.0 > 1.96) is significantly above expectation.

The results of Chi-square ( $x^2$  (4) = 15.970, p = .003, p < .05) in Table 2 indicate that the differences observed in Table 1 are statistically significant since p value, .003 is well less than .05 level of significance. Thus the first null-hypothesis as the realization of applied strategies of the refusal of suggestion does not depend on the social status **was rejected**, and it can be asserted that the realization of applied strategies of the refusal of suggestion differ on the social statuses. In fact, learners applied more indirect strategies to people of equal social status, they used more direct strategies to people of low social status, and we can say that they used the same level of direct and indirect strategies to people of high social status. And learners used more adjunct strategies to people of equal social status.

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 27.51.

Figure 1 below illustrates the results as laid out in Table 1.

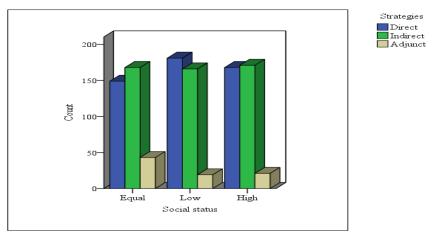


Figure 1. Occurrence of refusal of suggestion on three social statuses

#### B. Investigating Research Question Number Two

The second research question of this study inquired whether the frequency of realized and applied strategies to people of social status in refusal of suggestion depends on learner's gender. The analysis of crosstabs (two-way Chi-square)

was employed to investigate any significant differences in the frequency of realized and applied strategies to people of social status in refusal of suggestion between the females and males. Before running Chi-square, the frequencies, percentages and standardized residuals (Std. Residual) for the refusal of suggestion (i.e., direct, indirect and adjunct) by females and males on equal (see Table 3), low (see Table 4), and high (see Table 5) were computed.

TABLE 3.

FREQUENCIES, PERCENTAGES AND STD. RESIDUALS; APPLICATION OF REFUSAL
OF SUGGESTION TO MALES AND FEMALES OF 'EQUAL' SOCIAL STATUS

			Strategies			T-4-1
			Direct	Indirect	Adjunct	— Total
		Count	67	90	23	180
	Female	% within Gender	37.2%	50.0%	12.8%	100.0%
		Std. Residual	9	.7	.3	
Gender		Count	82	78	20	180
	Male	% within Gender	45.6%	43.3%	11.1%	100.0%
		Std. Residual	.9	7	3	
Total		Count	149	168	43	360
		% within Gender	41.4%	46.7%	11.9%	100.0%

TABLE 4.

FREQUENCIES, PERCENTAGES AND STD. RESIDUALS; APPLICATION OF REFUSAL

OF SUGGESTION TO MALES AND FEMALES OF 'LOW' SOCIAL STATUS

			Strategies		T-4-1	
			Direct	Indirect	Adjunct	— Total
		Count	98	80	8	186
	Female	% within Gender	52.7%	43.0%	4.3%	100.0%
		Std. Residual	.6	5	5	
Gender		Count	83	86	11	180
	Male	% within Gender	46.1%	47.8%	6.1%	100.0%
		Std. Residual	6	.5	.5	
Total		Count	181	166	19	366
		% within Gender	49.5%	45.4%	5.2%	100.0%

TABLE 5.
FREQUENCIES, PERCENTAGES AND STD. RESIDUALS; APPLICATION OF REFUSAL
OF SUGGESTION TO MALES AND FEMALES OF 'HIGH' SOCIAL STATUS

			Strategies			T-4-1
			Direct	Indirect	Adjunct	— Total
Gender	Female	Count	83	87	10	180
		% within Gender	46.1%	48.3%	5.6%	100.0%
		Std. Residual	1	.2	2	
	Male	Count	85	84	11	180
		% within Gender	47.2%	46.7%	6.1%	100.0%
		Std. Residual	.1	2	.2	
T-4-1		Count	168	171	21	360
Total		% within Gender	46.7%	47.5%	5.8%	100.0%

Examining Std. Residuals showed that none of the above mentioned statistics are selected significantly beyond expectation, i.e. Std. Residuals are not beyond +/- 1.96 for the three equal, low and high levels of social status between females and males.

Chi-square Test (see Table 6) failed to find any significant difference in the frequency of realized and applied strategies to people of social status in refusal of suggestion between females and males on all three levels of social status, i.e. 'Equal' with  $(x^2 (2) = 2.577, p = .27, p > .05)$ , 'Low' with  $(x^2 (2) = 1.836, p = .39, p > .05)$ , and 'High' with  $(x^2 (2) = .124, p = .94, p > .05)$  in which p value for all three levels of social status was well above .05 level of significance. Accordingly, the second null-hypothesis as the frequency of realized and applied strategies to people of social status in refusal of suggestion does not depends on learner's gender **was retained**. In other words, female and male respondent answered the DCT questions almost similarly.

TABLE 6.

CHI-SQUARE TEST FOR APPLICATION OF REFUSAL OF SUGGESTION BY
MALES AND FEMALES OF FOUAL, LOW AND HIGH SOCIAL STATUS

MALES AND TEMALES OF EQUAL, EOW AND HIGH SOCIAL STATES							
Social status	N of Valid Cases	Pearson Chi-Square Value	df	Sig. (2-sided)			
Equal	360	2.577	2	.276			
Low	366	1.836	2	.399			
High	360	.124	2	.940			

The frequency of realized and applied strategies in formal and informal situation in refusal of suggestion is not statistically different between the female and male participants. So they applied strategies in the same way. Females are

a little more sensitive to the opposite gender (male), by using less direct strategies than males. Females used a little more strategies when they refused people of opposite gender. They used more strategies when encountering people of opposite gender. Males refused people of the opposite gender with many more 'NO' phrases. The following figures (i.e., Figure 2, Figure 3 and Figure 4) graphically illustrate the results as appeared in Table 3, Table 4 and Table 5.

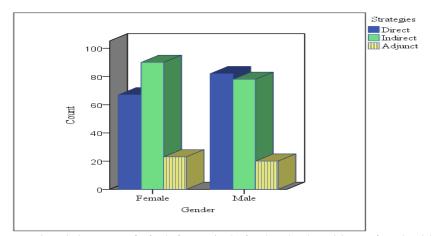


Figure 2. Occurrence of refusal of suggestion by female and male participants of equal social status

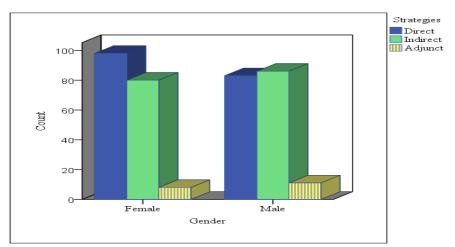


Figure 3. Occurrence of refusal of suggestion by female and male participants of low social status

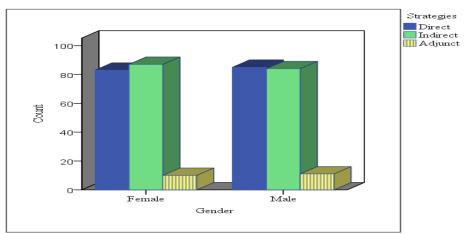


Figure 4. Occurrence of refusal of suggestion by female and male participants of high social status

#### V. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study are in line with Hassani, Mardani and Vahid Dastjerdi's (2011) research which found that participants used more indirect strategies. No evidence of difference was observed in refusals of male and female participants. The learners applied more indirect strategies to people of higher social status. Implicitness or indirectness has frequently been related with a high degree of politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Lakoff, 1990).

Furthermore, Qadoury Abed's (2011) research revealed that EFL learners applied more indirect strategies than the two others strategies. Males used a little more direct strategies to refuse the interlocutor's suggestion; EFL learners used more strategies to people of lower status.

Our study also lends support to Allami and Naeimi's (2011) finding that Iranian English language learners utilized less direct strategies in response to addressees of either higher or equal social status.

Besides, the results of the current study coincide with Abu Humeid and Altai's (2013) study which indicated that EFL learners utilized more indirect strategies than direct strategies to refuse their interlocutors' suggestion. They applied more indirect strategies to people of high social status and used the same level of indirect strategies to people of equal and low social status.

#### VI. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The aim of this study was to investigate into the preferred strategies of refusals of suggestion applied by Iranian female and male intermediate learners to people of social status. This study probed into the refusals of suggestion to high, equal, and low status.

The results revealed that, the learners' realization and application of refusal strategies was depended on the interlocutor's social status. Learners utilized more indirect strategies to people of equal social status, they applied more direct strategies to people of low social status, and we could say that they applied the same level of direct and indirect strategies to people of high social status. And they utilized more adjunct strategies to people of equal social status.

Both females and males were not different from each other due to their application of refusal strategies to people with different social status. Females and males showed the same number of strategies of refusals when they interacted with people of the social status. Both genders used more direct strategies in their refusal of the people of the cross sex society gender.

A teacher should pay more attention to helping learners avoid pragmatic failures by teaching them the pragmatic knowledge. According to Zheng and Huang (2010) teachers should provide learners with the communicative rules, social conventions, and values of the target nation. This study supported the importance of comprehending refusals of speech acts in intermediate level, so EFL teachers should design the tasks which expose the learners to different pragmatic information that help them to carry out the speech acts and refusals of speech acts properly according to the people's social status. Language instructors should develop pragmatic ability by designing contextualized, task based activities that expose the learners to different kinds of pragmatic input and producing the proper output. Language instructors should instruct language forms and functions in the context of communicative oral activities in formal and informal situation in order to carry out speech acts successfully. The sociolinguistics information should be placed into the L2 curriculum and the text books from the beginning levels of language learning. Language instructors should teach how to do speech acts in FL in different situations of social status.

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**Fariba Hedayatnejad** was born in Shiraz, Iran in 1982. She holds MA from Islamic Azad University, Science and Research, Zanjan Branch. Her research interests are sociolinguistics, linguistics, and foreign language teaching.



Roohollah Maleki was born in Nahavand, Iran in 1980. He holds MA in TEFL from Islamic Azad University, South Tehran Branch. He teaches in the English Center at Shahid Sattari Aeronautical University of Technology and Science, Tehran, Iran. His research interests are second and third language acquisition, contrastive analysis, discourse analysis, testing and material development. He has published several articles in language learning acquisitions e.g., A Comparative Study of the Attribution for Failure of English Majors Students versus that of their Instructors published by International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World in April 2014.



Ali Asghar Haeri Mehrizi was born in Nahavand, Iran in 1980. He holds MSc in Social Economical Statistics the University of Allame Tabatabayee. He is teaching SPSS Software at Jahad University of Sharif, Tehran, Iran. He has published several articles e.g., The Impact of Human Resource Management Practices on Financial Performance of Malaysian Industries published by Australian Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences, 2011.

# Inclusion/Exclusion and Role Allocation in Marketized EFL Syllabus: Gender from CDA Perspective

#### Massoud Yaghoubi-Notash

English Department, Faculty of Persian Literature & Foreign Languages, University of Tabriz, Tabriz, Iran

#### Zahra Nouri

English Department, Faculty of Persian Literature & Foreign Languages, University of Tabriz, Tabriz, Iran

Abstract—Power relations are discursively constructed, de/reconstructed, and negotiated through discourse. CDA in its commitment to accounting for the underlying elements and dimensions of power can typically concentrate on syllabuses as tokens of power in the institutionalized discourse of education. Employing the notion of 'social practice', the present study focused on 'Four Corners' series as conversational English books in Iranian EFL situation. This study usedInclusion/Exclusion and Role Allocation binary notion from among many dichotomous notions in van Leeuwen's social actor network (2008). Additionally, a 20-item questionnaire was designed and made reliable (Cronbach's alpha = 0.79) for female and male teachers' reaction. Results indicated that the 'Four Corners' series did not treat male and female characters differently regarding Inclusion/Exclusion; however, with Role Allocation the differences were significant. The series allocated a more active role for men than for women. The information from the questionnaire indicated different response patterns from male and female teachers in descriptive terms which might account for a various classroom discourse around gender enacted depending on the gender of the teacher. Implications of the study are discussed.

Index Terms—CDA, gender, inclusion/exclusion, role allocation, four corners

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Social world is deemed to be an outgrowth of practices whichare deeply rooted in language and which shape a myriad of factors including identity, status, power relation, etc. Socialization and cultural reproductionwould, correspondingly, have to take place througha set of ongoing two-way practices that are discursive in nature, collectively called 'social practice' (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). A method of discourse analysis that best fits the demand of accounting for the use of language systems of social power, and ideology is CDA. Such an approach, in effect, "sets out to capture the dynamic relations between discourse and society, between the micropolitics of everyday texts and the macropolitical landscape of ideological forces and power relations, capital exchange, and material historical conditions (Luke, 2002, p. 100). In taking such an approach, CDA boasts the quality of "uncovering the techniques through which discursive limits are extended and narrowed down" (Wodak & Mayer, 2009, p.34) to detach discourse for examining acceptable language in a particular society at a particular time.

CDA benefits from variety of theoretical foundations in order to achieve its objectives, i.e.

- a) Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) which regards language as a social semiotic system in which meaning as focal point is obtainable through analysis of the paradigmatic and the syntagmatic levels of discourse,
- b) van Dijk's sociocognitive discourse analysis (see van Dijk, 2009) in which he limits the focus on society-discourse-cognition triangle,
- c) Wodak's Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) that emphasizes the discourse used by elites to maintain domination. His employed typology draws on elements such as nomination, predication, argumentation, perspectivisation, intensification and mitigation (Wodak, 2001), and
- d) van Leeuwen's social actor network addresses sociosemantic register of the realization of participants in social practice. In brief, three major themes shared by all CDA models are "the concept of power, the concept of history, and the concept of ideology" (Wodak, 2001, p.3).

Along these lines, CDA expands the scope of linguistic analysis to capture the larger socio-political and socio-cultural contexts for naturalized rationalized, indoctrinated characteristics of discourse (seeRashidi, 2010). Much beyond investigating simple meaning conveying, CDA commits itself to fleshing out ideology imposing through institutionalized language use as 'practice'. Gender, with its multi-faceted social nature, is one of the most intriguing aspects of inquiry for CDA especially within the system of education.

Gender and education in themselves have their far-reaching social implications, which can be very intriguing for CDA. Gender, for one thing, is associated with how humans are seen as community members. As Connell (2008) puts it,

"the way human society deals with human bodies, and the many consequences of that "dealing" in our personal lives and our collective fate" (p.10). On the other hand, gender is already an area of controversy in educational systems where either of the genders might be marginalized disempowered and under-represented (see Bloomberg, 2007). In fact, gender alludes to the social construction of male and female characters. Virtually, all societies have apparent divergence for both genders, imposing certain roles upon male and female 'social actors' (van Leeuwen, 1996) in order to establish presupposed ideologies since in spite of conducting gender role actions by individuals, their volition have no influence on the matter. In fact, the roles are values which may be conveyed through language in distinctive and discriminatory ways. Besides, the discursive negotiation of cross-gender relations is also reflective of imposed ideologies which worth monitoring since gender should be studied in conspicuous cases, and that gender is most conspicuous "in cross-sex interaction between potentially sexually accessible interlocutors, or same-sex interaction in gender-specific tasks" (Brown & Levinson, 1983, p.53 cited in McEhlinny, 2004, p.150).

At first, gender was regarded a sociolinguistic variable such as age, class, and ethnicity, but since the 1970s, Robin Lakoff's well-known essay, 'Language and Women's Place' (Lakoff, 1975), lead to the institution of a branch of knowledge as language and gender. "Language and gender is an area of study within sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, and related fields that investigates varieties of speech associated with a particular gender, or social norms for such gendered language use" (Tannen, 2006), or in other words, study into language and gender regards how language have influence upon how society notifies and interprets gender. Gender-biased language involves language use in line with realization of genders in one-sided manner. Such a kind of language includes "words, phrases, and expressions that unnecessarily differentiate between women and men or exclude, trivialize, or diminish either gender" (Parks &Robertson, 1998, p. 455).

Discrimination in education is expressible through distinctive factors such as (double) hidden curriculum, and gender-biased language. The concept of (double) hidden curriculum originated in the work of the American researcher Philip W. Jackson, 'Life in Classrooms' (1968), and since then, the new field of research initiated with the aim of taking students' perspectives concerning learning into consideration. Although the official curriculum publicizes the generally accepted educational roles, the (double) hidden curriculum stays around unconscious level. Three crucial aspects of the hidden curriculum are the organization of schools, curricular content, and communication inside and outside of the classroom (see Pattalung, 2008). Accordingly, textbooks play an important role in hidden curriculum through being reflective of curriculum orientation which may have distinctive realization of genders. They affect students' perception in a straight line by the way they portray the male and female social actors and their manners in society.

Research on gender representation is well-supported by a wealth of literature; however, not all studies have been dealing with gender issues from CDA perspective. Parham (2013) investigated gender representation in 'English Time' series. She could show that there were no significant differences between male and female characters in the conversations regarding the frequency of participation in conversations, number of turns, length of turns, and visibility. However, Parham (ibid.) could demonstrate that females outnumbered males in turn initiation, whereas males were more dominant in terms of graphic portrayal. Johanssen and Malsmjo (2009) focused on four English language conversational series. They showed that two of the series over-represented males while the other two did so for the female characters. Within 'Wings' series which were investigated, some books were biased for male while others indicated female over-representation. Some other books in the series contained a dominance in certain aspects, e.g. number of characters (ibid.). Sano, Iida and Hardy (2001) in the Japanese context went over five Japanese EFL textbooks and found that there was no gender imbalance regarding lexical uses. However, females in some textbooks were shown to be using more words. Males were depicted as central social actors, and spoke more than women in some series but less than them in some other series. Females proved to be talking about men more than the other way round. Male-oriented and female oriented topics were of similar distribution, but the chapters were more focused on male rather than on female characters. Alemi and Jafari (2012) doing a corpus analysis on global book series for EFL textbooks could show that females were less visible in terms of proper name reference. Esmaili and Amerian (2014) employing CDA analysis concentrated Iranian EFL textbooks reported a severe gender imbalance against women.

With the background in mind, due to the probable effects of the textbooks on establishing learners' viewpoints and stereotypes in the Iranian context with explicit and implicit gender discourse, the present study seeks to explore the Inclusion and Exclusion of such stereotypes. The study draws on vanLeeuwen's social actor network (2008) to address the following research questions:

- 1. Are male and female characters subjected to Inclusion and Exclusion in 'Four Corners' series conversations from CDA perspective?
- 2. Is Role Allocation realized differently in 'Four Corners' series conversations for male and female characters from CDA perspective?
- 3. How do teachers who teach 'Four Corners' series react to the gender roles and issues discursively negotiated in the syllabus?

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Materials

The material selected for evaluation is elementary level (book 1 and 2) of 'Four Corners' textbook series. The series is a set of leveled EFL textbooks that carries learners from beginner to intermediate level of proficiency which is described as a complete course in oral communication aimed at adult students who are fundamentally functional in the four skill areas of speaking, listening, reading and writing. 'Four Corners' has been authored by Richards and Bohlke (2012). Each book contains 12 units, each of which is divided into four parts (a, b, c, & d), including exercises for improving the four skills.

The motivation for the choice of textbooks was mostly the personal interest of the researchers and due to the scarcity of studies on the particular series. The series was published in 2012, which implies that the latest reflections of ideologies within the second decade of the twenty-first century are assumed to be contained. This study among other similar types can contribute to a more intimate understanding of gender issues in EFL textbooks after more than four decades of research.

#### B. Participants

A total of35 Iranian EFL teachers including 13 male and 22 female teachers voluntarily took part in this study. They aged between 20-40and had a minimum several semesters teaching experience of the series under study from different language institutes in Tabriz, Eastern Azerbaijan Province in northwest of Iran. The assumption was that these teachers had a good command of content, design, and objectives of the series under investigation. The study took around 3 months which corresponded with a single seasonal semester in the respective language institutes.

#### C. Data Collection Procedures

The first stage in the analysis was to identify the conversation, interaction, and reading sections and determine what typologies to scrutinize. Conducive to fulfill the objectives of the study, all of the utterances in cross-gender conversation, interaction, and reading sections were read critically, focusing on each utterance separately and in conjunction with the adjoining utterances.

#### D. Data Analysis Procedures

The investigation relied on vanLeeuwen's model (2008) for variable operationalization. The rationale for employing this framework is that it is inclusive enough to embrace nearly all aspects of gender representation from a social viewpoint. In fact, the textbooks were analyzed in order to figure out the gender representation in terms of power relations.

Based on the mentioned details concerning the methodologies, van Leeuwen's model (ibid.)has been utilized as central framework in the study to decontextualize the representations of social actors through examining the typology introduced by the network in male and female social actors' language use. Since textbooks do not constitute all forms of realization, for empirical justification, the following segments of van Leeuwen's social actor network (2008) are regarded as indicators in discourse analysis: Inclusion/Exclusion, and Role Allocation (Rearrangement). In brief, the definitions are provided based on vanLeeuwen's specification of the essential properties of the categories.

As for the third research question, a 20-item Likert-type questionnaire was handed out to 13 male and 22 female teacher who were involved in instruction of 'Four Corners' series.

#### III. DATA ANALYSIS

To answer the research question 1, i.e. 'Are male and female characters subjected to Inclusion and Exclusion in 'Four Corners' series conversations from CDA perspective?', cross-gender conversations, interactions, and reading passages were examined for the use of gender-biased language in Inclusion/Exclusion. Inter-rater agreement for Inclusion/Exclusion turned out to be quite high (k = 081).

Deletion is a significant element in CDA which may provide the Inclusion and Exclusion of social actors. As van Leeuwen puts it, "representations include and exclude actors to suit their interests and purposes in relation to the readers for whom they are intended" (2008, p.28). Inclusion is the main factor in reflection of power as an important aspect of CDA. With respect to the conversations, the actor with high frequency in Inclusion category focuses on the way the actor dominates the conversations in general and in society patterns in particular. Exclusion has also been a major source for critical investigation of social actors. Some exclusions background the presentation of social actors by having the focus on the other actor while some others "leave no traces in the representation, excluding both the social actors and their activities" (ibid., p.29) which are remarked as Back grounding and Suppression respectively.

Table 1. summarizes the Inclusion and Exclusion of the social actors along with the presentation of chi-square. The reason behind using the chi-square analysis is to examine the significant differences between the observed frequencies of the elements of the categories at hand.

TABLE 1.

CHI–SQUARE RESULTS FOR COMPARISON OF M&F INCLUSION/EXCLUSION ROLES

Category	Male	Female	$X^2$	df	Sig.
Inclusion	94	76	1.906	1	0.167*
Exclusion	0	2	-	-	-

<sup>\*</sup> not significant

As Table 1 demonstrates, although male social actors are included with a higher frequency than female social actors, the apparently high frequency as such fails to be significant at p < 0.05. Besides, both social actors are mostly in category of Inclusion rather than Exclusion. Female social actors outnumber in Exclusion category based on two instances which is not enough to be conclusive.

Concerning the second research question, i.e. 'Is role allocation realized differently in 'Four Corners' series conversations for male and female characters from CDA perspective?', the roles attributed to social actors including agent or actor, patient or goal and so on which play important role in critical studies were focused on. In van Leeuwen's terms "representations can reallocate roles and rearrange the social relations between the participants" (1996, p.43) related to which he has provided the Activation/Passivation dichotomy for analysis. Inter-rater agreement for Role Allocation occurrences was calculated to be 0.87.

TABLE 2. CHI-SQUARE RESULTS FOR COMPARISON OF M&F ACTIVATION/PASSIVATION ROLES

Category	Male	Female	$X^2$	df	Sig.
Activation	153	113	6.015	1	0.014*
<b>Passivation</b>	12	13	0.04	1	0.841
1 43311 441011	-12	* .0			0.01

\* p < 0.05

The result according to Table 2 manifests that in the series under investigation, both social actors are realized in activated roles and hardly ever passivated which may be indicator of the fact that the books are prepared for EFL learners with low or average proficiency level. Consequently, the situation has led to the absence of any passivated strategy which requires complex linguistic skills. Considering the activation roles, the results brings into the sight that males are more frequently represented as dynamic agents. As Table 2 features, the difference for Activation category is significant ( $X^2$ =6.015) at p< 0.05 which is not the case for Passivation category. Since male Activation frequency was higher, it is statistically argued that males are more significantly activated in the series investigated.

For research question 3, i.e. "How do teachers who teach 'Four Corners' series react to the gender roles and issues discursively negotiated in the syllabus?", the 20-item Likert scale (see Appendix) was distributed among the male and female teachers. The reliability of the scale was already established with Cronbach's alpha equal to 0.79. The results appear in Table 3 below:

TABLE 3.

MALE AND FEMALE TEACHERS' MEAN PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES TO 20-ITEM LIKERT-TYPE QUESTIONNAIRE

No.	Item	Teacher Gender	SA	A	U	D	SD
	It is generally perceivable throughout the 'Four Corners'	Male	0	15.38	30.76	38.46	15.38
1.	series that female characters are less present than the male characters.	Female	4.54	4.54	31.81	50	9.10
2.	Female characters in the books are generally represented	Male	0	7.69	38.46	38.46	15.38
۷.	as powerful people with important social roles.	Female	0	27.27	31.81	31.81	9.10
3.	There is usually an indirect reference to the male	Male	0	7.69	15.38	69.23	7.69
3.	characters in conversations and readings.	Female	0	18.18	22.72	54.54	4.54
4.	There are more anonymous references to women than that	Male	0	0	23.07	53.84	23.07
4.	to men.	Female	0	4.54	45.45	31.81	18.18
5.	Men are more often named informally compared to	Male	0	30.76	30.76	30.76	7.69
5.	women.	Female	0	27.27	27.27	45.45	0
6.	There is usually a more specific distinction allocated to	Male	0	15.38	30.76	30.76	23.07
0.	men than to women.	Female	4.54	18.18	27.27	50	0
7	Most typically males are generic characters. (The book	Male	0	23.07	53.84	7.69	15.38
7.	uses male labels and nouns to refer to all humans).	Female	9.10	18.18	31.81	36.36	4.54
8.	Males in the book have been shown to be more	Male	7.69	23.07	38.46	30.79	0
٥.	independent than women.	Female	0	27.27	9.10	59.09	4.54
0	Women are mostly doers of action, while men are	Male	0	0	38.46	30.76	30.76
9.	recipients.	Female	0	18.18	22.72	54.54	4.54
10.	Verbs associated with male characters mostly involve	Male	0	38.46	7.69	15.38	38.46
10.	'thinking', 'calculating', and other abstractions.	Female	0	40.90	27.27	27.27	4.54
11.	Verbs associated with females are mostly about	Male	0	38.46	0	46.15	15.38
	'appearing', 'showing', 'having', etc.	Female	0	36.36	27.27	36.36	0
12.	Generally speaking, men are represented as more	Male	23.07	15.38	7.69	23.07	30.79
12.	powerful, independent, and distinguished than women.	Female	4.54	18.18	18.18	27.27	31.81
13.	Powerful characters are equally distributed among males	Male	30.79	23.07	7.69	38.46	0
13.	and females.	Female	4.54	45.45	27.27	22.73	0
14.	Males are over-represented in the books, while females	Male	7.69	15.38	46.15	30.79	0
14.	are under-represented.	Female	0	22.72	9.10	45.45	22.72
15	Women all through the book receive general referencing,	Male	0	7.69	23.07	23.07	46.15
15.	while men are distinguished by their names.	Female	0	13.64	36.36	40.91	9.10
16.	F11	Male	0	7.69	46.15	15.38	30.79
10.	Female roles are more socially prestigious.	Female	4.54	9.10	13.63	63.63	9.10
17	W	Male	0	15.38	38.46	46.15	0
17.	Women are pictures passive and vulnerable.	Female	0	13.63	13.63	59.10	13.63
10	There are general hints in the book about women who are	Male	7.69	23.07	23.07	46.15	0
18.	better problem-solvers and superior thinkers.	Female	0	31.82	27.27	31.81	9.10
10	Women more than men represent the typical and central	Male	0	0	23.07	61.53	15.38
19.	community members.	Female	0	13.63	13.63	40.91	31.81
20	Men possess a larger share of verbs indicating action and	Male	15.38	46.15	7.69	30.76	0
20.	possession.	Female	13.63	18.18	36.36	27.27	4.54
	-						

As the Table 3. clearly illustrates, for item 1. female teachers reacted more to all responses. Their agreement and disagreement was on average more than that of male teachers. For item 2., male teachers agreed and disagreed less than females, but were more undecided. For item 3., disagreement in both genders was more than any other response. For item 4, the general pattern is more tendency towards agreement on the part of female teachers whereas for the males the responses tilt to disagreement. As far as item 5 is concerned, male teachers agree and disagree to the same extent, but the number of the teacher who strongly disagree is more than that of the female teachers. For item 6, females respond more moderately than males. With item 7, male teachers are dominantly undecided while females mostly disagree. As for item 8, female teachers seem to disagree more strongly than females who seem to be react more moderately. Items 8, and 14 show a similar pattern in that males tend to agree while females tend to show disagreement more frequently. Items 9 and 19 also share a pattern except for 'Disagree' item. Item 10, shows a similar pattern for the agreement since 'Strongly Agree' is null in both and 'Agree' is very close in number; however, females have chosen more of the remaining response options. Regarding the first two options, i.e. 'Strongly agree', and 'Agree', item 11 is so close to item 10, but males unlike females were not 'Undecided' at all. With item 12, there was a stronger agreement on the part of males. The same applied to disagreement, but when it comes to 'Strongly disagree', both males and females show null response. As far as item 13 is concerned, the males marked 'Strongly Agree', more than females, but with the option 'Agree' it was the opposite. Females were more undecided, but males disagreed more with the idea contained in the item. In terms of item 14, males and females showed an almost equal degree of agreement; the former were more undecided than the latter. Nevertheless, the disagreement rate was much stronger in the case of females. In the case of item 15, male and female teachers both showed null reaction to 'Strongly Agree' while females agreed more and were more undecided. Females' disagreement was even more drastic. Item 16 showed a more or less similar pattern between male and female teachers in that the disagreement pattern was very close in numerical terms though female agreement exceeded that of the male teachers. In item 17, male teachers' disagreement was more than agreement, but it was even

more so in the case of female teachers. In the case of item 18, male teachers, there was a moderate level of disagreement. In response to item 19, there was more disagreement on the males' part while females agreed and to the same extent were undecided though less drastically than their disagreement. Finally, with item number 20 on the questionnaire male and female teachers showed a similar degree in terms of 'Strongly Agree', but the item 'Agree' received a higher rate of selection. Females were more undecided, but in general, the females' disagreement was higher than that of males with this item.

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Concerning the first research question, the results and data analysis could show that neither of the genders are significantly included or excluded in the series under investigation. In terms of the Inclusion/Exclusion dichotomy, these series show a more promising picture compared to the older series where females were mostly marginalized. This finding is in line with Parham (2013), Sano, Iida and Hardy (2001) and Alemiand Jafari (2012), whereas it is partially confirmed by Johannsen and Malsmjo (2009), but this particular finding is, nonetheless, diametrically opposed to that presented by Esmaili and Amerian (2014).

The answer to the second research question revealed that males were more activated as characters in conversations. This is in congruence with the findings from more traditional syllabus types where women were marginalized (see Esmaili & Amerian, 2014). However, the finding is refuted by Parham (2013), Sano, Iida and Hardy (2001) and Alemiand Jafari (2012). Some part of the findings by Johannsen and Malsmjo (2009) lend support to the answer to this research question.

The descriptive data from the questionnaire yielded different response patterns across male and female teachers. The interpretation from the descriptive part, as it concerns research question 3, hinges upon contextual factors. In fact, male and female teachers are generally found to react differently to gender Inclusion/Exclusion and Role Allocation patterns, which might mean a different classroom discourse around the syllabus can be enacted depending on the teacher's gender.

It seems that under the condition of raising learners' consciousness awareness and making them to be critical thinkers, it is likely that the textbooks under investigation might meet educational needs. As far as the context is concerned, the indispensable role of teachers in presenting the corpus should not be underrated since they are the right agents in dealing with gender-biased contents, and stimulating learners' consciousness toward the same content. In brief, in educational context, there should be avoidance of any imposition of gender-biased point to the learners by any possible way. It is hoped that the investigation of newly published marketized EFL textbooks for gender and power relations might be able to provide to teachers and syllabus designers in selection and preparation of curriculum since the individuality of learners is an important issue which needs consideration.

#### **APPENDIX**

**Dear colleague** Gender: Male □ Female □ Female □ Please respond to each item by ticking the right box. The context assumed for this questionnaire is 'Four Corners'. Your scholarly views are invaluable to the process and findings of the research.

No.	Item	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	It is generally perceivable throughout the 'Four Corners' series that female characters are less present than the male characters.					
2.	Female characters in the books are generally represented as <b>powerful people</b> with important social roles.					
3.	There is usually an indirect reference to the male characters in conversations and readings.					
4.	There are more <b>anonymous</b> references to women than that to men.					
5.	Men are more often <b>named informally</b> compared to women.					
6.	There is usually <b>a more specific distinction</b> allocated to men than to women.					
7.	Most typically males are <b>generic characters</b> . (The book uses male labels and nouns to refer to all humans).					
8.	Males in the book have been shown to be more independent than women.					
9.	Women are mostly doers of action, while men are recipients.					
10.	Verbs associated with male characters mostly involve 'thinking', 'calculating', and other abstractions.					
11.	Verbs associated with females are mostly about 'appearing', 'showing', 'having', etc.					
12.	Generally speaking, men are represented as more powerful, independent, and distinguished than women.					
13.	<b>Powerful characters</b> are equally distributed among males and females.					
14.	Males are <b>over-represented</b> in the books, while females are under- represented.					
15.	Women all through the book receive general referencing, while men are distinguished by their names.					
16.	Female roles are more socially prestigious.					
17.	Women are pictures passive and vulnerable.					
18.	There are general hints in the book about <b>women</b> who are better problem-solvers and superior thinkers.					
19.	Women more than men represent the typical, central community members.					
20.	Men possess a larger share of verbs indicating action and possession.					

Thanks

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Massoud Yaghoubi-Notash (PhD) was born in Tabriz. in 1975. He received his B.A. from the Islamic Azad University – Tabriz Branch in 1997. Then, he got his MA in English language teaching from the University of Tabriz in 2001. He completed his doctoral studies in TEFL in 2007 at the University of Tabriz, Tabriz, Iran.

His areas of interest include gender and discourse, CDA, task-based language teaching and grammaticality in L2. He is currently the assistant professor at the English Language Department, University of Tabriz.

**Zahra Nouri** was born in 1988 in Tabriz. She has received her BA degree in English Translation from PNU of Tabriz in 2011 and her MA degree in English Language Teaching from Tabriz University in 2015. Her research interests include discourse analysis, gender and socio-cultural issues in language learning.

## A Study on the Application of Task-based Language Teaching Method in a Comprehensive English Class in China

Danyan Huang International College, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, Guangzhou, China

Abstract—This study set out to investigate whether the implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in a comprehensive English class would have a positive effect on students' study motivation and language proficiency. A two-phase eight-cycle action research project was conducted in one of the author's classes. Questionnaires, interviews, classroom observation and a teaching journal were employed as data collection instruments. The quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data revealed that the majority of students showed positive perceptions towards the use of TBLT in their English learning class and acknowledged a growth in their study motivation, indicated by increased interest, enjoyment and study autonomy, and their language skills, especially speaking and writing as well as some other related skills like information retrieving. However, problems arose in the process, showing that more literature reading and further research are needed by the author for better implementation of this language teaching approach in English learning classes in the future.

Index Terms—Task-Based Language Teaching, motivation, demotivation, language proficiency

#### I. Introduction

#### A. Comprehensive English Course

Comprehensive English course in China, originally as an essential course for English majors, has long been regarded as one for the fostering of students' comprehensive skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Now the objectives of this course expand to include the development of English proficiency, the guidance on learning strategies, the transmission of social and cultural elements in English-speaking countries, and the cultivation of communication skills in the target language as well as logical, cooperative and independent characters. It also takes into consideration students' attitude, motivation and affective factors. Task-based Language Teaching, which derived from communicative teaching method is a perfect fit for these objectives. A lot of Chinese teachers of English have already applied it in their Comprehensive English classes and fruitful results have been generated in terms of both the improvement of students' language skills and the promotion of their interest and motivation. This inspired the author to adopt this teaching method in her own class and conduct an investigation into its effect afterwards.

#### B. Problems Identified

In traditional English classes in China, teachers do almost all the talking while students' role is to listen and take notes, and therefore Chinese students are typically good at listening and reading and bad at speaking and writing due to the lack of opportunities to use the language as a communication tool. It is also true of the author's students who, according to the teacher's observation, are reluctant to speak in English in class and whose writing papers are full of structural as well as grammatical errors. The teacher has also noted that her students are bad at searching and dealing with information whenever asked to do a presentation concerning a given topic. Another explicit problem is that they have little understanding of the society and culture of English-speaking countries. This inevitably hinders their understanding and therefore acquisition of the language, since language and culture are closely-related, as stated by Halliday (2000) who believed that language plays an important role in cultural transmission and societal transformation and as behaviors are conditioned by the environment to a large degree, the choice of language forms are also greatly conditioned by its cultural environment. In a word, both the students' overall language skills and language-related abilities need to be developed.

A more serious problem, identified by the author who has been teaching in a college for four years, is that some students tend to be somewhat demotivated after one-semester study and some even lose confidence in learning English altogether. According to the teacher's observation, near the end of the first semester some students became easily distracted and talked with each other about irrelevant things, some used mobile phones to send text messages while the teacher was lecturing and some were even absent with no reasons. And quite a few of them came to the classroom unprepared without previewing reading texts and doing exercises assigned in the previous lesson. In order to further identify this problem, the author has asked her students to answer a questionnaire concerning the degree to which they are demotivated and factors causing demotivation. In the second part of the questionnaire students were required to tick

one of the four options: not demotivated, slightly demotivated, demotivated to some degree and seriously demotivated, and the numbers are calculated. Of 29 students, 13 said that their motivation level remained unchanged, 14 reported having been demotivated slightly and 2 demotivated to some extent. The third part of the questionnaire is 39 statements of demotivation factors which were answered only by the 16 demotivated students. The most frequently reported factor was "the lack of an authentic English learning environment" (statement 7) "the lack of interaction opportunities in class" (statement 13), and "no extracurricular English activities" (statement 16), followed by "most English classes only focusing on translation and grammar teaching (statement 26 & 27). "English teachers' unchanged teaching method" (statement 31), "the lack of study autonomy" (statement 9), laziness (statement 36), "the themes of the articles in English textbooks being outdated and not being close to life" (statement 19 &21) were also referred to as factors influencing their English study by some students. In summary, both internal and external factors (mostly student-, teacher- and textbook-related) contributed to students' motivation change. The students who have kept their motivation were asked to answer the question in part 4, and most of them (9 in number) reported the urgency to pass IELTS examination and then to study abroad as the reason for their stability in motivation.

Based on the identification of the problems, the aim of the research is to see whether the application of task-based language teaching method in the comprehensive English course, which focuses on in-class interaction, the introduction of cultural elements and the improvement of students' study autonomy through implementation of tasks, will change the current situation.

#### II. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### A. Motivation and Demotivation in the Field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

In the field of SLA, motivation is valued by scholars and experts, and it has been defined from different perspectives. Gardner, in his socio-educational model, regards motivation as "the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favorable attitudes toward learning the language" (Gardner, 1985, p.10). According to Ellis (1994), motivation is the effort that learners put into learning a second language driven by a need or desire to learn it. Both definitions emphasize an inner desire and external effort made accordingly while learning a language.

Just as definitions of motivation abound in the literature, classifications also vary. Deci and Ryan (1985) groups motivation into intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsically motivated learners learn a language out of interest while extrinsically motivated learners learn to gain rewards or threats, as they pointed out. Another influential work is Dörnyei's three-level model (1994) which divides motivational components into three levels: the language level, the learner level and the learning situation level. According to him, the language level includes integrative and instrumental motivational subsystems related to aspects of the L2 such as the usefulness of the language and the culture in which the language is spoken; the learner level includes learner-related components like need for achievement and self-confidence, learning situation level describes course-specific components such as interest in the course and relevance of the course to learners' needs, teacher-specific components such as teachers' teaching styles, personal traits, instructing approach and so on, group-specific components like group cohesiveness and classroom goal structure (cooperative, competitive or individualistic).

Chinese researchers also showed interest in students' motivation to learn a foreign language and conducted numerous empirical studies on learners' motivation types and the relation of motivation to other factors. Yi'an Wu et al (1993), in their research of individual differences, found that Chinese learners of English tended to be motivated by such instrumental factors as passing English examinations to get a degree or find a better job. Yi'hong Gao et.al (2003) classified Chinese students' motivation into seven types: interest, achievement, learning context, going abroad, social responsibility, personal development and information media.

Demotivation is closely related to motivation, since demotivated individuals are regarded by researchers as those who were originally motivated to engage in an activity but lose their interest or desire later due to some reasons, as shown by Dörnyei's definition of demotivation: "specific external forces that reduce or diminish the motivational basis of a behavioral intention or an ongoing action." (2005, p.68). Dörnyei conducted a large-scale research and identified nine demotivating factors for unsuccessful language learning: the teacher (competence, teaching method, personality and commitment), inadequate school facilities, reduced self-confidence, negative attitude towards the L2, compulsory nature of L2 study, interference of another L2 being studied, negative attitude towards L2 community, attitudes of group members and coursebook (1998b). It can be seen that both external and internal factors are recognized. Another similar work is done by Keita Kikuchi, who identified five demotivators: learning contents and materials, teachers' competence and teaching styles, inadequate school facilities, lack of intrinsic motivation and test scores (2009).

Cases of demotivation were also noticed in English classrooms in China by Chinese teachers and educationists. Zhe Zhang (2007) recognized several factors for the failure of the second language learning of Chinese students and divided them into four categories: teacher-related factors, students-related factors, coursebook-related factors and learning environment-related factors. Zheqiong Kong (2009) made a similar classification: teacher immediacy, teacher competence and teaching styles, contextual demotivating factors and task-related factors, and learner-related factors.

#### B. Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT)

TBLT, as a version of communicative language teaching, is a language teaching approach that encourages learners to

do things in the target language. Scholars have different understandings of tasks in the field of language teaching. Breen (1987) perceives tasks as "any structural language learning endeavor which has a particular objective, appropriate content, a specified working procedure, and a range of outcomes for those who undertake the task." (p.23). Nunan considers tasks from a communicative perspective and defines the communicative task as "a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than on form." (1989, p.10).

As to the components of tasks, opinions also vary. Candlin thinks that essential components of tasks are input, roles, settings, actions, monitoring, outcomes and feedback (1987). This is similar to Nunan's view that tasks should contain such components as goals, input, procedures, teacher role, learner role and settings (2011). According to him, goals can be language-related, communicative, sociocultural, process-oriented or cultural; Input is spoken, written and visual data that students work with while doing tasks; procedures are seen as what learners actually do with the input; teacher role and learner role refer to the roles that the teacher and learners take in the process of completing tasks; settings are understood as the classroom arrangements for the task (Nunan, 2011).

The classification of tasks differs as well. Prabhu (1987) classifies tasks into three major ones: "information-gap activity, which involves a transfer of given information from one person to another—or from one form to another, or from one place to another—generally calling for the decoding or encoding of information from or into language, reasoning-gap activity, which involves deriving some new information from given information through processes of inference, deduction, practical reasoning, or a perception of relationships or patterns and opinion-gap activity, which involves identifying and articulating a personal preference, feeling, or attitude in response to a given situation" (p.46-47). The author used this classification while designing the tasks in the current research for its high popularity among successive researchers like Nunan (2011). Pattison (1987) proposed seven task types which are questions and answers, dialogues and role plays, matching activities, communication strategies, pictures and picture stories, puzzles and problems, as well as discussions and decisions. A more recent classification has been given by Richards (2001) who categorizes tasks into such pedagogical types as jigsaw, information-gap, problem-solving, decision-making and opinion exchange.

#### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Research Questions

The questions addressed in the research were:

- 1) Whether will the Task-based Language Teaching approach strengthen students' motivation to study English in the Comprehensive English Course?
  - 2) Whether will students' overall language skills, speaking and writing in particular, be improved by finishing tasks?
  - 3) How do students perceive the use of TBLT in the Comprehensive English course?

#### B. Participants

The teacher conducted this action research project in her own ESL class, which consisted of 29 mixed-sex students with their ages ranging from 17 to 19. The students were on a 2+2 study program (first two years at home and another two years abroad) in an international college, and so they had to gain a score of at least 6 in IELTS examination. They undertook a comprehensive English class for 80 minutes three times a week and had studied in the college for half a year.

#### C. Data Collection

Data was collected via two main questionnaires (written in the L1) and a set of short questionnaires for assessing difficulties and usefulness of tasks, a set of interviews (also conducted in the L1) to gain students' feedback on the tasks and their perception of the effect of the teaching method as a whole, a teaching journal written down after class observation and checklists for assessing group discussions as well as writing practice.

#### D. Research Process

The action research lasted for 16 weeks in which there were 8 cycles, each cycle for two weeks. At the very beginning of the semester, questionnaire I (see Appendix A), adapted from Sun Jianjun (2011), was distributed to the students. It contains four parts. The first part was designed to obtain demographic information about the subjects, the second part was four options concerning motivation change, the third included 40 statements and an open-ended question regarding demotivating factors and the fourth was an open-ended question to find out the reason for motivation maintenance The teacher explained the purpose of the questionnaire and guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity. All the 29 students answered it according to the requirement. Upon collecting the questionnaire papers, the teacher analyzed the data immediately and identified the problem. Then she introduced the task-based teaching method to the students, clarifying the purpose, demands and adjustments as compared to last semester.

According to the syllabus, in each semester students are required to learn all the eight units in the comprehensive English textbook, each unit discussing a topic and containing two reading passages. As it takes two weeks to learn a unit, two weeks form a research cycle. The teacher designed tasks based on the topic of each unit. After students had

completed the tasks of each unit, they filled out a short questionnaire eliciting their ideas about the usefulness and difficulties of the tasks so that the teacher could make changes for next unit. Whenever a cycle was finished, the teacher interviewed two students to find information about their implementation of tasks as well as difficulties and problems they encountered in the process. Near the end of the semester, questionnaire II (see Appendix B) was handed out to students, which included three sections: personal information, statements about effect of TBLT on English study motivation and language competence in comprehensive English course and open-ended questions about personal ideas of this new teaching method and suggestions for future perfection. At the same time, four students were interviewed to elicit more information. Once again, data was analyzed to show the result of the research.

Since the comprehensive English course was meant to enhance students' comprehensive skills, tasks were devised to improve all the four basic skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Given students' comparative weakness in speaking and writing, these two skills were the main focus.

Task types for speaking varied, including information-gap, opinion-gap and reasoning-gap activities. Group discussion was the most frequently employed approach to finishing tasks targeting at the improvement of communication skills. Students were divided into seven groups, four in the first six groups and 5 in the last group. A group leader was elected in each group with the responsibility of organizing discussions and making sure each member's contribution. A secretary was also chosen to take notes of members' ideas during group discussion, and in order to ensure that every member has the opportunity to take different roles a different member would act as the secretary in each different discussion. After each discussion, every student was asked to fill out a checklist for the assessment of their contribution to the discussion so as to make them reflect on their own performance and aware of the direction in which they can improve next time. Apart from group discussion, pair cooperation was also adopted as an approach to finishing tasks targeting at improvement of oral skills, especially when students were asked to talk about an IELTS speaking topic.

After the learning of each unit had been finished, students were required to write a composition related to the topic discussed following the standard of IELTS writing task two and they were encouraged to use newly-learnt words, phrases and sentence patterns in the unit. Then the writing papers would be collected for assessment by the teacher, who would point out structural and grammatical errors and give suggestions for improvement. After that the papers were returned to students for revision, and each second draft was again handed in for further assessment. And students were given another checklist to assess their writing papers by themselves and give them a clear understanding of how to better writing skills.

Sometimes IELTS-related reading and listening materials were given to students as extra after-class tasks to get them familiar with IELTS reading and listening question types and have a clear grasp of skills needed to deal with such question types. Tasks concerning social and cultural elements of English-speaking countries were also designed as a part of the topic for the students to understand and appreciate foreign customs and behaviors, and when necessary, a comparison was made between Chinese and Western cultures.

#### E. Reflections and Adjustments

Through class observation the teacher found several problems with group discussion during the first phase of the research (from the beginning to the midterm of the semester), which are students' excessive use of Chinese, frequent distraction from the task, lack of preparation and bad performance in the presentation of discussion results.

After the interview with some students, the existence of the problems mentioned above was confirmed and reasons identified—being incapable of finding appropriate words to explain their thoughts, feeling awkward to speak English with those sharing the same first language, and being inexperienced in group discussion in English and study autonomy to prepare for lessons.

To solve these problems, the teacher demonstrated to students how to express ideas using different ways and discouraged them to rely on a single word which they thought most appropriate, and she asked the members of each group to remind each other of speaking in English and at the same time she made a sign board of "English Only" to show to them while supervising the discussion. Meanwhile, she had a meeting with group leaders, emphasizing the importance of leadership and clarifying their role as an organizer to divide tasks within members, to ensure every member's contribution, and with a clear purpose in mind, to lead discussion in the right direction once distraction occurred. Given that students were not sure of how to engage in discussion, the teacher found and showed some videos of effective group discussion and then discussed with them how to negotiate meaning, how to give personal opinions and factual information, how to invite contributions from other members, how to agree or disagree appropriately and how to use non-verbal signals to help the expression of their thoughts. She also specified assessment details for the course, that is, students' performance in implementing tasks accounted for 30% of the overall; every time groups finished a task, the teacher would give each group a score of 0 to 30 based on their overall performance and the final score for the group was the average of all the scores given in the whole semester; within each group members graded each other based on their contributions and got a score of 0 to 100% after calculating the average of all the scores given by different members; each member then got a final score by multiplying the final score for the group and his/her average percentage of contributions graded by other members. Having known that their performance was closely related to their final grade for the course, students became more prepared and attentive. Considering students' lack of presentation skills, the teacher showed some video clips of English presentations to let them observe and learn, and

encouraged them to practice in front of a mirror after class.

After the implementation of the adjustments outlined above, some changes were noted. Students were more willing to speak English, although L1 was still heard from time to time, and they became more focused during group discussion. Almost everyone was prepared and engaged in discussion. Besides, they seemed more motivated in the class. In the teacher's teaching journal she wrote "As everyone was attentively participating in finishing tasks, chitchatting, using mobile phone for personal purposes and absence from class were seldom noticed." Confidence also grew in them when they came to the front stage to give presentations.

The problem recognized with the completion of the writing task was that students' performance differed greatly due to their different levels of English proficiency especially the mastery of grammatical rules. When getting the teacher's comments and revision suggestions, some students still did not know how to revise their work. Considering this, the teacher decided to adopt another approach. After marking their writing papers, she picked several from those with a high score and showed them to the whole class. Then discussion was conducted within each group about the good points of these papers so that students with lower proficiency could learn from those with higher proficiency. This change proved to be effective since students' performance in writing had an overall improvement, which will be discussed in next part.

As time went by, the second phase of the action research (from the midterm examination to the final examination) seemed to go more smoothly. But new problems still occurred. As students got more acquainted with each other and more comfortable in giving their opinions, sometimes their discussion developed into quarrels especially when such activities as debates were carried out (in the second phase more demanding tasks like games and debates were added), as is shown in the teaching journal—"Some students got so excited that they stood up and shouted to each other." In order to keep them disciplined, the teacher re-emphasized the classroom rules and had them understand that the purpose of the debate was to learn from others and learn in the process, and that the process was more important than the result.

Quite a lot of students also displayed their incompetence in summarizing the information searched for the discussion of social and cultural aspects and were unable to think critically when required to express their own views. In view of this, the teacher asked students to summarize the two passages in each unit and then discussed with their group members before presenting the result. Students were also encouraged to read more about the topic in question after class and form their own judgment, and they were given more opportunities to answer open-ended questions in class.

These solutions were effective to some degree. Classroom discipline was guaranteed. Students became better at getting main ideas from information and when answering questions, they could say more. But this is far from enough. What they need is constant practice in information summary and critical thinking in the future.

After the conduction of the action research in this semester, students have made some improvement in terms of study autonomy, communication skills and team spirit, writing skills as well as confidence in themselves. Although there is still a long way to go, this is a good start for them. The teacher herself has gained from this experience too. In her future career, she will be more flexible in choosing teaching approaches and ready to do more research to help students in their language learning.

#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To address the first and second research question, a quantitative analysis was carried out on students' responses to Questionnaire II. The questionnaire papers were distributed to all the 29 students and 26 of them completed and returned. Part 1 of the questionnaire was about students' personal information. Part 2 includes 23 items and items 1 to 12 concern motivation change while items 13 to 23 were about language skills.

 $\label{eq:table 2} Table~2$  students' views on the effect of TBLT on their study motivation (N=26)

Items	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n
Strongly disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Disagree	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	3	1	0	1	1
Neutral	6	7	6	6	5	7	5	6	2	6	3	7
Agree	17	17	16	18	21	17	19	15	19	18	17	18
Strongly Agree	2	0	4	2	0	1	2	2	4	2	5	0
Percentage (%) for those	73.1	65.2	76.9	76.9	80.8	69.2	80.8	65.4	88.5	76.9	84.6	69.3
who agree/strongly agree												

Table 2 presents a number and percentage comparison of students' responses to each of the 12 items on the relation of TBLT to study motivation. Items 1- 4 asked students to identify some important changes in their performance in the Comprehensive English course, and most respondents acknowledged that this new teaching approach made them more willing to speak English (73.1%), more attentive (65.4%), more in expectation of their own performance and improvement (76.9) and have a stronger sense of achievement (76.9%). Items 5-7 concerned students' involvement in tasks, and the responses showed that the majority of them had participated in in-class tasks actively (80.8%), had finished pre-lesson tasks on their own (69.2%) and had clearly known the theme of each task. Items 8-12 were concerned with respondents' attitude towards task implementation. More than half of the students (65.4%) agreed that

this teaching approach was more interesting than the traditional one characterized by lectures and practice; A vast majority had demonstrated their willingness to exchange ideas with classmates in group discussion (88.5%) and their enjoyment in the interaction with the teacher and classmates (84.6%); 76.9% acknowledged that they had learnt a lot by completing tasks; 69.3% recognized an enhancement in their confidence and sense of belonging due to the relaxing atmosphere created while they were working on tasks.

IABLE 3
STUDENTS' VIEWS ON THE EFFECT OF TBLT ON THEIR LANGUAGE SKILLS (N=26)

Items	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n
Strongly disagree	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Disagree	0	1	1	2	2	1	0	0	1	1	1
Neutral	9	4	1	3	3	2	4	2	3	1	3
Agree	16	19	22	19	17	19	19	18	16	19	19
Strongly agree	1	2	2	2	4	4	3	3	6	5	3
Percentage (%) for those who agree/strongly agree	65.4	80.8	92.3	80.8	80.8	88.5	84.6	80.8	84.6	92.3	84.6

Table 3 shows students' recognition of a growth in their overall language skills. Responses to items 13 and 17 indicated an improvement in their ability to retrieve information through finishing pre-class and after-class tasks (65.4% of respondents) and a deeper understanding of the western culture through group discussion (80.8% of respondents). In response to items 14 and 18 students reported that they had seen a clear growth in their communication skills through group discussion and result presentations (80.8%) and better performance for part two of the IELTS speaking task owing to constant practice (88.5%). Responses to items 15 and 16revealed that students were mostly in agreement that they could understand English essay features better, which was conducive to reading comprehension and writing design, by finishing tasks of reading passage summarization and outline analysis, and were more able to reason logically by answering questions concerning the theme of each unit (92.3% and 80.8% respectively). In response to items 19 and 20, most respondents admitted a development in overall reading abilities as well as a better grasp of skills for certain IELTS reading question types thanks to the addition of IELTS reading materials to their daily reading assignments (84.6% and 80.8% respectively). Items 21, 22 and 23 were about writing, and according to the responses, a clear majority recognized an overall growth in writing skills (84.6%), a better mastery of outline design, paragraph development and the use of words (92.3%) and a clear awareness of employing newly-learnt words, phrases and sentence patterns in writing (84.6%) after finishing IELTS writing tasks.

To address the third research question, three open-ended questions were designed in part three of Questionnaire II, which were meant to elicit students' attitudes towards the application of TBLT in the Comprehensive English course, views on tasks and suggestions for future perfection of this course.

The answers to the first question show that 19 out of 26 students preferred the new language teaching approach to the old one mainly for the reason that this approach could give them more opportunities to speak and thus improve their communication skills while the traditional method, which emphasized word and grammar explanation, was comparatively boring. The remaining seven who had returned completed questionnaire papers were in favor of the traditional teaching method. The reasons, as they stated, were "It is of more help for those whose English proficiency was not so good", "It is better in laying the foundation for the future" and "I am more accustomed to this one".

The answers to the second question reveal that most students perceived group discussion and writing tasks to be most helpful. The most frequently mentioned problems with tasks were the time-consuming preparation for group discussion and the lack of vocabulary and arguments for writing. When asked to provide suggestions for the future (the third question), some respondents stated a need to adopt this approach from the first semester so that their speaking and writing skills could be bettered earlier; some recommended the introduction of some language learning tips and the addition of some expressions for daily conversations to better prepare them for future life in an English speaking country.

Apart from the open-ended questions in Questionnaire II, qualitative data was also taken from interviews conducted with four students (three females and one male) of the teacher's class. They were asked three questions: 1) what do you think of the TBLT method adopted in the Comprehensive English class this semester? 2) what improvement have you experienced through the completion of various tasks? 3) what suggestions do you have for the future improvement of the TBLT approach and the teaching of the Comprehensive English course as well?

All of the interviewees showed a positive attitude towards the TBLT method, as shown in the following extracts of their statements which are the responses to the first interview question:

[S1] The teaching method employed this semester is much better than the one used last semester. I didn't know why and what to learn last semester, while I am clearly aware of the purpose of learning this term because I have tasks to finish and thus my learning is more effective.

[S2] Everyone prepares for the same task, and when it is time for discussion, we can express ideas freely.

[S3] This teaching approach is good. I feel highly motivated and excited in the Comprehensive English class. I used to be reluctant to go to English classes, because I was fed up with listening grammar explanations and doing translation exercises, but now I'm always fully prepared for lessons and expect my performance in class.

[S4] I become more active in thinking, since I have to think of ways to complete my share of tasks. Besides, I have to do a lot of information searching and literature reading, and so I spend more time in exposing myself in English, which is good for my learning.

All the four students also felt a positive effect of this method on their speaking, reading and writing skills, as shown in the following extracts which are their answers to the second interview question.

- [S1] Presenting discussion results is my favorite part. I need to summarize ideas of my group members and then present it in front of the whole class, and this gives me confidence in public speaking. My overall writing skill has been bettered. And I become more aware of the importance of using newly-learnt words and expressions in my writing, which I think is a good way of consolidating what has been learnt.
- [S2] My communication skills have been greatly improved. At the beginning, I was afraid of speaking in public, but with the passage of time, I get used to group discussion, and knowing that I have prepared for it, I can convey my feelings in English fluently.
- [S3] IELTS reading exercise is of more use to me. The tips you gave us for dealing with certain question types such as how to scan reading passages quickly and how to find topic sentences are quite helpful.
- [S4] I had no desire to write in English before. Now, as you assigned the writing task and introduced some ways of developing ideas, I feel it much easier to write. And after the revision from the first draft to the second one, I have noted my problems.

Problems also arise, as stated in the following:

- [S2] It gives me headaches to think of examples to back up my arguments in writing and it takes me a lot of time to write an English essay.
- [S3] I felt easily distracted from the topic in discussion and tended to chat with my classmates about irrelevant things like sport news and gossips in the entertainment circle.

When asked to give suggestions for the future, the interviewees thought it would be better if we could introduce this teaching method at the start of the first school year, and the earlier they had access to IELTS reading question types and writing topics, the better they could get prepared for the IELTS examination, which is in agreement with the responses to the last open-ended question in Questionnaire II.

From the above quantitative analysis, it is evident that the students have experienced an upward change in the level of their study motivation and language proficiency. The qualitative findings also showed an improvement in their speaking, reading and writing skills, and revealed their positive perceptions towards the use of tasks in language teaching. Students' study autonomy has been strengthened to some degree since they took a more active role in preparing for task completion, and their information searching ability has been advanced at the same time. In addition, they displayed a better appreciation of Western cultures, and as a result a deeper understanding of the target language.

Despite this expected result, the fact that not all the students agreed with the questionnaire statements concerning study motivation change and language ability improvement demonstrates that this anti-traditional language teaching method is not appropriate for all and it takes time and effort to make it become overwhelmingly popular with language learners. The fact that there are still seven students in preference to the traditional language teaching method also shows that tradition has its own strengthens worth inheriting, and that the combination of both the old and the new might be a better solution. Additionally, that there were problems accompanying the application of this approach in the English classroom indicates the teacher's lack of experience and competence in carrying it out completely successfully, and thus she needs to read more and do more research to get better equipped in the future.

#### V. CONCLUSION

The present research was conducted to investigate the effect of the application of Task-Based Language Teaching method into the Comprehensive English course on the university students' motivation and language proficiency as well as their perception of this new method.

The results revealed that the majority of the students recognized a positive relation of TBLT to their motivation for English study in terms of an enhanced interest in and enjoyment of the language itself, more active participation in classroom activities and strengthened study autonomy as indicated by the increased time spent on preparation for and completion for tasks. Most students also identified a growth in their language skills, especially their speaking and writing skills, information retrieval abilities, and a better understanding of Western cultures due to the communicative nature of the approach.

However, this action research suffered from limitations. Action research in itself is not perfect and lacks external validity, since "it is simply a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own practices, their understanding of those practices and the situations in which the practices are carried out" (Carr and Kemmis, 1986, p.162). To investigate the effect of a teaching method, experimental research designs, the pre-test post- test control group design in particular, might be a better option. Another problem is with quality control. According to Denzin (1978), in order to guarantee the quality of a research, one needs to consider the four types of triangulation: data triangulation (various data sources), theory triangulation (different theories), methods triangulation (multiple data collecting methods) and researcher triangulation (more than one researcher). In the current study, methods triangulation was not satisfied. So, the involvement of another researcher would be necessary to

increase confidence in the conclusion.

#### APPENDIX A. QUESTIONNAIRE I

Part one: Demographic Information

(1) Gender (2) Age

Part two: motivation change

After a semester your English learning motivation has undergone which of the following change:

Not demotivated ( ) Slightly demotivated ( )
Demotivated to some degree ( ) Seriously demotivated ( )

Part three: demotivating factors

The following are statements intended to find out factors contributing to the demotivation for language study. For each of the statements, please choose your answer by ticking the appropriate box in the table below:

Dem	otivating factors for English study	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1.	I hear that English is so widely learnt that it is not as competitive as before.	disagree				agree
2.	My friends do not like learning English.					
3.	I always get low scores in tests.	-				
4.	Sentences in the English texts are difficult to understand.	+				
5.	I find it difficult to memorize English words and phrases.	+				
6.	Texts in English course books are too easy.	+				
7.	There is a lack of authentic English environment in the process of learning.					
8.	I do not like my classmates.	+				
9.	I don't know how to learn autonomously.	+				
10.	The English teacher's pronunciation is poor.					
						+
11.	The English teacher ridicule students' mistakes in their answers.					
12.	English class hours are not sufficient.					
13.	I seldom have chances to communicate in English in the class.					
14.	Audio-visual facilities in the classroom are seldom used.					
15.	I have made efforts to learn English but without achievement.					
16.	Out-of-class English activities are rarely organized.					
17.	The English teacher shows no emotion and enthusiasm while giving lectures.					
18.	The English teacher favors some students.					
19.	Topics of the English passages in the course book are too old.					
20.	Excessive new words emerge in the textbook.					
21.	The content of the passages in the course book is not close to life.					
22.	I have so many things to do that I do not have time to learn English					
23.	There are too many students in the English class.					
24.	Students do not cooperate in the English class.					
25.	English learning task is too heavy.					
26.	Most English lessons focus on translation.					
27.	Most English lessons focus on grammar.					
28.	The English teacher is always engaged in giving lectures without interacting					
with	students.					
29.	The English teacher does not give feedback on students' learning punctually.					
30.	The English teacher gives lectures at a quick pace without considering					
whet	her students can catch up or not.					
31.	The English teacher sticks to one single instructing method.					
32.	The English teacher's explanations are difficult to understand.					
33.	I do not like the English teacher's appearance and manners.					
34.	There is no sufficient equipment in the classroom (such as no adequate					1
	ing and warming and cooling facilities).					
35.	The teaching is arranged at an unreasonable pace.					
36.	I am too lazy to spend time on English study.	1	1			<u> </u>
37.	I have no interest in English at all.	1	1			<u> </u>
38.	I am addicted to the Internet and lose interest in English.	†	1			†
39.	I am in love with someone and have no desire to learn English.	+	1			+

Please explain briefly if you are demotivated for other reasons.

Part four: open-ended question

Why has your English study motivation not changed? Please state the reason in brief.

APPENDIX B. QUESTIONNAIRE II

Part one: Demographic Information

(1) Gender (2) Age Part two: the influence of TBLT on study motivation and language skills

The following are statements intended to find out the perceived effect of TBLT in the Comprehensive English class. For each of the statements, please choose your answer by ticking the appropriate box in the table below:

statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
I was more willing to speak English.					
2. I was more attentive in the Comprehensive English class.					
3. I had more expectations for my own performance and progress.					
4. I could get a sense of achievement from learning English in this course.					
5. I always participated actively in the in-class tasks.					
6. I could finish all the before-class tasks assigned.					
7. Every time, I was clear of the theme of the tasks.					
8. Compared with the traditional language teaching method, TBLT is more interesting.					
9. I was willing to exchange ideas with my classmates in the group discussion.					
10. I could learn things while trying to finish tasks.					
11. I enjoyed interacting with my teacher and classmates.					
12. I could gain confidence and a sense of belonging in the atmosphere created with the adoption of TBLT.					
13. I have made progress in retrieving information online through the					
completion of before-class and in-class tasks.					
14. I have improved my communication skills through group discussion and					
result presentation.					
15. I have improved my reading and writing abilities through finishing tasks of					
working out the outline of passages and summarizing the main idea of each					
paragraph in these passages.					
16. I have strengthened the ability of reasoning by answering the questions					
designed by the teacher concerning the content of the passages.					
17. I have got a better understanding of Western cultures via the discussion of					
Western cultural elements.		+			
18. I was aware of my own weaknesses and the direction in which to improve					
through the oral practice of the second part of IELTS speaking test.					
I have improved my reading skills by finishing IELTS reading tasks.      I could better solve certain IELTS reading questions under the guidance of					
the teacher.					
21. I have bettered my overall writing proficiency by writing essays concerning		+			
the topics of IELTS writing task two.					
22. I have improved my writing skills in terms of outline, argumentation and		+			
sentence and lexical variety through the revision of the first draft of each piece of					
writing.					
23. I have tried to use newly-learnt words, expressions and sentence patterns in		1			
each unit while writing the essay concerning the same topic with this unit.					

Part three: open-ended questions.

- 1. Do you prefer the traditional language teaching method which focuses on grammar and vocabulary or the Task-Based Language Teaching approach which emphasizes meaning and interaction? Why?
- 2. Among all the tasks designed in this course (reading, writing, listening and speaking), which do you think is of greater help to you? What problems have you ever come across in the process of finishing the tasks?
- 3. What suggestions do you have of the further improvement of the teaching method in the Comprehensive English course?

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

My heartfelt gratitude is particularly extended to Professor Chen Linhan, who has inspired me to conduct this research in the first place and offered me academic help needed during the whole process.

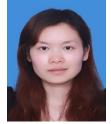
My sincere thanks also go to all my colleagues in the International College of Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, who have given me their advice and encouragement from the beginning to the end of my research.

Lastly, I would like to express my indebtedness to my husband, who has not only given me the necessary technical assistance but also helped to take care of the baby while I was engaged in doing this research.

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**Danyan Huang,** born in Shaodong, Hunan Province on December 2<sup>nd</sup> 1984, earned the bachelor degree in the English language in Southwest Jiaotong University in Chengdu, China in 2008 and the master degree in foreign linguistics and applied linguistics in Guangdong University of Foreign Studies in Guangzhou, China in 2010.

Since the September of 2010, she has been working as a teacher of English in the International College of Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, located in Baiyun District of Guangzhou, China. Now as a lecturer, she is mainly responsible for the instruction of such courses as Comprehensive English, Listening and writing during the academic year and IELTS Reading in the summer training program. Her previous publications include A Study on Intercultural Business Negotiation—Based on a Case, published in *Overseas English*,

Hefei of Anhui, China: Anhui Science and Technology Press, 2013, and A Study on the Teaching Model of Business English Writing, published in *Journal of Language and Literature Studies*, Hohhot of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, China: Adult Education College of Inner Mongolia Normal University, 2013. Her previous research interests lay in pragmatics and business English while currently she is keen on second language classroom research mainly due to her teaching experience in this field.

# Social and Emotional Intelligences: Empirical and Theoretical Relationship

Ebrahim Khodadady Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran

Omolbanin Hezareh Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, International Branch, Mashhad, Iran

Abstract—This study aimed to explore the relationship between social and emotional intelligences. To this end, Reading the Mind in the Eyes Test (RMET) was translated into Persian and employed as a measure of social intelligence. It was then administered along with the Persian Emotional Intelligence Scale (EQS) to one hundred eighty one students majoring in English language and literature, translating English to Persian and teaching English as a foreign language at undergraduate and graduate levels at three universities in Mashhad, Iran. The correlational analysis of the participants' responses on the RMET and EQS revealed no significant relationship between social and emotional intelligences. The same analysis, however, showed that social intelligence is significantly related to four out of fifteen genera constituting the domain of emotional intelligence, i.e., Self-Aware, Humanistic, Sociable, and Self-Satisfying. The results are discussed from empirical and theoretical perspectives and suggestions are made for future research.

Index Terms—social intelligence, emotional intelligence, schema theory, translation

#### I. INTRODUCTION

From the perspective of schema theory, concepts represented by words such as "intelligence" have been approached either macrostructurally or microstructurally. The former which is widely adopted by almost all scholars and quoted by their followers defines them deductively in single-statement definitions such as the ability to judge, understand and reason well (Binet, 1905) or "the ability to solve problems or fashion products that are of consequence in a particular cultural setting or community" (Gardner, 1993, p. 6). By their very nature the words for which these definitions are offered place themselves at the apex of a hierarchical system and evade being tested due to their broad and vague nature.

The microstructural approach of schema theory, however, focuses on the words constituting the definition, studies them inductively and then decides whether they represent what they define. While Gardner himself, for example, followed the macrostructural approach of schema theory and did not develop any measure to establish the validity of proposed multiple intelligences (MIs), some of his followers did.

Shearer (1994), for example, designed the Multiple Intelligences Developmental Assessment Scales (MIDAS) consisting of eight scales to address the intelligences identified by Gardner (1983), i.e., naturalist, interpersonal, linguistic, intrapersonal, logical-math, spatial, kinesthetic, and musical. Other scholars expanded the list of intelligences by developing scales for cultural intelligence (e.g., Ang *et al.*, 2007), emotional intelligence (e.g., Mayer, Caruso & Salovey, 2000) social intelligence (e.g., Cantor & Kihlstrom, 1987) and spiritual intelligence (e.g., Amram & Dryer, 2007), to name a few.

Among the MIs identified and investigated so far, the 133-item Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) designed by Bar-On (1997) and Reading the Mind in the Eyes Test (RMET) developed by Baron-Cohen *et al.* (2001) have been validated microstructurally by Khodadady and Tabriz (2012) and Khodadady and Namaghi (2043), respectively. By building on these studies, the present project attempts to find out whether the emotional and social intelligences of university students majoring in English language and literature (ELL), translating English to Persian (TEP) and teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) relate to each other significantly.

#### A. Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence (EQ) has been defined macrostructurally by a number of scholars (e.g., Goleman, 1998; Mayer & Salovey 1997; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2002). Bar-On et al. (2003), for example, defined it as "an array of emotional and *social* [italics added] abilities, competencies and skills that enable individuals to cope with daily demands and be more effective in their personal and social life" (p. 1790). This definition is macrostructural because it assumes the existence of five competences, i.e., Adaptability, General Mood, Interpersonal,

Intrapersonal and Stress Management, and 15 components, i.e., Flexibility, Problem Solving, Reality Testing, Happiness, Optimism, Empathy, Interpersonal Relationships, Social Responsibility, Assertiveness, Emotional Self-Awareness, Independence, Self-Actualization, Self-Regard, Impulse Control, and Stress Tolerance, to be adopted universally.

Khodadady and Tabriz (2012) [henceforth K&T], however, questioned the validity of five competencies and 15 components by arguing that Bar-On (1997) had included 15 statements, i.e., 5, 12, 25, 34, 41, 50, 57, 65, 71, 79, 94, 101, 109, 115 and 123 to assess positive impression (PI) scale, negative impression (NI) scale, and inconsistency index (II). They argued that these statements were irrelevant to the construct under investigation. K&T removed these items and reduced their number from 133 to 117. They also rendered the 63 reverse statements of the EQ-i positive arguing that application of reverse statements is questionable because an EQ scale is designed to measure the existence of a construct rather than its non-existence.

K&T studied Dehshiry's (2003) Persian translation of 117 positive statements and revised them by resorting to schema theory as suggested by Khodadady (2001, 2008) and Khodadady and Lagzian (2013). In order to differentiate K&T's 117-statement scale from that of 133-item EQ-i, it is named EQS in this study. K&T administered the EQS to 669 instructors of English as a foreign language (EFL) and extracted 15 latent variables (LVs) when they applied the Principal Axis Factoring to their data and rotated their extracted factors. The LVs will be described in the instrumentation section very shortly.

#### B. Social Intelligence

Social intelligence has been defined macrostructurally as "the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls-to act wisely in human relations" (Thorndike, 1920, p.228) and "facility in dealing with human beings" (Wechsler, 1958, p. 8). It has been translated into several scales such as George Washington Social Intelligence Test (Moss *et al.*, 1955), Social Insight Test (Chapin, 1942), the Role-Taking Test (Feffer, 1959) and Reading the Mind in the Eyes Test (RMET) developed by Baron-Cohen, Wheelwright, Hill, Raste, and Plumb (2001) [henceforth BWHR&P] and employed in this study.

The RMET is based on a rationale called theory of mind (Premack & Woodruff, 1978). It is based on the assumption that people interact by identifying each others' mental states. According to BWHR&P, the theory is variously referred to as "mentalizing" (Morton, Frith & Leslie, 1991), "mind reading" (Whiten, 1991) and "social intelligence" (Baron-Cohen, et al., 1997). Kodadady and Namaghi (2013) [henceforth K&N] employed the RMET as a measure of social intelligence defined as "the ability to decode others' mental states on the basis of observable information, such as facial expressions" (Sabbagh, Moulson, & Harkness, 2004, p. 1).

K&N administered the Persian RMET validated by Khorashad *et al.* (2014) with the cloze multiple choice item test (CMCIT) designed by Hale et al. (1988) as a measure of English language proficiency to 181 undergraduate university students of ELL and Theology and obtained a significant correlation between the two (r = .27, p < .01), indicating that there is a positive relationship between social intelligence and English language proficiency. No study has, however, explored the relationship between social intelligence as measured by the RMET and emotional intelligence as measured by the EQS so far. In addition to exploring the relationship, the Persian RMET was revised in this study to find out whether the revision yields better psychometrics.

#### II. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Participants

One hundred eighty one university students majoring in the three main subfields of English took part voluntarily in this study. While the majority (n = 96, 53.0%) were majoring in ELL, 44 (24.3%) and 41 (22.7%) studied TEFL and TEP, respectively, as full time students at undergraduate (n = 136, 75.1%) and graduate (n = 45, 24.9%) levels at Ferdowsi University of Mashhad (n = 97, 53.6%), Imam Reza (n = 58, 32.0%) and Khayyam (n = 26, 14.4%) universities in Mashhad. Most participants were female in gender (n = 126, 69.6%) and single in terms of marital status (n = 153, 84.5%). Their age ranged between 18 and 39 (mean = 22.27, SD = 4.1). They spoke Persian (n = 180, 99.4%) and Turkish (n = 1, .6%) as their mother language.

#### B. Instruments

Three instruments were employed in the present study: A Demographic Scale, Reading the Mind in the Eyes Test and Emotional Intelligence Scale.

#### 1. Demographic Scale

Following Khodadady and Dastgahian (2015) a Demographic Scale (DS) consisting of nine short-answer and multiple choice items were developed to collect the data related to participants' age, place, field, degree and year of study, and mother language. The questions dealing with these variables were raised on the answer sheet requiring the participants to mark the 36 boxes corresponding to the items brought up on the Persian RMET.

#### 2. Reading the Mind in the Eyes Test

The Persian version of 36-item Reading the Mind in the Eyes Test (RMET) validated by Khorashad *et al.* (2014) was revised and administered in this study. Along with the test, a word definition handout was given to test takers to look up whatever words used in the four alternatives of the test if they did not know their meanings. The handout in the original English version contained 93 words presented alphabetically. The word "accusing", for example, was given as the first schema followed by its definition "blaming". It was then contextualized through **bold** fonts within a sentence such as "The policeman was **accusing** the man of stealing a wallet".

K&N employed the Persian version of the RMET translated by Khorashad (2013) and Khorashad et al. (2014). Instead of 93 words, it contained 25 in its word definition section. They were defined and presented in sentences whose content had been slightly altered to suit their intended Persian takers. The word "jealous", for example, was translated as HASSOOD and contextualized in the Persian sentence "ALIREZA BE HAMEYEH PESSARHAEE KE AZ OO BOLONDTAR VA KHOSH GHIYAFEHTAR BOODAND HASOODI MIKARD". In this study, however, the original English RMET was translated by resorting to schema theory and its deficiencies were removed by consulting *Multiple Choice Items in Testing: Practice and Theory* (Khodadady, 1999). The processes of translation and revision will be described in some details in the Procedures section shortly.

The original English version of the RMET requires its takers to choose and circle the most suitable alternative on the test booklet as quickly as possible. In this study this procedure was changed to render the test cost effective. The four alternatives of items on the RMET were numbered alphabetically as A, B, C, and D, and the participants were provided with a single answer sheet to mark their answers on, allowing the researchers to administer the test booklets over and over. The participants were advised to look at each photo carefully and choose one of the alternatives which they thought described the mental state of the person photographed best. Upon choosing the best answer, they had to mark the box corresponding to their answer on the answer sheet. They were also advised to choose their answers as quickly as they could. They were not, however, timed. They had to, for example, choose the most suitable alternative provided on the top and bottom corners of the photo given in Figure 1 as a practice item in which the area around the eyes of a "panicked" man is presented. The alpha reliability coefficient reported by K&N was .54, indicating that the RMET is a relatively reliable measure of social intelligence.



Figure 1. Practice Item on the RMET

#### 3. Emotional Intelligence Scale

The Persian Emotional Intelligence Scale (EQS) validated by K&T in Iran was employed in this study. It consists of 117 positively worded statements taken from the 133-item Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-I) designed by Bar-On (1997). The content validity of statements was established by K&T who resorted to schema theory to revise Dehshiry's (2003) translation of those statements. Each statement is offered on a 5-point Likert scale, i.e., never, seldom, sometimes, usually, and always true of me. The test takers are required to read each statement such as "I avoid hurting other people's feelings", and decide to what extent it is true of them at the time they take the scale. With the exception of five statements, the rest loaded acceptably on fifteen LVs in K&T's study, i.e., Humanistic, Self-Satisfying, Self-Confident, Self-Aware, Self-Controlled, Research-Oriented, Content, Sociable, Empathetic, Tolerant, Flexible, Realistic, Independent, Emotional and Happy. While the EQS proved to be a highly reliable measure itself, i.e.,  $\alpha = .97$ , the reliability coefficients of its 13 underlying LVs ranged from .95 to .52. The last two LVs, i.e., Emotional and Happy, consist of only one item each and thus lack alpha reliability index.

#### C. Procedures

The Persian version of the RMET translated and explored by Khorashad (2013) and Khorashad et al. (2014) was consulted to translate the English RMET into Persian by employing schema theory (Khodadady, 2000a, 2008a, 2008b; Lagzian, 2013) and the guidelines offered for developing multiple choice item tests (e.g., Farhady, Jafarpoor, & Birjandi, 1994; Haladyna, 1994; Khodadady, 1999, 2000b). First, from the section dealing with word definitions, extraneous words not given as the keyed mental state or foils were removed to reduce the number of defined words from 93 to 74. Secondly, the English names were not changed into Persian names as was done on the RMET employed by K&N simply because the photos were taken from Western characters. Thirdly, the keyed response and its foils were numbered alphabetically and presented in a manner in which no two photos presented after one another had the same choice as their keyed response. And finally, the best Persian equivalents were chosen by consulting several monolingual and bilingual references (e.g., Haghshenas, Samei, & Entekhabi, 2001; Saatchi, 1992).

The word "playful", for example, is translated as "SARZENDEH" by Khorashad (2013). In their English to Persian dictionary, Haghshenas et al. (2001), however, provided their readers with seven Persian equivalents for "playful", i.e., 1. BAZIGOOSH, SHEYTAN, SARHAL, SHAD VA SHANGOOL, BA NESHAT, 2. BA BAZIGOOSHI, BA SHEYTANAT, SARHAL (p. 1286). As can be seen, SARZENDEH is not among the equivalents offered by Haghshenas et al. Similarly, Saatchi (1992) offered 12 English equivalents for SARZANDEH in his Persian to English dictionary none of which is "playful", i.e., frolicsome, lively, animated, gay, breezy, cheerful, sprightly, vivacious, spirited, brisk, bold, daring (p. 1266).

The present researchers, therefore, revised not only the alternatives of the Persian RMET, but also translated those English words and their example sentences which had been left out by Khorashad et al. (2014). The newly revised and translated RMET was then printed in adequate numbers and administered to the participants of this study after their approval as well as that of their instructors in Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Imam Reza and Khayyam universities had been secured. They took the EQS on a separate session and provided the researchers with the data required to explore the relationship between SQ and EQ. The researchers were present in the testing sessions and administered both tests under standard conditions.

#### D. Data Analysis

The descriptive statistics of the items comprising the RMET and EQS were calculated to determine how well they had functioned. The reliability of the two scales was estimated via Cronbach's alpha. Upon establishing their reliability, the relationships between the RMET and EQS were explored by using Pearson Bivariate Correlations. The same correlations were utilized to find out whether the LVs underlying the participants' emotional intelligence relate significantly to their social intelligence. All the descriptive and inferential statistics were conducted via IBM SPSS Statistics 20 to test the hypotheses below.

- H1. The revised Persian RMET is as reliable as the RMET employed by K&N.
- H2. There is no significant relationship between the Persian RMET and EOS.
- H3. There are no significant relationships between the 15 factors underlying the EQS and the scores obtained on the RMET?

#### III. RESULTS

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the RMET administered in the present, BWHR&P and K&N's studies. (BWHR&P provide the statistics related to three groups. The statistics of their third group is chosen for comparison because they belonged to undergraduate university students as those of the present and K&N's did). As can be seen, the mean score of the Iranian students on the RMET, i.e., 24.01, is lower than that of their British counterparts, i.e., 28.0. It is, however, higher than that of 161 Iranian students in K&N's study, i.e., 21.7, indicating that schema-based translation of the RMET has decreased its difficulty level. In spite of becoming easier, the reliability level of the test in this study, i.e.,  $\alpha = 0.38$ , is noticeably lower than that of K&N's, i.e.,  $\alpha = .54$ , rejecting the first hypothesis that the revised Persian RMET will be as reliable as the RMET employed by K&N.

 $\label{thm:constraint} \textbf{TABLE 1} \\ \textbf{DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND RELIABILITY ESTIMATES OF THE RMET}$ 

Test takers	Baron-Cohen et al. (2001)			Pres	Present study				K&N			
	N	Mean	SD	α	N	Mean	SD	α	N	Mean	SD	α
All	103	28.0	3.5	-	126	24.01	3.3	.38	161	21.7	3.9	.54
Females	50	28.6	3.2	-	55	23.35	3.4	-	127	21.8	3.9	-
Males	53	27.3	3.7	-	181	23.81	3.3	-	34	21.4	4.3	-

Two factors have contributed to the low reliability coefficient of the revised RMET in this study. The first and foremost is the negative ID index of item two (-.050), indicating that participants with lower social intelligence (SQ) did better than those with higher SQ. [In this study SQ is used to differentiate it from spiritual intelligence to which scholar such as Amram and Dryer (2007) and King (2008) refer to as SI]. The removal of item two from reliability analysis, for example, increased the alpha coefficient from .38 to .42. The second reason is the lower value of SD (3.3) compared to the value reported by K&N (3.9), reflecting differences in the homogeneity of the samples who took part in the two studies, i.e., the participants in this study were more homogeneous than those in K&N. In Thorndike and Hagan's (1977) words, "A sample made up of children from a wide range of socioeconomic levels will tend to yield higher reliability coefficients than a very homogeneous one" (p. 89).

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics of the Persian EQS and its 15 factors. As can be seen, the mean score on the EQS in this study is 417 (out of 560) which is very close to the score reported by K&T, i.e., 433, indicating that the participants of this study were emotionally as intelligent as K&T's. The scale proved to be as reliable as it was in K&N's study as well, .97. With the exception of Emotional and Happy factors whose reliability could not be estimated because of consisting of a single item, the alpha reliability coefficients (ARC) of other 13 factors ranged from .36 (Independent) to .93 (Self-Satisfying). The ARC of the Self-Satisfying factor is the same for both studies, i.e., .93. It is also higher than the ARC of the first factor, i.e. .93, obtained in this study because its standard deviation (SD) is higher, i.e., 18.1 vs. 15.4, indicating that the Self-Satisfying factor could differentiate emotionally intelligent participants better than the Humanistic factor did.

 ${\it Table \ 2}$  Descriptive Statistics and Reliability Estimate of 15 Factors Underlying the EQS

No	Factors	Mean	SD	Skew	Kurt	Alpha This study	Alpha K&T
1	Humanistic	109.01	15.414	-1.216	4.744	.90	.95
2	Self-Satisfying	113.70	18.148	-1.775	8.929	.93	.93
3	Self-Confident	45.21	7.705	-1.174	5.919	.86	.89
4	Self-Aware	35.59	7.181	268	253	.84	.87
5	Self-Controlled	23.04	5.717	168	321	.84	.84
6	Research-Oriented	18.51	3.609	711	1.117	.70	.79
7	Content	14.60	3.783	885	1.035	.87	.81
8	Sociable	16.01	3.091	-1.459	4.459	.70	.72
9	Empathetic	7.71	1.786	825	1.422	.83	.65
10	Tolerant	6.56	1.998	487	.222	.70	.67
11	Flexible	6.86	2.120	698	.334	.77	.74
12	Realistic	6.19	2.058	217	535	.62	.56
13	Independent	7.47	1.634	950	1.965	.36	.52
14	Emotional	3.87	1.024	-1.031	1.099	-	-
15	Нарру	3.11	1.259	139	771	-	-
	EQS	417.44	56.612	467	1.354	.97	.97

Table 3 present the correlation coefficients (CCs) obtained between the EQS and RMET on the one hand and the factors underlying the EQS and RMET on the other. As can be seen, there is no significant relationship between emotional and social intelligences of university students. This result *confirms* the second hypothesis that *there is no significant relationship between the Persian RMET and EQS*. In line with Feizbakhsh's (2010) findings showing no significant relationship between EQ and teacher effectiveness as measured by a questionnaire called Characteristics of Effective English Language Teachers (Khodadady, 2010), the results of this study show that emotional intelligence as a cognitive domain does not relate to social intelligence as measured by the RMET.

 $TABLE\ 3$  Correlations between the RMET and EOS along with its Underlying Factors (N = 165)

Domain and Genera	RMET	Domain and Genera	RMET
EQS	.145	Sociable	.167*
Humanistic	.201**	Empathetic	.041
Self-Satisfying	.161*	Tolerant	018
Self-Confident	.036	Flexible	.044
Self-Aware	.216**	Realistic	.001
Self-Controlled	118	Independent	099
Research-Oriented	.008	Emotional	.087
Content	.097	Нарру	015

<sup>\*\*</sup> Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

While as a measure of social intelligence the RMET does not correlate significantly with the emotional intelligence as measured by the EQS, four of its underlying factors do, i.e., Humanistic (r = .201, p < .01), Self-Satisfying (r = .161, p < .05), Self-Aware (r = .216, p < .01) and Sociable (r = .167, p < .05). These results partially *reject* the third hypothesis that there are no significant relationships between the 15 factors underlying the EQS and the scores obtained on the RMET. These findings also show that as a cognitive domain, the emotional intelligence measured by the EQS consists of heterogamous cognitive genera most of which bear no relationship to social intelligence measured by the RMET.

#### IV. DISCUSSIONS

The results of this study are discussed by treating the words constituting the RMET and EQS as linguistic and cognitive schemata (see Khodadady & Mokhtary, 2014). The two measures did not reveal any significant relationship between social and emotional intelligences (r = .145, ns) because they differ from each other in terms of their constituting linguistic schema types, species and genera. While the former brings up 32 mental states and requires the test takers to choose them from among other 45 states all represented by a single noun schema and 46 adjective schema types belonging to the semantic domain of language only, the latter presents 223 semantic schema types which are repeated in various tokens and connected to each other by 57 and 17 syntactic and parasyntactic schema types, respectively, as shown in Table 4. The 297 schema types belong to semantic, syntactic and parasyntactic domains of language which comprise 112 statements describing the emotional intelligence of English language teachers in Iran.

<sup>\*</sup> Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Domains	Genera	Tokens		Types	
		f	%	f	%
Semantic	Adjectives	99	10.2	48	16.2
	Adverbs	22	2.3	11	3.7
	Nouns	131	13.5	68	22.9
	Verbs	185	19.0	96	32.3
	Total	437	45.0	223	75.1
Syntactic	Conjunctions	22	2.3	5	1.7
	Determiners	76	7.8	14	4.7
	Prepositions	108	11.1	16	5.4
	Pronouns	165	17.0	15	5.1
	Syntactic verbs	23	2.4	7	2.4
	Total	394	40.5	57	19.2
Parasyntactic	Abbreviations	50	5.1	7	2.4
	Para-adverbs	31	3.2	9	3.0
	Particles	60	6.2	1	.3
	Total	141	14.5	17	5.7
Total	<u> </u>	972	100.0	297	100.0

TABLE 4
LINGUISTIC DOMAINS AND GENERA COMPRISING THE LANGUAGE OF 112-ITEM EQS

As can be seen in Table 4 above, the 112-item EQS is far richer than the RMET in terms of its language. The syntactic schema "I", for example, has a token of 83 highlighting the role of test takers themselves as regards the evaluation of their own emotional intelligence. In contrast, there is no role for the same test takers to play in their social intelligence as measured by the RMET. Instead they have to put themselves in the shoes of certain actors and actresses in order to find out in what mental states they were when their photos were taken. In other words, while test takers evaluate their own emotional intelligence on the EQS by choosing options common to all statements, they have to decide what mental states other people were by choosing certain foils which change from photo to photo on the RMET.

Although the RMET does not correlate significantly with the EQS and thus establish the two social and emotional intelligences as two distinct and unrelated abilities, four genera underlying the emotional intelligence of undergraduate and graduate university (UGU) students do, i.e., Self-Aware (r = .216, p < .01), Humanistic (r = .201, p < .01), Sociable (r = .167, p < .05), and Self-Satisfying (r = 161, p < .05).

The Self-Aware genus of EQS shows the strongest relationship with the RMET (r = .216, p < .01) because individuals who enjoy this particular genus can easily express themselves, describe and share their feelings with others telling them whether they are angry with them. They easily tell people what they think, express their intimate feelings and ideas to others, tell them whether they disagree with them by showing affection and not allowing their impulsiveness create problems for them. The key cognitive schema which helps self-aware individuals to relate to people emotionally and thus employ their social intelligence effectively is their ability to accommodate "others".

The cognitive schema type "I" has a token of three in the Self-Aware genus of emotional intelligence as does "others", highlighting the importance of others in helping individuals acquire emotional self-awareness. While the schema type "me" has the second highest token after the particle "to", i.e., 6 and 9 respectively, the schemata "my" and "easy" have both been used five times in the ten species comprising the genus, emphasizing the central role of test takers in determining their own emotional intelligence and the ease with which they can reach emotional self-awareness in social interactions.

In addition to Self-Aware factor, the RMET relates significantly to the Humanistic genus of EQS (r = .201, p < .01), indicating that the higher the social intelligence of UGU students majoring in English is, the more humanistic they become in their emotional intelligence. The significant correlation between the two variables is due to the role the cognitive schemata "others" and "people" having tokens of four and three, respectively, play in developing the students' humanistic EQ. The relationship between the Humanistic genus of EQS and the RMET is almost as strong as that of Self-Aware genus of EQ (r = .216, p < .01) though the former consists of 28 species whereas nine species comprise the latter.

The relatively weak but significant relationship between SQ and Humanistic genus of EQ is due to the centrality of "I" as compared to "others". While the schema "I" contributes to Self-Aware genus three times, its token increases to 25 in the case of Humanistic genus of EQ. Two of the species comprising the genus, for example, reads: "I do not cling to others and try to stay independent", "other people seem to need me more than I need them", indicating that in spite of being social, individuals with high humanistic EQ attach more importance to their independence and self-sufficiency.

K&N seem to have employed the schema "Humanistic" to name the first genus of EQ based on species 105, "It's hard for me to see people suffer", having the fifth highest loading (.69) on the genus. Species 88, however, has the highest loading (.74) on Humanistic genus and involves "having good relations with others". The main motive for species 88 seems to have been specified in species 84 having the second highest loading (.73), "I enjoy those things which interest me", indicating that individuals with this particular genus pay attention to the mental states which concerns them and thus may stay indifferent towards most of the states brought up on the RMET which have little, if any, to do with their personal interests.

In addition to being self-oriented, the Humanistic genus of EQ contains a number of concepts none of which are addressed by the RMET, e.g., upsetting, law-abiding, comfortable, sensitive, sociable and right. Species 96, for example, reads, "I believe in my ability to handle most upsetting problems". Since there is no example as regards how upsetting problems are handled by humanistically intelligent individuals, one can assume that they will try "to be law-biding citizens" if their addressees upset them in a social interaction and thus exhibit an acceptable level of social intelligence whereas their self-aware counterparts "will show affection" and will therefore be recognized socially more intelligent.

As another genus related to social intelligence, the Sociable genus of EQ specifies individuals who make friends easily. It is also easy for these individuals to make adjustments and smile apparently because they like to help people. The sociable nature of this genus depends on containing the cognitive schemata "friends" and "people" whose cognitive formation must take place within a human society as specified in the two out of four species comprising the genus. These schemata in turn depend on the conscious and deliberate processes of "making friends" and "helping people" involved in social interaction, resulting in mutual understanding. The results of this study thus show that the higher the UGU students' social intelligence, the more sociable they become by employing their own emotions as reflected in the significant correlation between the genus and the RMET (r = .167, p < .05).

As the second factor underlying the EQS, Self-Satisfying genus of emotional intelligence consists of 30 cognitive species represented by 30 linguistic sentences. The species having the highest loading on the genus (.62) reads, "I enjoy what I do" followed by "I feel good about myself" and "It is easy for me to accept myself just the way I am", both having the second highest loading (.61) the genus. Since the RMET and Self-Satisfying genus of EQ correlate significantly with each other (r = 161, p < .05), their significant relationship highlights the indispensible role of others in helping Mashhadi individuals reach emotional self-satisfaction and relate to others emotionally.

#### V. CONCLUSION

The findings of the present study provide researchers and teachers alike with several conclusions. First, they show that social intelligence as measured by the RMET has little to do with emotional intelligence as measured by the EQS because the two scales do not correlate significantly with each other. This finding questions scholars like Goleman (1995) who claimed that

People's emotions are rarely put into words; far more often they are expressed through other cues. The key to intuiting another's feelings is in the ability to read nonverbal channels, tone of voice, gesture, facial expression and the like. . . . One rule of thumb used in communications research is that 90% or more of an emotional message is nonverbal. (pp. 110–11)

It is argued in this study that the very existence, identification and communication of emotions depend on the concepts they produce in human brains. The concepts themselves have to be represented by schemata whose materialization in linguistic forms or words allows their conceptualizers not only to refine and enrich their personally acquired concepts but also relate them to each other within the confines of space and time.

Secondly, the domain of social intelligence relates to certain genera of emotional intelligence, i.e., Self-Aware, Humanistic, Sociable, and Self-Satisfying, and thus necessitate emphasizing these genera in the fields which involve human interaction. The EFL teachers should, for example, be emotionally self-aware, humanistic, sociable and self-satisfying in order to enhance their own social intelligence. Since K&N's findings show that the RMET correlates significantly with the EFL students' language proficiency, then high proficiency levels can be adopted by authorities as their main criterion to recruit EFL teachers on the grounds that these teachers will be the most effective in their classes as documented by Khodadady and Dastgahian (2015a, 2015b) and Khodadady, Fakhrabadi and Azar (2012).

Although Sociable genus of EQS correlates significantly with the RMET, the correlation coefficient (r= .17, p<.05) does not reach .80. According to Hatch and Lazaraton (1991), two tests measure the same variable if they overlap highly, i.e., "with an r in the .80 to 1 range" (p. 442), indicating that the Sociable genus is not the same as social intelligence as measured by the RMET. The implication of this finding is that RMET needs to be administered with the EQS in order to have a more comprehensive estimate of test takers' social intelligence in general and their sociability in particular.

And finally, this study needs to be replicated and the RMET be administered along with other scales measuring emotional and social intelligences because the two must relate significantly to each other at domain, genera, species and schemata levels due to their dependence on emotions. The results of this study, however, show that the RMET relates significantly neither to the EQS nor to most of its constituting genera. In K&T's study, for example, the Self-Aware genus of EQS correlates the highest with its Self-Confident genus (r = .60, p < .01), explaining 36 percent of variance in each other. While the Self-Aware genus correlates significantly with the RMET, the Self-Confident genus does not, indicating that socially intelligent test takers are not self-confident.

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**Ebrahim Khodadady** obtained his PhD in Applied Linguistics from the University of Western Australia in 1998. He holds TESL Ontario and Canadian Language Benchmarks Placement Test (CLPBPT) certificates and has taught English as a first, second and foreign language to high school and university students in Australia, Canada and Iran.

He is currently an academic member of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, International Branch, Mashhad, Iran. He was invited as a VIP by Brock University in Canada in 2004 and served as the Associate Director of Assessment Center at George Brown College in Toronto for almost a year. His published books are *Multiple-Choice Items in Testing: Practice and Theory* (Tehran, Rahnama, 1999), *Reading Media Texts: Iran-America Relations* (Sanandaj, Kurdistan University, 1999), *English Language Proficiency Course: First Steps* 

(Sanandaj, Kurdistan University, 2001) and *Research Principles and Methods and Statistics in Applied Linguistics* (Mashhad, Hamsayeh Aftab, 2013). His main research interests are Testing, Language Learning and Teaching.



Omolbanin Hezareh is an MA student in Applied Linguistics in Ferdowsi university of Mashhad, International Branch, Mashhad, Iran. She has been teaching English as a foreign language to children, adolescence and adults at different private Institutes, i.e., Parax and MCI (Mehr Sajjad Cultural Institute) Institutes since 2006. She has also been the supervisor of English Website of Public Relations of Astan Quds Razavi in 2007, for one year. Her main research interests are Language Learning and Teaching.

## The Impact of Content-based Pre-reading Activities on Iranian High School EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension

Ali Hashemi University of Zanjan, Iran

Fariba Mobini University of Zanjan, Tehran, Iran

Ghiti Karimkhanlooie Zanjan University of Medical Sciences, Zanjan, Iran

Abstract—Most specialists in the field of foreign language reading consider reading as an interactive process between the text and the reader's prior knowledge. Therefore, the activation of prior background knowledge for an effective comprehension is very important. It is generally agreed that the pre-reading phase is the stage where we can help this interaction and activation take place. There are different strategies and techniques which could be applied to make sure of this interaction and to achieve the final goal of reading, i.e. comprehension. In this study, we focus on the pre-reading phase and the impact of three pre-reading techniques (the brainstorming, the kwl (what I know, want to know, learned), and the pre-questioning techniques) on reading comprehension. 125 high school students, both boys and girls, studying pre-university in Tarom, Zanjan, participated in the study. They were assigned to four groups: one control group and three experimental groups for each of the three pre-reading techniques. The results of data analysis indicated that all the experimental groups that used the pre-reading techniques did significantly better in their comprehension than the control group which received no technique. Meanwhile, the KWL group exceeded the other two groups in their performance.

Index Terms—reading comprehension, pre-reading stage, pre-reading techniques (kwl, pre-questioning, and brainstorming), and background knowledge

#### I. Introduction

Reading comprehension is of key importance especially to many EFL (English as foreign language) learners who rarely have an opportunity to speak English in their everyday lives (Razi, 2010). Reading is a key skill required to improve and develop students' understanding of the English language and is a skill that will prove central even to everyday lives. Reading is mostly considered as the most important language skill for EFL learners (Gu, 2003), as it exposes students to the target language and receive valuable linguistic input to build up language proficiency (Erten & Razi, 2003).

The study has important implications for students, teachers, syllabus designers, and material developers. Students can improve their own reading skill through the use of pre-reading techniques. If they learn to use these pre-reading techniques, and relate their prior background knowledge to the incoming information and activate the proper schemata, they could improve their understanding of the reading text successfully. If students lack any previous knowledge, it is the responsibility of the teacher to provide them with some background information to enable them to interpret and make sense of the text. Previewing the main points of the text, and sometimes pre-teaching of the key terms, and asking referential comprehension questions in advance to the task of reading can lead to success in their comprehension for certain. They can help their students by providing opportunities for the students to use these pre-reading techniques in practice in real situations. Material developers and syllabus designers can make use of these findings for providing better conditions for learning and teaching; they can help them read effectively and have meaningful comprehension and enjoy reading as fun.

#### II. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

#### A. The Importance of Reading

Reading is the basis of knowledge and cognition which shapes our mentality and gives insights. Davis (2008) believes that having the ability to read in one's own language is a need for the students of all languages. Reading is a primary life skill. It is a basis for a child's success in school, and, actually, all over the life. Sookchotirat (2005) believes

that reading is the most important skill in life as it is the basis of all the success in one's life. Reading is considered to be the most important activity for all students, especially in EFL classes. According to Rivers (1981), reading is a good source of information and an enjoyable activity, as well as a valuable means of extending and consolidating one's knowledge of the language. Reading abilities are critical for academic learning, and L2 reading is a primary source to learn on one's own beyond the classroom. To Dreyer (1998), in academic contexts, reading is the most important skill for second language learners.

#### B. Definition of Reading

Traditionally, reading was regarded as a linear process, a decoding one-way flow of ideas and knowledge from a writer to a reader (Gough, 1972), involving the reader in attempting to build up meaning from the written symbols and graphics in the messages in the text with no reference to the role played by the background knowledge of the reader. In the past, reading was considered as a passive skill, i.e., the readers did not have any message production or active mental process likes speakers or writers (Chastain, 1988). In modern views of reading, however, there is a shift of emphasis, more in favor of the reader. For Anderson (1999), reading is an interactive process involving the reader and the reading material in building meaning. Meaning does not exist on the printed page; rather an interaction occurs in reading, combining the printed words with the reader's background knowledge and experience (Anderson, 1999). Reading is a cognitive and interactive task. Goodman (1968) considers reading as a mode of written communication. Accordingly, reading is an activity in which the reader rebuilds the message from the text. To Grabe (1988), reading is a type of communication between the reader and the text. Smith (1988) holds that the interaction between the reader and the text is more significant than identifying and remembering the actual content of the text. To sum up, reading is by no means a linear process; rather, it is a dynamic activity.

Construction of meaning is a key concept and consideration in modern definitions of reading. Day & Bamford (2000) consider reading as the construction of meaning from a written message. In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, meaning construction is directed by the teacher. Reading is the construction of meaning through the interaction among the reader's prior knowledge, the information stated or implied in the text, and the context of the reading situation. The reader, in contrast to the traditional views, interprets and makes sense in the printed page through his own mentality and experiences which might be different from those of the writer. This proves that reading is both an active as well as an interpretive process.

#### C. Reading Comprehension

Comprehension and understanding is the final purpose in the reading process. In a reading situation, priority should be given to meaning and comprehension. Fry (1965) found it difficult to define comprehension. According to Fry (1965), comprehension is the communication process of attaining the thoughts present in the author's mind into the readers' mind. As Fry states, comprehension is to get the message and meaning in the text.

Reading comprehension is under the influence of different variables and factors including passage content or topic familiarity, gender, text difficulty, follow-up activities, background knowledge, test types and the like. One of the most important of these factors, i.e., previously acquired knowledge, is the focus of special attention in the following sections.

#### D. Reading as Process and Reading as Product

The process of reading is 'reading' itself. It is the interaction between a reader and the text; it is reader-centered and attaches greater importance to the kinds of background knowledge and experiences which the reader brings to reading. As Alderson (2000) ststes, this process may be different for the same reader on the same text at a different time or with a different purpose in mind. The product of reading is the understanding or comprehension of it. This approach is mainly used to investigate the process of reading.

#### E. Schematic Theory and Background Knowledge

Previous background knowledge of the topic which is stored in reader's mind, and the reader brings with himself to the reading situation, is referred to as 'schema'. Cognitive psychology holds that all of a person's background knowledge is stored in the cognitive structures of the brain. Therefore, in order to acquire new knowledge, background knowledge or schema needs to be activated. Schema theory is based on the concept that past experiences leads in a mental framework to get new experiences (Nunan, 1999). Based on the schema theory, comprehension of a text is as a result of an interactive process between the reader's prior knowledge and the text (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1988).

The activation of this background knowledge is through the use of an introductory instructional technique. Ausubel (1960) developed the new introductory linking strategy and named it 'advance organizers'. Advance organizers help introduce new learning concepts and join or develop new schema to relate the new incoming material to the previously acquired knowledge. They can take many shapes including a simple oral introduction by the teacher, student discussion, outlines, timelines, charts, diagrams, and concept maps.

#### F. Reading Approaches

#### 1. The Bottom-up Approach

The bottom-up approach was introduced by Gough (1972). The bottom up approach emphasizes that reading moves form part to whole. Processing the meaning starts from the text and it is text-based. According to this approach, the text is of great importance and knowing the meaning of individual words is necessary and promotes vocabulary learning. The reader has to know the meaning of each word to interpret the whole text (Al Hossani, 2005).

#### 2. The Top-down Approach

Goodman (1975) introduced the top-down approach to reading. This approach focused on whole text and the role of schemata or background knowledge to interpret the text. In this model of reading the reader is of great importance his prior knowledge and past experiences are very important.

#### 3. The Interactive Approach

The interactive model was first used by Rumelhart (1990). It is a combination of the two previous models of reading. in this model the reader gets the meaning of the text and also pays attention to the linguistic features of the text.

These text processing models consider comprehension as either text-oriented or as reader-oriented. The bottom-up, or text-driven, model suggests that the meaning of the text resides only in the text itself and is driven through decoding the incoming information in the text. In contrast to this model, the other two models are reader-driven: the reader plays an important role and part in constructing the meaning of the text. He reaches a level of automaticity in recognizing the words and sentences and predicts the meaning of the text after this recognition (Goodman, 1975).

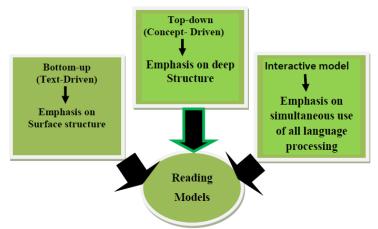


Figure 1 Dechant (1991) Figure of Reading Models

#### G. Reading Stages

How to enable students to create text-based questions before they are involved in the actual reading? Williams (1987) provides a three-phase (pre-reading, while-reading, and post reading) approach to reading, and pays special attention to the first phase (the pre-reading phase). The technique starts by introducing the topic of the passage which is to be read. After the introduction, students are supposed to work in groups and write a list in two columns. The first column lists things about the topic that they already know, and the second lists things that they are not sure of or don't know.

#### H. Pre-reading Techniques

In the past, the general practice of teaching reading, as Chandavimol (1998) stated, the learners were assigned to read a reading task by themselves and do the post-reading exercises. In such reading activity, the teacher did not provide any activities that could stir up the reader to achieve a more effective comprehension. Chatwirote (2003) believes that the teachers could provide reading enhancing activities to interest the learners.

One way of motivating a reader's interaction with a text for stimulating and building background prior knowledge is out of the use of pre-reading activities (Hudson, 1982). Pre-reading activities are intended to activate appropriate knowledge structures or provide knowledge that the reader lacks. Ajideh (2006) holds that pre-reading activities are beneficial to the reader: by building new schemata, by activating existing schemata, and by informing the teacher what the students know.

Colorado (2007) argues that knowing something about the topic is necessary for students before the reading. Besides semantic and syntactic knowledge, the student should know something about the text in order to understand it better. Pre-reading activities influence reading comprehension because they inform and activate students before reading.

#### 1. The Pre-Questioning Technique

Pre-questions can aid comprehension when these pre-questions focus on the most important aspect of the text (Bean, 1985; Rickard, 1976). Moreover, pre-questions trigger student curiosity about the passage, activate prior content knowledge, make students anticipate, and elaborate what they read (Moore, Readence and Rickelman, 1982).

In this study, two kinds of questions were used: inferential questions and literal (factual) questions. Inferential questions involve information which is not explicitly stated in the text. The reader can find the answer to such questions by using his experience and by inferring. The answer to the literal (factual) questions is explicitly stated in the passage.

These kinds of questions are used to understand, remember, or recall the information explicitly contained in the passage (Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching, & Applied Linguistics, 2002, p. 255).

#### 2. The Brainstorming Technique

Based on Wallace (1992), a very well-known type of pre-reading technique is "brain storming". A variation of this technique is giving the class a certain key word. Students are then asked to draw forth words and concepts that are related with the keyword or words provided by the teacher. Brainstorming has many advantages as a classroom technique. First, it requires little teacher preparation; second, it allows learners considerable freedom to bring their own prior knowledge and opinions to bear on a particular issue; and third, it can involve the whole class (Ajideh, 2006).

Brainstorming technique is effective in generating new ideas in the students. Richards (1990) observed that student involvement was an important part of developing cognition and generating ideas and brainstorming was an effective way of getting this. He concluded that students who were trained in brainstorming techniques were more efficient at generating and organizing ideas. According to Rao (2007), students who had been trained in brainstorming techniques, produced measurably higher results in writing tasks, and had positive attitudes about the efficiency of the brainstorming techniques as well.

#### 3. The KWL Technique (What I Know, Want to Know, and Learned)

Ogle's (1986) KWL technique serves to link readers' previous knowledge to incoming knowledge, while stimulating student involvement in their own learning. The KWL technique is divided into three parts: (1) what students already know, (2) what students want to learn, and (3) what students have learned.

#### III. METHOD

#### **Participants**

From among the total number of 200 pre-university students studying in Tarom region, Zanjan, 125 students who attended high school in Abbar, were selected. The entire number of the students participating in the study was divided into four groups, one *control* group and three experimental groups intended to test the impact of the three pre-reading activities, namely "the KWL technique, the Brainstorming technique, and the Pre-questioning technique".

#### 1. Instrumentation

#### 1) Pre-test

Since, there was no standard test for our purpose, the researcher had to develop a test. A battery of tests was implemented to collect the required data. The initial test was a general English proficiency test. The pre-test was pilot studied to find any probable shortcomings in it. Pilot study helped improve the test. This pre-test was a multiple-choice reading comprehension test comprising some short readings taken mostly from the previous university entrance exam (konkoor) and from the final exams of high school 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Both sources were recognizable enough to credit as they were tests of nation-wide scope. All the readings were followed by 40 multiple-choice questions based on the reading. The pre-test was not timed and the students were given sufficient time to deal with the entire test items and cover them.

#### 2) Post-test

The same test was administered as the post-test after a time interval of four months. There was no considerable test effect as the interval was long enough. Only a small number of the participants remembered to have taken the test before and so they could not logically be influenced by the pre-test. The results of the pre-test were statistically analyzed and led to the inference that the sample enjoys the required level of homogeneity as far as their general English proficiency is concerned.

#### 3) Four Quizzes

After teaching every reading passage, a teacher-made test based on the same reading passage was administered. In designing these tests, the researcher made use of both inside the text materials and outside resources. Meanwhile comments from that colleague and other co-workers were taken into account. All these four quizzes were designed and developed in this way to make sure of an optimal validity.

#### 4) Reading Section of the Final Test

To have further evidence on the practicality and usefulness of independent variables (the pre-reading techniques), we agreed to have a common reading comprehension section for the final test of all groups. The researcher, with the help of the colleague, found a suitable text of an appropriate level and an interesting topic, and included it in the final test. This part was intended to measure the students' ability and performance on reading comprehension in general. The results were all interesting and contributing to the proposed hypotheses. This section comprised of eight points out of 40 (four out of 20) in general.

#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### A. The Pre-test and the Post-test

As the means of the scores of all groups indicate (question and answer group=9.0, the KWL group= 8.75, the brainstorming=8.26 and the control group=8.43), all groups were at the same level concerning their English background and vocabulary knowledge. These means indicate that the groups' performance was the same in the initial phase prior

to the experiment. In this way, groups' homogeneity was ascertained and allowed for enquiring. In this way we could logically consider the failure or success of the pre-reading activities on reading comprehension.

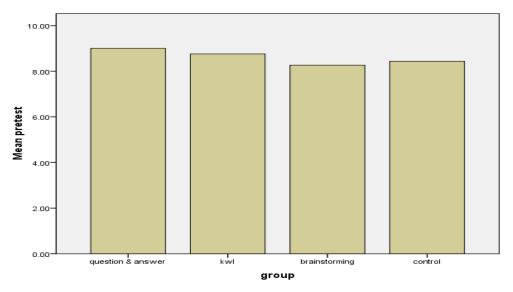


Chart 4.1 Comparing the Results of All Groups in the Pre-Test

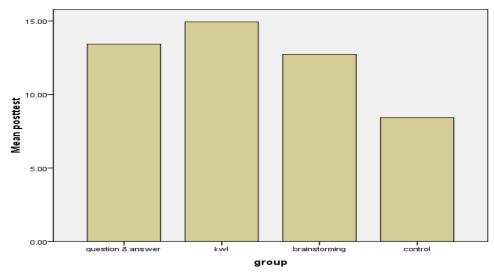


Chart 4. 2 Comparing the Results of All Groups in the Post Test

The results obtained from the post-test, emphasize the significant change taken place as a result of applying prereading techniques. They confirm the positive and favorable impact of these techniques on comprehension. As the means in the pre-test and post-test suggest, the control group with no treatment shows no such changes and improvement in performance. Once again, it is to be stated that the first hypothesis is rejected as these techniques *do* lead to a better and more effective comprehension.

The first research concerns efficiency of the pre-reading techniques. As confirmed by the results of the tests, depicted by the above charts, these strategies are all helpful and all enhance comprehension. Thus, all the three techniques implemented in the study significantly lead to a better comprehension, the degree of change, however, is not equally the same for all techniques.

The other finding concerns the second research question and the second hypothesis. Based on these results, the answer to the second question is presented here. It seems that the KWL technique is more effective as compared to the other two techniques. Taking a glance at the chart, the post-test mean in the KWL group is above the other groups. The results also make clear that the pre-questioning technique is not the most effective technique, rather, based on these findings, the most effective technique is the KWL technique.

The third research question concerns the impact of the involved pre-reading techniques on high-level and low-level students. In the study, it was hypothesized that both low-level and high-level students, equally, can benefit from pre-reading techniques. The results of the study and the findings reveal interesting truths.

In order to define high-level and low-level, the researcher consulted some colleagues in the field of language teaching. Finally an agreement could be achieved. It was assumed that the students who scored 12 or less be considered low-level and those who scored 17 and above comprise high-level students. All colleagues unanimously agreed on this criterion as a key defining term for determining low-level and high-level.

The analysis of the results rejects the hypothesis that high-level students can benefit more from the pre-reading techniques as compared to the low-level students. The analysis of the results reveals more truths on this issue. All low-level students in all the three groups made equal progress in the post-test scores compared to pre-test scores. All the high-level students, too, made similar progress in their post-test scores. This is one interesting and important finding in this study as the researcher could not perceive this before conducting the experiment.

This was a confirmation for the hypothesis. Contrary to the common belief and the supposition of the researcher, both high-level and low-level students could equally benefit from these techniques.

#### B. Quizzes

After the pre test, four more tests were administered to all groups. These four tests corresponded to the four reading sections in four units in the high school English text book. These four reading passages in their original order of presentation in the book were entitled 'Child Labor', 'Space Exploration', 'Information Technology', and 'Great Men and Women'.

The analysis of the results revealed several facts; all of the experimental groups outperformed the control group; the control group had a weak performance in these tests as compared to that of the other groups. They had the lowest low-score, high-score, and the mean and there was a significant difference in their performance.

The KWL group had the best results in the test. These findings conform to the previous results; in the similar way, again, we can seek answer to the research questions in the study. All of the intended pre-reading techniques actually led to effective comprehension, but the KWL technique was more efficient in this respect.

#### C. Reading Part of the Final Test

In addition to the pre-test and the post-test as well as four other quizzes, there was a common reading comprehension part in the final test for all groups. It is worth mentioning that in the final test, since the focus of attention was on comprehension, there was a common reading part in the final test and other parts in the final test were different. This part was intended to assess general comprehension on materials other than those present in the course book.

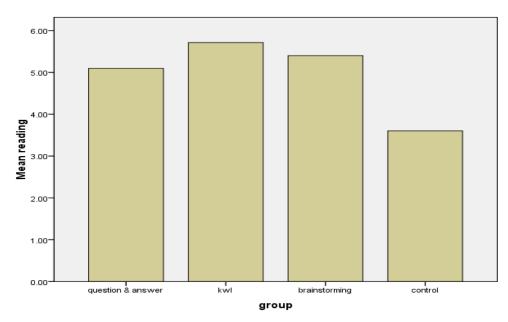


Chart 4.3 The Mean Scores in the 'Reading' Part of the Final Test

Based on the analysis of the results, significant differences in the performances of the groups were observed. The mean scores of the reading part in all groups were considerably above that of the control group; the control group had the lowest mean as compared to other three groups. The pre- reading techniques had great impacts on the reading comprehension of students in the experimental groups, but the control group had the weakest performance.

This analysis provides answer to the pre-posed research questions. The results reveal that all pre reading techniques led to more meaningful comprehension. In line with previous findings, again, it was the KWL technique which yielded better results as compared to the other pre-reading techniques.

#### D. The Questionnaire

In addition to the tests introduced earlier, the researcher made use of a questionnaire in the study to assess the impressions and attitudes of the students concerning the use of pre-reading techniques. The questionnaire contained 17 items with answers ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. This questionnaire was intended to measure and evaluate the attitudes of the participants in terms of the efficiency of the techniques in the views of the students.

#### V. CONCLUSION

#### A. Findings

This study aimed at evaluating the efficiency of the pre-posed pre-reading techniques (the KWL, the brainstorming, and the pre-questioning techniques) on EFL learners' reading comprehension. There were three research questions the answers to which formed the basis for the thesis. This study was conducted with 125, both boys and girls, high school students who were divided into three experimental groups, for the three techniques, and a control group.

The mean of the scores obtained from the pre-test assured the researcher of the similarity of background and word knowledge. The mean of scores in the *pre-questioning* group, *KWL* group, *brainstorming* group, and the *control* group are 9.00, 8.75, 8.26, and 8.43, respectively. These scores indicate that the students were at same level concerning their background English and vocabulary knowledge. All the participants in all groups made progress to a large extent except for those in the control group who received no treatment. A comparison of the mean of the scores obtained from the post-test proves this progress and advancement. The mean scores in the *pre-questioning*, the *KWL*, the brainstorming, and the *control* group in post-test were 13.41, 14.93, 12.43, and 8.43, respectively.

Taking a glance at the scores corroborates the improvement in the scores in a comparison between pre-test and post-test. Comparing the performance of the students in the pre test and the post test reveals great differences. These results are indicative of a great change in the means of the scores of the groups which received treatment. Both the means and the upper scores changed dramatically which is the sign of pre-reading activities' success in bringing about favorable changes in scores.

Another major finding concerns the pre-posed research question on the efficiency of one of these techniques. Based on these results, it seems that the *KWL* technique was more effective and leading more to comprehension that the other two techniques. Taking a glance at the post-test mean, the KWL group is above the other groups. The most effective technique, based on these findings, is the **KWL** technique.

#### B. Applications and Implications

In some situations, it is felt that reading tasks are dealt with in such a way that they seem unnecessary to attach any importance as compared to grammar or writing. However, teaching reading necessitates its own specialty and it is not an easy job to handle. Familiarity with the phases involved in reading process and activities which are special for each phase and applying them into classroom settings are of key help in the promotion of reading skill in students. When foreign language teachers of reading recognize that each reader brings to the reading situation a unique set of past experiences, emotions and mental capabilities, level of cognitive development, and interest, they realize that not all teaching techniques are appropriate for all students.

In the present study, there were three research questions and hypotheses. Based on the findings in the study, it could be concluded that the pre-posed techniques all lead to a more effective comprehension. That is because familiarity with the topic and content of a text can activate the proper schemata more efficiently as compared to having no idea of what the text is all about. This is due to the fact that providing the reader with some background knowledge of the text can activate his prior knowledge, interest him as well as intrigue his curiosity.

The most successful technique in providing background and activating prior knowledge in the reader, based on this study, is the *KWL* technique that yields better results than the other two techniques. In addition to this finding, it could be concluded that the techniques can have positive effects on all students whether high-level or low-level, and all learners can benefit from these techniques.

Findings of the current study provide the ground for adopting the claim that providing prior background knowledge of the topic by means of pre-reading activities has key impacts on reading comprehension. Providing and activating background knowledge by means of pre-reading techniques, and previewing content for the students can be effective techniques for the teacher to make up for the difficulties students encounter in reading comprehension. Pre-reading techniques can make a more efficient comprehension and a more successful reading. A wise use of these pre-reading techniques and a combined use of them is one primary step in reading comprehension.

The *questionnaire* used in the study indicates that a vast majority, nearly all, of the participants enjoyed the prereading techniques and improved their reading skill. The questionnaire is of great significance in assessing the views and attitudes of the participants regarding the practicality and ease of use as well as helpfulness of these pre-reading techniques. In most items used in the questionnaire, students had good ideas and agreed on them in general.

As for students, they could improve their own reading skill through the use of pre-reading techniques. If students get familiar with these techniques, they could make more progress and gain an efficient comprehension. If they learn to use these pre-reading techniques, and relate their prior knowledge to the new information and activate the proper schemata, they could improve their understanding of the reading text successfully.

This study has another important implication; students need to activate background knowledge of the topic and content before they embark on the reading. If they lack any previous knowledge, it is the responsibility of the teacher to provide them with some background information to enable them to interpret and make sense of the text. Previewing the main points of the text, and sometimes pre-teaching of the key terms, and asking referential comprehension questions in advance to the task of reading can bring about success in their comprehension for certain.

The results of the study can potentially change EFL teachers' attitudes about the nature of reading. Teachers, too, can help their students in achieving the intended change in them. They can introduce suitable pre-reading techniques and encourage the use of them. They can help their students by providing opportunities for the students to use these pre-reading techniques in practice in real situations. The role of EFL teacher is all important in this respect. He can make up for the shortcomings in the course books through his own experience and the provision of effective techniques, especially pre-reading techniques.

Another major implication of this study concerning teachers is that teachers are recommended to use and teach the required comprehension techniques for an effective comprehension in the students. To achieve this goal, two suggestions may are offered to teachers: First, it is better to teach these techniques *explicitly*. Teachers are also recommended to use and model these and any other newly introduced techniques themselves; in this way students learn them in practice. In this study, we clearly introduced and explained the techniques first, and then modeled them in practice for the students.

Material developers, syllabus designers, parents, and all those in charge and involved in teaching and learning, can make use of these findings for providing better conditions for learning and teaching. Providing students with modern and scientific methods and techniques for learning is undoubtedly a great thing; we can help them to read effectively and have better comprehension and enjoy reading as fun.

#### C. Suggestions for Further Research

Some suggestions are made for further research based on the results of the present study. It is suggested that further researches focus on the effect of pre-reading techniques on different types of reading, such as short stories and non-educational materials.

In the present study, some variables such as gender and age were not taken into account. Further studies can focus on the role of gender and age range in comprehension. Future research, also can focus on other aspects of language and explore the efficiency of such techniques on other language skills, i.e., listening, speaking, and writing.

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Ali Hashemi is an M.A. Candidate of TEFL at University of Zanjan, Zanjan, Iran.

Fariba Mobini is an assistant professor of TEFL at University of Zanjan.

Ghiti Karimkhanlooie is an assistant professor of TEFL at Zanjan University of Medical Science.

### The Novel Interpretations of Nominal Plural Attributives in Modern English

#### Xiongyong Cheng

School of Foreign Languages, Henan University of Technology, 450001 Lianhua Avenue, Zhengzhou High & New-tech Industries Development Zone, China

Abstract—It is a common phenomenon in modern English for nouns to be used as attributes in the form of singulars, but there are more and more plural nouns used as attributes together with the popularity of nominal singular attributes. Whether the occurrence of this tendency is fortuitous or natural has been a hot issue among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) lecturers and learners. As such, the current paper is aimed at facilitating EFL lecturers and learners' comprehension of the fundamental principle of language forms serving the expression of language significance, thereby pushing the enhancement of potential EFL instruction along the fit and sound path.

Index Terms—modern English, nominal singular, plural, attribute noun

#### I. INTRODUCTION

The traditional English grammar assumes that words modifying or restricting central nouns as attributives should be adjectives (Bo, 2006). Nevertheless, any language is variable, and the English language is no exception (Brown, 2011). For a long time, some of the so-called "standard rules" in English have begun to change quietly in one way or another (Zhang, 2001, p. 35). In control of the economical principles of language, people tend to express linguistic details with the structure of the simplest form (Chen, 1994), and instead many nouns in the absence of the same adjectives are frequently used as attributes, and the plural attributive "has increasingly become a tendency" (Jesperson, 1954, p. 23). It is likewise a hot and challenging issue for the majority of teachers, students, and English lovers in China to attend to (Liu, 1993). As such, this current paper attempts to start from the following four perspectives in search of the new rules and characteristics of plural nouns as attributives to cater for readers concerned: (1) the causes of attributive nouns, (2) the functional interpretations of attributive nouns, (3) the fundamental features of plural nouns as attributives, and (4) the different and diverse meanings of singular and plural noun attributes.

#### II. ATTRIBUTIVE NOUN ORIGINS

In English, a noun can be used as a modifier like an adjective before another noun if there is no corresponding attributive adjective with the same root as a noun concerned, and this noun word is called "noun adjective" or "attributive noun" (Bryant, 1959, p. 28). It is also one of the characteristics of modern English to express complex thoughts by drawing on simple structures. So-called noun adjectives are really nouns which directly modify other nouns, which actually play the role of adjectives, for example, "science students", "the Obama Administration", "dinner-time", "oil industry", "Christmas party", and so on. There are usually seven reasons for noun adjectives to be used as attributives as follows:

- (1) Nouns replace adjectives or present and past participles, for instance,
  - a) country life  $\rightarrow$  rural life
  - b) China-U.S. relations  $\rightarrow$  Sino-American relations
  - c) a *launch* pad  $\rightarrow$  a launching pad
  - d) *cube* sugar  $\rightarrow$  sugar formed in the shape of a cube
- (2) Common nouns take the place of possessive nouns, for example,
- a) good rapport between *consumer* and *producer* countries  $\rightarrow$  good rapport between consumers' and producers' countries
- b) a proposal for a ceiling on ASEAN commodity imports  $\rightarrow$  a proposal for a ceiling on ASEAN's commodity imports
  - (3) Nouns replace prepositional phrases, such as:
    - a) a *tool* box  $\rightarrow$  a box for tools
    - b) a *television* program  $\rightarrow$  a program on television
    - c) apple seeds  $\rightarrow$  the seeds of an apple
  - (4) Nouns regularly take the place of appositives, adjective clauses, or infinitive verb phrases, such as:
    - a) his bank manager son  $\rightarrow$  his son, (who is) a bank manager
    - b) an ASEAN joint conference report  $\rightarrow$  a report to be jointly made by ASEAN(members)

- (5) Nouns in lieu of corresponding adjectives with the same roots are used to modify central nouns (Zhang, 2001). For example, such phrases as "room number", "telephone book", "door bell", and "television program", in which room, telephone, door, and television are respectively utilized as attributives to modify the central nouns to be followed subsequently in place of the corresponding adjectives concerned;
- (6) Misunderstanding is to be avoided for some adjectives to be used as attributives (Yi, 1996). For instance, such expressions as "health condition", "snow mountain", "mountain village" are more commonly uttered in comparison with "healthy condition", "snowy mountain", "mountainous village" in that the latter would bring about ambiguity or semantic deviation. As such, we often say, for example, "child laborer" rather than "childish laborer" or "history teacher" in place of "historical teacher" in that the latter cannot bring out exact meanings;
- (7) Pursuant to the economic principles of language, people always try to seek the minimal cost of cognition for the maximal thinking expression (Chen, 1994). For the sake of the need of economic communication, there are more and more nouns instead of adjectives used as pre-modifiers in modern English since many of the adjectives derive from the same root nouns by means of affix transformation, which are generally more complex than the related nouns in form, for example, "a *science fiction* writer", "a *convenience food* store", "a *heart attack* patient", "labor-management conflict", or whatever (Azar, 2008).

In particular, there is one more thing that should be noted with care enough. That is, is there any difference in meaning between the noun attributive and the adjective attributive with the same word root? Difference lies in it that the former emphasizes the contents or functions, whereas the latter focuses on attributes and characteristics. As such, a further comparison will be made between seven groups of phrases below for the sake of detailed differences:

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[labor intensity (= physical work density)
[laboring people (= working people)
[a space rocket (= a rocket to be sent to space)
[a spacious room (= a wide and large room)
[an art gallery (= a gallery displaying all kinds of art exhibits )
[artistic effects (= effects with artistic characteristics)
[a history department (= the department of history)
[a historic relic (= a relic in history)
[riot police (= police against riots)
[riotous police (= riot-loving or trouble-making police)
[a stone house (= a house made of stones)
[a stony heart (= a cruel heart)
[a peace conference (= a conference concerning peace)
[peaceful construction (= no wars in the course of construction)
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In addition, possessives as attributives are generally different from attributive nouns in functions. The former emphasizes the possessive relation to the modified noun or represents logical predicate relationships, while the latter elucidates on the nature of the modified noun. For instance, in the phrase "the *Party* member", the noun "*Party*" as a modifier represents the nature of the modified noun "members", but in the phrase "the *Party's* calls", the modifier "*Party*" plays the role of an action issuer. While "calls" is a noun, it possesses the meaning of an action, which can also be more perfectly represented via another group of examples "a *student* teacher" and "a *student's* teacher". In more detail, "a *student* teacher" signifies "a practice teacher", while "a *student's* teacher" implies "the teacher of a student' as a result.

#### III. THE FUNCTIONAL INTERPRETATIONS OF NOUN ATTRIBUTES

Nouns used as attributes generally have no corresponding adjectives with the same roots as nouns. They can be either living or inanimate, either countable or uncountable. In modern English, attributive noun cases have become commonplace, in which attributive nouns often elaborate on the materials, functions, time, places, contents, and categories of modified nouns, so exploring the significance and function of noun attributives is necessary (Bryant, 1959; Halliday, 1994).

- (1) Indicating the spatial locations or the sources of central words (Bo, 2006), such as "New York City", "London Big Ben", "Beijing University", "body temperature", "the spaceship floor", "the kitchen window", "magazine editorials";
- (2) Illustrating the occurrence times of central words like the phrases "morning exercise", "generation gaps", "winter vacation", "a day bed", "the dinner party", "the Spring and Autumn Period", "evening suit", "midday luncheon";
- (3)Narrating the contents of central words (Liu, 1993), for example, in the phrases "a rose garden", "a story book", "piano lessons", "oxygen supply", "the air pressure", "grammar rules", and "a picture gallery", the nouns rose, story, piano, oxygen, air, grammar, and picture are the narrations of the central nouns;
- (4) Describing the use of central words (Azar, 2008), for instance, in the phrases "a *service* counter", "a *railway* station", "a *meeting* room", "the *telephone* pole", "the *trade* union", "water pipe", "welcome speech", "eye drops";
- (5) Showing the texture of central nouns (Bo, 2006), for example, in the phrases "a *brick* wall", "a *gold* medal", "rain drops", "a *diamond* necklace", "a *bamboo* pole", "paper money", and "a *stone* bridge";
  - (6) Elaborating on the relationship between noun attributives and central nouns (Bo, 2006), for example, in the

phrases "a *school* gate", "a *book* cover", "a *mountain* foot", "*children* problems", "*enemy* soldiers", and "*bus* drivers"; (7) Describing the shapes of central nouns (Bo, 2006), for example, in the phrases "*cube* brick", "*circle* stage", etc.

#### IV. THE CHARACTERISTIC ANALYSIS OF PLURAL NOUNS AS ATTRIBUTIVES

In accordance with traditional English grammar, "nouns as attributives in English are not expressed in plural forms" (Kruisinga, 2009, p. 126), and "attributive nouns are singular except that no singular form exists" (Thomson & Martinet, 1991, p. 22). Nonetheless, "this generally accepted rule now appears to be wrong" (Halliday, 1994, p. 92) since Jesperson (1954) claimed as early as in the year 1914 that plural nouns can be used as attributes, adding, however, the plural forms of nouns as attributives ought to be limited into a very narrow range. As a matter of fact, more and more plural nouns are beginning to act as attributes, which seems to be an irreversible trend of modern English (Zhang, 2001; Zhang, 1991). As such, under whatever circumstances are plural nouns used as attributes?

- (1) Plural nouns are used for the sake of the highlight of the plural concept and the elimination of ambiguity caused by the number. In more detail, if a singular noun is used as an attribute, there may be two possibilities for the meaning expressions in that the quantity concept concerned is either "one" or "several" as well. In case a plural noun is used as an attribute, only one quantity concept is just "several". As such, plural noun attributes can render the plural concept more specific and clear and avoid ambiguity, for instance, "soft *drinks* manufacturer" (a manufacturer which produces all kinds of soft *drinks*), "surgical *appliances* manufacturer" (a manufacturer which produces diverse *appliances*), "foreign *affairs* office" (an office dealing with various foreign *affairs*), "materials engineering" (engineering researching into a variety of materials), "car parts department" (a department selling all sorts of car parts);
- (2) The singular and plural forms of some nouns have quite different meanings, and the plural noun used as an attribute can identify semantic meanings, for example, "arm" and "arms", "good" and "goods", "communication" and "communications", in which singular and plural nouns differ in definition. As a result, this kind of difference renders users to choose corresponding appropriate nouns as attributes;
- (3) Some plural nouns are conventionally used as attributes, for example, "sales tax", or should be so out of common senses like "sports meeting" which in general involves a lot of "sports". Likewise, the expression "workers association" signifies that if there are few workers, it is impossible to form an "association". As such, it is the same with the phrases "suggestions handbook", "appropriations committee", "VIPs home", "advertisements attack", and so on;
- (4) Some abstract nouns ended with -ics to denote "subject", "theory", "major", "technology" are used as attributes still in the form of plural nouns (Zhang, 1995), for instance, "mechanics student", "physics problem", "linguistics study", and "statistics expert" and so forth. By comparison, in case the singular form is used, in most cases, there might be ambiguity in meaning. For example, "a mechanics student" implies a student who is majoring in mechanics now, while "a mechanic student" signifies a student who is a mechanic as well;
- (5) Some proper nouns with themselves appearing in plural forms are still to be used as attributes in the form of plurals, for example, "United Nations Assembly", "United States Senate", "Olympics President", and so on;
- (6) If an attribute noun is modified by numerals (greater than one), the noun must also be used in the plural form, unless there is a hyphen between the numeral and the noun. Make a comparison between "100 meters race" and 100-meter race", or between "two hours negotiation" and "two-hour negotiation";
- (7) Sometimes, using plural noun forms is for the sake of distinguishing other homonyms. In English, there are numerous nouns deriving from the verb plus the suffix –ing. If such v-ing forms are directly used as attributes to modify other nouns, this would lead to ambiguity since "saving account" is more easily considered as the verb-object structure, meaning "to save an account". However, if "savings account" is used, in which "savings" has the functions of a noun to modify another noun "account", the plural form is the unique feature of the noun (Sun, 2000). Similarly, as far as certain words whose adjectives and nouns are identical in forms are concerned, plural nouns are used as attributes for the purpose of the differences of parts of speech. For instance, in the phrase "a single competition", "single" is a typical adjective, which determines "only one competition". If "singles competition" is used, "-s" denotes that "single" is a sheer noun meaning "single event competition". As well, "a right law" means "a just law" in comparison with "rights law" signifying "the law of the rights";
- (8) Conventionally used plural nouns are usually used in plural attributive forms (Xu, 2000), for example, in the phrases "savings bank", "talks table", and "sports car", etc;
- (9) The forms of few special nouns such as *man* and *woman* whose plural forms are irregular can change with the singular or plural form of the modified central noun to signify the gender (Bo, 2006; Zhang, 2001). The noun attributive mentioned here and the modified central noun are mutual appositions in relationship (Yang & Jiang, 1993), for example, from "a *woman worker*" to "women workers";
- (10) Some plural nouns used as attributes are really the omissions of genitives with apostrophes off since the economic principles of language suggest people expressing complex semantic contents with simple language forms (Bo, 2006; Chen, 1994), for example, in the phrases "a *teachers* college" (teachers = teachers'), "the *workers* union" (workers = workers'), "a *trousers* leg" (trousers = trousers'), "four *hours* ride" (four hours efour hours' or four-hour);
- (11) Plural forms have to be used as attributes in case their singular forms might produce ambiguity (Liu, 1993), for instance, in such expressions as "seconds hand" rather than "second hand" (used), "plains people" instead of "plain people";

- (12) Plural nouns that denote multi-level complex meanings are commonly used as attributives (Sun, 1988), for example, in such terms as "the foreign *languages* department", "the *commodities* fair", "the *problems* page", "a *folksongs* concert";
- (13) Some structures are loose and long, which are really parallel noun phrases (Bo, 2006), for instance, in the phrases "equal *terms* policy", "three *fourths* majority", "the *United States* president", "the *United Nations* organization", etc.
- (14) Plural noun attributes are frequently applied in the titles of different organizations, units, press papers, television, and broadcasting radios, for example, Learning Skills Center, China Arts and Crafts Import and Export Corp., Dalian Foreign Languages Institute, Foreign Languages Press, The Warring States Period, The Boys Club, The Watergate Tapes Affair, Jobs Cut, etc. In particular, a couple of representative sentence examples are provided as follows for further reference: ①I did not go to parties except those thrown by my Camp Fire Girls Club. ②The judge also ordered Santiago to pay \$2000 into the State's Crime Victims Fund for the children's psychotherapy expenses. ③Martin Luther King led civil rights demonstrations in many cities. ④The Seal Savings Fund has passed a resolution which makes March 1st International Seals Day.

#### V. THE DIFFERENT MEANINGS OF SINGULAR AND PLURAL NOUNS AS ATTRIBUTIVES

- (1) In modern English, many nouns ended with the letter "s" used as attributes modifying or limiting the subsequent nouns (usually subject nouns), which are plural in form but singular in meaning (Wu, 1985). If there is no –s suffix, these words can only be used as adjectives, not as nouns, and moreover, the meaning is changed as well (Bo, 2006), for example, in such phrases as "news agency", "a physics teacher", "an economics PhD", "ceramics arts", "electronics science and technology", "a headquarters fighter", "a pincers movement", etc.
- (2) There are also numerous nouns ended with the letter "s" used as attributes, which are plural both in form and meaning (Yi, 1996). For example, "a glasses frame" means "a frame of a pair of glasses", while "a glass frame" signifies "a frame made of glass"; honors students in the system of higher education in Western countries are different from generals students; college students choosing to pursue the honor degree need to spend four years completing twenty courses prior to graduation, while college students choosing to pursue the general degree will have got to spend three years fulfilling fifteen courses before graduation (Hedge, 2002). For another example, "sales centre" is "the center of production sales", while "sale center" is "cheap commodity distributing center" (Yang & Jiang, 1993). In addition, we often utter "clothes brush" rather than "cloth brush", "goods train" signifying commodity train in lieu of "good train", and "customs official" in place of "custom official" etc., in which clothes and cloth, goods and good, customs and custom are extremely different while used as attributes;
- (3) Sometimes, the plural forms of nouns used as attributives lay emphasis on the respective plural concepts, often bringing about a kind of solemn dignity or with some emotion (Yi, 1996). Nevertheless, their corresponding singular meanings seem to be relatively dull, equivalent to the general descriptive or restrictive adjective functions (but not really adjectives) (Sun, 1988). For instance, in the term "pests officer", the plural noun word "pests" would probably give a person a kind of very seriously emotional experience, highlighting the seriousness and responsibility of officers "inspection and quarantine work". In further comparison with "the pest house" and "the pest control staff", hereby the semantic difference between pest and pests sticks out a mile (Wu, 1985). For another instance, the evening paper Evening Standard in London covered a piece of news with the headline and contents described as follows:

#### **CAREERS GIRL**

At the age of 18, Anne Giles starts on her fourth career on Thursday --- as a television actress. (*Evening Standard*, 1954) (Wu, 1985, p. 184)

The plural noun "careers" in the above title "careers girl" implies "(the girl) having a kind of occupation out of her reach and having to go for another occupation at all times", which is burdened with obvious irony (Wu, 1985, p. 184). Nevertheless, supposed the author changes to apply "career girl" as a title, it would signify "a girl making a living by means of a certain occupation" without any satirical implications (Wu, 1985, p. 184). Of course, this complex relationship between the forms and the meanings of singular or plural nouns cannot make blind generalizations, which should depend on the specific circumstances instead. For example, "careers tutor" means "tutor guiding students to choose occupations successfully" with careers being positive in meaning, while "career politician" refers to "occupation politician" with a derogatory sense (Yi, 1996);

(4) In modern English, although there are many nouns whose implications do not make much difference in singular or plural forms from the perspective of objectivity, more and more people are willing to choose plural attributives (Zhang, 2001). This tendency is particularly prominent in the titles of the press and media (Cook, 2012). A large number of singular nouns as attributes originally also begin to gradually evolve into plural attributes in the end (Zhang, 2001), for instance, *The Harrogate Toy Fair* has now become *The Harrogate Gifts and Fancy Goods Fair*, on top of the expressions like *the College Exams Board*, *the Disputes Commission*, *the Salaries Agreement*, *the wool textiles commodity*, *the ideas man*, *the old pensions project*, or whatever (Wu, 1985). The diverse titles of numerous governmental and congressional acts and regulations seem to keep pace with the times and fashions, attempting to draw on plural noun attributes, for example, *the Industrial Relations Bill*, *the US Civil Rights Bill*, *the Small Dwellings* 

Acquisition Act, the Aliens Order, etc (Wu, 1985). The frequent appearance of such expressions might contribute to the dissemination and development of plural noun attributes (Fu, 2013), which also represents a new orientation of contemporary English (Cowan, Light, Mathews, & Tucker, 1979). If the current terms "tonsils operation" and "seeds-mixtures" are compared with the previous "tonsil operation" and "seed-mixtures" from Oxford English Dictionary respectively, it is easily known that the difference of semantic logic results from their difference in form because "tonsil operation cannot be performed only in a tonsil" and also since "containing only one type of seed cannot count as 'mixture'" (Liu, 1993; Wu, 1985). As such, it seems more logical and justifiable to draw on plural noun attributes (Yi, 1996).

#### VI. ANALYSIS OF COMPLEX ATTRIBUTIVE NOUNS

Since attributive nouns are increasingly popular, the restriction of people's application of such attributives is smaller and smaller. As such, overlapping attributive nouns have taken shape little by little, which has also been recognized by grammarians. Terminologically, this type of attributive consisting of two or more nouns is named the complex noun attribute as well, which is equivalent to the attribute of a prepositional phrase in that "in most cases, noun attributes correspond to prepositional phrases as post-modifiers" (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 1330). The noun attributes in the following noun phrases are equivalent to post modification prepositional phrases: the *foreign languages* department  $\rightarrow$  the department of foreign languages, *water pollution* situation  $\rightarrow$  the situation in water pollution.

Such is the commonplace case that several nouns are put together to form a whole to modify the last noun, for example, "world record holder", "fire escape ladder", "Christmas morning exchange of presents", "mountain village school teacher", "house property tax office building", etc. In particular, English for Science and Technology (EST) tends to be concise and clear, in which the cases of multiple nouns as attributes are even more frequent, for instance, "tungsten filament lamp", "television transmission satellite", "air surface vessel radar", "motor car repair and assembly plant", "high voltage switch gear factory", and so on.

From the above examples, it is found that complex noun attributes may bring about some difficulty with people's apprehension, even cause possible misunderstanding. As such, two aspects are to be taken into account for this sake as follows.

(1) The modification correlation between complex attribute nouns and central nouns should be shed light on. Noun attributes and their central nouns have generally two cases of relationship in such examples as *the State Health Commission* and *the income tax rate*. Apparently, in the former example case, *State* and *Health* individually modify the same central noun *Commission* simultaneously. Nevertheless, in the latter case, *income* firstly modifies *tax*, and then *income tax* as one modification unit modifies *rate*. Typically, the more wording items complex noun attributes possess, the more complicated the correlation between attribute nouns and the central noun will be in the end.

The semantic analysis of complex attributive nouns ought to be clarified. For complex attributive nouns, it is a must to analyze multi-semantic relationships between the attribute nouns and the central noun, to identify the multi-level semantic modification of the internal structure, and to clarify the meaning the complex attributive nouns. For instance, the complex attributive noun phrase U.S. Air Force aircraft fuel systems equipment mechanics course is really long and is not easy to distinguish between the nouns. As such, the internal structure of the example ought to be analyzed step by step so as to reveal different connections between words inside. In another example nozzle gas ejection ship attitude control system, there are six noun attributives prior to the central noun system, which have respective attributive functions in four divisions: ① control representing functions of the modified; ②ship attitude expressing the application of the central noun; ③gas ejection and ④nozzle referring to the mode of operation. The noun modifier nozzle means a little further so that its position is just farther from the central noun as a result.

Therefore, when two or more nouns are used together as an attributive, each of them would have distinct relationships with the central noun. Typically, the first noun on the left of the central noun is the direct modifier attribute to the central noun, and then farther to the left is in the second by turns. The attribute nouns in order firstly illustrate the nature, secondly the functions, thirdly applications, fourthly the mode of operation, and then the material production quality of the central noun concerned, and so on.

#### VII. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, some grammatical rules of English we are familiar with are changing quietly, and these alterations are gradually to meet the need of people using simple linguistic structures to express complicated thoughts. More and more nouns are directly used as attributes or the modifiers of central words, which is also a major characteristic of development of modern English. Whether singular nouns or plural ones are used as attributes will rely on the detailed implications of corresponding collocations under specified circumstances. In recent years, either in British English or in American English, nouns as attributes are really frequent and popular. In particular, plural nouns as attributes are more endless, which seems to keep pace with the usage of singular nouns as attributes. Whether singular nouns or plural nouns are used as attributes, there are specific rules to be followed, and we cannot make an over simple summary only using "exceptions" to elaborate on the usage of plural nouns as attributes. As such, in the course of modern English learning, it is really timely and indispensable to reinforce the further exploration of plural nouns as attributes, and it is

also of great value for us to further understand the developmental principles and laws of modern English in the future.

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**Xiongyong Cheng** was born in Xinyang, China in 1966. He is an associate professor in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) at the School of Foreign Languages, Henan University of Technology, China. His primary research interests are EFL testing and assessment in relation to classroom instruction. He holds an MA in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) from Henan Normal University, China, and a PhD in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) from the University of Malaya, Malaysia.

His current research interests encompass EFL teaching, inter-cultural communication, teacher education, professional development, and the evaluation of curriculum implementation. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Cheng was awarded the honor title "National Excellent Education Gardener" by the Ministry of Education of China in 1993

### Development of Pragmatic Competence

Husein Hafizi Dorcheh English Department, Najafabad Branch, Islamic Azad University, Najafabad, Iran

Roya Baharlooie

English Department, Najafabad Branch, Islamic Azad University, Najafabad, Iran

Abstract—It is beyond that that any discussion of language pedagogy without taking into consideration the field of pragmatism would be deficient. Pragmatics being defined as the rules governing the use of language, that is, where to say what and how to say what is deeply rooted in our communications in any social context without which our process of learning is inevitably confined to language usage. Pragmatic aspects of language, therefore, have taken center stage in constructivist approaches towards language pedagogy which unlike cognitive theories do not believe in the development of language in isolation and on the contrary emphatically stress the role of environment and interaction as necessary factors contributing to language proficiency. The present study has presented the readers with a good deal of literature to examine how bringing into limelight pragmatics will affect the process of second language learning.

Index Terms—pragmatic, competence, development, language knowledge, environment, instruction methods

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Pragmatic competence, in the scientific acceptance of the term, generally denotes the appropriate use of language in any given social matrix where both implicit and explicit meanings take center stage. A search of the pertinent literature yields a number of different, yet all very general, definitions of pragmatic language. Gallagher describes pragmatic language as "linguistic elements and contextual elements as forming a contextual whole" (1983, p. 2). A simpler definition comes from Bates (1976 a), who defines pragmatic language as "rules governing the use of language in context" (p. 420). Other researchers do not provide definitions that lend insight into the parameters of pragmatic language, although they acknowledge that pragmatic language skills are complex (Philofsky, Fidler, & Hepburn, 2007). These statements about pragmatic language give rise to questions about the more specific behaviors, skills and cognitive processes that might contribute to an operational definition of pragmatic language. The next section describes how three dominant theoretical frameworks interpret the key components of pragmatic language in different ways. When the pendulum of language teaching gradually swung from usage extreme to use extreme, pragmatism focused chiefly on communicative competence to enable students to become proficient in the target language. Pragmatic knowledge, accordingly, concerns language use with reference to language users and the setting where the language is applied. In other words, one who purports to be pragmatically competent is cognizant of creating and interpreting utterances by taking into consideration two factors, namely, language user's intentions and the setting in which the language is being used. The fact implies that pragmatic knowledge must necessarily bring two different realms of knowledge into its compass. This approach is supported by Bachman's (1990) language competence model, in which language competence is divided into organizational competence (knowledge of linguistic units at the sentence level and discourse) and pragmatic competence (knowledge of speech acts and speech functions and ability to use language appropriately according to context). This implies that a proficient speaker knows not only the linguistic forms to perform a language function (e.g., greetings or leave-takings), but also the contexts in which these forms are used. According to Crystal (1985, p. 240) pragmatics is "the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication."

Poor social skills are a predictor of school failure and negatively impact behavior, acceptance and psychological well-being (Agostin & Rain, 1997; Foulks & Morrow, 1989; Gresham, Elliott & Black, 1987; Landa, 2005; Wilson & Shulha, 1995). Researchers estimate that 10% of typical children have difficulties with social functioning; this number is likely higher in children with known disabilities (Asher, 1990). Hummel and Prizant (1993) report that between 50 and 70 percent of children with emotional, social or behavioral difficulties have concomitant language impairments. They attribute impaired communicative competence and persistent social failure as factors that interfere with building positive relationships. Given that pragmatic language skills are the cornerstone of communicative competence, it follows that the children with behavioral/emotional problems and co-occurring language impairments are at elevated risk for pragmatic language difficulties. These difficulties can create limitations in interactions and impact learning, since "engaging in practice... may well be a *condition* for the effectiveness of learning" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p.93, original emphasis). Several research studies also suggest that the development of social decision-making, stronger interpersonal skills and improved social cognition and conflict resolution should be part of any discussion about

violence prevention programs. Preschool is a critical period to begin to develop these skills (DuRant, Treiber, Getts, McCloud, Linder & Woods, 1996; Kellermann, Fuqua Whitley, Rivara & Mercy, 2000; Payton, Wardlaw, Graczyk, Bloodworth, Tompsett & Weissberg, 2000). With so much at stake when a child's pragmatic skills are poor, it seems apparent that adequate pragmatic language skills in children is an area that warrants attention as an factor in promoting school success, decreasing mental health issues and fostering a more peaceful society.

#### II. DISCUSSION

Pragmatics investigates how second language (L2) learners develop the ability to produce and comprehend linguistic action in an L2 (Kasper, 1998; Kasper & Rose, 2002). Following Crystal (1985), pragmatics can be understood as "the study of language from the point of view of the users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication" (p. 240). Learning to be a competent user of the target language involves learning the pragmatic norms of the L2 to successfully engage in speech acts (e.g., apologizing, greeting, requesting), participate in conversations and different types of discourse, and maintain interaction in complex speech events (Kasper, 1997).

Kasper and Schmidt (1996), in line with many well-known pragmatic scholars of the field concur that instruction plays a crucial role in rendering the learners cognizant of the pragmatic principles governing the use of the second language. Their theory of pragmatic teachability advocates the idea of helping learners acquire pragmatic fluency. This theory, nonetheless, neither suggests that acquiring second language pragmatics is possible without any type of intervention nor implies that all second language pragmatic knowledge could be instructed in any learning context. As a matter of fact, the implication is that some pragmatic knowledge is universal and other pragmatic facets could be readily transferred from the learners' first language. Bardovi-Harlig (1996) further states that "language learners have difficulty in the area of pragmatics, regardless of their level of grammatical competence" (p. 21). This means that one cannot take for granted that the more developed the four skill areas (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) are, fewer errors will be made concerning language use. Students will not know how to act appropriately just by learning the linguistic forms and functions of a language (for example, just telling them that one modal verb entails more politeness than the other). Learners might also use the target language based on the norms of behaving (and interpreting social behavior) of their first language. As with linguistic forms, interference from the native language can occur with pragmatic knowledge as well.

This nature of transferability exerts both negative and positive impacts on the learners' gradual advance towards proficiency and gaining a more extended awareness of language use and usage. To put in another way, learners during learning process bring into limelight the social means of interpretation as well as their linguistic knowledge. Many such facets, such as using indirectness to express pragmatic intent and using diverse linguistic forms based on contextual limitations, are universally shared among various linguistic communities and therefore, facilitate the interpretation of second language acts for learners.

The nature of transferability is best delineated in the study conducted by Takahashi (1993) who examined the production of indirect speech in thirty seven female Japanese speakers of English in beginning, intermediate and highly advanced levels. In this regard, examinees were assigned an acceptability judgment task for five indirect request expressions in Japanese and English in four distinct situations. The results indicated that the language neutral "want statement" and "willing statement" could be almost transferable to the corresponding English request context. However, "mitigated ability statement" and the "mitigated expectation statement" failed to be transferred to the corresponding context in English. Contextual factors were contended to influence the transferability ratio of the indirect strategies. In this particular case, interaction between the politeness and conventionality encoded in each strategy determined the transferability of indirect strategy. In a previous study (1987) they proved the higher proficiency learners were more likely to transfer first language socio-cultural norms as compared to lower proficiency learners due to their relative mastery over the linguistic forms of the second language to convey how they felt.

Learning environment is an important variable which has attracted a lot of attention in the field of second language acquisition thus far. Whether learning and acquisition takes place better in an EFL or ESL environment has been a matter of controversy for long. The common assumption is that learners in the ESL setting due to enjoying more interactive opportunities (both inputs and outputs) both inside and outside the classroom can in all likelihood use language more authentically. Nevertheless, some recent studies have demonstrated that learners in ESL setting do not always benefit from these interactive edges to promote faster in comparison to their EFL counterparts. Accordingly, many learners in ESL setting do not get a full grasp of pragmatic function in the target language as these functions need to be learned rather than acquired. Researchers contend that they maintain to adhere to their first language pragmatic rules to govern their language use and their familiarity with second language usage makes them indifferent to learning pragmatic facets as communication takes center stage.

Because of the strong influence cross-cultural pragmatics research has had on the field (e.g., Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 1989), the majority of IL pragmatics research has focused on L2 use, comparing differences between native speakers (NSs) and advanced learners (Bardovi-Harlig, 1999a; Kasper, 1992). Since the 1990's, however, there has been an increase in investigations on IL pragmatic development, encouraged by calls for research on how learners progress from beginning to advanced stages (Bardovi- Harlig, 1999a; Kasper, 1992, 1998; Kasper & Rose, 2002; Kasper &

Schmidt, 1996). These studies have focused on factors that might influence development, such as level of proficiency (e.g., Salsbury & Bardovi-Harlig, 2000, 2001), the influence of instruction (e.g., Rose & Kasper, 2001), individual differences (e.g., Kuriscak, 2010), study abroad (e.g., Cohen & Shively, 2007), and transfer (e.g., Beebe, Takahashi, & Uliss-Weltz, 1990).

Most of the work that has sought to outline developmental stages has been based on the acquisition of requests. Kasper and Rose (2002) suggest five stages of pragmatic development based on Achiba (2003), Ellis (1992), and Schmidt (1983): 1) pre-basic (context dependent); 2) formulaic (unanalyzed formulas and imperatives); 3) unpacking (formulas incorporated into productive language use); 4) pragmatic expansion; and 5) fine-tuning (p. 140). Investigations in the field of IL pragmatic development have used these stages as the basis for analysis, with some providing further support (e.g., Chang, 2010; F dix-Brasdefer, 2007; Omar, 2006; Rose, 2009) while others have found that their learners do not seem representative of any stage (Shively, 2008) and suggest that learners are idiosyncratic and non-linear in terms of their development (Barron, 2003; Vyatkina & Belz, 2006).

Among various instruction methods proposed for developing interlanguage pragmatics, two types of research studies have as their primary goal the development of classroom techniques in order for enhancing pragmatic fluency, namely, observational and interventional studies. In a literature review conducted by Kasper, he truly came to the conclusion that early studies in the realm of second and foreign language classroom have taken pragmatic ability for granted at the expense of accentuating merely the language use. However, between 1992 and 1999 scholars' attention shifted to the sociocultural contexts in which language use manifests itself.

Inspired by an early study conducted by Kasper who had compared and contrasted seventeen interventional studies in the realm of pragmatics with regard to their approaches towards teaching pragmatics, House (1996) aimed to find out which type of instruction (implicit vs. explicit) suits advanced adult EFL learners. In the conclusion, we can clearly come to know that he took side with explicit instruction as conspicuously more beneficial in improving pragmatic fluency. Weaving explicit-raising techniques with appropriate contexts for learners to practice was considered crucial in instructing second language pragmatics.

Martinez-flor and Soler's (2007) study too, gave evidence to positive effects of instruction though they had taken a different approach as their study had the analysis of the role instruction in developing learners' pragmatic awareness as its main objective. Subsequently, eighty one EFL learners in Spain with an intermediate level of English undertook the test. They were divided into three groups, the first receiving explicit teaching, the second receiving implicit teaching and the third group was the control group. Though their studies testified to the significance of explicit learning, they were taken aback to see that the group receiving implicit teaching developed higher pragmatic awareness.

Thomas (1983) emphasizes the social and pragmatic aspect of communicative competence, terming it as pragmatic competence. She compares this pragmatic competence with grammatical communicative competence. Pragmatic competence, as one of several levels of knowledge, includes grammatical, psycholinguistic, and social competence (Thomas 1983: 92). This competence determines correct, appropriate, and effective language behavior, besides the grammatical knowledge of phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics, in relation to the particular communication goal in context (Thomas 1983: 92). For example, if an EFL speaker understands 'sentence meaning' of a sentence spoken by a native speaker, "Would you like to come in and sit down?", and is ready to come in and sit down, he or she has linguistic competence (Leech 1983). However, in order to understand whether the utterance is an invitation, a request, or a directive, or whether it stands on the uncertain boundary between all three, he or she needs knowledge about 'speaker meaning' in relation to pragmatic context and this knowledge is from pragmatic competence (Leech 1983; Thomas 1983: 92). The latter knowledge, which parallels sociopragmatic competence suggested by Thomas (1983) completes effective language behavior in relation to a particular communication goal. Thomas emphasizes the importance of pragmatic competence by suggesting types of communicative failure which arise when this competence is not fully developed. She defines the term pragmatic failure as the inability to understand 'what is meant by what is said' (Thomas 1983: 91). She suggests two types of pragmatic failure on a cross-cultural basis. One is pragmalinguistic failure, which is defined as a matter of grammar and can be taught, and the other is sociopragmatic failure which involves the learner's system of beliefs as much as his or her knowledge of the language and is therefore much more difficult to deal with (Thomas 1983: 91). A speaker's linguistic competence would consist of grammatical competence, more abstract and "decontextualized" knowledge about language such as phonology, syntax and semantics, on one side and pragmatic competence, the ability to use language for a specific purpose in context, on the other (Thomas 1983). While the range of possible senses and references of an utterance is provided by syntactic and semantic rules, assigning force and value with senses and references to the speaker's words requires pragmatic principles (Thomas 1983: 97).

Pragmatic failure can cause more serious communication problems than grammatical failure does, and in cross-cultural situations, pragmatic failure may cause serious "communication breakdown" (Thomas 1983: 97). Pragmalinguistic failure "occurs when the pragmatic force mapped by a speaker onto a given utterance is systematically different from the force most frequently assigned to it by native speakers of the target language or when speech act strategies are inappropriately transferred from LI to L2" (Thomas 1983: 99). Sociopragmatic failure is related to "sociopragmatic judgment concerning the size of imposition, cost/benefit, social distance, and relative rights and obligations" in language use (Thomas 1983: 104-5). This categorization and definition of pragmatic failure may carry a heavier weight on the language of North Koreans in discourse because North Koreans are second language speakers of

English and they are expected to show both types of learning problems: a lack of linguistic and cultural 'comprehensible input' (Krashen 1981) and output (Swain 1997). Since pragmalinguistic failure, as a linguistic problem, is caused by differences in the linguistic encoding of pragmatic force, and since sociopragmatic failure stems from cross-culturally different perceptions of what constitutes appropriate linguistic behavior (Thomas 1983: 99), North Koreans, who have been isolated both geographically and politically from English speaking society, may experience these types of pragmatic failure more seriously and frequently than native speakers of English and more than other second language speakers of English. In addition, the hearers and readers of the discourse of North Koreans might be required to be more careful in decoding and interpreting the discourse because the speakers/writers of the text make culturally different assessments of the relative importance of pragmatic principles (Thomas 1983) or they may be operating on different pragmatic principles (Smith 2011). This different assessment or different operation is reflected in the speakers/writers' language. Interestingly, this view about language speakers with different cultures is in line with the suggestion by Green (1990) that people in different cultures, as rational agents, prioritize cooperative principles of communication differently.

#### III. CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to present us with various studies in the realm of pragmatism to supply empirical evidence to advocate the reasoning behind the fact that by concentrating solely on grammatical, lexical, phonological and semantic aspects of language we will by no means be successful in paving the way for attaining communicative goals of language as pragmatic knowledge plays a pivotal role in the accomplishment of this goal. As Locastro (2003, p.313) remarks "even in our first language, to present ourselves as we wish requires comprehending and producing pragmatic meanings in a variety of contexts, ranging from a simple speech act requesting the salt to processing irony and comprehending joking". Recent studies in interlanguage pragmatics indicate the need of teaching second language learners the pragmatic conditions governing the use of grammatical structures, mainly because they might not perceive the mismatch between the pragmatic rules of their native language and those of the second language. As LoCastro (2003) emphasizes, "teachers now have to teach how to speak the second language and to train learners to use it in situationally appropriate ways" (p. 73).

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**Husein Hafizi Dorcheh** was born in Dorcheh, Isfahan in 1988. He got his B.S. in electrical power engineering in 2014 from Najafabad University. He is already majoring M.A. in TEFL in Najafabad University. He has already published papers in several international journals.



**Roya Baharlooie** was born in 1963. She got her B.A. in TEFL from University of Isfahan and her M.A. in TEFL from Tarbiyat Modares University and her Phd in TEFL in TEFL in Russian Academy of Science.

## Teachers' Self- and Collective Efficacy: The Case of Novice English Language Teachers

Azadeh Zakeri Tehran Azad University of Science & Research, Iran

> Ramin Rahmany Azad University of Takestan, Iran

Elizabeth Labone Australian Catholic University, Australia

Abstract—This paper studies the relationship between EFL teachers' self-efficacy and collective efficacy among 55 novice EFL teachers from Milad Language Institute in Tehran, Iran. The participants were asked to complete the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2001), and the short version of Collective Teachers' Efficacy Instrument (CTEI) (Goddard and Goddard, 2001). Data analysis revealed that there is a significant relationship between the teachers' self-efficacy and their collective efficacy. To investigate which components of self-efficacy might have more predictive power in predicting teachers' collective efficacy, regression analysis was run. The first subscale of self-efficacy, i.e., self-efficacy for students' engagement, was found to be a good predictor of teachers' self-efficacy. The paper presents possible differences in the sources of collective efficacy and teacher self-efficacy and the interaction between teachers' self-efficacy and collective efficacy. The conclusions and implications of the research are discussed with reference to Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory and the earlier findings.

Index Terms—collective efficacy, self-efficacy, teachers' beliefs, efficacy expectations

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Teacher efficacy is recognised as an important psychological construct in effective teaching. Teacher efficacy is theoretically based on Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura 1977; 1997) which maintains that self-efficacy, defined as "people's beliefs about their capabilities to exercise control over their own level of functioning and over events" (Bandura, 1993, p.118), is a key determinate of future behavior. When applied to teaching, teacher efficacy is the teacher's assessment his/her capability to organize and execute teaching and learning processes (Bandura, 1997). According to Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001), "in these days of hard-nosed accountability, teachers' sense of efficacy is an idea that neither researchers nor practitioners can afford to ignore" (p.803). Some scholars have even argued reforms that do not address teachers' efficacy may be doomed (e.g., Sarason, 1990).

The importance of teacher efficacy lies in its strong link to quality practices. As Ashton & Webb (1986) reveal, those self-efficacious teachers have been found to be less critical of students' mistakes, to deal more with struggling students (Gibson & Dembo, 1984), to be more desirous to take risks (Ross, Cousins, & Gadalla, 1996), to be more willing to experiment with new methods to better meet the needs of their students (Ghaith & Yaghi, 1997), to exhibit greater levels of planning and organization (Allinder, 1994), to be more enthusiastic for teaching (Allinder, 1994), to show greater commitment to teaching (Evans & Tribble, 1986) and to be more able to continue teaching career (Milner, 2002). Moreover, teachers with strong sense of self efficacy lead students to better achievement (Ashton & Webb, 1986), motivation (Midgley, Feldlaufer, & Eccles, 1989), and self-efficacy (Anderson, Greene, & Loewen, 1988) than students of less efficacious teachers.

While there is now a well established link between teacher efficacy and individual teacher practice, in more recent years there is increasing focus on the relationship between teacher efficacy and school context. Until recently the school context had been largely ignored by efficacy researchers (Labone, 2004). The focus on individual teacher efficacy has been predicated by the assumption that teachers generally work independently within the classroom, yet as noted by Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, and Hoy (1998) "teaching is typically performed in a group context. In fact, many problems teachers face require that they work together to change the lives of their students" (p. 241).

Recognition of this interdependence of teachers within the school organization has given rise to the study of a second important construct within efficacy research, collective efficacy. Perceived collective efficacy is a measure of the performance capability of an organization as a whole (Bandura 1997). Bandura maintains that any organization is characterized by some level of interdependency among employees in performing tasks and achieving organizational outcomes. As such personal capabilities and performance are dependent to some extent on the capabilities and performance of others within the organizational group. Hence personal efficacy is linked to some extent to an

individual's perceptions of the efficacy of the organization within which they work. While this association between personal efficacy and collective efficacy for teachers has received very limited attention in the research, studies that have investigated this association have found support for this, all be it a correlational association (Lee, Dedrick & Smith, 1991; Newmann Rutter & Smith, 1989). This research aims to further understanding of the association between individual and collective efficacy by investigating the relationship between these two constructs. The first step in this process however must be the development of an understanding of the theoretical connection between individual teacher efficacy and collective efficacy. This paper discusses the theoretical relationship between personal teaching efficacy, possible sources of collective efficacy and then suggests aspects of cognitive processing of efficacy information through which the interrelationship may operate.

#### Relationship between individual and collective efficacy

Studies teacher efficacy, in the main, have considered collective efficacy and personal teacher efficacy independently. While studies of collective efficacy are relatively recent, investigation of collective efficacy has focused on organizational factors associated with collective efficacy such as job satisfaction (Klasses, Usher & Bong 2011; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010) or the impact of collective efficacy on teacher or leader practice (Ciani, Summers & Easter, 2008; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008) or student performance (Bandura, 1993). Yet, as Bandura (1997) notes, theoretically the constructs are connected and to some extent have a reciprocal impact on each other. This interrelationship between individual teacher efficacy and collective efficacy has not been thoroughly considered in efficacy research. This oversight stems from the lack of theoretical analysis of key processes in the operation of personal efficacy and collective efficacy, specifically, the sources of efficacy and the cognitive processes used to translate this source information into efficacy beliefs.

Researchers within the field of organizational psychology have provided more specific analysis of the processes in the formation of efficacy beliefs. Gist and Mitchell (1992) (see Figure 1) suggest three processes in the formation of efficacy beliefs: Analysis of task requirements – what is necessary to perform this task well; Attributional analysis of experience, in which an individual may ask themselves why a particular level of performance occurred in a prior experience (enactive mastery), the validity of information involved in social persuasion, or the similarity between themselves and a model observed through vicarious experience; and assessment of personal and situational resources. It is within this third process that individual efficacy beliefs and collective efficacy beliefs may interact. A teacher may consider collective efficacy of the school organization as a situational resource or constraint, similarly preexisting levels of individual teacher efficacy will be considered as a personal resource or constraint. As Klassen, Tze, Betts and Gordon (2011) note

"When teachers experience challenges and failures that may lower their individual motivation, these setbacks may be ameliorated by beliefs in their colleagues' collective capacity to effect change. Teachers' collective efficacy beliefs, then, are related to teachers' self-efficacy beliefs" (p.23).

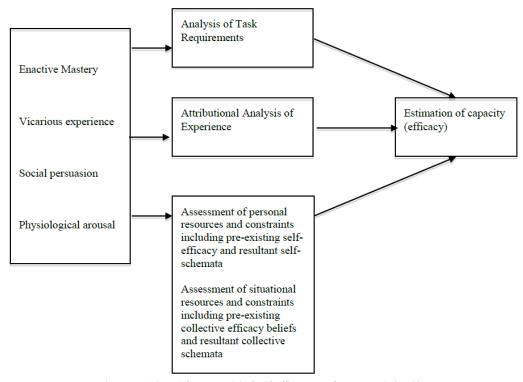


Figure 1 Adapted from a model of self-efficacy - performance relationship (Gist and Mitchell, 1992, p. 189)

Sources of collective efficacy.

Collective efficacy may be sourced in the same way as other types of efficacy. The four sources of efficacy postulated by Bandura (1997) are mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion and physiological and affective states. Mastery experience has been recognized as the most influential source of efficacy. For collective efficacy mastery experience may include prior school performance, as demonstrated in research showing the significant impact of prior school achievement on collective efficacy (Bandura, 1993).

When learning occurs vicariously by observing models performance vicarious experience is gained. When the model performs well, the efficacy of the observer is enhanced. When the model performs poorly, and the observer perceives themselves to have similar attributes to the model, the efficacy expectations of the observer decrease. At a collective level, observing successful performances of colleagues within the group to which the observer belongs may enhance efficacy. This is demonstrated in the work of Zeldin and Pajares (2000) who found vicarious experience of the success of other women working in the traditionally male-dominated fields of Mathematics and Science, was a critical source of self-efficacy for the women in the study. While this example is not related directly to an organization, the collective nature of the efficacy is related to a sense of belonging to a gender-based collective. Alternatively the experience of observing in another similar institution, for example visiting another school may inform collective efficacy. This is clearly demonstrated in research by Takahashi (2011) who explored sources of collective efficacy in interviews with teachers. She quotes one teacher who had visited another high school in which she assessed the standards of work to be below her own school and as a result concluded "So I think that the work we are doing here as teachers is effective" (p739). This demonstrates that vicarious experiences that inform collective efficacy may not only occur within a teachers own school environment but that experience of other schools may be particularly important for collective efficacy, as they serve as anchor values against which to assess collective efficacy.

Social persuasion entails performance feedback. The potency of persuasion depends on the credibility, trustworthiness, and expertise of the persuader. As Milner & Hoy (2003) puts it, social persuasion such as verbal feedback and encouragement can help to create a supportive social environment, while lack of feedback and non-responsiveness can create an unsupportive environment" (p.265). For collective efficacy, comments from both colleagues within the organization or others outside the organization can impact on collective efficacy. Most people have had an experience within their workplace of others criticizing their organization, which prompts the individual to question the efficacy of their organization, or alternatively positive appraisals of their organization may bolster perceptions of collective efficacy.

Finally, the level of arousal, either of excitement or anxiety, adds to the feeling of mastery or incompetence. Positive organizational climates should translate to more positive teacher affect, while negative climates my undermine affect. Hongyun, Qingmao and Lei (2004) found that, for teachers in high collective efficacy schools, the collective efficacy moderated the effect of stressors on teachers' internal motivation. Furthermore, Salanova, Llorens and Schaufeli, (2011) found that efficacy beliefs influence activity engagement through their impact on positive affect and that this in turn influences subsequent efficacy beliefs. They suggest that the interaction between efficacy beliefs and positive group affect can give rise to an upward spiral which they term a "positive group affect spiral" (p 270). This suggests that positive personal efficacy beliefs may induce a positive organization climate which enhances perceptions of collective efficacy and this can create an upwards spiral.

Interaction of teacher efficacy and collective efficacy in the cognitive processing of efficacy information

In theorizing the relationship between individual teacher efficacy and collective efficacy it is necessary to consider how efficacy information is processed and integrated and what cognitive processes may support the relationship between personal teaching efficacy and collective efficacy.

Bandura (1997) notes that there are two distinct tasks in the processing of efficacy information; the first is related to the type of information people attend to; the second is how the information is weighted and integrated. While individual efficacy and collective efficacy would independently glean information from the four sources, individual and collective efficacy would also inform each other as discussed earlier.

When processing enactive mastery experience Bandura (1997) maintains that people attend to pre-existing self-schemata in choosing to attend to information. Bandura notes that people are more likely to attend to efficacy information that is consistent with their self-schemata. This is demonstrated again in the research of Takahashi (2011) in which one teacher dismisses the schools poor test scores because they are inconsistent with her perceived efficacy of the teacher group. This may suggest that teachers hold a collective schemata which informs the type of information that they attend to in assessing efficacy beliefs. Teachers with high perceptions of the collective efficacy of their school may be more likely to attend to information consistent with that collective schemata and therefore pay more attention to their positive performances. Furthermore, self-schemata for personal teacher efficacy may interact with the collective schemata. Teachers with high personal efficacy or a positive self-schemata efficacy, may be more likely to attend to positive collective efficacy information because it is more consistent with their perception of themselves as contributors to that group. Conversely, teachers with high collective efficacy may attend more to personal successes in assessing their personal efficacy because they perceive themselves to be members of an effective group.

In the processing of enactive efficacy information, one influence of relevance is the assessment of the difficulty of the task and the contextual conditions in which the task was accomplished. When a task is perceived as difficult,

efficacy may be lowered if the performance is judged as unsuccessful, and enhanced when the performance is successful. The difficulty of the task has been found to be assessed using normative information (Harackiewicz, Sansone & Manderlink, 1985). Perceptions of collective efficacy may provide some normative information against which teachers judge their personal efficacy as suggested in the findings of Zeldin and Pajares (2000). Hence the two beliefs may be interdependent. Contextual conditions are also considered in the assessment of efficacy information. Contexts seen as internally controlled are more likely to sustain or enhance efficacy (Bandura (1997). Teachers with high personal efficacy may feel in more control of their environment and this may translate to more positive perceptions of their work context, hence collective efficacy, conversely teachers who feel in less control of their context may feel less confident in the organizations capabilities as they may feel displaced or unable to contribute effectively to the group.

In the attending to and processing vicarious experiences Bandura (1997) suggests that people consider their similarity to the attributes and performance of models as well as levels of model competence. Bandura suggests that models convey comparative information; when the observer sees a model fail whom they perceive to be similar to themselves, they may become convinced of their inefficacy as it confirms their existing self-schemata. Conversely, viewing positive modeling can buffer the impact of a "failure experiences and sustain effort" (Bandura, 1997 p 88). This may suggest that a staff that performs well may induce positive beliefs of collective efficacy and provide positive vicarious experiences that may be protective and buffer negative judgments about personal experience. This is consistent with Klassen et al. (2011)

Social persuasion may also contribute reciprocally to each type of efficacy. Bandura (1997) considers that social persuasion is most useful when used with analysis of enactive mastery experiences. The impact of social persuasion is dependent on the framing the persuasion, the credibility of the persuader and degree of disparity between the persuasion and the recipients preexisting self-schemata (Bandura 1997). When processing either teacher efficacy information or collective efficacy information a teacher will therefore attend more to positive feedback delivered by credible persuaders, but importantly they will evaluate this information against preexisting self-schemata and collective schemata. It may be that the information that is most influential is that which is consistent with both of these schemata. This may suggest that internal consistency between the self-schemata and collective schemata may be important in attending to and processing efficacy information.

Furthermore, as high teacher efficacy is related to greater enthusiasm for, and commitment to, teaching this may impact on the affective state of organization and subsequent collective efficacy as demonstrated in the work of Salanova et al (2011).

Building upon these theoretical propositions this present study aims to examine the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and collective efficacy. In exploring this notion this research seeks to investigate the relationship between individual efficacy and collective efficacy. Bandura (1993) found both teacher efficacy and collective efficacy contributed independently to student achievement, but furthermore, found that collective efficacy contributed to academic achievement even when individual teacher efficacy was controlled. He therefore concludes that these attainments are produced by staff working both independently and collectively. This research seeks to build on this work builds on by considering how teacher efficacy and collective efficacy might interact. The study focuses specifically on novice teachers at the early stages of the teaching career; because, as Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, and Hoy (1998) observed "the effect of collective efficacy may be especially pronounced for novice teachers as they are socialized into the teaching profession" (p. 221). Focusing on novice teachers may be specially revealing because some research into changes in teachers' self-efficacy from entry into a teachers' preparation program through the first year (Hoy & Spero, 2005) has found significant increases in efficacy during student teaching, but significant declines during the first year of teaching, a drop attributed to the level of support received.

#### II. METHODOLOGY

#### **Participants**

The data were collected from 55 novice English teachers teaching at Milad language center in Tehran. The participants were male and female with an age range of 20 to 25. They were guaranteed anonymity and received credit at their workplace. The criterion for selecting novice teachers was six months of teaching experience or less. All the teachers had taken teacher training courses before starting their profession and had been admitted into their teaching positions after passing the same licensing criteria, and were teaching within the uniform teaching system.

#### III. INSTRUMENTS

In this study, two instruments, the Teachers' Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES) (Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2001), and the short version of Collective Teachers' Efficacy Instrument (CTEI) (Goddard and Goddard, 2001) were used. The items in both questionnaires were answered on a 9-point Likert scale ranging from 1 nothing to 9 a great deal. The Self-Efficacy questionnaire consisted of 12 items and the Cronbach's alpha for the items on the questionnaire was 0.88, showing that the responses of the participants to the items of this questionnaire were consistent enough for assessing the participants' attitudes toward their self-efficacy. The Collective Efficacy questionnaire consisted of 10

items and the Cronbach's alpha for the questionnaire was 0.57, guaranteeing an acceptable level of reliability.

#### IV. RESULTS

#### **Self-Efficacy Questionnaire**

The Self-Efficacy questionnaire aimed to examine three constructs, i.e. self-efficacy for learners' engagement, self-efficacy for classroom management, and self-efficacy for instructional strategies. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the participants' answers to the items of the self-efficacy questionnaire.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE PERFORMANCE ON THE SELF-EFFICACY QUESTIONNAIRE

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE PERFORMANCE ON THE SELF-EFFICACY QUESTIONNAIRE							
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation		
Self-Efficacy	55	3.75	8.33	6.74	1.13		

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics for the participants' answers to the items of the three subscales of the self-efficacy questionnaire. As can be seen, the respondents performed slightly better on efficacy for class management, followed by efficacy for instructional strategies and efficacy for students' engagement.

TABLE 2
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE PERFORMANCE ON THE SELF-EFFICACY QUESTIONNAIRE AND ITS COMPONENTS

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Efficacy for Students' Engagement	2.50	9.00	6.62	1.48
Efficacy for Classroom Management	4.00	8.50	6.89	1.18
Efficacy for Instructional Strategies	3.50	8.75	6.67	1.32

#### **Collective Efficacy Questionnaire**

Table 3 presents descriptive statistics for the responses of the participants to the items of the collective efficacy questionnaire.

 $TABLE \ 3$  Descriptive statistics for the performance on the collective efficacy questionnaire

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Collective Efficacy	55	2.40	8.40	5.28	0.97

#### The Relationship between Teachers' Self- and Collective Efficacy

The present study aimed at determining the degree of relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and teachers' collective efficacy. The results of Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient analysis showed that there is a moderate and positive relationship between English instructors' self-efficacy and their collective efficacy (r-observed = 0.466, p < 0.01).

#### The Relationship between Collective Efficacy and Self-Efficacy Subscales

Further analysis was run to determine the relationship between the three subscales of English instructors' self-efficacy and their collective efficacy. The results of Pearson product-moment correlation analysis showed a moderate and positive relationship between the participants' collective efficacy and their self-efficacy for students' engagement (r-observed = 0.512, p < 0.000), a low and positive relationship between the participants' collective efficacy and their efficacy for classroom management (r-observed = 0.301 p < 0.026), and a low and positive relationship between the participants' collective efficacy and their self-efficacy for instructional strategies (r-observed = 0.398, p < 0.003).

In order to investigate which components of self-efficacy might have more predictive power in predicting teacher's collective efficacy, a regression analysis was run. As Table 4 illustrates, the first subscale of self-efficacy – efficacy for students' engagement – was found to be a good predictor of the dependent variable, i.e., collective efficacy.

TABLE 4

THE RESULTS OF REGRESSION ANALYSIS FOR TEACHERS' COLLECTIVE EFFICACY AND THEIR SELF-EFFICACY.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	В	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)	2.964	0.703		4.216	0.000
Efficacy for Students' Engagement	0.338	0.106	0.514	3.200	0.002
Efficacy for Classroom Management	-0.170	0.145	-0.206	-1.170	0.247
Efficacy for Instructional Strategies	0.187	0.114	0.254	1.643	0.107

a. Dependent Variable: Collective efficacy

Table 5 displays the model summary statistics. The results indicate that the model containing all of the components of self-efficacy can predict 30% of the dependent variable, i.e., teachers' collective efficacy. This indicates that about 30% of the variation in collective efficacy can be explained by taking self-efficacy into account. Moreover, the R value

is 0.55 which shows the multiple correlation coefficients between the components of teachers' self-efficacy and their collective efficacy.

 $\label{eq:table 5} Table \ 5$  R  $^2$  Table for self-efficacy as the predictor of teachers' collective efficacy.

Model	R	$\mathbb{R}^2$	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	$0.550^{a}$	0.302	0.261	0.83753

a. Predictors: (Constant), Efficacy for Students' Engagement, Efficacy for Classroom Management, Efficacy for Instructional Strategies

In order to investigate which components of collective efficacy might have more predictive power in predicting teachers' self-efficacy, a regression analysis was run. As Table 6 illustrates, none of the subscales of collective efficacy was found to be a good predictor of the dependent variable, i.e., self-efficacy.

 $\label{thm:table 6} The \ results of \ regression \ analysis for \ teachers' \ their \ self-efficacy \ and \ collective \ efficacy$ 

Model	Unstanda Coefficie		Standardized Coefficients		
	В	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)	4.312	0.841		5.127	0.000
CE1: teachers' perceptions of their colleagues' ability to reach difficult students	-0.094	0.100	-0.144	-0.944	0.351
CE2: teachers' perceptions of their colleagues' ability to motivate their students	0.150	0.105	0.270	1.421	0.162
CE3: Teachers' perceptions of their colleagues' belief that every student can learn	0.048	0.099	0.092	0.486	0.629
CE4: teachers' perceptions of the possibility that their colleagues would give up if a student does not want to learn	0.175	0.066	0.423	2.655	0.011
CE5: teachers' perceptions of their colleagues' skills needed to produce meaningful learning	0.042	0.083	0.081	0.501	0.619
CE6: teachers' perceptions of the students' readiness to learn	-0.054	0.086	-0.106	-0.626	0.535
CE7: teachers' perceptions of the students' level of motivation to learn	-0.055	0.087	-0.107	-0.636	0.528
CE8: teachers' perceptions of the opportunities at the institute for ensuring that the students will learn	0.200	0.095	0.347	2.092	0.042
CE9: teachers' perceptions of the difficulty of learning at the institute, because of the students' being worried about their exams	0.050	0.094	0.095	0.533	0.596
CE10: teachers' perceptions of their colleagues' skills needed to deal with students' learning problems	-0.004	0.084	-0.008	-0.050	0.960

a. Dependent Variable: Self-efficacy

Table 7 displays the model summary statistics. The results indicate that the model containing all components of collective efficacy can predict 18% of the dependent variable, i.e., teachers' self-efficacy. The R value is 0.57 which shows the multiple correlation coefficients between teachers' self-efficacy and the components of collective efficacy.

 $\label{eq:table 7} TABLE\ 7$   $R^2$  table for collective efficacy as the predictor of teachers' self-efficacy.

Model	R	$\mathbb{R}^2$	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.579°	.335	.184	1.02778

a. Predictors: (Constant), CE10, CE3, CE7, CE1, CE8, CE5, CE4, CE6, CE9, CE2

#### V. DISCUSSION

This study addressed the relationship between English teachers' self-efficacy and collective efficacy as well as the relationship between the three subscales of self-efficacy and their collective efficacy. As predicted, a significant relationship was found both between English instructors' self-efficacy and their collective efficacy and between the three subscales of their self-efficacy and collective efficacy. Initially, this finding is consistent with the results obtained by Goddard and Goddard (2001) who observed a significantly positive relationship between teachers' collective efficacy and their self-efficacy. This confirms Bandura's (2001) contention that teachers cannot ignore the other colleagues' contribution to their capabilities in judging their personal efficacy.

The results lend preliminary to support the contention that relationship between the two types of efficacy is to some extent reciprocal though it appears that self-efficacy is better predictor of collective efficacy than collective efficacy is of self-efficacy. This supports Bandura's (1997) proposition that any organization is characterized by some level of

interdependency among employees in performing tasks and achieving organizational outcomes. The analysis of the relationship between the two types of efficacy suggests that efficacy for student engagement is, of the three dimensions of efficacy measured in the TSES scale, most strongly related to collective efficacy. When reflecting on items used to measure efficacy for student engagement it is apparent that, of the three dimensions, this dimension is most dependent on school level factors. For example, these items tend to ask how much a teacher can do to motivate students who are disinterested in learning, teach students to value learning and assist families. These skills are to some extent dependent on the organizations ethos, academic values and family support. The other two dimensions are much more related to classroom level instruction and management skills, hence are less dependent on collective capabilities. The results of the regression analysis of the predictive value of the collective efficacy items on self-efficacy found that two items had some significant predictive value: CE4: teachers' perceptions of the possibility that their colleagues would give up if a student does not want to learn and CE8: teachers' perceptions of the opportunities at the institute for ensuring that the students will learn The first of these suggests that collective efficacy provides normative information about what is expected in the role of the teacher, it serves as an anchor value against which teachers might judge their self-efficacy. The second suggests that teachers consider the contextual conditions when evaluating their own efficacy. This latter item is also consistent with Gist and Mitchell's (1992) proposition that people assess situational resources and constraints in making efficacy judgments. In doing so these results may also provide initial evidence that the variation between language centers in terms of teachers' self-efficacy may be explained by the teachers' collective efficacy at the centers. Moreover, the finding shows that building collective efficacy in language centers may offer a new possibility for raising teachers' self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998).

The findings of the present study provide further support for Bandura's social cognitive theory of sources of efficacy expectations, as well as preliminary support for the reciprocal influence of the two types of efficacy in sourcing and processing of efficacy information. The positive relationship between collective and teachers' self-efficacy can be theoretically addressed in terms of mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion and physiological and affective states. As for the first source of efficacy expectations, i.e., mastery experiences, one can argue that when a school as a whole brings about students' achievement, it is plausible to consider that one or more teachers have done their jobs successfully. In other words, considering collective mastery experience, one or more teachers are involved in a school. Thus, mastery is considering both the individual and collective levels. In this sense, self- and collective efficacy may attend to both preexisting self-schemata and collective-schemata in attending to and processing efficacy information. This seems to be some extent evident in the finding that self-efficacy predicts 30% of collective efficacy. The results also add some weight to the proposition that that teachers assess contextual conditions in processing efficacy enactive mastery information. The finding that the collective efficacy item CE8: teachers' perceptions of the opportunities at the institute for ensuring that the students will learn significant (though weak) predicts self-efficacy suggests that teacher assess the organization's efficacy when making judgments about their personal efficacy. This provides preliminary support for the proposition of Klassen et al (2011) that "...setbacks may be ameliorated by beliefs in their colleagues' collective capacity to effect change." (p.23)

Secondly, Bandura (1997) suggests that models convey comparative information. The findings of this study to some extent provide preliminary support for the importance of this normative information in informing self-efficacy. This findings that the collective efficacy item CE4: teachers' perceptions of the possibility that their colleagues would give up if a student does not want to learn significantly predicted self-efficacy, suggests that observing colleagues commitment may provide normative information about role expectation in terms of what is achievable. This information may then be used to buffer a teacher's self-efficacy beliefs. In other words, the thinking might be "my colleagues would not give up on this so nor should I" or alternatively "my colleagues can achieve this student learning so I can too as I am similar to the group". This provides preliminary support for the proposition of Klassen et al (2011) that "...setbacks may be ameliorated by beliefs in their colleagues' collective capacity to effect change." (p.23)

The third way in which the positive relationship between collective and teachers' efficacy can be discussed is in terms of social persuasion. Social persuasion includes feedback, help, encouragement to persist, and a supportive environment. Teachers' actions are judged by group standards which give the members some control over the actions of others since those actions have consequences for the group (Coleman, 1990). Thus, a teacher's actions are influenced by group members. The group standard or collective schemata could be seen as a form of persuasion that either encouraged persistence or permitted giving up. In sum, collective norms are regarded as the effect of social persuasion on teachers' individual efficacy perceptions. Teachers "are not social isolates immune to the influence of those around them" (Bandura 1997, p. 469). Specifically, when teachers tend to think highly of the collective capability of the faculty, they may sense an expectation for successful teaching and, thus, work to be successful themselves.

The current results, together with the theoretical introductory discussion on the sourcing and processing of collective efficacy, give rise to the following proposed theoretical model (see Figure 2). The model proposes, as discussed earlier, that information is gleaned through all four sources for each of the two types of efficacy. The information on which individual efficacy is based is related to personal capability, while the information on which collective efficacy is based is related to organizational capability. The two types of efficacy then interact through mediating consideration of contextual conditions as illustrated in the association between CE8 and teacher self-efficacy; normative information or role expectation as seen in the association of CE4 and teacher self-efficacy; organizational ethos and attitudes and seen

in the association between the dimension of efficacy for student engagement and collective efficacy; and finally the existing collective schemata and self schemata which influence the attention to and processing of efficacy information. This model, however requires much more rigorous empirical confirmation which could be the subject of further research.

A further point which is noteworthy is that the participants in our study showed a high level of self-efficacy, an observation which is in contrast with studies that have reported a high level of teachers' efficacy before and during the teachers' preparation program for preservice teachers but a significant drop after the beginning of real teaching (Hoy &Woolfolk, 1990).

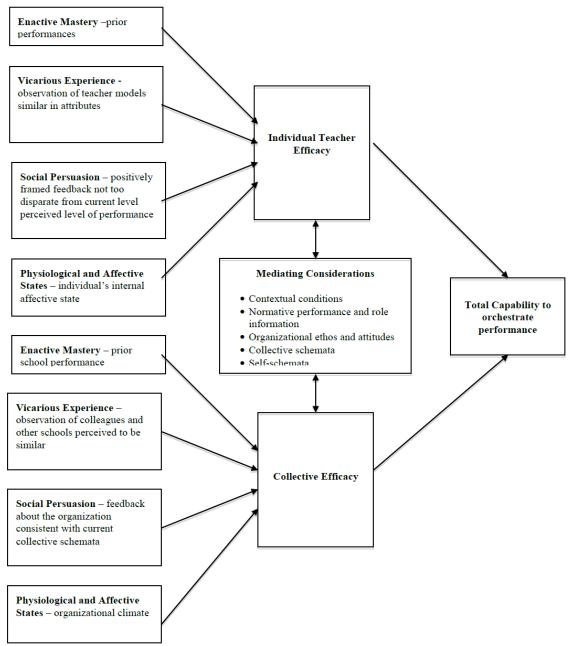


Figure 2: Hypothesized model of sources of and interaction between Individual Teacher Efficacy and Collective Efficacy

#### VI. IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The correlation between teachers' self-efficacy and collective efficacy suggests that teacher training programs should not limit their focus merely to pedagogical knowledge but give more attention to providing teachers with skills and experiences which they can currently only acquire after they start *real* teaching within an organization. More specifically, teacher training programs are required to provide authentic teaching contexts where prospective teachers can perform tasks in group settings and observe exemplary teachers as a way to provide them with both vicarious

experience and verbal persuasion as resources to enhance their level of efficacy. Authentic classroom contexts encourages teachers and enhances their confidence for performing the same tasks in the future. Putting prospective teachers in group settings where the members provide support for each other is also of great importance. This is corroborated by studies that have reported a significant role for school—university collaboration in increasing preservice teachers' level of efficacy (Pohan & Dieckmann, 2005) as well as studies that reported the great contribution to teaching efficacy with the emotional and pedagogical support received from prospective teachers as well as the preparation program (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, & Woolfolk, 2007).

The findings of the study can help promote language learning and teaching by making language teachers aware of the correlation between perceived self-efficacy and collective efficacy in education. The findings point to the need for developing special programs to enhance language teachers' sense of efficacy and teachers' collective efficacy, and in implementing teachers' self-efficacy enhancing instruction in teachers' training centers.

The results indicate the benefits of high teachers' self-efficacy with the hope of designing training plans so as to emphasize not only language proficiency, but also teachers' sense of self and collective efficacy. In closing, the results from this study serve to expand previous findings on teachers' self-efficacy and clarify the relationships between teachers' self-efficacy and their collective efficacy beliefs in prospective teachers, extending prior work conducted primarily in the West to the EFL setting in Iran.

#### VII. QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Many categories of teachers' self-efficacy beliefs merit attention, including teachers' efficacy beliefs about teaching various subject matters. Further research may study whether changes in collective efficacy lead to changes in teachers' efficacy. Future researchers might wish to examine conditions under which a teacher comes to feel efficacious. Similarly, it is important to study the efficacy beliefs of experienced versus inexperienced teachers. Future research may address whether teachers' efficacy is enhanced for teachers who join schools with relatively high collective efficacy.

In closing, it should be noted that observing correlation between teachers' self-efficacy and their collective efficacy does not mean a causal relationship by any means. Moreover, the findings of the current study must be treated with caution. To the best of the researchers' knowledge, this is the first attempt to explore the relationship between novice language teachers' self-efficacy and their collective in an institutional context. Thus, this study should be replicated to find out whether similar results can be obtained elsewhere. In addition, since this study was conducted only in a private language center, further research needs to be carried out at other educational settings in order to compare the results.

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**Azadeh Zakeri** is a Ph.D. candidate in TEFL at Tehran Azad University of Science & Research. She has been actively involved in teaching English, training English teachers, mentoring, and supervising English teachers at prominent language teaching centers in Tehran. One of her publications co-authored with Rahmany concerns "M.A. Preparation Reference Book" published by Rahnama Publications in 2010. She is also a lecturer at Azad University of Takestan. She completed her M.A. thesis on the relationship between teachers' knowledge, teachers' self-efficacy, and teachers' collective efficacy.

**Ramin Rahmany** is a Ph.D. holder in teaching English as a foreign language from Tehran University, Iran. Currently, he is an assistant professor in Azad University of Takestan, Iran. His major interests are language and acquisition, computer assisted language learning, and psycholinguistics. He has taught several courses at university like Language methodology and discourse analysis. He has published several articles in language learning acquisitions e.g. Acquisition of English Relative Clauses by Persian EFL Learners published by Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies in October 2009.

**Elizabeth Labone** is Director of Higher Degree Research and Senior Lecturer in Education Studies at Australian Catholic University. She teaches educational psychology and doctoral research. Her research interests include teacher efficacy, collective efficacy, professional learning and equity.

# Culture as the Core: Challenges and Possible Solutions in Integrating Culture into Foreign Language Teaching

Dianbing Chen
Zhejiang Normal University, China

Xinxiao Yang Zhejiang Normal University, China

Abstract—In this qualitative study, the researchers examined the experience of a sample of language instructors in foreign language programs to identify the challenges they encountered and the strategies they applied in integrating culture into their daily teaching. The findings of this study indicated that in spite of confronting challenges in cultural teaching, language instructors have made individual efforts on culture teaching in their specific programs. The article concluded with possible implications for language teachers and suggestions for future studies.

Index Terms—culture teaching, FL instruction, qualitative study, challenges, strategies

#### I. INTRODUCTION

For many foreign language instructors, teaching students how to say "teacher" in the target language is one of the first things they do when they meet their students. If it is easy to simply tell students that the word "teacher" in Chinese is "lao shi (初" or "sensei (先生・せんせい)" in Japanese, it certainly takes more time to teach students how to properly address their teachers in the target culture. For example, in the United States, people usually address a teacher as Mr./Mrs./Ms. and add his/her last name. In China, the translation of the word "teacher" is "lao shi," and people generally address a teacher as his/her last name plus "lao shi." In Japan, the translation of the word "teacher" is "sensei," and people refer to a teacher as his/her last name plus "sensei".

Although it is not difficult to train students to address their teachers appropriately in the target language and culture by having them imitate native speakers' behaviors and conversations, it is more challenging to help students understand the meanings, beliefs, and values attached to the word "teacher" in the target language and the role of "teacher" in a specific culture. For example, in the United States, "teacher" usually refers to a person who provides schooling for pupils and students ("Teacher", 2012). In China, people usually use "lao shi" to address a teacher or to address a respected person who actually does not work at school ("##, 2012). In Japan, people generally use "sensei" to address a teacher, a doctor, a lawyer or a politician ("Sensei", 2012).

Moreover, if one studies the use of the word "teacher" in different languages further, one would find out that in America, "teacher" is generally seen as a commonplace job, and teachers have been paid relatively low salaries ("Teacher", 2012). In China, people have a tradition of respecting teachers and a belief that any respected person has something to teach others ("豫, 2012). In Japan, "sensei" is actually a title used to refer to some figures of authority, and teachers, like doctors, lawyers, and politicians, are people who have achieved a certain level of mastery in some skills ("Sensei", 2012). If our students have such an understanding of "teacher" in the target culture, one can say that they have a better understanding of the underlying ideas, attitudes, meanings, and values that explain why a society performs its practices and creates its products.

The above example of teaching the word "teacher" to student showed that through the learning of other languages, students could gain a knowledge and understanding of the cultures that use that language. In fact, students cannot truly master the language until they have also mastered the cultural contexts in which the language occurs. So, while grammar and vocabulary are essential parts of language instruction, it is the acquisition of the ability to communicate and behave in meaningful and appropriate ways with users of other languages that is the ultimate goal of today's foreign language classroom. Culture as the core in language instruction needs to be integrated in language instructions.

#### II. BACKGROUND

The field of teaching culture in foreign language education has been rapidly developing and flourishing, ever since the publication of Nelson Brooks' book in 1960 (Lange & Paige, 2003). Brooks' book, *Language and Language Learning: Theory and Practice*, started a discussion on the topic of teaching culture in the foreign language classroom.

About four decades later, *Standards for foreign language learning in the 21st century* (1996) listed culture as one of five goals of learning foreign language. Since then, foreign language instructors have generally accepted that teaching culture is an indispensable part of teaching language. In 2007, a Modern Language Association of America (MLA) report on foreign language learning in higher education emphasized the importance of teaching both language and culture at the post-secondary level, which demonstrates that culture continues to be an important element in foreign language education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

In the field of teaching language, a number of scholars (Arens, 2010; Barnes-Karol & Broner, 2010; Byrd, Hals, Watzke, & Valencia, 2011) have accepted the guidance of the National Standards and the 5Cs (communication, cultures, connections, comparisons and communities) of learning foreign languages. One of 5Cs, culture, includes three closely interrelated components, "the philosophical perspectives, the behavioral practices, and the products—both tangible and intangible—of a society" (National Standards, 2006, p. 47). Corresponding with the National Standards, many scholars and researchers (Schulz, 2007; Barnes-Karol & Broner, 2010; Kearney, 2010) have argued that the objectives for the learning of culture should move beyond simple "culture as fact," for example, stereotypes, famous events, hero figures, and aim at gaining cultural perspectives, such as worldviews, values, and beliefs.

Although the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries have witnessed a renewed interest in language education due in part to internationalization, globalization, and the aftermath of September 11, 2001, yet the inclusion of culture in language instruction remained an unresolved issue and foreign language instructors confront many difficulties in teaching culture and cultural perspectives in practice for the following reasons: (1) instructors' negative attitudes towards teaching culture, (2) the lack of effective instruction, resource, and technology of teaching culture, and (3) the absence of academic support for teaching culture at the post-secondary level. For example, teachers and learners might have the following beliefs as Lange and Paige (2003) indicated,

(1) Culture is complex and elusive, incorporating as it does elements such as attitudes, beliefs, ideologies, perceptions, ways of behaving and thinking, and values; (2) Many teachers say: 'Culture is not language, so why should we have to deal with it and its complexities'? It takes away from the needed focus on language and communication. (3) Any discussion of cultural differences could cause language learners to change their own ways of thinking and behaving. In other words, culture takes the learning experience far beyond the realm of comfort, experience, and interest of both teachers and the learners. (p. x).

First of all, culture is still viewed as a traditional domain of anthropology rather than education, therefore, a substantial amount of important writing on culture teaching and learning exists, much of which is completely unrelated to language education (Lafayette, 1997; Furstenberg, 2010). For example, although some foreign language educators (Shrum & Glisan, 2005; Tokuhama-Espinosa, 2008) mentioned using music, fine arts, classical literatures, or other resources, which essentially fall into the cultural products and cultural practices categories, while teaching foreign languages, they still avoid using the word "culture." Instead of simply understanding cultural products and patterns, the National Standards (2006) require that students demonstrate the understanding of the relationships between cultural products and cultural perspectives, as well as cultural patterns and cultural perspectives. Therefore, by only displaying cultural products and/or presenting cultural practices, without having students investigate, compare and reflect on the target cultural perspectives, foreign language instructors hardly fulfill the National Standards' requirements.

Second, foreign language instructors often lack resources, effective strategies, and technology to teach cultural perspectives. A 2007 Modern Language Association of America (MLA) report requires higher education to foster foreign language learners' translingual and transcultural competence in the post-9/11environment. However, it is much harder to teach culture than language. Unlike teaching linguistic components, which many linguistics and language educators have worked on for generations and have incorporated into all kinds of textbooks, foreign language instructors hardly get enough support from their teacher education programs, textbooks or reference books for teaching culture (Byrd, Hals, Watzke, & Valencia, 2011). For example, many popular books written for pre-service language teachers, such as *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching* (Richards & Rodgers, 2001), and Teacher's Handbook: Contextualized Language Instruction (Shrum & Glisan, 2005), do not include any content related to the teaching of culture.

Third, since college-level students are usually high school graduates, younger or older adults, their fully formed first language skills and cultural knowledge may affect their foreign language learning, in such areas as cognitive ability, and attitudes towards language and culture (Tokuhama-Espinosa, 2008). Thus, we have to consider college-level language students as adult learners. However, most foreign language instructors were not specifically trained for teaching adults. In this case, the National Standards (2006) and the Modern Language Association of America (MLA) report (2007) are not very helpful for two reasons: the National Standards are specifically designed for K-12 levels, and the MLA report contains mostly general requirements, rather than explicit teaching guidelines.

More and more scholars in the field of teaching foreign language advocate teaching culture, and the National Standards require instructors to teach culture and cultural perspectives. Nevertheless, the lacks of resources and academic support, as well as instructors' own negative attitudes, are still obstacles to teaching culture in foreign language education (Yang & Chen, 2014). Can meaningful culture teaching take place given the identified challenges? The purpose of this study is to illuminate findings from a qualitative case study that answers this overarching question.

#### **Research Questions**

This study was guided by the following overarching question: Can meaningful culture teaching take place given the identified challenges? Also, the following secondary questions were added:

- 1: What challenges do language instructors encounter when integrating "culture" in their language teaching?
- 2: What instructional strategies do language instructors perceive as practical and effective in culture teaching?

#### III. METHODOLOGY

In this study, the researchers utilized a qualitative case study, a methodology in which "the case itself is center stage, not variable" (Schwandt, 1997, p.13). Much has been written about case study and where it fits in a mainstream research tradition (Merriam, 2009; Stake, 2005; Thomas, 2011; Yin, 1994; Yang & Chen, 2014). More specifically, in order to treat the experience of each instructor as a separate case as well as compare and contrast the effects of those different cases, the researchers conduct what Stake (2005) called a "collective case study". It was the researchers' intention to study the experiences of those cases, as well as their similarities and differences on influencing students' foreign language learning, which would "lead to better understanding, and perhaps better theorizing, about a still larger collection of cases" (Stake, 2005, pp. 445-446). Perhaps more importantly, case study supports instructors in valuing the uniqueness of their classes. Learning from them, and showing how their experience and knowledge can be made accessible to other practitioners in simple but disciplined ways. They are particularly suited to practitioners who want to understand and solve teaching problem in their own context (Thomas, 2011; Yang & Chen, 2014). The purpose of this investigation was to identify and inform best practices in dealing with challenges occurred in instructors' culture-teaching experience. Therefore, a qualitative case study approach is tailored for this study.

#### Setting

The researchers examined six different language programs at Rocky Mountain University (RMU) in the western United Sates. The university was chosen for the following reasons. The department offered Spanish, German, French, Russian, Chinese, Japanese and Arabic language courses in both undergraduate and graduate programs. There were twenty-four faculty members and fourteen graduate assistants as instructors in the department when they conducted this study. In the fall semester 2011, the Department offered 108 foreign language courses as Figure 3.1 shows. Arabic, Japanese and Chinese are less taught languages with four total native speakers as instructors. French and Spanish are more frequently taught languages with twenty-two total instructors. Russian and German fall in between, with twelve instructors.

Language	1000	2000	3000	4000	5000	Total
Arabic	2	1	1			4
Japanese	1	1	1	1		4
Chinese	2	2	1			5
Russian	3	2	3	3		11
German	4	2	3	2	3	14
French	5	4	3	5	9	26
Spanish	15	8	6	3	12	44

Figure 1. In Fall Semester of 2011, the Number of Foreign Language classes offered by the Modern Language Department at RMU (1000~~4000 level classes are designed for undergraduate students. 5000 level classes are designed for graduate students.)

#### **Participants**

Participants included six instructors (see Figure 2) from seven different programs. On average, the researchers interviewed each of these six instructors twice and visited each of their language classes three times for this study. The six instructors are representative of three different types of language instructors: (1) tenured professors with many decades of teaching and research experiences, such as Dr. Charles and Dr. Hassan; (2) tenure-line instructors in their 40s with more than ten years of teaching experience, such as Lin and Frank; (3) graduate assistants who teach introductory language classes and who have just begun the teaching careers, such as Claudia and Asta. Their age range from 20s to 50s, their experiences range from one year to twenty-nine years, they teach introductory, intermediate, and advanced level courses. Three of them are native speakers, and the other three are not. In other words, these six instructors represented multiple generations and various types of language instructors at RMU.

Participant	Years of Teaching	Native Speaker?
1	29	No
2	20+	Yes
3	12	Yes
4	20	No
5	2	Yes
6	2	Yes
7	30	No
8	7	Yes
9	3	Yes

Figure 2. Participants' Teaching Experience and Their Language Information

Dr. Charles and Dr. Hassan are both tenured professors with many decades of teaching experiences at the college level. Dr. Charles has been teaching Spanish for twenty-nine years. He had published many academic articles about

Spanish literature and Hispanic culture. Dr. Charles is a well-recognized expert at RMU for his teaching and research in the Modern Language Department. Dr. Charles has taught many Spanish courses, including introductory classes for beginners and literacy classes for graduate students. Dr. Hassan has also been teaching at RMU for over twenty years. Originally, Dr. Hassan came from Tunisia, and Arabic is his first language. His Arabic cultural origin is strongly reflected by the decorations in his office and his passion when he talked about how to bring Arabic culture into language classrooms. Dr. Hassan is currently working on bringing more teachers to the Modern Language Department at RMU to expand the Arabic language program.

Lin and Frank are senior lecturers in their 40s in the Modern Language Department. Lin came from China in 2002 and has been teaching Chinese at RMU ever since. Lin initially started the Chinese program at RMU. Frank was born in the United States, and German is his second language. He has been teaching German at RMU for over twenty years. Frank teaches German courses at all levels and has interests in Germany literacy and culture.

Claudia and Asta are two instructors in their late 20s. Both have been teaching foreign languages at RMU for less than a year. Claudia recently came from Mexico to pursue a master degree in Spanish while teaching introductory Spanish courses as a graduate assistant. She was not used to life in America, and her English was not very fluent. On the contrary, Asta was born in America and always wanted to be a German teacher. She had lived in Germany for about two years when she was a child. Both Claudia and Asta were teaching beginning level courses during the time of the study and were eager to learn more about how to teach a foreign language.

#### **Data collection and analysis**

Qualitative inquiry was the utilized research platform for this study because of the exploratory nature of this subject. The data collection sources utilized in this study were interviews, classroom observations, and document mining (Yin, 2009). Categorical aggregation (Stake, 2005) was used to analyze the data, resulting in a collection of various instances from different data sources that led to the formation of general themes of this study. Cross-checking of themes was conducted by different researchers to ensure validity and thoroughness.

Instructors were observed for a period of four months during planning, instructing, and office hour times in order to document cultural teaching practices that occurred. Also, interviews and document mining were conducted with instructors to know their experiences, opinions, feelings, or other information that cannot be observed (Merriam, 2009). Additionally, the researchers collected various types of documents including lesson plans, syllabi, textbooks, student assignments, tests, and online documents regarding cultural teaching practices to help uncover meaning, develop understanding and provide insights relevant to the research questions.

#### IV. RESULTS

The objective of this study was to inform and identify best practices in culture teaching through investigating the live experience of language instructors. Two major categories emerged from the data based on the experience and perceptions of culture teaching reported by language instructors through their efforts to attempt, appraise, and apply cultural teaching within their multiple life contexts. They included:

- 1. Challenges in Culture Teaching
- 2. Practical and Effective Strategies in Culture Teaching

#### **Challenges in Cultural Teaching**

Generally, participants agreed that culture is a key component in foreign language classes and they have attempted to weave culture into their daily instruction, they also reported all the challenges they have encountered. The following excerpts demonstrated some experiences shared by participants when asked to describe challenges they have encountered when integrating culture in their language instructions.

Lack of standards of what a culture teaching class looks like. Participants referenced lack of standards of what a culture teaching class looks like as their first challenge in weaving culture into their teaching. According to their experience, two factors that are troubling their cultural teaching: (1) various individual understandings of culture teaching in FL classroom; and (2) teaching textbook culture or reality culture.

Through data collection and analysis, the researchers noted that different instructors shared a different understanding of what it really means to teach culture in FL classroom. As Charles shared,

Culture could be defined as general types of things, related to language, literature, arts, physical, important people, and so forth. Culture could also be related to the norms, ideas, and ways of doing things, linguistic expressions, attitudes, and so forth of people. It ranges very broadly in my definition. When basic texts talk about culture, they usually will do in terms of, in Spanish texts of course, country, factors of these countries, their languages are more than one, the numbers of people who live there, some important cities, few significant people, and that's about it. Then they assumed that they've talked something about culture, I'm not sure. (Laugh) I'm not sure that is really teaching culture. I think that focuses the facts about the country. Then culture, you can do all of that without reading anything written by someone from that culture, without listening to any music. There might be a picture or two, but the pictures tend to be things like monuments, parks, and the museums.

On the other hand, other participants reported their own understanding of culture and what does it mean to teach culture in FL classroom. For instance, according to Hassen, culture and culture teaching is and should be embedded into every day curriculum. He shared,

Culture in the classroom is something that has to be defined as a curriculum. In other words, it should be in teachers' minds even at the beginning level of learning that teachers should not only introduce the mechanics of the language, not only the format of the language, they also need to introduce students the aspects of culture. They are not only learning the cold language. We are not only teaching students how to write letters, how to say the words, how to put words together to say the sentences. Language is a primarily cultural practice. I take it into my account when I start teaching. Although my class initially is a language course, I also bring cultural elements in it. During the limited time we have in classroom, I hope to introduce students to culture aspects, a bigger picture for their future study.

Lin echoed Hassen's perspectives. But she also mentioned "different languages have different culture, so there is no unified standard here at the university. We follow 5Cs of the National Standards, and designed a curriculum to cover culture". She shared,

Personally, every language is the carrier of its culture. Therefore, it is hard to teach language without teaching culture. When you use the textbook to teach language, there will be culture between the lines. I mean, you need to teach students about the culture, or you will find a common phenomenon in student's language learning: students have no problem in learning the vocabularies and grammar but when it comes to use them, they do not know how to use them within a certain culture context because they do not know the culture. In the National Standard, there are different levels of language learning. The standard they used to define the different levels lies in the understanding of the culture. In the real teaching practice, we do not have special culture session; the culture teaching usually goes hand in hand with vocabularies and grammar teaching. I employ all of them and do them routinely. Sometimes, I teach them how to sing a Chinese song because there are culture elements in the songs. Sometimes, I assigned them to interview with Chinese speakers outside class. Also, some of the assignments helped them understand Chinese culture such as outsider interview (interview someone from China). Moreover, here at the university, there is a language change program to encourage the American students to talk to their language partners, who are usually students from China. It was surely helpful to help them understand Chinese culture.

Asta shared her culture teaching experience through her understandings of culture teaching in a language course,

I think if you really want your students to understand the language, you have to teach culture, at least. For example, in 1010 we talk about foods. There are some foods that do not exist in America. So you have to teach about that, and how they eat them. When we talk about the meal, I explained that we eat cereals for breakfast, which is very rare in Germany. It is not like never happen but it doesn't happen every day. If you really want your kids to understand the language, culture comes naturally. You also should give students a real context for the language. If you give a real context, the language and culture would come naturally. For example, today we talk about restaurants. In Germany, the tip is that you give about extra one dollar because the waitress actually makes a decent wage. But here the waitresses actually do not make much; you have to tip them 15-20%. So we talked about that difference in order for them to understand the word "tip". And how to order their foods and how to talk in a restaurant, where to seat, all these things. Just teaching them vocabularies does not make a real context.

Frank also shared his understanding of culture and culture teaching in a FL classroom,

Culture remains a component in all my classes. The area I rarely taught is in between of intermediate and advanced level. 3000 level is the class that I rarely taught. As far as the first three semesters, which I teach frequently, I have cultural component all the time. In fact it is a big component, probably. At least half of readings or more are culture. Of course we use cultural studies as part of language acquisition strategies. Of course we have strictly grammar lessons. For intermediate level, we have three classes for each week, and I try to keep grammar down to less than one lesson a week

I think there are two primary objectives of teaching culture. The first is for language acquisition. You use it as a tool to introduce language, and give them examples of how it is used in a format they find interesting. The second thing is to increase their cultural awareness. It is one of few opportunities that students spend time in another culture. Especially if their major is not culture studies, their foreign language classes is their best place to get culture. Of course in anthropology classes you learn a lot about culture and I'm not sure how much you can learn culture in engineer classes (laugh). They are exposed to culture during their language studies.

Claudia mentioned that she was sometimes confused by different standards of teaching culture in a FL classroom from different directions and reported,

We were asked to teach just cultural stuff, every 5 minutes. Just emerge, into different countries' stuffs. So I was doing that a lot. I bring into a lot of YouTube videos, when I talked about Mexico or Peru. I tried to involve grammar into culture. I compared culture in Mexico and culture in Spain. We did the comparison and also learn the grammar, but not focus on grammar. There's a teacher always told us don't lose too much time on grammar. This semester I want to do differently. I want to see what the students' reactions are if I focus more on grammar, less culture. Because I'm from Mexico, when I'm there, there's always culture. I always tell them about my personal experience, like the songs that my mom sang to me when I was a baby. Because some students are not interested, so I have to capture their attentions. I talk about culture and then give them a little bit grammar. Now we talk about Indian people in Latin America, in Peru, because 1020 is more advanced than 1010, you can talk more descriptively, what they sing about people, what they eat, and things like that. The first part of the semester I was more focused on grammar, but the second part of the semester I

was more focused on culture. I can see their reaction is very different. They are more in the class, they want to learn, and they want to talk even with mistakes. They try to communicate about their feelings.

More importantly, participants argued that conflict between textbook culture and reality culture confused both teachers and students. Charles argued that the culture taught in classroom and represented in the textbook were like second hand information to teachers and students. He reported,

Students are presented to limited realities. You don't want to teach students negative things that would cause them to look down on other people. That would not be appropriate. But I think it's Ok to point out the differences, and areas that have difficulties based on realities. All texts tend to present information that they boil down everything to several obvious things. So is that really teaching students culture? You can tell students about culture, can you teach them about culture? You can certainly tell them about it, how things are done, or perhaps point out how thing are done differently from their home situation. When I personally teach culture, I don't care a lot about how many people live in the Mexico city, and those kinds of things. But I do like them to reflect on how they observe individual people doing things, and how some of that probably related to the culture and language.

Hassen added the importance role that teachers and researchers played in bridging the culture gap between textbooks and reality by suggesting,

I think it is important for teachers and researchers of culture to know and understand reality culture. When we talk about culture, we have to be very careful, because we have many colors in one culture. When we talk about Arabic culture we are teaching, in fact, we are teaching many cultures, many Arabic dialects. It is very important to make students behave themselves in certain culture, in certain dialect. When I teach Arabic 3050, which is a course about dialects; I introduce different dialects by using videos or audios from Arabic countries. Hopefully, after we analyze those, both linguistically and culturally, students will develop that kind of knowledge. Arabic is not only spoken in Arabic countries, it is also spoken in many other parts of the world, it only affected other languages historically, and it also accepted many vocabularies from other languages. I think it is important for students to develop that kind of ideas. It depends how much time the student in that program, spending in language and culture

Asta shared that sometimes the culture in the textbook was there for its own sake without considering students' comprehension ability. She referenced,

They (textbooks) have a lot of dramatic stuffs in there that I maybe put them into different order. Like some vocabularies should go through chapters, or group up a little bit. Culturally they try to put a lot of things into it. Like every couple chapters they have a film that tells the stories, they try to choose modern version of the stories instead of fairy tales, the most famous German stories. And they have videos come with the books and talk about different cultural things. I don't really use the videos very often in 1010 because it is just some native speakers narrate some new things going on. I don't think they understand anyway. And they are very fast, I don't think they would do any good any way.

Frank shared his worries of the misconceptions students got from different resources that confused students in his classroom. He mentioned,

There are many misconceptions and expectations that they gained from movies about Germans. And Germany is the enemy for the two World Wars, which has left a lot of stereotypes about Germany in minds of Americans. We have relatively little opportunities to interact with Germans. The stereotypes are very common and often go un-clarified. For a German teacher, especially the Nazi past, you can count on to address that regularly. In fact, the two big cultural topics that Americans have interests in learning are not happy subjects, the Nazi era and the era of the Berlin Wall. The two political situations have been responsible for a lot of misery. A lot of students want to know about that. Those lessons are extremely successful, usually. The students are fascinated and want to know more about that. They compare Germany today with Germany of the 40s, 50s, 60s and 70s. This is interesting thing.

Claudia argued her points through an example,

For example, in all of the basic texts, they have foreign students which are invented, all of the young students are university students, there is never non-university students, all of their families have money, all of the families take vacations. I personally that it has something to do with they are trying to show the North American students the best aspects of so-called culture. It probably reflects that the people who write the textbooks, some of them are native speakers and they are protective of their own culture. I think it's OK not to talk about negative things, but it is necessary to talk about realities, and maybe even difficulties.

In general, the participants' sharing indicated that although culture teaching was required by national standards, there was no specific requirement on how culture should be taught in the classroom. To some extent, instructors just tested on their own understanding and perceptions on how they should to teach culture and how much they should teach culture.

#### **Practical and Effective Strategies in Culture Teaching**

While sharing their challenges in culture teaching, all participants suggested that they have not just sit and waited for miracles to happen. Instead, they have their own ways to weave culture into their daily instructions. Through analyzing the data from interviews and classroom observation, the researchers summarized the following practical and effective strategies implemented by the participants.

**Strategy 1. Bridging the culture gap.** Participants shared their ways in reducing the misunderstanding brought in by the textbooks and other resources by engaging students with genuine culture elements through culture field trip, native speakers, or study or live in the targeted country. As Charles argued:

The first possible way is field trip: texts tend to reflect the things that students here might do. When they go to restaurant, an order food, and menus often reflects foods usually in this country instead of common food there. I think they want students to learn vocabularies in Spanish that they can talk their lives here, rather than learning words about things that are not necessarily in another country. So the basic level texts could be more authentic, could teach much more culture. Forgetting about have students eat breakfast at 8:00 am, and have pancakes and syrups on them, instead of having them eat at other time and like in Argentina, have beverages with/without sugar or with/without cream, the kind of bread they would have. We could have make text more authentic rather than having them go to the beach, or the places that all the American students would like to go. I don't know why they do this, or maybe they think "if tell American students about the reality, they will look down on us". Therefore, they need to show students the very best to demonstrate that we are the people superior. But that's my personal theories. That's why there's never anything about civil war in textbooks. Or have young people who cannot afford to go to school, which never appears in textbooks. There are many of them have to go to work because they cannot afford to go to school. We just don't teach about it. And I don't know the reverses are true. I don't know the texts in Argentina to teach about English in the United States. They just show people from upper social level groups.

Another possibility would be having students in class interact with people in that country in the target language. The focus there may be mainly linguistically, but students probably would ask things about culture. Language does not exist in the vacuum; you have to have a context, in which language to be taught. And, contexts could be related to the cultures.

In addition, living in the targeted country is another way. If you are in a county, your experience limited to visit important places, seeing things from those perspectives, yes, that helps some. But if you are there for a longer period of time, interact with that people in a lot of settings, become an acquaintance to individuals and families, you are in peoples' homes and so forth. Then you have the opportunities to be exposed to a lot of things. Then you will not be exposed, if you simply there, outside, taking a bus to go see something. Yes, that would allow you some access, but going to someone's home, talking to them, getting to know them, that's different kind of culture, to which you exposed. And I found my students being more interested to the way people do things, the way people react things, peoples' attitudes, where they live than the names of important people. Sometimes they are interested in products, foods, beverages, and just so many things. We don't all do things the same ways. Everyone in the world doesn't eat the same things, the same breakfasts, or the same lunch, meals. I think you can only be aware of those things if you spend longer period of times there. You can visit parks or mountains, but it is not as rewarding as speaking to people in their language. I think that's important. There are so many opportunities for misunderstandings or miscommunications, if you don't understand peoples' culture.

Asta shared her experience in creating a real setting for her language and cultural teaching classes:

I think if you really want your students to understand the language, you have to teach culture, at least. For example, in 1010 we talk about foods. There are some foods that do not exist in America. So you have to teach about that, and how they eat them. When we talk about the meal, I explained that we eat cereals for breakfast, which is very rare in Germany. It is not like never happen but it doesn't happen every day. If you really want your kids to understand the language, culture comes naturally. You also should give students a real context for the language. If you give a real context, the language and culture would come naturally. For example, today we talk about restaurants. In Germany, the tip is that you give about extra one dollar because the waitress actually makes a decent wage. But here the waitresses actually do not make much; you have to tip them 15-20%. So we talked about that difference in order for them to understand the word "tip". And how to order their foods and how to talk in a restaurant, where to seat, all these things. Just teaching them vocabularies does not make a real context.

Lin echoed the above effective ways in culture teaching by admitting that she has applied all the methods that can benefit her classroom teaching:

I applied all of them and do them routinely. I usually take students out and have class in a Chinese restaurant to have them really in the cultural settings. In the second year of their learning, I start to assign them to interview native Chinese her on campus or doing some group projects on a specific culture elements they are interested in such as Chinese food or Chinese wine. Also, here at the university, there is a language exchange program where American students can talk to their language partners who are students from China. It is surely helpful to help them understand Chinese culture. Another thing I have done is every Summer, students here at the university have the opportunities to go to study at a university in China for two months. When they are in China, they will make friends and keep in touch with each other through different communication modes such as Skype. This way it can enhance their cultural skills including culture understanding.

**Strategy 2 Involving native and non-native instructors.** Participants all agreed that the importance of involving native and nonnative instructors in culture teaching and the benefits of having a balanced faculty group. Lin said that the Chinese language program needs to hire more faculty and "we need both types of faculties: faculty whose first language is Chinese and faculty who got a degree in Chinese".

Charles argued the benefits of having a native speaker to teach culture:

They certainly, potentially have some advantages of teaching culture, especially if they are in the situations that they consciously compared. So they can talk to their students about something that may be done differently from the way

that would be done here. For the non-native speakers, it depends on what they read and experience, how much they traveled and how much they paid attention. They probably have a little bit of disadvantages. But regarding to teach the language itself, unless the native speakers have had some types of special preparation, they maybe not know the language very well to teach it. Just because someone can speak the language does not mean they can teach someone else. The non-native speakers probably have advantages there because they have gone through the process that their students have to go through. So they have advantages. I think the native speakers are certainly aware of their culture, they maybe not know enough to, or that's just part of them, they try to step outside of their culture so they can see it from a new perspective. They may not think that's different enough or worthwhile enough to mention. And I think sometimes native speakers of the language are more protective their culture, in the sense that they want to talk from the most positive side possible.

Asta, as a non-native speaker echoed from her perspectives:

I think culturally they have advantages, because every time when students have questions they always know the answers. But sometimes I have to go research it first. But I think linguistically, in some ways I have advantages because I have to learn German so I understand the ways that you are learning. For native speakers, they just know this is the way it is. They know about tricks of the rules or something. Their accents are of course better than mine

**Strategy 3 Inviting students' discussions on culture.** The most common strategy the participants shared was discussions on culture. In the following example, instructor Hassen shared his experience:

One of ways that many people use is to bring in short videos and have them [students] watch and discuss them. I encourage them to make comments about language, ask them which words they catch, and I also encourage them to make cultural comments, and make comparison of what happens in the video and what if the same idea was addressed in their own country. In other words, the materials are available; they are more available than ever they have been. You bring in documents, videos or satellites television, you have students watch them and recognize cultural elements. You can also do chatting, which is students like very much, so they can put what they learned into practice. You can invite some people from your home country, or some Arabic speakers in any part of the world, and you have your students to practice your language. I want them to ask questions like, who the person is, how many brothers and sister that he has, what the person wears, what he has for lunch, and so on. I also grade student how they behave in terms of language and culture.

Claudia mentioned that while talking about culture, she likes to let students discuss and compare:

I ask them a lot of questions. Sometimes, I have them talk in groups. I ask each student and get answers, after that, then I use each answer to form some arguments. Or sometimes, I have them sat in a circle and have conversation. I usually speak very little and invite students to speak a lot. Sometimes I put them into groups to talk about how they think about this literature, this reading. Also, I ask students to compare the culture differences among countries. I've been doing that a lot. For example, compare the ethnic groups in Mexico and the ethnic groups in America. How Mexico treat them compared with how America treat them here. Or compare foods in Mexico and food here. Or compare how you greet, this kind of things.

Lin echoed Claudia's insights and illustrated her points with an example:

Cultural discussion and comparison is really helpful in enhancing students' understanding. For instance, the difference between "您好" and "你好". Both of them are used to greet people. But unlike American culture, we have them to greet different groups of people. "您好" is used to greet people who are older or whom you deeply respected.

**Strategy 4. Spending quality time on preparing the culture classes.** Participants all pointed the quality time spent on preparing a culture class. Charles used "critical" and Claudia used "the only way" to a successful language and culture instruction. Other participants illustrated with examples in their specific targeted cultures. Lin argued:

Sometimes people will forget a very simple fact in teaching: Preparation makes perfect and works its miracle. As a Chinese saying goes, ten minutes on the stage take ten years to prepare. China is a country with a long history where culture varies among different provinces. As a teacher, in order to prepare a perfect culture class, I need pay attention to every detail of culture notes I will explain to my students which involves hours of research even as a native speaker.

Asta shared a similar viewpoint and added:

Culture teaching needs a lot of preparation. Because I have to make sure I have pictures ready, or other examples, so they can understand what I try to say. Especially if it is a brand new grammar concept, I just cheated and do it in English. Because we have such a small amount of class time, we cannot afford to say this thing in Germany over and over again, if I just say it once or twice in English.

Hassan based on his decades of culture teaching experience suggested instructors also need preparation in their offices:

Preparation in the office is also important. When they come to my office, they can see many things in Arabic as you can see here, like books, games and the plastic model wearing traditional clothes. The question is, how general you can be, how you can expose them to culture in the initial stage. Eventually, students will get enough language knowledge beyond the sounds, letter, and words level, they can read dialogues, and they can read texts. Then you automatically find you are in the business talking about culture. When you watch TV, like political events, elections, you will see cultural facts, artifacts in from of them. In the initial stages, you have to create situations in general, which is not very easy.

Frank added to this strategy by sharing his way of preparing a culture class:

When I prepare, because preparation is everything for a language class, what I try to do is going through it all, in many cases I don't use all the texts. When I do use texts, I go through it very carefully and make sure there is not anything that I don't like or don't approach the problem appropriately, and then I write down my alternative approach. I tell my students you shouldn't just depend on your books when you study, you should take notes in class. It makes me laugh if I say that because I have to take notes when I was a student every class. I am astonished that how many of my students now never take notes. They just not learned that in high school.

#### V. DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

As shown by the qualitative results, in general, language instructors did perceive that there were still challenges in the field of culture teaching in terms of the definition and standards of culture teaching in the classroom, and the conflict between textbook culture and reality culture. However, from the strategies they shared, the researchers are happy to witness and write down the efforts and time they have spent on their attempt to culture teaching.

These findings support the findings and suggestions of Banks and Banks (2010), Byrd, Hals, Watzke, and Valencia (2011), Paige (2003), and Yang and Chen (2014). Based on the present study, the theory and practice of culture as the core in FL teaching and learning are still facing challenges and still needs continuous efforts from classroom teachers and researchers.

Also, during this study, the researchers found out that there is no collaboration among the faculty members in the language department. In many ways, they are fighting the difficulties and challenges by themselves. So researchers would like to make three recommendations to all the language departments or programs. First of all, a foreign language department at college or university can actively seek cooperation with experts on campus in order to improving its teaching quality. For example, a language department can work with programs within a college of education to improve instructors' abilities of teaching by encouraging them to taking teacher preparation courses. Language department can also seek help from technological departments, so instructors can get technology support to broaden the ways in which they acquire more authentic teaching/learning resources.

In addition, a language department can help instructors who teach the same language courses to build a database that includes various cultural products and authentic materials, which language instructors can contribute to and draw from. Through such a database, instructors can share teaching resources with each other and save time.

Finally, the researchers would suggest a language department should encourage and support language instructors to go to academic conferences in the field of foreign language education, as well as create opportunities for instructors to discuss and share experience. In this way, language instructors can learn from experts and their colleagues and eventually improve their own abilities of teaching.

#### For scholars and future research

Scholars from the professions of language teaching and the educational field can work together and write textbooks that focus on teaching culture as required by the National Standards and the 5Cs goals. Especially for some less-taught language like Arabic, and Russian, the textbooks published decades ago are not suitable for the teaching foreign language in the 21<sup>st</sup> century any more. Furthermore, the researchers suggest scholars in the profession of teaching modern languages conduct more substantial research in the classrooms on how to teach culture, how to connect cultural products, patterns with cultural perspectives. The results from future research would reveal more problems of teaching culture in foreign language programs, and improve the ways in which language instructors connect the National Standards (2006) with their own courses. In the end, the researchers recommend that scholars build close cooperative relationships with language instructors, so they can find out more problems in practice that need to be solved and help instructors to understand how to teach a language, which can better help filling the gap between the theory and practice of effectively teaching culture.

#### VI. CONCLUSION

This manuscript investigated the challenges confronted by teachers and instructors when they attempted to embedded culture into their language instructions. Also, this study explored some down-to-earth strategies that have been applied and proved to be useful by the participants.

The results were encouraging in terms of identifying the challenges and the strategies in weaving culture into culture teaching. Participants reported the challenges that occurred in their culture teaching, and this may have led t their being more willing to figuring out ways to solve them. The participants also shared their strategies in teaching culture, which might be helpful to all teachers who have worked hard on finding a way out in culture teaching.

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**Dianbing Chen** was born in Yantai, China in 1979. He received his PH. D. degree in Education from University of Wyoming, USA in 2014. He is currently an assistant professor in College of Education, Zhejiang Normal University in China. His research interest includes Culture and educational leadership.

Through his research and publications, Dr. Chen has won himself several international scholarships from University of Wyoming.

Xinxiao Yang was born in Yantai, China in 1981. She received her master degree in Curriculum and Instruction from Minnesota State University in 2008 and her PH.D. degree in Education from University of Wyoming, USA in 2012. She is currently an assistant professor in College of Education, Zhejiang Normal University. Her research interest includes Classroom teaching, instruction, and management.

Dr. Yang won several two awards of best teacher from Minnesota State University and Zhejiang Normal University for her efforts in teaching and researching.

## The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Tolerance of Ambiguity in Academic Iranian EFL Learners' Willingness to Communicate

Vahideh Sadat Vahedi Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, International Campus, Iran

Azar Hosseini Fatemi English Department, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran

Abstract—The present study was set up to detect any possible relationship among learners' emotional intelligence (EI), tolerance of ambiguity, and willingness to communicate inside the classroom. For this purpose, 64 undergraduate EFL university students were chosen. The instruments utilized in this study were a) Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-I) to measure learners' emotional intelligence, b) Second Language Tolerance of Ambiguity Scale (SLTAS) to identify participants' tolerance of ambiguity, and c) willingness to communicate questionnaire to evaluate learners' willingness to initiate and take part in the interpersonal communication inside the classroom. The gathered data were analyzed using Pearson Correlation Product Moment test. The results showed that although the relationship between emotional intelligence and tolerance of ambiguity was not statistically meaningful, the two variables were positively correlated with learners' willingness to communicate.

Index Terms—emotional intelligence, tolerance of ambiguity, willingness to communicate, EFL learners

#### I. Introduction

In recent years, researchers have proposed and explored two important concepts which are considered to play an influential role in differences among language learners and their language learning achievements.

The first key concept is Emotional Intelligence (EI). As an overriding factor in determining learners' success, EI has received the attention of many researchers and educators during the last two decades. Many studies suggest that emotional quotient (EQ) more than IQ contribute to one's success in life and education (Goleman, 1995; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Based on Goleman's (1995) view, IQ accounts for only 20% of the individual's total success and the remaining 80% is related to one's EQ.

The second crucial key concept is Tolerance of Ambiguity (TA). As the "the ability to take in new information ... to hold contradictory or incomplete information without either rejecting one of the contradictory elements or coming to premature closure on an incomplete schema ... [and] to adapt one's existing cognitive, affective, and social schemata in light of new material" (Ehrman, 1993, p. 4) tolerance of ambiguity trait helps learners to cope with L2 learning ambiguous situations.

Like any other concept, it takes researchers some time to explore the different dimensions of these concepts and their relationships with other variables related to L2 learning field. One of One of the variables which is of great interest in modern language teaching profession is the concept of Willingness To Communicate (WTC), proposed and advocated by McCroskey and Baer (1985), which is related to learners' psychological readiness to initiate and participate in communications.

Although there are some studies exploring each of the above variables separately, it is hard to find a single study on the relationship among emotional intelligence and tolerance of ambiguity and willingness to communicate. The current study is an attempt to investigate the relationship among the variables believed to affect Iranian learners' willingness to communicate inside the English language learning classrooms. More specifically, it aims to explore the role of individuals' EI and TA level in shaping their willingness to initiate and maintain interpersonal communication with others.

In line with the purpose of this study, the following research questions were raised:

- 1) Is there any significant relationship between Iranian EFL learners' emotional intelligence and their tolerance of ambiguity?
- 2) Is there any significant relationship between Iranian EFL learners' emotional intelligence and their willingness to communicate?
- 3) Is there any significant relationship between Iranian EFL learners' tolerance of ambiguity and their willingness to communicate?

#### II. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### A. Emotional Intelligence Theory

The first roots of emotional intelligence concept, as a component of multiple intelligence, can be traced back in the works of Thorndike in 1920s. He believed that true intelligence does not solely consist of academic intelligence, but involves emotional and social elements. Conceptualizing EI through social intelligence, Thorndike defined social intelligence as the ability "to sympathy with others and behave wisely in human relationships" (Abdolmanafi Rokni, Hamidi & Gorgani, 2014, p.118). Later, during 1970s- 1980s, the concept of social intelligence was more developed by the works of great scholars such as Gardner, Salovy and Bar- Ons, emerging as the more completed EI concept. As an "an array of noncognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures" (Bar- On, 1997, p. 14), EI has proved to be an influential factor in success and/ or failure in a number of different areas like work settings, classroom performance, cognitive tasks and language acquisition, etc.

According to Bar- On (2000, p. 798), the whole picture of EI constitutes of the following components:

- (1) **Intrapersonal**: managing oneself, the ability to know one's emotions.
  - (a) Emotional self-awareness: the ability to be aware of, recognize, and understand one's emotions
  - (b) Assertiveness: the ability to express one's feelings, beliefs, and thoughts and to defend one's right
  - (c) Self-regard: the ability to be aware of, understand, accept, and respect oneself
  - (d) Self-actualization: the ability to realize and reach one's potential
- (e) Independence: the ability to be self-directed and self-reliant in one's thinking and actions and to be free from emotional dependency
  - (2) Interpersonal: managing relationships with others.
    - (a) Empathy: the ability to understand and appreciate others' feelings
- (b) Interpersonal-relationship: the ability to establish and maintain mutually satisfying relationships that are characterized by emotional closeness and intimacy and by giving and receiving affection
- (c) Social responsibility: the ability to demonstrate oneself as a cooperative, contributing and constructive member of one's social group
  - (3) Adaptability: ability to adjust to change.
    - (a) Problem solving: the ability to effectively solve problems
- (b) Reality testing: the ability to validate one's feelings and thoughts by assessing the correspondence between what is subjectively experienced and what objectively exists
  - (c) Flexibility: the ability to adjust one's feelings/thoughts to change
  - (4) **Stress management**: controlling stress
- (a) Stress tolerance: the ability to manage one's strong emotions, adverse events, and stressful conditions by positively coping with problems
  - (b) Impulse control: the ability to control one's emotions and resist an impulse to act
  - (5) **General mood**: the ability to be optimistic and positive as well as to enjoy life.
    - (a) Happiness: the ability to feel satisfied with life and to have fun
    - (b) Optimism: the ability to look at the brighter side of life and maintain a positive attitude in the face of problems

#### B. Tolerance of Ambiguity

Tolerance of Ambiguity is defined as how a person or group "perceives and process information about ambiguous situations or stimuli when confronted by an arrey of unfamiliar, complex or incongruent clues" (Furnham & Ribchester, 1995, p. 180). In educational settings, tolerance of ambiguity refers to the individuals' ability "to deal with ambiguous new stimuli without frustration and without appeals to authority (e.g. first language)" (Ellis, 1994, p. 518).

According to Ehrman (1999), tolerance of ambiguity helps learners to deal with ambiguous situations at three different levels: Intake, tolerance of ambiguity proper, and accommodation. First and foremost, tolerance enables learners to take new information which may include many unknown elements. At the second level, learners with tolerance of ambiguity are able to hold contradictory or even incomplete information without rejecting them. At the last level, learners will be able to integrate new information into the existing schemata and restructure it.

As part of people's personality, tolerance of ambiguity trait can influence individuals' life and work in general. More specifically, regarding the field of language learning and teaching, it can affect numerous aspects of language learning and learners' performance and achievement (Chapelle, 1983) since it is associated with risk taking and clearly, those who are able to tolerate ambiguities are more likely to take risks in the process of language learning, the factor which is vital for making progress in language learning (Ely, 1986). Furthermore, encountering with unknown structural and/ or cultural norms may increase learners' anxiety (Oxford, 1999), that may lead to "a degree of apprehension and frustration which may ... [be] deleterious to progress" (White, 1999, p. 456).

Supporting the above view, Chapelle (1983) asserts that learners who have moderate levels of ambiguity tolerance are more likely to overcome the ambiguous situations and persist in language learning demanding process. In other words, language learners with ambiguity tolerance are more successful in managing and coping with the ambiguous situations in the case of encountering with unfamiliar structures and/ or cultural cues. Such learners, based on Robin's

(1975) view, are more motivated to take risks and open to change and therefore, uncertainties cannot impede their progress.

Ehrman's (1993) and Reiss' (1985) studies also reveal that learners with low ambiguity tolerance achieve less in comparison with high ambiguity tolerant ones.

#### C. Willingness to Communicate

The concept of willingness to communicate refers to "a speaker's or writer's propensity to voluntarily engage into an interpersonal communication when the situation requires" (MacIntyre et al., 1998 cited in Mohammadzadeh & Jafarigohar, 2012, p. 25- 26). The proponents of this concept suggest that individual differences in language learning and/ or communication can be attributed partially to their different levels of willingness for communication. Nowadays, it is believed that interaction plays a significant role in language development and attainment of L2 competence and hence, meaningful communication is highly valued and emphasized by language educators. "No matter how proficient a person is in using a foreign language, his attempts at establishing sound communication will be less than desirable if he or she is not fully willing to communicate" (Mohammadzadeh & Jafarigohar, 2012, p. 25).

Taking into consideration the crucial role that willingness to communicate factor plays in determining language learners' success, its enhancement has turned out to be one of the important goals in foreign/ second language pedagogy. Many researchers emphasize that concentration on enhancement of WTC can guarantee the success of any language learning program; otherwise, its failure will not be out of sight.

#### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Participants

The participants of this study were 64 EFL language learners. They ranged in age between 18 to 39 years. Among the participants, 36 were male and 28 were female. In terms of language proficiency level, they were either intermediate or advanced language learners and therefore, the level of language proficiency was not controlled in the current study. The participants were selected voluntarily on the basis of their convenience and availability to take part in the study.

#### B. Instruments

The materials used in the current study consisted of three sets of self- reported questionnaires.

a. Bar- On Emotional Quotient Inventory

Bar- On EQ-I questionnaire, as a self-report measure of EI, provides valid and reliable information about individuals' social and emotional behavior. It includes 90 items in five categories, i.e. interpersonal, intrapersonal, stress management, adaptability, and general mood categories assessed on a five-point Lickert scale. The subjects are required to answer whether they 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neither disagree nor agree, 4= agree, or 5= strongly agree about each question. Higher levels of emotional intelligence are indicated by higher scores attained through this questionnaire.

b. Second Language Tolerance of Ambiguity Questionnaire

To evaluate the level of participants' tolerance of ambiguity, the Second Language Tolerance of Ambiguity Scale (SLTAS), developed by Ely (1995) was used in the present study. The questionnaire includes 12 items based on 4-point response scale ranging from "strongly agree" or "agree" to "disagree" or "strongly disagree". The reported internal consistency reliability of SLATS is 0.89 in this study.

c. Willingness to Communicate Questionnaire

To measure students' willingness to communicate inside the classroom, a questionnaire developed by MacIntyre et al. (2001) was used. It includes 27 items in five- point Lickert scale ranging from 1= almost never willing, 2= sometimes willing, 3= willing half of the time, 4= usually willing, and 5= almost always willing (see Appendix 1). The subjects were required to indicate how much willing they were to communicate in the classroom.

#### C. Procedure

After selecting the subjects for measurement administration, a brief introductory session was held. The subjects were informed that their participation in the study was voluntary and they were assured that the data collection process will be kept confidential. The students were given a brief oral instruction of how to complete the questionnaires and then, each student received a package including three questionnaires. The subjects returned all of the completed questionnaires in the same session.

#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After administering the questionnaires and tabulating the scores for each participant, the raw data were put under a series of statistical analyses using SPSS 18 software. Based on the nature of research questions, the correlation test was considered to best serve the purpose of the current study.

A. The Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Tolerance of Ambiguity

The first research question concerned the relationship between learners' emotional intelligence and their tolerance of ambiguity. As shown in Table 1, the correlational index (r= .068; P= .396> .05) is not statistically significant, indicating that there is not meaningful relationship between emotional intelligence and tolerance of ambiguity of the participants.

 ${\it Table 1:} \\ {\it Corelation between learners' emotional intelligence and ambiguity tolerance} \\$ 

		Emotional Intelligence
Tolerance of Ambiguity	Pearson Correlation	.068
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.396
	N	64

<sup>\*</sup> The correlation is significant at .05 level.

#### B. The Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Willingness to Communicate

As stated earlier, the second research question of this study sought to explore the existence of any relationship between learners' EI and WTC. To answer this question, Pearson Product Moment Correlation test was run. The results are presented in Table 2.

 $TABLE\ 2:$  Corelation between learners' emotional intelligence and willingness to communicate

		Willingness to Communicate
Emotional Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	.861**
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000
	N	64

<sup>\*</sup> The correlation is significant at .05 level.

As it is clear, the above results show a significant correlation between learners' EI and willingness to communicate. The above high index of correlation (r= 0.86; P= .000< .05) reveals a significant positive correlation between EI and WTC, indicating the fact that if learners' EI enhances, their willingness to communicate will also increase.

The obtained result can be attributed to the fact that interpersonal factor as one of the components of emotional intelligence leads learners to successful communication, as supported by researchers such as Gardner (1999) and Armstrong (2003), etc. In other words, those possessing high emotional intelligence are more willing to get involved in interpersonal communication.

This piece of finding supports the previous body of research. It is in line with Sucaromana's (2010) statement that learners who have higher EI can perform better because EI makes study atmosphere more ideal.

Furthermore, it is in line with Lopes et al. (2003) suggestion that "people with higher EI are more successful in social competent, relationships, and they are more interpersonally sensitive than people with lower EI" (Abdolmanafi Rokni et al., 2014, p.119).

Moreover, Hasanzadeh and Shahmohamadi's (2011) study confirms this finding. Their study revealed that students with high emotional intelligence are better able to communicate and express themselves and consequently, more successful in the process of language learning.

Tabatabaei and Jamshidfar's (2013) study is also in line with the above finding. They concluded that EI level of students has a significant correlation with their willingness to participate in L2 communications.

#### C. The Correlation between Tolerance of Ambiguity and Willingness to Communicate

The third research question concerned the relationship between learners' ambiguity tolerance and their willingness to initiate and participate in interpersonal communication. To find the answer to the third research question, another Pearson Product Moment Correlation test was conducted. Table 3 below shows the results of the correlation test.

TABLE 3:

CORELATION BETWEEN LEARNERS' AMBIGUITY TOLERANCE AND WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE

		Willingness to Communicate
Tolerance of Ambiguity	Pearson Correlation	.698**
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.013
	N	64

<sup>\*</sup> The correlation is significant at .05 level.

According to the above table (r=.698; P=.013<.05), it can be concluded that tolerance of ambiguity is highly correlated with willingness to communicate.

One reason underlying such finding may be due to the fact that individuals with higher tolerance of ambiguity seem to be more successful in meeting and coping with environmental demands and pressures, especially during communication and interpersonal relations and hence, they may be more willing to initiate and/ or participate in communications. This is especially the case in language learning classes where teachers put more emphasis on using the correct forms and structures during communications and therefore, impose more stress and pressure on students to use language accurately. This is why language learning classes are usually ambiguous and threatening environments. In

such situations, learners with higher tolerance of ambiguity seem to manage the situation more successfully and be more willing to communicate.

This result seems to be in accordance with the heuristic model of WTC proposed by MacIntyre et al. (1998). In their suggested pyramid- shaped model, WTC is supposed to be interrelated with six affective variables- motivation, confidence, attitude, communication competence, communication apprehension, and personality. As revealed in this study, tolerance and/ or intolerance of uncertainties, reflecting part of one' personality can influence individuals' willingness to initiate and participate in communications, when the opportunity is provided.

Moreover, such finding is supported by Sun (2008) who emphasized that personality is an important predictor of individual's degree of WTC.

Furthermore, supporting the above line of thinking, Fu, Wang, and Wang (2012) state that interpersonal communications encouraged in L2 classrooms expose learners to ambiguous situations in which those who have higher degrees of tolerance of uncertainties and risk taking seem to more willing to participate. Clearly, those who fear to make mistakes in such communications and consequently, fail to cope with ambiguities remain silent in the class.

#### V. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship among emotional intelligence, tolerance of ambiguity and willingness to communicate in Iranian EFL academic contexts. The findings revealed that there is a strong positive relationship between learners' EI and WTC. The positive correlation between tolerance of ambiguity and willingness to communicate was another finding of the current study. It was also found that there is no significant correlation between emotional intelligence and ambiguity tolerance.

The above findings have some implications for language teaching profession. Nowadays, the proponents of modern language teaching put greater emphasis on communication and authentic language use. Therefore, learners who take benefit of higher levels of willingness to communicate seem to be more successful in such systems. According to MacIntyre et al. (1998), enhancing learners' WTC is accounted for as a critical factor in modern language pedagogy and as it is apparent, teachers play a significant role in providing the conditions in which students' willingness to communicate can be boosted. An awareness of students' level of ambiguity tolerance and emotional intelligence, as influential psychological traits on individuals' WTC in particular and their language learning achievements in general, will help language teachers to modify and improve their teaching practices. Put is more simply, "in order to provide successful instruction, teachers need to learn to identify and understand their students' individual differences. This may cause a shift from teacher to learner instruction, such as the learner- centered curriculum" (Nosratinia et al., 2013, p. 27).

Moreover, believing that emotional intelligence can be improved, trained and schooled (Elias et al., 1997 cited in Pishghadam, 2009), language policy makers and educators can design and/ or implement programs that can enhance learners' emotional competencies.

This study had also some limitations. First, three self- report questionnaires were used in this study and the reliability of the data depends on the degree of truthfulness of the answers given by the participants. To increase the reliability of the data, some performance- based instrument can be also used. Besides, the small number of the respondents limited the generalizability of the findings. Further research with greater number of participants can yield more generalizable results.

#### **APPENDIX**

#### A. REVISED VERSION OF WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATE IN THE CLASSROOM (MacIntyre et al., 2001)

We would like to appreciate you for your nice cooperation. Please, read the following statements carefully and answer them according to the instructions prepared.

Directions: This questionnaire is composed of statements concerning your feelings about communication with other people, in English. Please indicate in the space provided the frequency of time you choose to speak in English in each classroom situation.

If you are almost never willing to speak English, write 1. If you are willing sometimes, write 2 or 3. If you are willing most of the time, write 4 or 5.

- 1 =Almost never willing
- 2 = Sometimes willing
- 3 =Willing half of the time
- 4 = Usually willing
- 5 = Almost always willing

#### Speaking in class, in English

- 1. Speaking in a group about your summer vacation. .....
- 2. Speaking to your teacher about your homework assignment. .....
- 3. A stranger enters the room you are in, how willing would you be to have a conversation if he talked to you first? .....

- 4. You are confused about a task you must complete, how willing are you to ask for instructions/clarification? .....
- 5. Talking to a friend while waiting in line. .....
- 6. How willing would you be to be an actor in a play? .....
- 7. Describe the rules of your favorite game. .....
- 8. Play a game in English. .....

#### Reading in class (to yourself, not out loud)

- 1. Read a novel. .....
- 2. Read an article in a paper. .....
- 3. Read letters from a pen pal written in native English. .....
- - 5. Read an advertisement in the paper to find a good bicycle you can buy. .....
  - 6. Read reviews for popular movies. .....

#### Writing in class, in English

- 1. Write an advertisement to sell an old bike. .....
- 2. Write down the instructions for your favorite hobby. .....
- 3. Write a report on your favorite animal and its habits. .....
- 4. Write a story. .....
- 5. Write a letter to a friend. .....
- 6. Write a newspaper article. .....
- 7. Write the answers to a "fun" quiz from a magazine. .....
- 8. Write down a list of things you must do tomorrow. .....

#### Comprehension in class

- 1. Listen to instructions and complete a task. .....
- 2. Bake a cake if instructions were not in Persian. .....
- 3. Fill out an application form. .....
- 4. Take directions from an English speaker. .....
- 5. Understand an English movie. .....

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Vahideh Sadat Vahedi is the faculty member at Islamic Azad University, Qaenat branch, Qaenat, Iran. She is a PhD candidate in Applied Linguistics at Ferdowsi University, Mashhad, Iran. She received her M.A. degree in English language teaching from Alzahre University, Tehran, Iran in 2006, and she also got the B.A. degree in English language and literature from Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran in 2006. Her areas of research include applied linguistics and CALL. She has presented and published several articles in international conferences and journals.

**Azar Hosseini Fatemi,** assistant professor in TEFL, is the head of Department of English, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran. Her areas of interest include issues in second language teaching and learning.

## The Effect of Metalinguistic Corrective Feedback on EFL Learners' Grammatical Accuracy

Somaieh Abdollahzadeh Azad University of Miandoab, Iran

Abstract—In everyday classrooms, teachers and their students must interact with each other on many levels. High communication abilities are required in order to teach and motivate these students effectively. Therefore, feedback is an important part of the teaching and learning. There are different kinds of feedback. The present study was designed to investigate the effect of metalinguistic feedback on grammatical accuracy among Iranian L2 learners. Sixty learners from Sahand language Institute in Miandoab after taking grammatical judgment test which was administered to homogenize them, were placed in two control and experimental groups. The experimental group, received metalinguistic feedback as the treatment. The researcher corrected the learners errors related to past tense and pronoun after they finished the retelling according to principles of Jigsaw task. But learners in control group did not receive any feedback. After treatment, which lasted for six sessions, post-test was given to both control and experimental groups to observe the difference resulted from the treatment. To be sure about the significance of the difference between post-test means of both groups, a ttest was used. The results at the end showed that learners in experimental group outperformed control group. After that, other tests (pronoun and tense tests) were given to the learners in both control and experimental groups. The data collected was computed through t-test which revealed that the effect of metalinguistic feedback on accuracy of tense is greater than pronoun. The findings of this study can be helpful for language teachers and teacher trainers.

Index Terms—feedback, metalinguistic feedback, task, accuracy

#### I. INTRODUCTION

#### A. Background

The term "corrective feedback" has recently been imperative part of the foreign language teaching. As its name refers, corrective feedback is used to give information on correctness of learner's utterances and provide them with the correct form of their erroneous production.

Kepner (1991 as cited in Grami, 2005) defined feedback in general as "any procedures used to inform a learner whether an instructional response is right or wrong." (p. 141)

According to Lyster and Ranta (1997) there are different kinds of feedback: explicit correction, recast, clarification, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation, and repetition. It is the teachers' task to decide which kind of feedback to be used. However, this decision should be based on the teachers' regards as to which type of feedback can bring the most effective outcome.

The present study tries to describe the effect of metalinguistic feedback on L2 learners' grammatical accuracy. The researcher wants to know if using metalinguistic feedback would lead to a better chance of grammatical accuracy occurring.

#### B. Research Questions

This research seeks to answer the following questions:

**Research question 1**: Does metalinguistic corrective feedback have any effects on the grammatical accuracy of EFL learners?

Research question 2: Does metalinguistic corrective feedback have any effects on the accuracy of tense?

Research question 3: Does metalinguistic corrective feedback have any effects on the accuracy of pronoun?

#### II. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

#### A. Theoretical Background

According to Brandet (2008) information given to learners related to some aspects of their performance on a task is called feedback. He maintains that teachers provide this piece of information for learners and there should be a balance in the authenticity of feedback provided for learners and also teacher feedback must be less face threatening.

According to Naeini (2008), an effective instruction entails feedback. As he argues, in classes where learners are deprived of corrective feedback, no pedagogically significant result is obtained. He believes that learning happens when there is an exchange of information between learners and teachers. Furthermore, he claims that there should even be a considerable amount of interaction within learners.

Feedback is an essential part of the teaching and learning process. There are many kinds of feedback and many kinds of people. Since students are different in personality and trait, the type of feedback given will either positively or negatively influence that student. Thus, it is important to discuss the different kinds of feedback and their influences on students. Feedback is an imperative part for learners in language learning.

The purpose of feedback is to teach skills that help learners to improve their writing skill. (Williams, 2003).

The most important thing while giving feedback is adopting a positive attitude toward learner errors. If the learner receives only negative feedback, he/she may easily be disappointed from trying to learn complex structures. However, feedback sessions can be an important experience for the student if the teacher shows the strong points as well (Gulcat & Ozagac, 2004)

Kepner (1991 as cited in Grami, 2005) defined feedback in general as "any procedures used to inform a learner whether an instructional response is right or wrong." (p. 141)

It is important to consider that, in most studies, the effectiveness of corrective feedback are only assessed in terms of learners' immediate response to the feedback (Ellis,2001). The learners' responses to feedback can not be equated with ultimate use of feedback in real life situation, that is, in artificial classroom context, learners may notice teacher's feedback and sometimes could produce the correct form of the first utterance, but it does not mean that learner will never commit that kind of error again. Therefore, more studies are needed to provide supportive evidence for effectiveness of feedback (Ahmad Shah, 2003).

#### B. Different Kinds of Feedback

Lyster & Ranta (1997) distinguished six types of feedback, namely **explicit correction, recasts, clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, elicitation, and repetition**.

**Explicit correction:** clearly indicating that student's sentence was wrong and the teacher provides the correct form.

**Recast:** Recast is a kind of corrective feedback in which teachers without directly showing that the student's utterance was incorrect, they implicitly reformulates the student's error, or provides the correction.

**Clarification:** Teachers by using phrases like "excuse me" or "I don't understand" show that the message has not been understood or that the student's utterance includes some kind of error and that a repetition or a reformulation is required.

**Metalinguistic Clues:** In this kind of feedback the teacher poses questions or provides comments or information related to the learner's utterance.

**Repetition:** the teacher repeats the student's error and adjusts intonation to draw student's attention to it.

#### C. Task Based Language Teaching

Task based language teaching is an approach to the design of language course in which the end is not a list of linguistic items, but a collection of task (Nunan, 1999). According to Harmer (2001), task- based language teaching refers to an approach based on the use of tasks as the core unit of planning and instruction in language teaching. The idea of task-based lesson was mostly popularized by prabhu who speculated that students were just likely to learn language if they were thinking about a non-linguistic problem than if they were concentrating on particular language forms.

Task-based language teaching is generally characterized as a development within the communicative approach. It has resulted in response to some disadvantages of traditional PPP approach represented by the procedure of presentation, practice and performance focusing language learning as a developmental process which develops communication and social interaction (Ellis, 2003).

Ellis (2003) believes that task-based language teaching constitutes a strong version of CLT, and tasks provide the basis for an entire language curriculum.

Johnson and Johnson (1998) manifested that in TBLT much interest is focused on the nature of classroom activities (tasks) learners are asked to undertake, and on the possibility of using these tasks as the basis for syllabus design. They refer to Prabhu's work in 1987 on the procedural syllabus as an important attempt at task-based teaching.

Tasks are everyday activities which need language, for example writing a letter. As well as activities that can be done without resorting to any language, e.g; painting a door (Long, 1985 as cited in Ellis, 2003). Task is an activity where the focus is put on meaning, communicative problems are solved, real world activities are related to each other and the assessment of the task is on the basis of outcome (Nunan, 1989).

#### 1. Task types

According to different scholars there are many different kinds of task. Pattison (1987, as cited in Nunan, 2003) sets out seven task types:

- Questions and answers: Question and answer tasks based on the notion of creating an information gap which lets the learners make a personal choice from a list of language items and they are to discover their classmate's choice.
- Dialogs and role play: In theses kinds of activities if learners are given some choice of what to say, and if there is a clear aim to be achieved, learners will participate willingly and learn much better than that when they are told to repeat the dialog, because more repetition sometimes seems to be a tiring action.
  - Matching activities: In these kinds of tasks the learners' task is to match the items or to complete pairs.

- Communication strategies: These are activities which help learners practice communication strategies like asking for feedback.
  - Picture stories: They create communication activities through the use of pictures.
- Puzzles and problems: These kinds of tasks are of different kinds and require the learners to make guesses, based on their general knowledge and personal experience, during which they use their imagination and test their power of reasoning.
  - **Discussions and decisions:** Require the learners to share their information to reach a decision. Richard (2001, as cited in Nunan, 2003) provided the following five task types:
- **Jigsaw tasks:** In these kinds of task, every learner or a group of learners has a piece of information. They combine the pieces to form a whole.
- Information gap tasks: tasks in which one group of learners are given a set of information and another group are given a complementary set of information. They negotiate in order to understand the other group' information to compete an activity.
- **Problem solving tasks:** In these kinds of tasks learners are given a problem and a set of information. They must negotiate and find a solution to the problem, and there is generally a single outcome.
- **Decision making tasks**: In these kinds of activities learners are given a problem with a number of possible outcomes, and finally they select one through interaction and discussion.
  - Opinion exchange tasks: In these kinds of task learners discuss something and exchange their opinions.

#### D. Accuracy, Fluency and Complexity

According to Skehan (1996), three aspects of language, namely, fluency, accuracy and complexity are in competition for attentional resources. Fluency refers to the learners' ability to produce language fluently in real time without hesitation (Skehan, 1996, as cited in Ellis, 2003). Learners can be fluent speakers through memorizing integrated language elements. Accuracy is the ability to avoid errors in performing the target language.

According to Skehan (1996 as cited in Willis & Willis, 1996), accuracy concerns "how well language is produced in relation to the rule system of the target language" (p.22). And complexity concerns the learners' ability to take risk and to expand their inter-languages. For example the number of clauses per T -unit or C-unit. And it is the ability to use more advanced language automatically. This aspect is correlated with restructuring, i.e. the development of interlanguage system.

Different researchers have different opinions about measuring accuracy. Some examine how accurately some grammatical features (like tenses) are used; others have chosen more generalized features or measures, such as percentage of error free clauses that don't contain any error. For instance, in the study done by Yuan and Ellis (2003) themselves, the same definition was made. They related all errors to syntax morphology and lexical choice.

#### III. RESEARCH METHOD

#### A. Participants

The participants of the present study were 60 females EFL learners studying in one of the language institutes (Sahand institute) in Miandoab. Their ages ranged from 14 to 18. The course offered for the classes was eight-units from Select Readings.

A pre-test consisting of 30 items grammatical judgment test was administered to 60 learners. The testees were divided into two groups according to their scores in pre-test. The instructor tried to have two linguistically homogeneous groups, then one of the groups consisting of 30 students was randomly selected as experimental group and the other one selected as control group. Both groups received the same amount of instruction (about 8 sessions), using the same material taught by the same instructor. Finally students in both control group and experimental group were administered the same post-test.

#### B. Instrumentation

Grammatical judgment test is taken to be one of the important instruments which was used in the present study. Before administering the grammatical judgment test the reliability and validity of the test were estimated. For estimating reliability the researcher used test-retest reliability. In test-retest reliability according to Hatch and Farhady (1981, p. 246), "Reliability is obtained by administering the test to the same students twice and computing the correlation between the two administrations". The researcher administered the test twice to 20 EFL learners and then computed the correlation between the two administrations. And also validity of the test was computed through content validity. Hatch and Farhady (1981, p. 250) defined content validity as "the extent to which a test measures a representative sample of the subject matter content". The focus of content validity is on the adequacy of the sample and not simply on the appearance of the test. To assure content validity of this test, the content of whatever the researcher wish to measure carefully defined. Eight reading passages from select readings were another instrument that was used in this study.

#### C. Procedures

Firstly, 60 students from one of the institutes (Sahand institute) were given a pre-test including 30 items grammatical judgment test adapted from Nelson English language tests (specially, tense and pronoun). The testees, then, were divided in two 30-member groups on the basis of their obtained scores. The instructor tried to put the same number of students who gained almost the same scores in both groups. Then, one of the groups was randomly chosen as experimental group to receive the treatment.

Second, researcher created small teams among the experimental and control groups according to principles of jigsaw task. Here, too, regarding the students' pre-test scores, the instructor tried to make six equal teams out of the 30 participants in the experimental group and make six equal teams out of the 30 participants in the control group. That is, each small group included two weak students who received below 18, two average students who received between 18-32, and one strong student who had got from 32-40 in the pre-test. Consequently, the experimental and control groups were divided into six teams, each with five members to work together for the purpose of retelling the part of the reading passage according to principles of jigsaw task. In these kinds of tasks, every learner or group of learners has a piece of information. They combine the pieces to form a whole (e.g. two or three groups of learners have different parts of the story and put the pieces together to complete the story) (Richards, 2001 as cited in Nunan, 2003). In the present study, according to principles of jigsaw task, first paragraph was given to group one for retelling, second paragraph was given to group two and third paragraph to group three and so on.

Then, the researcher corrected the learners' errors in the experimental group after they finished the retelling the passage (metalinguistic feedback). The instructor only corrected the errors related to a tense and pronoun. In each session, they covered one reading passage from Select Readings. Learners in control group didn't receive any feedback.

Both the experimental and control group lesson plans were based on the same reading selections. However, the experimental plans provided opportunities for receiving treatment through metalinguistic feedback. Conversely, students in the control group didn't receive any feedback.

Finally, Students in both control and experimental groups were administered the same post-test, grammatically judgment test.

The mean and standard deviation of both control and Experimental groups were computed. The data collected was computed through t-test.

#### D. Design

The research question proposed in the present study requires Quasi- experimental mehod of research. Accordingly, the study employed a pre-test and post-test, control group, experimental design while focusing on the variables of metalinguistic feedback as an independent variable and grammatical accuracy as a dependent variable which was hypothesized to be influenced by the independent variable.

#### E. Measures

To measure the grammatical accuracy, at the pre-test stage after gathering the learners' scores, the researcher computed the mean and standard deviation of both groups. To be confident that both groups were homogeneous and there was no significant difference among them before the treatment, their obtained mean scores were compared through t-test. At the post-test stage, to prove the efficiency of the given treatment, also the same test as a post-test was administered for both control and experimental groups to examine differences after 6 sessions.

After gathering both experimental and control groups' scores, the means, ranges, and standard deviation for both groups were computed. Then another t-test was run to check the significance of the difference between post-test means of groups.

#### IV. ANALYSIS RESULT

As already explained, the pre-test including 30 items grammatically judgment test (including tense and pronoun) was given to clarify the actual linguistic condition of samples in both groups before treatment. Before administering the grammatical judgment test the reliability and validity of the test were estimated. For estimating reliability the researcher used test-retest reliability. And also validity of the test was computed through content validity. To assure content validity of this test, the content of whatever the researcher wish to measure carefully defined. After administering the test, learners' scores were gathered the mean and standard deviations of both groups were computed. After treatment, which lasted for six sessions, post-test was given to both control and experimental groups to observe the difference resulted from the treatment. Again the mean of both groups was computed as well as their standard deviations. However, to be confident that both groups were homogeneous and there was no significant difference between them before the treatment, their obtained mean scores were compared through t-test. To be sure about the significance of the difference between post-test means of both groups, another t-test was run to check the significance of the difference between post-test means of groups.

#### V. CONCLUSIONS

The first research question in the present study was: Does metalinguistic feedback have any effects on grammatical accuracy of EFL learners? The findings indicated that the metalinguistic feedback has a positive effect on grammatical

accuracy of the learners. Simply, when the participants received feedback through metalinguistic comments in the experimental group, there were higher mean differences between the two groups in the post-test.

The second research question addressed the effect of metalinguistic feedback on accuracy of pronoun. The results indicated positive effect of metalinguistic feedback on accuracy of pronoun.

The third research question was formulated to explore the effect of metalinguistic feedback on the accuracy of tense. The results indicated that the effect of metalinguistic feedback on grammatical accuracy of tense is greater than pronoun.

#### APPENDIX

 $TABLE\ 4.1:$  The mean, standard deviation and Std. error mean in pre-test and post-test  $\textbf{Group\ Statistics}$ 

				Std. Erro
Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviati	Mean
Pre control	30	24.325	7.7306	1.2223
test experimen	t 30	23.650	7.0267	1.1126
Post- control	30	28.475	9.5218	1.5055
test experimen	t 30	32.900	9.7869	1.5474

Table 4.1 is the comparison of the pre-test and post-test results of the experimental and control groups. Table 4.1 shows that the pre-test mean score was 24 for control group and 23 for experimental group in pre-test stage. As it is obvious, the means of both experimental and control groups on the pre-test stage were homogeneous, while at the post-test stage the mean of control group is 28 and for experimental group is 32. It is concluded that the difference between the means of experimental group and control groups in the post-test is noticeable.

 $\label{table 4.2:} T\text{-test for equality of means in the pre-test and post-test stages}$ 

#### **Independent Samples Test**

		Levene's Equality of		t-test for Equality of Means			
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
PRE	Equal variances assumed	.426	.516	.408	78	.684	
	Equal variances not assumed			.408	77.320	.684	
POST	Equal variances assumed	.128	.721	-2.050	78	.044	
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.050	77.941	.044	

In this table mean difference, t value, degree of freedom and 2-tailed probably are shown. As it is obvious from Table 4.2 there was no significant differences between the means of two groups at the pre-test stage. (-t = .408, df = 78, P = .684 > .05). And we could claim that both groups to be equal before the treatment. While there does seem to be some differences between them on the post-test and this difference is statistically significant. (-t = 2.050, df = 78, P = .04 < .05).

TABLE 4.3:
THE MEAN, STD. DEVIATION IN PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST

Descriptive Statistics

	Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
PRE	control	24.3250	7.73068	30
1	experiment	23.6500	7.03672	30
	Total	23.9875	7.35276	60
POST	control	28.4750	9.52187	30
	experiment	32.9000	9.78696	30
	Total	28.6875	9.84898	60

Table 4.3 shows the mean and standard deviation of both control and experimental groups at pre-test and post-test stages. As it is clear, the mean scores of two groups at pre-test stage is homogeneous but at the post-test stage there was difference between means of two groups.

TABLE 4.4:
THE MEAN, STANDARD DEVIATION AND STD. ERROR MEAN OF BOTH CONTROL AND EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS FOR TENSE

Group Statistics

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
TENSE	control	30	13.1000	5.90437	.93356
	experiment	30	24.4750	5.64318	.89227

Table 4.4 explains the mean and standard deviation of control and experimental groups for tense. The mean score for control group was 13.1000 and 24 for experimental group. And the standard deviations were respectively 13 and 24 for the groups. As it is obvious, the experimental group has higher mean in comparison to the control group.

TABLE 4.5:
T-TEST FOR EQUALITY OF MEANS FOR TENSE Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of ∀ariances		t-test for Equality of Means			
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
TENSE	Equal variances assumed	.067	.795	-5.711	78	.000	
	Equal variances not assumed			-5.711	77.841	.000	

In this Table mean difference, t-value, degree of freedom and 2-tailed probably are shown. As Table 4.5 shows there was significant difference between the means of two groups. (-t = 5.71, df = 78, P = 0 < .05).

TABLE 4.6:
THE MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF BOTH CONTROL AND EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS FOR PRONOUN
Group Statistics

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PRONUN	control	30	15.6750	7.14820	1.13023
	experiment	30	19.9760	5.78795	1.07327

Table 4.6 explains the mean and standard deviation of control and experimental groups for pronoun. The mean of control group is 15.6750 and for the experimental group it is 19.9760. As it is obvious the difference between the means of experimental and control groups for pronoun is noticeable.

TABLE 4.7: T-TEST FOR EQUALITY OF MEANS FOR PRONOUN Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of ∀ariances		t-test for Equality of Means			
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
PRONUN	Equal variances assumed	032	851	-2.759	78	.007	
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.759	77.792	.007	

Table 4.7 indicates the t-value, degree of freedom and 2-tailed probability of the two groups for pronoun. As it is obvious the difference is statistically significant. (-t = 2.75, df = 78, P = .007 < .05

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I want to express my heart full thanks and appreciation to my parents whose support and understanding helped me overcome all my problems.

And also I am grateful to Dr. Ahangari whose invaluable comments and suggestions were undeniable. Her kindness, effort and patience during these several months encouraged me to continue and conduct the current research willingly. I offer my sincere regards to Dr. Sedagat who helped me in statistical analysis of data.

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**Somaieh Abdollahzadeh** was born in Miandoab, a city in the west of Iran in 1982. She is a PhD student at Azad university of Tabriz. She received her MA in English language teaching from Azad university of Tabriz in 2008, her BA in ELT from the same university in 2005. From 2007 to 2011 she was an English language teacher in language institutes in Miandoab.

Since 2006 to date she has been working as a teacher at Azad university of Miandoab and Payamenoor University. Her current research interests include scaffolding, focus on form, foreign language learning.

## Application of the Concept of Defamiliarization in Translation Studies: Case Studies of the Translation of Film Titles

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

Junyan Wei

College of Foreign Language, Nanjing University of Chinese Medicine, Nanjing, China

Abstract—As more and more foreign films stream into China, the importance of translation of film titles is becoming obvious. A good film title can not only convey the theme of a film, but also grab the attention and inspire the aesthetic emotion of the audience. The aim of defamiliarization theory is to evoke the aesthetic emotion of people which has been widely used in the translation of film titles. Yet some translations of film titles decrease the defamiliarization effect and present audience with more familiar content. This thesis probes into the application of "defamiliarization" in translation studies, summarizes the methods of translating film titles and discusses the issues of defamiliarization degree, hoping to provide new ideas of translating film titles.

Index Terms—defamiliarization, film title, translation studies

#### I. Introduction

Film title is the first window opened up for audience. Whether a foreign film title is translated properly can directly influence the audience's first impression of the film and passion of enjoying it. With more and more foreign films being introduced into China, the importance of how to translate a foreign film title is becoming obvious. Translators are doing their best to search for better ways to translate film titles. This thesis is to probe into the application of "defamiliarization" in translation studies, discuss the methods of translating film titles and the "degree" of defamiliarization in the process of translating from the perspective of defamiliarization theory.

#### II. DEFAMILIARIZATION THEORY: DEBATE ABOUT TWO POLES

Defamiliarization is a core concept of Russian formalism. Viktor Shklovsky, who is a theorist of Russian formalism, has pointed out that "the technique of art is to make objects 'unfamiliar', to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged" (Shklovsky, 1998, p.16). Russion formalists hold the opinion that people always look for something "new" during their aesthetic process, which means they prefer novel content and expression. During aesthetic process, some elements should be highlighted to reduce the automaticity and mechanization of reading and arouse people's emotion. Only in this way can aesthetic subject get their aesthetic pleasure.

However, some other scholars think that people always look for something "same" during the aesthetic process and put forward "perceptual fluency hypothesis" (Martindale & Moore, 1988; Reber et al.'s, 1998; Winkielman et al.'s, 2006). This hypothesis holds the opinion that unfamiliar contents bring intensive cognitive load. Compared with contents which are cognitively difficult, people prefer familiar things. Therefore, only by making things more familiar can people get more aesthetic pleasure.

#### III. "Two Poles" of the Concept of "Defamiliarization" in Translation Studies

The debate about "two poles" of defamiliarization raises that of defamiliarization translation----one is to reduce the cognitive distance through translation and approach unfamiliar object with familiar conventional experience; the other is to increase the cognitive distance through translation and approach familiar object with relatively unfamiliar experience. According to Formalist literary theorists, the subject accepts familiar matters in automatic sensitivity. The key point of defamiliarization is to extend the aesthetic process. The more the readers' psychological expectation caused by the meaning which translators give to translated texts during the translation process is and the greater the distance of which the reconstructed semantics deviates from conventional ones in the translated texts, the longer (within an accept limit) the aesthetic process is. There are something that can not be automatically perceived for readers in translated texts, extending readers' aesthetic process, increasing readers' perceptive difficulty and experience time. Compared with automatic perception, readers perceive more aesthetically. Conversely, the shorter the aesthetic process is, the less

readers perceive aesthetically compared with automatic perception.

It is similar to "adequacy" and "acceptability" proposed by Toury (1995, p.57). "adequacy" means that translators adhere to the norms of source language and culture to produce translated texts which maximally retain contents and features of original texts on the levels of language and culture. There are some difficulties for target language readers during their reading, since translators try to represent the features of the original texts during the translation process. "acceptability" means that translators adhere to norms of target language and culture to produce translated texts which are not very difficult for target language readers during their reading, since translators consider their reading experience, aesthetic habits and cognitive competence. The deviation of meaning and form of translated texts with adequacy is severe, lengthening readers' aesthetic process. It is a translation way of "seeking the new" which is at one end of defamiliarization translation. The deviatin of meaning and form of translated texts with acceptance is not so severe, shorting readers' aesthetic process. It is a translation way of "seeking the same" which is at the other end of defamiliarization translation.

In fact, the "adequacy" and "acceptability" of translated text discussed above are not always corresponding to the "seeking the new" and "seeking the same" of defamiliarization. For example, contents of the original texts that are familiar to source language reader can become unfamiliar to target language readers when they are translated into target language culture. Similar situation exists in translated texts with acceptability. Contents that have strong defamiliarization effect in original texts can become familiar to target language readers after the translators' consideration of language readers' reading experience, cultural background etc. Wu Ying (2007) holds the opinion that "defamiliarization" put forward by Formalists is a kind of expression technique, involving one single text. However, it involves original text and translated text in translation. It is necessary to define the "defamiliarization" of source language and target language separately. As a special kind of communication activity, defamiliarization effect cannot always be the same between source culture and target culture. In some situations, defamiliarization effect in source language culture disappears when it is put into target language culture, and in other situations, expression technique that is not defamiliarization can produce defamiliarization effect in translated texts. This reflects the complexity of defamiliarization theory's application in translation studies. Since the concept "defamiliarization" in translation studies is much more complicated in Russian Formalism, it is necessary to define the concept "defamiliarization" in translation first before further discussions.

#### IV. THE CONCEPT OF "DEFAMILIARIZATION" IN TRANSLATION STUDIES

Defamiliarization theory exerts influences over different art levels like literature, drama, film and so on. At the same time, it also exerts influences over translation of art language during which many translators inherit defamiliarization theory's spirit of pursuing novelty which means that translators put defamiliarization theory into practice. Some of the translators (Even-Zohar 2000; Gentzler, 2001; Sun Yifeng, 2003; Sun Huijun, 2005) take defamiliarization as their translation object. When defamiliarization expressions appear in a source text, translators present the strangeness and defamiliarization of the expression in the target text; some of the translators (Seamus, 1988; Zheng Hailing, 2002; 2003) take defamiliarization as their translation principles and choose defamiliarization methods during translation process to produce the target text. However, some translators choose to decrease the contents containing defamiliarization effect during the translation process. They translate the defamiliarization part with contents that are familiar to readers, hoping to bring readers more fluent aesthetic experience and higher recognition of identity.

About the concept "defamiliarization" in translation studies, early translation studies hold the opinion that since literary quality is the primary feature of literary works, it should be conveyed into translated texts, giving translated texts the same aesthetic feeling which means literary quality (Gentzler, 2001). Levy, the representative scholar, makes it clear that "if an expressive feature does not work in the receiving culture, then the translator must replace it or even invent a new feature so that the overall literary quality is not lost" (Gentzler, 2001, p.88). The "expressive feature" can be one of the features that produce defamiliarization effect in original texts. Even-Zohar (2000) also suggests that ".....some literatures have taken peripheral positions, which is only to say that they were often modelled to a large extent upon an exterior literature. For such literatures, translated literature is not only a major channel through which fashionable repertoire is brought home, but also a source of reshuffling and supplying alternatives. Thus, whereas richer or stronger literatures may have the option to adopt novelties from some periphery within their indigenous borders, 'weak' literatures in such situations often depend on import alone" (p.194). The "bring home fashionable repertoire" and "adopt novelties" here provide a way of retaining new literary expressions and images in original texts, trying to represent the defamiliarization effect of source language culture in target language culture. It is similar to "dynamic equivalence" put forward by Nida which could be stated as "The readers of a translated texts should be able to comprehend it to the point that they can conceive of how the original readers of the text must have understood and appreciated it" (Nida, 2000, p.87). This means that the main emphasis of translation is on the feeling of target language readers. These translation studies see defamiliarization as translation object and confine it between texts and readers.

Zheng Hailing from China see defamiliarization as a translation strategy and confine it between original text and target text and highlights translator's subjectivity. In one thesis citing examples to discuss defamiliarization translation, Zheng Hailing (2002) says that "for the original text, this translation way is a kind of 'defamiliarization' which is 'domestication' for Chinese readers ...... 'defamiliarization' can both be 'demestication' and 'foreignization'. The latter

one can bring translated texts exotic flavour. The key point of 'defamiliarization' is whether translators' expression technique is novel and can evokes readers' aesthetic feelings"(p.49). He equates "defamiliarization" with translation strategies of "domestication" and "foreignization". He also says that "applying 'defamiliarization' to translation is precisely the recreation of translators. The application of 'defamiliarization' usually produces distance in language forms between original texts and translated texts, highlighting artistic effect recreated by translators. ...... This translation way reflects the awakening of translators' subjectivity and importance of creativity of literary translation. It is conventional that translated texts should be faithful to original texts, yet in literary translation, translators usually deviate from the partial to realize the faithfulness of the whole" (Zheng Hailing, 2003, p.45). However, Russian Formalists define "defamiliarization" between aesthetic subject and aesthetic object, namely between texts and readers. It puts emphasis on readers' feelings. What is more, "defamiliarization" in Formalism is put forward with literariness and is an artistic technique of realizing the literalization of texts. It exists in one single language, whereas translation strategy relates to two languages and is a interlingual transformation way.

Based on the review of "defamiliarization" in translation studies, this thesis will discuss film title translation under the following definitions: (1) defamiliarization" in translation studies is a kind of translation strategy (according to discussion of "two poles" of defamiliarization, there are some specific translation methods under strategy. "see below"); (2) "defamiliarization" in translation studies can both be defined between two aesthetic objects (the original text and the translated text), and between aesthetic object and aesthetic subject (the original text and original reader, or the translated text and target reader, or the original text and translator, or the translated text and reader); (3) "defamiliarization" in translation studies puts emphasis on the feelings of target readers.

#### V. TRANSLATION OF FILM TITLES: FOUR METHODS

Film, which is a comprehensive art, is an art form of spreading culture. A film title is not only high compression of the whole film contents, but also the first window that is opened up for audience. According to the differences of methods and degree dealing with defamiliarization, this thesis sums up four translation methods during the translating process----keep unfamiliar, from familiar to unfamiliar, from unfamiliar to familiar and keep familiar.

#### A. Keep Unfamiliar

There are a lot of translations of film titles choose the way of keep unfamiliar. Specificly it can be divided into two kinds. Firstly, the original film title itself is created in a defamiliarization way and its translation keeps the unfamiliar effect. The information of a film is firstly conveyed through the film title, so how to catch the eyes of audience is the key point. Many film titles are created in the way of defamiliarization to extend audience's aesthetic process and impress them very much. These translations of film titles mostly keep the unfamiliar effect. For example, when "Rain Man" was released, "rain man" itself was then a new and novel expression. According to the title, the audience will associate the content of the film with somebody related to rain. However, after watching the film, they find that the leading character, whose name is Raymond, has a problem of lisp. When he pronounces his name, it sounds like "rain man". The title "rain man" also plays a crucial role on one plot linking up with another. It reminds the brother of the leading character of the fact that the imaginary rain man in brother's childhood memory turns out to be his real older brother. This film's title is translated in a way of literal translation, retaining almost the same defamiliarization effect as the original film title. The word "rain man" is also unfamiliar to Chinese audience. It is not common to see a man related to rain. In this way, interest of audience in this film is aroused. Although the translation of the film title cannot convey the homophonic effect of the leading character's name "Raymond", it calls for the plot of the "rain man" being afaid of rain. The translation of this film title "rain man" is not abrupt but can attract audience's attention. Another example is "The Shinning" which itself is an unconventional expression. "shinning" means glittering and sparkling and often used as an adjective not a noun. After the film, audience will find that "The Shinning" is a specific reference, referring to a special ability of mind perceiving which the cook named Dick says in the film. The one who owns this ability can communicate by ideas and has an insight into the past and the future. Danny, the son of the leading character Jack, foresees tragic events happening one after another in the house through the ability. Usually, this film is translated as "Shan Ling" in Chinese. This translation not only retains the defamiliarization effect of the original title, but also is new and novel to Chinese audience. The word "Ling" is like a flash of light and at the same time renders horrible atmosphere. Incidentally, "Shan Ling" happens to be the transliteration of "shinning". "Shan Ling" perfectly retains the original defamilirization effect, successfully arousing audience's curiosities. "Shan Ling" is correspondent with the original title in phonology and form. Other translations like "Gui Dian" (meaning "ghost store" in Chinese), "You Guang" (meaning "ghost light" in Chinese) are, by contrast, inferior in these respects. Translations that retain the defamiliarization effects of the original titles are not uncommon. Some are translated in a literal way. For example, "The Lovely Bones" is translated into "Ke Ai De Gu Tou"; "The Silence of Lambs" is translated into "Chen Mo De Gao Yang". Those translations all retain the suspenseful or horrible effect of the original titles. Another examples such as "the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy" and "The Fifth Element" are literally translated into "Yin He Xi Man You Zhi Nan" and "Di Wu Yuan Su" which also retain strong unfamiliar feelings that science fiction films bring to audience. Besides, some translations are not in a literal way, instead, the translations are results of interpretation of the film. This translation method can retain the defamiliarization effect of the original. For example, the "Sideways". The original title uses metaphor, implying that the leading character gets off his regular life track. "Sideways" is translated into "Bei Jiu Ren Sheng" which derives from different attitudes of the leading character toward wine in the film. Likewise, the Chinese title explains life through wine in a metaphorical way. It is not a literal translation, so the meaning of Chinese title is quite different from that of the original. However, both titles use metaphor to achieve the same goal of interpreting character's life.

Secondly, the original film title does not use defamiliarization technique, however, it is unfamiliar to Chinese audience. The Chinese title keeps the defamiliarization effect. Most of this kind of titles have deep background of the source language culture which is not familiar to Chinese audience. For example "Avatar". It originates from Indian Sanskrit, meaning "reincarnation". After years of development, it is written in Latin and finally accepted by English. To English-speaking country audience, it has conveyed the essence of the film. However, it is not familiar to Chinese audience. Translators make no explanatory translation and transliterate it into "A Fan Da", retaining the defamiliarization effect. There are many other translations like this, such as "Ge Si La" (Godzilla), "Tai Tan Ni Ke Hao" (Titanic), "Zhen Zhu Gang" (Pear harbor), "Fang Tu Li Ba" (Rabbit ProofFence) and so on.

#### B. From Familiar to Unfamiliar

Some translations have no defamiliarization effect either from the perspective of creation or Chinese audience's reception. Yet translators do some recreations during translating process, adding some defamiliarization elements to attract audience's attention. For example, "The Double Life of Weronigqe". It tells a story of two girls, one living in France and the other in Poland. They have the same appearance, name and even details of life, like one person living a double life. The original title is a clear summary of the film contents. If it is translated into "Wei Luo Ni Ka De Shuang Chong Sheng Huo", it can exactly convey the meaning of the original title and be accepted by Chinese audience, however, there is no defamiliarization effect. The translation "Liang Sheng Hua" (meaning flowers of two lives) compare people to flowers, extending aesthetic distance of the audience and bringing defamiliarization effect. This translation implies the theme of the film and has poetic beauty, corresponding to poetic plot in the film. It is successful to recreate the original film title through defamiliarization way during translating process. Another example is "Mission: impossible" which is translated into "Bu Ke Neng Wan Cheng De Ren Wu" both of which are common expressions. But the translation "Die Zhong Die" extends the aesthetic time and has defamiliarization effect. In Chinese the first "Die" and the second "Die" have the same pronunciation but different form, which can provoke people's thinking. The first "Die" refers to a disk and the second one refers to a spy, both of which are key elements of the film.

#### C. From Unfamiliar to Familiar

Some translations of film titles retain no defamiliarization effect of the original title, instead, the original titles are translated into ones that are familiar to Chinese audience. Generally speaking, if these kind of titles are translated in a literal way, the translations will be unfamiliar to Chinese audience and can not attract audience's attention. As a result, translators make some creative transformation during translating process. For example, "Forrest Gump". If it is transliterated into "Fu Lei Si Te Gang Pu", it is just a meaningless foreign name to Chinese audience, too many words and without any attractions. Another translation "A Gan Zheng Zhuan" is more appropriate. For one thing, the leading character is called "A Gan", which brings Chinese audience intimacy, conveys a feeling of nobody; for another, "Zheng Zhuan" embodies that the film is a miniature of the leading character's whole life. Compared with the title of transliteration, the catchy translation "A Gan Zheng Zhuan" is more attractive to audience despite the lack of defamiliarization. Another example is "The Other Boleyn Girl". If it is transliterated into "Ling Yi Ge Bo Lin Jia De Nv Hai", it will be faithful to the original title and have defamiliarization effect, however, it will make audience confused. It it is translated into "Jiu Zhan Que Chao" (meaning "A turtledove takes over the nest of a magpie"), it is more vivid. "Jiu Zhan Que Chao" is an idiom that is widely known to Chinese people and also summarizes the contents of the film, reflecting that it is a story full of struggle. This can easily arouses people's desire to watch the movie. There are many such translations of this kind like "The Bridges of Madison County" (translated into "Lang Qiao Yi Meng"), "The wizard of Oz" (translated into "Lv Ye Xian Zong"), "Gone With the Wind" (translated into "Luan Shi Jia Ren"), "The Groods" (translated into "Feng Kuang Yuan Shi Ren") and so on.

#### D. Keep Familiar

Some film titles are originally familiar to Chinese audience, so translators make no modifications during translating process and present them to audience in the form of what is familiar to Chinese audience. For example, some films that are adapted from literary classics like "Jian Ai" (translated from *Jane Eyre*), "Tai Si' (translated from *Tess*), "Ju Li Fu Ren" (translated from *Madam Currie*), "An Na·Ka Lie Ni Na" (translated from *Anna Karenina*), etc. Some are adapted from popular books like series of "Ha Li·Bo Te" (translated from *Harry Potter*), etc. These are popular as books, so it is the best option to use the original translation titles. Some film titles like "Oceans", "The Travelling Birds/Le peuple migrateur" which have obvious documentary features are obvious and straight to the point and translated into "Hai Yang", "Qian Xi De Niao" which retain those features.

VI. "DEGREE" OF DEFAMILIARIZATION: INTEGRATION OF TWO POLES

Among the above translation strategies, some retain defamiliarization effect of the original titles or are translated from familiar to unfamiliar, yet some are translated to the contrary, from unfamiliar to familiar, or retain familiarization effect of the original titles. What kind of translations on earth are the most attractive? It is related to the question of "degree" of defamiliarization. To what degree of defamiliarization can people get the best aesthetic experience?

In fact, early in two thousand years ago Aristotle has mentioned about the question of degree of defamiliarization. Aristotle points out that strange words or phrases make people confused and common ones can only convey known information. Only metaphorical language can make people feel fresh. The function of metaphor is to lead people from the unknown to the known. Yang Xiangrong also mentions this point. He suggests that "there is a problem of 'degree' about defamiliarization. 'Defamiliarization' should be realized within the comprehension of receptors" (Yang Xiangrong, 2006, p.345). In recent years, the Optimal Innovation Hypothesis in cognitive domain points out that not only metaphor can bring novelty and beauty, aesthetic pleasure can be produced as long as the bridge that connects the unknown and the known is built. The hypothesis holds the opinion that "it is neither pure innovation nor familiarity alone that account for highly aesthetic judgments. Rather, it is optimal innovation—novelty that allows an insight into some salient response—that is most pleasurable" (Giora et al.'s, 2004, p.137-138). According to Optimal Innovation Hypothesis, the best translation of film titles should possess information that are both innovative and familiar to audience. So, while putting an emphasis on "defamiliarization", translators should also pay attention to the acceptability and readability of translated texts. If the degree of defamiliarization is too high, readers cannot get their artistic enjoyment. Examples are as follows.

Translations that retain defamiliarization effect like "Rain Man" has another translation, "Shou Zu Qing Wei Liao" (meaning brotherhood forever). "Rain Man" is an innovative phrase itself, yet with the two familiar images of "rain" and "man". It arouses association of ideas and possesses both innovation and defamiliarization, bringing audience aesthetic pleasure. "Shou Zu Qing Wei Liao", by contrast, is a summary of the film contents, and almost daily language, lacking unfamiliar information. So "Shou Zu Qing Wei Liao" cannot arouse audience's curiosities as "Rain Man". It is the same with "Shan Ling" and "Bei Jiu Ren Sheng". The two are also translated into "Gui Dian" and "Xun Zhao Xin Fang Xiang" (meaning looking for a new direction). The latter translations are too common and lack innovative contents. As a result, they cannot arouse aesthetic feelings. According to Optimal Innovation Hypothesis, "A Fan Da" is not a good translation. It is too unfamiliar to Chinese audience who will assume it a person's name which is in fact the name of a project and of all substitutes. The other translations of this film title like "Tian Shen Xia Fan" (meaning God descends to the world) and "Hua Shen" basically convey the meaning of the original title, but lack enough innovative effect. If it is translated into "A Fan Da Ji Hua" (meaning project Avatar) which possesses both innovative and familiar information, it may be more appropriate. Among the titles translated from familiar to unfamiliar, "Liang Sheng Hua" uses the way of metaphor, extending a long enough aesthetic distance and fully conveying the film contents. Another translation "Wei Luo Ni Ka De Shuang Chong Sheng Huo" of this film title, by contrast, is too smooth and plain. Among the titles translated from unfamiliar to familiar like "Feng Kuang Yuan Shi Ren". "Yuan Shi Ren" (meaning primitive man) is a familiar image to audience. The words that are related to "Yuan Shi Ren" are usually ignorant, uncivilized, etc. It is novel and unfamiliar to use "Feng Kuang" (meaning crazy) to describe "Yuan Shi Ren", so the title "Feng Kuang Yuan Shi Ren" possesses both innovative and familiar information, attracting audience's attentions. Its another translation "Gu Lu Jia Zu" (meaning Gu Lu family) is too unfamiliar to audience. As for the titles that are already widely known to people have made people form fixed cognition of the original works. And documentary films have particular features. Both the two last kinds of film titles should be discussed under a separate standard because of their familiarity to audience.

In the translation of film titles, the representation of "Other" of language and culture in the original titles and the challenge to their expressiveness in target language constitute the nature of artistic recreation of translation. The novelty of target language titles makes target readers consistently discover new things, evokes their aesthetic interest in cultural "Other" and activates the reading appreciation process. It not only raise the novelty pursued by target language titles up to the height of ontological study of translation, that is to say translation is the representation of novel theme, technique and image relative to familiar parallel texts, but also supports the view of "reserving differences" in translation ethics. This shows the respect for foreignness in source texts and the identity of artistic creation in target language. During the process of translating film titles, the application of "defamliliarization" strategy creatively can propel the evolution of language forms and produce aesthetic values.

In conclusion, when translators do film title translations, no matter in the way of defamiliarization or reducing defamiliarizatin effect, translators should consider the information both innovative and familiar to audience. In this way, the aesthetic time can be properly extended, and aesthetic pleasure and interest to watch a movie can also be aroused.

#### VII. CONCLUSION

The translation of film titles is a kind of aesthetic recreation. From the perspective of translation aesthetics, translators should integrate the film style, theme and the aesthetic interest of target language audience with cultural background in aesthetic thinking. Defamiliarization can produce specific aesthetic effect, however, the realization of defamiliarization is not the result of pure language operation. As a kind of art, film also possesses the common nature of art, that is the aesthetic nature. A good film title itself is a condensed fantastic art with high aesthetic value.

During the process of film titles translating, how to produce aesthetic distance, invoke aesthetic emotion and arouse passion to watch a movie are questions that translators should be constantly thinking and exploring. Only starting from the aesthetic way of art participating in reality, can translators better comprehend, appreciate and convey aesthetic effect of defamiliarization. This thesis probes into the application of "defamiliarization" in translation studies, summarizes the four methods dealing with defamiliarization translation. Through the discussion of the "degree" of defamiliarization, this paper points out that a good translation of a film title should be combinations of both familiar and unfamiliar information. As translators use defamiliarization methods more skillfully, more good translations of film titles will be produced.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am grateful to my supervisor, professor Dongzhu Wang in Nanjing Normal University for her concern and care in my normal life, and patient instructions and moral encouragement in my study.

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**Ruichao Geng** was born in Shandong, China in 1984. She is a PhD candidate in the School of Foreign Languages and Cultures, Nanjing Normal University. Her research interests include translation theory and practice, philosophy of language and literary theory.

**Junyan Wei** was born in Jiangsu, China in 1985. She received her Master degree from Nanjing Normal University in 2015. She is currently a lecturer in the College of Foreign Language, Nanjing University of Chinese Medicine. She specializes in researches on translation and cognitive linguistics.

# EFL Graduate Students' IELTS Writing Problems and Students' and Teachers' Beliefs and Suggestions Regarding Writing Skill Improvement

Mohammad Sadegh Bagheri Department of Foreign Languages, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran

Mohammad Javad Riasati Department of Foreign Languages, Shiraz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shiraz, Iran

Abstract—This study aimed at finding the EFL graduate and post-graduate writing problems. Moreover, it sought teachers and students' beliefs regarding why they had some problems and where the sources of problems could be detected so that they would be taken into account and rectified. To answer the research questions the participant were given IELTS task1 and task 2 writing mock tests and then they were interviewed. Some university professors teaching writing classes were also interviewed to find out why students had some problems regarding the writing tasks assigned and performed. The findings revealed that PhD candidates outperformed their M.A students counterparts and they could achieve higher overall and component scores. The differences and discrepancies between groups were significant but the differences within groups were not significant. The scores achieved by the students through tasks 1 and 2 revealed their writing problems as well as their strengths. The unstructured interviews conducted with the students and their teachers could elicit some potential sources of trouble and some inspirations and eye-opening facts were gained through the interviews. It is hoped the findings of this study can help students improve their writing skills and teachers can take some measures to help students learn how to improve their writing.

Index Terms—writing problems, students' beliefs, teachers' beliefs, writing improvement, IELTS writing tasks, cohesion, coherence, lexical resources, task response, task achievement

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Out of the four skills Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing the one which is highly instrumental for graduate students is writing because such students are required to write assignments, publish papers and work on theses and dissertations. Yet, the courses offered and passed to fulfill the writing requirements are meager and hence the students are not mostly proficient enough to write impeccably and flawlessly. Hence, this project aims at finding EFL graduate and post-graduate students' writing problems and students' and teachers' beliefs and suggestions regarding writing skill improvement.

#### A. Significance and Objectives of the Study

The findings of the study might contribute a lot to the graduate and post-graduate students and teachers teaching such students. The findings might also help curriculum and materials developers. Knowing writing problems and areas of difficulty can significantly improve our awareness and hence some major steps can be taken by policy makers so that the students improve their writing skill. It is assumed that if students improve their writing they can disseminate their research findings and what they write is more publishable and up to the international writing standards.

Students studying graduate and post-graduate are assumed to have a good writing command because they are required to write papers, theses and dissertations. Moreover, after they graduate they are assumed to teach, do research and publish books and articles. Nonetheless, experience reveals the bitter fact that most students are not good at writing and this seriously cripples them when they are assigned to write papers or do research. Thus, the main objectives of this study are:

- finding the participants' writing problems
- detecting the type and frequency of writing problems
- seeking suggestions and beliefs regarding where the writing problems lie and how they can be rectified
- finding out whether students have more strengths or weaknesses in writing graphs or essays
- finding and comparing the level of writing proficiency of graduate and post-graduate students.

#### B. Research Questions

Question #1: Is there any significant difference between TEFL PhD candidates and M.A. students' overall performance regarding Task 1 IELTS writing academic module(bar graph, table, process description)? If so in which writing components the differences are significant?

Question #2: Is there any significant difference between TEFL PhD candidates and M.A. students' overall performance regarding Task 2 IELTS writing academic module (essay writing)? If so in which writing components the differences are significant?

Question #3: Do M.A. students perform differently overall and specifically regarding writing Task 1 and Task 2?

Question #4: Do PhD students perform differently overall and specifically regarding writing Task 1 and Task 2?

Question #5: Overall what writing problems do the students have regarding task 1 components?

Question #6: Overall what writing problems do the students have regarding task 2 components?

Question #7: What do writing teachers believe about students writing errors and their related reasons?

Question #8: What do students believe about their writing errors and their related reasons?

#### II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section, the literature regarding writing will be presented and highlighted. First, Assessment of written works will be discussed and then IELTS writing and second language acquisition will be elaborated. The next sections deal with assessment of writing and memorization and assessment of writing and task authenticity. Then, handwriting and IELTS writing assessment will be discussed and the role of using IELTS model essays in improving learners' writing and their awareness of writing features will be illustrated. Finally, the components of writing or the assessment criteria features (i.e., IELTS writing and task response (TR) assessment of written performances and cohesion & coherence (CC) assessment of written work and lexical resource (LR)assessment of written performance and grammatical range & accuracy (GRA) will be presented.

#### A. Assessment of Written Works

Astika (1993) looked into the native speaker ESL teachers' assessment of foreign students' writing. The measurement, in this study, used an analytical scoring technique based on the ESL Composition Profile (whose equivalence in our research is IELTS writing band descriptor with four key features), which contains five key features or assessment criteria: Content, Organization, Vocabulary, Language Use, and Mechanics. Consequently, the nature of the quoted work here happens to be largely analogous to that of the researcher of this paper.

Schoonen (2005) highlights that writing skill evaluation is arguably hard to accomplish. Various aspects of writing assessment might affect the evaluation task result. Moreover, many factors such as writing proficiency of the candidate, writing task topic, the features evaluated like language use or content and even the manner through which such features are assessed may all have a say in the writer's achieved score. This study highlights generalizability issues regarding such traits and facets through some statistical analyses to reach a hypothetical model. In this study, 89 students were asked to write four essays which were later on rated by five assessors employing two different scoring procedures, namely, analytical and holistic, focusing on two features of language use & content and organization. The data analysis revealed that writing scores generalizability, rater assessment and the topics were greatly dependent on how essays are evaluated and the features or traits being scored. Overall, the general finding was that type of writing tasks and topics contribute more to the variance of scores than raters assessments.

#### B. IELTS Writing and Second Language Acquisition

An investigation by Banerjee, Franceschina, and Smith (2004) sheds light on the merits of cooperation among researchers in second language acquisition and language assessment as advocated by Bachman and Cohen (1998) and Ellis(2001). The study concentrates on how different levels of competence might be associated with what has been revealed concerning different second language developmental phases. This study focusing on IELTS writing tasks 1 and 2 delves into writing features of IELTS bands 3 to 8 candidates regarding the three out of the four basic IELTS assessment criteria, that is, coherence and cohesion, lexical resource and grammatical range & accuracy. The findings are indicative of the fact that proficiency level might affect the frequency and types of writing error. The study results revealed that grammatical range and accuracy component has a high correlation with lexical resources and that these two might balance each other significantly. Moreover, this study shows that L1 writing assignments have fundamental impacts on some of the writing criteria.

#### C. Assessment of Writing and Memorization

Wray and Pegg (2005) elaborate on written performance assessment problems, highlighting that especially for essay writing, it is likely that candidates memorize some clich & and templates to lengthen their sentences and beautify their production; thereby, making attempts to impress assessors and achieve higher scores. They worked on 233 scripts of Chinese candidates and as anticipated when band scores improved the number of errors decreased. Likewise, high band scores were more native-like productions. However, it seems that different ability candidates had a tendency to copy from the input questions posed to them.

#### D. Assessment of Writing and Task Authenticity

Test tasks authenticity regarding writing assessment is a crucial issue which a candidate might face in test situations. In the same vein, More and Morton (1990) delved into task 2 components authenticity. In particular, the study tried to find out to what extent test components match requirements of non-test university context. The survey used interviews with university staff to find out the truth behind validity of IELTS test.

Accordingly, an investigation done by Mickan (2003) studied the rating inconsistency regarding IELTS and called for working on valid assessment criteria to rate different writing performance levels. The findings revealed that it is hard to spot the lexical and grammatical features discriminating different performance levels of candidates. Actually, it was found that the overall integration of writing traits might create flourishing and impressive writings. Hence, it was concluded that holistic approaches are much better than discrete and analytical methods of assessment.

#### E. Handwriting and IELTS Writing Assessment

Brown (2003) examined two research questions. Firstly, in the context of a move to deliver IELTS in two different modes, pen-and-paper and computer, she explored the impact of legibility on ratings awarded to IELTS Task Two essays. The study found that legibility plays a small but significant role in scores, and that the volume of the effect is relative to the quality of handwriting and presentation. However, the direction of the effect in this study was unexpected; whereas it had been hypothesized on the basis of numerous studies of L1 writing assessment that poor legibility would lead to lower scores, the opposite was, in fact, the case. Given that the assessment of L2 writing differs significantly from L1 assessment in that, there is a much stronger emphasis on 'linguistic' features (syntax, grammar, and vocabulary).

#### F. Assessment of Written Performances and Cohesion & Coherence (CC)

Although cohesive devices and coherence are quite necessary for the text unity and connectedness, Jones (2007) believes that cohesion involves bottom-up processing whereas coherence necessitates top-down processing. It is assumed that raters might pay more attention to immediately noticeable and tangible cohesive devices and hence pay inadequate attention to a more serious concern, that is, coherence. Canagarajah (2002) revealed that examiners believe that CC evaluation as compared with other criteria is more difficult. He argues that the CC jargon may not be quite to the point and tangible.

Majdeddin (2010) also conducted a study to see if candidates get trained on CC, it can actually improve their scores. He gave the participants of his study explicit instructions on cohesive ties highlighting referencing, reiteration, synonyms, substitution and other related construct components. The results indicated significant changes in use of cohesive devices especially reference and super-ordinate words leading to higher scores.

#### G. Task Response (TR)

Task response is the first criteion out of the four main criteria of assessing Task 2 (essay writing) for both general and academic modules. This criterion demands that candidates develop a position or stand regarding the given input prompt. In this task, candidates should support their positions by offering evidence and examples from their own experience. The minimum number of words for this task is 250 and underlength essays will be penalized (ESOL, 2008-Present).

Chandrasegaran (2000) argues that many students produce some information from the essay topic without parapharasing or restructuring the content and they get penalized for producing oblique output which is copied from input. He highlights that to produce something of significance a writing should reveal the writer's creativity, innovation, critical and interpretive understanding as well as independent and autonomous thoughts. He also indicates that good writing should offer some evidence of flexibility, critical thinking, analysis and synthesis of information as well as organisation. He maintains that to achieve a high score originality is of high importance. He implicitly highlights that we human beings can view an idea or problem from different angles or perspectives based on our life experience, creativity, critical thinking and originality.

#### H. Assessment of Writing Performance and Grammatical Range & Accuracy

Rimmer (2006) highlights the significance of grammatical range and accuracy to generate an average band score. He maintains that candidates should manifest a good grammatical competence to generate complex structures; however, he maintains that this construct is not fully defined and we need more advancement to teach grammar and test grammatical competence through essays. In the same vein, (Galloway, 2005) maintains that it is not likely that corpora will offer any sudden breakthroughs in understanding and testing grammatical complexity, even taking into account "the tremendous rate of technological advancement in corpus linguistics".

#### I. Assessment of Written Work and Lexical Resource (LR)

The third criterion in the assessment of writing (task 2) in the test of IELTS is Lexical Resources. LR refers to vocabulary range of candidates and how flexibly and appropriately candidates can show and manifest their lexical resources, knowledge of idiomatic expressions and collocations (ESOL, 2008-Present).

It seems that some candidates are in the wrong believing that churning out bombastic vocabulary might be indicative of mastery over vocabulary knowledge; however, they should keep in mind that appropriacy, naturalness, flexibility and comprehensibility of a piece of writing are of prime significance. It is highly recommended that IELTS candidates read

authentic and genuine texts to generate naturally sophisticated and advanced levels of writing. It should not be neglected that to get a high score in writing having a good knowledge of vocabulary is not enough. Familiarity and orientation with different topics and communication skills matter a lot. Thus, it is vital that IELTS candidates get to know how to use the vocabulary learned in genuine communication. Measuring candidates' vocabulary size is sometimes difficult when poor candidates cannot generate a good essay mostly due to not being familiar with some certain topics.

Laufer (1991) indicates that vocabulary size can be measured independent of writing as an autonomous construct. However, it can be argued that learning vocabulary involves activating passive vocabulary, paying more attention to words use and usage and practicing words in writing tasks. Thus, it remains to be seen whether vocabulary should be tested as an isolated construct or it should be checked through writing tasks. To gauge vocabulary knowledge depth, breadth and size in context or out of context, directly or indirectly remains to be a controversial issue. Moreover, Laufer emphasizes that it is possible to check the vocabulary knowledge through "Lexical Proficiency Profile" and discriminate different proficiency levels. In his paper, he argues that Lexical Proficiency Profile" has a high relationship with independent vocabulary measure. He implicitly mentions that vocabulary growth is more related to appropriate, flexible and natural vocabulary use rather than having a passive or impractical knowledge of vocabulary.

Alderson (2007) advocated that judgments of relative word frequency by expert and proficient assessors can replace frequency counts and he called for devising much better teaching curriculum, authentic tests as well as research instruments to achieve better results.

#### J. The Role of Using IELTS Model Essays in Improving Learners' Writing and Their Awareness of Writing Features

Bagheri and Zare (2009) aimed at exploring the function of using IELTS model essays in improving Iranian EFL learners' writing ability. They also attempted to see the learners' perceptions as of what aspects of their writing they noticed to have improved after being exposed to model essays. In their study, candidates' attention to writing features was classified into four language related episodes, which they called, "LREs". It comprised for components: lexical resources, form, discourse, and relevance. The participants were 65 learners, forming three groups. Group A were intermediate students with no model essay exposure. Group B was consisted of intermediate students with exposure to model essays. Finally, group C included advance students with model essay exposure. A posttest was administered whose results revealed that using model essays did bear a significant impact on the writing improvement of the learners. Immediately after the posttest, 17 randomly selected participants were asked to think aloud as they were going over their own essays to say in what aspects of writing they had benefited from model essays. The same participants were interviewed to ascertain their general attitude towards using model essays. The findings indicated that there was a significant difference in the frequencies of learners' LREs denoting their deferential attention to the writing features and all interviewees expressed their satisfaction with using model essays.

#### III. METHOD

The participants of the study comprised 25 graduate and 25 post-graduate students studying Teaching English as a Foreign Language at I.A.U. Shiraz. Regarding the ethnicity of the participants, they were all Iranian students and concerning their level of proficiency they were proficient enough to pass the required proficiency bar exam designed to screen and select the students to enter university. The participants ages ranged from 22-40 (mean 29) and they were native speakers of Farsi. The reason behind choosing such participants was that graduate students are involved in writing assignments, papers, theses and dissertations and if they are not good at writing they may lose a lot. Hence, this research can locate problems and take some steps toward improving the current state of affairs.

#### A. Instruments

The instruments used for the study were the public versions of assessment criteria released by Cambridge and IDP Australia. These instruments help the assessors or raters grade the writing samples and the main criteria for assessment are Task Response/Task Achievement, Cohesion and Coherence, Lexical Resources, and Grammatical Range and Accuracy.

To tap the writing proficiency of the participants a bar graph and an essay taken from past released versions of the IELTS tests were used. Moreover, to obtain the teachers' and students' suggestions, recommendations and beliefs unstructured interviews were conducted.

#### B. Data Collection Procedures

The students were given a writing task which required them to elaborate on a table/graph analyzing the tabulated data. Then, they were asked to write an argumentative essay discussing an issue. It was believed that the two writing tasks could aptly tap the writing competence of the students. Two IELTS writing experts analyzed the writing samples and highlighted the problem areas and then graded the samples. The inter-rater consistency was almost perfect (0.93). The weaknesses and strengths of the samples were assessed through IELTS Writing Assessment Criteria Task 1 and Task 2 public versions available online and the four components of writing (i.e., Task response/ Task achievement, CC, lexical resources and grammatical range and accuracy) were taken into account.

#### IV. RESULTS

In this part, the research questions posed will be highlighted once more and the answers to research questions will be offered and discussed.

**Question #1**:Is there any significant difference between TEFL PhD candidates and M.A. students' overall performance regarding Task 1 IELTS writing academic module(bar graph, table, process description)?If so in which writing components the differences are significant?

Table 1 reveals the mean differences regarding M.A. students and PhD candidates' overall and components performance scores. As it can be observed, the score means for total band scores and all components (i.e., Task Achievement, Cohesion and Coherence, Lexical Resources and Grammatical Range and Accuracy) are higher for PhD candidates thereby indicating PhD candidates outperformed M.A. students.

TABLE 1. GROUP STATISTICS

	GROOT STATISTICS						
	level	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean		
mean	MA	25	6.7200	.50166	.10033		
	PhD	25	7.3200	.62716	.12543		
TR	MA	25	7.0000	.50000	.10000		
	PhD	25	7.3600	.70000	.14000		
CC	MA	25	6.8400	.62450	.12490		
	PhD	25	7.3600	.63770	.12754		
LR	MA	25	6.5600	.65064	.13013		
	PhD	25	7.3200	.69041	.13808		
GRA	MA	25	6.2400	.59722	.11944		
	PhD	25	7.2000	.64550	.12910		

Table 2 depicts the results of the independent samples t-test showing that all the mean differences are significant and hence we can conclude that PhD candidates' writing in general and specifically is much better than their M.A. counterparts (P value 0.05 &0.01).

TABLE 2. INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST

			m .		(DEI ENDENT	SAMIFLES I ES	•					
		for Equa	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances t-test for Equality			uality of Means						
						Sig. (2-	Mean	Iean Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
		F	Sig.	t	df	tailed)	Difference	Difference	Lower	Upper		
mean	Equal variances assumed	6.15	.017	-4.34	48	.000	68000	.15663	994	3650		
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.34	44.69	.000	68000	.15663	995	3644		
TR	Equal variances assumed	18.2	.000	-3.40	48	.001	52000	.15275	827	2128		
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.40	39.874	.002	52000	.15275	828	2112		
CC	Equal variances assumed	2.97	.091	-3.61	48	.001	68000	.18797	-1.057	3020		
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.61	44.785	.001	68000	.18797	-1.058	3013		
LR	Equal variances assumed	.191	.664	-4.41	48	.000	80000	.18111	-1.164	4358		
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.41	47.921	.000	80000	.18111	-1.164	4358		
GRA	Equal variances assumed	.380	.540	-4.33	48	.000	84000	.19391	-1.229	4501		
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.33	47.805	.000	84000	.19391	-1.229	4500		

**Question #2**: Is there any significant difference between TEFL PhD candidates and M.A. students' overall performance regarding Task 2 IELTS writing academic module (essay writing)? If so in which writing components the differences are significant?

Table 3 reveals the mean differences regarding M.A. students and PhD candidates' overall and components performance scores. As it can be observed, the score means for total band scores and all components (i.e., Task Achievement, Cohesion and Coherence, Lexical Resources and Grammatical Range and Accuracy) are higher for PhD candidates indicating PhD candidates outperformed M.A. students regarding task 2.

TABLE 3.
GROUP STATISTICS

	level	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
mean	MA	25	6.7200	.50166	.10033
	PhD	25	7.3200	.62716	.12543
TR	MA	25	7.0000	.50000	.10000
	PhD	25	7.3600	.70000	.14000
CC	MA	25	6.8400	.62450	.12490
	PhD	25	7.3600	.63770	.12754
LR	MA	25	6.5600	.65064	.13013
	PhD	25	7.3200	.69041	.13808
GRA	MA	25	6.2400	.59722	.11944
	PhD	25	7.2000	.64550	.12910

Table 4 depicts the results of the independent samples t-tests showing that all the mean differences are significant and hence we can conclude that PhD candidates' task 2 writing in general and specifically regarding all the components is much better than their M.A. counterparts (P value 0.05 &0.01).

TABLE 4. INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST

				INDEFE	TIDEITI DI	AMPLES LEST				
		Levene's T Equality o Variances	f	t-test for E	quality of	Means				
						Sig. (2-	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	tailed)	Difference	Difference	Lower	Upper
mean	Equal variances assumed	3.943	.053	-3.735	48	.000	60000	.16062	92296	27704
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.735	45.79	.001	60000	.16062	92336	27664
TR	Equal variances assumed	16.125	.000	-2.092	48	.042	36000	.17205	70592	01408
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.092	43.43	.042	36000	.17205	70687	01313
CC	Equal variances assumed	2.156	.149	-2.913	48	.005	52000	.17851	87892	16108
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.913	47.97	.005	52000	.17851	87893	16107
LR	Equal variances assumed	.088	.767	-4.006	48	.000	76000	.18974	-1.14149	37851
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.006	47.83	.000	76000	.18974	-1.14153	37847
GRA	Equal variances assumed	.384	.539	-5.458	48	.000	96000	.17588	-1.31363	60637
	Equal variances not assumed			-5.458	47.71	.000	96000	.17588	-1.31368	60632

Question#3: Do M.A. students perform differently overall and specifically regarding writing Task 1 and Task 2?

TABLE 5. PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	meanMA1	6.6600	25	.47258	.09452
	meanMA2	6.7200	25	.50166	.10033

Table 5 reveals the means comparing M.A. students' performances on Task 1 and Task 2.As it can be observed the means difference of M.A. students' task 1 and task 2 writing scores is the same indicating that the students enjoyed the same level of performance regarding writing task 1 and task 2.

The paired samples t-test result (Table 6) shows that the means difference is not significant. We can also view the same pattern of no significance regarding all the components' mean scores and their related significance values (Tables 7-14).

#### TABLE 6. PAIRED SAMPLES TEST

		Paired Differe	ences						
			Std.	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				Sig. (2-
		Mean	Deviation	Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	tailed)
Pair 1	meanMA1 - meanMA2	06000	.48563	.09713	26046	.14046	618	24	.543

#### TABLE 7. PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	TRMA1	6.9200	25	.40000	.08000
	TRMA2	7.0000	25	.50000	.10000

#### TABLE 8. PAIRED SAMPLES TEST

		Paired Differ	rences							
	Std. Deviatio Std. Error Difference Interval of the				of the	t		Sig. (2-		
		Mean	n	Mean	Lower	Upper			df	tailed)
Pair 1	TRMA1 - TRMA2	08000	.49329	.09866	28362	.12362	811	24	.425	

#### TABLE 9. PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	CCMA1	6.6400	25	.56862	.11372
	CCMA2	6.8400	25	.62450	.12490

#### TABLE 10. PAIRED SAMPLES TEST

		Paired Differe	ences						
			Std.	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean	Deviation	Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	CCMA1 - CCMA2	20000	.70711	.14142	49188	.09188	-1.414	24	.170

#### TABLE 11.

#### PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	LRMA1	6.5200	25	.65320	.13064
	LRMA2	6.5600	25	.65064	.13013

#### TABLE 12. PAIRED SAMPLES TEST

		Paired Differ	rences						
			Std. Std. Error 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference						
		Mean	Deviation	Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	LRMA1 - LRMA2	04000	.53852	.10770	26229	.18229	371	24	.714

#### TABLE 13. PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS

### Mean N Std. Deviation Std. Error Mean Pair 1 GRAMA1 6.4000 25 .70711 .14142 GRAMA2 6.2400 25 .59722 .11944

TABLE 14. PAIRED SAMPLES TEST

		Paired Diff	ed Differences						
			Std.	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				Sig. (2-
		Mean	Deviation	Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	tailed)
Pair 1	GRAMA1 - GRAMA2	.16000	.68799	.13760	12399	.44399	1.163	24	.256

Question#4: Do PhD students perform differently overall and specifically regarding writing Task 1 and Task 2?

TABLE 15.
PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS

		17	TIKED SAMI LEA	DIAIDIKS	
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	meanPHD1	7.3400	25	.62450	.12490
	meanPHD2	7.3200	25	.62716	.12543

As for PhD candidates, Table 15 highlights that the means obtained for both task 1 and task 2 are almost the same and the same trend can be viewed observing the components' mean scores and their related significance values (no significant differences, Tables 16-23).

TABLE 16. PAIRED SAMPLES TEST

	Paired Diff	erences						
		Std.	Std. Error	95% Confid Interval of Difference	the			Sig. (2-
	Mean	Deviation	Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	tailed)
Pair 1 meanPHD1 - meanPHD2	.02000	.42032	.08406	15350	.19350	.238	24	.814

TABLE 17.

#### PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS

I			Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
I	Pair 1	TRPHD1	7.4400	25	.65064	.13013
ı		TRPHD2	7.3600	25	.70000	.14000

#### TABLE 18. PAIRED SAMPLES TEST

	Paired Differences							
		Std. Deviati	Std. Error	95% Confide Interval of the Difference				Sig. (2-
	Mean	on	Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	tailed)
Pair 1 TRPHD1 - TRPHD2	.08000	.7023	.14048	20993	.36993	.569	24	.574

#### TABLE 19.

#### PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	CCPHD1	7.3200	25	.74833	.14967
	CCPHD2	7.3600	25	.63770	.12754

#### TABLE 20. PAIRED SAMPLES TEST

		Paired Diff	erences						
			Std.	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean	Deviation	Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	CCPHD1 - CCPHD2	04000	.67577	.13515	31894	.23894	296	24	.770

#### TABLE 21. PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	LRPHD1	7.3200	25	.62716	.12543
	LRPHD2	7.3200	25	.69041	.13808

#### TABLE 22. PAIRED SAMPLES TEST

		Paired Differences							
			Std.	Std. Error	95% Cont Interval o Difference	f the			Sig. (2-
		Mean	Deviation	Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	tailed)
Pair 1	LRPHD1 - LRPHD2	.00000	.57735	.11547	23832	.23832	.000	24	1.000

#### TABLE 23 PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	GRAPHD1	7.2400	25	.66332	.13266
	GRAPHD2	7.2000	25	.64550	.12910

#### TABLE 24. PAIRED SAMPLES TEST

		Paired Differences							
				Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	GRAPHD1 - GRAPHD2	.04000	.67577	.13515	23894	.31894	.296	24	.770

**Question #5:** Overall what writing problems do the students have regarding task 1 components?

Regarding task 1 performance the participants had some flaws in the following categories which deserve attention: Task Achievement

Some inconsistencies in tone, some irrelevant or inappropriate information and some missing information were observed and further illustration and extension seemed missing.

Cohesion and Coherence

Cohesion within and between sentences were faulty, mechanical or repetitive. Some overuse and/or underuse of cohesive devices could be observed.

Lexical Resources

Some occasional errors in spelling and word formation could be detected.

Grammatical Range and Accuracy

Some problems in complex sentences and punctuation were noticed.

**Question** #6: Overall what writing problems do the students have regarding task 2 components?

As for task 2 performance flaws, the following points pertaining to the relevant components can be highlighted:

Task Response

Lack of focus was observed and some issues were more or less fully covered than others.

Cohesion and Coherence

Some overuse/underuse of reference and substitution could be observed.

Faulty or mechanical and misuse/underuse and overuse/no use of cohesive devices were observable. Sometimes no clear topic sentence and no logical paragraphing could be detected.

Lexical Resources

Low ability to use natural collocations and idiomatic expressions, errors in spelling and word formation and some inappropriate and inaccurate use of vocabulary could be noticed.

Grammatical Range and Accuracy

Some errors in grammar and punctuation and limited or wrong use of complex sentences could be detected.

Question #7: What do writing teachers believe about students writing errors and their related reasons?

#### **Teachers' opinions**

A series of interviews were held with 5 experienced university professors teaching writing to graduate students for 10-20 years and the unstructured interview revealed the possible reasons why students had difficulty writing in English. The following comments were the main highlights of the interviews.

- English is a foreign language in Iran and that is why immersion and exposure to English is meager.
- -Curriculum developers do not pay due attention to writing courses.

- -Iranian students do not have access to newspapers and magazines in English and they mostly do not listen to news and watch films in English. Thus, exposure to English is very poor.
- -Writing teachers are not products of a sound education system. They do not receive enough and efficient training and they do not attend writing workshops.
- -Many students cannot write as they should because they do not know grammar very well, they do not enjoy rich vocabulary, and their writings are replete with circularity of some forms and content due to lack of resources and poor knowledge of coherence, cohesion and paragraph development
- -There are too many students in writing classes and the teachers do not have time to correct or provide any immediate or delayed feedback to their students.

Writing classes are mostly reading classes and writing is taught and considered mostly as a product not a process.

Plagiarism, copying and cut and paste with no due modification, elaboration or reflection is a common practice among the students.

Teachers are mostly reluctant to have and run writing classes.

The students are poor writers in L1, let alone L2 due to the fact that from primary school up to university they do not have good writing classes.

- -Writing is a sophisticated skill needing a good knowledge of grammar, collocations, vocabulary, cohesion and coherence.
- -Many students cannot develop a good topic sentence/thesis sentence and they cannot think of and develop a sound outline.
  - -They have no ideas due to not studying inspiring resources and lack of exposure to English media.
  - -Students are lax and have a lukewarm and lackadaisical attitude towards writing.
  - -Fear, writing phobia and lack of accountability and commitment lead to poor writing.
- -Writing classes are mostly like "garbage in garbage out". Poor attitude and attempt, poor methods of teaching and lack of good samples lead to poor output.
  - -Most students correspond in Farsi or Penglish when sending emails or texts to friends and acquaintances
  - -The students do not feel a strong need for writing in English.
- -Teachers and classes mainly focus on passive skills of reading and listening rather than productive and active skills of speaking and writing.
  - -Students have no access to expert writing teachers and native teachers.
  - -Writing contests, rewards and awards are missing.
  - -Libraries need more resources and facilities to attract students.
  - -Assignments are based on single skills and mostly do not follow an integrated approach.

Question #8: What do students believe about their writing errors and their related reasons?

#### **Students' opinions**

To have a better understanding of the students' writing problems and finding reasons and solutions to think of and reflect on possible amendments almost all the students were interviewed and they asserted that they had writing problems due to the following reasons:

- -Lack of confidence
- -Debilitating stress and fear
- -Resorting to avoidance strategy because of not knowing the rudiments of writing
- -Lack of practice
- -Bad teachers who do not teach writing properly, waste time, and do not introduce good resources and references
- -Poor and negative attitude, not taking writing seriously, considering it boring and lame
- -Bad teachers not assigning writing tasks and not pushing students to work hard enough to improve their writing skill
- -No serious need to write in English
- -No opportunities provided to write in English
- -Multiple choice questions not requiring the students to write short answers or essays
- -Thinking in Farsi because of lack of mastery over English
- -Lack of exposure to authentic materials and resources
- -Not reading extensively to develop ideas and background knowledge
- -Dearth of writing classes
- -Lack of commitment and accountability by students and teachers
- -Receiving poor or no feedback
- -Poor or no time allocation on writing skill leading to poor knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and the right format
- -Lack of concentration
- -Not being used to writing
- -Bad effects of technology making the students lazy
- -Boring classes, materials and tasks
- -Being afraid of criticism, sarcasm, embarrassment and getting belittled
- -lack of practice, knowledge, good teachers, motivation, imagination, critical thinking and creativity

-Lack of reading and writing culture

#### V. DISCUSSION

Writing is a skill which needs more attention as we pave the way towards perfection and civilization. To interact with others in a global village we have to improve our writing skills and this leads to much better interpersonal communication leading to better understanding and interaction. Despite the importance of writing, this skill has not received enough attention. Some recent studies have mentioned the problem areas in writing and they have tried to reveal how we can improve writing skills. To name but a few studies the following research in the EFL context of Iran can be mentioned:

Farazmand (2010) highlighted the effects of different kinds of feedback on EFL learners' writing and delineated how feedback can enhance writing. Yarabbi (2012) investigated the impact of critical thinking on Iranian students IELTS writing skill through an integrative process oriented approach and she contributed a lot on this issue. Popari (2012) highlighted the relationship between multiple intelligences and writing strategies and revealed which intelligences are more influential regarding writing proficiency. Mohammaditabar (2013) tried to find the strengths and weaknesses of Iranian IELTS candidates in essay writing and revealed some eye-opening facts. Ghassemi (2013) made an attempt to find out whether there is a relationship between emotional intelligence and writing performance of IELTS learners to show that lots of factors can influence our writing ability and skill. Dokoohaki (2014) elaborated on the effect of integrating skills on willingness to communicate among Iranian EFL classes to show that writing can be reinforced and scaffolded through integrated tasks.

This study first revealed that education matters a lot and paves the way towards perfection. PhD candidates had a better writing skill and overall and component-wise they did much better than their M.A. counterparts. However, regarding task achievement, task response, coherence and cohesion, lexical resources and grammatical range and accuracy there is still room for progress and in the light of the feedback and assessment results they receive they can move towards perfection. M.A. students lagged way behind their PhD counterparts and the findings of this study can help them get to know their problem areas and reflect on possible amendments.

It is hoped that this study will help both teachers and students have a better grasp of what writing is and how it can be enhanced.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The writers acknowledge their deep respect and appreciation towards all teachers and students who helped this study start and end best way possible. This study was supported and received the grant by Islamic Azad University Shiraz Branch and we genuinely thank the university research committee authorities who sponsored this research.

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**Mohammad Sadegh Bagheri** was born on February 29, 1964 in Shiraz Iran. He holds a PhD in Teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) from Shiraz University, earned in 2006.

He has been teaching at several universities and language institutes for the past thirty years. Currently he is Shiraz Islamic Azad University Literature and Foreign Languages College Dean. So far, he has published more than sixty articles &thirty books and presented papers at thirty national and international conferences. His most famous book is *Crack IELTS* series and his research areas are international proficiency exams, research and teaching methods as well as assessment.

Dr. Bagheri is a member of some associations like TESOL Arabia and ACLA and he is currently a member of Shiraz Islamic Azad University Research Committee.

**Mohammad Javad Riasati** was born in 1979 in Shiraz, Iran. He holds a PhD in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) from University Putra Malaysia.

He has been teaching at several universities and language institutes for several years. Currently he is Shiraz Islamic Azad University faculty member. So far, he has published several articles and books and has presented articles at national and international conferences.

He is currently a member of Shiraz Islamic Azad University Research Committee.

## Analyzing Metadiscourse in the English Abstracts of BA Theses

Xin Jin

School of Foreign Languages, Jiangsu University, Zhenjiang, Jiangsu 212013, China

Yan Shang

School of Foreign Languages, Jiangsu University, Zhenjiang, Jiangsu 212013, China

Abstract—Metadiscourse is an important linguistic resource to express writers' attitudes and to establish the relationship among writers and readers. Recently metadiscourse studies have a number of significant progresses in terms of theoretical and empirical researches. However, little attention has been drawn to the analysis of metadiscourse use in research article abstracts across different disciplines. Based on previous studies, therefore, this article takes Hyland's (2005a) interpersonal model of metadiscourse as the theoretical framework and adopts corpus-based approach to analyze the mode of usage and distributional features of BA theses English abstracts across three different disciplines (Applied Linguistics, Material Science and Electronic Engineering). This study is helpful to deepen our interpersonal consciousness of English academic discourse and is beneficial to enhance our understanding of the second language academic writing. Meanwhile, the study has certain implications for EFL learners' dissertation abstract writing.

Index Terms—metadiscourse, interpersonal, abstract, three different disciplines

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Recently metadiscourse studies have achieved a number of significant progresses in the aspects of theoretical and empirical researches. Since 1959 Harris has raised the concept of metadiscourse, many scholars (Williams, 1981; Vande Kopple, 1985; Crismore, 1989; Crismore et al., 1993; Hyland, 2004&2005a) further develop this term. They take those language forms such as hedges, connectives or comments that represent writers'/ speakers' influence on readers/ hearers into the category of metadiscourse (Yang, 2007).

Abstracts as an independent discourse perform an important function of arousing readers' interest in the articles which involve writers' interaction with potential readers. Thus, in presenting their attitudes, abstract writers provide their work to members in the same disciplinary community by predicting the readers' needs and taking into consideration what readers have known about the topic. For instance, abstract writers may provide additional information about linguistic terms in abstracts, or mention other researchers' contributions to show their solidarity with the disciplinary community. It can be seen clearly that abstract writers writer by using these linguistic devices through which metadiscourse can provide a framework for understanding the interaction between writers and readers. Therefore, this study adopts the corpus-based research method and intends to investigate the use of metadiscourse in BA theses' English abstracts of different disciplines.

The aim of the present study is to explore the use of metadiscourse resources in BA theses' English abstracts of different disciplines which are Applied Linguistics, Material Science and Management. Specifically, this study aims to (a) investigate the general use of metadiscourse resources in English abstracts of BA theses; (b) contrast the distributional patterns of metadiscourse use in English abstracts of BA theses across three different disciplines such as Applied Linguistics, Material Science and Management.

This present study makes a contribution to the research in two ways. Firstly, analyzing BA theses' English abstracts within the framework of metadiscourse offers insight into metadiscourse, illustrating how metadiscourse resources are realized in the genre of BA theses' abstracts. Secondly, examining the patterns of metadiscourse use in different disciplines' English abstracts helps to uncover the similarities and differences across the English abstracts of the three disciplines which will provide a broader view on metadiscourse use in written texts by EFL learners and thus facilitate our understanding of the roles and functions of metadiscourse.

This article is organized as follows: The first part provides research background, indicating the aim and significance of the study and presents the organization of this thesis. The second part gives an overview of the previous studies on the definitions and classifications of metadiscourse and establishes the theoretical framework for the present study. The next part presents the methodology adopted in the present study in which the research questions are raised and then the procedures of data collection and data analysis are presented. The fourth part investigates the general use of metadiscourse resources in English abstracts of BA theses and contrasts the distributional patterns of metadiscourse use in English abstracts of BA theses across three different disciplines. The last part draws general conclusions of the major findings in the present study. The implications of the study are also presented in this chapter.

#### II. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### A. Definitions of Metadiscourse

Metadiscourse have been defined from different perspectives since the term was first proposed by Harris in 1959. He believes that metadiscourse is a way of understanding language in use or representing writers'/speakers' intention to guide receivers' perception of texts (cited Hyland, 2008). Williams (1981) defines metadiscourse as "writing about writing, whatever does not refer to the subject matter being addressed" (p. 226). According to Vande Kopple (1985), metadiscourse is the word beyond the basic proposition which refers to a set of mechanism that can lead readers to organize, classify, interpret, evaluate and reflect the text message (cited Xu, 2006). Crismore et al. (1993) redefines metadiscourse in their influential article as:

Linguistic material in text, written or spoken, which does not add anything to the propositional content but that is intended to help the listener or reader organize, interpret and evaluate the information given. (p. 40)

Hyland and Tse (2004), however, have branches of narrow and broad understanding of metadiscourse. The narrow point of view is underlining the function of discourse organization; the broad point of view is that metadiscourse embodies authors' approaches to using language, rhetoric as well as combining discourse organization and meaning (Xu, 2006). According to this understanding, Hyland (2005a) gives a clear definition of metadiscourse:

Metadiscourse is the cover term for the self-reflexive expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assisting the writer (or) speaker to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community. (P. 37)

This definition emphasizes the interpersonal meaning, such as evaluation, attitude and engagement and considers metadiscourse as a meaning system that is reflected by language items.

#### B. Classifications of Metadiscourse

Similar to the different approaches to defining metadiscourse, the categorizations of metadiscourse resources vary due to different standpoints taken by researchers. Nowadays, scholars' classifications on metadiscourse mainly focus on the discussion of word classes. From the point of the present study, there are two taxonomies on metadiscourse resources that most people are familiar with which are textual metadiscourse and interpersonal metadiscourse; interactive metadiscourse and interactional metadiscourse.

Based on Lautamatti's and Williams' taxonomies of metadiscourse, Vande Kopple (1985) puts forward seven types of metadiscourse resources which are shown in Table 2.1.

TABLE 2.2.1 VANDE KOPPLE'S CLASSIFICATION OF METADISCOURSE

Category	Function	Examples
Textual	show how parts of a text are connected or organized	first, next, as for, however
Text connectives	help grasp the meaning of elements in texts	in other words, that is
Code glosses		
Interpersonal	make explicit discourse acts performed at certain points	I hypothesize that, to sum up, we claim
Illocution markers	indicate the source of the information presented	Mrs. Jones said
Narrators	assess the probability or truth of a statement	clearly, undoubtedly
Validity markers	reveal writers' attitude to propositional contents	surprisingly, luckily
Attitude markers	address readers directly and draw them into an implicit dialogue	Most of you will oppose the idea that
Commentaries		

Vande Kopple (1985) considers that metadiscourse can convey either textual or interpersonal meanings and divides seven types of metadiscourse resources into two categories: textual and interpersonal. Textual metadiscourse include text connectives and code glosses. They help to show how individual elements of those propositions make sense in conjunction with the other elements of the text in a particular situation. Interpersonal metadiscourse include illocution markers, narrators, validity markers, attitude markers and commentaries. They help to characterize the interaction between the writers and readers about the content.

However, this kind of classification is likely to break the integrality of three metafunctions proposed by Halliday (Luo & Pang, 2010). With the extension of relative researches, deficiencies of the dichotomy to textual and interpersonal metadiscourse are more and more obvious. Therefore, Hyland and Tse (2004) argue that dividing metadiscourse into interactive and interactional can essentially reflect the characteristics of it. This study takes Hyland's (2005) classification model of metadiscourse as the theoretical framework.

#### C. Interpersonal Model of Metadiscourse

Hyland (2005) proposes an innovative classification of metadiscourse and develops an interpersonal model of metadiscourse by adopting Thompson and Thetela's (1995) conception of interactive and interactional resources. This model consists of interactive and interactional resources and is summarized in Table 2.2.

TABLE 2.3.1
HYLAND'S INTERPERSONAL MODEL OF METADISCOURSE (HYLAND, 2005A, P. 49)

Category	Function	Examples		
Interactive	Help to guide the reader through text	Resources		
Transition	express relations between main clauses	in addition; but; thus		
Frame markers	refer to discourse acts, sequences or stages	finally; to conclude		
Endophoric markers refer to information in other parts of the text		noted above; see Fig		
Evidentials refer to information from other texts		according to X; Z states		
Code glosses	elaborate propositional meanings	namely; e.g.; such as		
Interactional	Involve the reader in the text	Resources		
Hedges	withhold commitment and open dialogue	might; perhaps; about		
Boosters	emphasize certainty or close dialogue	in fact; definitely;		
Attitude markers	express writer's attitude to proposition	unfortunately; I agree		
Self mentions	explicit reference to author(s)	I; we; my; me; our		
Engagement markers explicitly build relationship with reader		note; you can see that		

In comparison with earlier classification models of metadiscourse, Hyland's interpersonal model of metadiscourse employs "interactive resources" and "interactional resources" to replace the traditional dichotomy of "textual" and "interpersonal" metadiscourse and identifies more specific functions with them by minimizing functional overlapping. Therefore, we will take Hyland's (2005) classification model of metadiscourse as the theoretical framework of this present study.

#### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Research Questions

The present study adopts a corpus-based approach to investigate the distribution of metadiscourse resources in EFL students' writings and tries to explore the reasons for some differences of distributional patterns. According to the research purposes, research questions of this study are summarized as follows:

- (1) What is the overall distribution of metadiscourse resources in English abstracts of BA theses?
- (2) Are there distributional similarities or variations for metadiscourse resources use in English abstracts of BA theses across three different disciplines (Applied Linguistics, Material Science and Electronic Engineering)? Why?

#### B. The Corpus

The corpus consists of three sub-corpus each of which is comprised of 20 abstracts of BA theses written in English by students from three different disciplines that are respectively Applied Linguistics, Material Science and Electronic Engineering. In order to confirm the validity of the selected abstracts, 60 abstracts are collected randomly from those students whose grades of CET 6 are over 550. All the abstracts are written between 2012 and 2015. A description of the sub-corpora employed in this study is summarized in Table 3.1.

TABLE 3.2.1
SUMMARY OF THE SUB-CORPORA EMPLOYED IN THIS STUDY

SUMMARY OF THE SUB-CORPORA EMPLOYED IN THIS STUDY						
Corpus	No. of Abstracts	Total No. of Word Tokens	Average Abstracts Length			
Applied linguistics	20	3517	176			
Material science	20	4574	229			
Electronic Engineering	20	5106	255			

#### C. Data Analysis

Data analysis is used for analyzing and comparing the data in the 60 BA theses abstracts and in the sub-corpus of abstracts from three different disciplines. To begin with, the author reads the abstracts carefully word by word to distinguish the metadiscourse items according to Hyland's interpersonal model of metadiscourse referred in the second part. Besides, metadiscourse items of each category are calculated manually and the corpus is analyzed for several times to ensure its validity. Next, in order to answer research questions of the present study, the frequency and proportion of metadiscourse in each category are calculated by AntConc3.2.2; in addition, functions of each metadiscourse category and distributional similarities or variations for metadiscourse resources used in each sub-corpus will be examined. Finally, the possible reasons behind similarities or variations for metadiscourse resources use will also be analyzed.

#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### A. Overall Distribution of Metadiscourse Resources in English Abstracts of BA Theses

As an important linguistic tool that writers use to organize texts, engage readers and express their attitudes, metadiscourse is investigated in English abstracts of BA theses in the present study. According to Hyland's classification, the quantitative analysis demonstrates the importance of metadiscourse in English abstracts, with 816 occurrences in the corpus of 13197 word tokens. The standard frequency of metadiscourse is 618.3 per 10,000 words, which is a reflection of the significant role of metadiscourse resources in BA theses English abstracts. In order to intensify the our understanding of the significant role of metadiscourse resources in BA theses English abstracts in our

corpus, we can compare 618.3 cases of metadiscourse resources per 10,000 words in our corpus with Biber et al.'s (1999) findings of 18.5 cases of passive voices per thousand words and 20 cases of past tense verbs per thousand words in their study for the Longman Grammar (cited Hyland, 2008). Also, the high frequent use of metadiscourse in our data reveals that the abstract writers would like to establish an appropriate writer-reader relationship in their abstract writing.

The overall distribution of metadiscourse in BA theses English abstracts of our corpus is shown in the following Table 4.1.

 ${\it Table 4.1.1}$  Overall distributions of metadiscourse resources in BA theses abstracts

Category	Total number of items	Percentage of total	Per 10,000 words
Transition	538	65.9	407.7
Frame markers	64	7.8	48.5
Endophoric markers	6	0.7	4.5
Evidentials	0	0	0
Code glosses	29	3.6	22.0
Interactive	637	78.1	482.7
Hedges	53	6.5	40.1
Boosters	33	4.0	25.0
Attitude markers	5	0.6	3.8
Self mentions	13	1.6	9.9
Engagement markers	75	9.2	56.8
Interactional	179	21.9	135.6
Totals	816	100	618.3

On the whole, the number of interactive metadiscourse resources accounts for about 78.1 percent of the total number of metadiscourse resources investigated, which is more than three times of the interactional resources. In other words, the abstract writers use more than three times of the number of interactive metadiscourse items than that of the interactional ones. Investigating the subcategories of the interactive and interactional metadiscourse in detail, we can find that there are certain linguistic preferences in each subcategory. For example, transition markers are overwhelmingly the most common resources used in students' BA these abstract writing, which account for about 65.9 percent of the total metadiscourse resources. Following transition markers are engagement markers, hedges, and frame markers. Evidentials, attitude markers and endophoric markers are least used and make up only about 1.3 percent of the total metadiscourse resources. Boosters, code glosses and self mentions rank from the fifth to seventh and account for about 9.2 percent of the total number.

#### B. Distribution of Interactive Metadiscourse across Three Different Disciplines

Writers use interactive metadiscourse resource to help readers understand a text by explaining, orienting and guiding them through discourse. In other words, with interactive metadiscourse, abstract writers can organize the main contents of abstracts in a coherent way by considering readers' knowledge, experiences and needs. Interactive metadiscourse consists of five subcategories, i.e., transition, frame markers, endophoric markers, evidentials and code glosses.

From Table 4.2 we can find that among the three disciplines, transitions account for over half of the interactive metadiscourse used in students' abstracts. As Hyland (2005a) puts it, the most frequent way that the argument structure of a text is made explicit is through transitions, which indicate how the writer intends the connections between elements of the discussion to be understood. As Table 4.2 illustrates, in BA theses English abstracts of these three disciplines, the transitions are the most frequently used interactive metadiscourse resources followed by frame markers, code glosses and endophoric markers. What is more, the number of evidentials used in the three sub-corpuses is zero. Thomas and Hawes (1994) refer to evidentials as "metalinguistic representations of an idea from another source" (p. 129). They refer to information or idea from other texts. They are references to authorities that writers use for their intellectual or persuasive force (Crismore, 1993). Probably as the corpus is made up with the novices' academic writings, they lack the experience of reference.

Table 4.2.1 Interactive metadiscourse resources in BA theses abstracts of three disciplines (per 10,000 words)

Category	Applied Linguistics	Material Science	Electronic Engineering
Transition	477.7	391.4	374.1
Frame markers	65.4	28.4	54.8
Endophoric markers	5.7	0	7.8
Evidentials	0	0	0
Code glosses	36.9	13.1	19.6
Totals	585.7	432.9	456.3

Variations are also found when a comparison is made regarding the use of metadiscourse in the three disciplines of students' BA theses English abstracts. As is shown in Table 4.2, the total frequencies of interactive metadiscourse resources in Material Science and Electronic Engineering are almost the same. While the frequency of interactive metadiscourse resources in abstracts of Applied Linguistics is much higher than that in the two subjects of Material Science and Electronic Engineering. This variation may be attributed to the abstract writers' proficiency in English. In

our data, students who write BA theses on Applied Linguistics are major in English, therefore their English writing ability is relatively higher than those who are major in science and engineering.

#### C. Distribution of Interactional Metadiscourse across Three Different Disciplines

Interactional resources are employed by writers to express their attitudes or commitment in the texts and connect with readers, and thus indicate the writer-reader interactions. Through the use of hedges, boosters, attitude markers and self-mention, which are collectively called "stance markers" by Hyland (2005b, p. 177), writers can present themselves and convey their judgments, opinions and commitments. The use of engagement markers makes it possible for writers to relate to their readers with respect to the positions advanced in the text. Table 4.3 gives a summary of the frequency of interactional resources found across the three disciplines and reveals some similarities and variations regarding their use, which will be discussed in the following texts.

Table 4.3 reveals that although the abstracts of Material Science and Electronic Engineering contain the different number of interactional metadiscourse per 10,000 words, even the total frequency of interactional metadiscourse used in Material Science is more than twice of that in Electronic Engineering, the distribution of interactional metadiscourse in each subcategory is almost the same. As it illustrates in Table 4.3, engagement markers are the most frequently used metadiscourse resources followed by hedges and boosters, while attitude markers and self mentions are the least used in the BA theses abstracts of these two subjects. The similarities may be produced due to the two disciplines belong to science and engineering and their English proficiency as well as academic writing abilities are relatively at the same level.

Table 4.3.1 Interactional metadiscourse resources in BA theses abstracts of three disciplines (per 10,000 words)

Category	Applied Linguistics	Material Science	Electronic Engineering
Hedges	96.7	24.0	15.7
Boosters	45.5	24.0	11.8
Attitude markers	14.2	0	0
Self mentions	28.4	6.6	0
Engagement markers	68.3	74.3	33.3
Totals	253.1	128.9	60.8

However, the frequency of interactional metadiscourse resources used in BA theses abstracts of Applied Linguistics exhibit significant differences with the other two disciplines. As Table 4.3 shown, hedges are the most frequently used metadiscourse resources followed by engagement markers and boosters, which is different from the frequency of interactional metadiscourse resources ranked in the other two subjects. Meanwhile, the number of the former four subcategories listed in Table 4.3 of interactional metadiscourse used in Applied Linguistics abstracts is much higher than that in Material Science and Electronic Engineering, which leads to the total frequency of interactional metadiscourse resources in BA theses English abstracts of Applied Linguistics is fairly higher than those in the abstracts of the other two disciplines. This variation may be attributed to subject differences and abstract writers' different proficiency in English as well as their varied academic writing abilities.

#### V. CONCLUSION

This study adopts a corpus-based approach to investigate metadiscourse use in EFL student abstracts written for bachelor degree. It aims to investigate the general use of metadiscourse resources in English abstracts of BA theses, and find out if there are similarities or variations in metadiscourse use in metadiscourse resources use in English abstracts of BA theses across three different disciplines (Applied Linguistics, Material Science and Electronic Engineering).

Generally, the number of interactive metadiscourse resources is more than three times of the interactional resources used in BA theses abstracts across the three disciplines. In terms of interactive metadiscourse resources, there are more similarities in the use of each subcategory of interactive metadiscourse items among the three subjects. However, in terms of the interactional metadiscourse resources, the frequency of this category of resources used in BA theses abstracts of Applied Linguistics exhibit significant variations with the other two disciplines. For example, hedges are the most frequently used metadiscourse resources followed by engagement markers and boosters, which is different from the frequency of interactional metadiscourse resources ranked in the other two subjects. In BA theses abstracts of Material Science and Electronic Engineering, engagement markers are the most frequently used metadiscourse resources followed by hedges and boosters.

Metadiscourse use reflects the writers' attempts to help readers understand discourse relations, and the relationship they wish to establish with the readers. Therefore, the research findings in this study may provide several implications for English teaching of writing to EFL students. Firstly, metadiscourse resources should be taught in our classroom to make students understand the role of metadiscourse in the interaction between the writer and the reader. Students need to be made aware that use of metadiscourse depends on the communicative situation in which the researcher is involved. Thus, the study is helpful to deepen our interpersonal consciousness of English academic discourse, so as to help writers and readers establish a good interpersonal relationship. In addition, it is a teaching priority to help students to learn where certain metadiscourse devices should be used and how metadiscourse devices are realized according to linguistic

preferences of each metadiscourse resource in BA theses abstracts. So the study is beneficial to enhance our understanding of the second language academic writing, so as to improve our second language writing ability; meanwhile the study has certain implications for EFL learners' dissertation abstract writing.

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Xin Jin was born in Yangzhou, China in 1990. She received her Bachelor's degree in English from Jiangsu University, China in 2013

She is currently a graduate student in the School of Foreign Languages, Jiangsu University, Zhenjiang, China. Her research interests include Pragmatics and Applied linguistics.

Yan Shang was born in Yancheng, China in 1990. She received her Bachelor's degree in English from Jiangsu University, China in 2013.

She is currently a graduate student in the School of Foreign Languages, Jiangsu University, Zhenjiang, China. Her research interests include English Teaching and Applied linguistics.

# Detecting the Underlying Constructs of the Selfefficacy Scale for English Language Learners' Textbooks (SES-ELLT) through Exploratory Factor Analysis

Seyyedeh Mina Hamedi Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran

Reza Pishghadam Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran

Mohammad Ghazanfari Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran

Abstract—The present study attempts at determining the inherent components of the validated Self-Efficacy Scale for English Language Learners' Textbooks (SES-ELLT) (Hamedi, Pishghadam, & Ghazanfari, 2013). To this end, 290 language learners from several language institutes of Mashhad (Iran) engaged in the study to examine the underlying dimensions of the scale. Participants were asked to reflect on the importance of the 33 items for the English language textbooks. Afterwards, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was administered to substantiate the construct validity of the scale. Two tests were employed to measure the factorability of the inter-correlation matrix: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) and Bartlett's test of Sphericity. The results of the two tests demonstrated the appropriateness of the factor model. Finally, the scale revealed five major factors, accounting for 39.94% of the total variance to be used by textbook designers and material developers as a set of empirically based self-efficacy inducing factors.

Index Terms—SES-ELLT, underlying dimensions, EFA, factorability, five factors

#### I. Introduction

Self-efficacy is defined as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Bandura, 1997, p.3). Bandura (1986, 1997) suggests that our predictions about possible outcomes of behavior are remarkably affected by self-efficacy. In fact, we imagine future consequences by relying on our past experiences and our observations of others (Woolfolk, Winne, & Perry, 2003).

Meta-analyses across various fields of study asserts the impact of perceived self-efficacy in human self-development, adaptation, and change (Boyer et al., 2000; Holden, 1991; Holden, Moncher, Schinke, & Barker, 1990; Moritz, Feltz, Fahrbach, & Mack, 2000; Multon, Brown, & Lent, 1991; Sadri & Robertson, 1993; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998). It is claimed that high efficacious people outperform the low efficacious ones (Templine, Guile, & Okuma, 2001). Several studies have observed that students with higher sense of self-efficacy are seen to participate more actively, to work harder, and to be more enthusiastic in learning (Bandura, 1997). Therefore, higher extent of self-efficacy can promote higher intrinsic motivation, perseverance and self-regulation (Schunk, 1989).

On the other hand, in the realm of second language acquisition, textbooks are the major components of language teaching and learning which are widely used and designed for language learners to boost their linguistic and communicative abilities (Sheldon, 1987). In fact, textbooks give cohesion to the teaching and learning process by offering direction through various language based activities for further classroom practice of the students (Mares, 2003); however, to the researchers' best knowledge no study has been conducted to identify the prominent self-efficacy enhancing factors affecting the learners' sense of self-efficacy.

In a study conducted by Hamedi et al. (2014), SES-ELLT was constructed in order to measure the degree to which textbooks can impact the learners' sense of self-efficacy. The scale was validated using Rasch measurement model. After the investigation of the psychometric properties of the scale, the results demonstrated that all items except three contributed towards the expected purpose of the scale; however, due to the novelty of the scale a revalidation of it through EFA can testify the previous findings as well. More importantly, Rasch model is incapable of identifying the inherent components of the scale. Henceforth, the primary objective of the study is to find out the underlying factors acting on the language learners' sense of self-efficacy.

#### II. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### A. Self-efficacy

Bandura (1977) first proposed the concept of self-efficacy to provide a unified theory of behavior change (Gallagher, 2012). Pajares and Schunk (2002) pointed out that self-efficacy beliefs revolve around the concept of "can". In all, Pajares and Schunk (2002) believed that if psychologists are really eager to figure out the major reasons of why students show preference towards some activities while avoiding the others, why they succeed in some academic disciplines and fail at the others, or why they anticipate some tasks and panic the others, they should meticulously examine the students' beliefs about themselves and their abilities, in the first place.

Within the domain of language education, the four identified types of self-efficacy are collective self-efficacy, teachers' self-efficacy, collective teachers' self-efficacy, and creative self-efficacy. Collective self-efficacy accounts for the capabilities of the group, team, or larger social entity (Bandura, 1997). It is not simply the average of individuals' self-efficacy but rather it refers to the extent to which each member believes the group may achieve by attempting unanimously. Teachers' self-efficacy refers to the instructor's beliefs in his capabilities to help the students succeed in learning (Pajaras, 1997; Tschannen- Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998, as cited in Pajares & Schunk, 2001). Collective teacher self-efficacy is the impact of teachers collective capabilities on students outcomes (Goddard, Hoys & Woolfolk Hoy, 2000). Caprara, Barbaranell, Bargogni, and Steca (2003) have demonstrated that there is a positive relationship between this type of self-efficacy and teachers' job satisfaction. Finally, creative self-efficacy is defined as the individual's beliefs in oneself to produce creative outcomes (Tierney & Farmer, 2002).

Indeed, there are four major channels through which self-efficacy can be affected. First and foremost are the mastery experiences which are our direct experiences that are highly considered to be the most informative source of efficacy (Woolfolk et al., 2003). Secondly, vicarious experiences which are modeling other similar individuals succeeding by struggling with hardships might be stimulating to the point that they think they, too, have the required capabilities to carry out the task in a relative manner (Bandura, 1995). Thirdly, social persuasion which is referred to as a verbal assurance that they, too, have the essential capabilities to fullfill the given activities (Bandura, 1995). Ultimately, somatic or emotional cues being defined as the individual's estimation of his abilities by relying on their emotional states can be the least constructive but still effective method of promoting self-efficacy beliefs (Gallagher, 2012).

Recently, in the realm of second language acquisition there has been a growing attention towards the role of self-efficacy. Sani and Zain (2011) found that there is a positive relationship among second language reading attitude, reading self-efficacy, and reading ability. In other words, they proved reading attitudes and efficacy to have significant roles in reading improvement in a non-supportive foreign language setting. Besides, Ghonsooly and Elahi (2009) asserted that high self-efficacious respondents gained higher scores in reading comprehension than the low self-efficacious ones. Moreover, Rahimi and Gheitasi (2010) found a positive relationship between English teachers' sense of efficacy and the feedback on form and content of the writings. In spite of numerous studies, it seems that no study has been focused to extract the major underlying factors of English Language Teaching (ELT) textbooks affecting the learners sense of self-efficacy.

#### B. Textbooks' Impact on Language Learning and Teaching

Sheldon (1987) takes textbooks as a published book designed for language learners to boost their linguistic and communicative abilities. In fact, textbooks give cohesion to the teaching and learning process by offering direction through various language based activities for further classroom practice of the students (Mares, 2003).

As a matter of fact, textbooks play a crucial role in ELT classes in the whole world (Dendrinos, 1992; Williams, 1983). Studies have revealed that it is highly common to apply textbooks for daily teaching programs and a few professionals would not utilize published ELT materials in their classes (Cunningsworth, 1984; Litz, 2005; McDonough & Shaw, 1993) as they are on the belief that textbooks might expose learners to the inauthentic language, distorted content, and may even overlook the learners' or deskilled teachers needs (Richards, 2001, as cited in Hamedi et al., 2013). In fact, those who disapprove of shaping their syllabi based on textbooks would rather focusing on the students' needs to make them able of acquiring life skills through a life based syllabus. This is quite in line with the premises of life syllabus being proposed by pishghadam (2011) as a new syllabus which can play a significant role not only in education but also in enhancing life qualities.

#### C. Life Skills

In sum, inspired by Pishghadam (2011), ELT can be viewed as an independent and scientific field ready to contribute to and be applied to other fields of study by language teachers who are empowered to go beyond the reflective, critical, and participatory language teaching (Ketabi, Zabihi, & Ghadiri, 2012). Recently, Pishghadam and Zabihi (2012) gave a new lease of life to the field of English language teaching and learning by granting it a more contributory and life-changing role, and encouraging the teachers to take a fresh look at its principles. It corroborates the principles of humanistic education which asserts that education should enable people to lead a more meaningful and purposeful life by fostering their intellectual and emotional capabilities (Ketabi et al., 2012). As a result, the underlying assumption of recent ideas of applied ELT, and educational language teaching is that ELT practitioners should focus their attention on the promotion of learners' life skills, and critical thinking prior to language-related skills (Ketabi et al., 2012).

#### D. Self-efficacy Measurement

Since judgments of self-efficacy are task specific and may differ in various domains; therefore, scales of perceived self-efficacy must accord with the specific domains of functioning that is the object of interest (Bandura, 2006). Indeed, most of the designed self-efficacy scales have resorted to Bandura's guidelines on the self-efficacy scale development (Bandura, 2001; Pintrich & De Groot, 1990; Zimmerman, 1995). Within the context of language learning Templin et al. (2001) constructed a reliable and valid self-efficacy scale to measure the learners' self-efficacy and achievement. In fact, despite the numerous self-efficacy studies at hand, the dearth of a comprehensive research identifying the implicit factors affecting the learners' sense of efficacy while studying ELT textbooks is noteworthy. Having this in mind, the main goal of the study was to extract the underlying components of SES-ELLT (Hamedi et al., 2013). To this end, EFA was conducted to examine the most influential factors which had an impact on the learners' sense of self-efficacy.

#### III. METHODOLOGY

#### A. Participants

A total number of 290 language learners from different fields of study comprising 100 males (34.5%) and 190 females (65.5%) from various language institutes of Mashhad volunteered to engage in the study to investigate the underlying components of the scale, with no expectation of incentives. They had at least two years of familiarity with their textbooks as they were expected to assess their books with regard to the extent to which textbook activities might affect their sense of self-efficacy. In all, the ages of the participants ranged from 15 to 64 years. Their overall mean age was 26.63 years, with a standard deviation of 9.28.

#### B. Instruments

#### 1. SES-ELLT

In order to conduct EFA, a 5-point SES-ELLT (Hamedi et al., 2013) ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*srongly agree*) was utilized to specify the underlying factors of the scale. SES-ELLT has 33 items which has been validated by using Rasch rating scale model (Andrich, 1978) as implemented in WINSTEPS (Linacre, 2006a). In fact, Rasch reliability statistics were fairly high for both person separation (.81) and item separation (.87). Moreover, the scale proved to enjoy an acceptable index of reliability (Cronbach's  $\alpha$ = .84) as well. The overall analysis of the scale revealed that the scale was unidimensional and only three items were misfitting.

#### 2. Exploratory Factor Analysis

Factor analysis is a commonly used complicated set of techniques in social sciences (Costello & Osborne, 2005). It attempts to reduce "the dimensionality of the original space and to give an interpretation to the new space, spanned by a reduced number of new dimensions which are supposed to underlie the old ones" (Rietveld & Van Hout, 1993, p. 254). Besides, it can explain the variance in the observed variables in terms of underlying latent factors" (Habing, 2003, p. 2) More specifically, it is used to investigate the interrelationships among numerous variables and to explain these variables regarding their common underlying dimensions (factors) (Field, 2000).

Indeed, there are two main categories of factor analysis, exploratory (EFA) and confirmatory (CFA). EFA is utilized to generate a theory or model from a relatively large number of latent constructs (Swisher, Beckstead, & Bebeau, 2004; Thompson, 2004); however, CFA is performed to test a proposed model based on priori theory regarding the number of factors and which factor theories or models best fit (Thompson, 2004).

#### C. Procedure

The researchers attempt at revalidating and specifying the underlying constructs of SES-ELLT. To achieve this end, SES-ELLT was distributed among 290 learners in various language institutes of Mashhad. The scale comprises 33 items which are scored based on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from *strongly agree* (5) to *strongly disagree* (1). It took around 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire. The participants were language learners who had a longstanding familiarity with their language textbooks. They were supposed to rate their ELT textbooks i.e. *Top Notch 3B* (Saslow & Ascher, 2006), *Summit 1A* (Saslow & Ascher, 2006), *American English file: Students' book 3* (Oxenden, Koenig, & Seligson, 2008), *Total English (upper intermediate)* (Acklam & Crace, 2007), and *Interchange (students' book 3)*(Richards, Hull, & Proctor, 2005) with regard to the extent to which their textbook activities can promote their sense of self-efficacy. Besides, they were assured of the confidential nature of the study and that they could disengage from the study prior to submitting the questionnaire.

#### IV. RESULTS

Cronbach Alpha estimated the reliability of the whole items as .84. Besides, all of the five factors yielded good reliability estimates ranging from .58 to .77 (Table 1).

TABLE 1
RELIABILITY OF EACH FACTOR

Factors	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Factor 1	.77	6
Factor 2	.69	7
Factor 3	.58	4
Factor 4	.60	9
Factor 5	.61	6

The items of (SES-ELLT) were subjected to principal components analysis (PCA) using SPSS version 19. Prior to performing PCA, the suitability of data for factor analysis was assessed. Inspection of the correlation matrix revealed the presence of coefficients of .3 and above. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was .81, exceeding the recommended value of .6 (Kaiser, 1970) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Bartlett, 1954) reached statistical significance (Table 2), supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix.

TABLE 2 KMO AND BARTLETT'S TEST

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of	.810	
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	2342.859	
	Df	528
	Sig.	.000

Principal components analysis revealed the presence of ten components with eigenvalues exceeding 1, explaining 19.88%, 5.59%, 5.18%, 4.85%, 4.42%, 4.29%, 3.81%, 3.67%, 3.21%, and 3.07% of the variance respectively; however, an inspection of the scree plot did not clearly support a ten factor solution. In fact, the scree plot cutoff is quite subjective (Fabrigar, Wegener, MacCallum, & Strahan., 1999) and this leads to the difficulty of identifying the precise cutoff point and overextraction of factors (Henson & Roberts, 2006). Therefore, using parallel analysis which has shown to be the most accurate (Pallant, 2011), it was decided to retain five fixed components for further investigation. It revealed only five components with eigenvalues exceeding the corresponding criterion values for a randomly generated data matrix of the same size (33 variables  $\times$  290 respondents). In all, the five-component solution explained a total of 39.94% of the variance. Furthermore, to aid in the interpretation of these five components, orthogonal rotation was performed. The result of Varimax with Kaiser Normalization was a rotated component matrix (Table 3) (see appendix B). The rotated solution revealed the absence of simple structure (Thurstone, 1947), with variables that loaded on more than one factor (Table 3) (see appendix B).

As Table 3 (see appendix B) demonstrates, although five items are cross-loading, they should be retained in as much as the cross-loadings on both factors are not greater than .40 (Schonorock-Adema, Heijne-Penninga, Van Hell, & Cohen-Schotanus, 2009). Besides, according to this table, item 14 should be removed from the set as it does not possess a significant loading on any of the factors.

In sum, the five resultant factors were descriptively labelled as indicated below. Factor 1 was given the label of *perseverance*. There were six items that loaded on this factor, with loadings ranging from 0.38 to 0.80 (explained variance of 19.88%). The top item within the factor was "It makes me try to write well- constructed sentences" (loading 0.80). Factor 1 included characteristics such as demonstrating effort to support one's ideas, being well organized and focused, using effective words and well-constructed sentences for the writing skill, and interacting well through effective written communication skills. These components illustrated the factor tagged as perseverance.

Factor 2 was labelled as the *self-regulation strategy*. There were seven items that loaded on this factor, with loadings ranging from 0.44 to 0.64 (explained variance of 5.59%). The top item within the factor was "It encourages me to do extra work on tasks to improve my knowledge" (loading 0.64). Factor 2 included characteristics such as recognizing language capabilities, estimating language capabilities, being a task initiator, gaining advantage of past experiences, being proactive regulators of the learning process, adhering to the task, and being a goal-oriented learner.

Factor 3 was given the label of *problem-solving* capability. There were four items that loaded on this factor, with loadings ranging from 0.35 to 0.635 (explained variance of 5.18%). The top item within the factor was "It helps me feel I can solve the problems effectively" (loading 0.635). Factor 3 included characteristics such as having the capacity for tackling language problems, personal problems, interpersonal problems, and task analysis.

Factor 4 was tagged as *self-reflection*. There were nine items loading on this factor, with loadings ranging from 0.31 to 0.69 (explained 4.85% of the variance). The top item within this factor was "It can make me confident that I can well participate in a class discussion" (loading 0.69). Factor four included characteristics such as thought inspection of language capabilities, feeling inspection of language capabilities, clarity of understanding listening skill improvement, clarity of understanding reading skill improvement, thought inspection of being a focused language reader, thought inspection of language weakness, thought inspection of one's language strengths, thought inspection of being a well language communicator, and thought inspection of having the speech power.

Lastly, factor five was labelled as *self-assessment*. There were six items loading on this factor, with loadings ranging from 0.39 to 0.51 (explained 4.42% of the variance). The most loaded item within this factor was "It makes me think how well I am doing as I am proceeding a task" (loading, 0.51). This factor included characteristics such as language

assessment, achievement assessment, tolerance assessment, language skills mastery assessment, vicarious experience, and problem solving assessment. In all, items representing each factor are displayed in Table 4 and Table 5 (see appendix C), and the validated scale is provided at (see appendix A).

TABLE 4
FIVE FACTORS OF THE SCALE

Factors	Statements	N of Items	Percentage
Perseverance	21, 20, 22, 23, 19, 24,	6	18.75
Self-regulation	17, 18, 13, 3, 1, 2, 12	7	21.88
Problem-solving	5, 4, 10, 7	4	12.5
Self-reflection	32, 33, 31, 30, 25, 29, 27, 28, 11	9	28.12
Self-assessment	9, 15, 8, 16, 26, 6	6	18.75
	Total	32	100

#### V. DISCUSSION

EFA was used to extract the main components of SES-ELLT. Following the initial extraction conducting exploratory factor analysis on the scale items, the data were analyzed using Varimax rotation detecting ten factors with eigenvalues exceeding one; however, given the fact that parallel analysis is the most accurate way of identifying the number of components to be retained with both Kaiser's criterion and Catell's scree test tending to overestimate the number of components (Hubbard & Allen 1987; Zwick & Velicer, 1986), parallel analysis was decided to be performed, determining the number of factors that best-fit model and had to be extracted as five . However, one item (Item 14: It helps me feel confident that I can understand the basic concepts taught by the book) failed to load on any factor; henceforth, given the clearly inappropriate loading noted in the extraction phase, modification for this item seems to be recommended. Probably, the reason behind this might be the confusing nature of the word "basic" in this statement and the difficulty of assuming what concepts as the basic ones. In all, the five extracted factors that best represent this construct and accounted for 39.94% of the variance were descriptively labelled as mentioned below.

The first detected component of self-efficacy was perseverance, which is in consistence with Bandura (1977), Brown and Inouye (1978), Schunk (1981), Weinberg, Gould, and Jackson (1979), and Zimmerman, Bandura, Martinez-Pons' (1992) that perceived self-efficacy can greatly affect the amount of effort to mobilize, and the individual's perseverance in the face of difficulties. Besides, as mentioned earlier, persistence can be mostly generated by social persuasion mechanism (Bandura, 1995) as people are assured verbally of their required capabilities.

The second extracted factor was self-regulation which indicates the extent to which learners are metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally proactive regulators of their own learning process (Zimmerman, 1986, 1990a). This is in accord with Zimmerman, et al. (1992) earlier research in which they announced that the students' perceived self-regulatory efficacy would affect their perceived self-efficacy for academic achievement. Moreover, it confirms Zimmerman's (1989, 1990b) claim of the higher exhibition of a sense of self-efficacy by the self-regulator learners.

The third identified component was problem-solving which is in parallel with Hall (2007) findings who believed that self-efficacy is influenced by the feedback that fosters problem- solving skills. Afterwards, self-reflection which is the inspection and evaluation of one's thoughts, feelings, and behavior, as well as the clarity of understanding these thoughts, and feelings (Carver & Scheier, 1998) was the fourth recognized factor. It corroborates Bandura's (1986) notion of depicting self-efficacy as a *self-system*, which is comprised of cognitive and affective components including the ability to symbolize, learn from others, regulate one's own behavior, and engage in self-reflection; therefore, enabling people to exercise control over their thoughts, feelings, and actions.

Finally, self-evaluation which is the assessment and comparison of one's accomplishments to a standard or a goal (Dinther, Dochy, & Segers 2011) was the last extracted factor which is in line with Gist's conception of self-efficacy that seems to emphasize on the self-assessment of skills (as cited in Claggett & Goodhue, 2011).

Indeed, the present study is worthwhile on the premise that no specific study has been concentrated exclusively on the extraction of ELT textbooks' components regarding their extent to which they may boost the learners' self-efficacy. More importantly, in the light of life syllabus (Pishghadam, 2011) which prioritizes life issues and language rather than merely language in classes, the researchers are looking forward to assisting EFL teachers and learners in the detection and utilization of these factors for the enhancement of the learners' sense of self-efficacy through ELT textbooks.

Moreover, as choosing an appropriate ELT textbook paves the way for taking better teaching and learning strategies and entails a considerable professional, financial or even political investment, the findings of the current study will have significant implications for language teachers, supervisors, L2 learners, lesson planners, material developers, syllabus designers, decision makers, and the language scholars to make more valid decisions about the effects of the ELT materials on promoting the L2 learners' sense of self-efficacy and to provide them with a cornerstone to adopt the most self-efficacy inducing books, respectively.

#### $A \mathtt{PPENDIX}\, A$

Self-Efficacy Scale for the English Language Learners' Textbooks

No.	-Efficacy Scale for the English Language L	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	The current textbook helps me think about my language capabilities.	Disagree		nor Agree		Agree
2.	It helps me estimate my language capabilities before starting a task.					
3.	It excites my feelings to start doing the tasks.					
4.	It helps me feel I can do my homework effectively.					
5.	It helps me feel I can solve the problems effectively.					
6.	It helps me think how well I can answer the difficult questions in the class.					
7.	It helps me feel I can do my classwork effectively.					
8.	It helps me think how well I can achieve my academic goals.					
9.	It makes me think how well I am doing, as I am proceeding a task.					
10.	It helps me feel determined how to solve a task before I begin.					
11.	It helps me feel confident that I can understand the most difficult materials offered by the textbook.					
12.	It makes me resort to my past experiences while performing a task.					
13.	It encourages me to work as hard as possible on tasks.					
14.	It helps me feel confident that I can understand the basic concept taught by the book.					
15.	It helps me think how well I can master skills by the course.					
16.	It helps me set some of my classmates as the language learner models while doing pair works or group works.					
17.	It encourages me to do extra work on tasks to					
18.	improve my knowledge.  It helps me stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.					
19.	It makes me try to use details in my writings to support my ideas.					
20.	It makes me try to write a well-organized, focused text with an inviting beginning, developed middle, and a meaningful ending.					
21.	It makes me try to write well-constructed sentences.					
22.	It makes me try to use effective words in my writings.					
23.	It makes me try to write effectively to express my thoughts and interact with others.					
24.	It makes me try to use punctuation accurately in my writings.					
25.	It helps me feel confident that I have the required ability for improving my listening skill.					
26.	It helps me feel how well I can find a strategy to answer most of the questions even if the listening tasks are hard and I cannot understand them					
27.	It helps me feel confident that my listening					
28.	comprehension is improving.  It helps me feel confident that I have the ability to					
29.	focus my concentration on the text I am reading.  It helps me feel confident that I am capable of improving my reading comprehension skill.					
30.	It makes me feel although my world knowledge is					
31.	good, I have problems in reading comprehension.  It helps me confident that I can understand difficult					
32.	passages in the textbooks.  It can make me confident that I can well participate in a class discussion.					
33.	in a class discussion.  It helps me feel confident that I can communicate my		+			+

#### APPENDIX B

TABLE3
ROTATED COMPONENT MATRIX

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
SE21 SE20 SE22 SE23	.802 .700 .623				
SE25 SE19 SE24 SE17 SE18 SE13 SE3 SE1 SE2	.591 .588 .382	.311 .646 .635 .587 .507 .478			
SE12 SE5 SE4 SE10 SE7 SE32 SE33 SE31 SE30 SE25 SE29 SE27		.442	.635 .633 .518 .355	.696 .668 .518 .449 .420 .400 .390	.386
SE2/ SE28 SE11 SE9 SE15 SE8 SE16 SE26		.359		.390 .359 .314	.301 .511 .493 .462 .414 .400
SE6 SE14			.376		.394

#### APPENDIX C

## TABLE 5 THE FACTORS OF SES-ELLT

#### Perseverance

- 1. It makes me try to write well-constructed sentences.
- 2. It makes me try to write a well-organized, focused text with an inviting beginning, developed middle, and a meaningful ending.
- 3. It makes me try to use effective words in my writings.
- 4. It makes me try to write effectively to express my thoughts and interact with others.
- 5. It makes me try to use details in my writings to support my ideas.
- 6. It makes me try to use punctuation accurately in my writings.

#### Self-regulation

- 1. It encourages me to do extra work on tasks to improve my knowledge.
- 2. It helps me stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.
- 3. It encourages me to work as hard as possible on tasks.
- 4. It excites my feelings to start doing the tasks.
- 5. The current textbook helps me think about my language capabilities.
- 6. It helps me estimate my language capabilities before starting a task.
- 7. It makes me resort to my past experiences while performing a task.

#### Problem-solving

- 1. It helps me feel I can do my homework effectively.
- 2. It helps me feel I can solve the problems effectively.
- 3. It helps me feel determined how to solve a task before I begin.
- 4. It helps me feel I can do my class work effectively.

#### Self-reflection

- 1. It can make me confident that I can well participate in a class discussion.
- 2. It helps me feel confident that I can communicate my agreement or disagreement in a discussion.
- 3. It helps me confident that I can understand difficult passages in the textbooks.
- 4. It makes me feel although my world knowledge is good, I have problems in reading comprehension.
- 5. It helps me feel confident that I have the required ability for improving my listening skill.
- 6. It helps me feel confident that I am capable of improving my reading comprehension skill.
- 7. It helps me feel confident that my listening comprehension is improving.
- 8. It helps me feel confident that I have the ability to focus my concentration on the text I am reading.
- 9. It helps me feel confident that I can understand the most difficult materials offered by the textbook.

#### Self-assessment

- 1. It makes me think how well I am doing, as I am proceeding a task.
- 2. It helps me think how well I can master skills by the course.
- 3. It helps me think how well I can achieve my academic goals.
- 4. It helps me set some of my classmates as the language learner models while doing pair works or group works.
- 5. It helps me feel how well I can find a strategy to answer most of the questions even if the listening tasks are hard and I cannot understand them completely.
- 6. It helps me think how well I can answer the difficult questions in the class.

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**Seyyedeh Mina Hamedi**, M.A., is a TEFL student at the English Department of Mashhad, Iran. Her primary research interests concern language testing, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, second language acquisition, foreign language teaching methodologies, and research methodologies. She has published a number of articles in some international journals.

**Reza Pishghadam** has a PhD in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). He is currently on the English faculty of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran. He is an associate professor of TEFL and teaches socio-psychological aspects of language education. Over the last five years, he has published more than 120 articles and books in different domains of English-language. In 2007 he was selected to become a member of the National Association of Elites of Iran. In 2010, he was classified as the distinguished researcher in humanities in Iran.

**Mohammad Ghazanfari** has a PhD in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL). He is currently on the English faculty of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran. He is an associate professor of TEFL and teaches several courses such as applied linguistics, discourse analysis, advanced writing, research methodologies and translation. He has a number of published papers in the international language journals and conferences.

# Cultivation of Intercultural Awareness in EFL Teaching\*

Chenlu Liu School of Foreign Studies, Nantong University, 226000, China

Abstracts—Language and culture are inseparable. Foreign language learning is not only the language learning, but also the culture learning. Intercultural awareness, therefore, should be cultivated so that students can have the competence to use language to fulfill the successful intercultural communication. By analyzing a survey which investigates the students' present condition of intercultural awareness, this paper tries to put forward some measures to cultivate the students' intercultural awareness in EFL teaching.

Index Terms—intercultural awareness, cultural differences, EFL teaching

#### I. Introduction

For quite a long time, English as a foreign language (EFL) teaching in China mainly emphasizes on teaching students' grammar and language skills, ignoring the introduction of cultural differences. Nowadays, however, with the increasing international connection, people begin to realize that vocabulary and grammar can't ensure real success in intercultural communication. Language and culture are inseparable. Therefore cultivating intercultural awareness is necessary in language teaching, which helps to strengthen English learners' understanding of the language and improve their performance in intercultural communication.

This paper first introduces the relationship between language and intercultural awareness based on the related theories and research achievements at home and abroad. Then through a survey including cultural test and questionnaire, this paper aims to take a deep look at the college students' current condition of intercultural awareness and tries to explore the appropriate approaches for efficient cultural teaching so as to enhance students' intercultural awareness.

#### II. INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS

#### A. Language and Culture

What is culture? There are various definitions. Actually it's hard to give "culture" a scientific and integrated definition. British anthropologist Edward Tylor (1920) gave a profound scientific description of the term. He defined it as complex whole including knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. In the early 1920s, American linguist Sapir (1921) once mentioned that there is something behind language, and language cannot exist without culture. Language is a part of culture and influenced by culture. Gladstone (1972) once pointed that Language and culture are linked closely, language is the product or result of culture and it is the vehicle to shape and communicate culture. Language is the carrier and manifestation of culture. It is the tool of carrying and expressing cultural information. Rivers (1983, p.263) thought that "Language is deeply embedded in culture". A Chinese linguist Dai (1989, p. 158) thought "language is the primary means by which a culture transmits its beliefs, values, and norms. It gives people a means of interacting with other members of the culture and a means of thinking". Shu and Zhuang (2008) regarded language as an inalienable part of culture. Language is the carrier of culture, and culture is the foundation and circumstance of language. Culture and language are inseparably integrated. One cannot hope to really master a target language without profound knowledge of the culture linked to that language.

#### B. Intercultural Awareness in Language

Intercultural awareness, according to Chen and Starosta (1996), refers to an understanding of one's own and others' cultures that affect how people think and behave. Robert G. Hanvey developed the idea of global perspectives that has been widely used as a framework in intercultural awareness. According to Hanvey (1979), a global perspective consists of certain modes of thought, sensitivities, intellectual skills, and explanatory capacities, which is a combination of many things and any person may be rich in certain elements while relatively lacking in others. Hanvey describes four levels of intercultural awareness: (1) awareness of superficial or visible cultural traits, such as isolated facts or stereotypes; (2) awareness of significant and subtle cultural traits that contrast markedly with one's own and interpreted as unbelievable and irrational; (3) awareness of significant and subtle cultural traits that contrast markedly with one's own but can be understood cognitively; (4) awareness of how another culture feels from the standpoint of the insider.

<sup>\*</sup> It is supported by a grant from Nantong University (13W45).

Seelye, H. N. (1975) proposed some practical teaching principles for improving cultural awareness in his book "Teaching Culture": (1) Acquiring cultural knowledge through language learning; (2) Making cultural behavior an important part of class; (3) Letting student have the capacity of occupying their social economic status; (4) A better understanding of native culture and target culture; (5) Making students know that people's behavior was affected by culture

The cultivation of students' cultural awareness in EFL teaching can encourage students to break the obstacles of intercommunication and master the culture of the target language, and in turn, promote teaching effect. Therefore, to gain knowledge on culture difference and to promote the students' cultural awareness is one of the aims of the present language teaching.

#### III. A SURVEY INVESTIGATING STUDENTS' INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS

The purpose of this tentative survey is to find out the present condition of the students' cultural awareness in their English learning and whether it is important to teach intercultural knowledge and cultivate intercultural awareness in English teaching.

#### A. Research Questions

- 1. What is the current condition of the students' intercultural knowledge?
- 2. What are the students' attitudes towards intercultural awareness?
- 3. What are the students' main sources of acquiring intercultural knowledge?
- 4. What are the problems existing in the teaching of intercultural knowledge?

#### B. Research Subjects

The subjects for this survey are 50 sophomores selected randomly from Nantong University.

#### C. The Content of the Survey

The survey includes one cultural test and one questionnaire. The cultural test was designed to find out how much cultural knowledge students have learned about English and English speaking countries. It consists of four parts, as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
THE CONTENT OF THE CULTURAL TEST
Category Content No.

Category	Content	No. of items
Part A	Literature, geography and history	1-10
Part B	Social conventions	11-15
Part C	Religious beliefs, values	16-20

The questionnaire for students was designed to investigate students' intercultural awareness, their main sources of acquiring cultural knowledge and the possible problems of English teaching in cultivating intercultural knowledge. It consists of 16 questions. Question 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 15, 16 were designed to investigate students' attitudes towards the cultivation of intercultural awareness. Question 1,3,5,7,10,11,12,13,14 were designed to investigate the students' main sources of acquiring cultural knowledge and the possible problems of English teaching in developing intercultural knowledge.

#### D. Data Collection

The cultural test and questionnaire were given to 50 subjects. Students were required to finish the test in 30 minutes and the questionnaire in 10 minutes. 50 copies of test paper and questionnaire were finally collected back. And all of them prove to be valid after careful examination.

#### E. Data Analysis

The total score of the test are 100, with 5 points per question. The mean of all participants' answers was calculated by Statistical Package for Social Sciences 17.0 (SPSS). As for the questionnaire, the descriptive analysis was used.

#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### A. Students' Intercultural Knowledge

From the data shown in Table 2, we can see that the highest score of cultural test is 90 and the lowest score is only 20. Of the 50 students, only 28 pass the test, with a passing rate of 56% and a mean score of 50. These data clearly show that the students didn't do quite well. They have a little knowledge of typical English speaking countries' cultures and have some difficulties in communication in English. That is to say, the students are in lack of the intercultural communicative competence. The reason may be that students don't have full learning awareness of cultivating themselves the cultural knowledge, or teachers pay less attention to the cultivation of students' cultural awareness when teaching.

TABLE 2
SCORE OF THE CULTURAL TEST

Participants	Full Score	Maximum Score	Minimum Score	Mean Score	Passing Percentage	
50	100	90	20	50	56%	

Through the comparison of the scores of part A, part B and part C, it can be found that students do better in part B than in part A and part C (shown in Figure 1). Part B is about social conventions, while part A and part C focus on literature, geography, history, religious beliefs and values. This comparison shows that students are much more familiar with social conventions or in other words, general knowledge about English speaking countries which can be obtained easily from movies, TV, newspapers and other public media, and have mastered the basic intercultural knowledge. And for the part of literature, geography and history, most of which are taught by teachers in class and remembered by mechanical memorizing, students don't have a good command of that.

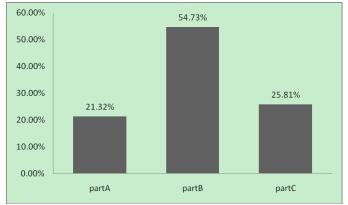


Figure 1 The accurate rate of the cultural test Note: Part A: Literature, geography and history Part B: Social conventions Part C: Religious beliefs, values.

#### B. Students' Attitude towards Intercultural Awareness

As is shown in Figure 2, only 3.64% of the subjects think intercultural awareness is useless. 34.70% think it is useful. And 76.45% of subjects think it is very useful. We can see that most subjects have fully realized the importance of cultivating the intercultural awareness in English teaching,

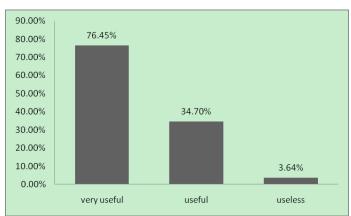


Figure 2 Students' opinions of intercultural awareness in English teaching

As for students' interest in learning intercultural knowledge, question No. 2 can give the answer. As is shown in Figure 3, 66.65% of the students like to learn different cultures very much, 13.35% of them are more willing to learn it, 20.00% of them are less interested and only 6.67% of them don't like it. So it is obvious that most subjects are eager to learn knowledge about English speaking countries' culture.

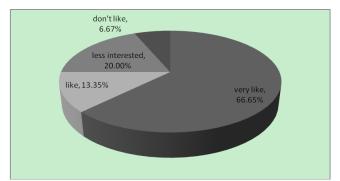


Figure 3 The percentage of students' interest in learning intercultural knowledge

#### C. Students' Main Sources of Acquiring Intercultural Knowledge

About students' main sources of acquiring cultural knowledge, we get the following result (shown in Figure 4). 23.54% think that they obtained the cultural knowledge from teachers. 13.76% think that they obtained the cultural knowledge from English books, newspapers and magazines. 21.57% think that they obtained the cultural knowledge from interactive activities in class. 35.67% think that they obtained the cultural knowledge from English TV programs and movies after class.

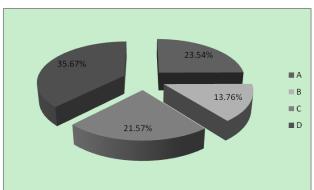


Figure 4 Students' main sources of acquiring intercultural knowledge
Note: A= cultural knowledge from teachers in class
B= cultural knowledge from English books, newspapers and magazines
C= cultural knowledge from interactive activities in class
D= cultural knowledge from English TV programs and movies after class

So it seems that students' sources of acquiring intercultural knowledge are not limited to their teachers. Most students think it is helpful to know the English speaking countries' culture by reading literature works, attending lectures, watching movies, and doing role play in the class, which may shed some light on teaching.

As for the way teachers cultivate students' intercultural awareness, as is shown in Figure 5, 72.23% students think it is helpful when teachers utilize multimedia and other means to assist cultural teaching or through sitcoms and other performance forms and only 4.23% of them think it is helpless. Thus we can conclude that the majority of students think that it is helpful to have a deep understanding of cultural knowledge if teacher use some unconventional means to assist cultural teaching.

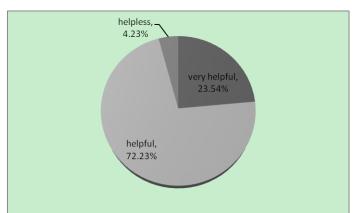


Figure 5 Students' opinions about unconventional teaching method

#### D. Problems Existing in Intercultural Knowledge Teaching

When asked about whether your teacher combines culture teaching with language teaching, 78% students thought their teachers pay more attention to language teaching. This is because nowadays, to some extent, students' scores in various exams are still valued, which making the teaching more language-oriented. When asked about whether the intercultural knowledge in the textbook meets your need, 57% students gave negative answer and they thought the culture information is somewhat outdated. Thus, we could see textbooks including culture knowledge should be updated, or they can't serve the students well.

#### E. Conclusion

According to the feedback of the questionnaire and cultural test, we can see students still have some difficulties in intercultural communication, but the majority of the students have a positive attitude towards intercultural knowledge and they are willing to cultivate their intercultural awareness. However, current language teaching only pays attention to the grammar and language points but ignores the true value of language use and language communication competence. The purpose of English teaching actually is to help students learn the cultures embodied in language and cultivate their communication competence. Therefore, teachers should be more strategic and creative in culture teaching.

#### V. Principles and Approaches for Cultivating Intercultural Awareness in English Teaching

As is concluded from the survey, it is necessary to use certain teaching methods to increase learners' interest and improve their efficiency in receiving the cultural knowledge. Therefore, some principles and approaches are put forward in order to develop English learners' intercultural awareness

#### A. Principles

#### 1. Principle of Practicality

From the results of the cultural test above, it is clear that students behave better in mastering the knowledge about social conventions than in other two parts, literature, geography, history and religious beliefs and values. This reflects that students are easier to grasp cultural knowledge that is closely related to their daily life. This requests teachers to pay more attention to the principle of practicality when teaching culture. Principle of practicality demands that the introduced cultural knowledge should be easily accepted by students and be practical (Shu, 2008). It shouldn't be outdated because when time passes culture changes. Also, the teaching of culture could be done through verbal communication practice so that students can get more practice and preparation for intercultural communication. And this can arouse students' interest in learning both language and culture. The purpose of English teaching is not only to develop students' ability to use the language they have learned but also to improve their intercultural awareness of successful intercultural communication. Therefore, the introduction of cultural knowledge should take student's language proficiency into consideration and keep the information updated timely.

#### 2. Principle of "Step by Step"

From the data shown in Figure 2, it can be seen that the highest score of the culture test is 90 points and the lowest score is only 20 points. This result reflects students' different language proficiency, learning capacity and apperception ability. This requests teachers to pay more attention to the penetration of the cultural content step by step when teaching culture. The content of culture teaching should be designed according to students' language proficiency, learning capacity and apperception ability. Teachers should proceed in order and step by step, from the easy to the difficult and complicated. Teaching should be started from students' point of view. Before the teaching or during the teaching process, teachers should fully understand their students' knowledge level and language proficiency. Teaching should be adjusted according to students' cognitive ability and real language proficiency. If teaching is beyond students' ability, in the first place, it will be unfavorable for students to have a good understanding; in the second, it will be unfavorable for teachers to realize their teaching plans. Teachers may need to spend more energy and time preparing for more background knowledge so that students can better understand the content which is too profound for them. Only when the knowledge teachers teach accords with students' cognitive ability and real language proficiency, can the knowledge be understood and accepted by students successfully.

#### 3. Principle of Suitability

As mentioned above, for question No.13 "Does your teacher attach importance to the integration of cross-cultural teaching and language teaching?" the majority of the students' answer is that teachers usually focus more on language teaching. This shows that the integration of cross-cultural teaching and language teaching hasn't been applied well in teaching. Then how to achieve a balance? Principle of suitability may do help. The principle of suitability emphasizes the importance of both language skills teaching and culture teaching. The teaching of the language should combine these two parts together according to the demands of the teaching content and students' language proficiency (Shu, 2008). In the process of teaching, it is necessary to avoid two extremities: pure language skills teaching without any introduction of culture and too much cultural knowledge teaching while ignoring the basic language knowledge. Language skills teaching and cultural knowledge teaching are two parts indispensable from the teaching of a foreign language. Inclination to any side would do harm to the whole teaching activity and give rise to deformity of ability cultivation. As for teaching, it is a must to seek for the harmonious and organic combination of both of them.

#### 4. Principle of "Student-oriented"

Currently, autonomous learning with teachers' guidance is popular in EFL teaching. The role of teachers and students in a class is totally different from before. Students do not passively accept the knowledge taught by the teachers. They are encouraged to give full play of their initiatives to develop their cultural awareness while teachers are no longer the dominator of the class but the facilitator of the students. With teachers' recommendation and guidance, the knowledge students get from various channels will be merged into their minds better. Still, there is one thing that has to be mentioned. Teachers' intercultural awareness also has to be enhanced. As is shown above, teachers pay less attention to the teaching of intercultural knowledge, which quite disappoints the students. Thus it's time for teachers to change their teaching concept, enhance their own cultural awareness, keep pace with the times and explore more cultural notes when comes to a certain topic. Here is an example. When comes to the topic of food, students are required to find more information about food in different countries and the way of cooking, eating habits, etc. However, that is far from enough. Teachers can explore more, for instance, by asking why the staple food of Chinese people is rice which is quite related to the China's long history and culture. In this way, teachers can exert a subtle influence on students by showing their own intercultural awareness.

#### B. Approaches

#### 1. Annotation and Mergence

The method of annotation means that teachers give students some additional materials to help them solve the difficulties appearing in the text (Shu, 2008). Teachers could list the words and some expressions that might cause some difficulties in understanding and explain them in the form of notes. The advantage of this approach is that it can help the students understand the cultural knowledge better, making teaching more successful and efficient.

The method of mergence means to combine the cultural content with the language material together (Shu, 2008). When lecturing some language materials, teachers could introduce some related cultural content, such as historical events, cultural customs, origins of words and expressions and so on. Teachers can use these additional materials to arouse students' interest in culture learning. And those cultural contents added may exert a subtle effect on the learning of both culture and language. Stern (1992) believes that this method is very necessary and it can help to create a cultural context for cultural teaching.

#### 2. Comparison and Role-play

Comparison is an important method in developing intercultural awareness in English teaching. It can help students get a clearer understanding about the differences between two different cultures and be able to develop their cultural sensitivity so that they can make proper and appropriate intercultural communication in the future. Teachers should help students to make comparisons. If students make the comparison without any guidance, they may only find the similarities while ignoring the differences. For example, when talking about smiles in different cultures, students may find that both China and America can be called smiling nations, because people in these two countries are easy to smile even meeting strangers. However, they may ignore the differences, such as the different meanings of smiles in different situations, which should be noted by the teacher.

"Role-play" is another useful teaching approach that teachers can adopt. When organizing class activities, teachers can create a certain social and cultural situation according to the teaching materials and require students to play the situation. This activity could arouse students' interests which give them a strong willing to do their best. They may try to use the language as correctly as they can and take fully consideration of the cultural elements. For example, when teaching a passage about generation gap, teachers can ask the students to surf the internet to look for the information about the relationship between parents and children of different countries, which may be different because of different social beliefs and values, and then ask the students to make a dialogue reflecting those differences.

In addition, students can be asked to make a presentation in the class, showing cultural difference to a certain topic. Mini-drama and short play are also good ways to help students understand the culture as well as practice their language.

#### 3. Some Assisted Teaching Methods

From the research results of the survey, students prefer to learn cultural knowledge through reading literature works, masterpieces, magazines or newspapers, watching TV programs and movies, and attending lectures. They think they can get a better learning effect under such joyful atmosphere. Hence teachers could make use of these different methods to assist their teaching.

Literature reading is an efficient way for students to know about the cultural knowledge including geography, history, belief, traditions, and values. It can also help students to better understand the language they have learned. Therefore, teachers could introduce some literature works to students or explain the cultural background that would be important for their reading. During the course of reading, students' intercultural awareness and competence could be well developed.

TV and movies can offer visual information that cannot be shown in books. They also can provide updated and comprehensive views of a culture. They connect learners with language and cultural issues closely. For example, there are a lot of cultural elements contained in English movies. If English learners could make good use of the information expressed in these English movies, it will be easier for them to pick up the idioms and slang contained in it, get familiar with both verbal and non-verbal behavior, and obtain wide range of messages about English culture. Teachers can make a list of the recommended TV and movies for students and let students share what they have got from TV and movies in

class.

Attending lectures is another effective way to develop students' intercultural awareness. Experts or foreign teachers can be invited to give lectures on certain topics related to culture or cross-cultural communication. After the lectures, teachers can hold discussions or debates among students and let students talk or write about their feelings about the lecture or the cultural differences they have learned.

#### VI. CONCLUSION

Through the tentative survey about the current condition of college students' cultural awareness, we can see that students' weak intercultural awareness may hinder their cultural learning and intercultural communication competence. For English learners in China, the key point of learning cultural knowledge and cultivating cultural awareness is to create a good learning environment for them. Teachers should change the conventional concepts, as well as the attitudes of regarding exams as the standard of evaluating students' ability. Instead, they should take their responsibility in giving directions, center on the purpose of "fostering students' communicative competence" and change their teaching concepts by adopting efficient methods and approaches. In this way, students can not only learn the language knowledge but also the social and cultural knowledge; not only develop the language ability but also the intercultural awareness, ultimately improving their intercultural communicative competence. Learning a foreign language and its culture is a long process. To develop students' intercultural awareness and the ability of intercultural communication is still a big challenge to scholars and teachers. Although this research has some limitations, such as small number of samples, it is just a start. And it shall be continued further and deeply for improvement in the future.

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**Chenlu Liu** was born in Nantong, China in 1981. She received her M.A. degree in English language and literature from Yangzhou University, China, in 2010.

She is currently a lecturer in School of Foreign Studies, Nantong University, China. Her research interests include English linguistics, language learning and teaching.

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- · Estimated number of papers to accept to the special issue
- Tentative time-table for the call for papers and reviews, including
  - o Submission of extended version
  - o Notification of acceptance
  - o Final submission due
  - Time to deliver final package to the publisher

If the proposal is for selected papers of a conference/workshop, the following information should be included as part of the proposal as well:

- · The name of the conference/workshop, and the URL of the event.
- · A brief description of the technical issues that the conference/workshop addresses, highlighting the relevance for the journal.
- A brief description of the event, including: number of submitted and accepted papers, and number of attendees. If these numbers are not
  yet available, please refer to previous events. First time conference/workshops, please report the estimated figures.
- Publisher and indexing of the conference proceedings.

If a proposal is accepted, the guest editor will be responsible for:

- · Preparing the "Call for Papers" to be included on the Journal's Web site.
- · Distribution of the Call for Papers broadly to various mailing lists and sites.
- Getting submissions, arranging review process, making decisions, and carrying out all correspondence with the authors. Authors should be informed the Author Guide.
- Providing us the completed and approved final versions of the papers formatted in the Journal's style, together with all authors' contact information.
- · Writing a one- or two-page introductory editorial to be published in the Special Issue.

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