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Loss and Gain: Revisiting the Roles of the First Language in Novice Adult Second Language Learning Classrooms

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Abstract—In order to further understand the roles of first language (L1) in second language (L2) classrooms and explore new potential pedagogical insights for second or foreign language teaching, this article presents an empirical study that explores the attitudes of foreign and second language teachers and students on the use of L1 in L2 classrooms. A small group of L2 teachers and L2 novice students from a public university in Alaska participated in a combined qualitative and quantitative study (survey, individual interviews, and a focus group interview) given by the researchers in 2013. The study shows that the majority of the participants hold a very positive outlook on using L1 in their L2 learning process and they believe that the use of L1 can help build a meaningful connection between their L1 and L2 that it can promote L2 students' understanding on L2 grammar, culture, and syntax (especially at the beginning level). Participants all agreed that L1 use can help L2 teachers to make instructions and assignments easier for L2 students to understand. The findings support previous studies on positive effects of L1 on L2 learning classroom. The study concludes that the use of L1 in L2 classrooms can be treated as a naturally occurring phenomenon at various levels and for a variety of teaching and learning purposes and that it should not be avoided but be monitored for its conducive effects in L2 classrooms.

Index Terms—L1 use in L2 classrooms, multi-competence, L2 learner attitudes, L2 teacher beliefs

I. INTRODUCTION

The controversy concerning L1 use in L2 classrooms has been going on since foreign and second language teaching became widespread in the 18th century. Based on the promising findings of the research on the positive effects of using L1 in L2 classrooms (Moore, 2013; Martin-Beltran, 2010; Deller & Rinvoluceri, 2002; and Cook, 2001), many L2 educators have encouraged the proper use of L1 in their L2 classrooms in different learning contexts. However, there are those who advocate total avoidance of L1 use in L2 classrooms. Additionally, much recent research has neglected the differences between L2 novice adult learners (i.e. studying the L2 from the very beginning) and L2 non-novice adult learners (i.e. having L2 learning experience from high schools or other secondary sources) when discussing L1 use in L2 classrooms. In order to further understand the positive functions of using L1 in L2 novice learners' classrooms and explore potential new pedagogical insights for second or foreign language teaching and learning, this article presents a study conducted at a public university in Alaska. Specifically, it investigates college L2 teachers' and L2 beginning foreign language learners' attitudes towards L1 use in foreign language classrooms and their attitudes on the benefits and drawbacks of using L1 (English) in their L2 (Chinese) classrooms. This paper is written from a background in teaching Chinese as a foreign language at a university in which L2 students are novice learners taking the L2 to meet a general education requirement in a U.S. university.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical and conceptual work, which informs this research includes arguments against L1 use, research supporting L1 use in L2 classrooms, and the multi-competence perspective (Cook, 2003) that provides a new lens for examining the L1 functions in the L2 classroom.

A. Arguments against L1 Use in L2 Classrooms

One argument against the use of L1 in L2 classrooms originates from the "naturalistic" language approach termed the Direct Method created by Charles Berlitz (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). This approach insists that L2 learning should be more like L1: much active oral interaction, spontaneous use of the language, no translation between L1 and L2, and little or no analysis of grammatical rules (Brown, 2000). Here, the implied reason for avoiding L1 use seems to be that when children learn their L1, they have no other language to depend on and, thus, L2 learners should avoid using their L1.

Another argument against L1 use in L2 learning comes from contrastive analysis (CA). Formulated by Lado (1957) and influenced by the behaviorist theories prevalent at the time, CA suggests that difficulties in acquiring a new(second) language are derived from the differences between the new language and the native (first) language of a language learner (cited in Kramsch, 2007). Such a phenomenon is usually known as negative transfer of L1 to L2. In its strongest formulation, the CA hypothesis suggests that all the errors made in learning the L2 can be attributed to ‘interference’ by L1 (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Even though it became clear later that CA could not predict all L2 learning difficulties and errors, it was still regarded as useful in retrospective explanation of L2 errors.

Then, during the 1980s, Krashen’s (1981) Input Hypothesis claims that “an important ‘condition for language acquisition to occur is that the acquirer understanding (via hearing or reading) input language that contains structure ‘a bit beyond’ his or her current level of competence.... If an acquirer is at stage or level i , the input he or she understands should contain $i+1$ ” (p. 100). As Brown (2000) suggests, “an important part of the Input Hypothesis is Krashen’s recommendation that speaking not be taught directly or very early in the language classroom. Speech will ‘emerge’ once the acquirer has built up enough comprehensible input ($i+1$)” (p, 278) from exposure to target language (TL). Indeed, many L2 educators believe that Krashen, in fact, suggests that language acquisition occurs through maximum exposure to comprehensible input, and, thus, L1 should be disallowed in the L2 classrooms (Piske & Young-Scholten, 2009). This maximum exposure theory provides another reason for many L2 educators to take a strong line in rejecting L1 in L2 classrooms (Ford, 2009).

B. Arguments in Support of L1 Use in L2 Classrooms

Despite some of the arguments above, the practitioners of second language teaching have found that there are many reasons that support L1 use in L2 teaching.

One comes from the fifth hypothesis of Krashen’s Monitor Model- the affective filter hypothesis (1981). This rationale suggests that students of a foreign language will filter or block out the target language if they become nervous, bored, and frustrated due to the difficulty of the target language. Logically, this seems to make sense because students who are confused become upset about, resentful at, and resistant to learning the target language. When this situation occurs, students’ language acquisition becomes extremely difficult. Meyer (2008) states that, to prevent this phenomenon from happening, it is imperative that the students comprehend what is happening both administratively in the classroom and pedagogically with the target language (p.148). He also states that it is the students’ comprehension of the language classroom environment that can lead to the lowered affective filters while using the students’ L1 can increase comprehension and lower affective filters (Meyer, 2008, p. 148). Likewise, Brown (2000) uses the concept of language anxiety to describe this kind affective filter in the L2 classroom and suggests that it is composed of communication apprehension, fear of negative social evaluation, and test anxiety (p. 151). However, by using students’ L1, all the three components of this language anxiety can be mitigated. For example, communication apprehension can be reduced through allowing students to use their L1 to fully express their thoughts and ideas during class. Thus, the fear of negative social evaluation can be lowered since they can communicate directly with each other more clearly and then make positive social impressions on one another (Brown, 2000). Additionally, allowing basic instructions to be given in L1 can also help reduce test anxiety because increased comprehension of classroom interaction acts to decrease anxiety and increase motivation (Meyer, 2008, p.151).

Another important rationale for using L1 in L2 classroom comes from Vygotsky’s (1978) sociocultural theory, which posits that social interaction is the driver of individual development of knowledge and cognitive processes (Moore, 2013). According to Lantolf and Appel (1994), Vygotsky’s focus on the role of language as a mediating tool in the development of childhood cognition has been particularly appropriate to second language acquisition, where language is both the mediation tool and the object of learning. Thus, as Moore (2013) argues, using L1 may increase learner interaction in L2 classroom related to sociocognitive negotiation of pedagogic roles, intersubjectivity, and intrapersonal constructs of inner and private speech. Moore (2013) believes that these constructs feature heavily in studies into L1 use in L2 classroom as there is evidence that learners naturally and inevitably draw on their L1 in both private and inner speech (p.241).

A third important reason why L1 should be used in L2 classroom is based on the schema theory which suggests that cognitive knowledge is organized into interrelated patterns. These patterns are built on an individual’s previous experience regarding a given aspect of the experiential world (such as their first language) and allow the individual to hypothesize about future experience (Meyer, 2013). In fact, Ausubel’s (1963) meaningful learning theory shares the similar rationale with the schema theory. He suggests that humans relate “new events or items to their existing cognitive concepts” (Brown, 2000, p. 83), and meaningful learning occurs when new material is related or anchored to “relevant established entities in cognitive structure” (Brown, 2000, p. 83). As Cook (2001) further points out, the use of schema in L2 learning is like accreting knowledge from instances of incomprehension embedded in the comprehensible (p.101).

Finally, Cook’s (2003) notion of multicompetence also provides some support for L1 use in L2 classroom. This theory suggests that second language users should not be viewed as imitation monolinguals in a second language; rather, they should be seen to possess unique forms of competence, or competencies, in their own right (Cook, 2003). Jarvis and Pavlenko (2008) claim that “[t]he multicompetence approach allows us to theorize the interaction between multiple languages in the speaker’s mind as a natural and ongoing process...” (p.17). Cook (2003) further suggests that a multicompetence perspective allows for languages to be viewed as part of a larger system rather as separate entities in a

learner's mind, and since L1 and L2 are in the same mind, they must form a language supersystem at some level other than being completely isolated systems. Similarly, Cenoz and Gorter (2008) explain that bilinguals and multilinguals can use languages in different ways because they can code-switch between languages and also because there is interaction between their competence in the different languages that form their linguistic repertoire (p. 272). One implication we can draw from Cook's multicompetence theory seems to be that students' L1 actually serves as a resource for their L2 learning rather than simply a negative transfer as traditionally defined. According to Lightbown and Spada (1999), most teachers and researchers do not doubt that students use knowledge of their first language (and other languages they may familiar with) to decipher the target language (as cited in Meyer, 2008, p. 152).

III. METHOD

A. Research Questions

1. What are beginning Chinese student learners' and beginning Chinese instructors' attitudes towards using their first language (English) in their second language (Mandarin Chinese) classrooms respectively?
2. What are the proper occasions for L1 to be used in L2 (Mandarin Chinese) classrooms? What is the proper time L1 should be avoided in L2 (Mandarin Chinese) classrooms?
3. What are the advantages of and disadvantages of using students' L1 in their L2 learning classrooms from the beginning Chinese student learners' perspective and from the beginning Chinese instructors' perspective respectively?

B. Participants

Twenty-one (21) full-time college students taking Introductory Chinese 101 at a public state university in Alaska participated in focus group interviews and a survey questionnaire. These students were at the first semester to learn Chinese (level 1) and were without any previous Chinese learning background. Five (5) instructors teaching Introductory Chinese 101 at the same university participated in the individual interviews. The instructors were all native speakers of Chinese language, which is different from that of the students'. Although most of them encouraged students to use L2 language (Chinese) whenever possible in and out of class within their abilities, the instructors themselves did use both English and Chinese to explain grammar and others.

C. Data Collection

During November 2012, one of the researchers conducted the student survey questionnaire on the university campus, and during December 2012, one of the researchers administered focus group interviews with the student participants and individual interviews with the instructor participants.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the research results and discusses the findings in the form of responses to the three research questions presented at the beginning of this article.

The research question 1 will be discussed first:

1. What are the beginning Chinese student learners' and the beginning Chinese Instructors' attitudes towards using student first language (English) in their second language (Mandarin Chinese) classrooms respectively?

First, the results of the focus group interviews with the students in Chinese 101 show that the participants held positive attitudes towards L1 use in L2 classrooms and believed that using their L1 (English) in their L2 classroom was helpful for the L2 learning process. During the 2012 focus group interview, all the student participants (seven) stated that they felt comfortable using L1 (English) in their L2 (Chinese) class, and six of them admitted that they used about 50% of their L1 (English) during their Chinese class period. All of them also claimed that they believed that their Chinese instructors should not avoid using L1 (English) in their L2 (Chinese) class, especially at the beginning level.

Additionally, the survey results with the student in Chinese 101 further demonstrate the participants' approval and positive attitudes towards using L1 in their L2 classes (see TABLE 1).

TABLE 1
THE RELATED SURVEY RESULT FROM CHINESE 101 (NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS=21)

Questions 5-9	Multiple Choices (N= the students who made the choices)				
	a	b	c	d	e
5. Do you think the appropriate use of the English language in second language class by your teacher is helpful for you learning?	Not much--1	Somewhat--2	Not sure--0	Indeed--7	Extremely--9
6. Do you agree that Chinese instructors should use Chinese only in class?	Disagree--8	Not sure--1	Somewhat agree--7	Agree--4	Strongly agree--0
7. Do you think English can help you construct knowledge and compare linguistic or cultural information between English and Chinese when you learn Chinese in and out of class?	Not much--0	Not sure--0	Somewhat helpful--3	Helpful--15	Very helpful--2
8. Do you use English language cues to help you understand the Chinese language or make notes?	Not very often--1	Sometimes--5	Frequently--8	Always--4	N/P
9. Do you use English language cues to help each other during the class teamwork or group study?	Not very often--3	Sometimes--4	Frequently--8	Always--4	N/P

The results of individual interviews with the Chinese instructor participants also show that the four of the five participants held a supportive attitude towards using L1 in L2 class. Most of them agreed that using L1 (English) in L2 (Chinese) was necessary and useful for them to help their L2 students learn Chinese. For example, 80% of them (three) described that during a L2 class period, their L1 usage might vary from 25%-50%. As one participant stated, “[s]ometimes, the students feel they understand the new language better when we use English during teaching...” (personal communication 3, December 3, 2012). Another claimed “[m]y students are new Chinese learners. They would like to have English to help them to understand” (personal communication 1, December 1. 2012). A third participant argued that when he or she used students’ L1 during the L2 class time, “[t]hey are secure and satisfied that they understand better about what I am teaching and they are catching the cultural as well as grammatical points” (personal communication 4, December 3, 2012). Furthermore, all of the instructor participants stated that they believed that L1 (English) should not be avoided in their L2 (Chinese) class. One participant stated “I don’t think so [avoid using L1]. It is really hard to explain the grammar points or cultural differences in Chinese sometimes, especially for the beginners” (personal communication 3, December 3, 2012). Another commented that “[u]sing English in teaching Chinese makes it easier for students understanding the study. [It is] more effective, especially for adult” (personal communication 4, December 4, 2012) while one interviewee pointed out that “[s]ometimes, using English helps students avoid misunderstanding” (personal communication 5, December 4, 2012).

It was remarkable that participants in both groups all realized the importance and necessity of using L1 in the beginning L2 classroom. This shared understanding on using L1 in the beginning L2 classrooms helps shed light on the participants’ approval and supportive attitudes towards using L1 in the novice L2 classrooms. The findings also further show that at the novice level, there is a natural tendency in which both L2 educators and L2 learners will turn to the L1 for assistance for various purposes such as lowering affective filters, providing scaffolding for novice learners, and making the classroom a more comprehensible place (Meyer, 2008). These findings tend to agree with several previous studies such as Anton and Dicamella (1998) who found L1- a useful psychological tool in the early stages of second language leaning. Brook and Donato (1994) also claim "L1 use is a normal psycholinguistic Language teaching process that facilitates L2 production , allows the learners both to initiate and sustain verbal interaction with one other" (p. 268).

In the following, the research question 2 will be discussed:

2. According to the instructors and the students respectively, what is the proper time for the L1 to be used in L2 (Mandarin Chinese) learning classroom? What is the proper time the L1 should be avoided in L2 (Mandarin Chinese) classroom?

The following TABLE 2 and TABLE 3 summarize the results based on the data analysis from the focus group interviews with the student participants and the individual interviews with the instructor participants in response to the second research question.

TABLE 2
THE RESULTS FROM THE STUDENT FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

The Proper Time or Occasions for Using L1 in L2 Classrooms	The Student Participants (N= 7)
-- When we learn vocabulary and sentence patterns, English can help us undusted words more and understand the structure more	The student participant 1
--When the teacher compares two languages and tell stories, English can help us remember the Chinese words better.	The student participant 2
-- When the teacher tells culturally related stories, English makes it easier for us to understand them.”	The student participant 4
-- When we need to ask questions, English helps us to express ourselves more clearly and understand the answers better.	The student participant 3

TABLE 3
THE RESULT FROM THE INSTRUCTOR INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

The Proper Time or Occasions for Using L1 in L2 Classrooms	The Instructor Participants (N= 5)
-- English was used when I assign students homework and make announcement.	The instructor participant 1
-- I use English when I teach difficult grammar rules and new words or after class when helping individual students with grammar usage.	The instructor participant 2 The instructor participant 4
-- When dealing with complicated language points and comparing the two cultures, I use English more.	The instructor participant 3 The instructor participant 4
-- I use English when I need to tell stories demonstrating some Chinese cultural themes and explain grammar.	The instructor participant 5

TABLE 2 and TABLE 3 show that students and instructors all agree that L1 (English) should be used in L2 (Chinese) classroom when dealing with grammar, culture, new words, and administrating class activities.

These results tend to agree with previous research on the positive functions of L1 in L2 classrooms (Schweers 1999; Atkinson, 1987; and Auerbach, 1993). For instance, Schweers’ (1999) study shows that L1 (Spanish) was used mainly in explaining difficult concepts such as grammar and new vocabulary. He explains that “starting with the L1 [Spanish] provides a sense of security and validates the learners’ lived experiences, allowing them to express themselves. The learner is then willing to experiment and take risks with English [L2]” (Schweers, 1999, p.7). Cianflone’s (2009) research on L1 use in English courses at the University of Messina in Italy also shows that the students and the teachers

were favorable to L1 use in terms of explanation of grammar, vocabulary items, difficult concepts and for general comprehension. He suggests that students preferred L1 use and teachers also subscribed to using L1 judiciously (Cianflone, 2009). Finally, the findings also support Swain's (2000) and Lapkin's (2000) assumption that L1 can help move the class tasks along, facilitating L2 classroom activities, particularly for low proficiency students and on complex class activities.

The following TABLE 4 and TABLE 5 summarize results from the focus group interviews with student participants and the individual interviews with the instructors in response to the proper time or occasions for avoiding L1 in the L2 classroom.

TABLE 4
THE RESULTS FROM THE STUDENT FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

The Proper Time or Occasions for Avoiding L1 to be Used in L2 Classrooms	The Student Participants (N= 5)
-- If our teacher speaks too much English in class, we won't learn Chinese.	The student participant 1
-- We need more Chinese input, so we can hear the tones and how it is supposed to be.	The student participant 2
-- Direction and housekeeping in English helps the lower level students understand better, as we progress, more Chinese can be used.	The student participant 4

TABLE 5
THE RESULTS FROM THE INDIVIDUAL INSTRUCTOR INTERVIEWS

The Proper Time or Occasions for Avoiding L1 to Be Used in L2 Classrooms	The Instructor Participants (N= 5)
-- If I must list one, it probably will be the situation when something can be easily understood by the students, I am still using English (L1) to explain, which makes the situation being more verbose.	The instructor participant 1
--When teaching vocabulary and texts, too much English (L1) may make students become dependent on their first language, but using Chinese (L2) properly in teaching will help students to concentrate in class and reinforce their language memory.	The instructor participant 2
--When teaching oral Chinese, it is better to use Chinese (L2) as much as possible. If English (L1) is used too often for instructions or explanations, students will most likely reply on their mother language too much, thus, missing the chances of practicing the new language, and thus limit students' exposure to Chinese (L2).	The instructor participant 3 The instructor participant 5
-- Some new words and expressions should not be taught in English (L1).	The instructor participant 4

TABLE 4 and TABLE 5 demonstrate that the instructors had a clearer impression of when not to use L1 than did the students. However, the findings show that both the students and instructors were aware of the possible negative effects of relying on L1 use in L2 classroom.

Finally, the research question 3 will be discussed:

3. What are the perceived major advantages of and disadvantages of using students' first language in their second language learning classrooms from the beginning Chinese student learners' perspective and from the beginning Chinese instructors' perspective respectively?

The results based on the data analysis on the two open questions from the survey with the student participants provide rich answers from the students. TABLE 6 and TABLE 7 summarize the student participants' opinions on the advantages and disadvantages in their L2 (Chinese) learning process when their L2 instructors use L1 (English) in the L2 (Chinese) classroom.

TABLE 6
SUMMARY OF THE STUDENT PARTICIPANTS' PERSPECTIVES ON ADVANTAGES OF USING L1 IN L2 CLASSROOMS

Type of Advantages of Using L1 in L2 Classrooms	The Student Participants (N= 21)
1). Helping build a connection between L1 and L2 that makes learning L2 easier 2). Helping L2 students understand L2 grammar, words, and meaning faster	-- When the teacher uses English along with the foreign language, it helps me make connections and understand the material better. If only Chinese is used, I become confused and frustrated because I can't connect the words with their meaning (The Participant 1). -- In the rare occasion that an idea is too far from my knowledge base, using English sets me on the right track (The Participant 6). -- I learn the words more by saying in English and Chinese, and also when we are building sentence structure (The Participant 9). -- Due to our limited exposure to Chinese vocabulary, sometimes the proper or improper usage are hard to define using only Chinese that we are familiar with, but using English bridges the gap (The Participant 15). -- The teacher knows how to explain Chinese words by comparing term to English words to help us understand better (The Participant 8). -- When the teacher uses the English cue, it's only to help describe the words that we are learning and how it applies in the language. I find this is very helpful in making sure I don't use the wrong words for the statement I'm making (The Participant 3). -- It is really hard to study Chinese, so the instructor uses both Chinese and English. Especially, this is beginning class, so English must be used to help understanding (The Participant 4). -- You can ask questions about the concepts you don't know (The Participant 11). -- You can ask the teacher about sentences and words for clarification (The Participant 17). -- To explain difficult aspects of grammar, it is very helpful to have our teacher help hard parts in English (The Participant 20).

TABLE 7

SUMMARY OF THE STUDENT PARTICIPANTS' PERSPECTIVES ON DISADVANTAGES OF USING L1 IN L2 CLASSROOMS

Type of Disadvantages of Using L1 in L2 Classrooms	The Student Participants (N= 21)
May making students rely on their L1, thus receiving less L2 input for L2 students to practice L2	-- It is disadvantageous speaking English because it takes the class out of a certain mindset, which makes it easier to learn foreign language (The Participant 14). -- It encourages people depend on English even when we have vocabulary in Chinese (The Participant 15). -- It becomes distracting; sometimes, I will wait until my professor uses English before I attempt to figure out what the word is (The Participant 19). -- If I stick with English, I will not be able to learn Chinese (The Participant 4).
No- disadvantage perception	-- Seven participants claimed that they believed that there was no disadvantage, and as one of them said 'I don't really think there is a disadvantage. When instructors use only the foreign language, I believe it actually makes the language harder to understand.'

TABLE 6 and TABLE 7 demonstrate that the student participants have identified two major advantages: using L1 in L2 classroom can not only help L2 learners build a connection between L1 and L2 but also help L2 students understand L2 grammar, words, and meaning. Additionally, only some of the participants believe that one major disadvantage of using L1 in L2 classroom is that it can make L2 students rely on their L1, thus receiving less L2 input to practice L2.

The results of the individual interviews with the instructors provide answers about the instructor's perspectives. TABLE 8 and TABLE 9 summarize the instructor participants' perspectives on the advantages and disadvantages when they use L1 in their L2 classrooms.

TABLE 8

SUMMARY OF THE INSTRUCTOR PARTICIPANTS' PERSPECTIVE ON ADVANTAGES OF USING L1 IN L2 CLASSROOMS

Type of Advantages of Using L1 in L2 Classrooms	The Instructor Participants (N= 5)
Being efficient in explaining language points and grammar, thus keeping class moving on easily	-- Sometimes, comparison of English and Chinese will help students to understand and remember Chinese language better (The instructor participant 3). -- Using English can save time on having students making guess on what teachers are trying to get across. Grammatical differences can be explained in a short amount of time to help students with a better unstinting between Chinese and English (The instructor participant 5)
Helping students understand instructions more quickly and easily and better receive the language knowledge	-- Since English is students' first language, using it makes class effective and help students better understand the teaching (The instructor participant 4).

TABLE 9

SUMMARY OF THE INSTRUCTOR PARTICIPANTS' PERSPECTIVE ON DISADVANTAGES OF USING L1 IN L2 CLASSROOMS

Type of Disadvantages of Using L1 in L2 Classrooms	The Instructor Participants (N= 5)
May limiting the important L2 language learning environment, thus impeding students' exposure to authenticity of L2 language	-- Using too much mother language will affect learning the new language; it slows down students' acceptance of another language (The participant 3). -- It may draw back the development of the target language logical system, which is a very important goal in helping the students to acquire the target language (The participant 1). -- Using L1 may result in students' less practice in L2 and then less language circumstance (The participant 4). -- Using L1 may reduce the opportunities for students to listen and speak Chinese but an L2 learning environment can help students focus on L2 learning better (The participant 4).

TABLE 8 and TABLE 9 demonstrate that the instructors saw two major advantages for L1 (English) in their L2 (Chinese) classrooms. One is that using L1 can help them efficiently explain language points and grammar, thus helping the class move easily. The other is that it can help students understand instructions quickly and easily, and thus students may better receive the language knowledge. However, they all agreed that the major disadvantage of using L1 in L2 classroom is that it can limit students' exposure to the authenticity of L2 language learning.

The findings for the third research question support Allford's (1999) conclusion that employing the mother tongue is entirely compatible with extensive use of the target language, which is being complemented, rather than undermined by cross-lingual comparisons (as cited in Crawford, 2004, p.16). These findings also support Martin-Beltran's views (2010) that, by using L1 in some L2 language contexts, the students were able to create a linguistic bridge, draw on multiple resources to meaningfully communicate, and create new opportunities for L2 learning. In other words, using L1 properly helped students engage in cross-linguistic comparisons, which can help them see the similarities and differences between the grammatical rules of two languages. Thus, they might understand L2 usage better. Just as Carless (2008) argues, consciousness-raising strategies in using L1 seek to raise student awareness of the formal property of a language feature. In such a case, Carless (2008) further explains that the L1 may help students to formulate hypotheses about language and support them in developing explicit understanding about how grammar operates in the L2. Similarly, Deller and Rinvulcri (2002) also suggest that students can profitably use L1 to make comparisons between the grammars of their first and second languages.

On the other hand, the results also raise some legitimate concerns such as what Carless (2008) describes, in that the “use of the L1 does seem to be a humanistic and learner centered strategy, with potential to support student learning, but at the same time involving a risk of failing to encourage L2 practice and communication” (p.336). So, clearly, we need to seek a balanced and flexible strategy of L1 use in the novice L2 classrooms.

V. CONCLUSION

This study shows that using L1 in L2 novice learners’ classrooms has more advantages than disadvantages. There are some pedagogical implications we can draw from this study. First, since both L2 instructors and L2 novice learners believe that using L1 in L2 student learning process is useful, they all need to develop a clearer awareness and understanding of how and when L1 naturally occurs in the context of the L2 beginning classroom (Moor, 2013) and how and when L1 use would benefit both L2 instructors and novice L2 learners most. Second, L2 instructors should treat the use of L1 at the novice L2 learners’ classroom as a transitory and facilitative strategy to assist beginning L2 learners to cope with their SL affective factors such as their frustrations and the new language challenges. Thus, the L2 instructors should avoid overusing L1 and minimize the possible negative effects of students receiving less L2 input due to the L1 exposure in class. Finally, drawing insight from Cook ‘s (2000) multicompetence perspective that L1 and L2 coexist and interact with each other in L2 learners’ minds, we can conclude that exploring L1’s positive functions in L2 learning process and applying them into L2 classrooms make for a worthwhile effort for both L2 instructors and beginning L2 students. Therefore, L2 teachers must not feel guilty when making necessary use of L1 in second language teaching (Halasa & Al-Manaseer, 2012), and L1 should be treated as a useful resource at the novice L2 learning classrooms for various purposes. We also recommend that future studies may focus on conducting comparative studies, in which they might compare learning results from classes encouraging L1 use in the L2 classrooms with those from classes discouraging L1 use in the second /foreign language classrooms. Thus, we may fully understand the loss and gain of using L1 in L2 classrooms.

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Effective Use of Performance-based Assessments to Identify English Knowledge and Skills of EFL Students in Ecuador

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Abstract—This paper seeks to understand how EFL teachers can effectively use performance-based assessments to determine the English knowledge and skills that EFL students have developed during the teaching-learning process. It also presents the advantages of this type of assessment as well as its challenges and the way these challenges can be overcome. Through this investigation, EFL teachers in Ecuador and around the world will be able to get valuable information that will guide their assessment practices in EFL classrooms.

Index Terms—performance-based assessments, authentic assessments, evaluation strategies, EFL education, education in Ecuador

I. INTRODUCTION

English is considered the predominant language of international commerce today. That is why Education Departments all around the world are working hard to improve English language learning in their schools (Glisan, Uribe & Adair-Hauck, 2007). However, since teaching and assessment go hand in hand, teaching cannot be truly effective if it is not directly connected to effective assessment as well. Actually, wrongly selected assessment tasks can severely damage teachers' hard work in creating efficient and supportive classrooms (Colley, 2008; Pinter, 2009; Rixon, 2000). Therefore, schools are looking for innovative assessment tools that connect assessment with teaching, strengthen instruction, provide feedback to learners, and improve students' knowledge and skills.

For many years, teachers have relied on standardized tests to evaluate students. However, research shows that these types of assessments do not always demonstrate what students really know (Colley, 2008; Speers, 2008). As several authors explain, traditional assessments like pencil-and-paper tests are usually reductionist and do not measure the extent to which students have acquired deeper understanding of a topic or if they have mastered complex skills like critical thinking or problem solving (Amrein & Berliner, 2002; Herrera, Morales & Murry, 2013; Volante, 2004). These kinds of evaluations do not always reveal what the students really know. Besides, they do not provide any information about the changes that teachers have to make in their classes in order to improve instruction or help unsuccessful students. In fact, several studies reveal that these tests cause high levels of anxiety and lead to losing interest in language learning (Bejarano & Gordon, 2009; Hasselgreen, 2005; Taylor, 2006). That is why it is necessary to implement a new assessment strategy that takes into consideration students' cognitive development, emphasizes what learners can do instead of what they cannot do, serves as a tool to diagnose learning and teaching problems, and has as its primary focus the continuous improvement of learning for all students (Bejarano & Gordon, 2009). Thus, advanced educators are trying to find effective assessment tools that go beyond paper-and-pencil formats to evaluate students appropriately.

Based on the requirements mentioned above, it is possible to conclude that performance-based assessments (PBA) are one of the most appropriate and effective evaluation strategies that can be used with EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students. According to Stiggins (2001), performance-based assessments represent a set of strategies that asks students to use their knowledge and skills to create a product or perform a task that is authentic and meaningful to them based on certain predetermined criteria. For instance, the tasks may include giving oral reports, writing essays, participating in interviews, among others. That is why government policies all around the world are increasingly requiring performance-based assessment in all areas of education, including language education (Glisan et al., 2007) since they are practical tools that can be used to improve education and positively impact learners and instructors.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The world has become a large global society. Thus, people live now in an interconnected civilization where communication between individuals from different countries is a constant need. Accordingly, English has become the predominant language of international communication and commerce. That is why many schools around the world have been trying to implement effective teaching and assessment practices to build upon students' abilities to use English in the fullest meaning of the term and in real contexts (McKay, 2006). Advanced educators recognize that it is necessary to

integrate assessment with curriculum and instruction. Also, they realize that effective assessment practices must promote “a practical rather than a theoretical command of the language” (McNamara, 2001, p. 334). That is why many of them have decided to start using authentic assessments.

A. *Authentic Assessments*

Evaluating students’ language products and processes without the use of tests has come to be known as alternative assessment (Yildirim & Orsdemir, 2013). According to Wiggins (1998), assessments are authentic if they test the learner’s knowledge and skills in real-world situations, promote doing a task rather than reciting memorized content, and give students the opportunity to rehearse, obtain feedback on, and strengthen performances and products. Therefore, authentic assessments provide an alternative for traditional evaluations, and include tasks that are relevant for both the teacher and the student. Actually, the students are actively involved in the evaluation process and may even contribute to the creation of the criteria used to assess their tasks.

When instructors implement authentic assessment in classrooms where English is taught as a foreign language (EFL), they give students the opportunity to demonstrate their active use of English to complete tasks or solve problems (Glisan et al., 2007; McKay, 2006). Therefore, they can motivate students to see English as a real means of communication. Besides, authentic assessments help teachers to monitor student learning and progress, identify learners’ strengths and weaknesses, collect evidence about what students really know and can do, monitor teaching effectiveness, and plan and modify instruction according to the students’ needs (Herrera et al., 2013; Stiggings, Arter, Chappuis & Chappuis, 2007). Evidently, instructors will choose an appropriate evaluation tool according to what they want to learn from the assessment. Thus, teachers can use different types of authentic assessments like portfolios, interview-based assessments, play-based assessments, cooperative group assessments, experiments, projects, student narratives, among others. However, this project is based on a specific type of authentic assessment, which is performance-based assessment.

B. *Performance-based Assessments*

Assessment based on performance is not a new concept in education. In fact, it is one of the oldest methods used to evaluate how well a student has mastered the material that has been presented in class (Colley, 2008; Speers, 2008). Nowadays, teachers who use this kind of assessment believe that students demonstrate their real learning and understanding by performing tasks or creating products. This is because performance-based assessments require students to use higher-order thinking skills like analysis, synthesis, problem solving, and critical thinking in order to create the responses or perform the tasks (Tsagari, 2004; VanTassel-Baska, 2013). Many educators also prefer to use performance-based assessments (PBAs) since they include meaningful, challenging, and engaging tasks that simulate real-world contexts, and combine language abilities with knowledge and skills of different content-areas. Besides, PBAs evaluate not only the final outcome but also the procedures and strategies used to obtain that outcome. Through performance-based assessments, students’ understanding and reasoning are tested to determine how well they can apply what they know (Glisan et al., 2007; Herrera et al., 2013). Therefore, these evaluation instruments provide information in depth about students’ knowledge and skills.

The philosophy behind performance-based assessment is that knowledge is constructed during learning, and that students discover knowledge for themselves rather than receive knowledge from the teacher (Glisan et al., 2007; Herrera et al., 2013). Also, unlike old traditional assessment practices, in which feedback meant returning test scores to students, in performance-based assessment practices, feedback is considered an important tool to improve student learning and teacher instruction. Actually, as William and Thompson (2007) mention, “performance-based assessments give teachers and students an implicit and explicit recipe to improve future action” (p. 12). Therefore, effective teachers commonly use PBA as a formative assessment tool to monitor and examine student progress from various perspectives and under different conditions during instruction.

There are several linguistic and cognitive theories that offer foundation for performance-based assessment. All of them emphasize the importance of evaluating EFL learners in communicative contexts, through authentic, contextualized, and challenging materials (Kasper et al., 2000). It is impossible to mention all the theories behind performance-based assessment. That is why I will only mention the most relevant philosophies related to this evaluation methodology.

C. *Foundation for Performance-based Assessment*

The literature related to performance-based assessment mentions several authors that support this evaluation strategy. According to all these scholars, effective assessment practices result on student motivation and enhanced learning. One of the most important intellectuals in this area is Stephen Krashen. Krashen’s Comprehensible Input Hypothesis explains that language can be easily acquired if it is taught through comprehensible input that is just beyond the learner’s current proficiency level (Krashen, 1981). That is exactly what PBA promotes. Teachers who evaluate students using performance-based assessments offer learners contextualized and meaningful contexts where students can demonstrate their authentic communicative skills.

Another relevant author is Vygotsky. According to Vygotsky, social interaction plays an important role in the learning process because learners construct the new language through socially mediated communication (as cited in

Wang, 2009). This idea is supported by Lightbrown & Spada (2006) who suggest that it is important to engage students in socially interactive activities that encourage them to communicate and express their intentions, thoughts, and opinions actively. Hence, this is another theoretical foundation for PBA since it evaluates students' communicative skills in real-world socially interactive contexts.

Finally, according to the environmentalist approach of second language acquisition defended by McLaughlin (1987) and Larsen-Freeman & Long (1991), learner's external environment serves as a stimulus for the process of learning. Thus, they suggest that the amount of contact that learners have with the target language and the degree to which they are exposed to it, influence their level of language development. Therefore, the closer a person is to the target language group, the more he will learn the language. This approach also supports the idea of using performance-based assessments in the classroom. When teachers use PBA, students are exposed as long as possible to the target language inside and outside the classroom because learners have to demonstrate the extent to which they can actually use the language in real contexts.

Based on the theories mentioned before, it is possible to conclude that performance-based assessments offer many benefits for teachers and students. Actually, several studies report the benefits obtained by implementing Performance-Based Assessments in EFL classrooms. In the following section, I will explain those benefits.

III. ADVANTAGES OF PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENTS

In recent years, there are abundant researches and articles that explore the benefits of performance-based assessments (Adair-Hauck, et al., 2006; Bekiroglu, 2008; Chan, 2008; Henning and Robinson, 2004; Liao, 2007; Miller & Linn, 2012; Pccheone et al., 2005). All those investigations conclude that PBAs help to measure complex learning outcomes that cannot be measured by other means, and provide tools for assessing the process or procedure as well as the product or result of the performing task.

According to Stiggins (2001), PBA involves students directly and deeply in their own learning process, and increases their confidence and motivation to learn since it emphasizes progress and achievement rather than failure and defeat. Furthermore, in performance-based assessments, students' work is compared to a set of criteria, not to other students' performance (Davies, 2000; William & Thompson, 2007). As a result, this kind of assessment promotes learning rather than assigning grades; that is why PBAs look more like teaching and less like testing. Therefore, performance-based assessments can be a learning experience in themselves; in fact, they can motivate EFL students to learn more about the target language.

Performance-based assessment also allows students to construct their own responses instead of choosing them from a list of options as it usually happens in multiple-choice and standardized tests. According to Gardner (2006), cognitive research indicates that most learning occurs in active rather than passive contexts, and that children construct knowledge from their interactions in the classroom. Consequently, this is a suitable and useful assessment tool to evaluate learners effectively.

Moreover, performance assessments offer teachers the opportunity to discover their own strengths and weaknesses. By using PBAs, teachers can reflect on their own teaching practices in order to identify their own deficiencies or determine if further emphasis is needed in certain areas of instruction (Speers, 2008; Stiggins, 2001). Actually, educators are better able to see all their deficiencies at the time they are assessing their students' performances.

Finally, performance-based assessments can be used to enhance instruction, determine what curriculum needs to be taught and at what level, identify appropriate strategies for grouping students, and recognize which core concepts should be emphasized or even retaught (VanTassel-Baska, 2013). Therefore, this kind of evaluation brings many benefits for EFL learners, especially those who are *culturally and linguistically diverse* (CLD).

A. Performance-based Assessment and Student Biography

Performance-based assessments are useful to evaluate culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) learners whose prior experience, language, and knowledge differ from those students from the dominant culture (Herrera et al., 2013). When dealing with CLD learners, teachers need to consider the unique characteristics of these students and try to understand how their language, culture, and background affect their learning processes. That is why, before assessing, educators should take into account several characteristics of these students like exposure to the language outside the school, previous educational experiences, and proficiency in the second language and in the native language (Gottlieb, 2006).

It is important to incorporate multicultural perspectives and culturally diverse resources in the assessment tasks used to evaluate CLD learners (Herrera et al., 2013; Ioannou-Georgiou & Pavlou, 2003; Stiggings et al., 2007). That is why, in these cases, performance-based assessments can be extremely useful since they scaffold student learning naturally and sequentially, allow learners to demonstrate their competency in different ways according to their own needs and preferences, make instructions comprehensible for students by using visuals, pictures, and diagrams, give learners the needed time to complete their tasks, and engage students in their own learning process. Consequently, as Colley (2008) says, "all those elements can motivate students to perform well and may account for cultural differences in a more equitable manner than it occurs in standard testing settings" (p. 69).

B. Benefits Reported in Several Studies

Several studies have reported the benefits of using performance-based assessments in class. For example, Adair, Glisan, Koda, Swender & Sandrok (2006) created a PBA prototype to identify the effects of implementing this tool on EFL classrooms. The results showed that performance-based assessments let students demonstrate their knowledge and skills in real-world situations, helped learners to develop their ability to communicate in another language, provided appropriate and timely feedback to students and other stakeholders like parents, authorities, program coordinators and administrators, and helped teachers to improve their instruction. The authors also reported that implementing PBAs encouraged teachers to create rich instructional contexts, and connect English with other disciplines.

These conclusions are supported by another research project conducted at the US Air Force Academy during the 2004-2005 academic year. The primary purpose of this study was to determine if using performance-based assessments had any effect on students' language learning process (Glisan et al., 2007). As a result, the article reported that PBAs improved students' oral skills and encouraged teachers to connect teaching, learning, and evaluation effectively. Evidence from this research project also supports previous studies on second language acquisition (Ellis, 2005; Lightbown & Spada, 2006; William and Thompson, 2007; Wong & VanPatten, 2003). According to these studies, when learners have the opportunity to use the language in real-world situations, they easily achieve higher levels of language performance.

Moreover, according to research conducted by Yildirim & Orsdemir (2013), performance-based assessments contribute to improve writing skills, increase vocabulary, reinforce grammar, develop motivation, and promote self-confidence in the use of language. These results support the idea that performance assessments offer many advantages since they improve learners' self-esteem, enhance motivation and learner involvement, and promote the improvement of teaching practices. However, implementing PBA in EFL classrooms also presents several challenges that will be explained in the next section.

IV. CHALLENGES OF PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENTS

Most assessment practices in the United States and many other countries are still traditional not only because instructors think it is challenging to make the change to more performance-based, open-ended formats, but also because they feel that these new evaluation tools require too much time to be designed, administered, and scored (Adair-Hauck et al., 2006; Colley, 2008; Stiggings et al., 2007). The development of this type of assessment involves creating the performance task, gathering materials and resources, and finally, implementing the evaluation. All of these activities take time. Linn & Miller (2005) also recognize that PBAs are time-consuming since students need a substantial amount of time to perform the tasks.

Designing complex assessments that are truly informative can also be difficult. According to Colley (2008), a major challenge in developing or using performance-based assessment is the standardization of scoring procedures. In performance tasks, there is a huge variety of possible solutions, answers, and procedures to obtain those answers. Due to this variability, it can be very difficult to evaluate student performance. Besides, for large-scale performance-based assessment at a district or state level, the costs of administering and scoring these evaluations are very high (Linn & Miller, 2005). Furthermore, for several authors, the most important limitation of performance-based assessment is that it is not possible to prove the validity and reliability of these kinds of evaluation tools. Actually, some say that scores and grades will probably change across teachers and across time (Stiggings et al., 2007; Yildirim & Orsdemir, 2013).

Teachers also need to be tutored to use performance-based assessments efficiently.

When educators have no instruction about the nature and application of PBAs, they are not well-equipped to employ these alternative assessment methods correctly (Clark & Gipps, 2000; Yildirim & Orsdemir, 2013). Therefore, they are not prepared to train their students in the use of this type of assessment. As a result, learners usually don't complete their tasks appropriately and the expected results are not obtained.

Finally, many teachers express indecision about using authentic assessments because they think these evaluation tools rarely provide information in numerical format. Therefore, many believe these strategies are good, but they don't know how to determine a grade for the content of the lesson (Herrera et al., 2011). To some extent, this point of view is reasonable because teachers are responsible for reporting grades and proving that a student has met a goal set by the curriculum or standards. Besides, the education system and policies usually restrict teachers' views of grading. Therefore, many educators are constantly worried since performance-based assessment focuses more on learning development than grading (Colley, 2008; Herrera et al., 2011). However, although all the challenges mentioned before are logical, most of them can be overcome if the assessments are designed appropriately.

V. FACING CHALLENGES

Most of the disadvantages mentioned above can be solved. For example, by using rubrics and check lists, teachers can equitably and accurately score students' performance. According to Herrera et al. (2011), before creating a rubric, teachers need to have a clear desired outcome in their minds. Also, they need to establish what knowledge and skills will be assessed, determine what a good or high-quality performance on this task might look like, and finally, create the rubric by describing the requirements that must be met in each level of performance. On the other hand, when using checklists, teachers have to identify the skills, knowledge, and competencies needed to perform the tasks, include them

in the checklist, and then use it to check the steps of the task that the student actually completed (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2012). Additionally, instructors need to check the assessments and rubrics regularly in order to determine if they are consistently measuring what they are supposed to measure. In this way, it will be possible to ensure the validity and reliability of the assessment tool.

Training teachers can also be helpful to use performance-based assessments efficiently. Training gives teachers the opportunity to enhance their knowledge about preparing alternative assessment tasks. Therefore, they will learn to value both effort and achievement of students during the language-learning process (McKay, 2006). Also, they will acquire the necessary skills to design rubrics and checklists with specific criteria linked to the intended learning objectives to enhance and evaluate student learning appropriately (Yildirim & Orsdemir, 2013).

Finally, even though designing performance-based assessments requires a substantial amount of time, it is possible to solve this problem if teachers work cooperatively. For example, teachers could exchange materials that exemplify various tasks and evaluation criteria. Consequently, if cooperation among teachers is encouraged in schools, it will be easier to design tasks and develop criteria for the design and evaluation of those tasks, and it will take less time to do it (Yildirim & Orsdemir, 2013).

In general, there are several steps teachers can follow to develop effective performance assessments. First, before developing a performance task, it is important to determine what knowledge and skills need to be assessed. Then, teachers have to decide what tasks will be used to identify if the objectives have been met, and describe how the ideal response will look like (Stiggins et al., 2007). Next, instructors need to create a set of evaluation criteria that is clearly understood by the students, and provide them a model response. Evidently, the rubric and scoring guide should be discussed with students before administering the assessment. Students can even participate in developing the rubric and the scoring guide (Herrera et al., 2007). After the assessment has been administered, educators must analyze the kind of responses the students produced. Finally, it is important to provide feedback. This feedback needs to be more than just a number (Linn & Miller, 2005). It needs to provide descriptive and constructive information that can help students and teachers to do better the next time.

A. *But What about the Grade?*

Scoring procedures vary depending on the focus and intended outcomes of the performance task. However, if teachers want to assign a grade for certain task developed in class, it is important to establish a clear rubric. As Arter & McTighe (2001) mention, rubrics are the best format to demonstrate learners' degrees of mastery. Actually, rubrics can measure accomplishment of the tasks in the four areas of language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. That is why students' performance is often scored by raters using a rubric that details the characteristics that must be present in a well-developed task (Moskal, 2003; VanTassel-Baska, 2013; Wang, 2009). Students are usually given the scoring rubrics to guide their own work and performance. Then, the teacher uses them to assess student performance at the completion of the task.

B. *Evaluation beyond a Letter/Number Grade*

First, it is important to understand that the appropriate assessment approach should always be based on the purpose of the assessment. Generally, if content mastery is being assessed, a paper-and-pencil test with close-ended items may be a good option. However, if higher-order thinking and problem solving are being assessed, a performance-based assessment would be more appropriate (Stiggins et al., 2007; VanTassel-Baska, 2013).

Performance assessments do not have a clear right or wrong answer, and do not determine which the best student in the class is. Instead, this kind of assessment tries to help all learners to do their best to improve their performance. That is why feedback is an important component of performance-based assessments (Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2002; Wang, 2009). Also, the main focus of these evaluations is to determine what the students have achieved, identify progress in student motivation and linguistic development, and inform teachers about appropriate accommodations for the students. Therefore, reflective teachers realize that "the most desirable goal of assessment is to move beyond a grade toward useful information about what knowledge has been gained, what capacities have been maximized, and what skills have been developed" (Herrera et al., 2007).

VI. PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT IN EFL CLASSROOMS IN ECUADOR

In Ecuador, MinEduc (Ministry of Education) recognizes the importance of developing students' communicative language skills since the primary function of language is to allow interaction and communication. MinEduc also believes that EFL classrooms should engage learners in authentic and meaningful activities that support the functional use of language (Ministry of Education, 2012). Actually, the English Curriculum in Ecuador states that "students should use the language productively (through speaking and writing) and receptively (through listening and reading) inside and outside the classroom" (Ministry of Education, 2012, p. 8). That is why it promotes classroom activities that equip students with the necessary skills to communicate in real contexts. In consequence, from this point of view, performance-based assessment is a suitable evaluation method that schools should implement to achieve the objectives established in the National English Curriculum Guidelines and to change and improve the traditional high school

language programs which are focused mainly on memorization of grammatical structures and vocabulary, and that are still widely used in many EFL classrooms in Ecuador.

In addition, performance-based assessments could be a practical tool to be used with culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) learners in Ecuador since this type of assessment gives students the opportunity to connect their interests and backgrounds with the class content. With this type of assessment, students are able to listen, read, write, and speak in English about topics that are connected to their real lives. Therefore, they will be motivated to learn English as it is something meaningful for them. Many people believe that Ecuador does not have a very diverse population as United States because there are not many immigrants or people coming from foreign countries. However, Ecuador is considered a multicultural and multiethnic country because of its diverse population. Even though most people are Mestizos, we can also find Afro-Ecuadorians, Quichuas, Awas, Tsatchilas, Chachis, Huancavilcas, Mantas, Epera, Cofan, Secoyas, Sionas, Huaorani, Zaparo, Achuar, and Shuar (Granda, 2003). Nevertheless, the culture background is not the only source of diversity in Ecuador. Cognitive abilities and learning styles are also important factors that contribute to the diversity of our classrooms. Consequently, it is important to be prepared to deal with all these types of diversities during instruction and assessment. That is why teachers in Ecuador need to provide students with personalized and authentic assessments like performance-based assessments that will scaffold their learning naturally and sequentially, and that will increase their confidence and motivation to learn.

VII. CONCLUSION

To be reflective and effective teachers, it is necessary to look at what we do from time to time in order to correct our mistakes and improve the teaching and assessment strategies we use in class. That is why the main objective of this paper was to guide teachers' professional practice in order to help them grow as educators. As teachers, we need to realize that it is important to constantly verify if the way we are teaching and assessing our students is appropriate, or if it is necessary to modify our instruction in a certain way. Besides, we all need to be aware that it is important keep up-to-date with current research on best practices for assessment of EFL students in order to provide them the support they need to succeed.

Lamentably, many secondary school language classrooms around the world, including Ecuador, continue to focus only on grammar and form instead of on meaning and communication (Adair-Hauck et al., 2006). That needs to be changed. It is time to use authentic assessments such as performance-based assessments more, since they are practical tools that can be used to improve education and positively impact learners and instructors. We need to start giving students the opportunity to show their knowledge and abilities through practical tools like essays, compositions, dialogues, interviews, role-plays, and others. In that way, it will be possible to take into consideration students' cognitive development, emphasize what learners can do instead of what they cannot do, diagnose learning and teaching problems, and focus on the continuous improvement of each learner which will lead, at the end, to the students' success.

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Bilingualism in Education

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Abstract—The article deals with the issue of bilingualism in education and highlights the significance of this linguistic phenomenon in the process of education. As knowledge of foreign languages is the key priority for any individual in the modern world, bilingualism, even multilingualism is supported in Azerbaijani system of education as well as in any country in the world. Considering great challenges learners face in the process of second language acquisition, there should be organized way for realization of bilingual education without damaging their linguistic psychology.

Index Terms—bilingualism, bilingual individuals, education, language acquisition, structured immersion, submersion, language awareness, language skills

I. INTRODUCTION

Knowledge of foreign languages is becoming one of the most significant requirements on the modern stage of the development of the system of education in any country in the world. It is the result of constant reforms and innovations in the sphere of education caused by scientific, political and economic changes taking place in the modern society as education serves to integration of nations to the world community and promotes to the solution of many global problems. Consequently, to achieve better results in modern science and technology, transition to bilingual education is inevitable and even in some cases crucial in the system of education.

Bilingualism gives a unique opportunity for cross-cultural communication between nations, promotes to mutual understanding and expands the individuals' outlook, makes them more aware of the processes taking place in the modern world, more humanistic and open-minded. Azerbaijan is not exclusion in this field. Bilingual education in Azerbaijan is one of the effective ways of teaching and learning which ends up with comprehensively developed individuals.

II. BILINGUALISM IN EDUCATION

We can speak about bilingualism even if there are a few bilingual individuals in the society focused in some part of the country, the amount of which might vary from small to a greater number. (Tej K. Bhatia, William C. Ritchie, 2006)

Educational aspect of bilingualism is of special significance in modern society in the period of globalization and serious changes taking place in the dynamic and developing world. Educational factor in bilingualism is not less actual in Linguistics. In the XXI century, when bilingual education is practiced in many countries of the world and the number of bilingual individuals is constantly growing, we observe gradual increase in requirements for teaching foreign languages in pre-school, secondary and tertiary education.

The role of the language in secondary education is shown as a means of acquiring knowledge and skills, also promotes to the development of thinking, at the same time the language is a subject and the aim of studying. (The problem of bilingualism and multilingualism., 1972) It is indisputable that the role of the mother tongue is irreplaceable in the function of knowledge and skills' acquisition since the individual learns, acquires new information and thinks in Language 1 already having had some definite language skills. When it comes to the learning of the foreign language, the individual mobilizes the whole potential for acquiring absolutely new theoretical and practical skills, characteristic to Language 2 which was unfamiliar before.

The cases when the pre-school children hardly speak Language 2 and parents enforce them to study, to get education in Language 2 are especially challenging both from educational and psychological points of view. Baker C. (2006) analyzing the case with the children of immigrants in the USA focuses on acquiring English language skills and finds learning English in the shortest period of time like one year "unrealistic" and even "damaging" for the learners. He fairly separates communication skills (on colloquial level) from academic English used in the English language classroom which implies challenging phrases, scientific terminology. Consequently, before studying in a foreign language, any bilingual individual should be competent in the language of education. For example, many Azerbaijani parents enforce their children to study in foreign language schools without any background language preparation. In such cases the process of learning is often ineffective, regardless of the development of cognitive skills and it leads to serious psychological complications even to the inferiority complex. In order to avoid such situations before choosing the language of education it is crucial to make sure that your child has a good command of the language, is able to express ideas and perceive the incoming information effectively. Besides the preliminary language background, learners' motivation which directly affects their beliefs about learning a foreign language in bilingualism is also significant. Studying motivational differences between monolinguals and bilinguals in the context of English as a

foreign language Rayhangul Ayat (2014) reveals major reasons for learning English for successful career, academic development “to act as a global citizen”.

The similar cases are observed in the United States of America, which is the country of immigrants and children from different countries and cultures have to study in American schools without any background of speaking English. Of course, the direct language environment is useful for quick adjusting to a foreign language atmosphere. However, “structured immersion”, that is exposing of the child to English with a language teacher works better rather than “submersion” which implies a foreign language environment without any support to the learner. (Tiersma P., 2010)

In Azerbaijan children belonging to the families of ethnic minorities living on the territory of our country – lezghins, talishes, avars, tats and others, experience such difficulties. Being the native speakers of their mother tongue (Lezghin, Talish, Avar, Tat, etc), such children face serious challenges studying at Azerbaijani or Russian language schools. To avoid such obstacles before starting school a 6 year-old pre-school child should definitely get in the appropriate Azerbaijani or Russian language environment for minimum 1 or 2 years to feel confident and perceive knowledge and skills in the language of education.

According to the ALA website ‘Language Awareness can be defined as explicit knowledge about language, and conscious perception and sensitivity in language learning, language teaching and language use’. (www.lexically.net/ala.htm) These requirements can easily be met in the process of teaching and learning interactively. A professional language teacher creates both learning and real-life language environment during the lesson to give the learners an opportunity to be exposed to the target language as much as possible and communicate using a foreign language a lot.

L.V.Sherba (1972) attached great importance to the mother tongue of the bilingual learner, considering that schoolchildren understand the meaning of the new word or language phenomena only in case when they find corresponding equivalents for them in their native language. We can agree with this view point regarding to the learning on lower levels of education, in primary classes. With the increase of the level of learning in Language 2 the necessity of making parallels with Language 1 gradually decreases, even disappears. After acquiring skills and abilities of independent thinking in the language of education by the bilingual learner, the ability to perceive the incoming information becomes direct. As a result of it, bilingual personalities are formed, that is very important in education and provides them with wide access to the heritage of the world culture, science and history.

R.C.Gardner’s (1985) approach to the second language acquisition is also related to the process of education and implies that his “socio-educational model” of the language acquisition is realized in a specific “cultural context”. It means that the process of the second language acquisition is affected by the particular beliefs of the corresponding community as well as individual abilities of learners.

Talking about bilingualism in education it is necessary to note the fact that education received by the bilingual individual is automatically perceived in two languages as the bilingual has one consciousness. It means that knowledge perceived in one language can be easily applied in the other language community when communicating in Language 2. This advantage enriches the bilingual individual’s life experience and increases his or her competency.

Taking into consideration the significant role of bilingual education in the system of education of the country, linguists summarize its following aims:

- 1) language unification and integration by means of the language;
- 2) bilingualism and dual culture;
- 3) achievement of mutual understanding and harmony between different language groups existing in the country;
- 4) promotion of the learners’ culture and increasing of their social and professional opportunities;
- 5) an opportunity to receive knowledge which the national learner is not able to provide;
- 6) providing the learners an opportunity to master the foreign language perfectly so that they could teach it and extend their professional chances on the international level. (Ciguan M., Manni U.F., 1990).

The above mentioned aims serve to the progressive development of the society and they are actual in the modern world of the integration of nations to the world community that motivates the individuals to bilingualism and bilingual education.

In modern Azerbaijan the citizens of the country have freedom of choice in the language of education. They are offered the choice between four languages of education: Azerbaijani, Turkish, English and Russian. However, in any case knowledge of the official language is compulsory. All necessary conditions for bilingual education and formation of the bilingual personality are provided in the country.

Based on the above mentioned facts, we can state that education strongly promotes to the development of bilingualism and promotes to the formation of comprehensively developed and educated bilingual individuals.

Thus, bilingualism is an actual issue both for linguists and methodologists in the sphere of teaching languages.

Relying upon the experience of working with the students (having Azerbaijani and Russian education) studying French, Azerbaijanian linguist B.Ismayilov (2013) claims that, for the best mastering of the foreign language (in this case French) using of similar and different features between languages that the student masters and a foreign language, works really well and considers the following methods of teaching French quite effectively:

- a) using of Azerbaijani for students studying in Russian and learning French on the phonetic level in assimilation of the sounds [f], [e],[c],[d];

- b) on the lexical level using of the words characteristic to Roman languages which exist in Russian for students studying in Azerbaijani language;
- c) on syntactical level in the same groups of students while teaching defining subordinate clauses;
- d) Cultural Linguistics;
- e) getting over the cases caused by the phenomena of interference also positively influence teaching the target language on condition of using significant amount of comparisons.

The above mentioned criteria are based on F.de Saussure's Theory. While learning a foreign language on later stages the individual has already got the fixed speech model of the native language which helps to compare the features of the target language with the mother tongue and to remember new phonemes, morphemes, grammatical structures, lexemes characteristic to Language 2.

From educational point of view the role of a foreign language teacher in mastering of Language 2 is great. The teacher has to motivate the students, generate interest and give the proper direction, not to complicate, vice versa to simplify the process of mastering a foreign language.

In the XXI century, when the knowledge of languages in the sphere of education is just necessary, at secondary schools and higher educational institutions there is a great demand for highly qualified and trained specialists teaching foreign languages using more effective and modern methods of teaching. Very often we witness the fact that some learners are taught a foreign language during 10 or 11 academic years, however, by the time of finishing secondary school they do not have the required skills of communicating in the target language.

Undoubtedly, it is very challenging to achieve equal success of mastering language skills for all learners as every learner has individual language abilities. Even in such cases it is possible to define every learner's learning style: audio, visual or kinesthetic styles, and to plan the lessons taking into consideration their psychological features accordingly, to design appropriate exercises suitable to the learners' learning styles.

We often claim that despite continuous learning of a foreign language both at comprehensive secondary and high schools of our country still the learners do not have a good command of the foreign language and find it challenging to communicate in a foreign language environment. Consequently, teachers of a foreign language besides linguistic aspect of teaching a language should focus on teaching how the foreign language functions in the context of interpersonal and intercultural communication. That is, how the native speakers use it in real life situations for effective communication considering cultural features of the target language country. As a result the learners acquire sociocultural competency that is important for their fluent and spontaneous communication in the foreign language.

If the teacher of a foreign language creates appropriate social, psychological pedagogical and necessary language environment at the lessons of a foreign language and uses effective methods of teaching, the process of learning Language 2 is realized in positive, friendly and "involuntary" language atmosphere that sooner or later will result in successful learning a foreign language. Only on condition if the learners have communication skills, understand and express their thoughts and feelings in the target language, we can speak about bilingualism in education. As the language of education is the source of acquiring necessary information, transmission and perception of knowledge. Without the above mentioned processes education is just not realized.

Today there is a right number of bilingual schools in Azerbaijan with education in Russian and English. In the north of Azerbaijan in Kusal region reside Lezghins, minor ethnic groups belonging to Caucasian ethnicities. In comprehensive schools of these regions, where the education is in Russian, one more extra subject is included in the curriculum – Lezghin language for children from Lezghin families. In such cases bilingualism is replaced by multilingualism as in the family children communicate in their native Lezghin language, in society they speak Azerbaijani which is the official language in Azerbaijan, at school the language of education is Russian.

It is practically impossible to arrange secondary schools, what is more, higher educational institutions for the representatives of minor ethnic groups as the number of learners is not quite enough to create such conditions. In such cases much depends on language environment of those individuals in the family and at school.

In the family with their parents such children, undoubtedly, communicate in their native language. At school for maintaining the equal level of Azerbaijani and Russian languages much depends on the teachers, how effectively they accustom such children to logical thinking, develop their critical thinking and create bilingualism.

For the last years, as it was mentioned before in Kusal region of the Azerbaijan Republic and in some villages, densely populated with Lezghins, Lezghin language is included in school curriculum, the learners are taught to read and write in their native language. This fact gives a unique opportunity to Lezghin children to study their native language and to pass their culture, history and language from generation to generation.

From the point of view of educational aspect bilingualism is successfully developing in Azerbaijan. Since the affiliation of the system of education of the Azerbaijan Republic to Bologna process, education in higher educational institutions in our country is conducted in English. The students who master the English language start studying from the first course of the higher educational institution, those who have difficulties with the foreign language improve their language skills on preparation courses.

Blanchet, P (2006), for example, is against the idea that acquiring new language skills is a "rare talent" characteristic to special individuals. So, any language can be acquired in the process of teaching and learning in the language

environment. Svalberg, A. M. (2007) attaches important role to classroom interaction irrelevant of being structured or informal in the area of Language Awareness research.

Ruilan Zhao (2015) also highlights collaborative learning among multilingual TESOL graduate students and in his research shows that educating in a foreign language interactively promotes to students' academic development.

Although there are opinions against bilingual education which claim that bilingual education is costly or it promotes minority language speakers to give up their own language or culture (www.sitemaker.umich.edu/137014) we can hardly agree with that because later when individuals finish school or graduate from University and realize that knowledge of minimum one foreign language is unavoidable in the modern world, they have to spend much more expenditures to acquire foreign language skills rather than they would have learnt it at an earlier age more effectively.

Concerning the loss of language and culture, we suppose that if a bilingual individual lives in his or her native country the chances to give up national features will surely reduce. Even in foreign countries there are special communities, embassies where bilingual individuals can be aware of their national language and cultural values.

One of the advantages of bilingual education is academic achievement and enhancing many spheres of knowledge that is challenging for monolinguals. (The Bilingual Education Controversy: A Road map //moramodules.com/Prop227/BERoadmap.htm). Knowledge of an additional language provides good foundation for successful future career and gives opportunities for further education in advanced educational institutions. So, nowadays not only highly-developed, but also developing countries support bilingual education.

Undoubtedly, bilingual education has its challenges as well. Bilingual individuals face certain difficulties until they master the L2 on the required level. Porter R.P. (1990) even suggests that bilingual learners should be taught basic subjects in their own language, not in English. Rossel, C. and Baker, R. (1996) in their research prove that "structured immersion", a special program for non-English speaking learners where they are taught separately and given instructions in English in an accessible way for them is much more effective than submersion, "sink or swim" principle when limited English-proficient students are placed in a regular English-speaking class.

To compare the learners who were exposed to foreign language before attending secondary school and those who got in a foreign language atmosphere by the principle "sink or swim", we explored the language background of the Azerbaijani children starting secondary school in their first year of education in Russian and English departments and observed their language awareness during the initial period of adaptation approximately for two months. Those who studied in Russian department were the learners of school number 212 situated in Baku, first graders whose parents chose English as the language of education were the learners of private Baku Special Talents' School as secondary education in English is provided only by private educational institutions in Azerbaijan. In both classes there were children of mixed language background: those who had a foreign language preparation with the tutor in the appropriate language environment and those who spoke only their native language – Azerbaijani.

The first month was just the period when the children got familiarized with school environment, their new classmates, and their first school teacher. For many of them, even for those who were absolutely incompetent in Russian or English languages, the atmosphere at school was attracting, interesting and very different from what they used to have at the kindergarten. Starting from the second month, we observed their academic progress. Approximately 20% of the children who faced their language of education for the first time at school showed very low rate of academic performance in comparison with those who were previously exposed to Russian or English languages. By the end of the second month their parents even were not able to enforce them to go to school. Children started ignoring school and had very negative associations with school and the learning process. Eventually, they absolutely refused to attend school and study. The rest 80% showed very intensive and successful academic progress as a result of language awareness and background preparation and were willing and enthusiastic to learn new information in Russian or English.

To prevent such undesirable and disastrous effect, children without any appropriate language skills to study in a foreign language should either be prepared for such psychological experiment in advance or separated from the more competent ones for some period of time not to cause serious psychological problems and neglect to education in general.

In our opinion, "structured immersion" is more beneficial for learners without any pressure or damage to their language psychology and encouraging to study in a foreign language environment not overloading them. This technique would work very well if in some foreign language schools the basic subjects were taught in learners' native language and gradually replaced by English.

III. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is necessary to mention that education plays the enormous role in the development of bilingualism and it is an important criterion in the formation of bilingual personality, his outlook and intellectual level.

Very often the language in which the bilingual individual educated, accompanies in all spheres of his life, and in some cases even dominates in the consciousness of the bilingual individual as during studying logical thinking is formed, which directly affects the consciousness of the bilingual individual, thinking in the language of education.

It is indisputable that knowledge of minimum one foreign language in the modern globalizing world is crucial. The phenomenon of bilingualism has many aspects. Educational aspect is one of the actual ones in the XXI century.

Bilingual individuals who have a chance to study in a foreign language have wider outlook, more cultural awareness and they are more outgoing which is essential nowadays. What is more, bilingual individuals educated in a foreign language have more career opportunities and can work in many other countries.

However, bilingual education has its challenges as well. Unless it is realized in proper conditions, it may damage the learners' psychology and lead to serious negative consequences.

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Genre Analysis and Reading Comprehension: The Potentials of Genre Analysis to Faster the Literacy Skills of Iraqi EFL Students

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Abstract—This study tried to utilize genre analysis with the focus on pedagogical matters and in this case reading comprehension. Effectively, genre as one of the factors which influence the process of reading comprehension is considered in this study especially in terms of schemata theory. To this end, 50 homogenous Iraqi EFL students were selected as the subjects of the study based on a version of TOEFL test. In fact, the selected subjects were 29 females and 21 males. The subjects were randomly divided into two groups of experimental and control—each with 25 subjects. Likewise, both groups went under a ten-hour instruction in which five reading passages were instructed—the experimental group through a blended approach based on the tenets of genre analysis and the control group through a traditional model. It is worth mentioning that the two groups took the same reading comprehension test before and after instruction. Finally, their gain scores were computed and analyzed in SPSS which resulted into supremacy of experimental group.

Index Terms—reading comprehension, genre analysis, schemata theory, TOEFL, experimental group, control group

I. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

English language as an international language has attracted the attention of many researchers among them literacy skills has received the paramount attention especially in the countries in which English is considered a foreign language. In effect, English as a foreign language was coined to address English in this type of countries like Iraq. Considering the fact that EFL students have little chance, if any, for using English in oral communication, the importance of literacy skills becomes clear. Hence, literacy skill has composed of two macro skills of reading and writing and this study deals with reading comprehension with the point of view of genre analysis.

Genre analysis, however a notion emerged in 1990s, recently has been considered to be implemented in the context of teaching language especially reading comprehension. Swales (1990) as a main figure in the domain of genre analysis views genre as "a collection of communicative events (which have) a shared set of communicative purposes" (p. 46). Hence, communicative purposes is a crucial issue in dealing with genre analysis. Bhatia (1993) underpins that "communicative purpose(s) determine the structure of the genre; should the purpose(s) change in a significant way, the genre would be different" (p. 14).

As far as the review of literature is concerned the notion of genre is fundamental in the process of reading comprehension, for example, students seem to do much better with the genres they are exposed and familiar with (Ammon, 1987; Carrell, 1981; Johnson, 1981, 1982; Langer, Barolome, Vasquez, & Lucas, 1990; Shimoda, 1989). Hence, one of the issues interfaces reading comprehension and genre analysis is schemata. The concept of schemata emphasizes on the reader's prior knowledge as well as on the active role played by the reader in the process of reading comprehension (Toledo, 2005).

In dealing with schemata, three types are considered, namely, thematic, linguistic, and formal (Carrell, 1983; Levine & Reves, 1994). Formal schema, which is the focus of the present study, deals with the knowledge about the formal characteristics of texts, structure and sequence of the text, genre types (e.g. expository, argumentative, etc.). In line with this dimension of schemata which is in harmony with genre analysis, Swales (1990) explicates that

A genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constraints choice of content and style. Communicative purpose is both a privileged criterion and one that operates to keep the scope of a genre as here conceived narrowly focused on comparable rhetorical action. In addition to purpose, exemplars of a genre exhibit various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience. If all high expectations are realized, the exemplar will be viewed as prototypical by the parent discourse community (p. 58).

Considering the aforementioned issues, the significance of the present study becomes clear. Considering the crucial emphasis put on the literacy skills in the countries like Iraq in which English is considered a foreign language; the

researcher endeavors to make a study in order to investigate the influence of teaching reading comprehension to Iraqi EFL students by a genre-based approach. The next section deals with the background knowledge of the study.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This part of the study deals with the review of literature in order to explicate the notions fundamental in doing this study.

A. Genre Analysis

Genre, according to Swales (1990), "comprises a class of communicative events" (p. 58). In Swales' (1990) perspective, genre is "a communicative event is one in which language plays both a significant and an indispensable role" (45). Communicative event, in effect, is a complicated concept which is composed of the discourse along with "the role of the discourse and the environment and culture surrounding it" (Swales, 1990, p. 46).

Swales (1990) considers genre as "a collection of communicative events (with) a shared set of communicative purposes" (p. 46). In fact, genre emphasizes on the "shared purpose rather than on similarities of form or some other criterion" (Swales, 1990, p.46). Accordingly, "exemplars or instances of genres vary in their prototypicality" (Swales, 1990, p. 49), which "what holds shared membership together [may not be] a shared list of defining features, but inter-relationships of a somewhat looser kind" (Swales, 1990, pp. 49-50).

It is worth mentioning that existence of some particular conditions and contexts are crucial. In fact "the rationale behind a genre establishes constraints on allowable contributions in terms of their content, positioning and form" (Swales, 1990, p. 52). It means that these rationales "provide limitations and constraints to the specific form of the genre" (Swales, 1990, p. 52).

Bhatia (1993) in dealing with genre, points out that the essence of a genre "is primarily characterized by the communicative purpose(s) that it is intended to fulfil" (p. 13). For Bhatia (1993) "communicative purpose(s) determine the structure of the genre; should the purpose(s) change in a significant way, the genre would be different" (p. 14).

Bhatia (1993) undermines that "although the writer has a lot of freedom to use linguistic resources ..., he must conform to certain standard practices within the boundaries of a particular genre" (Bhatia, 1993, p. 14). It means that there are certain differences between different genres like poems, news articles, discourses of movies or advertisements which "enables the reader to distinguish between genres which may seem to be related, e.g. a newspaper editorial and a news report (Bhatia, 1993, p. 14). Bhatia (1993) illustrates that "each genre is an instance of a successful achievement of a specific communicative purpose using conventionalized knowledge of linguistic and discursal resources." (p. 15).

Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995), on the other hand, argue that "genres are intimately linked to a discipline's methodology, and they package information in ways that conform to a discipline's norms, values, and ideology" (p. 1). Bhatia (2004). In a similar vein, clarifies that

In more recent years, genre analysis has developed further in the direction of a more comprehensive exploration of social space to raise a number of other interesting issues, in particular those that question some of the basic assumptions about the integrity of generic descriptions.' (p. 22)

In a nutshell, genre is a notion, which according to Bhatia (2004), refers to language use in a conventionalized communicative setting in order to give expression to a specific set of communicative goals of a disciplinary or social institution, which give rise to stable structural forms by imposing constraints on the use of lexico-grammatical as well as discursal resources.' (p. 23).

So far, the concept of genre was clarified; but what does genre analysis mean? The following sheds light on the genre analysis in details.

Genre analysis, in particular, deals with analyzing and investigating the linguistic and non-linguistic features and elements of different discourses. Bhatia's (1993), for example, follows a "multidisciplinary activity" (p. 16) which "from the point of view of the analysis of functional variation in language, one envisages at least three different kinds of orientation, depending upon the nature of background knowledge and the motivating purpose the researcher brings to genre analysis" (pp. 16-17).

Multidisciplinary approaches to genre analysis, according to Bhatia (1993) "tend to associate certain specific features of language with certain types of writing or styles. However, very few of them distinguished a variety (or register) from a genre" (p. 17). It should be pointed out that "analyses of varieties or registers on their own reveal very little about the true nature of genres and about the way social purposes are accomplished in and through them in settings in which they are used." (Bhatia, 1993, p. 18)

Generally, for Bhatia (1993), genre analysis is multilayered composed of different levels including linguistic, social, or psychological. It is clear that genre analysis, in Bhatia (1993) perspective, needs to be considered within the constraints of social frame. Which implicitly denotes that "text by itself is not a complete object possessing meaning on its own; it is to be regarded as an ongoing process of negotiation" (Bhatia, 1993, p. 18).

Bhatia states that "the sociological aspect of genre analysis focuses on the conventional and often standardized features of genre construction" (Bhatia, 1993, p.19).

Psychological level of genre analysis, according to Bhatia (1993), has composed of two sub-categories, namely, psychological and tactical. whereas, "the psycholinguistic aspect of genre analysis reveals the cognitive structuring,

typical of particular areas of enquiry, the tactical aspect of genre description highlights the individual strategic choices made by the writer in order to execute his or her intention.' (Bhatia, 1993, p. 19). Tactical choices which are utilized by the writer attempt "to make the writing more effective, keeping in mind any special reader requirements" (Bhatia, 1993, p. 20).

In a nutshell, genre is an obscure concept which means that it is nearly "impossible to draw up clearly defined criteria to make a satisfactory distinction between genres and sub-genres" (Bhatia, 1993, p. 21).

B. Reading Comprehension

Clarifying the concept of reading comprehension is also crucial for this study. Goodman (1967) states that "skill in reading involves not greater precision [of the graphic input], but more accurate first guesses based on better sampling techniques, greater control over language structure, broadened experiences and increased conceptual development" (p. 132). One of the issues which clarifies the relation between reading comprehension and genre analysis is the notion of cognitive structures which demands three elements of the readers, the text, and the interaction between the text and the readers (Rumelhart, 1977).

Cognitive constructs, according to Cook (1989), refers to the knowledge stored in mind in different large structures. In this regard, Cook (1989) explicates that "the mind, stimulated by key words or phrases in the text or by the context, activates a knowledge schema" (p. 69). In fact, schemata is a crucial element in the process of reading comprehension (Bartlett, 1932).

Bartlett (1932) argues that schema "active organizations of past reactions and experiences which are always operating in any well-developed organism" (P.201). Likewise, schemata sheds light on world knowledge, linguistic knowledge, as well as knowledge of texts and forms, i.e. genre are, in effect, the domains which highlight the relationships between genre and reading comprehension (Widdowson, 1983; Cook, 1989).

Rumelhart (1980), in a similar vein, states that structures play as "a network of interrelations that is believed to normally hold among the constituents of the concept in question" (p.34). These structures, in effect, are "the generic concept (which) stored in memory" (p. 171).

It should be noted that there are different types of schemata and content schema which refers to the background knowledge the readers bring with themselves lighten the role of genre through rhetoric, language structures, lexical resources, or grammatical features (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1983; Carrell, Pharis, & Liberto, 1989).

Fowler (1989) points out that "readers learn genres gradually, usually through unconscious familiarization" (Fowler, 1989, p. 215) which makes "possible the communication of content" (Fowler, 1989, p.215). it means that the notion of genre makes a comparison between the text and the readers "which set up expectations on each side for the form of the communication..., its functions..., its epistemology..., and the communicative frame (e.g. the participants, the power of the viewer, the openness of the text, and the role of the reader)" (Livingstone, 1994, pp. 252-3).

Livingstone (1994), in a similar vein, shows that different genres demands different types of interaction between text and reader which, in turn, lead to different types of involvement, i.e. "critical or accepting, resisting or validating, casual or concentrated, apathetic or motivated" (Livingstone, 1994, p. 253).

Scott (2009) argues that there are "considerable variability regarding what counts as reading comprehension instruction", "fundamental disjuncture between how leading literacy scholars define reading comprehension and how reading comprehension is conceptualized in other resources" as well as superficial ways of "teaching reading comprehension" (p. xi).

Toledo (2005), also, emphasizes on the relation between the process of reading comprehension and the notion of genre. He argues that "the comprehension of textual macrostructure does not necessarily imply comprehension along essential dimensions such as the text's communicative or pragmatic function" (Toledo, 2005, p. 1). Toledo (2005) explicates that reading comprehension is highly influenced by different types of typology the students are exposed with and are familiar with along with their background knowledge which is heavily influenced by genre analysis.

Furthermore, Wolfe (2009) considers "understanding of technical communication practice by analyzing the organizational and social context in which writing takes place" (p. 292) as crucial for the process of reading comprehension.

The next section clarifies the characteristics of the participants, model, and statistical procedures on data analysis.

III. METHODOLOGY

This part of the paper deals with the methodology based on which this study is conducted.

A. Participants

The participants of the study were 45 Iraqi EFL students who were studying English language in the University of Samarra. The 45 selected subjects were homogenous in terms of their native language, i.e. Arabic, the credit hours they have passed, with the age range between 19 and 24. In order to guarantee wider generalization the genre was also considered as a variable.

B. Procedure

In order to select the most homogenous Iraqi EFL students, a version of TOEFL test was administered among 60 ones out of them 45 ones whose scores were one standard deviation above and below the mean score were included. The selected subjects were randomly divided into two groups of experimental and control. All subjects in the both groups took a reading comprehension test which composed of 50 questions and the same reading comprehension test after they went under a thirty-hour instruction during 3 months, two sessions for a week. The subjects' scores in the pretest and posttest were subtracted which resulted into the gain scores based on which t-test statistic was administered to determine the significant or non-significant differences between the two groups of experimental who was instructed based on the principles of genre analysis and the control group who was instructed by a traditional approach to reading comprehension.

C. Teaching Method

Teaching reading comprehension to the both groups composed of three phases of pre-reading, during-reading and post-reading. The both groups were similar in terms of teaching however the experimental group received some instruction regarding the moves which occlude in the reading passages like description, sequence, comparison, cause and effect, as well as problem and solution. For example, the experimental group was instructed that the expressions like *for example, for instance, such as, including, to illustrate* describe the text; or the expressions like *first, second, next* deal with the sequence in the text; or the expressions *however, on the other hand, also, yet* make a comparison in the text; furthermore, the expressions of *if then, therefore, as a result, because* illustrate cause and effect in the text; finally, the expressions of *problem is, dilemma is, so that* are related to problem and solution.

IV. RESULTS

This part of the study deals with the results obtained. It was mentioned that 60 Iraqi EFL students participated in the study out of them the homogenous ones whose scores from the proficiency test were one standard deviation above and below the mean score were included. As table 1 sheds light on.

The sixty participants took the proficiency test which resulted into the mean score of 37.30 and the standard deviation of 0.64.

TABLE 1
PROFICIENCY TEST AND THE PERFORMANCE OF THE SUBJECTS

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
proficiency	60	36.00	39.00	37.3000	.64572
Valid N	60				

Hence, the 45 participants whose scores were between one standard deviation above and below the mean score were included. They were randomly divided into two groups of experimental and control as table 2 shows:

TABLE 2
PROFICIENCY TEST AND THE PERFORMANCES OF THE TWO GROUPS: EXPERIMENTAL VS. CONTROL

group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
proficiency =exp.	22	37.1364	.56023	.11944
=ctrl	23	37.3913	.78272	.16321

As table 2 shows the experimental group composed of 22 students with the mean score of 37.13 and the standard deviation of 0.56. Whereas, the control group had the mean score of 37.39 and the standard deviation of 0.78. To determine whether the differences between the two groups is non-significant at the start of the study, t-test statistic was administered on the data achieved by the proficiency test as table 3 shows:

TABLE 3
T-TEST AND PROFICIENCY TEST: EXPERIMENTAL VS. CONTROL

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
proficiency	Equal variances assumed	5.800	.020	-1.251	43	.218	-.25494	.20373	-.66581	.15593
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.261	39.889	.215	-.25494	.20224	-.66373	.15385

As table 3 shows the sig-value is quite above 0.05 which indicated to the non-significant differences between the performance of the two groups of experimental and control on the proficiency test. The following tables (table 4) shed light on the descriptive statistics of the performance of the two groups on pre-test.

TABLE 4

POST-TEST: EXPERIMENTAL VS. CONTROL					
	group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post-test	=exp.	22	24.4545	.59580	.12703
	=ctrl	23	24.4783	.59311	.12367

As the table shows the experimental group had the mean score of 22.24 and the standard deviation of 0.59. Furthermore, the mean score of the control group was 24.47 and their standard deviation is 0.59.

TABLE 5

POST-TEST: EXPERIMENTAL VS. CONTROL					
	group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post-test	=exp.	22	38.6364	.49237	.10497
	=ctrl	23	33.5652	.50687	.10569

Moreover, the experimental group and the control group had the mean scores of 38.63 and 33.56 on the post-test respectively. In order to determine whether the differences between the two groups after going under instruction is significant or not, t-test statistic was administered on the gain scores which were achieved by extracting the pre-scores from the post-scores as table 6 shows:

TABLE 6

T-TEST AND GAIN SCORE: EXPERIMENTAL VS. CONTROL

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Gain score	Equal variances assumed	.616	.437	21.521	43	.000	5.09486	.23674	4.61743	5.57229
	Equal variances not assumed			21.520	42.900	.000	5.09486	.23676	4.61737	5.57236

As table 6 shows the p-value is 0.00 which is quite below the cut score of 0.05 which indicated to the significant differences between the performances of the two groups. Considering the statistical differences in which the mean score of the experimental group is higher shed light on the positive influence of genre analysis on the reading comprehension of Iraqi EFL students.

TABLE 7

GAIN SCORE: EXPERIMENTAL VS. CONTROL

	group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
gain score	=exp.	23	14.1818	.79501	.16950
	=ctrl	22	9.0870	.79275	.16530

Finally, the gain scores were analyzed in terms of gender as table 8 shows.

TABLE 8

T-TEST AND POST-TEST: FEMALE VS. MALE

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Gain score	Equal variances assumed	5.669	.022	-.141	43	.888	-.11462	.81204	-1.75226	1.52301
	Equal variances not assumed			-.142	42.074	.888	-.11462	.80848	-1.74612	1.51687

As table 3 shows the sig-value is quite above 0.05 which indicated to the non-significant differences between the performances of the two genders. Table 9 shows the descriptive statistics of the two genders:

TABLE 9

GAIN SCORE: FEMALE VS. MALE

	gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Gain score	=female	23	11.5217	2.96755	.61878
	=male	22	11.6364	2.44064	.52035

According to table 9, females had the mean for the gain scores of 11.52 and the males showed the mean score for the gain scores of 11.63 which is similar.

V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

This study concluded that genre-based instruction influences the students' reading comprehension. It seems that genre instruction influences the process of reading comprehension positively because of the consciousness raising provides for the students when expose to reading passages. Furthermore, the results of the study showed that gender is not playing any role because the performances of the two genders were almost similar.

Hence, the results of this study are beneficial for language learners, language teachers, as well as course designers. For example, genre instruction helps the students to have a more comprehensive reading comprehension by accessing to the deeper meaning and reason for vocabulary selection and design.

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The Effect of Using Authentic Materials on Iranian EFL Learners' Vocabulary Learning

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Abstract—Vocabulary learning is one of the most important aspects of second language learning. One controversial way of teaching vocabulary is using authentic materials. The current study focused on teaching vocabulary using authentic materials and its influence on learners' vocabulary achievement. To this end, a population of 80 female Iranian EFL learners aged 17 to 20 from an institute in Bushehr were selected. All of them received Oxford Proficiency Test (OPT). Following the administration of OPT, those whose scores ranged between 105 and 119 (elementary level) were chosen for the purpose of the study. After the OPT only 66 participants were left for both experimental and control groups. Both groups received a pretest at the first session. After that the participants attended the English classes 3 times a week for a month. Every session took one hour. The control group received new vocabularies through their textbook (English Result) in each session and the experimental group received the same vocabularies through The New Straits Time online paper in each session. The students were asked to read and talked about the topics. After a month post-tests were run among all of the participants in both control and experimental groups. The analysis of data showed that the vocabulary knowledge of the participants developed in both groups but the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group.

Index Terms—authentic material, vocabulary learning, textbooks, vocabulary achievement

I. INTRODUCTION

The knowledge of words includes explanations of word meanings. A word is a combination of sounds or written symbols which communicates a meaning (Ying, 2010). In the world of language, words play a fundamental role. Words are the building blocks of languages because they help their users convey their desired meaning (Lotfi, 2007).

Experience shows that communication will be meaningful if learners have enough knowledge of the vocabulary and use it appropriately. It is believed that vocabulary acquisition is one of the fundamental and significant components for foreign and second language comprehensibility (Lewise, 1993). Richards and Renandya (2002) held that the core component of language proficiency is vocabulary and it makes the basis for how well learners of a language speak, listen, read, and write. Language skills cannot be acquired and proceed appropriately without vocabulary acquisition (Wilkins, 1972).

Different theorists and researchers in the field have emphasized the significant role of vocabulary knowledge in second or foreign language learning. Therefore, great numbers of approaches, techniques, strategies, exercises and practice have been introduced to teach vocabulary (Hatch & Brown, 1995). Ellis (1985) defined learning strategies as the mental processes of acquiring and using the L2 and the ways that learners accumulate new L2 rules and automate existing ones; this process could be conscious or subconscious. Learning strategies referred to the techniques, approaches, methods, or intentional actions which learners take to learn the target language (Ying, 2010).

In the mid-1970s, communicative approaches to language teaching mentioned that language learners needed skills to be able to encounter the real world. Most language institutes and teachers tried to make their teaching communicative in order to be suitable for real situation. To this end, students needed to have an adequate knowledge of vocabulary in addition to other language skills. The use of authentic materials in EFL classes started in 1970s as a result of the spread of the Communicative Language Teaching Approach. Authentic materials became the main part in syllabus design, task based approaches, materials development and the main Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Bax, 2003). Communicative language teaching approach changes the view of syllabus designers toward English subjects, from just a language to be learned like other subjects in the school, to a very important tool of communication inside and outside the classroom (Al Azri & Al-Rashdi, 2014). Freeman (2000) stated that one of the characteristics of communicative language teaching is using authentic materials.

According to what has been said by Krashen (1987) learners should be in an acquisition rich environment and in natural exposure to language. Nunan (1999) mentioned that learners should listen and read authentic data as much as possible in order to prevent difficulty in their learning task. In addition to bringing reality to classrooms, authentic materials can present motivation, cultural awareness, giving real exposure, creative teaching (Peacock 1997). Authentic materials help and motivate the learners by bringing the content to life for them, and giving them the opportunity to connect the classroom world to the outer world (Peacock 1997).

The necessity for the development of intervention programs that boost vocabulary in students with poor vocabulary knowledge seems inevitable. Despite the importance of vocabulary acquisition which has been mentioned by different scholars, there is no general agreement on how vocabulary should be taught. Vocabulary knowledge, despite its prominent roles which play in language production and recognition, has been ignored in some language learning programs.

Vocabulary knowledge seems to be one of the most important language components that Iranian students need to achieve to be able to communicate well. It is supposed that the lack of vocabulary knowledge can cause communication failure. Unfortunately, it seems that Iranian students are still weak in learning vocabulary and experiences have shown that many students have problem in learning vocabulary in Iran. Iranian learners live in an EFL environment, lacking the opportunities to acquire through exposure to authentic materials. It is found that the teachers focus only on textbooks and workbooks in teaching vocabularies.

Therefore, it is important to provide Iranian EFL classes with programs which prepare students with suitable vocabulary knowledge in such contexts by implementing authentic vocabulary materials in the EFL classes.

It is believed that vocabulary knowledge plays a significant role in daily communication and educational process. This study aimed to contribute to the literature on material development in EFL classes. It focused on teaching vocabulary with the use of authentic materials and its influence on learner achievement and improvement of vocabulary. Hopefully, this study could present a framework for vocabulary teaching in EFL classes.

Learners might benefit from the results because it is believed that authentic material can bring autonomy in learning. The findings might help the teachers design and develop their new program and curricula in vocabulary teaching in order to be able to provide the learners with the best vocabulary achievement. It would be helpful for general English teachers to apply authentic materials in ESL/EFL classrooms. Syllabus designers and course planners can rely on the results of this study to design a course syllable and teaching methodology focusing on the authentic materials in order to help students in English vocabulary. Authentic vocabulary materials can give an extra capacity to teachers, learners, schools and educational policy makers to encounter vocabulary learning more effectively.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to contribute to the literature on material development in EFL classes. It focused on vocabulary teaching with the use of authentic materials and its influence on learner achievement and improvement of vocabulary. This study was conducted to investigate the effect of using authentic materials on vocabulary learning among Iranian EFL learners. Therefore, the following research questions and hypothesis were presented:

1. Does using authentic material affect students' vocabulary acquisition?
2. Is there any difference between using authentic materials and the traditional way of teaching vocabulary on vocabulary acquisition among Iranian EFL learners?

Based on the above research questions, the following null hypotheses were formulated in this study:

H01: using authentic materials does not affect vocabulary learning of Iranian EFL learners.

H02: there is no difference between using authentic materials or the traditional way of teaching vocabulary on vocabulary acquisition among Iranian EFL learners.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Different studies have been conducted in different parts of the world and in Iran as well. The researcher chose very few of them to mention.

Karimi and dolatabadi (2014) investigated the effect of authentic materials on listening comprehension of lower intermediate Iranian learners. They conducted a survey of 50 Iranian students at Arak University, Iran. The design of the study was quasi-experimental in which one experimental group and one control groups were involved. After the treatment, the test scores of two groups were compared. The results revealed that the EFL students frequently used paying attention when someone was speaking English, and asking the other person to say again if they did not understand something as their main metacognitive strategies. It was also shown that implementing authentic materials in EFL listening class improved the students' attitudes towards language learning. Moreover, the listening comprehension in EFL students improved after they listened to authentic listening materials in class.

Zoghi, Moradian, and Kazemi, (2014) investigated how authentic materials facilitated vocabulary development. 50 IELTS student were randomly selected. IELTS classes were observed several times and then a self-reported questionnaire was distributed to all students of chosen classes. The findings indicated that majority of the students preferred using authentic materials for vocabulary acquisition because by using authentic material students dealt with

outside, real world, they became interested when dealt with real language, became familiar with the culture of target language, and authentic materials increased their motivation for learning second language.

Norafkan (2013) investigated the effect of exposure to authentic and computer assisted language learning-based English materials on learners' metaphorical competence and conceptual fluency in Iranian foreign/second language (L2) classrooms. For this research 53 Persian learners of English were divided into two groups with different experiments. The control group used textbook-based materials whereas the experimental group used authentic materials and instruction by trained native speakers as online teachers through the mediation of computer assisted language learning techniques. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected based on questionnaires as well as pre-, post- and delayed post-tests. Both control and experimental groups improved in their English language proficiency based on the statistical main effects. The results of the study at the post-test stage also indicated that L2 learners' written and oral discourses had improved more compare to the conceptual skill and metaphorical structure after being exposed to the authentic materials compared to the control group. This claim was based on the significant difference between the textbook-based and authentically-based approaches reflected in the data analyses. Delayed post-test data analysis showed differences between oral and written discourses. Oral discourse metaphorical density felt back to a limited extent though still degrees of improvement were visible. Participants in the experimental group produced less marked discourse with a higher metaphorical density. Also, the study showed that conceptual fluency and metaphorical competence were two related phenomena and the development of one affects the other.

Wu, et al., (2011) investigated the effect of aural authentic materials on second or foreign language learners' motivation. The research made an attempt to find out how aural authentic materials help to enhance learner motivation in a process - oriented conceptualization. In the main study, two advanced English classes which used aural authentic materials participated. The results of the questionnaires and post- questionnaire interviews indicated the positive effect of aural authentic materials on initiating and sustaining learner motivation. The findings also suggested the benefit of aural authentic materials to learning.

Erbaggio, et al., (2010) investigated how the application of online technologies brought opportunities to provide access to authentic material that was engaging, appropriate, and affordable. The multi-media capabilities of a Course Management System (CMS) were used to deliver authentic materials online. Therefore, the instructors of French, Italian, and Chinese were able to both positively impact student attitudes toward the subject matter and to design learning and evaluation activities that increased student engagement. They pointed out that using technology to deliver authentic materials could reduce student anxiety associated with being exposed to authentic foreign language. Furthermore, students became active participants in the learning process and were able to employ their own learning style. They also showed that how the meaningful use of instructional technology could help create learning environments that engage students.

IV. METHODOLOGY

A. *Design of the Study*

The design of the research is quasi-experimental. This particular research design has been chosen to conduct this research because the researcher manipulates independent variables (here vocabulary teaching through authentic materials and textbooks) and measures dependent variables (here the amount of vocabulary learning) in order to establish cause-and-effect relationships between them (Yount, 2006). However, since the study follows a convenient sampling procedure, it is called a quasi-experimental.

B. *Participants*

To collect the required data for the research questions, a total of 80 Iranian female EFL learners, aged 17 to 20, studying in a language institute in Bushehr, were asked to participate in this study. All of the participants had studied English for 6 years in junior and senior high schools. The sample was chosen theoretically (judgmentally). In other words they were selected just because they seemed appropriate for the purpose of the study. The researcher needed elementary level learners and therefore, an OPT test was run and finally 66 out of 80 students were chosen. Randomly they were divided into two 33 member groups of experimental and control group.

C. *Instruments*

This section discusses the instruments which include OPT, a pre- and post-tests, authentic material, and a textbook (courses) used in this study.

1. Oxford Placement Test (OPT)

To determine homogeneity of the students Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was administered (See Appendix, A). The OPT proficiency test is divided into two main sections (Listening Test and Grammar Test), each section contains 100 items. The proficiency level required for the research was elementary. The scores needed for this level of students were 105 to 119 out of 200. Participants whose scores were lower or more than the required scores were excluded from the study.

2. Authentic materials The New Straits Times Press (Malaysia) Berhad online

To conduct the study, the researcher went through the news and found some paper that were nearly in the same line with the course book (Result) and included the vocabularies that were in the wordlist of unit seven, eight and nine of result book. The selected authentic material was The New Straits Time online which is a daily newspaper. It is the leading print media with innovative products and comprehensive media solutions.

The chosen papers had an eye catching topic that was interesting for the learners at the first look. The researcher provided copies of them and they were presented to the participant in experimental group.

3. The text book

English Result is one of the most impressive English course books of Oxford University Press. Learners can use it to learn and develop their English. It focuses largely on speaking, language production and interaction. Two prominent professors in teaching English Mack Hancock and Annie McDonald have designed Result series course books. Each level provides materials to help learners progress from one level to another in all 5 skills; reading, writing, listening, spoken interaction and spoken production.

4. Pre- and post-tests

The instrument used to assess whether students would gain more vocabulary and had a better understanding of the word was a thirty-item vocabulary test, consisting of the target words designed by the researcher from the Elementary Result student book (2010) word list. The test (pre and post) was also created by the researcher in order to meet purpose of the study and subject's needs. A pretest of vocabularies was conducted to check the existing knowledge of vocabulary of the participants. Vocabularies were chosen according to the level of students and from the wordlist of text books. These were some of the words which the students were required to master. Test contains 30 multiple-choice items. In order to be sure that the vocabularies were really new to them and they were not aware of their meanings and they were appropriate for the purpose of the participants took the pretest. The results of the pretest indicated that the vocabularies were appropriate for the purpose of the research; fortunately it was proven that they did not know their meanings.

The post-test was similar to the pre-test and contained 30 vocabulary items and had the same items as the pretest. The test included 30 items, i.e. one item for one or two target vocabularies (See Appendices A). Reliability is an important aspect to be computed and reported in any study, thus internal consistency reliability test was carried out to determine the Cronbach's coefficient alpha. Reliability coefficient of .80 or higher is considered as acceptable in most social sciences. The reliability of our test was .85.

The validity of the test was confirmed by some experts; in other words, to validate the vocabulary test, the test was administered to a group of experts. They were asked to comment on different aspects of the test including language, content, and format. Following the experts' feedback, the test items were modified. The revised test was assumed to be content valid and as the result it was safely used as the pre- and post-test measure in this study. The researcher also checked the items by the advisor in order to achieve content validity, clarity and conciseness of instruction, the appearance and the sequence of questions. The maximum possible scores for the test were 30 because the participants received one score for correct answers and zero for incorrect answers. The test required students to answer 30 items with one blank space in each item. The participants were asked to choose the correct vocabulary between the four options.

D. Data Collection Procedure

Generally, the present study aimed to investigate the effect of using authentic material (the cutting news of The New Straits Times online) on vocabulary learning of elementary level students. For this aim, a body of 80 female Iranian EFL learners aged 17 to 20 from a language institute in Bushehr took part in this study. All the participants were asked to take the OPT test which consisted of 200 items (100 listening items and 100 grammar items). 200 score was assigned to the test for 200 items. After the OPT only 66 participants remained in the study. Participants were randomly divided into control and experimental groups. In order to be sure that the vocabularies were really new to them and they were not aware of their meanings and is appropriate for the purpose of the study a pilot test was carried out. Pilots testing by population of 10 female were chosen and then they were asked to take the pretest for 30 minutes. The results of the pilot study validated that the instruments were appropriate for the purpose of the research; fortunately it was proven that they did not know their meanings. Both groups received the same pre and posttests at their first and last sessions. The test consisted of 30 items, with one score for each item. The participants were given 30 minutes to choose the correct vocabulary.

The participants attended the English classes 3 times a week for a month. Every session took one hour. The materials were taught in 12 sessions. The control group was taught the new vocabularies through their textbook (English Result) in each session. The experimental group received the same vocabularies in the same conditions as the control group through The New Straits Time online paper in each session.

For both groups, the researcher read the authentic material (newspaper) or the course book (English results) and talked about the topic and explained the words that were not familiar to learners or were difficult to them. Students were asked to read and talk about the topic. The target vocabularies were highlighted by the researcher and received more attention and they become the keyword of learners' speech. They were practiced in group and individually. The new words were written on the white board, and the participants looked them up in dictionaries. As mentioned before, the participants in the experimental group used cutting newspapers and those in the control group studied only their textbook. They could look them up in their dictionaries. It is worth mentioning that the target vocabularies were

common in the textbook (English Result) and the cutting newspapers (The New Straits Times Press (Malaysia) Berhad online).

During the twelve sessions of English classes, three units were taught by the researcher. These three units centered on topics such as how to talk about our free time activities, how to talk about weather, how to talk about abilities, how to describe actions, how to ask for transport information, how to ask and describe a holiday.

After a month, the post-test was distributed among all participants of both control and experimental groups. They were asked to take the post-test. The post-test included 30 items vocabulary the same as pretest, represented with multiple choice items for the participants to choose the appropriate vocabularies. The participants had 30 minutes to answer the questions.

E. Data Analysis

To address the research questions, the scores of the pre and posttests of both control and experimental groups were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Both pre and post-test scores were compared using an Independent-Samples T-test to find out any significant differences between the two groups. Also, two paired-samples t-tests were used to compare the pretest and posttests in each of the experimental and control groups respectively.

V. RESULTS

A. Pre-test Results for the Control and Experimental Groups

In order to prove that both experimental and control group were homogeneous with regard to their information about the meanings of the selected vocabularies, a pretest was run and all of the participants in the two groups took part in this test. The results of the pretest were presented in the following tables.

TABLE 1.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE PRE-TEST

Authentic		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-test	With authentic material	33	12.64	1.365	.238
	no authentic material	33	12.76	1.501	.261

Based on the descriptive statistics in Table.1, mean of the both groups were almost similar and it showed that both groups were the same with regard to their knowledge about the meanings of the selected vocabulary items. Accordingly, an independent samples t-test was run to ensure the equality of variances and means.

TABLE 2.
RESULTS OF INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST FOR THE PRE-TEST

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
								Lower	Upper	
Pre-test	Equal variances assumed	.303	.584	-.343	64	.733	-.121	.353	-.827	.584
	Equal variances not assumed			-.343	63.435	.733	-.121	.353	-.827	.584

The results of the above Table showed that the two groups were not aware of the meanings of the selected vocabularies. Therefore, the treatment started and after a month the participants took part in posttests which would be mentioned in the next parts.

B. Results of Post-tests

In this section, the descriptive statistics and the inferential statistics of the collected data related to the posttests are presented. Regarding the first research question concerned with the effect of using authentic material on students' vocabulary acquisition, a pretest and two posttests were run. The results of the posttests for both groups are as follows:

1. Results of analysis in the experimental group

Table 8.3 below presented the descriptive statistics for the posttest in the experimental group.

TABLE 3.
DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE POSTTEST IN THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre-test	12.64	33	1.365	.238
	Post-test	17.58	33	2.208	.384

According to the descriptive statistics presented in Table 3 above, it was clear that the mean of the experimental group changed significantly compared with the result of their pretest. In order to determine whether this difference was significant or not a sample t-test was run. The results of paired-samples t-test are presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4.
PAIRED-SAMPLES T-TEST IN THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

	Paired Differences	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
					Pair 1	Pre-test Post-test			

Table 4 indicated that the difference within experimental group at the beginning and the end of the study was significant. The t-test gave a t-value of -20.405 and $p < .000$ which was statistically significant. The results indicated that the mean value obtained from the post-test was significantly higher than the mean value obtained from the pre-test in the experimental group. The mean value increased from 12.64 to 17.78. This showed an improvement in vocabulary acquisition for the participants in the experimental group.

2. Post-Test Results for the Control Group

Table 5 presents the descriptive statistics for the posttest results in the control group.

TABLE 5.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE POST-TEST FOR THE CONTROL GROUP

Pair 1	Pre-test	12.76	33	1.501	.261
	Post-test	16.33	33	2.131	.371

According to the descriptive statistics presented in Table 5, it was clear that the mean of the control group changed significantly compared with the result of their pre-test. In order to determine whether this difference was significant or not a paired-sample t-test was run. The results of the test were presented in Table 6.

TABLE 6.
PAIRED-SAMPLES T-TEST FOR CONTROL GROUP

	Paired Differences	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
					Lower	Upper			
					Pair 1	Pre control post control			

Table 6. indicated that there was a difference within control group at the beginning and at the end of the study. The t-test gave a t-value of -21.936 and $p < .000$ which was statistically significant. The results indicated that the mean value obtained from the post-test for the control group was higher than the mean value obtained from the pre-test. The table showed that the mean value had increased from 12.76 to 16.33. This showed an improvement in vocabulary acquisition for the participants in the control as well.

C. Comparison between the Post-test Results of the Control and Experimental Groups

With regard to the second research question which is concerned with any difference between using authentic materials or traditional way of vocabulary acquisition among Iranian EFL learners, a comparison between the posttest results of both groups was made.

TABLE 7:
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE POSTTEST FOR BOTH GROUPS

	Authentic	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post-vocabulary score	with authentic material	33	17.58	2.208	.384
	no authentic material	33	16.33	2.131	.371

According to the descriptive statistics in Table 7, it was clear that the mean of the experimental group was different from the mean of the control group. In order to determine whether this difference was significant or not an independent-sample t-test between the two groups was run. The results of the sample t-test were presented in Table 8:

TABLE 8.
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST FOR BOTH GROUPS

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Post-vocabulary score	Equal variances assumed	.171	.681	2.326	64	.023	1.242	.534	.175	2.310
	Equal variances not assumed			2.326	63.919	.023	1.242	.534	.175	2.310

The results of t-test showed that the posttests' mean scores between the two groups were statistically significant as $t=2.326$ and $p<.05$. The mean score for the experimental group was 17.58 and for the control group was 16.33. The Independent-samples t-test showed that the difference between the two groups was significant and the experimental group outperformed the control group. Therefore, the second null hypothesis which claimed that there was no difference between the two groups could be safely rejected. The next part presents the discussion for all the above mentioned results.

VI. DISCUSSION

The results of data analysis indicated that following the presentation of the results in the last section, the outcomes will now be discussed with reference to the research questions and hypotheses put forward earlier. Relevant findings from other studies and theoretical concepts mentioned in the literature review will also be taken into consideration when interpreting the results.

In this section a particular discussion for each research hypothesis is provided and the researcher tries to link the findings to the existing literature. Addressing the first hypothesis it was revealed that an improvement occurred in vocabulary acquisition of experimental group students who learned vocabulary through exposure to authentic materials. This result could be added to the results of other studies which would be mentioned here. As mentioned in the literature review, in some studies the positive effects of authentic materials on language learning were confirmed. One of these studies was Zoghi, et al., (2014) investigated how authentic materials facilitated vocabulary development. Fifty IELTS student were randomly chosen. IELTS classes were observed several times and then a self-reported questionnaire was distributed to all students of chosen classes. The results showed that most of the students preferred using authentic materials for vocabulary acquisition because by using authentic material students dealt with outside world and real language. Students became familiar with the culture of target language and their motivation increased.

Rodengam (2011) investigated the effect of authentic materials on enhancing vocabulary for listening comprehension and the influence of authentic materials on students' attitudes towards learning English vocabulary for listening comprehension. The participants were 45 high school students in the English Japanese program (EJP) at Winituksa School, Thailand. The results indicated that the use of authentic materials had a positive effect on students' performance, comfort and self-confidence when listening to the target language. The answers to the questionnaire showed that the authentic materials had a positive effect on students' attitudes and motivation to learn the language. The results also implied that instructors could promote positive attitudes of the students toward language learning by providing materials and activities that satisfy the needs of the students.

In another study Pellicer-Sánchez and Schmitt (2010) investigated incidental vocabulary acquisition from an authentic novel called *Do Things Fall Apart?*. The researchers investigated the degree to which relatively advanced L2 readers could learn spelling, word class, and recognition and recall of meaning from reading the unmodified authentic novel *Things Fall Apart*. The results showed the positive effect of authentic material on all variables.

All the above mentioned studies and some other studies have confirmed the positive effects of authentic materials on vocabulary learning. The findings of these studies are in line with the findings of our study.

It is also worth mentioning that some studies were contradicted to our study and the reported no positive effects of authentic materials on language learning. Some of these studies were (Clark, 1983; Kienbaum et al., 1986; Mihwa, 1994). Kilickaya (2004) claimed authentic texts were random in respect to vocabulary, structures, language functions, content, and length, thereby causing a burden for the teacher and he believed that the use of authentic materials at lower levels caused students to feel frustrated and demotivated since students at these levels lack many lexical items and structures used in the target language. McNeil (1994) and Miller (2005), faced challenges regarding access to authentic materials, the expense of purchasing them, and the time required to find an appropriate authentic text and design suitable pedagogical tasks. Martinez (2002) stated that authentic materials were too culturally biased and difficult to understand outside the language community.

As it is clear from the above mentioned studies, they were in opposition of our results.

Addressing the second hypothesis it was revealed that using authentic materials affect the EFL learners' vocabulary learning because the results of post-tests showed that there was a significant difference between the two groups at the

end of the study. Again the result of our study was in line with the results of some studies such as Demircan (2004) who investigated the impact of authentic materials on the development of grammar knowledge, retention and opinions of ninth grade students as English language learners, in comparison with traditional materials and textbooks or course books.

To compare the experimental and control groups in terms of achievement, retention and perception about the implementation units, a pretest posttest control group design was carried out. For the purpose of this study, two authentic material based grammar units were designed and developed and implemented to experimental group students. Three instruments; tests, opinionnaires and unit feedback forms were used. Seventeen (15 and two) teachers and 54 students at TED Ankara college foundation high school participated in the study. As for the data analysis, the quantifiable data in the pre, post and retention tests were analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. To indicate the differences between the experimental and control groups in consideration with achievements and retention, independent sample t test was conducted. Additionally, opinionnaires and unit feedback forms were analyzed to obtain information about the students' and teachers' opinions about grammar teaching in general and according to the treatment. The results indicated that most of the students were more successful in developing and retaining grammar knowledge while using authentic materials in class.

In opposition, this result of our study was against the result of Clark's (1983) study who claimed that media did not affect learning under any conditions (authentic versus non-authentic). Similarly, Kienbaum et al., (1986) found no special differences in the language performance of children using authentic materials or traditional classroom context.

In sum, the results revealed that the authentic materials were found effective in learning vocabulary. In the next chapter the findings of the study and suggestion for further research would be present.

VII. CONCLUSION

Authentic materials have been discussed many times as beneficial in teaching English for different skills. The operationalization of the two research questions involved the study into an integration of two significant issues (authentic materials and vocabulary learning) in contemporary language teaching pedagogy. Hypotheses were based on the assumption that there are no relationships between authentic materials and vocabulary learning. Scores from the pretests and posttests provided answers to the research questions mentioned in the beginning of the study. As the results showed, there was a significant relationship between these two. In other words the learners who exposed authentic materials learned better than those who exposed textbooks. It was explained that previous studies concluded mixed results. Some of the results were for using authentic materials in language teaching and learning and some others were against using them. Although, more of the related literature showed that the use of authentic materials in language teaching was supported by many researchers. In other words, despite some negative attitudes, the pros of using authentic materials in teaching learners in EFL/ESL classrooms outweigh its cons (Thanajaro, 2000; Kilickaya, 2004; Otte, 2006). Moreover, our results supported the idea of using authentic materials in order to enhance vocabulary learning.

Supporters of the idea of using authentic materials regard these kinds of materials as helpful ones to encourage and motivate learners, arouse their interest and expose them to real language they will face in the real world. Authentic classrooms and materials are available for native speakers (Taylor, 1994; Widdowson, 1978). Since language learners are ambitious for native like language proficiency, it is a good idea to add authentic materials to their text books in different educational places. According the positive effects of authentic materials which have been confirmed by many researchers, it is believed that even simplified texts should be judged in terms of whether they have the natural qualities of authenticity or not (Day & Bamford, 1998).

This study showed that using authentic materials in vocabulary teaching can be an effective method for increasing the vocabulary knowledge of the students. The most suitable authentic texts for the students should be selected. In this selection, students' level, age, gender, interests, and needs should primarily be considered. Authentic materials are used to fill the gap between the unreal situations of classes and the real world situations. Therefore, the activities which are designed for these materials and classes should be related to real life and include some communicative tasks which can be achieved by the mixture of authentic materials with communicative activities.

Based on the outcomes of the current study, the following suggestions identify possible areas for future research. The number of participants and their kind of authentic exposure was limited in this study; therefore, a replication of the study with more participants and authentic exposure is suggested to obtain more reliable results. In addition to their vocabulary knowledge their other skills, and features such as motivation and attitudes can be taken into account. Participants' level of knowledge and gender differences can also be regarded as variables in future studies. The effect of authentic materials on ESP and EAP can be investigated thoroughly

Similar to other studies, present study also suffered from some limitations. The first one is concerned with the limited number of participants. With more participants the generalization of the results can be easier. The researchers selected only one authentic material, and she believed that the finding might be different with more variant authentic materials.

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Indian Journal of Fundamental and Applied Life Sciences, Jaipour, India. Vol.4 (2), April-June 2014 pp. 106-113

International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World, Vol. 7 (3), Nov. 2014, pp. 277- 288.

International Journal of Current Life Sciences, Vol. 4, issue 12, Dec. 2014, pp. 13182-13192

His main research interests are: Teaching English as a Foreign/Second Language (EFL/ESL), discourse analysis, syllabus design, English for Specific Purposes (ESP).

A Learning-centered Course Design of Interpreting for Non-English Majors—An Empirical Study

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Abstract—Curriculum design is crucial for any courses, however, there seems to be sparse published literature that relates curriculum theory to interpreter education. Even scarcer is the study on the curriculum design of interpreting courses for non-English majors. To address such a scarcity of study, the author designed an optional course named Interpreting for Non-English Majors (IFNEM), drawing upon a learning-centered approach to course design in the ESP theories. After being implemented for one semester, the course design was evaluated by relating to the learning outcomes to the objectives, using instruments including a questionnaire on the course design and the students' learning journals and semester summaries. Results showed the course was well designed: the students had improved their interpreting scores with a statistical difference ($p < 0.01$), enhanced their English proficiencies and learning autonomy; the students' feedback on the course and the teacher was very positive. This study may bring insights into the curriculum design of similar courses.

Index Terms—course design, learning-centered, interpreting

I. INTRODUCTION

Curriculum design is one of the aspects that directly affect the quality of an educational program. However, there has been sparse published research that relates curriculum theory to interpreter education (Li, 2012; Sawyer, 2011). Even scarcer is the study on the course design of an interpreting class for non-English majors (IFNEM), a new existence in China's colleges, which requires emergent research attention.

Interpreting courses used to be set only for English majors, who were considered more competent linguistically for an interpreting task. However, non-English majors have improved greatly their English proficiencies. Many of them are capable candidates for interpreting training. Besides, results of both social and students' needs analysis have indicated the necessity to establish IFNEM as an optional College English course (Deng, 2007; Li, 2011; Luo, Huang, & Xu, 2008). As China's college English policy advocates curricular diversity and individuality (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 19), the time is ripe for optional courses like IFNEM to open. Then follows a practical problem of how to design it.

As the language teaching paradigm shifts from teaching to learning and from the instructor to the learner, the learning-centered curriculum design is gaining wider recognition. To design IFNEM, a new course for a certain group of students with special needs, a learning-centered approach of English for Special Purposes (ESP) seems to fit just well, for ESP is "an approach to language teaching which aims to meet the needs of particular learners" (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p.21). Therefore the course design of IFNEM adopts this approach.

II. RATIONALE

A. Learning-centered Approach to Course Design

There are three basic curriculum designs: subject-centered designs, learner-centered designs and program-centered designs (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009, p.191). Among them, the learner-centered design in line with constructivism learning theory has gained popularity since the early 1900s, when the learner became in the limelight of educational programs.

Building upon the learner-centeredness, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) proposed a learning-centered approach based on their understanding of learning. They held that learning is not just an internal process of the learner, but also a process of negotiation between the society that sets the target and the individual who tries to attain it. In other words, the learner is not the only factor to consider in learning. The learning-centered approach, as they suggested, involves both what competence that enables someone to perform and how that competence is acquired (pp. 72-73). This indicates that the learner should be considered at every stage of course design. Fig. 1 illustrates this approach (p. 74) with the author's modifications.

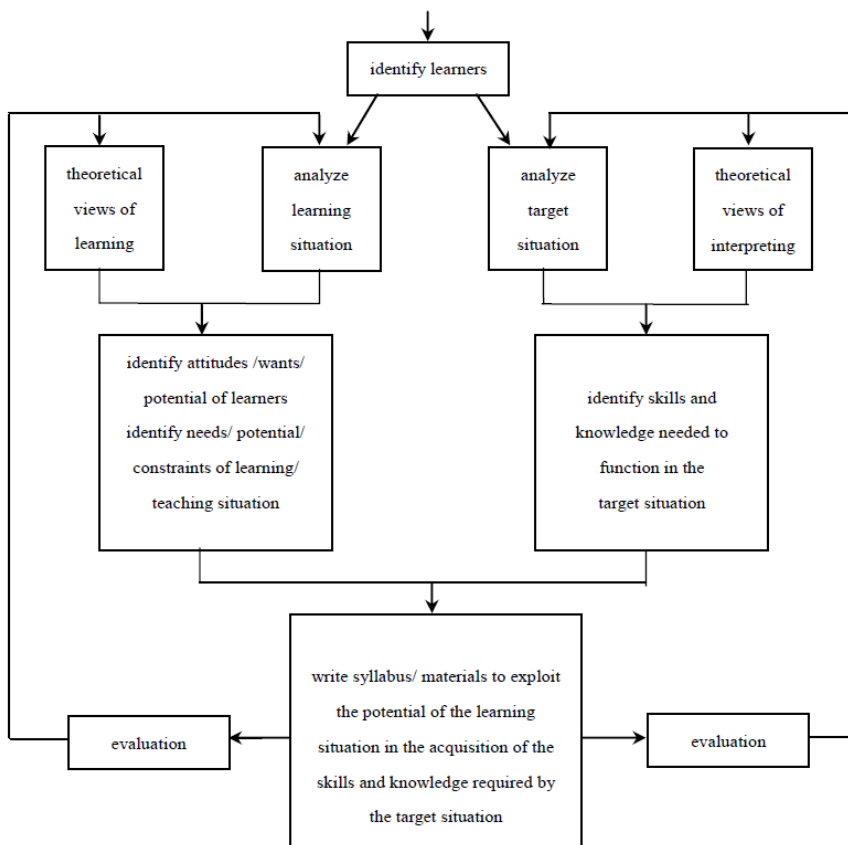


Figure 1. A learning-centered approach to course design with modifications

B. Factors Affecting ESP Course Design

To design a ESP course one should start by asking questions concerning language descriptions, learning theories and needs analysis (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p.22). Considering the difference between a language course and an interpreting course, the author altered the framework by replacing "language descriptions" with "descriptions of oral translation competence". The modified framework is demonstrated in Fig. 2.

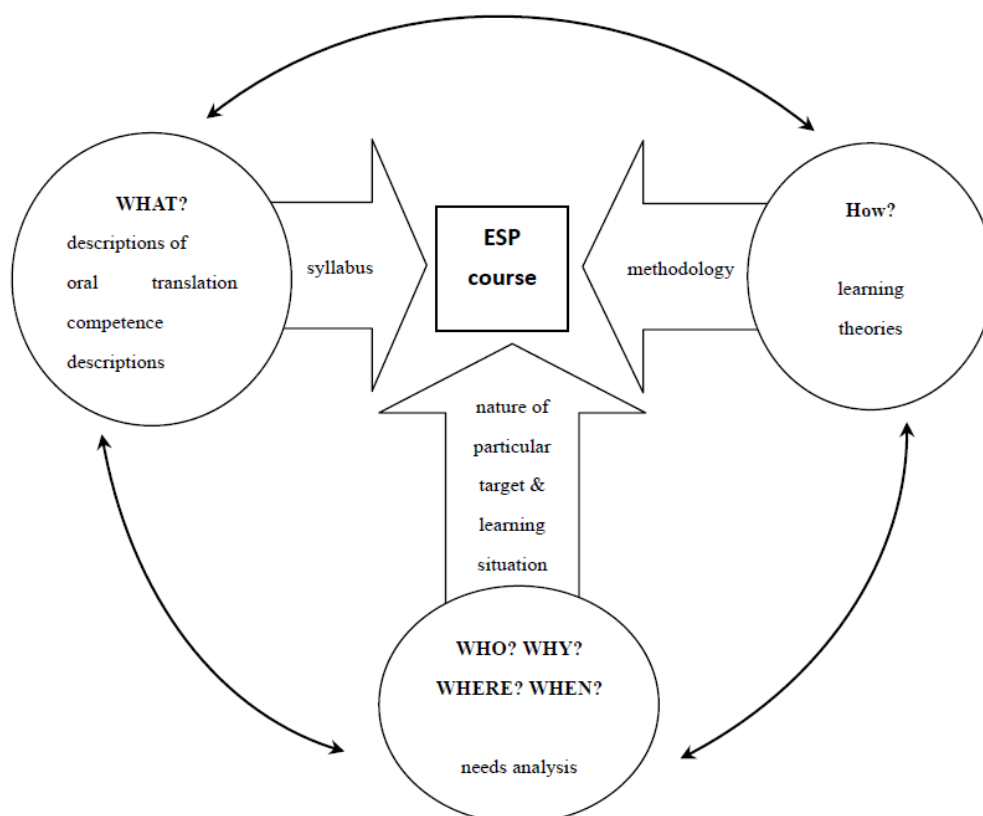


Figure 2. Factors affecting ESP course design

1. Descriptions of oral translation competence

To define components of oral translation competence one can refer to those of translation competence, since oral translation is one mode of translation. Gile (2011) summarized the components of translation competence as good passive knowledge of passive working language(s); good command of active working language(s); adequate world knowledge; and good command of the principles and techniques of translation (P. 18). Studies on oral translation competence (Lin, 1994; Zhong, 2003) shared similar views. A consensus has been reached that there are three key elements that comprise interpreter education, namely, interpreting skills, encyclopedia knowledge and proficiencies of languages (Wang, 2009, p. 209). A training program for professional interpreters should address all of the three aspects in its goals and objectives.

2. Learning theories

The starting point for all language teaching should be an understanding of how people learn. To avoid danger of basing too narrowly on one learning theory, Hutchinson and Waters suggested an eclectic approach and proposed a model for learning (1987, pp. 49-51). In addition to this learning model, the author drew upon constructivism and adult learning theories.

a. Constructivism

According to constructivists, learning is a constructive process in which the learner is building an internal representation of knowledge, a personal interpretation of experience. It is an active process in which meaning is developed on the basis of experience (Bednar *et al.*, 1999, p.22). This nature of learning requires learners to become actively involved and participate in a community (Lauzon, 1999, p. 263).

b. Adult learning

According to adult learning theories, education is defined as a process of mutual, self-directed inquiry (Knowles, 1972, p. 36). Adult learners are profoundly influenced by past learning experiences, present concerns and future prospects (Brundage & MacKeracher, 1980, pp. 21-31). This group of learners prefers a process design in which they participate as well.

3. Needs analysis

Needs analysis is a vital prerequisite for developing a course. Before IFNEM was established, the designer carried out a needs analysis through a questionnaire to 156 freshmen and junior students at her university, some of whom would be potential learners of the IFNEM that she later set up. The questionnaire was based on an adapted checklist of analyzing learning needs by Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 62).

Results showed that it is highly necessary to provide an IFNEM as an optional course. The students hoped to have free access to it in the second semester of the freshman year or the sophomore year, either in the evening or in the morning. They also expected a small-sized class of 20 to 40 students. The teaching environments were expected to

include multi-media appliances, computers and movable tables and chairs. Students' motivation to take this course was mainly instrumental, many expecting to improve their English skills. They expected the teaching goals to be improvement of both interpreting skills and language abilities, especially English listening and speaking abilities. (Li, 2011, pp. 1100-1101).

III. COURSE DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

The process of course design involves initial planning, implementation, and evaluation (Nunan, 1988a, p. 8). Traditionally this process is finished by curriculum designers before any encounters of the teacher and the students. This leads to difficulties to consider the learner at every stage of course design, as required in a learning-centered approach. Ideally the key participants of pre-course planning should be both the teachers who are to direct a course and the learners who are to take part in it (Nunan, 1988b, p. 45), and "the most valuable learner data can be obtained, especially after relationships have been established between the teacher and learners" (p. 5).

Fortunately, the IFNEM design lived up to the ideal: the designer of the IFNEM is also the teacher (and the author) who had been teaching English to the potential learners of IFNEM in their freshmen year. The teacher had known the class so well that she could remember all of the students' names and general English proficiencies. During that period, the teacher proposed the new course of IFNEM to the students and received many "reservation requests" from interested candidates. Much discussion was led afterwards to elicit the learners' opinions about the course design, especially on the content and assessment. For instance, as part of the formative assessment, the number and frequency of quizzes and learning journals was decided after rounds of negotiation between the ambitious teacher and realistic students. The decision proved to be a wise one as the course turned out. Without consulting with the learners, the assessment could have been too intensive and scared away many candidates.

The teacher was also able to collect comprehensive data about the learners before the class, encompassing their current proficiency level, age, previous learning experiences, preferred learning arrangement, learning-style preferences, personal learning objectives and motivation, etc., through tests, questionnaires, and most importantly, causal chats via WeChat, a communication tool of instant messaging. In fact, this effective channel of communication continued to the period during the implementation of IFNEM class, enabling ongoing supervision, modification and evaluation of the course.

The final design of IFNEM is as follows.

A. Aims and Objectives

This course aims to introduce the fundamental knowledge of interpreting to students, and equip them with basic interpreting skills, higher English listening and speaking skills and independent learning strategies. A subdivision of fundamentals of interpreting knowledge and skills is elaborated in Table 1:

TABLE 1.
OBJECTIVES ON FUNDAMENTALS OF INTERPRETING AND BASIC INTERPRETING SKILLS

1. On fundamental knowledge of interpreting	
The course is to help students to understand:	
	- competence required for an interpreter;
	- principles of de-verbalization;
	- Effort Model;
	- principles and techniques of listening for interpreting tasks;
	- principles and techniques of note-taking for interpreting tasks;
	- principles and techniques of short-term memory for interpreting tasks;
2. On interpreting skills	
The course is to help students to learn and practice:	
	- listening for meaning;
	- short-term memory techniques;
	- note-taking techniques;
	- public speaking skills;
	- critical thinking skills (e.g., to summarize, to identify main ideas and to reconstruct);
	- interpreting figures;
	- coping tactics
3. On professionalism	
The course is to help students learn about:	
	- short-term preparation for interpreting tasks;
	- cross-cultural communication ;
	- professional standards.

The list is not exhaustive. For instance, more advanced objectives like analysis of different registers and artistic delivery of interpreting are not included. For "it is essential to select the number of objectives that can actually be attained in significant degree in the time available, and that these be really important ones" (Tyler, 1949, p. 31).

B. Syllabus

In view of the introductory nature of this course and learners' varied proficiency levels, the teaching content is decided upon liaison interpreting in common settings (tourism, business and culture, etc), which are less challenging and more practical. The materials for this course are from multiple sources, including textbooks, online recourses and training materials that the teacher accumulated from her own education and interpreting experiences. The textbooks selected are *Liaison Interpreting* (Wang & Wu, 2010), *Basic Interpreting Skills* (Su & Deng, 2009), and *Asia Link--Interpreting Asia Interpreting Europe* (Xiao & Yang, 2006). Additional multi-media resources are uploaded online to the "iclass" teaching platform, a MOODLE-like course management system, which the students have access to via computers or a smart phone application named "Blackboard Mobile Learn".

The teaching content attempts to address the three components of translation competence as mentioned before, with interpreting skills ranking the first in importance. This is in line with the interpreter educationalist Zhong's viewpoint (2001, p. 31). He maintains that training of interpreting skills should be the top priority of interpreting education, which can be arranged according to different themes of situations that interpreting takes place. Accordingly, the IFNEM is arranged by themes, except for an introduction to fundamentals of interpreting at the beginning.

The theme-based syllabus is presented below:

1. fundamental knowledge of interpreting,
2. short-term memory techniques,
3. listening techniques in interpreting,
4. note-taking techniques,
5. receiving guests,
6. tourism and shopping,
7. food and catering,
8. seeing guests off,
9. exhibition and fairs,
10. business negotiation,
11. business etiquettes,
12. cooperation talks,
13. cultural communication,
14. preparation for an interpreting task,
15. interpreting practicum.

This theme-based syllabus, however, fails to demonstrate the actual focus on training interpreting skills which happen in almost every class, regardless of the theme. To present an overview of what and how those interpreting skills are trained and assessed, a skills-based syllabus is elaborated in Table 2, drawing upon Zhong's summary of basic interpreting skills and training methods (2001, p.31).

TABLE 2.
THE SKILLS-BASED SYLLABUS OF IFNEM

Content	Objectives	Materials	Activity	Assessment
interpreting competence	to understand competence required for an interpreter and learn what long-term preparation is needed as a self-directed learner of interpreting	Gile's comprehension equation, etc.	Lecture; impromptu interpreting practice	Quiz on fundamentals of interpreting
Effort Model	to enhance awareness of better distribution of efforts during interpreting and the importance of proficiency of languages, especially listening and speaking skills	Gile's Effort Model, related practice	repeating practice, retelling the gist	pretest, learning journal
de-verbalization	to be more cautious about common mistakes of literal translation by beginners	de-verbalization model	mini-lecture, related interpreting practice	learning journal
listening in interpreting	to understand and practice "listening for meaning"	Chinese and English listening materials	listening and retelling in source and target language	retelling quiz, learning journal
short-term memory	to learn and practice short-term memory techniques; to learn to summarize, identify main ideas and reconstruct	a celebrity's speech, etc.	listening and retelling in source and target language	retelling quiz, learning journal
note-taking	to learn and practice note-taking techniques	logical passages	lecture and note-taking at the sentence, passage level	quiz on basic principles of note-taking
interpreting figures	to master at least one of the ways to interpret large numbers	speeches containing figures	related interpreting practice	figure interpreting quiz
short-term preparation	to learn what short-term preparation to make for an interpreting task	a lecture in source language	listening and memorizing related vocabularies	simulation of the interpreting task
coping tactics	to learn possible solution to frequent difficulties in interpreting	practicum	a real-life interpreting practicum	practicum, video-recording, learning journal
professionalism	to learn about professional standards	textbook DVD	lecture and DVD watching	learning journal

C. Method and Organization

1. Course arrangement

The arrangement of the course is, for the most part, a fulfillment of the students' wishes and expectations, as expressed in the Needs analysis mentioned before. The IFNEM is established as an optional course in Tuesday evenings for Non-English majors of the second year and above. It is a 16 week program for two credits. The course is conducted in a language lab equipped with a multi-media console for the teacher, computers for each student and movable chairs--basically everything necessary for interpreting training, which entails presenting and sharing multi-media resources, carrying out simulation activities, and collecting the students' data. However, there is only one discrepancy from the original plan. The enrollment of the class is limited to 46 instead of the ideal 20, a balance between the teacher's hope to give due attention to each student in a small class and the administrative staff's concern with students' large demand for such a course.

2. Class organization

The course is organized in ways to maximize the learners' participation in interpreting practice. More than half of the class time was devoted to the interpreting practice. This emphasis on students' participation is grounded in constructivism and adult learning theories which stress the importance of the students' personal experience. It also echoes the golden rule in interpreter education that "practice makes perfect", which is also phrased as "the practice-based principle" of interpreting training (Zhong, 2007, p.52).

There are different activities in the practice, ranging from individual interpreting, role-play, three-corner simulation and whole-class interpreting. Every learner is required to participate either in a three-corner simulation or a role-play task, which provides source materials for the rest to interpret. In order for the students to practice public speaking skills, a stimulus plan is added that bonus points could be gained by delivering a speech on the theme of that class, which serves also as a source text of interpreting for the class.

As advocated in translation programs (Li, 2012, p. 159), the principle of authenticity is applied in IFNEM for the practice to have relevance to the learners. Authentic training signifies authentic training materials and training methods (p. 160). The teacher adopts authentic training methods especially, having foreigners come to her class physically and via Skype to be interpreted by the learners, in which the students learn interpreting by doing it for real instead of for exams.

D. Assessment

In accordance with the focus on the process of learning, the assessment of IFNEM is largely formative (70%) . Summative assessment accounts for only 30%. The assessment breakdown is shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3.
ASSESSMENT BREAKDOWN OF IFNEM

formative assessment 70%					summative assessment 30%
attendance & class Participation	three-corner simulation/role play	5 Quizzes	5 learning journals & 1 portfolio	bonus items	final interpreting test
20%	10%	25%	15%	2-10%	30%

The learning journal is used to help develop students' independent learning abilities. It follows a structure of "SEEDS" and "GPS". "SEEDS" is an acronym the designer coined from "Summary", "Evaluation of oneself", "Evaluation of others", "Difficulties" and "Solution"-- five parts of the learner's reflection after a particular class. "GPS" is a record of the students' autonomous learning efforts during the week, organized by the titles of "Gains", "Problems" and "Solution". The students are to submit this homework every other week, though they are encouraged to do so every week for bonus points. This assignment is designed for the students to increase meta-cognition awareness as they reflect regularly on their learning. It also helps the teacher to adjust content and methods during the course.

The bonus items in Table 4 need explanation. As mentioned before, one of them is the extra learning journal, which is 2 points each; other bonus-winning items include deliverance of speeches (5 points each), and contribution of model three-corner simulation video (5 points each). Obviously the stimulus plan intends to encourage students' regular reflection and active participation in learning.

IV. EVALUATION

No curriculum design would be complete without being evaluated. Evaluation addresses the value and effectiveness of curricular matters and activities (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009, p. 304). Essentially, it consists of gathering data and relating them to goals (p. 279). In this empirical study, the designer examined the effectiveness of the course against its aims through both quantitative and qualitative methods, including tests, a questionnaire on course evaluation, students' learning journals and semester summaries.

A. Results Relating to the Aims

1. Fundamental knowledge of interpreting

As an introductory course to interpreting, the preliminary goal is to inform the students of the basic knowledge on the subject. This objective has been attained: the students' scores of the quiz on fundamentals of interpreting averaged at 3.52 (full mark: 5), indicating a fairly good mastery. In addition, all of them reported in their learning journals and

semester summaries that they had gained a general understanding of interpreting. Many "demystified the allegedly 'fancy and classy' interpreting competence", and discarded prejudices like "interpreting is no big deal but a matter of vocabulary".

2. Improved interpreting skills

At the end of the course, the students' interpreting skills saw a marked progress with a statistical significance ($p < 0.01$), manifested by the results of a paired samples test of their pre- and post-test scores as shown in Table 4. Both examinations used authentic tests from China Accreditation Test for Translators and Interpreters (CATTI), a national qualification exam of high validity and reliability.

TABLE 4
PAIRED SAMPLES TEST OF THE STUDENTS' PRE- AND POST- TESTS

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	99% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 pretest - posttest	-6.58974	4.27180	.68404	-8.44455	-4.73494	-9.634	38	.000

This progress is also confirmed by their learning journals and semester summaries. Many expressed joy and pride at their achievement of being able to interpret long dialogues in the final exam, in comparison with their "bleak" starting points when they had difficulties in interpreting short sentences. Two of them described their first experiences of interpreting in real life after class and gave credit to IFNEM, saying they would have shied away from the challenges without the knowledge and skills equipped in this class.

In fact, all of the students ascribed their growth in interpreting skills to the course. In their responses to the questionnaire on the course evaluation, all of them acknowledged the helpfulness of this class to their English interpreting skills, half of them (51.52%) considered this course "greatly helpful" (Table 5).

TABLE 5.
THE HELPFULNESS OF IFNEM IN IMPROVING ENGLISH INTERPRETING SKILLS

Item	Percentage
A. greatly helpful	51.52%
B. somewhat helpful	39.39%
C. helpful	9.09%
D. Not very helpful	0%
E. No help at all	0%

3. Language enhancement

As a byproduct of interpreting training, the students' English improved as well. In their semester summaries most of them mentioned that they had increased their vocabulary on the themes covered in the course, and saw "surprisingly" a growth of their English listening and speaking abilities, especially in comparison with their peers who failed to enroll in this class. Another evidence lies in their increased scores of interpreting tests, which alone could indicate an increase of language proficiency, as prerequisites of interpreting involve a certain amount of vocabularies and good English listening and speaking skills. Again, all of them agreed that the class had helped with their English listening and speaking skills (table 6).

TABLE 6.
THE HELPFULNESS OF IFNEM IN IMPROVING ENGLISH LISTENING AND SPEAKING SKILLS

Item	Percentage
A. greatly helpful	27.27%
B. somewhat helpful	57.58%
C. helpful	15.15%
D. Not very helpful	0%
E. No help at all	0%

In fact, the role interpreting practices play in language enhancement is confirmed in other studies. Research found that the students who took an IFNEM scored far higher than those who did not. The enrollers' English listening, speaking and translation abilities advanced in particular (Xiong & Luo, 2006). They improved in both translation and writing, embodied by a raised language sense and better choice of word collocation (Deng, 2007).

4. Independent learning strategies and abilities

One of the teaching objectives is to assist the students to further their interpreting skills through independent learning, which requires both the knowledge of interpreting training strategies and abilities of autonomous learning. The former has been mastered, judging from the students' scores and writings as evaluated before. Their autonomous learning abilities have also been strengthened, as they mentioned the learning journals had helped them to summarize and reflect, and form a habit of learning English. Most of them (81.82%, a combined percentage of Item A and B, in Table 7) claimed that they did take further action upon finishing the journals. Admittedly, even with the students' claims, it is

hard to prove or quantify the development of independent learning abilities. However, it is safe to assert that a regular reflection on one's learning could be a good beginning to increase one's meta-cognition awareness, an integral part of independent learning ability. After all, action starts from a thought. In this sense, the designer believes that the students' autonomous learning abilities should have been promoted.

TABLE 7
WHETHER THE STUDENTS TOOK FURTHER ACTION UPON FINISHING THE LEARNING JOURNAL

	Percentage
A. I will take action accordingly	21.21%
B. It helped me to reflect, though with little further action.	60.61%
C. It helped me to reflect, though without further action.	12.12%
D. I forgot everything after finishing it. There is no further action.	6.06%
E. Others. Please specify:	0%

B. The Students' Feedback on the Course

The course has met the students' expectations in general. According to the results of the questionnaire, the majority of the students acknowledged that the teaching model had been greatly (27.27%) and largely (60.61%) in accordance with their expectations, as Table 8 shows.

TABLE 8.
THE DEGREE TO WHICH THE TEACHING MODEL IS IN LINE WITH THE STUDENTS' EXPECTATIONS

Item	Percentage
A. greatly	27.27%
B. largely	60.61%
C. somewhat	9.09%
D. not quite the same	3.03%
E. complete different	0%

Specifically, the participants rated the course elements on a 5-point scale in terms of the teaching content (4.24), methods (4.15), assessment (4.13) and effects (4), as Table 9 illustrates. More than half of them were "very satisfactory" with all the course elements. Though there were five votes for "very unsatisfactory" options, no supporting evidence was found in any of their writings, including the answers to questions eliciting feedback on the course in the same questionnaire.

TABLE 9
THE STUDENTS' RATINGS OF THE COURSE ELEMENTS

Item	Very Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Fairly satisfactory	Satisfactory	Very satisfactory	No comment	average
Content	5(15.15%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	5(15.15%)	23(69.7%)	0(0%)	4.24
Method	5(15.15%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	8(24.24%)	20(60.61%)	0(0%)	4.15
Assessment	5(15.15%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	8(24.24%)	19(57.58%)	1(3.03%)	4.13
Effects	5(15.15%)	0(0%)	2(6.06%)	9(27.27%)	17(51.52%)	0(0%)	4

The teaching content is described as "appropriate" (51.52%) and "a bit difficult" (42.42%), indicating a challenge and potential for growth that the course has brought (Table 10). The students further explained that their difficulty lied mainly in a relatively low English proficiencies, especially English listening and speaking skills.

TABLE 10.
THE DIFFICULTY LEVEL OF THE TEACHING CONTENT

Item	Percentage
A. Very difficult, because:	6.06%
B. A bit difficult, because:	42.42%
C. Appropriate	51.52%
D. A bit too easy, because:	0%
E. Too easy, because:	0%

As for the implementation of practice-based methodology, 60.61% (a combined percentage of Item A and B in Table 11) affirmed that half and more of class time was invested in interpreting practice. One explanation is needed here that this opinion was based on the whole semester, including the beginning lecture-based orientations to interpreting fundamentals. The proportion of interpreting practice in the skills-based classes was actually even larger. The multiple patterns of interpreting activities have met students' expectations, as the patterns were "always" (21.21%) and "largely" (66.67%) the same as their preference (Table 12).

TABLE 11.
THE PROPORTION OF THE TIME SPENT ON STUDENTS' INTERPRETING PRACTICE IN CLASS

Items	Percentage
A. over 75%	9.09%
B. 50-75%	51.52%
C. 25-50%	30.30%
D. 10-25%	9.09%
E. under 10%	0%

TABLE 12.
THE FREQUENCY OF THE PATTERNS OF INTERPRETING ACTIVITIES PREFERRED BY THE STUDENTS

Item	Percentage
A. always	21.21%
B. largely	66.67%
C. sometimes	9.09%
D. seldom	0%
E. Never	0%
Blank	3.03%

The students also approved of the predominance of formative assessment in the course evaluation, deeming it was more comprehensive and helped them to focus on the learning process instead of cramming for tests. All of the students agreed the quizzes held on a regular basis had been helpful to their study (Table 13), because "Otherwise I would probably slack off", as some students confessed. The majority of them (90.91%) believed multiple learning journals had also helped with their interpreting learning, as Table 14 shows.

TABLE 13.
HELPLESSNESS OF HAVING A QUIZ EVERY OTHER WEEK TO THE STUDENTS' INTERPRETING LEARNING

Items	Percentage
A. greatly helpful	30.30%
B. somewhat helpful	48.48%
C. helpful	21.21%
D. Not very helpful	0%
E. No help at all	0%

TABLE 14.
HELPLESSNESS OF REGULAR LEARNING JOURNALS TO THE STUDENTS' INTERPRETING LEARNING

Items	Percentage
A. greatly helpful	24.24%
B. somewhat helpful	30.30%
C. helpful	36.36%
D. Not very helpful	9.09%
E. No help at all	0%

On the whole, the students regarded their IFNEM learning experience as intensive, interesting and meaningful. Quoting from them in semester summaries, "It had never occurred to me that an optional course could be so informative and intensive, even better than compulsory English courses"; "I have never learnt so much in a course before"; "I wish there would be another IFNEM next semester".

C. The Students' Comments on the Teacher

The success of a course can be exemplified by the students' recognition of the teacher. The teacher of this IFNEM is highly thought of and appreciated. In fact, one of the reasons some students selected this course is that they believed in the teacher, as revealed in the semester summaries. From their encounters with the teacher during a one-year English program before IFNEM, the students found her "highly responsible and committed" and her class "interactive and relaxing". Many mentioned that they were so touched by the devotion of the teacher that they increased their efforts during the course.

D. Room for Improvement

There have been few complaints about the course. One or two students advised to reduce the class size and increase real-life interpreting practice, which might be hard to realize due to practical constraints. A very feasible suggestion from the students is to replace some learning journals with video recordings of their interpreting practice after class, which is a more interesting way to improve their interpreting skills. In the teacher's opinion, a lack of updated and authentic materials that caters to the learners' needs is the most pressing problem, which calls for academic attention and contribution of practitioners.

V. CONCLUSION

As an attempt to address the scarcity of curriculum study in interpreting education, the author designed an IFNEM class based on Hutchinson & Waters' learning approach to course design, and a three-pronged framework of oral

translation competence, learning theories and needs analysis results.

During the course design process, the designer was able to consider learners at every stage of course planning, thanks to the ideal condition that the teacher had been personally acquainted with and consulted directly the students who were to be enrolled in this new course.

The final product of the course design is presented in terms of aims and objectives, syllabus, method and organization and assessment, the four key elements of curriculum. The IFNEM is designed with the aims to introduce the fundamental knowledge of interpreting to students, and equip them with basic interpreting skills, higher English listening and speaking skills and independent learning strategies. It is arranged mainly by theme-based interpreting situations, with an introduction to interpreting fundamentals at the beginning. Meanwhile, there is a hidden skills-based syllabus, specifying the subdivision of interpreting skills and how those are trained and evaluated in class (in Table 2). The practice- and authenticity-based methodology of IFNEM is grounded in constructivism and adult learning theories, emphasizing the students' maximum and active participation. Finally, the assessment of the course is mostly formative (70%), focusing on the students' learning process.

At the end of the IFNEM, the course was evaluated through tests, a questionnaire on course evaluation, students' learning journals and semester summaries. It is found that this course design had been effective, judging from the results relating to the objectives, the students' feedback on the course and the teacher.

There were only a few suggestions for improving the course. One constructive suggestion is to include in the students' homework video recordings of their interpreting practice after class. From the perspective of the instructor, a pressing problem is a lack of authentic materials specifically for non-English major students, which calls for further academic endeavors.

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The Effect of Proficiency and Task Type on the Use of Paraphrase Type in Writing among Iranian EFL University Students

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Abstract—Academic writers use paraphrasing as an important borrowing strategy when integrating source text into their writing. To have a better understanding of L2 university students' paraphrasing strategies, the present study examines how language proficiency and the type of writing task (summary tasks vs. opinion tasks) affect students' use of paraphrase type: near copy, minimal revision, moderate revision, and substantial revision. The participants of the study were 127 EFL learners at 3 different levels of proficiency (44 advanced, 42 high intermediate, and 41 low intermediate). They were given a text based on which they were asked to do a writing task. In each proficiency group, half of the participants were asked to summarize the source text (i.e., to do a summary task) and the other half were required to write their opinions about the text (i.e., to do an opinion task). The assignment of the tasks to individuals was done randomly. The participants' use of attempted paraphrases within the summary and opinion tasks was compared. It was found that the advanced group used more attempted paraphrases in their writing. In addition, the participants who did the summary task used more attempted paraphrases than those who did the opinion task. Furthermore, low and high intermediate groups used more near copies than the advanced group. Conversely, the advanced participants used more minimal, moderate, and substantial revisions than the other two groups. However, task type appeared to have no effect on the use of paraphrase type.

Index Terms—paraphrase type, minimal revision, moderate revision, substantial revision

I. INTRODUCTION

Academic writers in any field of study have to synthesize written ideas from background sources including journal articles, books, and interviews (mentioned in Keck, 2006). The locus of research in these areas has been investigating how academic writers integrate source texts into their writing (Currie, 1998; Scollon, 1995; Spack, 1997; Yamada, 2003; John & Mayes, 1990; Pecorari, 2003; Sherard, 1986; Shi, 2004; Tardy, 2010; Tomas, 2010; to name a few). The results have shown that many academic writers copy source texts exactly and put them into their writing without paraphrasing them. That is why many researchers including Tylor (1984), Campbell (1990), Currie (1998), Howard (1996), Hyland (2001), Shi (2004 and 2012), and Roig (2001) have emphasized incorporating the instruction of paraphrasing into pedagogical programs. The issue gains more significance considering the plethora of internet-based writing resources available to university students (Keck, 2006).

Research shows that while writing a summary, L2 learners usually tend to copy the material from the source text rather than paraphrase it. This tendency to copy is partly due to the nature of the task of writing which requires high level of linguistic knowledge and the ability to paraphrase on the part of the writer (Shi, 2004, Shi, 2012, and Leki & Carson, 1997). Pennycook (1996) examined the relationship between text, memory, and learning in a Chinese context. He asked his first-year undergraduate English majors to write a brief biography of a famous person. He found that the students copied biographies from original sources.

Brown and Day (1983) investigated the summary writing of 18 fifth grade, 16 seventh grade, 13 tenth grade native English speaking students, and 20 freshman college students. They used two expository texts in the three experiments as source texts. The results of their study indicated that all participants employed deletion rules in their writing; that is, they deleted trivial or redundant material. The only common rule that freshman college students used repeatedly was to combine the chunks of words across different paragraphs. However, younger subjects (fifth and seventh grade native English speaking students) rarely employed the rule due to their low level of linguistic knowledge. Accordingly, the researchers concluded that the copy-delete strategy is easy to use because it requires no more information and manipulation of the source text on the part of the learner.

Pecorari (2003) examined the writing task of 17 postgraduate students who used a source text in their doctoral theses. She compared the students' writings to the original source in order to see to what extent they copied the source text to their writings. She found that almost all the writers (16) had at least one passage in their writing in which they had copied more than 5% of the words used in the source text without introducing them as direct quotations. The majority of the writers (13) copied over 70% of the source text and a few (3) copied exactly (100%) one or more passages from the source text.

Research has also shown that there is a relationship between language proficiency and textual borrowing strategies. For example, Johns (1985) compared the summaries of 128 native students at three different proficiency levels. The results of the study showed that the students at the low level used copying as a major strategy in their summaries. However, high level students used paraphrasing as a strategy in their summaries; that is, they used synonyms and changed the structure of the sentences in their writing.

Kennedy (1985) investigated how six college writers used the assigned reading source texts. The participants were asked to write an objective essay based on three articles about communication in their own words. Having analyzed the essays, Kennedy found that the writers directly copied strings of words from the source texts into their essays. In addition, she noticed that the students with a high proficiency level employed more strategies including indirect copying strategy (that is, they changed the grammatical structure or wording of the sentences) when incorporating the source texts into their writing. However, less proficient students copied directly some parts of the source text.

Johns and Mayes (1990) examined summary protocols of ESL students (40 low proficient and 40 advanced or high proficient) to see how they summarized the texts at the sentence level. The analysis of the summaries revealed that low proficiency students produced more direct replications of the source text than the high proficiency group. The researchers claimed that low proficiency students directly copied more strings of words from the source text because they had not acquired deletion rules adequately and, due to their low level of proficiency, they were not able to paraphrase the source text while integrating it into their summaries.

Sherrard (1986) investigated summaries of expository texts that were obtained from 10 undergraduate Social Science students to explore the strategies they used while summarizing the source texts in their writing. She used the orthographic sentence as the basic unit of analysis and concentrated on the sentence by sentence construction of the summary in order to see how the text was edited and compressed into a reduced form. The strategies commonly employed by all the writers were omission, one-to-one mapping, combination of text-sentence pairs, triples, and quadruples (that is, combining two, three and four text sentences, respectively) into a single summary sentence. In addition, she found that there was a great tendency among the writers to omit text sentences or single sentences in the original text rendered into summary sentences. The researcher also noticed that although there was little exact word-for-word retention, the students' paraphrases did not extend to rearranging by topic or to much combining across paragraphs.

Campbell (1990) examined textual borrowing strategies in the expository writing of 30 L1 and L2 students (20 ESL and 10 native English speakers) to see how they synthesized the source text. The students were required to complete an in-class writing task in which they were free to use source information. Although the students used quotations, exact copies, paraphrases, and summaries in their writing, a major strategy used by all the students was copying.

In addition to proficiency level, a few studies have shown the effect of task type on the extent to which student writers borrow chunks of language from the source text while writing summaries. Shi (2004) compared the type and the amount of textual borrowing in the summary and opinion writing tasks of 87 students (48 Chinese ESL and 39 native English speakers). She analyzed the students' written tasks to identify how they integrated the source texts into their writing. She identified combinations of words which contained two content words as a unit of textual borrowing; in contrast, combinations of one content word and a functional word were not considered as a unit of textual borrowing. The students' writing were also examined to see whether the strings of borrowed words were exact copies, they were modified slightly by adding or deleting words or using synonyms, or they were closely paraphrased. The results revealed a little difference between the two groups in the opinion task. In addition, the Chinese participants who did the summary task wrote longer essays than the other group of Chinese who wrote the opinion task and the native English speaking students who did the summary task employed much fewer words than their English peers who did the opinion task.

Keck (2006) compared L1 and L2 writers' use of paraphrase in summary writing. The participants in her study were 165 undergraduate university students (79 native English speakers, 12 bilinguals, and 74 ESOL). They were asked to read a source text and write a one-paragraph summary. The results of the study revealed that all the participants used paraphrasing as a major strategy. In fact, they used more paraphrases than exact copies in their summary writing. L2 writers also showed a great tendency to copy the material from the source text whereas L1 and bilingual writers moderately or substantially paraphrased the source text while incorporating it into their writing. Moreover, L2 writers used exact copies more than the other two groups. Finally, it was found that paraphrase was used more frequently than exact copy by both L1 and bilingual writers. Furthermore, Keck (2014) compared L1 and L2 writers' summarization practices to see their use of copying and paraphrase strategies and found that L2 writers used copying at "a higher rate". In addition, less experienced writers tend to depend on the source text more than experienced writers.

The above review of literature shows that research on summary writing and paraphrasing in L2 suffers from a few shortcomings. Primarily, very few studies have investigated the impact of the student writers' language proficiency on the extent to which they paraphrase source texts or exactly copy the material from the text to their writing. Furthermore, the majority of these studies have merely investigated paraphrasing in summary writing but not in other writing tasks. By the same token, very few studies have investigated the effect of task type on paraphrasing. Although research findings indicate that language proficiency and task type are influential factors in paraphrasing, no study has investigated the effect of the interaction of the two factors on paraphrasing. Finally, most the studies in this area have examined the writings of a limited number of participants which may be said to have adversely affected the

generalizability of the results of the studies. The present study is an attempt to fill the aforementioned gaps and to avoid the pitfalls in the research done in this area. In effect, the present study mainly aims at investigating the effect of language proficiency level and task type on the use of paraphrase type by Iranian EFL students. In accordance with the above objective, the study aims at answering the following research questions:

1. Do proficiency level and task type influence Iranian EFL learners' use of paraphrasing vs. copying when they incorporate a source text into their writing?
2. Do level of proficiency and task type influence Iranian EFL learners' use of different paraphrase types when they incorporate a source text into their writing?

II. METHOD

Participants

One hundred twenty seven EFL Iranian university students (47 males and 80 females) from three different universities participated in the study. They were members of intact classes. All the participants had already passed a course in advanced writing and were participating a course in essay writing at the time of the experiment. They ranged from 22 to 26 years of age.

Instruments

The first instrument used in the study was Oxford Placement Test employed to determine the students' levels of proficiency. In addition, two expository texts titled *Physician Can or Cannot Ethically Assist in Suicide* taken from Biskup and Wekesser (1992) (see Appendix A for the texts) were used as the source text in the study. Shi (2004) also used the same text as the source material in her study. The appropriateness of the texts for the purpose of the study was confirmed by two experienced university professors. The reason for the use of pre-selected source texts was the easy identification of different types of paraphrases by juxtaposing students' writings with the original texts.

Finally, a semi-structured interview was used to collect answers to the following questions from a sample of the participants (30 students):

1. To what extent did you copy strings of words from/paraphrase the original text?
2. Why did you do so?
3. If you copied strings of word from the original text, did you know you were plagiarizing?

Data collection procedure

The participants first took the Oxford Placement Test, which took them about 35 minutes to complete. Then all the participants were given two expository texts. However, in each class, half of the students were asked to read the texts and to do a summary task based on them and the other half were similarly asked to read the texts but subsequently write an opinion task in which they were supposed to write their opinions about the text.

In order to identify what counts as a paraphrase and a paraphrase type, Keck's (2006) paraphrase scheme was utilized. Table 1 illustrates the paraphrase type classification.

Near copy	50% or more words in the paraphrase contained unique links
Minimal Revision	20%- 49% words in the paraphrase contained unique links
Moderate Revision	1- 19% words in the paraphrase contained unique links
Substantial revision	no unique links observed in the paraphrase

In the above table, the term attempted paraphrase refers to the strings of words within a student summary or opinion task which (a) are based upon source text and (b) contain at least one word level change. Word level change has been defined as changes in word choice (e.g., synonym, substitution, replacement of word function with another), or word class (e.g., changing the noun form to its adjective form). This scheme, nonetheless, does not include changes in punctuation, grammatical number, and subject verb agreement as an attempted paraphrase.

In addition, the term unique links refer to individual lexical words (e.g., nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs), or exactly copied string of words that appear in a paraphrase and that do not frequently occur in the original text; general links refer to lexical words that appear in a paraphrase and we can find them frequently in the original text.

To identify instances of attempted paraphrases, the two researchers analyzed a random sample of twelve written summaries and opinion tasks; this initial method of analysis was also used by Sherrard (1986), Shi (2004), and Keck (2006). They followed each orthographic sentence in students' summary and opinion tasks and mapped them to the original source text to find the instances of attempted paraphrases. They also decided on starting and ending points of a paraphrase, i.e., where a paraphrase started and ended in the summary and opinion tasks. Moreover, they decided on whether the identified instances were attempted paraphrase or not. The inter-rater reliability for the tow coders was 0.93.

After the accomplishment of the experiment, in order to triangulate the results obtained from the statistical analysis of the data, the students were interviewed. As mentioned above, a sample of 30 students who had done either of the two tasks (15 from each) volunteered to participate in the interview. In this sample, 15 belonged to those who had accomplished the opinion task and 15 belonged to those who had accomplished the summary task. In the opinion group, 8 were advanced and 7 low intermediate; similarly, in summary group, 8 were advanced and 7 low intermediate. The

reason why the high intermediate group was not taken into account was that, as the results of the study mentioned in the following parts of this paper show, the results for the high intermediate group were not consistent. That is, their performance was sometimes similar to that of advanced group and sometimes to the low intermediate group. Hence, the two groups who were at the two extremes were interviewed.

The first researcher interviewed each student individually for about 5 minutes and asked them the three questions mentioned above. The interviews were recorded and then transcribed for further analysis.

Data analysis

To calculate the mean number of unique and general links, the total number of words in unique and general links was divided by the number of words in attempted paraphrases. Then, these two percentages were added for each attempted paraphrase and the total percentage was put into the taxonomy of the paraphrase type. A two-way ANOVA was run to identify the effect of students' level of proficiency and task types on the mean number of attempted paraphrases in the students' writing tasks; it was also run to show if the interaction between proficiency level and task type would affect the mean number of attempted paraphrases. Moreover, a test of MANOVA was used to show the effect of proficiency level and task type on different paraphrase types.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question One

Do level of proficiency and task type influence how frequently the Persian EFL learners use paraphrases while incorporating a source text into their writing?

In order to answer research question one, a two-way analysis of variance was run. Table 2 illustrates the results of the test.

As the results show, proficiency level ($F= 70.90, p<0.01$), task type ($F= 15.31, p<0.01$), and their interaction ($F= 12.10, p<0.01$) have influenced the mean number of attempted paraphrases used by the participants. Hence, the answer to research question one is yes. Further analysis of the mean number of paraphrases used by different proficiency levels and in different task types delineates the effect of these two factors.

TABLE 2
TWO-WAY ANOVA FOR THE EFFECT OF PROFICIENCY AND TASK ON PARAPHRASING

Independent variable	F	P
Proficiency	70.90	0.00
Task	15.31	0.00
Proficiency*Task	12.10	0.00

Table 3 represents the mean number of attempted paraphrases for the three proficiency levels.

TABLE 3
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE ATTEMPTED PARAPHRASE USED BY DIFFERENT PROFICIENCY LEVELS

Prof. level	N	Mean	SD
Advanced	44	7.22	3.42
High interm.	42	3.45	1.92
Low interm.	41	1.97	1.38

According to Table 3, the mean for the attempted paraphrase used by the advanced level students is higher than that of the high intermediate ones (7.22 and 3.45, respectively); the mean of the attempted paraphrased used by the high intermediate students, in turn, is higher than that of the low intermediate students (1.97). The results of the scheffe post hoc test showed that all these differences were significant ($p<0.01$).

The results are in line with those of Keck (2006) who found that the level of language proficiency of the learners affected their use of attempted paraphrase.

Table 4 shows the mean and standard deviations of the mean of attempted paraphrase for the two task types.

TABLE 4
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE ATTEMPTED PARAPHRASE USED IN THE TWO TASK TYPES

Task	Mean	S D	N
opinion	3.45	2.05	64
summary	5.12	3.92	63

As the data in the table reveal, the mean for the summary task is higher than that of the opinion task. In other words, the participants used more attempted paraphrases in writing the summaries than the opinion tasks. A likely explanation for this phenomenon can be the fact that in doing the summary task the students had to incorporate ideas from the source text, so they paraphrased the sentences. On the other hand, while doing the opinion task, they had to use their own ideas, so their reliance on the source text was lower and, as a result, fewer attempted paraphrases were observed in this task.

In order to see if the above speculation is right or a lower mean for attempted paraphrases in the opinion task means that the students have used copying strategy more than paraphrasing, the sentences in which there were no attempted paraphrases were analyzed. Table 5 illustrates the mean number of sentences in the opinion task that have been either copied from the source text or represent the students' own ideas.

TABLE 5
T-TEST FOR THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MEAN OF COPIED SENTENCES AND IDEA ONES IN THE OPINION TASK

Proficiency level	Mean of copied sentences	Mean of idea sentences
Advanced	0.00	3.80*
High interm.	0.33	1.96*
Low interm.	1.81	0.45*
Total	2.14	6.21*

As Table 5 illustrates, on the whole, in the opinion task, the mean number of sentences representing the students' own ideas is significantly higher than the sentences copied from the source text. The same is true with respect to the advanced and high intermediate group; in the low intermediate proficiency level, on the other hand, the mean number of copied sentences is more than the idea ones.

These results are in line with those of Shi (2004) who found that Chinese students borrowed more chunks of words when they were writing summaries.

As mentioned above, the interaction of proficiency and task type turned out to influence significantly the use of attempted paraphrases. A follow-up one-way Analysis of Variance was run to examine the effect of proficiency on the attempted paraphrases for each task type. The results are presented in Table 6.

TABLE 6
ANOVA FOR THE EFFECT OF PROFICIENCY ON ATTEMPTED PARAPHRASE IN OPINION TASK

Proficiency	Mean	SD	F	Sig
Advanced	5.19	1.72	30.39	0.00
High interm.	3.57	1.69		
Low interm.	1.68	0.89		

As Table 6 shows, proficiency level affects significantly the use of attempted paraphrase in the task type ($F=30.39$, $p<0.01$). The results of post hoc analysis showed significant differences among all the three groups, indicating that the more advanced the students were, the more they used attempted paraphrases in the opinion task.

Similar results were observed with respect to summary task.

Table 7 illustrates the results of ANOVA for the summary task.

TABLE 7
ANOVA FOR THE EFFECT OF PROFICIENCY ON ATTEMPTED PARAPHRASE IN SUMMARY TASK

Proficiency	Mean	SD	F	Sig
Advanced	9.08	3.21	45.83	0.00
High interm.	3.33	2.17		
Low interm.	2.31	1.76		

As the results reveal, for the summary task, too, the higher the proficiency level, the more attempted paraphrases the participants have used ($F=45.83$, $p<0.00$). Nonetheless, the results of post hoc analysis showed significant difference between the advanced level students and the other two proficiency groups; nonetheless, no significant difference was observed between high intermediate and low intermediate groups. This indicates that for the summary task, unlike the opinion task, the participants rely more on the original text and that is why only the very highly proficient learners use a significant number of attempted paraphrases while this difference is not significant between the lower proficiency levels.

Research Question Two

Do level of proficiency and task type have an influence on using paraphrase types while incorporating a source text into their writing?

In order to answer the second research question, a test of MANOVA was run. The results are presented in Table 8.

TABLE 8
RESULTS OF MANOVA FOR THE EFFECT OF PROFICIENCY AND TASK TYPE ON PARAPHRASE TYPE

Independent variable	Dependent variable	F	Sig.
Proficiency	Near copy	19.90	0.00
	Minimal revision	42.61	0.00
	Moderate revision	44.86	0.00
	Substantial revision	31.09	0.00
Task type	Near copy	2.24	0.13
	Minima revision	0.78	0.37
	Moderate revision	2.63	0.10
	Substantial revision	3.20	0.07
Proficiency*task	Near copy	0.67	0.51
	Minimal revision	2.22	0.11
	Moderate revision	3.82	0.02
	Substantial revision	8.49	0.00

As the results show, proficiency level affects significantly the use of all the four paraphrase types. Nonetheless, task type does not affect any one of them. That is, no difference was found between different paraphrase types with respect to the task type. The interaction of proficiency and task type, however, turned out to affect the use of moderate revision and substantial revision but not the other two paraphrase types.

As for the main effect of proficiency level on paraphrase type, the means and standard deviations are presented in Table 9.

TABLE 9
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE USE OF PARAPHRASE TYPE IN DIFFERENT PROFICIENCY LEVELS

Paraphrase type	Proficiency	Mean	SD
Near copy	Advanced	0.53	0.14
	High interm.	0.47	0.15
	Low interm.	1.68	0.15
Minima revision	Advanced	3.20	0.20
	High interm.	1.88	0.20
	Low interm.	0.49	0.21
Moderate revision	Advanced	1.86	0.13
	High interm.	0.69	0.14
	Low interm.	0.26	0.14
Substantial revision	Advanced	1.04	0.09
	High interm.	0.21	0.10
	Low interm.	0.23	0.10

As the results show, the mean for the near copy in the lower-intermediate level participants is larger than that of the advanced and higher intermediate groups. In other words, the lower their proficiency level, the more the students have copied strings of words from the original text. The results of the post hoc test showed significant difference between the lower-intermediate level participants and the other two groups, but no significant difference was observed between the advanced and the high-intermediate group.

As for other paraphrase types, the results presented in Table 9 above show that the higher proficiency level students have used different paraphrase types more frequently than the other two groups. The results of post hoc test showed that for the minimal revision and moderate revision, there was significant difference among all the three proficiency groups; on the other hand, with respect to substantial revision, significant difference was observed between the advanced group and the other two groups, but no difference was observed between the high and low intermediate levels.

On the whole with respect to the impact of proficiency level on paraphrase type, one can say that, in paraphrasing of any proportion, the students at a high proficiency level outperform those at the lower proficiency levels.

These results are in line with those of Pecorari (2003) who also identified some excerpts in the majority of international students' doctoral theses which indicates that the use of near copy as textual borrowing strategy is not constrained to the undergraduate level or low proficiency level. In addition, these findings are in line with Shi (2004) who discovered that her Chinese participants frequently made use of nearly copied string of words in their summary and opinion tasks. Moreover, Keck (2006) found that international students may be somehow less aware that the use of near copy is unacceptable in many western institutions. These findings are also in line with those of Currie (1998), Howard (1996), John and Mayes (1990), and Shi (2004), who found that language proficiency affects students' decisions to copy from source text.

As mentioned above, the interaction of proficiency and task were found to affect the paraphrase type in two types of revisions, namely, moderate revision and substantial revisions, but not in the other two types. A follow-up test of MANOVA was run to find the effect of proficiency on these two paraphrase types in summary and opinion tasks. Table 10 represents the effect of proficiency on the two paraphrase types in opinion task.

TABLE 10
ANOVA FOR THE EFFECT OF PROFICIENCY ON PARAPHRASE TYPE IN OPINION TASK

Paraphrase type	Proficiency	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
Moderate revision	Advanced	1.42	0.13	13.16	0.00
	High interm.	0.76	0.83		
	Low interm.	0.00	0.00		
Substantial revision	Advanced	0.61	0.86	4.91	0.01
	High interm.	0.33	0.73		
	Low interm.	0.00	0.00		

As the results indicate, for the opinion task proficiency influences the use of both moderate ($F=13.16$, $p<0.01$) and substantial revisions ($F= 4.91$, $p<0.05$). The results of the post hoc test showed significant difference among all the three proficiency levels. Thus, it can be said that in opinion task there is a linear effect of proficiency on large scale paraphrasing, i.e., moderate and substantial revision. Nonetheless, in minimal revision and copying, there is no difference between the three proficiency level. In fact, as mentioned before, in opinion task, the students' writings contain sentences that represent their own ideas rather than the ideas expressed in the source text. That is why one can see a low number of copied sentences. That is why one cannot see significant difference among the three groups in minimal revision and copying.

Another follow-up ANOVA test was run for the effect of proficiency on paraphrase type in the summary task. The results are presented in Table 11.

TABLE 11
ANOVA FOR THE EFFECT OF PROFICIENCY ON PARAPHRASE TYPE IN SUMMARY TASK

Paraphrase type	Proficiency	Mean	SD	F	Sig.
Moderate revision	Advanced	2.30	1.36	36.27	0.00
	High interm.	0.61	0.58		
	Low interm.	0.05	0.22		
Substantial revision	Advanced	1.47	0.99	35.07	0.00
	High interm.	0.09	0.43		
	Low interm.	0.00	0.00		

The results for the summary tasks are, similarly, indicative of the fact that proficiency level affects the use of moderate and substantial revisions in a linear manner and the frequency of the use of these paraphrase types increases as the students become more proficient. The results of post hoc analysis, however, revealed that there was no significant difference between the high and the low intermediate students in using these two paraphrase types. Once more, it can be emphasized that since, in the summary task, the students are more dependent on the original text, only those with a high proficiency level would be more independent of the source text and try to paraphrase it, while the others, even those at an intermediate level, would be more dependent on the original text.

These results are in line with those of Keck (2006) who found that some L2 writers did not use moderate and substantial revisions because their linguistic knowledge was not developed. In addition, the results resemble those of Sherard (1986) in that she found that the use of near copy does not require high proficiency on the part of the students since they delete some elements of the texts and copy the remaining parts in their writing. However, the use of moderate and substantial revisions requires syntactic changes e.g. clause-level change as well as changes in lexis, e.g. substitution and synonym, which are difficult to handle for students at low levels of proficiency.

On the whole the results of the present study are indicative of the fact that both proficiency level and task type affect to what extent the student writers paraphrase the source text while doing a writing task. Concerning the level of proficiency, the findings indicate that more proficient students are more independent of the source text while doing a writing task and try to paraphrase the ideas expressed in the text. This independence of the source text is more conspicuous in the opinion task where the students are supposed to present their own ideas. Here one can see a linear effect of proficiency of the extent to which they paraphrase the source text.

As for the summary task, proficiency level is again a deciding factor; however, the effect is not as strong as the case of the opinion task. Here, only the students with a relatively high proficiency level use significantly more paraphrases as compare to the lower proficient students; this difference is not significant for the high intermediate and low intermediate students. In effect, in summary task, the students have to summarize the source text. This makes less proficient students to sometimes copy sentences from the source text. Hence, one can say that a main reason for plagiarism is the low proficiency level in L2 and too much independence on the source text. The results of the interview with the students will shed more light on these findings.

Research question three: Do students deliberately copy chunks of language from the source text and to what extent?

As mentioned above, in order to see to what extent the inferences made of the quantitative analysis are true, a sample of students were interviewed with respect to whether and to what extent they copied strings of words from the source text and if they knew they were plagiarizing.

In response to the first two questions, i.e., to what extent and why they copied from/paraphrased the source text, the advanced students from the summary group stated that they tried to rewrite and rephrase the main ideas expressed in the source text; they further stated that they copied sentences from the source text very rarely and only when they were not

able to rewrite the original sentence. Of course they stated that copying was mostly at word level and that they did it when they were not able to replace the word in the original text with another one. In addition, they believed that copying a sentence from the source text would jeopardize the coherence of the text. That is why the mean number of near copies for the advanced group turned out to be lower than the low intermediate group. Moreover, they had no idea what plagiarism was; some of them mentioned a main reason why they avoided copying whole sentences from the original text was that the summarized text would lose its coherence when one inserts a sentence into the summary.

The results of the interview with this group confirm the finding of the statistical analysis. As mentioned above, the mean of attempted paraphrase for the advanced group is significantly higher than the other two groups. Furthermore, the mean for the advanced group on the moderate and substantial revisions, which involve the highest scale of change in the original text, is larger than the other two groups.

In similar vein, the students in the advanced group who had accomplished the opinion task stated that they used paraphrasing when they needed to refer to a part of the text to express their opinion about it. However, they preferred to use their own ideas while doing the task. That is why we can see a lower mean of paraphrases in the opinion task than in the summary task. This group, too, stated that they copied words, rather than sentences, from the original text in case they were not able to replace them with their own words. That is why the mean for the attempted paraphrase for this group was lower than that of the summary group. In addition, the fact that they noted that they copied only words if needed justifies why in Table 5 above the mean for the copied sentences for the opinion task was zero. This group too had no idea was plagiarism was exactly.

The results of the interview for the low intermediate group were, nonetheless, to some extent different. The students of this group said that, in doing the summary task, they mainly deleted the parts that they considered irrelevant and kept the sentences of the original text. Of course, they said they tried to paraphrase the sentences but they felt the sentences they made would not be correct enough and not as beautiful as the sentences of the original text. They further said that they mainly tried to replace some words in the original text with synonymous ones but the sentences mostly remained the same. The results of the interview for this group show why we can see a very low mean for the attempted paraphrase for the low intermediate group as compared to the advanced one. In addition, the statements of this group show why the mean for the moderate and substantial revision for this group was zero. With respect to the question about plagiarism, this group too, did not think copying the sentences from the original text would be ethically wrong.

The students of the low intermediate group in the opinion group had almost the same views. There were, however, a few students who said that since it was an opinion task and they were supposed to write their opinions they sometimes tried to paraphrase part of the source text. They, nonetheless, noted that they did not write their own ideas since they did not rely so much on their writing ability and their knowledge of grammar. That is why, according to Table 5 above, we cannot see any sentences representing the idea of the students of this group. The students of this group, too, did not consider plagiarism a big deal.

On the whole, a common finding of the interview with the students is that plagiarism is not considered as an act violating the ethics. In fact, in a country where the majority of the books are pirated and the copyright law is not observed and the original books are simply offset, it is not surprising that the students do not see anything wrong with plagiarism particularly the students with a low proficiency level who are not able to compose a text of their own.

IV. CONCLUSION

The present study examined whether language proficiency and writing task (summary and opinion) have an impact on the extent to which the students make an attempt to paraphrase the original text and what paraphrase type they would use more.

With respect to the results presented in this study, proficiency level turned out to influence the mean number of attempted paraphrases used by the students. In addition, task type also appeared to affect the use of attempted paraphrase. Moreover, the interaction of proficiency and task type influenced the mean number of attempted paraphrases. On the whole, the results showed that the students at a higher proficiency level used more attempted paraphrases than those at a lower level; the results also revealed that the students used a higher number of attempted paraphrases in the summary task than in the opinion task.

The result of the study also confirmed the significant influence of proficiency level on the mean number of all the four paraphrase types used by the students. However, the task did not affect the use of paraphrase types. Finally, the interaction of proficiency and task type was also found to affect the mean number of moderate and substantial revisions but not the other two paraphrase types, i.e., near copy and minimal revision. Advanced students used more minimal and moderate revisions in their writing. Conversely, high and low intermediate students used less or no minimal and moderate revision in their summary and opinion tasks.

In advanced level, in addition, students used more substantial revisions in the summary task than in the opinion task. Conversely, low intermediate students used no substantial revision in their writing. what the results indicate is that the interaction of proficiency and task type turned out to affect the paraphrase type in two types of revisions, namely, moderate revision and substantial revisions, but not in the other two types. That is, high proficient students used more moderate and substantial revisions in both summary and opinion task. However, those who did the summary task used more moderate revision and substantial revisions, since the use of the source text was obligatory for them. what one can

infer from the obtained results is that only those with high level of language proficiency can manipulate and paraphrase the original text, or the use of original text is optional for those who did the opinion task.

V. PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

First, the result of this study have expanded our understanding of the types of textual borrowing strategies including paraphrasing strategies employed by Iranian EFL university students. The results of the study showed that the use of strategies such as exact copy and near copy was more prevalent among low level students. Therefore, we can design different summary and paraphrase tasks for different proficiency levels and gear our expectations of the students to their level of proficiency both with respect to the extent of the summary and the task type we give them. Also, we can help our students to become confident and successful academic writers by designing some writing courses, handbooks, and manuals which include paraphrasing strategies. In addition, teaching these materials in the academic institutions especially at universities can help them to integrate source texts into their writing without any footprint of plagiarism.

VI. LIMITATIONS

Like other empirical studies, the findings of this study should be interpreted in the light of certain limitations. First of all, the participants are from intact classes and may not represent the population they come from. Second, the present subjects each did one of the tasks either the summary or the opinion task. A within-subject design with each student doing both tasks would allow more accurate identification of the task effect on the use of paraphrase type among students writing.

VII. FURTHER RESEARCH

Future studies can replicate the study with more subjects; in addition, they need to explore the use of paraphrase type across such variables as language background, sex, and different kinds of texts in different contexts, so that we can enrich our understanding of paraphrasing strategies employed by different students.

APPENDIX A

Excerpt 1.

***Physicians Can Ethically Assist in Suicide*, by Sidney H. Wanzer et al. (from Biskup & Wekesser, 1992, pp. 54-55)**

In the patient whose dying process is irreversible, the balance between minimizing pain and suffering and potentially hastening death should be struck clearly in favor of pain relief. Narcotics or other pain medications should be given in whatever dose and by whatever route is necessary for relief. It is morally correct to increase the dose of narcotics to whatever dose is needed, even though the medication may contribute to the depression of respiration or blood pressure, the dulling of consciousness, or even death, provided the primary goal of the physician is to relieve suffering. The proper dose of pain medication is the dose that is sufficient to relieve pain and suffering, even to the point of unconsciousness. The principles of medical ethics are formulated independently of legal decisions, but physicians may fear that decisions about the care of the hopelessly ill will bring special risks of criminal charges and prosecution. . . . The physician should follow these principles without exaggerated concern for legal consequences, doing whatever is necessary to relieve pain and being comfort, and adhering to the patient's wishes as much as possible. To withhold any necessary measure of pain relief in a hopelessly ill person out of fear of depressing respiration or of possible legal repercussions is unjustifiable.

Excerpt 2.

***Physicians Cannot Ethically Assist in Suicide*, by David Orentlicher (from Biskup & Wekesser, 1992, pp. 59-60)**

This long-standing rejection of assisted suicide reflects a number of concerns with assisted suicide. patient contemplating assisted suicide will naturally want to discuss that possibility with his or her physician. If the physician appears sympathetic to the patient's interest in suicide, it may convey the impression that the physician feels assisted suicide is a desirable alternative. Such an impression may not be very comforting to the patient. Moreover, if the patient decides to reject suicide, will the patient have the same degree of confidence in the physician's commitment to his or her care as previously? In short, assisted suicide might seriously undermine an essential element of Patient-physician relationship. Patients who are enfeebled by disease and devoid of hope may choose assisted suicide not because they are really tired of life but because they think others are tired of them. Some patients, moreover, may feel an obligation to choose death to spare their families the emotional and financial burden of their care. Finally, assisted suicide is problematic in terms of its implementation. For many patients, the progression of disease will result in the impairment of decision-making capacity, either from the effects of the disease itself or those of drug treatment. Consequently, it may be difficult to ensure that a competent decision is being made At what point in the contemplation of suicide by the patient, for example, can the physician be confident that the patient has made a firm decision to end his or her life.

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Reporting Verbs in Applied Linguistics Research Articles by Native and Non-native Writers

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Abstract—This study investigated the differences between applied linguistics research articles written by non-native writers and their native counterparts in English, focusing on the use of reporting verbs in quoting other authors. The corpus consisted of 63 articles (about 200000 words) written by native and non-native writers of English published in three scholarly journals in the fields of language teaching and applied linguistics. The results showed significant differences in the choices writers made in using reporting verbs. The corpus was also analyzed to determine the degree to which writers quoted different authors directly or indirectly. The number of verbs were tallied and recorded and then classified on the basis of Thompson and Ye's (1991) classification. Finally, the results of the analysis of reporting verbs used by native and non-native writers were compared. The findings showed higher use of direct quotations by native writers which might be interpreted to be the result of their linguistic capability in handling linguistic materials produced by other authors.

Index Terms—metadiscourse, reporting verbs, citation patterns, applied linguistics articles, non-native writers

I. INTRODUCTION

Although much of the research throughout the world is conducted by researchers whose native language is not English, their scientific findings are mostly reported in this language. As a result, English academic writing is a skill much needed by many researchers who are non-native English speakers (NNES). In order to succeed in their field, not only are non-English-speaking scholars demanded to deal with the challenge of new developments, but they also must be skillful in English writing (Manan & Noor, 2014). According to Paltridge (1993), non-English speaking scholars cope with vast difficulties to succeed in their scientific discourse through research articles. This is because academic writing follows certain conventions, and it requires techniques and style that are unique to this genre (Cullip & Carrol, 2003). Some studies revealed that writers exploit different patterns to form their materials. For example, Tenbrink and Wiener (2009) stated that writers benefit from some networks of options which provide them with a variety of linguistic choices that may be helpful in generating ideas. Thus, developing textual materials might be different among native speakers as well as between them and non-native ones. Accordingly, the researchers in applied linguistics and language teaching may face difficulty in adapting their prose like every other field of science, even though they are supposedly thought as competent English language users.

It is proposed that the research article and the language of science follow rhetorical, grammatical and stylistic patterns for developing the general semiotic system to have effective scientific discourse (e.g., Halliday & Martin, 1993; Swales, 1990, 2004). One of the challenging areas related to this issue is the citation of one's own claims or the claims of others, which requires the correct choice of grammatical devices (Hyland, 1998). Sakita (2002) noted the important role that occurrence of reporting verbs have in this process, which reflects how writers and speakers present, criticize and question their claims as well as express their own related opinions. Hyland (1998) referred to reporting verbs as a grammatical device required to express the writer's stance in an academic paper. Thompson and Ye (1991) discussed the idea that writers may utilize reporting verbs to refer to their own claims and opinions and also to reveal how writers view others' claims. In order to become competent academic writers, it is required to know how to make correct grammatical choices while reporting claims. This issue can impact the credibility and rhetorical stance of the claim (Bloch, 2010).

Regarding the importance of citation process and academic writing conventions, some scholars studied the existing problems of NNSE in this area. For instance, Hyland (2008) mentioned that NNSE feel they must take "definite and self-assured" stance without the sense of "fuzziness" in their citing claims (p. 70); hence the rhetorical stance of their claims may be influenced by the inappropriate use of reporting verbs. Duszak (1994) proposed that the vagueness of non-native speakers' academic prose to English audiences emanates from the use of those discourse features that are valued in their communication; hence, their papers might not be publishable. Myers (1996) argued that teachers can overemphasize directness in stating a claim, so students may not always recognize the importance that deliberate vagueness can play in negotiating the rhetorical purpose of that claim.

In sum, research articles are developed upon various voices in texts which, according to Silva and Matsuda (2001), can affect readers through the writer's selection of an extensive range of factors. Hence, studying and comparing such effective discourse features as direct/indirect voice among different academic writing research might enhance non-native speakers' knowledge towards keeping their own rhetorical stances.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. *Theoretical Background*

It is very important to use different means available to improve instructional tools at hand in order to develop researchers' academic writing skills (Baleghizadeh, 2012). McEnery and Xiao (2011) stated that one way of developing such materials is to create language corpora from second language users. This course of action provides a bottom-up approach to language teaching that can be complemented by a top-down approach through collecting samples and creating corpora from native speakers. This type of data has proved to be of great aid in language teaching and second language acquisition research (see Keck, 2004; Myles, 2005; Pravec, 2002).

One issue that needs attention in this area is academic citation in general and the use of reporting verbs in particular. The appropriate use of reporting verbs impacts the citation process and strength of the claim made or reported for convincing readers. Hyland (2005) defined reporting verbs as a lexical device which benefits writers in displaying their stance as well as establishing a connection with readers. Hunston (2000) discussed the important role of reporting verbs in establishing the credibility of the claims and writers as well. Charles (2006) contended that correct use of reporting verbs enables writers to show the opinion and personality towards the idea they quote. Fairclough (1992) delicately pointed out that quotation patterns of reporting are a form of intertextuality which is defined as "the property texts have of being full of snatches of other texts" (p. 84). Many researchers have stated that it is necessary for learners to be competent in the use of citations and reporting verbs (Clugston, 2008; Davis, 2013; Swales, 2014). Bloch (2010) in his study mentioned that NNES have difficulty in using reporting verbs efficiently. Manan and Noor (2014) also believed that NNES may lack the ability in using reporting verbs judiciously.

B. *Empirical Studies*

There has been a large number of studies on the issue of citation from various disciplines such as social sciences (Zhang, 2008), medicine (Thomas & Hawes, 1994), chemistry (Gooden, 2001) information science, sociology of knowledge and of course English for specific and academic purposes (Swales, 2014). A host of reasons can be counted for this large number of studies. First, citations can act as a rhetorical booster for the claims and arguments presented in the text (Hyland, 2004). Another reason is the fact that citation by nature is an indicator that shows a text is indeed academic. It also enables writers to become part of an academic community in which they study by commenting on what other scholars and researchers have done. It is also a clear indication of intertextuality and dialogism in the text (Swales, 2014).

Among the studies done on the topic of citation, there are studies that particularly focused on reporting verbs and their use by different groups of writers. One such research on reporting verbs was conducted by de Oliveira and Pagano (2006), who examined two different genres, i.e. Portuguese research articles and science popularization articles in Portuguese magazines. The results showed that the occurrence of reporting verbs implying direct discourse representation was more frequent in science popularization articles than in research article indicating that journalists in texts about science exploited the quotation voices that signaled a discursive stance superior to their own. The employed reporting verbs signaling direct discourse in research articles, however, displayed less discursive position between writers and the authors being quoted. Furthermore, in science popularization articles most of the verbs used were in present tense showing the findings being reported were fresh; however, in research articles most of the verbs were in past tense.

In another study, Bloch (2010) intended to create instructional materials about the role of reporting verbs in academic writing using a technique called concordancing. He used a sample of articles from a scientific journal to create two small corpora. He chose 27 reporting verbs and drew a randomized sample of sentences for each. Based on this, he used writing samples from students and created another corpus to compare the reporting verbs used by students to those used by published authors. In the end, he concluded that by exposing students to authentic samples and showing the process of how a writer decides to write, we can familiarize learners with language use. He also used the findings to design an online database of sentences that enables teachers and material developers to form instructional materials for an academic writing course (Bloch, 2009).

In a more recent study, Kim (2012), using Swales' (1990) classification of citations, examined the use of citations in introduction section of 40 research articles in the field of educational psychology, half of which were written by English and the other half by Chinese authors. His findings showed that English writers used citations five times more than Chinese writers, guiding him to conclude that knowledge of citation can improve academic writing skills of Chinese students.

In yet another study on a corpus from the field of biology, Swales (2014) explored citation practices of graduate and undergraduate students. He studied and analyzed the corpus to observe the distribution of integral and parenthetical citations, the choice of reporting verbs, the effect of citing system, and whether students used citee's first name in their

writing. Findings did not show significant difference between the undergraduate and graduate papers in different aspects.

Finally, in a study in the field of English language studies, Manan and Noor (2014) conducted a study on the use of reporting verbs in Masters Theses. Using Hyland's (2000) framework, they tried to determine the choice of reporting verbs by Masters students, their frequency of use, and the impact these verbs employed in the theses. The findings from six theses revealed that reporting verbs from the research acts category was used more frequently by students compared to verbs from cognition acts and discourse acts categories. Based on their findings, they suggested that instead of teaching different aspects of research in research methodology courses, knowledge of reporting verbs could be taught and it could be more beneficial for students.

Considering the role of reporting verbs in the citation process, Thompson and Ye (1991) made a specific contribution by scrutinizing reporting verbs used in academic settings which can guide writers to evaluate their choices and subsequently categorize them. Furthermore, they established a convention to differentiate the writer, the quoting voice who wrote a text, from the author, the quoted voice whose words are mentioned. With respect to the reporting verbs' denotation, Thompson and Ye (1991) categorized them under two broad categories. The first one refers to those verbs which report the author of the text being quoted; hence it is labeled "author acts". This category includes three subcategories, i.e. textual, mental, and research verbs. Textual verbs are the ones through which the author's verbal expression is presented, e.g. "point out", or "state". The mental category, as it can be construed by its name, are verbs basically implying mental processes, e.g. "believe", or "think". Finally, the research verbs refer to physical and mental steps throughout the research process, e.g. "measure", or "find".

The second category, "writer acts", which reveals the writer's orientation towards the under-questioned issue through quoting someone else, contains fewer verbs and refers to verbs in two subcategories of "comparing" verbs and "theorizing" verbs. While comparing verbs such as "correspond to" and "contrast with" attribute the study of the author to a special viewpoint, theorizing ones such as "explain" and "support" benefit writers through providing them with gaining the advantage of the author's study in developing their arguments.

As Bloch (2010) mentioned, in order to develop effective instructional materials related to academic writing skills in general, and reporting verbs in particular, corpora should be designed in a way that they reflect how these features are used in specific genres. Different corpora in studies reported above in the genre of academic research were collected from disciplines other than applied linguistics and language teaching (e.g., Bloch, 2010; Swales, 2014; Zhang, 2008). Moreover, in studies related to research articles in applied linguistics and language teaching, very limited linguistic backgrounds were observed (Kim, 2012), or no data were collected from NNES (Manan & Noor, 2014). In order to create the corpora with both top-down and bottom-up approach by collecting data from both NES and NNES (McEnery & Xiao, 2011), a comparison between the use of reporting verbs in research articles by NES and NNES from different linguistic backgrounds in the field of applied linguistics and language teaching seems to be needed. Based on this assumption, the present study was an attempt to compare the use of reporting verbs by native writers and non-native writers of English. More specifically, this study aimed to find out whether there is any significant difference between native writers of English and non-native writers in the use of reporting verbs in research articles in the field of language teaching and applied linguistics.

III. METHOD

Corpus and Methodological Procedures

The corpus consisted of sixty three articles from three journals in the fields of language teaching and applied linguistics: "Modern Language Journal", "Regional Language Center Journal", and "System". Thirty three of the articles were written by non-native writers from different linguistic background and the other thirty were all written by native speakers of English. In order to determine whether a writer was a native speaker of English or not, writers' affiliations as well as their biodata provided in the websites of their universities were checked.

This corpus was later analyzed by the researchers to find any reporting verbs which were used to quote an author directly. This was done by using search parameter of Adobe Acrobat Reader's program to find any quotation mark in the body of the paper. In order to find reporting verbs which quoted authors indirectly, researchers read the papers carefully to find reporting verbs used by writers throughout the texts. The verbs were tallied, recorded, and then classified on the basis of Thompson and Ye's (1991) classification. An analytic comparison of the reporting verbs used by native and non-native writers is presented below.

IV. RESULTS

Table 1 contains information on the total number of instances of reported materials in the papers by NES and NNES. As it is seen, there was no significant difference between the number of citations that occurred in both groups although in sheer numbers NNES had more instances of citations in their papers. This was also true about the number of reporting verbs used by each group of writers. NES and NNES respectively used 183 and 185 different reporting verbs to quote works of other authors in their works.

TABLE 1.
NUMBER OF REPORTING VERBS AND INSTANCES OF THEIR USE BY NES AND NNES

Number of instances of reporting		Number of reporting verbs used	
NES	NNES	NES	NNES
763	727	183	185

In the case of total number of reporting verbs found in the corpus (Table 2), 254 different reporting verbs in five subcategories were used. Based on our expectations of Thompson and Ye's (1991) classification, the number of reporting verbs used in author's act category was far higher than the number of the ones used in writer's act category. This distribution was not only true for the total number of verbs, but also for all three groups of verbs. The ratio of author's act reporting verbs to writer's act reporting verbs used by both NES and NNES were similar to the total number of the verbs. This observation was also true about the verbs used only by NES and the ones used only by NNES.

TABLE 2
THE USE OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF REPORTING VERBS BY NES AND NNES

	Reporting verbs in the corpus	Reporting verbs only used by NES	Reporting verbs only used by NNES	Reporting verbs used by both NES and NNES
Total	254	73	66	115
Author's act	197	55	55	87
Textual	89	27	18	44
Mental	62	21	23	18
Research	46	7	14	25
Writer's act	57	18	11	28
Comparing	4	1	1	2
Theorizing	53	17	10	26

In the case of distribution of reporting verbs in different subcategories, the highest number of verbs used belonged to textual subcategory excluding the group of verbs used only by NNES in which writers used more mental verbs compared to other types of reporting verbs. In the case of reporting verbs referring to a mental activity the group of verbs shared by NES and NNES had the lowest number indicating that writers of each group tended to use a specific range of verbs that did not overlap in a large degree. Table 2 also shows that overall 46 research reporting verbs were used, and this is the lowest number of verbs used in author's act category. Moreover, its distribution among NES and NNES showed that they shared a high number of these verbs.

Writer's act reporting verbs constituted a smaller portion of the total number of verbs found in the corpus, and most of the verbs belonged to the subcategory of theorizing which in all cases except the verbs used only by NNES was more than the number of the verbs used in research subcategory. Comparing verbs formed the group consisting of the lowest number with only four verbs used only 25 times in the whole corpus.

Overall, the largest number in each category belonged to the verbs that were used by both groups of writers except mental verbs, indicating that to some extent writers of both groups had similar choices of verbs in creating their patterns of citation. Of course, this can only be stated about the choice of verbs, whereas, in the case of type of quotations they used, substantial differences existed.

Table 3 contains the total number of instances of citations that were observed in the corpus, a total of 1490 citations including both direct and indirect quotations of materials by NES and NNES, out of which, 1282 cases occurred by using reporting verb under the category of author's act compared to 208 instances which were reported by verbs of writer's act category. In the case of total number of direct quotations and indirect quotations, indirect quotation was used 924 times compared to 556 times of direct quotations.

TABLE 3.
NUMBER OF INSTANCES OF CITATION

	Total number of citations	Direct quotation	Indirect quotation
All the verbs	1490	556	924
Author's act	1282	426	856
Writer's act	208	140	68

TABLE 4.
NUMBER OF REPORTING VERBS AND THE INSTANCES OF THEIR USE IN DIRECT AND INDIRECT QUOTATION BY NES AND NNES

Reporting verb category	Total number of instances of use	Direct quotation of material by NES		Indirect quotation of material by NES		Direct quotation of material by NNES		Indirect quotation of material by NNES	
		Number of instances of reporting	Number of verbs used in reporting	Number of instances of reporting	Number of verbs used in reporting	Number of instances of reporting	Number of verbs used in reporting	Number of instances of reporting	Number of verbs used in reporting
Total	1490	389	118	374	108	177	80	550	146
Author's act	1282	292	89	353	94	134	51	503	132
Textual	520	193	54	72	40	83	38	172	57
Mental	289	62	23	53	28	17	4	157	41
Research	473	37	12	228	26	34	9	174	34
Writer's act	208	97	29	21	14	43	29	47	14
Comparing	25	8	3	7	3	4	1	6	2
Theorizing	183	89	26	14	11	39	28	41	12

Finally, Table 4 presents detailed information about different types of reporting verbs used in different instances of direct and indirect quotations of materials. NES used 389 instances of direct speech, a number far more than 177 instances used by NNES. On the contrary, NNES had 550 instances of citation of materials indirectly, which was far higher than 374 instances used by NES. In the case of number of verbs used in each category, the situation was very similar. NES used a more diverse range of reporting verbs to quote other researchers' materials directly. The same applies for number of reporting verbs NNES used to report other researchers indirectly.

V. DISCUSSION

Based on the findings, the overall number of reporting verbs used by native and non-native writers and the frequency of occurrence of these verbs were equal. Such results were somehow expected considering the fact that the size of the corpus for each group was almost the same. Such finding contrasts sharply with the result of Kim's (2012) study in which NES used citation five times more than Chinese writers, indicating that writers' linguistic background had affected the findings. It also explains that the diversity in linguistic background in the corpus at hand had no particular effect on the number of citations in present study.

In the case of number of verbs found in the corpus, this high number of verbs indicates the vast variation writers have in their citation patterns. Also the high number of verbs not shared by both groups of writers shows that NES and NNES followed different patterns and choices in citing materials by other authors. This situation could be caused by lack of judicious use of such verbs by NNES (Manan & Noor, 2014), inefficiency in using the verbs (Bloch, 2010), or their difficulty in creating successful academic discourse (Paltridge, 1993). These points being mentioned, we should not forget that linguistic possibilities in academic writing are not very limited and different styles and choices of verbs in discourses produced by NES and NNES may stem from choices based on their personality and understanding of the issue they intended to discuss. Therefore, this difference in the pattern of citation and choice of verbs might not be an indicator of incapability of NNES but of their idiosyncratic choice. This is specifically evident in the high number of mental verbs used only by either group, showing that different writers take different instances in relation to a particular material. This point is supported by Hyland's (2008) claim that NNES insist on having more certainty about the claims they make leading them to use reporting verbs that he considers to be inappropriate.

Another finding of the study was that more than 80 per cent of the 1490 instances of citations in the corpus occurred using verbs under the category of author's act, showing that writers tried to objectively report the author of the text being quoted (Thompson & Ye, 1991) rather than taking an orientation towards the quotation. In total number of quotations, this ratio does not change in the case of direct quotations and indirect ones, showing that the distribution of the verbs under such classifications does not change. However, one interesting point which is worth mentioning and elaborating is the equal and even a little more frequent use of reporting verbs by NES in their direct quotations compared to the number of their indirect quotations. Moreover, in direct quotations NES used very few words, and it was rarely observed that discourse chunks with more than 40 words were used. This could simply show that NES are capable of putting other authors' ideas in the form of words and phrases in their developing argument (Fairclough, 1992). This willingness to use more direct quotations than indirect ones can be allocated to the fact that managing someone else's linguistic products is easier for NES compared to NNES. It can also be hypothesized that NES attempted to convey that material being quoted comes from a superior discursive stance compared to their own (de Oliveira & Pagano, 2006). This could be controversial to some extent since in their study, de Oliveira and Pagano (2006) reported that journalists in the science popularization articles followed such patterns and researchers in academic

articles used fewer direct quotations, which can be attributed to the fact that articles were chosen from disciplines such as agriculture in which creating fuzziness in reporting claims is not very recommended.

As it was mentioned above, NES used more direct quotations in their citations, a phenomenon that was observed far fewer times in NNES quotations. NNES preferred to use more indirect quotations rather than to quote materials directly. This is evident in the results in such a way that the instances of using indirect quotations are three times higher than direct ones. The reason that can be given for this finding is that NNES have difficulty using other authors' linguistic products in their arguments and developing discourse. This is completely evident in all subcategories of reporting verbs. Besides, most uses of direct quotations by NNES were comprised of long chunks of language, normally more than 40 words, which causes NNES to be able to use fewer instances of direct speech. Such a finding supports Myers' (1996) argument about the fact that second language learners may not be able to create the required vagueness of claims necessary for building the rhetorical purpose of a claim in academic context.

In the case of different subcategories of author's act, findings suggested that NNES overall used more mental verbs. The findings also showed that in case of indirect quotations they have used more mental verbs. On the contrary, NES used more research verbs in both direct and indirect speech. This fact could be ascribed to Hyland's (2005) claim that reporting verbs facilitates the creation and maintenance of connection between writers and readers and they also enable writers to display their stance toward the quoted material. This might signal that in quoting other researchers NES preferred to remain more objective by using research verbs, which refer to employed physical and mental steps throughout the research process rather than mental verbs, which refer to unobservable processes they were absent at the time of their occurrence.

Although the findings may suggest that researchers in each group followed a specific and to some extent conscious pattern of citation, it can also be argued that some writers may have used their verbs semi-automatically and no specific purpose is behind them (Swales, 2014), a claim that cannot be verified without interviewing authors of the texts which was not feasible for the researchers. Nevertheless, not in all cases of such interviews could be helpful and revealing (Harwood, 2008, 2009).

With such findings and interpretations, this study tried to investigate the difference in the use of reporting verbs by NES and NNES in applied linguistics articles in English. The findings showed contrasting result in the use of reporting verbs by two groups of writers, which the researchers believe this to be the result of strategies used in order to report materials objectively. There are some concluding remarks and suggestions for further research that are mentioned in last section of this paper.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study was an investigation about the difference between the use of reporting verbs and citation patterns by NES and NNES in applied linguistics articles. The researcher used a 200000-word corpus written by native and non-native writers of English and the results showed significant difference in the use of reporting verbs by writers. The main difference was the higher use of direct quotations by native writers which the researchers believed to be the result of their linguistic capability in handling linguistic materials produced by other authors. Such findings could be helpful in teaching academic writing skills using a bottom-up approach (McEnery & Xiao, 2011). The importance of reporting verbs and the effect they may have on how writers are perceived makes teaching of these verbs and how they are used a necessary component in research methodology and academic writing courses (Manan & Noor, 2014).

There are a few points that other researchers can address in this area. First, using a larger corpus may help material developers and researchers to come up with a clearer picture on the differences between NES and NNES. The second suggestion of the researchers is that since non-native writers were from different linguistic backgrounds, this factor may have influenced the findings. Therefore, studies which control the native language of the writers could be so revealing. Speculations that have been made on the basis of findings can be strengthened by interviews with writers of articles. Researchers can also try to design studies to track specific pieces of discourse and see how they are reported by different writers. Researchers can also try to receive more insights from such corpora by examining each section of articles separately to see what types of verbs are used in each section.

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Feasibility Research on an EAP Course for Science and Engineering Students in China

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Abstract—With the growing internationalization of higher education and talents cultivation, EAP has been debated extensively in recent years in China with respect to its form, content and function in the system of college English. Under these new circumstances, a research-oriented polytechnic university in Beijing has launched an EAP course for the science and engineering students since 2013 based on its discipline strengths, talents cultivation goals and students' needs analysis. This paper first introduces the course design in detail, and then investigates its feasibility and effectiveness, with empirical data analyses indicating that this course could considerably promote students' basic language skills and academic communicative competence, activate their intrinsic motivation and help them prepare for the future academia.

Index Terms—EAP course, science and engineering students, feasibility and effectiveness, academic communicative competence

I. INTRODUCTION

With the growing internationalization of higher education and talents cultivation, EAP has been debated extensively in recent years in China with respect to its form, content and function in the system of college English. Meanwhile, China's National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development (2010-2020), issued by China's Ministry of Education, has placed a strong emphasis on developing college students' practical academic communicative competence, stating that "large numbers of talents shall be cultivated that are imbued with global vision, well-versed in international rules, and capable of participating in international affairs and competition". Under these new circumstances, college English teaching, as an integral part of higher education, if still sticking to basic language skills development as the major objective, could no longer satisfy college students' expectation of high-quality foreign language education, meet the demands of internationalized quality education and keep up with the nation's social and economic development. In addition, with the credit hours of English curriculum to be slashed soon, it is essential to redefine the role of college English teaching and establish a more competence-targeted system. In fact, many Chinese scholars (Zhang, 2011; Wang, 2013; Shu, 2013; Cai, 2014) have pointed out that college English teaching could shift from general English to English for Academic Purposes (henceforth EAP) to cultivate students' academic English proficiency and communicative competence in support of their future academia and career development. Similar voices also have been reflected in the administration of many Chinese colleges and universities. A survey conducted in 2010 by the National Foreign Languages Teaching Advisory Board under China's Ministry of Education found that among the surveyed 120 "985 Project" and "211 Project" universities, 66.6% laid down "the cultivation of academic English proficiency" as their "important" and "quite important" college English teaching objective (Wang & Wang, 2011).

As a branch of English for Specific Purposes (henceforth ESP), EAP refers to the teaching of English with the specific aim of helping learners to study, conduct research or teach in that language (Flowerdew & Peacock, 2001), and includes two sub-types: English for General Academic Purposes (henceforth EGAP) and English for Specific Academic Purposes (henceforth ESAP). The former focuses on common features of broad academic texts while the latter emphasizes the disciplinary differences in language use (Ye, 2013). In China, English courses are primarily delivered in the first two years of college study, and most students are not intensely exposed to technical knowledge and scientific research. Compared to ESAP, therefore, EGAP in theory is highly appropriate to be the content of college English teaching and bridge the gap between general English and ESAP.

Based on discipline strengths, talents cultivation goals and students' needs analysis, a research-oriented polytechnic university in Beijing has launched an EGAP course for the science and engineering students since 2013 to replace the traditional general English, with the aim of developing their academic English proficiency through the exposure and practice of common language features embodied in broad academic discourses. This EGAP course has been designated as compulsory for an elite program with top students selected upon their entry into the university, and also made available to other undergraduates as optional. In terms of contents and characteristics, there has been no similar course designed by other universities in China and no direct reference for consultation. Thus this paper attempts to investigate the feasibility and effectiveness of this EGAP course, in the hope of providing feedback and reference for the burgeoning EAP teaching especially in broad disciplines at home and abroad.

II. CONTENTS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EGAP COURSE

The ultimate goal of EAP teaching is to enable students to meet the literacy demands of the academy through text and context (Johns, 2014). Both textual and contextual perspectives should be drawn together especially in academic writing (Flowerdew, 2011; Tardy, 2011). If students don't study textual variety and disciplinary ideologies that infuse genres, they can, and do, fall on their faces when they attempt to read and produce texts in their classrooms (Johns, 2008). Thus students need to learn what matters most in their areas of study and what are the expected ways in which they should behave in their performance (Butler, 1990) as academic writers in the cultures and texts of their specific disciplines (Johns, 2016). They also need to learn how to present themselves to their readers in their disciplinary contexts (Ochs, 1992; Strauss & Feiz, 2014), and in doing this they can gradually be involved in their academic community as they perform and position themselves. In addition, students should be viewed as researchers (Johns 1997, 2014) and encouraged to correlate the EAP learning with their disciplinary research. In other words, for an EAP course, the ideal practice is that the language input and output are closely related and drive each other forward.

The theoretical ideas above are reflected in the EGAP course design and implementation by the research-oriented polytechnic university in Beijing. The course, tailored for science and engineering students, is aimed at: 1) developing students' basic language skills such as academic reading, academic listening, note taking, question raising and oral presentation, 2) cultivating their generic cross-disciplinary academic skills, for instance definition, description, explanation and argumentation of terms and concepts, formulas and symbols, tables and figures, systems and mechanisms, processes and procedures, and 3) imbuing them with the core elements of major academic discourse genres encompassing structural models, discourse features, rhetorical strategies, discourse community, communicative purposes etc. Its contents and major objectives are presented in Table 1. To realize the objectives, a genre-based approach is taken to acquaint the students with the most common target genres in their academic career development, including but not limited to research/grant proposal, lab/research report, literature review and research paper. In addition, a task-based approach is also incorporated into in-class and after-class writing assignments and oral presentations to consolidate the learning effect. At the end of this course, students are required to submit a final paper in the form of literature review, lab report, research proposal, or engineering designs, and present it orally within study groups to be teacher-and-peer assessed.

TABLE 1
CONTENTS AND MAJOR OBJECTIVES OF THE EGAP COURSE

Unit	Contents	Major Objectives
1	Terms and Concepts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Use various ways of defining unfamiliar terms and concepts within texts; 2) Get acquainted with the basic syntactic structural pattern and its variations of an intensional definition; identify the types of information in an extended definition; 3) Give an intensional definition and an extended definition of a technical term or concept; 4) Enhance stylistic awareness of written and spoken academic discourse; 5) Understand definitions of terms and concepts when listening to a report, talk, or interview.
2	Symbols and Formulas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Acquire basic skills to read and write mathematic symbols and formulas; 2) Get acquainted with syntactic structures to explain symbols and formulas; 3) Get acquainted with verbs, prepositions, adverbs, and connectives frequently used in texts containing symbols and formulas; 4) Follow grammatical rules when writing sentences containing symbols and formulas; 5) Distinguish technical and semi-technical vocabulary from general vocabulary in textbooks.
3	Tables and Figures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Understand that visuals such as tables and figures should interact with verbal texts to achieve effective communication; 2) Use various expressions and structures for making reference to tables and figures; 3) Use accurate words, expressions, and structures to describe trends, patterns, comparisons, increase, decrease, etc.; 4) Interpret the data from tables and figures for different purposes; 5) Develop students' skills to take notes when reading a lengthy report.
4	Overviews and Reviews	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Identify the types of information and common structural patterns of overviews and reviews; 2) Explain the various purposes of citing references in academic texts; 3) Increase awareness of consistency in citing and documenting references; 4) Distinguish critical evaluation from descriptive summary of sources; 5) Note down the main points of university lecture introductions.
5	Systems and Mechanisms	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Identify the typical structural pattern of texts that describe engineering systems and their components; 2) Identify the common types of information included in the description of components of engineering systems; 3) Use accurate expressions and structures to describe components of an engineering system and their functions; 4) Describe processes in explaining how an engineering system works; 5) Note down the main points of university lectures.
6	Processes and Procedures	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Use a variety of sentence structures to define various manufacturing processes; 2) Identify the basic elements or types of information included in defining a manufacturing process; 3) Identify the procedures or steps of various CO₂ capture and storage processes; 4) Use the right words, expressions, and structures to describe the sequence of procedures; 5) Use accurate verb-noun collocations in describing the procedures of CO₂ capture and storage processes.
7	Properties and Characteristics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Understand engineering variables that are used to describe properties of materials; 2) Develop language skills to inquire about properties and characteristics of materials; 3) Use accurate language to describe properties and characteristics of different types of materials; 4) Develop the awareness of optimizing material selection based on engineering requirements; 5) Understand talks and interviews which discuss properties and characteristics of chemical elements.
8	Tests and Experiments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Increase students' stylistic awareness of textbooks, lab manuals, and lab reports; identify language features in the descriptions of experiment or test procedures in textbooks, lab manuals, and lab reports; 2) Explain the reasons for tense switching in the descriptions of tests and experiments; 3) Increase students' accuracy in using verbs and verb forms when describing test procedures or test methods; 4) Increase students' accuracy in using propositions when describing test setups and test procedures; 5) Note down the main points when listening to talks and interviews.
9	Types and Classifications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Increase students' awareness of organizing complicated information by classification; 2) Develop students' note-taking skills when reading academic texts and give oral summaries with the help of the notes; 3) Use diagrams to describe the complicated structures of texts; 4) Distinguish the authors' generalizations from citations of specific studies; 5) Distinguish the main points from redundant details when taking notes of a talk or interview.

In response to course design initiatives, the teaching materials embody four distinguishing features: authenticity, relevance to science and engineering disciplines, genre varieties and great teaching value, as shown in Table 2. Reading materials are extracted from original English textbooks, monographs, reports etc., and listening materials are from authentic interviews, lectures, reports and open courses of some world's prestigious universities. The majority are strongly related to broad science and engineering disciplines, and the rest are intended for developing students' critical thinking and awareness of cross-disciplinary stylistic differences. To genre varieties and teaching value, both material selection and task design aim for the multi-facet manifestations of the course contents. For example, on how to compose literature reviews, written and spoken materials cover narrative, argumentative, critical and analytical literature reviews from various sources. In terms of communicative purposes and discourse community, micro-linguistic features and macro-structural patterns in various genres of literature reviews are exposed to students at the levels of word, sentence, paragraph and discourse. Moreover, what students read and listen to would be reflected in their writing and oral performance. The input and output knit together to consolidate students' learning and develop their dynamic view of language use via the observation of various academic discourses and the completion of target tasks. As a whole, it is expected to cultivate students' accuracy in language use, stylistic consciousness, and pragmatic and communicative competence.

Apart from the textbook plus supplements at around 10,000 words in every unit, students are encouraged to read and refer to academic papers in their own research interest for writing and speaking tasks, in order to satisfy their extra needs and activate intrinsic motivation.

TABLE 2
TYPICAL READING TEXTS AND LISTENING MATERIALS IN THE EGAP COURSE

Unit	Contents	Reading texts	Themes of listening materials
1	Terms and Concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lasers Defining Critical Thinking Critical Thinking in Every Domain of Knowledge and Belief 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carbon Geo-engineering Nano particles Magnetism
2	Symbols and Formulas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electrical Circuits Fundamental Physical Dimensions The Newtonian Modification of Kepler's Third Law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University course introduction Newton' assumptions The equation $E=mc^2$ Fibonacci numbers
3	Tables and Figures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Status of the US Science and Technology Workforce U.S. Manufacturing in International Perspective The 2007-2009 Recession 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistic parameters Progress of human health Global climate change Carl Friedrich Gauss's experiences
4	Overviews and Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manufacturing Engineering Overview and Issues for Implementation of the Federal Cloud Computing Initiative Urban Ecology as an Interdisciplinary Field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introductory lectures of university courses A lecture about environmental protection Urban planning
5	Systems and Mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Internal-Combustion Engine GPS Receiver Technology Battery Manufacturing for Hybrid and Electric Vehicles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An introductory lecture about biomedical engineering Working mechanism of a hybrid car Solar energy system
6	Processes and Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manufacturing Processes Overview of CO2 Capture Technologies Alternative Fuel Vehicles: Which Shall Win the Race to Commercialization? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manufacturing process of an automobile Working process of a 3D printer Power generation of a PC plant Production of plastic bags
7	Properties and Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electrical, Mechanical, and Thermal Properties of Materials Engineering Materials Materials for Consideration and Use in Automotive Body Structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Properties and applications of aluminum Supply of phosphorus Properties of uranium and its applications
8	Tests and Experiments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modulus of Elasticity, Modulus of Rigidity, and Bulk Modulus of Compressibility Results of Material Properties Testing for Aluminum Specimens Electric Potential, Electric Field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newton's experiment-based mathematical thinking The story about Newton and Leibniz Georg Cantor's insight and achievements
9	Types and Classifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Impacts of Liquid Biofuel Production and Use: A Review Robot Control Architectures and Motion Autonomy History and Overview of Vehicle Structure Types 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Types and applications of GPS Features of different types of robots Fuel types Significance of industrial design

III. RESEARCH METHODS

In order to grasp a global view of the course's feasibility and effectiveness, this study tracked all 64 students in the elite class and 101 students in two optional classes, and collected data on their course learning via classroom observation, interview and questionnaire. Classroom observation, together with interviews, was conducted to each class once a week to provide feedback on constructing the questionnaire. After a pilot test, the adapted questionnaire employed a 5-point Likert scale with overall reliability at 0.83, and was composed of four parts: personal information, learning process, study feelings and gains. At the end of the course, the questionnaires were administered to both types of classes, with 164 valid ones returned. Afterwards, follow-up interviews were conducted to complement questionnaire data.

Collected data was analyzed from a quantitative and qualitative perspective. Frequency analyses and independent-samples T test were applied to questionnaire data by SPSS 17.0, and the statistical results were tested against observation notes and interview scripts.

IV. STATISTICAL ANALYSES AND RESULTS

A. Learning Process

SPSS frequency analyses show that for reading materials plus supplements, 32% of the elite class finished reading around half and 56% completed more than 3/4, in which 5% read all. For optional classes, the corresponding figures are 44%, 41% and 2%. It indicates that most students could finish the majority of weekly 10,000-word academic discourses at their own learning pace. Besides textbook materials, students were encouraged to search for and read academic papers in technical fields interesting themselves. Statistical results demonstrate that 81% of the elite class read at least 3 extra papers while completing each writing task, with 60% 3-4 papers and 21% more than 5. To optional classes, it is

91% reading at least 3 extra papers, including 42% 3-4 papers and 49% more than 5. The figures above indicate that most students could handle the large quantity of language input with relatively high motivation and autonomy.

Listening materials in this course are selected from authentic academic interviews, lectures, reports, seminars etc. For every unit, the total length of listening materials is about 40 minutes. Most Chinese college students have rarely been intensively exposed to such oral discourses before when it comes to whether language difficulty or academic content. Frequency analysis reveals that 28% of the elite class finished about half of all listening materials. 50% finished no less than 3/4, with 6.5% completing all. For optional classes, the corresponding figures are around 40%, 40% and 11%.

Data analyses above indicate that academic genres and the large quantity of language input are feasible and workable to most students in both classes. They could adjust their autonomous learning pace to satisfy their individualized needs, which is further verified by the extra reading of at least 3 academic papers every week.

B. Learning Gains

Frequency analyses were also conducted to investigate students' feelings and attitudes towards the course effectiveness in promoting their overall academic English proficiency.

For the course effectiveness in reading abilities development, the number of students stating almost no help is zero in both classes. 76.2% of the elite class and 87% of optional classes chose the scales "quite helpful" and "very helpful." Similarly, almost all the students thought that this course was helpful to enhance their oral English proficiency, with 71% of the elite class and 69% of optional classes claiming "quite helpful" and "very helpful."

It thus can be concluded that a vast majority of students held a very positive attitude to the course learning, and agreed that their academic reading abilities and communicative competence were considerably fostered and promoted.

C. Significant Differences between the Elite and Optional Classes

Independent-samples T test was used to determine any significant difference between the two classes in course learning. Test results show that there is no significant differences in three variables: the learning process of reading and listening materials and the effectiveness of group presentation in improving students' oral English competence. As calculated in frequency analyses, almost half of the elite and optional classes finished more than 3/4 reading and listening materials, and nearly all students confirmed the form of group presentation was conducive to their oral English.

Independent-samples T test reveals that significant differences exist in five variables, as indicated by two-tailed significant levels far lower than 0.05 in Table 3. For the first three variables, t-value and mean difference are all negative, which means compared to the elite class, optional classes regarded reading materials and writing tasks as more difficult and had more study pressure. This is probably due to the fact that the elite class were selected with relatively higher English levels as a whole. On the other hand, in spite of the differences, optional classes finished the reading and listening materials almost as well as the elite class with no significant difference in the learning process found, which further proves the feasibility of providing this EGAP course to students with different English proficiency.

For the last two variables in Table 3, t-value and mean difference are also negative, which shows optional classes read more extra academic papers while completing each writing task and thought of this course learning as more helpful in bettering their academic reading abilities. In other words, as well as reflected in frequency analysis results, both types of classes have benefited considerably from this course, while optional classes stated more gains.

TABLE 3
SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE ELITE AND OPTIONAL CLASSES

Elite class vs Optional classes		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
1. Difficulty of Comprehending reading materials	Equal variances assumed	1.825	.179	-3.398	.001	-.57609	-.91105	-.24113
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.355	.001	-.57609	-.91582	-.23635
2. Study pressure	Equal variances assumed	.038	.846	-3.167	.002	-.41775	-.67838	-.15712
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.100	.002	-.41775	-.68453	-.15097
3. Difficulty of Completing writing tasks	Equal variances assumed	5.744	.018	-4.341	.000	-.74603	-1.08558	-.40648
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.196	.000	-.74603	-1.09817	-.39389
4. Effectiveness in promoting academic reading competence	Equal variances assumed	1.878	.172	-3.189	.002	-.31117	-.50387	-.11847
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.276	.001	-.31117	-.49892	-.12343
5. Extra reading of academic papers	Equal variances assumed	4.519	.035	-2.959	.004	-.44916	-.74887	-.14945
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.983	.003	-.44916	-.74692	-.15140

D. Student Interview and Classroom Observation

The recordings of student interview were taken down and merged with classroom observation notes. The summation of students' responses presents that despite some complaints of rigorous course requirements with insufficient credit hours, the majority of students have claimed considerable gains in their overall language competence. First, their basic language skills have developed enormously with language use accuracy improved and technical and semi-technical vocabulary accumulated. Second, they have acquired some generic academic skills such as defining a term, describing a table and explaining a mechanism. Third, they have had a stylistic and functional consciousness of discourse genres, structural patterns, rhetorical strategies etc. while composing academic texts for different communicative purposes. Next, their consciousness of academic norms has been established especially when it comes to in-text reference citation and styles. At last, extra reading of academic papers has promoted their literature search and summation abilities, and moreover, teaching materials covering broad science and engineering disciplines have expanded their academic horizons and activated their interest in scientific research.

V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study investigated the feasibility and effectiveness of the EGAP course launched by a research-oriented university in Beijing for its science and engineering students, since there is no similar course at home for quick reference. Data was collected through questionnaire, student interview and classroom observation, and analyzed from a quantitative and qualitative perspective. Results demonstrate that this course is feasible, workable and effective to both the elite class and optional classes. Most students could finish a large proportion of the authentic science-and-engineering discourses in the textbooks and extra read every week at least 3 academic papers in their own research fields. Consequently, they have reported considerable gains in overall language competence and acquired some certain basic language skills, vocabulary and generic academic skills. Moreover, their stylistic and functional consciousness of academic discourse genres has been developed through the observation and analyses of authentic materials at discourse and metadiscourse levels, and further consolidated in completing targeted tasks. Surprisingly, compared to the elite class, optional classes have stated more gains through the course learning, which implies that this course would be feasible and effective to more science and engineering students in more universities.

This study primarily focused on empirical data analyses, and did not further research into students' written and spoken discourses for more evidence. Since there has been no similar EGAP course specifically designed for science and engineering students in China and thus no direct reference, students' language competence development also needs to be verified in comparison with general English teaching in future study.

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Portfolio Assessment, Peer Assessment and Writing Skill Improvement

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Abstract—Little research has been conducted in the field of alternative assessment including portfolio and peer assessment in Iran. Moreover, in spite of the assumed advantages of portfolio and peer assessment, the practicality of these techniques needs to be investigated. To this aim, a total of 207 writing papers from 69 participants were collected to investigate the effects of peer and portfolio assessment on the writing components in two experimental groups. The data were collected from students of a general English semester course held at Sharif University of Technology. There were two experimental groups of 37 and 32 students experiencing portfolio and peer assessment respectively. As the treatment, students were supposed to write compositions, and for each composition, they were supposed to invest at least twenty minutes on a topic of interest e.g. sport, science, social issues, etc. And they were then rated by their teacher in group A and their peers in group B based on ten pre-established assessment criteria in each session during the term. After administering the writing post-test, independent t-tests were run to find the differences between the two groups. As the result, it was indicated that portfolio and peer assessment had the same effect on four of the five components of writing namely as content, organization, language use and vocabulary. But only there was a significant difference between portfolio and peer assessment groups on the last component of the study: mechanics in writing. The findings of this study have implications for language teachers, material designers, and educational policy makers.

Index Terms—alternative assessments, peer assessment, portfolio assessment

I. INTRODUCTION

Dochy, Segers, and Sluijsmans (1999) emphasized the idea of using assessment as a learning device in a way that one can switch from a teacher-centered classroom to a learner-centered classroom. In this context, teachers not only monitor learning but also improve it. Orsmond and Merry (1996) also stated that in order to encourage students to be more self-dependent in their own development; we need to change the current tests. To this end, we need to empower students, two instances of which are portfolio and peer assessment. While these assessments help to create a closer relationship among teachers and students, they also foster critical thinking, communication, feedback, responsibility, autonomy, and help students develop useful skills in academic and professional areas (Peng, 2010).

Despite the multiple advantages of new forms of assessments, students often assume that assessments made by teachers are more accurate, which may not always be true. In fact, teacher assessment cannot always be viewed as the most valid method and it can be triangulated with varied sources of assessments (Orsmond and Merry, 1996). On the other hand, there are still controversies about the accuracy of portfolio and peer assessments (Matsuno, 2009; Patri, 2002; Ross, 2006). With regard to the aforementioned merits of portfolio and peer assessment, the pedagogical value of these techniques is hard to be denied; however, the effectiveness of portfolio and peer assessments needs to be empirically tested in an EFL context. In addition, most of the university students in Iran have not experienced portfolio and peer assessment. Thus, this study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of portfolio and peer assessments on writing skill. To this aim, the 5 writing components as content, organization, language use, vocabulary and mechanics were compared between the two groups of students experiencing portfolio and peer assessments.

In recent years, the field of language teaching experienced more attention on learner independence and autonomy (Butler & Lee, 2010). According to the literature, portfolio and peer assessment seem to be a viable option to enhance independent and autonomous learning. Portfolio and peer assessments have many empirically supported merits that include raising students' awareness, extension of assessment range, improvement in learning, promotion of goal-orientation, beneficial post-course effects, and mutual assessment responsibility (Oscarson, 1989). Brown and Hudson (2002) reported the other merits to these alternative assessments as learner involvement in the learning and assessment, demanding short time to conduct in classrooms, increasing motivation, and encouraging learner- autonomy self-awareness and noticing the gap between self- and others' perception. While Saito & Fujita, (2004) added multiple-perspective feedbacks, sensitizing students to the evaluation criteria, encouraging connectivity in the classroom, and

self- reflection to their benefits. Although previous studies have addressed portfolio and peer assessment exclusively, almost a few examined both portfolio and peer assessment on writing skills in an EFL context.

Gaining insight into the degree of effectiveness of portfolio and peer assessment on writing performance can help policy makers, teachers and curriculum designers in gaining trust in these techniques. This study has focused on the effectiveness of these two newly-applied techniques on students writing skill components such as content, organization, language use, vocabulary, and mechanics. Writing skill plays a prominent role in recent types of proficiency tests (e.g. TOEFL IBT). In addition, writing has also formed backwash effect for motivating English learners to improve their oral skills (Peng, 2010). Thus, this study aims to broaden the knowledge of implementing portfolio and peer assessment in teaching writing in EFL context by exploring the effectiveness of either portfolio or peer assessments on students' writing skills.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Since this study aimed to investigate the relationship between the two methods of assessment on students writing skills, the research questions are as following:

- Q1. Do portfolio and peer assessment have the same effect on language use in writing among Iranian EFL learners?
- Q2. Do portfolio and peer assessment have the same effect on organization in writing among Iranian EFL learners?
- Q3. Do portfolio and peer assessment have the same effect on content in writing among Iranian EFL learners?
- Q4. Do portfolio and peer assessment have the same effect on vocabulary in writing among Iranian EFL learners?
- Q5. Do portfolio and peer assessment have the same effect on mechanics in writing among Iranian EFL learners?

According to the nature of the research questions, there are five hypotheses for them. The hypotheses are:

H1. Portfolio and peer assessments do not have the same effect on language use in writing among Iranian EFL learners.

H2. Portfolio and peer assessment do not have the same effect on organization in writing among Iranian EFL learners.

H3. Portfolio and peer assessment do not have the same effect on content in writing among Iranian EFL learners.

H4. Portfolio and peer assessment do not have the same effect on vocabulary in writing among Iranian EFL learners.

H5. Portfolio and peer assessment do not have the same effect on mechanics in writing among Iranian EFL learners.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The study was conducted at Sharif University of Technology. The sampling was a convenience one. Convenience or opportunity sampling is part of non-probability sampling in which we get help from subjects that are available (Dörnyei, 2007). The students were from 2 different classes which were structured with the same teacher and a textbook called 'Active Four'. There were more than 30 students in each class and totally 69 students were engaged in the study. One class experienced portfolio assessment which was named group A and group B experienced peer assessment. Group A (portfolio assessment group) included 37 students and group B (peer assessment group) included 32 learners. The students' proficiency level was deemed as intermediate, however, a PET test was run to test the homogeneity of the two groups and the analysis of the results showed that the two groups were homogeneous. They attended the class two sessions a week, while each session lasted one and a half hours, and the treatment period extended for 16 sessions in a normal semester. They were in the age range of 18 to 22 coming from different colleges such as the colleges of psychology, or Sciences such as Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, etc. The proportion of male and female was 48/21 in favor of male students. All the students were willing to participate in these classes, for the course was extracurricular and they have been charged in order to attend these classes. Table I shows the descriptive statistics of the participants in the study.

TABLE I.
PARTICIPANT STATISTICS

	Number	Gender		Age Range	Treatment
		Male	Female		
Group A	37	26	11	18-20	Portfolio assessment
Group B	32	22	10	18-20	Peer assessment
Total	69	48	21		

B. Instruments

The instruments used in this study include: 1) A framework for portfolio assessment including the goal, collection, evaluation, and reflection on the writings of students, 2) The standard PET test used as the tool for testing the homogeneity of the groups and as the post-test, 3) A 5- item pre-established criteria assessment sheet used as a scoring measure for peer assessment, measuring content, language use, organization, vocabulary, and mechanics of the students' writing papers.

The writing papers were scored based on the Jacobs' scoring framework for the end term evaluation; moreover, the scoring of the post test for both groups was conducted based on the same criteria. This scoring framework is divided

into five parts namely as content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics (See Appendix A). Each part is based on the 4-point Likert scale in which 1 represents the lowest score and 4 represents the highest score.

C. Data Collection Procedure

The data collection procedure was conducted with 2 different intact classes that were grouped in a) portfolio assessment group and, b) peer assessment group. All the groups took part in a pre-test for the sake of ensuring their homogeneity and writing part of the standard PET test was administered as pretest. During the treatment period, group A experienced portfolio assessment while group B solely experienced peer assessment.

After the introduction of the Portfolio evaluation scheme to the English classes, the teachers proceeded with their usual classroom activities that they had planned for the whole term. After all writing activities were accomplished and completed, the teacher asked their students to collate and compile all their best written output to be marked and analyzed for portfolio assessment. The same writing papers were subjected to peer assessment on the part of the students in the second group. The teacher provided writing prompts to facilitate the writing of the two evaluation essays.

At the beginning of the semester, the teacher explained the objectives and procedures of portfolio assessment to group A, and the purposes and procedures for peer assessment to group B. In the next session, he discussed issues and concerns of the students regarding the use of portfolio and peer assessment. For instance, Peng (2010) stated that students might be concerned that assigning grades to friends would jeopardize their friendship. Therefore, this issue was dealt with and the students were assured that the peer assessment would not have been used as the base for their final scores. Thus, he assured the students that their names would be kept confidential. In the third session, the instructor had to discuss various components of a good writing. From session four to the end, in each session, students were supposed to write one short essay on a pre-defined topic. Totally, each student was required to fulfill at least three writing assignments for the term. In group A, the collected writings of the participants were included in their own profile. Students were required to submit the final portfolio project to the teacher. Some students were very creative in their projects, and they came up with unique presentations that made their projects very interesting. And in group B, the peer assessment evaluation sheets for each student were collected for further analysis right after each writing task presented. Finally, the post-test was administered to both groups which was writing a composition, and the scores were obtained based on the Jacob's scoring framework to be implemented in the data analyses of the study.

III. DATA ANALYSIS

Prior to the conduction of statistical procedures for the research questions, the reliability of PET was estimated (table II). In addition, the inter-rater reliability of three raters' evaluation of the participants' writings was computed using Cohen's Kappa test. The resulting Kappa of .85 indicates that raters provided similar information about students' writing performance.

TABLE II.
RELIABILITY RESULTS OF PET

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.708	.704	6

TABLE III.
INTER-RATER RELIABILITY RESULTS

	value	Std. Error	Approx. T	Approx. Sig.
Measure of Agreement	.858	0.54	11.163	.000
N of Valid Cases	69			

The major research question of this study was concerned with the effects of peer and portfolio types of assessment on the writing performance of language learners. In order to analyze the data to test the research questions, the statistical procedures have been carried out using statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS, 2012) version 21. First, the scores were analyzed to ensure the assumptions of normality. The results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests and the box plots are presented below.

TABLE IV.
ONE-SAMPLE KOLMOGOROV-SMIRNOV TEST RESULTS

Null hypothesis	test	Sig.	Decision
1 The categories of language use occur with equal probabilities.	One-sample Chi-Square Test	.18	The null hypothesis was retained.
2 The categories of organization occur with equal probabilities.	One-sample Chi-Square Test	.20	The null hypothesis was retained.
3 The categories of content occur with equal probabilities.	One-sample Chi-Square Test	.45	The null hypothesis was retained.
4 The categories of vocabulary occur with equal probabilities.	One-sample Chi-Square Test	.06	The null hypothesis was retained.
5 The categories of mechanics occur with equal probabilities.	One-sample Chi-Square Test	.24	The null hypothesis was retained.

The results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests show that the scores are normally distributed ($p > 0.05$). In addition to Kolmogorov-Smirnov, box plots are depicted to ensure the normality of the scores.

A. Findings of 1st Research Question

Having ascertained the assumptions of independent samples t-test as a parametric test (i.e., the normality of data), the next step was to conduct the t-tests. First, the results of independent samples t-test for the first research question are presented in tables V and VI.

TABLE V.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF LANGUAGE USE ACROSS GROUPS

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Language use	Peer assessment	32	3.1716	.59538	.10525
	Portfolio assessment	37	3.2433	.57974	.09531

As the mean and standard deviation scores in table 4.4 show, there are very nuance differences between the peer assessment ($M = 3.17$, $SD = 0.59$) and portfolio assessment ($M = 3.24$, $SD = 0.57$) group learners' performance in language use aspect of writing. However, in order to get more accurate and reliable results, an independent samples t-test was run, the results of which are displayed in table VI.

TABLE VI.
T-TEST RESULTS OF GROUP DIFFERENCES IN LANGUAGE USE

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Dif.	Std. Error Dif.	95% Confidence Int. of the Dif.	
								Lo		up
Language use	Equal variances assumed	.34	.55	-.50	67	.61	-.07	.14	-.35	.21
	Equal variances not assumed			-.50	65.03	.61	-.07	.14	-.35	.21

The results show that the significance level of Levene's test is $p = 0.55$, which means that the variances for the two groups (portfolio and peer) are the same. The results of independent samples t-test show statistically insignificant difference ($t(67) = -0.50$, $p > 0.05$) between the portfolio and peer assessment groups in the language use aspect of writing. Therefore, the first hypothesis is rejected. This hypothesis reiterated the nonexistence of the sameness of the effect of portfolio and peer assessments on language use in writing among Iranian EFL learners.

B. Findings of 2nd Research Question

In order to examine the second research question which is concerned with the differences between portfolio and peer assessment groups' performance in the organization aspect of writing, an independent samples t-test was run. First, the results of descriptive statistics are shown.

TABLE VII.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF ORGANIZATION ACROSS GROUPS

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Organization	Peer assessment	32	3.1213	.58417	.10327
	Portfolio assessment	37	3.1470	.57101	.09387

As table VII shows, there are not mean differences between the peer ($M = 3.12$, $SD = 0.58$) and portfolio ($M = 3.14$, $SD = 0.57$) group participants' performance in organization. The results of t-test are indicated in table 4.5.

TABLE VII.
T-TEST RESULTS OF GROUP DIFFERENCES IN ORGANIZATION

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower		Upper
Organization	Equal variances assumed	.27	.60	-.18	67	.85	-.02	.13	-.30	.25
	Equal variances not assumed			-.18	65.11	.85	-.02	.13	-.30	.2593

The results show that the significance level of Levene's test is $p = 0.60$, which means that the variances for the two groups (peer and portfolio) are the same. The results of independent samples t-test show statistically insignificant differences ($t(67) = -0.18$, $p > 0.05$) between the experimental participants in the organization scores. Therefore, the researcher could reject the second hypothesis. This hypothesis stated the nonexistence of the sameness of the effect of portfolio and peer assessments on organization in writing among Iranian EFL learners.

C. Findings of 3rd Research Question

In an attempt to identify the differences between the peer assessment and portfolio assessment groups in terms of their performance in content aspect of writing, an independent samples t-test was run. The results are shown in tables VIII and IX.

TABLE VIII.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF CONTENT ACROSS GROUPS

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Content	Peer assessment	32	3.1831	.50231
	Portfolio assessment	37	3.1376	.53860

The man scores do not show differences between the peer assessment ($M = 3.18$, $SD = 0.50$) and portfolio assessment ($M = 3.13$, $SD = 0.53$) in the participants' content scores. Results of independent samples t-test are demonstrated in table IX.

TABLE IX.
T-TEST RESULTS OF GROUP DIFFERENCES IN CONTENT

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Content	Equal variances assumed	.00	.92	.36	67	.71	.04	.12	-.20	.29
	Equal variances not assumed			.36	66.59	.71	.04	.12	-.20	.29

The results show that the significance level of Levene's test is $p = 0.92$, which means that the variances for the two groups (peer and portfolio) are the same. The results of independent samples t-test show statistically insignificant differences ($t(67) = 0.36$, $p > 0.05$) between the peer and portfolio types of assessment of learners' content scores in writing. Consequently, the third hypothesis is rejected. This hypothesis reiterated the nonexistence of the sameness of the effect of portfolio and peer assessments on content in writing among Iranian EFL learners.

D. Findings of 4th Research Question

In order to examine the differences between the peer assessment and portfolio assessment groups in terms of their performance in vocabulary part of writing, an independent samples t-test was run. The results are shown in tables X and XI.

TABLE X.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF VOCABULARY ACROSS GROUPS

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Vocabulary	Peer assessment	32	3.5100	.46239
	Portfolio assessment	37	3.5354	.36830

TABLE XI.
T-TEST RESULTS OF GROUP DIFFERENCES IN VOCABULARY

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Vocabulary	Equal variances assumed	4.83	.03	-.25	67	.80	-.02	.10	-.22	.17
	Equal variances not assumed			-.25	59.04	.80	-.02	.10	-.22	.17

The results of the above table indicate that the significance level of Levene's test is $p = 0.03$, which means that the variances for the two groups (peer and portfolio) are not the same. The results of independent samples t-test show statistically insignificant differences ($t(59.04) = -2.5$, $p > 0.05$) between the peer and portfolio types of assessment of learners' vocabulary scores in writing. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis is rejected. This hypothesis reiterated the nonexistence of the sameness of the effect of portfolio and peer assessments on vocabulary in writing among Iranian EFL learners.

E. Findings of 5th Research Question

In order to provide an answer to the last research question about the differences between the peer assessment and portfolio assessment groups in terms of their performance in mechanics of writing, an independent samples t-test was run. The results are shown in tables XII and XIII.

TABLE XII.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF MECHANICS ACROSS GROUPS

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Mechanics	Peer assessment	32	3.6463	.30080	.05317
	Portfolio assessment	37	3.4832	.26948	.04430

TABLE XIII.
T-TEST RESULTS OF GROUP DIFFERENCES IN MECHANICS

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
										Lower	Upper
Mechanics	Equal variances assumed	.17	.68	2.37	67	.02	.16	.06	.02	.30	
	Equal variances not assumed			2.35	62.88	.02	.16	.06	.02	.30	

The results demonstrate that the significance level of Levene's test is $p = 0.68$, which means that the variances for the two groups (peer and portfolio) are the same. The results of independent samples t-test show statistically significant differences ($t(67) = 2.37, p < 0.05$) between the peer and portfolio types of assessment of learners' mechanics use in writing. The results confirm those of descriptive statistics, exhibiting that the peer assessment group ($M = 3.64, SD = 0.30$) obtained a higher mean score compared to the portfolio assessment group ($M = 3.48, SD = 0.26$). Therefore, the fifth hypothesis is not rejected. This hypothesis stated the nonexistence of the sameness of the effect of portfolio and peer assessments on mechanics of writing among Iranian EFL learners.

IV. DISCUSSION

The present study was conducted to examine the effectiveness of two methods of writing skill assessment, namely peer and portfolio assessment. In order to have a clearer and detailed insight about the efficiency of each method, five aspects of writing were examined: language use, organization, content, vocabulary and mechanics. The results of statistical analysis of the learners' writing pieces showed that although the treatments were not different in the first four categories of language use, organization, content, vocabulary and mechanics, there was significant difference for the mechanics of writing, with the peer group outperforming the portfolio group learners. The summary of the findings of the statistical analyses of the present study is reported in table XVI below.

TABLE XIV.
SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

hypothesis	Test	Sig.	Decision
1 Portfolio and peer assessment do not have the same effect on language use.	Independent samples t-test	.61	The hypothesis was rejected.
2 Portfolio and peer assessment do not have the same effect on organization.	Independent samples t	.85	The hypothesis was rejected.
3 Portfolio and peer assessment do not have the same effect on content.	Independent samples t	.71	The hypothesis was rejected.
4 Portfolio and peer assessment do not have the same effect on vocabulary.	Independent samples t	.80	The hypothesis was rejected.
5 Portfolio and peer assessment do not have the same effect on mechanics.	Independent samples t	.02	The hypothesis was retained.

V. CONCLUSION

It is claimed that portfolio and peer assessment is not as accurate as teacher assessment. But it must be noted that reaching high reliability and validity is not the primary objective of portfolio and peer assessment. As mentioned by Devenney (1989), the goals and functions of portfolio, peer, and teacher assessments are different; teacher assessment is a summative assessment technique which is mostly used for evaluation at the end of the courses while portfolio and peer assessment are formative assessment techniques which aimed at ongoing learning processes. One of the main advantages of having several input samples of students is to help teachers understand learning processes and their outcomes. In other words, portfolio and peer assessment are accompanying tools for students' engagement and empowerment which should be used along with teacher assessment. Shohamy (2001) also stipulated that portfolio and peer assessment should be used as tools for gathering samples of language from learners. All in all, with careful training,

monitoring and utilization, portfolio and peer assessment can be beneficial as good as teacher assessment in “cognitive, social, affective, transferable skill and systemic domains” (Topping, 1998, p. 269).

Since there were not any doubts regarding the benefits of alternative assessments over traditional testing, there was no need to have a control group in the study. Therefore, the comparison of traditional and alternative assessments was not the aim, and the design of the study was set to have two experimental groups to have portfolio assessment verses peer assessment on the improvement of writing skill.

According to the results of the study, it can be concluded that there were not any significant differences between the two methods of assessment namely as portfolio and peer. The only significant difference was in mechanics of writing between the two groups. Since the two groups acted similarly for four major components of writing, it can be concluded that portfolio and peer assessments have the same effect on the writing skill of Iranian English learners.

APPENDIX A. JACOBS ET AL.'S ESL COMPOSITION PROFILE

Students	Date	Topic	
	Score level Criteria		Comments
Content	4	Excellent to very good: knowledgeable. Substantive. Thorough development of thesis. Relevant to assigned topic	
	3	Good to average: some knowledge of subject. Adequate range. Limited development of thesis. Mostly relevant to topic, but lacks detail	
	2	Fair to poor: limited some knowledge of subject. Little substance. Inadequate development of topic.	
	1	Very poor: does not show knowledge of subject. Non- substantive. Not pertinent. Or not enough to evaluate	
Organization	4	Excellent to very good: fluent expression. Ideas clearly stated/ supported. Succinct. Well- organized. Logical sequencing. cohesive	
	3	Good to average: somewhat choppy. Loosely organized but main ideas stand out. Limited support. Logical but incomplete sequencing.	
	2	Fair to poor: on fluent. Ideas confused or disconnected. Lacks logical sequencing and development	
	1	Very poor: does not communicate. No organization. Or not enough to evaluate	
Vocabulary	4	Excellent to very good: sophisticated range. Effective word/ idiom choice and usage. Word form mastery. Appropriate register	
	3	Good to average: adequate range. Occasional errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage but meaning not obscured	
	2	Fair to poor: limited range. Frequent errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage. Meaning confused or obscured	
	1	Very poor: essentially translation. Little knowledge of English vocabulary, idioms, word form. Or not enough to evaluate.	
Language use	4	Excellent to very good: effective complex constructions. Few errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions	
	3	Good to average: effective but simple constructions. Minor problems in complex constructions. Several errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions but meaning never obscured.	
	2	Fair to poor: major problems in simple/complex constructions. Frequent errors of negation, agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronouns, prepositions and/or fragments, run- ons, deletions. Meaning confused or obscured	
	1	Very poor: virtually no mastery of sentence construction rules. Dominated by errors. Does not communicate. Or not enough to evaluate.	
Mechanics	4	Excellent to very good: demonstrates mastery of conventions. Few errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing.	
	3	Good to average: occasional errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, but meaning not obscured	
	2	Fair to poor: frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing. Poor handwriting. Meaning confused or obscured	
	1	Very poor: no mastery of conventions. Dominated by errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing. Handwriting illegible. Or not enough to evaluate.	

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The Relationship between Iranian EFL Learners' Attitudes towards English Language Learning and Their Inferencing Ability in Reading Comprehension

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Abstract—In line with recent focus on learner characteristics in L2 learning, this study was conducted to explore the relationship between Iranian EFL learners' attitudes towards English language learning and their inferencing ability in reading comprehension. Investigating the performance of these learners on inference test according to their gender and different linguistic contexts were secondary goals of the study. After the homogenizing process, a group of learners of both sexes were put in the final group. The attitude questionnaire and the inference test were administered in order to examine the learners' attitudes and inferencing ability respectively. In order to investigate the role of linguistic context, the inference test was then divided into two sub-tests of short and long passages. The results of the analyses for the collected data indicated a moderate positive correlation between the attitudes of the learners and their inferencing performance. The effect of linguistic context on inferencing turned out to be significant too. However, no significant difference was found between the mean scores of the males and females on the inference test.

Index Terms—attitude, inference, EFL learner, reading comprehension, linguistic context

I. INTRODUCTION

Second/foreign language learning has witnessed considerable changes in the last few decades and researchers are recently more concerned with effects of learner characteristics on second/foreign language learning. According to Clement, Dörnyei and Noels (1994), success in language learning is a multifaceted issue in which non-linguistic factors like learner attitude and motivation can play a crucial role. Thus, these factors can either enhance or diminish L2 learners' interest and performance in second/foreign language classrooms.

According to Ellis (1994), the learner attitude is a significant factor in the success or failure in learning a second/foreign. Thus, understanding learners' certain characteristics and the ways in which they differ from one another has been a fundamental concern in SLA research.

On the other hand, studies on reading comprehension as one of the major language skills and the improvement of reading instruction and text materials have become more important in recent years (Cain, Oakhill, & Bryant, 2004; Collins Block, Schaller, & Joy, 2004; Dewitz & Dewitz 2003; Trabasso & Bouchard, 2002; Villaume & Brabham, 2002). One useful strategy in enhancing reading comprehension is to improve L2 learners' inferencing ability. According to Garnham and Oakhill (1996), a great portion of our comprehension of the text is derived from making inferences—a central component of skilled reading. Hence, making inference assists readers in driving implicit knowledge from what is explicitly stated which results in the formation of coherent mental representation (Pillow, 2002).

In addition, a variety of variables such as language learners' educational system and classroom setting, social context, cultural background, and their gender have been regarded as essential parameters to be addressed in the investigation of attitude as well as learning differences (Ehram & Oxford, 1995; Molden, Plaks, & Dweck, 2006; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989; Sullivan & Schatz, 2009).

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Concept of Attitude

There have been many definitions and interpretations presented to describe the concept of *attitude*. When measuring the attitude, social scientists essentially infer it on the basis of individuals' reactions to the evaluatively-worded belief statements. So, one operational definition views attitude as "an evaluative reaction to some referent or attitude object, inferred on the basis of the individuals' beliefs or opinions about the referent" (Gardner, 1985, p. 9). Furthermore, Gardner (1985) refers to Allport's definition of attitude as "a mental or neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related" (1954, p. 45). Ito and Cacioppo (2007) define attitude as global and enduring tendency—either favorable or unfavorable—to react toward a stimulus or class of stimuli. With this definition, they introduce the term "implicit" and note that it has been applied to attitudes in at least three different ways: "(1) when considering the lack of awareness of the information-processing operations that underlie attitudes, (2) when the attitude itself is implicit (i.e., non-verbalizable), and (3) when the attitude is implicitly measured" (p. 126).

According to Brown (2000), attitudes shape one's perception of self and others and develop early in childhood as the result of parents' and peers' attitudes, of contact with people who are different in any number of ways, and of interacting affective factors in the human experience.

In the relationship between attitude and success in foreign/second language learning, different classification of attitudes can be reflected. According to Gardner (1985), attitudes can be classified in three ways: (1) along a dimension of "specificity" and "generality" in which attitudes towards learning a particular language like English are specific in that learning English is clear-cut and definite or is general in that foreign language is a more general attitude object than only one language and it can involve various activities and not just learning, (2) in terms of their relevance to second/foreign language achievement in which some attitudes can evidently be more relevant to learning and achievement in second/foreign language learning than others, and (3) classifying attitude variables as either educational or social attitudes in which attitudes circle around the educational dimensions of second/foreign language learning such as attitudes towards the course, teacher, and the educational setting and social dimensions considering culture and social groups respectively.

Henry and Apelgren (2008) convincingly reflected second language (L2) attitudes as a direct product of the learner's identification with the language itself, culture, and the social groups and native speakers of the target language. The extent of this identification is a significant factor in the strength of the learner's attitude and motivation.

Research results indicate that language learning occurs more easily when learners hold positive attitudes towards the language and language learning (Al Rifai, 2010; Chamber, 1999; Shams, 2008; Yang & Lau, 2003). Referring to studies on the relationship between attitudes and language success (Chihara & Oller, 1978; Oller, Baca & Vigil, 1978; Oller, Hudson & Liu, 1977), Brown (2000) concludes that for the most part L2 learners' positive attitudes towards self, native speakers of the target community, and the target language enhance their target language proficiency level. Negative attitudes, on the other hand, lead to decreased motivation and willingness and as a result, to unsuccessful attainment of proficiency. Brown (2000) also believes that negative attitudes can be changed with the awareness of the teacher into positive ones, often by exposing the learners to the real context of the target language and to replace these misunderstandings with an accurate understanding and awareness of the second/foreign language culture. In addition, Gardner, Smythe and Clement (1979) have conducted a large-scale study to examine the effects of attitudes on linguistic performance of L2 learners. They suggested that L2 learners need to be psychologically prepared and to be imposed to elements of the target culture. In spite of the fact that this association is quite common, not all studies support it. According to Gardner (1985), these findings cannot be attributed to factors such as intelligence or aptitude as attitudes towards second/foreign language learning are independent of these two elements.

Inference

According to Bialystok (1983), inferencing is recognized as a compensation strategy and an essential component of the process of reading comprehension which involves an interaction between textual information and prior knowledge of the reader. As Virtue and Van Den Broek (2005) put in, generating inferences as the text is read enables readers to establish a coherent mental representation of a text by choosing the appropriate antecedent among several possible antecedents.

Graesser and Clark (1985) remark that one of the most important types of inference for successful comprehension is that of bridging inference that assists readers to establish explanatory connections between a focal event and prior text or background knowledge. Anaphoric inference is a specific type of bridging inference that determines a person or an object within a sentence is identical to that in another sentence (Garrod & Sanford, 1990). Currently little is known about the processing of anaphoric inferences in the brain, but research on bridging inferences in general suggests that the right hemisphere may play a central role. Burgess and Simpson (1988) in their study found that the hemispheres may be involved in the activation of multiple antecedents. For example, when students are presented with ambiguous words, the right hemisphere displays increased facilitation for both more frequent and less frequent meanings of ambiguous words, whereas the left hemisphere only reflects increased facilitation for more frequent meanings. Likewise, when participants are encountered with sentences ending in ambiguous words, decreased facilitation for inappropriate meanings was found in the left hemisphere and not in the right one.

According to Calvo, Castill and Schmalhofer (2006), inferences can be mainly text-based and serve to combine different parts of the message, thus making a passage coherent or they can be typically knowledge-based and serve to

elaborate and expand the explicitly expressed information. Predictive inferences are one type of knowledge-based inferences which represent the possible outcomes of a stated situation (McKoon & Ratcliff, 1986). According to the minimalist hypothesis (McKoon & Ratcliff's, 1992) and based on the constructionist model (Graesser, Singer, & Trabasso, 1994), predictive inferences will be drawn online only when they are highly constrained by the context of the text with few alternative outcomes to anticipate and when the corresponding knowledge is available from long-term memory or currently activated in working memory. In addition, these inferences would not be automatic; rather, they involve post lexical processes and take time to be activated.

Markovits and Potvin (2001) point out that language learners are likely to come up with new and unknown words and vocabulary items in their interaction with a text which can be tackled through employing some compensation strategies; otherwise, the real intention of the speaker or writer may be understood wrongly or even communication may completely break down. Oxford (2002) defines compensatory strategies as techniques used "to make up for limited knowledge" of the language (p. 128) and that one such strategy is inference in which one has to draw on certain knowledge sources.

Haastrup (1991, as cited in Soria, 2001) proposed three sources of knowledge, namely, contextual, intralingual, and interlingual, that readers may rely on in making lexical inference. In his classification, contextual clues refer to the words from the immediate co-text of the new word which may help the global understanding of the whole text. For contextual cues to be effective in generating inference, Li (1988) indicates that they must be perceptually and conceptually familiar to the reader and contain the information available for the reader to find the relevant schemata in order to clarify the oncoming input in the text. Intralingual clues are, on the other hand, connected with the features of the new word in the target language and reliance on information about phonology, orthography, morphology, word class and collocations to guess the meaning. Finally, interlingual sources have to do with a language other than the target language. These cues are judgments made by learners about the existence of similarity of structures in two languages.

The importance of inferencing is emphasized in top-down reading models (Goodman, 1976; Smith, 1978 in Soria, 2001). These models underline the central role of readers who use their knowledge to read more efficiently. Morrison (1996) has investigated the interaction between bottom-up and top-down models of text processing. On the interactive view, "if sight word recognition is successful then information can be delivered to higher level skills that make associations between the incoming lexical items and hence help the lower level skills by narrowing the possible new pieces of information that would be acceptable to complete a coherent message" (Hudson, 1998, p. 48). Research results indicate that greater levels of background knowledge contribute to the efficiency of attention given to input during reading which, in turn, enable richer textual interpretations, and superior memory performance (Ellis, 2001; Graesser, et al., 1994; Kintsch, 1998; Rumelhart, 1980). According to these findings, the role of background knowledge stored in the long-term memory is largely determined by the quality of the text base that is activated during reading, which is influenced by the individual's text processing efficiency and working memory.

This study has focused on a new aspect in inferencing i.e. the relationship between learner attitude and inferencing ability. Thus, the study has attempted to answer the following research questions through testing the corresponding hypotheses;

1. Is there any significant relationship between EFL learners' attitudes towards English language learning and their inferencing ability in reading comprehension?
2. Is there any significant difference between male and female EFL learners in terms of their inferencing ability in reading comprehension?
3. Is there any significant difference in the performance of EFL learners in short and extended linguistic contexts in terms of their inferencing ability?

The following null hypotheses were formulated in line with the above research questions;

- (1): There is no significant relationship between EFL learners' attitudes towards English language learning and their inferencing ability in reading comprehension.
- (2): There is no significant difference between male and female EFL learners in terms of their inferencing ability in reading comprehension.
- (3): There is no significant difference in the performance of EFL learners in short and extended linguistic contexts in terms of their inferencing ability.

III. METHODOLOGY

Participants

A group of 56 subjects were randomly selected from among undergraduate EFL students at the University of Zanjan, Iran. In order to select a homogeneous group as the participants of the study, the researcher administered the Nelson Test to determine the language proficiency level of the subjects. Based on the Z-distribution of the test, those subjects whose scores fell within one standard deviation above and below the mean were designated as the intermediate subjects who turned out to be 49 in number. Consequently, the participants of the study consisted of 49 intermediate undergraduate EFL students. Table 1 below presents a profile of the participants.

TABLE 1
THE PROFILE OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Participant	Sex	Age range	Total
Male	21	20-25	49
Female	28		

Instruments

The Nelson Test

The Nelson test (500C), a widely used standardized test, was used to determine the subjects' level of English language proficiency. The 500 level tests are related to the proficiency examination. The proficiency test included 50 multiple-choice items and it took the subjects 45 minutes to answer the test. The test measured the subjects' English language knowledge, focusing on grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. The descriptive statistics of the Nelson test is given in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE NELSON TEST

Instrument	N	Mean	SD
Nelson Test	56	22.1607	8.49123

Attitude Questionnaire

An attitude questionnaire including 10 items was administered to the subjects to determine their attitudes towards English language learning. It was adopted from the Gardner's (2004) Attitude/Motivation Test Battery. This Test Battery is a research instrument which has been developed to assess the major affective components shown to be involved in second language learning. It provides a reliable and valid index of the various attitudinal/motivational characteristics which researchers may wish to investigate in many different contexts. Scores on subtests represent attitudes inferred on the basis of individuals' opinions about specific items. For the purpose of this research, the Attitudes towards English Language Learning Scale was adopted from the Test Battery. No time limit was set for administration of the test. Every item was followed by six alternatives: *strongly disagree*, *moderately disagree*, *slightly disagree*, *slightly agree*, *moderately agree*, and *strongly agree*. For each item only one alternative could be selected. To calculate the numerical value of the test results, every scale was given a value, as follows:

strongly disagree = 1, *moderately disagree* = 2, *slightly disagree* = 3, *slightly agree* = 4, *moderately agree* = 5, and *strongly agree* = 6.

Therefore, the participants' scores were calculated by adding the numbers of the scores. The scores ranged from 10 to 60 (See appendix a).

Inference Test

The inference test was adopted from the Cambridge preparatory book for the TOEFL (2003) which was supposed to measure the students' ability to infer in both short and extended contexts. As it was mentioned in the test book, the tests of this book mirror the structure of the TOEFL, the passages had similar readability and interest levels, and the use of several passages minimized the effect of topic familiarity (Gear & Gear, 2003). The test consisted of three short passages of approximately 70 words followed by 10 questions and two extended passages of roughly 200 words followed by eight questions. Students would infer 18 inference questions as a whole. It took the subjects 30 minutes to answer the test. All the items were in the multiple-choice format (See appendix b). The Cronbach alpha reliability indexes were calculated for the instruments used in this study. As displayed in Table 3, the instruments enjoyed high reliability indexes.

TABLE 3
RELIABILITY INDICES FOR THE INSTRUMENTS

Instruments	Number of items	Cronbach alpha
Inference test	18	Short context: 0.710 Long context: 0.712
Attitude questionnaire	10	0.878

Procedure

Several steps were followed to accomplish this research. First, the Nelson Test was administered and the participants of the study were selected through the procedure mentioned above. Next, the attitude questionnaire was distributed among the participants in order to determine their attitudes towards English language learning. The respondents were asked to rate each item on a 6-point Likert scale so as to measure their level of agreement with each statement. Higher scores indicated greater agreement with each statement. The inference test was then administered to measure the subjects' inferencing ability in reading comprehension. The participants were, then, divided into two groups of males and females to compare their mean scores on the inference test. Finally, the inference test was divided into two sub-tests of short versus long-context tests in order to investigate the inferencing performance of all the participants under the moderating effect of linguistic context.

IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Results for the Relationship between Attitude and Inferencing Ability

The Pearson correlation coefficient was carried out to explore the first research question of the study, that is, the relationship between the participants' attitudes towards English language learning (as measured by the attitude questionnaire) and their inferencing ability in reading comprehension (as measured by the inference test). The correlation index turned out to be significantly meaningful ($r = .422, p < .05$). This means that there is a moderate positive correlation between the two variables. The descriptive statistics and the results of the analysis are given in Tables 4 and 5 below.

TABLE 4
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE INFERENCE TEST AND THE ATTITUDE QUESTIONNAIRE

Instruments	Number of items	M	SD
Inference test	49	8.8980	3.33070
Attitude questionnaire	49	52.1429	8.69626

TABLE 5
CORRELATION BETWEEN THE ATTITUDE QUESTIONNAIRE AND THE INFERENCE TEST

	Attitude questionnaire	Sig (2-tailed)
Inference test	0.422**	0.003

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

Independent-Samples-T-Test Results for the Moderating Effect of Gender

In order to investigate the second question of the study, the researchers conducted an independent-samples t-test analysis to compare the performances of the male and female participants on the inference test. The results of the analysis indicated no significant mean difference [$t(47) = .012, p < .05$]. The descriptive statistics and the results of the analysis appear in Table 6 below.

TABLE 6
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND INDEPENDENT-SAMPLES T-TEST RESULTS FOR THE MALE AND FEMALE SUBJECTS' PERFORMANCES ON INFERENCE TEST

	Number	M	SD	T	DF	Sig
Male	21	8.9048	3.81975			
Female	28	8.8929	2.98564	0.012	47	0.990

Results of the Paired-Samples-T-Test Study

In order to answer the last research question, the researchers conducted a paired-samples t-test analysis to explore the effect of context length variable (short vs. long) on the participants' performance on the inference test. The results revealed a significant difference with higher mean score belonging to the short context [$t(48) = 4.994, p < .05$]. Table 7 below presents the descriptive statistics as well as the results for the analysis.

TABLE 7
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND PAIRED-SAMPLES T-TEST RESULTS FOR THE EFFECT OF CONTEXT LENGTH ON THE SUBJECTS' PERFORMANCE ON THE INFERENCE TEST

Variables	Number	M	SD	T	DF	Sig
Short context	49	5.1224	1.85554			
Long context	49	3.7347	1.99766	4.994	48	0.000

V. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

As the results of this study suggest, the learners' attitudes towards English language learning has significant relationship with their inferencing ability in reading comprehension. Accordingly, the first null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the EFL learners' attitudes towards English language learning and their inferencing ability in reading comprehension was rejected. This finding is consistent with the findings of previous studies (Al Rifai, 2010; Brown, 2000; Chamber, 1999; Shams, 2008; Yang & Lau, 2003) that were indicative of a close connection between language learners' attitudes and their level of success in specific aspects of language learning and second/foreign language learning as a whole. It seems that learners with positive attitudes who experience success in language learning will have enhanced level of motivation and reinforced positive attitudes whereas those with negative attitudes will have these attitudes strengthened by their lack of success (Ellis, 1994; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989).

The results, however, indicated no significant difference between the performance of males and females on the inference test. Thus, the second null-hypothesis claiming no significant difference between the performance of males and females on the inference test was supported. Owing to the generative nature of research, this cannot be viewed as an accomplished fact and further research is needed to explore the performance of language learners according to their gender.

The findings also revealed that the learners' inferencing ability differ in short and extended linguistic contexts. As a result, the third null-hypothesis claiming no significant difference between the performances of the participants in short and long contexts in terms of their inferencing ability was rejected. This is in line with Paribakht's (2005) claim that

text-related variables such as contextual factors and specially, different linguistic contexts influence accurate inferencing. It also supports Li's (1988) and Haastrup's (1991) emphasis on the importance of contextual clues which are specific to different linguistic contexts to guess the meanings when the learner does not know all the words. Hence, inferring the meaning from the text requires readers' processing of the different linguistic contexts, attending to and using variety of textual cues.

VI. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study findings have a direct relevance to the improvement of language teaching. Moreover, it calls for the language teachers' awareness of non-linguistic factors such as individual attitudes of their students and their attempt to satisfy the individual needs. Thus, teachers should make use of appropriate approaches to meet the demands of language learners with diverse traits and to enhance language learning outcomes. That is, instead of ignoring such factors, language teachers should identify them in order to minimize their potential effects.

The results of the study display that most of learners, irrespective of their gender, hold positive attitudes towards English language learning and stress the importance of learning English because of its productivity in the daily life as well as in academic settings. Hence, it seems crucial that language teachers promote their students' willingness to interact with real life issues through communicative approaches to language learning. Language teachers should try to foster positive attitudes that may lead to effective learning strategy use and to minimize negative attitudes that inhibit learning (Yang, 1999).

The results of the study also indicate that learners have different performances in different linguistic contexts. In the case of extended linguistic contexts, textual clues can be made more noticeable through employing different text-developing techniques. It is also expected that increasing learners' awareness of the links between the sentences and paragraphs of the text through explicit teaching of text organization and being aware of the learners' different memory capacities can assist their overall comprehension. A rewarding beginning in comprehension practice can bring about a favorable psychological effect and L2 learners would exhibit less resistance to the learning of a foreign language. Accordingly, the research results can be beneficial to both language teachers and test developers who will be able to make modifications on their approaches to both language teaching and testing and adapt their teaching and testing styles to students' specific needs.

APPENDICES

(a) Attitude Questionnaire

Dear student,

In answering these questions, you should circle one of the alternatives. Some people would circle Strongly Disagree, others would circle Strongly Agree, and still others would circle one of the alternatives in between. Which one you circled would indicate your own feelings based on everything you know and have heard. Note there is no right or wrong answer. All that is important is that you indicate your personal feeling.

Please give your immediate reactions to each of the following items. Don't waste time thinking about each statement. Give your immediate feeling after reading each statement. On the other hand, please do not be careless, as it is important that we obtain your true feelings.

Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Agree	Agree

1. Learning English is really great.
2. I hate English.
3. I really enjoy learning English.
4. I would rather spend my time on subjects other than English.
5. English is a very important part of the university program.
6. Learning English is a waste of time.
7. I plan to learn as much English as possible.
8. I think that learning English is dull.
9. I love learning English.
10. When I leave university, I will give up the study of English because I am not interested in it.

(b) Reading Comprehension Inference Test

Time: 30 minutes

Answer all questions following a passage on the basis of what is implied in that passage.

The female malabar pied hornbill enters a hole in the fruit trees and molts. She and her mate seal the hollow with mud and dung, leaving a crack through which he feeds her. When the chicks hatch and her plumage returns, she breaks out, resealing the nest to guard the young, which emerge later.

1. The Malabar pied hornbill is probably a
(A) chicken

- (B) seal
 - (C) bird
 - (D) bear
2. What can be said about the Malabar pied hornbill's nest?
- (A) It is lined with feathers.
 - (B) It is so warm that the female Malabar pied hornbill loses its plumage.
 - (C) The female Malabar pied hornbill breaks it up after molting.
 - (D) Its cracks are covered by the feathers that the female Malabar pied hornbill plucks off itself.
3. Which of the following statements can be inferred?
- (A) The male is afraid of other males and, therefore, forces his mate into the nest and seals it.
 - (B) The female is so involved in building her nest that she doesn't realize she's locked herself inside it.
 - (C) The female purposely imprisons herself to lay her eggs.
 - (D) The female has to keep the male from hurting the babies, so she encloses herself in the nest.
4. The male Malabar pied hornbill probably
- (A) feeds the eggs through a crack in the nest
 - (B) doesn't help the female until she has enclosed herself in the nest
 - (C) uses his plumage to guard the recently hatched chicks
 - (D) doesn't hatch the eggs by keeping them warm with his own body

Two Canadian provinces and all or parts of thirty-one states in the United States have rivers that drain into the Mississippi River. As the Mississippi River flows down to join the sea, it deposits sand, silt, and clay, building the delta seaward across Louisiana's shallow continental shelf. The delta marsh and its bays, lakes, and sounds provide shelter and nutrients for North America's most fertile marine nursery.

5. It can be inferred from the passage that
- (A) Canada has only two drainage areas in its provinces
 - (B) There are thirty-one states in the United States
 - (C) The thirty-one states mentioned have no other river systems to carry silt, sand, and clay
 - (D) Some of the silt deposited in the Louisiana delta is from Canada
6. It is probably true that
- (A) The delta system formed by the Mississippi River is very important for marine life
 - (B) Nurseries have been set up in the delta so that children can take part in aquatic sports in the bays, lakes, and sounds
 - (C) The delta marshland is an excellent area for medical people to study diseases caused by mosquitoes.
 - (D) The United States has established nurseries to provide shelter and food for migrating birds
7. It can be inferred from the passage that
- (A) The delta is being destroyed by the Mississippi River's depositing sand, silt, and clay
 - (B) The geographic features of the delta are always changing
 - (C) The sea movement is building a delta on the continental shelf at the mouth of the Mississippi
 - (D) The river, delta, and sea all play an important role in building Louisiana's continental shelf

Time has been defined as a one-dimensional quantity used to sequence events, to quantify the durations of events and the intervals between them, and (used together with other quantities such as space) to quantify and measure the motions of objects and other changes. Time is quantified in comparative terms (such as longer, shorter, faster, quicker, and slower) or in numerical terms using units (such as seconds, minutes, hours, days). It is regarded as neither a biological nor a physical absolute but a cultural invention. Different cultures have differing perceptions about the passage of time. At opposing ends of the spectrum are the "monochronic", or linear, cultures and the "polychronic", or simultaneous, cultures. In monochronic societies, schedules and routines are primary. Monochronic societies tend to be more efficient and impartial. However, they may be blind to the humanity of their members. In polychronic societies, people take precedence over schedules. People are rarely alone, not even at home, and are usually dealing with several people at once. Time and schedules are not priorities. Time has been a major subject of religion, philosophy, and science, but defining it in a non-controversial manner applicable to all fields of study has consistently eluded the greatest scholars.

8. It can be inferred from the passage that
- (A) People who are blind live in monochronic societies
 - (B) It may be frustrating for monochronic and polychronic societies to deal with each other.
 - (C) Monochronic cultures are concerned with schedules and linear cultures are concerned with people
 - (D) In monochronic cultures, one person takes precedence over schedules, and in polychronic cultures, many people take precedence over schedules
9. It is probably true that
- (A) In a polychronic society, a person will skip an appointment if a family member needs some help
 - (B) In a monochronic society. A person will skip an appointment for a blind friend
 - (C) In a polychronic society, a person will be on time for an appointment if the other person is from a monochronic society

- (D) In a monochronic society, people will look for any excuse in order to skip an appointment
10. Why does the author use the terms linear and simultaneous?
- (A) To examine and compare monochronic and polychronic cultures
 (B) To introduce two more types of cultures
 (C) To define monochronic and polychronic cultures
 (D) To emphasize the different cultures
11. It can be inferred from the passage that
- (A) There are other cultures that regard time differently from the way polychronic and monochronic cultures do
 (B) There are four different ways cultures regard time: monochronic, linear, polychronic, and simultaneous
 (C) A spectrum of time is not a culture's invention or a physical absolute
 (D) Cultures invent biological and physical absolutes

An ultralight airplane looks like a lawn chair with wings, weighs no more than 254 pounds, flies up to 60 miles an hour, and carries about 5 gallons of fuel. Most ultralights are sold as kits and take about 40 hours to assemble. Flying an ultralight is so easy that a pilot with no experience can fly one and accidents are rarely fatal or even serious because the ultralight lands so slowly and gently and carries so little fuel. Some models now have parachutes attached, while others have parachute packs that pilots can wear.

12. Ultralights are powered by
- (A) An engine
 (B) Human energy
 (C) Remote control
 (D) Solar energy
13. It is probably true that
- (A) An ultralight can be purchased at the airport
 (B) People can put their own ultralights together
 (C) People who fly ultralights have no experience
 (D) Ultralight builders need to have training in aviation
14. It can be inferred from the passage that
- (A) Accident statistics are inaccurate because ultralights are not registered at airports
 (B) Fatal accidents are frequent because of the lack of experienced pilots
 (C) Ultralight pilots can walk away from most of the accidents they are in
 (D) Because of the frequency of fatal accidents, laws requiring parachutes have been enacted

Jacob Epstein's sculptures were the focus of much controversy during the sculptor's lifetime. Epstein was born in the United States of Russian-Jewish immigrants in 1880. He moved to Paris in his youth and later to England, where he eventually settled and took out British citizenship in 1907. His first major public commission, on a building in London, offended public taste because of the expressive distortion and nudity of the figures. He often produced controversial works which challenged taboos on what was appropriate subject matter for public artworks. In 1937, the Rhodesian government, which at that time owned the building, actually mutilated the sculptures to make them conform to public notions of decency. Many other of Epstein's monumental carvings received equally adverse criticism. While the general public denounced his work, many artists and critics praised it. They admired in particular the diversity of his work and noted the influence on it of primitive and ancient sculptural motifs from Africa and the Pacific. Epstein died 21 August 1959 in London and is buried in Putney Vale Cemetery. His art is displayed all over the world; highly original for its time, its influence on the younger generation of sculptors such as Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth was significant. Today, Epstein's work has received the recognition it deserves, and Epstein is considered one of the major sculptors of the twentieth century.

15. Concerning Epstein's work, the tone of the article is
- (A) Critical
 (B) Derisive
 (C) Amusing
 (D) Admiring
16. Which of the following was most probably an important influence on Epstein's work?
- (A) Russian painting
 (B) Public tastes
 (C) The Rhodesian government
 (D) African carvings
17. Today, a newly erected Epstein sculpture would probably
- (A) Be mutilated
 (B) Conform to public opinions
 (C) Be well received
 (D) Be expressive

18. What does the author mean by the statement Many other of Epstein's monumental carvings received equally adverse criticism?

- (A) Many of Epstein's monuments have been defaced
- (B) People have taken equal offense to other critical works of art
- (C) Epstein's monuments are usually denounced for their nudity
- (D) Other sculptures of Epstein's have elicited negative comments

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Strategies for Translating Household Appliance Instructions from Chinese to English*

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Abstract—The translation of household appliance instructions is a new field where there are not enough research and study. At the same time, even much shortage lies in this field which is waiting to deal with. To solve these problems, this paper will discuss and study the translation strategies on household appliance instructions from Chinese into English with considering the choice and usage of words, sentences and language habits according to the translation theories and principles.

Index Terms—household appliance, instructions, translation strategies

I. INTRODUCTION

Since China has joined WTO, more and more household appliances which are made and produced in China are sold toward many countries all over the world. English instructions of household appliances are the most popular and general way for people to know the household appliances. And many customers make a choice of what they want to buy through English instructions. Thus the quality of translation about the instructions of household appliances from Chinese to English has a great influence on the sales volume of household appliances. And it also has connection with the company which has produced this household appliance.

The topic that is “translation about the instructions of household appliances” was found in the journal named Shanghai Journal of Translation for Science for the first time. And the first paper named “The special difficulty in translation from Chinese to English—talk about the choice of noun vocabulary in translation of instructions” was published in that journal. According to the statistics of China National Knowledge Infrastructure, in China, there are only three papers which are about the translation of instructions being published from 1993 to 2001. However, from 2002 to 2011, numbers of the papers about this research have grown rapidly. In summary, the numbers of this kind papers are fifty seven. Among these papers, six of them were published in Chinese Translators Journal, Chinese Science & Technology Translators Journal and Shanghai Translation Society for Science and Technology and so on.

Among the fifty seven papers, thirty seven of these papers have connection to the kinds of instruction. According to the result of statistics, these papers have nine classifications. And the largest classification is the translation of medicine instruction. The second one is the translation of cosmetic instruction. What's more, the third one is the translation of industry instrument and equipment instruction. It is shown in the table below.

TABLE ONE:
THE CLASSIFICATION OF INSTRUCTION TRANSLATION

Classification	times	percent
The translation of medicine instruction	14	37.8
The translation of cosmetic instruction	11	29.7
The translation of industry instrument and equipment instruction	4	10.8
The translation of car usage instruction	3	8.1
The translation of food instruction	1	2.7
The translation of household appliances instruction	1	2.7
The translation of electromechanical instruction	1	2.7
The translation of patent	1	2.7
In total	37	100

According to statistics results, there are twelve theories in the fifty seven papers. By the way, maybe one paper can have more than one kind of theory. At the same time, the results have shown that the first one is The Functional Teleology And the second one is Text Type Theory created by Peter Newmark. The third one is Functional Equivalence Theory put forward by the famous American translation theorist Eugene. Nida in 1969. The detail data are shown in the table two below.

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TABLE TWO:
THE THEORY THAT THE TRANSLATION DEPENDS ON

The theories	times	percent
The Functional Teleology	19	55.9
Text Type Theory	5	14.7
Functional Equivalence Theory	2	5.9
Domestication theory	1	2.9
Adaptation Theory	1	2.9
Contextual Theory	1	2.9
Theory of Grammatical Metaphor	1	2.9
The Social Semiotic Translation Theory	1	2.9
Register Theory	1	2.9
Manifest theory	1	2.9
Schema Theory	1	2.9

With the development of the study in translation, researchers have realized the characteristic and principle of translation on instruction in a macroscopic view and abstract way. That is to say, they develop the specific translation strategies to the theoretical translation strategies progressively. Since 2007, more and more papers use The Functional Teleology and combine with Text Type Theory to produce a new theory (Wei Wei et al. 2013). And the theory which can be used is becoming diversification because the achievement of translation is introduced from other countries.

Instructions have a wide variety and forms, while the main variety is as follows: manual type instructions, label type instructions and the instructions printed on the packaging. According to their usage, they can be divided into electric appliances, food, pharmaceutical, manual mechanical equipment specifications, cosmetics and books instructions.

Generally speaking, instructions have two kinds of purpose. On the one hand, it plays a role of introducing the constituent, function, characteristic and the way of usage of the product to customers. On the other hand, it has the function of advertisement which is to attract the customers to buy this product (Shi, 2014. p. 16).

II. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF PRODUCT INSTRUCTIONS IN ENGLISH

Generally speaking, there are instructions of machinery, electronics, food, medicine and daily necessities. Generally, there are four parts in an instruction:

- a. The characteristic, function and component of product
- b. Methods of install, use, take, drinking and eating
- c. Matters need to be paid attention
- d. The main performance, parameters and specifications

Thus translators should care about the characteristic of product instructions in English when they translate the instructions of household appliances. For example, there is an English instruction below

Product name: Hair Dryer	
Product model: EH-NA10	
Power source: 220V~50Hz	
Power consumption: 1200W	
Dimensions: 187(W)x77(D)x224(H)mm	
Accessory: Quick-dry nozzle	
Place of origin: China	
Date of production: See engraving on the commodity.	
Execution Standard	Chinese GB4706.1 GB4706.15 Standard: GB4343.1 GB17625.1 Company standard: Q/SXWBMJ7

The instructions of household appliances have the function and purpose to tell the costumers about the product and how to use them. And let them know the danger if they use the household appliances in a wrong way. At the same time, it is the strategies for sellers to persuade and guide the costumers to buy their product. So, it has great influence on the sales volume and profit.

III. THE PRINCIPLES OF TRANSLATION IN PRODUCT INSTRUCTIONS

A. The Principle of Faithfulness

According to the famous translator named Yan Fu, he put out that translation should be faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance (Pan, 2003). Thus translators should make the translation be faithful when they translate the instructions of household appliances. For example, one kind of Panasonic hair drier has written that “this appliance is not intended for use by persons (including children) with reduced physical, sensory or mental capabilities, or lack of experience and knowledge, unless they have been given supervision or instruction concerning use of the appliance by a person responsible for their safety” (Panasonic operating instructions. Nose& Facial Hair Trimmer <http://www.docin.com/p-455115440.html>). When we compare English instruction with Chinese instructions of this hair drier, we can find that the translation is faithful to the original Chinese instruction.

The translation of instructions of household appliances should be faithful. At the same time, translators should pay attention to the logical order of the instruction, especially in the part of how to use the household appliances. If translators do not follow the logical order, some terrible accidents may happen, which is dangerous and does harm to customers health and safety. For example, the Philips hair drier has shown the logical orders as follows,

Operating Steps	
Step one	Put the plug in the wall socket.
Step two	1) Set the airflow slide switch to “the desired setting to switch on the appliance. 2) Set the slide switch to setting II for ultra-quick drying. 3) Set the slide switch to setting I for drying short hair or styling your hair (http://www.go-gddq.com/down/2011-04/11042814557935.pdf).” HP8203/HP8202 only: “The ion indicator light goes on to indicate that the ion function has been activated. The ion function provides additional shine and reduces frizz and static electricity(http://www.docin.com/p-373383503.html).”
Step three	1) Set the temperature slide switch to the Quick Dry, Thermoprotect or Cool Care setting. 2) The Quick Dry setting 6 dries shower-wet hair very quickly and safely. 3) We advise you to use the Quick Dry setting only briefly to avoid dehydrating your hair(ibid.). 4) The Thermoprotect setting 5 quickly and gently dries the hair at a constant, caring temperature. 5) The Cool shot setting 4 dries your hair with care and helps to seal in shine(ibid.).
Step four	1) “Dry your hair by making brushing movements with the hairdryer at a small distance from your hair(ibid.).” 2) “Tip: When you have finished drying, press the cool shot button and direct the cool airflow at your hair. This fixes your style and adds shine(ibid.).”
Step five	Set the airflow slide switch to O to switch off the appliance after use.

B. The Principle of Conversion between Two Cultures

The main differences of culture between China and foreign countries are local culture difference, social customs and habits difference and religious faith (Xu, 2012. p. 22). These differences have different effects on Chinese to English translation in different degrees. And these differences maybe lead to misunderstanding of the instructions and have influence on the quality of instructions translation (Shao, 2013.p.20). Thus these differences also have effects on the translation of instructions of household appliances. For example, both the Chinese “Long” and dragon are meanings a kind of animal. However, they have different meaning when they are in different culture. In China, dragon has sacred, noble and auspicious meaning. While in foreign countries, dragon is a kind of animal with the symbol of evil (Newmark, 2002. p. 23). And some colors also have different connotation between two countries. In China, red is usually connected with success, good luck and celebration. However, red often means dangerous things in English. Some numbers also have different connotation between two different cultures. Number six is an example which can be put out. Six is a good number with the meaning of smoothness and good luck. But in English, six is regarded as negative connotation. According to the Bible, number “six” at times represents imperfection, because God spent seven days in creation, so seven takes the connotation of completeness. Besides, six is related with the wild beast.

Thus when translators translate the instruction, they should consider the difference between two different culture and make their translation have the equal and same meaning.

C. The Principle of Clearly and Smooth Translation

Pay attention to express clearly and make the instructions unobstructed, which is very important to customers, because it can let the customers understand how to use a product easily.

For example,

“Wahaha, a children’s nourishing liquid is co-developed by Hangzhou Wahaha Nutritious Food Product Factory and the Dept. of Medical Nutrition of Zhejiang Medical University. The liquid contains rich amino acids, vitamins and particularly supplies children with Ca and trace elements such as Fe and Zn essential to healthy growth. It occupies the leading position in the development of nourishing products and has passed the nation-level evaluation of newly-developed products

(http://wenku.baidu.com/link?url=D7esKGVYdsIa-SIZL3bALa_Vz9DsEwW6ln4NNwMa06sjiNbRBS2KQOtdcFIctbtvVS8-vYg3Re573ro7iG-aJqGgZHwyrM2vs9C0LKOuG7).”

Ingredients: honey, hawthorn, jujube, lyceum, Chinese lotus seed, barley.

Nutrients: per 100ml: protein over 1.5%, Ca 250-300 mg, Fe 12.5-20 mg, Zn 12.5-20 mg.

“Contents: 10 ampules per case, 10 ml per ample, total 100 ml.

Storage: To be kept in a cool place. Quality guarantee for one year and storage period one and a half year (ibid.).”

“Dosage: 1-2 ampules a day in the morning and evening. Sanction No.: Zhejiang Food Hygiene Permit (89)0004-35 Standard Code: Q/WJB 0201-89(ibid.).”

“Manufactured by: Hangzhou Wahaha Nutritious Food Product Factory.

Supervised by: Dept. of Medical Nutrition of Zhejiang Medical University (ibid.).”

We can learn from the instruction above that translators can use a list or a table to make the instructions clearly and smooth enough. And customers can also understand the instructions easier if the instructions are in this form.

D. *The Principle of Objective*

Your objective opinion can let customers trust you. In some way, it proofs that the quality of the product is reliable. Don't change the meaning of the instructions, which is the basic rules to translate instructions. If translators change the meaning, the customers may understand the meaning in a wrong way, which probably causes an accident suddenly. It is dangerous to everyone near the product.

E. *The Principle of Introducing the Reputation of Product*

Talking reputation about the product does good for the product. Normally, translators can use sentences as follows,

- 1) The product enjoys a good reputation/ high prestige at home and abroad.
- 2) The product has won high praises from the users.
- 3) The product has been well received by customers and sells well in Southeast Asia.
- 4) The product "has gained an excellent reputation in many countries and regions by virtue of its reliability, cost-effectiveness and a wealth of features (http://wenku.baidu.com/link?url=2IvCi3I1pgX8ZHGrXWNNuSWmpdSkaXrIafBbat1jTy5LrmOd72JF1HLebJbDDHQO4T19aSpNmWx3z00-Ga3YoAS3vyQc_7HxbDt0cvv5QS)."

IV. THE STRATEGIES ON THE TRANSLATION OF INSTRUCTIONS OF HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES

A. *Borrow Words from Other Languages*

When translators want to translate the instructions of product, they should know how to borrow words from other languages. Four ways of borrowing are loanwords, loan blend, loanshift and loan translation.

1. Loanwords

"The borrowing of loanwords is a process in which both form and meaning are borrowed with only a slight change, in some cases, to the phonological system of the new language that they enter (Hu, 2011, p.69)."

2. Loan blend

Loan blending is a process in which part of the form is native and the rest has been borrowed, but the meaning is fully borrowed.

3. Loanshift.

"Loanshift is a process in which the meaning is borrowed, but the form is native. Bridge is an English word, but when it refers to a type of card game, the meaning was borrowed from the Italian ponte. The English word artificial satellite is also a case of loanshift from the Russian sputnik (Hu, 2011, p.69-70)."

4. Loan translation.

"This is a special type of borrowing, in which each morpheme or word is translated in the equivalent morpheme or word in another language. (Hu,2011, p.70)."

B. *Often Use the Simple and Short Words*

The function and purpose of instructions of household appliances is to let customers learn how to use the household appliance as soon as possible. Thus, translators should let the instructions as easy as possible when they translate the instructions of household appliances (Chen, 2014.p.21). If they want to achieve the result, they should use the words that are often used in our daily life, the easy understanding words and short words. These words can let customers want to read the instruction. These words can also let customers remember the product and easy to learn how to use it. All of these can let customers understand the instructions correctly in case something bad happens. At the same time, these words can save the space of instructions.

For example, translators can use the word "use" instead of "utilize", use the word "stop" instead of "discontinue" and use the word "get" instead of "acquire". If translators use these words, almost everyone can understand what the instruction means, which is better for customers. And it can reduce the accidents happening. For example, there are three sentences as follows: "1)Do not use this appliance near water. 2)Do not use this appliance near bathtubs, showers, basins or other vessels containing water (http://wenku.baidu.com/link?url=45YbC5PYi9wTeGq8XxRpYGNEJrnSHTXWPT2v587ixhLiqyVTBdguDibg69hCGzsAHTtagCTdbKTvYB5_w1FtmRcNavRxFLxi5mxRKTak).") 3)This machine is equipped with a gear transmission mechanism, and its multi-dies are arranged in line. You can see the sentences, they are easier to understand when people read the short and simple sentence and words. These words "do", "use", "water" are all the ones that are short, easy and often used in our daily life. If translators change some of the sentences into "Customers should not make the usage of this appliance near water as well as not make the usage of this appliance near bathtubs, showers, basins or other vessels which contain water", we can compare this sentences with "1)Do not use this appliance near water. 2)Do not use this appliance near bathtubs, showers, basins or other vessels containing water(ibid.)". It is easy to find out that the later two sentences are easier to understand. What's more, the word "do" is better than the word "should" when translators translate the instruction. Because "do" is more suitable, easy and short when it is used in instruction.

C. *Often Use the Abbreviations Which Only Have One Meaning*

We can see abbreviations both in our daily life and in the international society. Of course, when translators use

abbreviations in the translation of instructions of household appliances, it can also achieve an efficient result. Many abbreviations can make it is easy for customers to remember the name of the product. And at the same time, it can save the space of the instructions. Such as DV(Digital Video), PC(Personal Computer), CD(Compact Disk), DVD(compact disc-digital video), OD(Optical Driver), HD(Hard Disk), LCD(Liquid Crystal Display) and so on. There are many of these abbreviations which can express what instructions want to introduce and can let customers understand the instructions too, so it is good enough to use abbreviations.

However, translators and researchers should pay attention to some special abbreviations which have two or even more meanings. These abbreviations can not be used in the translation of instructions of household appliances because they have two or more meanings. These abbreviations may let customers misunderstand the instructions. For example, ABC can stand for the American Broadcasting Company, Agricultural Bank of China, a kind of children shoes and the control system of the car. If translators use ABC as an abbreviation in instruction of a household appliance, customers maybe misunderstand what the instruction wants to express, even do not know what the instruction wants to explain.

Moreover, it is important that some abbreviations which are not often used by people should not used in the translation of instructions of household appliances. For example, 1). CC means Carbon copy 2). FYI means for your reference 3). ASAP means as soon as possible. Most people may not know the meaning of these abbreviations. If translators use these words in the translation of instructions of household appliances, customers may not get the correct meaning. In addition, some abbreviations can be used just in some special occasion. And some of the abbreviations have different meanings when they are used in different places or occasions. So, these words can not be used in the translation of instructions of household appliances.

For example, specification

LeLing Golden Silk Small Dates is produced in the biggest area of three big production areas. It is famous in the world for its small body, small pit, thin skin, rich of pulp, good quality and rich of nutrition. It contains Pectin Vitamin, Protein, Fat and rich of Fe, Calcium, Phosphorus and Vitamin AP etc. nutritious materials. It is high-grade tonic of a long history and well known both in China and abroad.

D. Use Elliptical Sentence

Elliptical sentence can save the space of product instruction and make the instruction briefly. For example, be careful when you are washing, which is better than the sentence you should be careful when you are washing your clothes. However, when translators use elliptical sentences, they can not cut off the important and necessary part. If they let the sentences miss these parts, the sentences may have different meaning or can not be understood by customers.

For example, in the sentence “This hairdryer offers you a variety of heat and speed settings for optimal styling freedom, giving your hair the lustre, body and richness you love”, the part “settings for optimal styling freedom” can not be cut off. In the sentence “Check if the voltage indicated on the appliance corresponds to the local mains voltage before you connect the appliance (http://wenku.baidu.com/link?url=ULr-pgqIPr2ToeotJ9htkgh4hBZKLT_QXXb_rUvAL_JZxUpZUucXMkMKbH14V3QXf3D8LTWXH2FqoBI7ejsRPZWLIIpSeU2o1hqdY68xv2G)”, the part “before you connect the appliance” can not be left out. And in the sentence “Do not use this appliance near bathtubs, showers, basins or other vessels containing water”, the part “or other vessels containing water” can not be left out. If translators let the sentence lack the part of “or other vessels containing water”, customers may use this appliance near other vessels which are containing water, and they may be in danger.

E. Use Imperative Sentence

In oral English, imperative sentence lets people feel impolite in our daily life. However, when you use it in instruction, people will believe your product in some degree.

For example, keep it clean all the time; Keep this User Manual for future reference; “Do not attempt to open the device other than as instructed in this guide. Do not drop, knock, or shake the device. Rough handling can break internal circuit boards and fine mechanics. Do not use harsh chemicals, cleaning solvents, or strong detergents to clean the device. Do not paint the device. Paint can clog the moving parts and prevent proper operation. Use a soft, clean, dry cloth to clean any lenses (such as cam-era, proximity sensor, and light sensor lenses). Use only the supplied or an approved replacement antenna. Unauthorized antennas, modifications, or attachments could damage the device and may violate regulations governing radio devices. Use chargers indoors

(http://wenku.baidu.com/link?url=D7esKGvYdsla-SIZL3bALa_Vz9DsEwW6ln4NNwMa06sjiNbRBs2KQOtdcFIctbtvVS8-vYg3Re573ro7iG-aJqGgZHwyrM2vs9COLKOUg7”).

We can see many imperative sentences which are used in the product instruction. And they make the instructions seem simple for everyone to use.

F. Use the Sentence Structure “BE+Adjective/Prepositional Phrase”

This structure makes the meaning of the instruction easier to understand. And it lets the sentence structure more simple. For example, be careful in raining days. This sentence seems very easy for almost everyone who can read English words to get its meaning. In some degree, it is convenient to emphasize the parts which should be paid more attention to.

For example,

1. Poly Clean is specially formulated to clean all dirt and stain from glass, windows and other hard surfaces quickly and easily.
2. This machine is equipped with a gear transmission mechanism, and its multi-dies are arranged in line.
3. The Type CYJ15-18-18 oil pumping machine is of simple and compact construction.
4. It is effective in reducing neurological pain and spasm caused by lack of calcium.
5. Due to its unique formulation, Etha moisturizing lotion is suitable for the skin of children and adults.

These sentences are short and clear enough. They can introduce the function of the household appliances and at the same time, they can save the space of the instruction on paper.

V. CONCLUSION

After a close study of the examples of instructions of household appliances translation, we concluded that the principles of translation in product instruction should be put in an important place. And the translation of instructions of household appliances plays a very important role in the sale of household appliances. It affects the understanding of customers and the sales volume. When we are translating the Chinese product instructions into English, we need to consider the choice of words, phrase and sentences. We can use simple, short and abbreviation words to let the instruction of household appliances become easy for customers to understand. At the same time, translators can use simple, elliptical, imperative and other sentences to translate the instruction of household appliances.

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The Efficacy of CMC versus Traditional Approaches to Teaching Translation to Iranian Junior Translation and Civil Engineering Students

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Abstract—Studies concerning teaching methods involving Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) have often focused on the differences between online and off line interactions. Accordingly, this study aimed to investigate the effect of CMC on teaching translation to Iranian English Language Translation and Civil Engineering students and evaluate the role of CMC as a communication platform in educational environments. For this purpose, from the population of Khorasgan and Najaf Abad Universities, 180 students were selected and based on their scores on a translation pretest were divided into three groups, 60 each. While students in the first group received translation instruction through a conventional method, those in the second group were taught by a CMC-based technique. However, the third group was trained using a combination of CMC and traditional face to face communication techniques. At the end of the treatment, a full term, a translation posttest was administered. Subsequently, a two way factorial ANCOVA was run to find if there were any significant differences between the results of the pre and posttests. The participants were then probed for their attitudes concerning the type of method adopted for teaching translation. The findings revealed that the groups' achievement of the training goals in CMC and hybrid methods of instruction were significantly higher than those trained by the face to face conventional one. The analysis of the respondents' answers to the questionnaire reflected that CMC approach to translation training is pedagogically meritorious and supportive of learners' preferred learning styles.

Index Terms—Computer Mediated Communication, face to face instruction, Hybrid approach, English translation students, civil engineering students, online interactions

I. INTRODUCTION

According to Nida (1982), the act of translating involves the recreation of source language message into the target language with the intention of reconstructing a faithful equivalence conveyed by an appropriate style in terms of a precise evaluation of existing conflicting factors overshadowing the translating process. Snell-Hornby (1988) has also tried to provide an interactive definition for the concept by describing it as a dynamic interaction between the author, the translator and the TL recipients. She believes that the translation process is a considerably complex act of communication engaging various parties who pursue different objectives in the process. In other words, by translating the SL text into the TL medium, the translator has to deal with both linguistic and extralinguistic features characterizing texture in order to reproduce a new frame of text that transfers the message for the new receptors as naturally as possible.

Alternatively, Zabalbeascoa (1996) equates the concept of translation with a communication act and a sort of social activity involving humans. Not surprisingly, since humans are prone to making errors, translation is almost invariably imperfect. Finally, as Carbonell (2006) suggests, translation is a form of communication seeking to achieve certain goals.

However, in translation the intended communicative act is transferred into a different context, which can completely change the whole purpose of the intended message.

Translation studies have emerged quite recently. According to Santoyo (1987), the first translation studies, using traditional approaches, began in the mid-20th Century in Geneva and Sorbonne. Authors like Newmark (2001) have represented the traditional approach, which has been extensively used as a pedagogical tradition in language teaching and translation practice. Other authors like Vinay and Dabernet (1995) have offered contrastive approaches classifying translation methods into direct and oblique based on the linguistic approaches utilized by the respective translators. Similarly, López and Minett (2001) have used the contrastive approach for comparing the specific linguistic aspects between several source and target languages. These traditional and merely linguistic approaches were later replaced by

functional approaches and were endorsed by some writers like Nord (2009) emphasizing that translation teaching should be the exact replica of real practices employed in the translation process.

On the other hand, the functionalist approaches, deeply influenced by systemic functional grammar (SFG), introduced a large number of instructional guidelines for choosing the texts to be translated in class, classifying translation problems and procedures, monitoring students' progress, and evaluating translations. As such, Gile (2009) maintained that translation training should concentrate on the translation process, instead of on the analysis of translation deviations. He also proposed that class discussions about fundamental concepts in translation should embrace factors such as communication, quality, fidelity to the message, understanding contextual clues and knowledge of skill acquisition through using various sources of information as well as feedback provided by the translation trainees.

Despite the existing theoretical debates, some writers like Kiraly (1995) have referred to the gap existing in translation pedagogy by postulating that there are no transparent principles which guarantee the development of the translator's competence simply because the instructional methods used for teaching translation skills are not sufficiently clear. In a later study, Kiraly (2000) stated that translation originates from the recreation of meaning and knowledge in the mind of various individuals. Therefore, translation is not a process to be repeated and followed but rather it requires the application of approaches enlisting the principles of the collaborative learning environment where students are guided by the contributory functions of collaborative learning, social constructivism, empowerment and reflexive practice employed by the related teachers for teaching translation. In another study, Kiraly (2003) suggested that translation trainers should help the individual learners to reconstruct the intended knowledge to solve complex and real problems in order to develop their cognitive flexibility and self-regulation skills which are essential for overcoming translation impediments.

Similarly, according to Gonzalez (2004), there is simply no best method for translation. She mentions that existing principles for teaching translation are perceived to be as outdated and ineffective as those employed in the Grammar translation Method (GTM) in teaching foreign languages. Concerned practitioners should, therefore, reach a consensus about the common ground and the overlap between various translation training methods in order to focus on the variations evoked by socio-contextual factors dominating texts.

In 2005, Hurtado (2005:130) claimed that there are three basic elements in any translation teaching process; namely, "translation as what is going to be taught, translator's competence as knowledge and abilities required to translate, and the acquisition of the translator's competence as the mean to develop this competence". He also presented a theoretical framework of translation teaching integrating translational and pedagogical dimensions required for developing the translator's competence. Although translation has played a pivotal role in shaping the world and has contributed to the development of expert translators, translation teaching really gained momentum in the 20th Century. Such development resulted from translation trainers' accountability and their deep concern for promoting translators' competence and educating professionals who will pave the way for globalization. All in all, it is very important to analyze translation teaching methods and their application in real sociocultural contexts.

Consequently, all approaches to teaching translation should build on the theoretical guidelines offered by the most renowned translation theorists such as Delisle (1980-1981), Newmark (1995), Nida (1974), Nord (1997), and Kussmaul (1995), all of whom agree with the following guiding principles:

Firstly, management of the principles underlying translation is a prerequisite to the comprehension and interpretation of various types of texts with typical textual and referential sensitivities. This type of competence involves both productive and receptive mechanisms necessary for text comprehension and interpretation. Secondly, re-wording is equally important. In other words, the application of various strategies for reformulating the message by choosing appropriate methods, techniques and procedures should have a top priority. Among the most frequently used procedures for the reformulation of ideas contained in a given text, a translator may resort to various strategic resources such as transfer, cultural or functional equivalence, synonymy, transposition, modulation, compensation, reduction and expansion or amplification (See Newmark, 1995). These skills constitute the essence of translating competence and should most strongly be emphasized in training would be translators. Similarly, it is also indispensable to make effective use of different authoritative references like Parallel texts, monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, encyclopedias, corpus-based data, informants, and other sources which may affect the quality of translation. Finally, translation theorists place a high premium on the assessment and evaluation which make it possible to operationalize and evidence the need for comparing and contrasting the translated text with that of the original in order to measure probable gains and losses.

Naturally, in the traditional, face to face approaches to translation, which were prevalent in the pre-technology education era, the teacher was regarded as the transmitter or the source, the instructional material as the information, and the learner as the receiver of that information. In this context, the translation trainer could deliver the textual features through the "chalk-and-talk" method, and other necessary realia like overhead projector, or transparencies. Clearly, foundations of the traditional model are embedded in the behavioral learning perspectivization and have long been used as a common technique and an educational strategy in various educational settings.

In this approach, the translation trainer controls the instructional process and the content is delivered to the entire class. Here, the teacher's main objective is the dissemination of factual knowledge. In other words, the teacher delivers the lecture content and the students listen to the lecture. Thus, the learning mode unfolds as a passive process and the

learners play little part in the learning outcomes (Orlich et al., 1998). Most teachers and students admit that the conventional lecture approach in classroom has a limited efficiency because the students assume a purely passive role in the teaching/learning process and they often feel bored and disinterested.

By contrast, the CMC approach, which has been around since the early 1960s, developed because of dramatic advances in computer technologies (Thurlow et al., 2004). Definitions of CMC vary, but virtually all concerned practitioners agree that it includes resources like email, chat, and computer conferencing as well as the use of online databases. The term “computer conferencing” has been used in different ways: Some equate it with email and bulletin boards and use the concept to refer to asynchronous structured text based interactions, while others refer to it as synchronous interactions involving video, audio, and document with real time sharing.

It is interesting to note that CMC comprises three components: computer-based instruction, information, and human-to-human communication in the form of e-mail and computer conferences. While the computer conferencing system is utilized to develop personal interactions, CMC in an online classroom can be categorized either as asynchronous (time-delayed communication) or synchronous (real-time communication) systems. Participants in an asynchronous communication context may interact with the intended addressees at any time wherever computer access (e.g., e-mail, BBoard and listserv) is available. Synchronous communication, on the other hand, requires participants to communicate simultaneously (e.g., real-time computer conferencing). Notably, audio and video components are not usually available in CMC settings.

Trying to provide a general definition for CMC, Higgins (1991) believed that it encompasses those human communications which require the use of computers. In other words, CMC involves interaction between humans using computers to connect to each other and generally refers to communication patterns mediated through computers for various purposes (Metz, 1994). What is significant is that communication takes place “through a computer between human beings, instead of to an already determined computer system” (Ferrara et al, 1991: 31). In recent years, the technology for CMC has advanced so that it incorporates aural and visual input into texts. It should be noted that in this paper, studies on text-only asynchronous CMC will be reviewed.

Hybrid approach

The application of computer-mediated communication (CMC) to teaching and learning (Nguyen, 2008; Thorne, 2008; Kern, 2006) has had a great impact on the social aspects of education and more language instructors prefer to integrate the use of such technologies into their classroom” (Chun, 2008, p. 16). CMC has offered the advantage of new literacies; and at the same time, has removed the borderline between written and oral communication by “combining the interactivity of speech with the permanence of writing” Fang & Warschauer, 2004, p. 304).

Admittedly, the Pervasive use of the Internet in universities around the globe has increased the need for incorporating information and communication technologies (ICTs) into the instructional contexts (O’Brien, & Tran, 1999; Katz, 1999). The issue is how to evaluate e-Learning as part of a face-to-face learning experience and the challenges it poses to both teachers and learners. Jochems, van Merriënboer, and Koper (2004), in discussing the notion of “integrated e-Learning”, argued that there is a need for assessing the effectiveness of e-Learning in combination with more conventional methods at different educational levels. The overall goal of a blended learning experience is to provide an admixture of both on-line and face-to-face experiences which support and complement each other in acquiring the desired learning objectives. As such, this study sought to focus on blended learning, and aims to examine how students experience learning in both traditional face-to-face and on-line contexts.

Studies on CMC have remarkably grown in number in recent years. As a case in point, Miliszewska (2007) has investigated students’ attitudes towards fully-online provision of education programs in one of the most important Australian transnational education markets: Hong Kong. The findings of the study indicated that the targeted students appreciated the appropriacy of fully-online modes of teaching and learning with respect to computing studies.

In a different study, Ginns and Ellis (2007) explained the approaches students take to learn different subjects. Their study sought to examine the relations between students’ perceptions of the e-Learning environment and students’ grades. The results of the study revealed that students vary in their perceptions of the blended learning environment, and that students’ self-reports of the learning outcomes covary with such attitudinal variations.

Similarly, Nowrozi (2010) stated that the integration of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) into EFL learning can enhance both exposure to input and use of the target language to promote both learners’ linguistic and pragmatic competences. He concluded that for EFL learners who need more authentic exposure and the opportunities to use the knowledge learned in the classroom, the use of computer mediated communication tools both inside and outside the classroom contexts certainly can promote the learning and improve the learners’ communicative competence.

In another study in 2010, Dell, Low, and Wilker analyzed students’ achievements using submitted assignments for two sections of a graduate course in human development and learning, taught both online and face-to-face, as well as three sections of undergraduate educational psychology, two of which were taught face-to-face, while the other was taught online. The results illustrated that there were no significant differences between the work submitted by students from the online sections and those from the face-to-face sections, and that the methods of instruction were more important to the learners than the type of input and delivery platform.

In 2011, Nguyen examined Vietnamese learners’ reflections on and perceptions of the application of computer-mediated communication (CMC) in a collaborative learning context. Data analysis included an evaluation questionnaire,

consisting of 24 items with a four -point Likert scale appended with six open-ended questions, and the transcripts of 15 out of 30 teacher trainees from a TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) class who had volunteered to participate in informal interviews. The conclusions drawn from the results showed that the majority of participants enjoyed the technology-enhanced class, in general. The findings also indicated that the course had helped improve participants' computer skills and collaborative experience; however, they remained skeptical about improvements to their English language skills.

Likewise, Redmond (2011), sharing the experiences of two instructors who swapped a face-to-face teaching with blended and online teaching approaches reported that the change of the teaching approach remarkably influenced the instructors' perspectives and practices since the new pedagogies led to more students' involvement in the teaching/learning processes. In a similar study, Hsieh and Ji (2013) also compared the effects of three instructional methods; namely, synchronous online communication, asynchronous online communication, and traditional grammar translation method—in an English reading comprehension program. The findings showed that synchronous and asynchronous online communication users outperformed those in the independent study group. Yet, no significant difference was found in reading scores obtained by synchronous and asynchronous communication groups.

Finally, Young and Duncan (2014) conducted a study whose purpose was to compare students' ratings about the type of instruction using online and face-to-face techniques in an effort to discover how teachers can strengthen their teaching in the online environment. Surprisingly, contrary to the popular opinion, the findings reflected that participants preferred the traditional face to face method of instruction to on line techniques.

Studies on CMC vs. Traditional face to face teaching approaches are abundant in the review of the literature. Unfortunately, a few studies have been done on the efficacy of CMC in teaching translation. In particular, testing and examining this issue has not received sufficient attention in translation domains. Lack of studies on the efficacy of CMC on teaching translation encouraged the researchers to delve into this least researched subject area. Therefore, the effects of CMC versus traditional approaches in teaching translation to the students of different fields of study were investigated. On this basis, the objective in the present study was to explore the efficacy of CMC versus traditional based approaches to teaching translation to Iranian junior translation and civil engineering students.

In view of the above remarks, this paper limited itself on using three distinct methods of teaching translation: Traditional approach, computer-mediated communication approach (CMC), and a hybrid approach integrating both CMC and traditional methods. More specifically, this study aims at answering three different but complementary research questions:

1. To what extent is experiential / academic background effective in teaching translation based on CMC approach?
2. Is the application of CMC based translation teaching more superior to face to face, traditional approaches to teaching translation?
3. How do participants in CMC and Hybrid approaches to teaching translation perceive the efficacy of on-line, CMC approach to translation training?

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The samples in this study were students from six senior classes chosen out of the target populations studying in two different Universities based on a convenient sampling method. In fact, three intact classes from translation students in Khorasgan University and three classes from Civil Engineering students studying at Najaf Abad University served as the targeted participants. They took a translation pretest, and based on their scores, were divided into three levels: Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced. Because the basic level students were English Limited Proficiency (LEP) students, they were excluded from the study. Before the study began, students were instructed on how to use Blackboard software. The validity of the instruments was established based on specialist opinion and the reliability was estimated by piloting the tests on students similar to those involved in the study.

The 180 participants in this study were divided into three groups. Each group consisted of either Translation or Civil Engineering students. Students in the first group (n = 60) were assigned to a traditionally face to face type of instruction for teaching translation. By contrast, students in the second group (n = 60), were instructed by computer-mediated communication (CMC) based translation. The students in the third group, however, were taught by a hybrid method combining both CMC and face to face traditional approaches to teaching translation.

As a consequence, in the current study, a mixed method research design was utilized with quantitative and qualitative instruments. A translation pre-test/post-test was employed in order to evaluate the students' translation development. In order to gain an in-depth understanding of students' beliefs and thoughts about computer-mediated communication, a student perception questionnaire was also administered.

B. Materials

The data related to the samples in this study were collected based on a by translation pretest and results were reviewed by three independent raters. Additionally, several instruments were chosen for collecting data were: Blackboard collaborate consisted of audio/video and text chat, classroom interactions, student learning books/essays, a test, and student perception questionnaires. Class content was designed based on relevance theory introduced by Gutt

(1991) and the same content was used for all three groups: teaching schedule, materials, and climate in the classrooms were standardized to meet the research outcomes. To collect the data, we used a mixed-method approach. At the end of the semester, a translation posttest was administered. After the test, the participants were probed for their perceptions on the use of teaching approaches in the classrooms as well as the use of CMC as a communication platform in the educational and social environments.

C. Procedures

This research was conducted during the fall semester of 2014 at the designated Colleges. The experimental research procedures were as follows. Firstly, class content was designed based on relevance theory (Gutt, 1991) so that the selection and presentation of the content was arranged based on the principles of the said theory. The first group received instruction through the traditional translation assignments and translation strategies, and was trained using traditional principles. The second group was required to use computer-mediated communication and was trained employing the Blackboard software. The third group, however, was trained based on guidelines and strategies needed to use Blackboard software for computer-mediated communication as well as additionally applied traditional translation teaching strategies and assignments. The experiment was conducted for twelve weeks.

III. RESULTS

The current research focused on three groups of students (N=180) from two different majors (Translation and Civil Engineering) studying at two different universities. They were given a translation pretest before the treatment. Then, after the treatment, a full semester, both control and experimental groups were given a translation posttest. As can be seen in Table I, the average mean values of the students in hybrid and CMC approaches are much higher than those in the control group receiving face to face translation instruction.

TABLE I.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS SORTED BY METHOD

Method	Test	N	Mean	Std. deviation
Face to Face	Pretest	60	60.000	9.5669
	Posttest	60	66.100	10.9911
CMC	Pretest	60	59.800	10.0622
	Posttest	60	73.783	10.8285
CMC & Face to face	Pretest	60	60.800	10.7905
	Posttest	60	83.000	9.7737

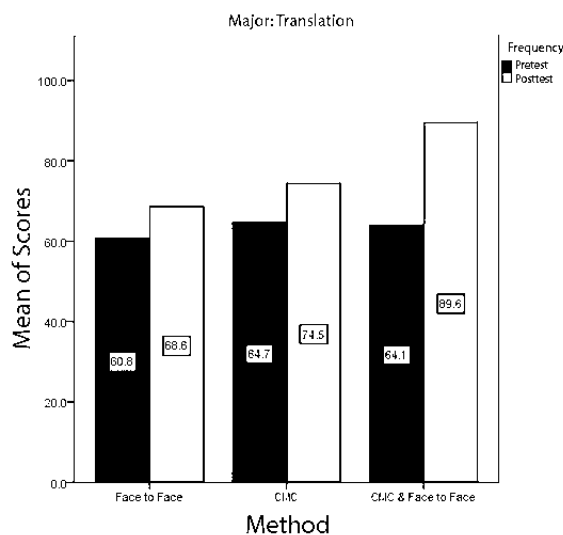


Figure 1: the mean of scores on pre and posttests related to English Translation students.

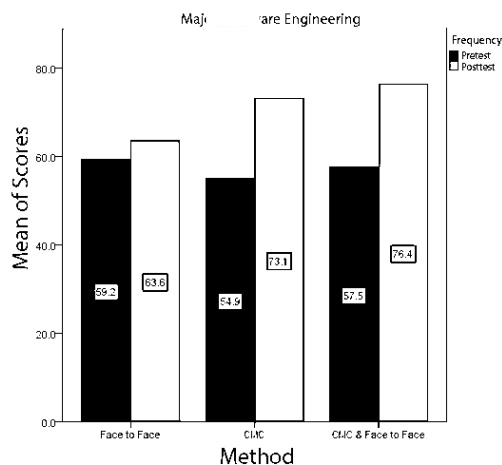


Figure 2: the mean of scores on pre and posttests related to Civil Engineering students

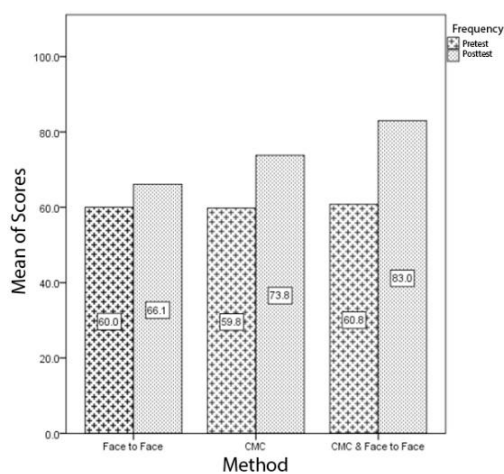


Figure 3: the mean of scores related to pre and posttests for both majors.

Figures 1, 2 and 3 also indicate the variations related to the performance profile of the students involved in different methods of teaching translation. It is evident from these figures that exposure to CMC impacts translation learning significantly.

In the first phase of the research, the question was: To what extent is experiential/academic background information influential in learning translation based on CMC approach? To answer the question, it is necessary to analyze the results of pre and posttests. To explore the differences in pre and posttest translation scores for different majors, a two-way factorial ANCOVA was employed. Notably, Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) allows us to compare one variable for two or more groups taking into account (or to correct for) variability of other variables called covariates. To run the ANCOVA test, two prerequisites must be met. One is Levene’s test for equality of variances, and the other is normal distribution of the variables.

Prior to ANCOVA test, Levene’s test for equality of variances was performed to examine whether the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups. Table II illustrates the results of the Levene’s test:

TABLE II.
RESULTS OF THE LEVENE’S TEST

F	Df1	Df2	Sig.
1.438	5	174	.213

For interpreting the results produced by ANCOVA and the associated adjusted mean values, homogeneous regression slopes for the various groups must be assumed (Huitema, 1980). When the Levene’s test is negative ($P > 0.05$), then the variances in the groups are not different (the groups are homogeneous), and therefore, the assumptions for ANCOVA are met.

Alternatively, to determine the effect of background knowledge, two-way factorial ANCOVA was employed, the results of which are shown in Table III:

TABLE III.
TEST OF BETWEEN-SUBJECTS EFFECTS

Dependent Variable: Posttest					
Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Uni Major	401.816	1	401.816	5.751	.018
Method	8104.728	2	4052.364	57.996	.000
Pretest	5526.422	1	5526.422	79.092	.000
Error	12227.822	175	69.873		
Corrected Total	28273.394	179			

As can be observed in Table III, significant levels for *major*, *method* and *pretest* variables are all lower than 0.05 alpha level. As a result, *major* variable impacted the posttest scores considerably. Clearly, the students in English Language Translation groups have performed better than Civil Engineering students on the posttest.

Therefore, the hypothesis that experiential/academic background knowledge has affected learning of translation in this study is attested. Although translation students' scores were better, civil engineering students' performance was remarkable. It could be concluded that all students exposed to CMC treatment had developed significantly in translation skills, but higher translation proficiency improvement of Khorasgan University students was more due to their prior translation experience.

In the next stage of the study, we wanted to determine if the method of teaching translation was also effective. The results shown in table 4 illustrate which translation method was more effective:

TABLE IV.
PAIRWISE COMPARISONS OF MAJOR AND DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Pairwise Comparisons						
Dependent Variable: Posttest						
Method (I)	Method (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for Difference	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Face to Face	CMC	-7.799*	1.526	.000	-10.811	-4.786
	CMC & Face to Face	-16.439*	1.527	.000	-19.453	-13.425
CMC	Face to Face	7.799*	1.526	.000	4.786	10.811
	CMC & Face to Face	-8.641*	1.528	.000	-11.655	-5.626
CMC & Face to Face	Face to Face	16.439*	1.527	.000	13.425	19.453
	CMC	8.641*	1.528	.000	5.626	11.655

Based on the results depicted by Table IV, the methods under investigation were significantly different because all the significant levels were lower than 0.05 (sig. <0.05) we can say that the method variable impacted leaning of translation. It is clear that all the significant levels are .000, but how to know which method is more effective. As it is shown in the table, both the Upper Bound and Lower Bound levels for each method are either - or +. It means that these three methods have significant differences. For CMC & Face to face approach in column I, the Upper Bound and Lower Bound levels are + for both methods in column J. But for CMC approach in column I, the levels for one of the methods in column J is -, while for Face to Face in column I, the Upper Bound and Lower Bound levels are - for both methods in column J. Thus, CMC & Face to Face (hybrid) approach in column I is more effective because the Upper Bound and Lower Bound are + for both methods in column J. Clearly, CMC approach to translation seemingly offers greater translation benefits compared with the face to face traditional approach. However, the participants' gains in terms of translation skills are even better because the hybrid, combination method involves a larger area of the learners' cognition when translating texts.

In third phase of the study, we wanted to see the learners' reaction to the application of the CMC method. To achieve this purpose, we only used the students who were taught by CMC and CMC & Face to Face approaches. Subsequently, a questioner was used to gauge the learners' attitudes. Questions were analyzed by One-Sample Statistics:

TABLE V.
MEAN AND STD. ERROR MEAN FOR CMC APPLICATION:

One-Sample Statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Communicating in educational environments	120	3.5679	.84098	.07677

A five-point Likert scale was applied to rank the targeted questions: strongly disagree = 1, disagree = 2, Uncertain = 3, agree = 4, and strongly agree = 5. Students were asked to mark only one of these points on the scale to express their perceptions about each item. It can be seen in Table 5 that CMC is indeed effective for teaching translation to students with different majors.

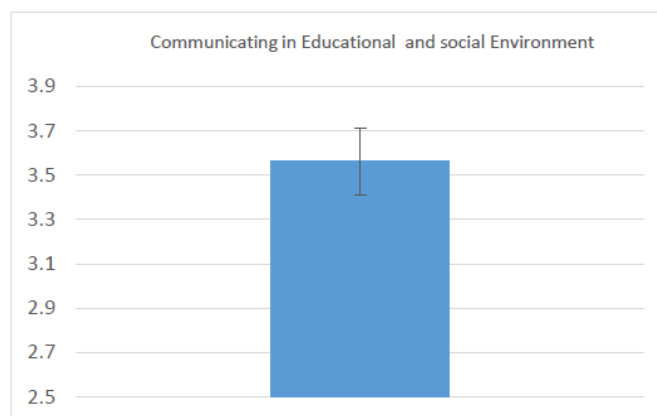


Figure 4: Superiority of CMC based on mean values

TABLE VI.
RESULTS RELATED TO ONE-SAMPLE TEST

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval for Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Communicating in educational environments	7.397	119	.000	.56786	.4158	.7199

It is clearly demonstrated by Table VI that the use of CMC in educational and social environments is 95% effective.

IV. DISCUSSION

Notably, the results of the study indicated that experiential/academic background knowledge (i.e., the major variable) had appreciably a high effect on learning translation. It was also observed that all students receiving treatment by CMC had improved their translation proficiency significantly, but Khorasgan University students' translation proficiency had improved even more due to their higher level of background experience with translation skills. The results revealed that those students who learnt translation via hybrid method performed the best on the posttest. The overall conclusion was that translation proficiency can be developed through CMC interaction for English non-major University students. In this study, both Translation and Civil Engineering students using CMC approach showed a more significant improvement. Finally, the results obtained from the questionnaire also revealed that the use of CMC in educational and social environments was effective.

Overall, the goal of the present study was to evaluate the efficacy of CMC versus traditional approaches to teaching translation to Iranian senior translation and civil engineering students. Drawing on previous research on students' attitudes towards fully-on line provision of computer education programs, Miliszewska (2007) conducted a study in Hong Kong. He found out that students did not fully appreciate the online provision of transnational programs as a preferred alternative to the current model of translation training. However, the results of the present study supported the utility of CMC in translation teaching.

Like the current research which is on hybrid methods of teaching, the study by Ginns and Ellis (2007), was about blended learning, and they explored the relations between student perceptions about e-Learning environment, approaches to instruction, and students' grades. The results of the study suggested that students vary in their perceptions of the blended learning environment, and that students' self-reports of their approaches to study and learning outcomes covary with contextual variations. However, in this research almost all students favorably agreed with the application of CMC as a supportive tool for learning. In fact, the findings were consistent with those of Nowrozi (2010) who proved that the application of computer mediated communication tools both inside and outside of the classrooms can certainly benefit the amount of learning and develop learners' communicative competence to a certain extent.

Similarly, Dell, Low, and Wilker (2010) conducted a study and concluded that there were no significant differences between the translation works submitted by students through online or face-to-face interactions, and that the methods of instruction are more important than the delivery platform. It is interesting to note that in our research the delivery platform played a key role in students' learning.

Alternatively in 2011, Nguyen (2011) examined Vietnamese learners' reflections on the application of computer-mediated communication (CMC) into a collaborative learning context. At the end of the study, students remained skeptical about any conceivable improvements to their English language skills. However, they expressed confidence that they would attend similar courses in future and were willing to recommend the technology-based course to other students.

In another study Redmond (2011), drawing on the experiences of two instructors using blended techniques, reported that moving to online settings may alter both pedagogy and practice and consolidate effective learning outcomes. However, in this study we used different pedagogical techniques and same class content for all targeted groups.

The results of this study clearly substantiated the efficacy of CMC as an effective tool in learning especially when it is used as an additional, supplementary leaning tool. This prediction agrees with the findings of the study conducted by Hsieh and Ji, (2013) who also compared the effects of three instructional methods; namely, synchronous online communication, asynchronous online communication, and traditional grammar translation method for teaching reading comprehension.

Finally, the results of the study were opposed to those obtained by Young and Duncan (2014) who performed a study whose purpose was to compare students' ratings of instruction in online and face-to-face higher education courses in an effort to understand how faculty members can strengthen their teaching in the online environment. These writers found that the target participants were more satisfied with traditional, face to face courses compared to online courses. Clearly, the results of the present study did not agree with these authors' findings.

V. CONCLUSION

In recent years, blended and on line English programs which involve the application of technology for the delivery of language instruction have become widespread. These approaches to language teaching have brought about important alterations in practical and pedagogical aspects of curriculum design in general and language teaching in particular. The results of the studies concerning the effectiveness of on line tools for language teaching have been inconclusive. However, concerned researchers agree on the need for the teachers to master the tools and acquire the skills for communicating with students on line.

Evidently, the results of the present study endorsed the opinions of related researchers in this area indicating that on line, CMC based approach to teaching translation evokes crucial changes in the outcomes of learning. Consequently, blended and on line teaching offer potential benefits to enhance traditional language instruction by linking the classroom context to the outside world. However, there are challenges that need to be addressed before fully adopting online courses. The results of the present study, therefore, may have potential implications for course designers, language teachers and learners.

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Panopticism in José Saramago's *Blindness*

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Abstract—José Saramago, the Portuguese writer, expresses in the novel *Blindness* (1995) the fear of dehumanization in the contemporary globalized world. This unfavorable homogenization is represented in *Blindness* through a white blindness that obliterates the individuals' physical interaction with the world. The contagion, in fact, is related to the individuals' dependence upon the social constraints and working of power. It is evident in the nature of the relationships between the characters and the authorities and also in the interaction of the citizens with each other. Thus, *Blindness* can be read as a text demonstrating how subjection of the modern man to the power relations can bring about a real panoptical society. This feature makes the text suitable to be read in terms of Foucault's views on power relations and in particular, panopticism. As a result, this study attempts to investigate how *Blindness* society is in nature a Panopticon in which power relations are present in the context of all relationships.

Index Terms—*Blindness*, disciplinary power, globalization, José Saramago, Michel Foucault, Panopticon

I. INTRODUCTION

Bertolt Brecht claims in his work, *A Short Organum for the Theatre*, that there is no true distinction between political and apolitical art. He insists that “all art is political and the question is simply whether art attacks existing structures of power or refuses such attacks and thereby contributes to the continuation of those structures” (Booker, 1994, p. 175). In fact, the issues of power structures and power relations have always constituted a major part in the works of philosophers, thinkers and literary theorists. Michel Foucault is widely acknowledged as being one of the most influential thinkers of power relations and surveillance as social facts. Foucault's theories addressed the power relationships and how they function within social context. According to him, power operates within the relationships between people in which one would affect another's action. It is different from force or violence which only affects the person physically; rather it is a strategy that makes a free subject does something through restricting or altering his will. He has called this kind of power disciplinary power. Disciplinary power is a type of power that is based on a permanent system of surveillance which eventually results in individuals' self-regulation of their behavior (Foucault, *Society Must be Defended*, 2003, p. 36).

For Foucault, disciplinary power is in the best way exemplified by Jeremy Bentham's panopticism. Panopticon is “an architectural structure that will permit a supervisor to see all without being seen by anyone under surveillance” (Schrift, 2013, p. 146). The “unequal gaze” caused “the internalization of the supervisor” (ibid: p. 146). This means one is less likely to break rules if he believes he is being watched, even if he is not.

The Portuguese novelist, José Saramago, is well-known for controversial novels in which his sharp criticism of any form of imposing power is transparent. His noble prize awarded novel, *Blindness* (1995) – original title: *Ensaio sobre a Cegueira* –, expresses Saramago's fear of dehumanization in a globalized world where any contemporary society may lead to Panopticon through the obligation to follow what power structures define and establish.

This study sets out to investigate the novel *Blindness* in terms of working of the power relations and their consequences on the life of human beings. *Blindness* conveys Saramago's fear of concealed threat that modern society might encounter: collective blindness when society itself becomes blind because all the society is the Panopticon. There is a distinct globalization perspective in this novel; all habitants of the world get blind. Indeed, the plague reveals the power relations underlying modern civilization and the panopticism that is present everywhere, not only in the relationship between the authority and the people, but also in the relationship among the populace who has blindly submitted to it.

II. DISCUSSION

“Power must be analyzed as something which circulates, or as something which only functions in the form of a chain ... individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application” (Foucault, 1980, p. 98). This statement reveals how Foucault's view about power differs from the traditional view on this issue. Foucault regards the power problem within the relations between society, individuals, groups and institutions. He defines a micro-physics of power which is constituted by a power that is strategic and tactical rather than acquired, preserved or possessed. This type of power is not restricted to the relation between the oppressors and the oppressed, but it is present in any type of

relationship between the members of the society. For this reason, in *Critical theory/intellectual theory* (1988) Foucault says:

“I am not referring to Power with a capital P, dominating and imposing its rationality upon the totality of the social body. In fact, there are power relations. They are multiple; they have different forms, they can be in play in family relations, or within an institution, or an administration” (qtd. 2010, p. 58).

Foucault believes that power can be productive, because it influences individuals' consideration of their own thoughts and behavior and leads to individual's self-discipline. In this way, it causes new behaviors to appear as norms. He chronicles the appearance of this kind of disciplinary power in his highly acclaimed book *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1975).

In this book, Foucault traces the emergence of the disciplinary power back to the massive changes that occurred in Western penal systems during the modern age. The appearance of new means of punishment, imprisonment instead of execution, heralded a technology of power that acts through the soul to subject and train the body. This technique of power is discipline.

To put simply, discipline for Foucault is a set of strategies, procedures and behaviors that pervades the individual's general thinking and behaviour. This purpose achieves through four ways: the first is “the art of distributions: it operates through certain *spatial* disposition of individuals, which is usually attained through imprisonment” (Bällan, 2010, p. 59). The prisoner is confined in an isolated room; so that he is separated from other prisoners (the patients of psychiatric clinics are disposed in the same way). The second way is “the control of activity” (Schrift, 2013, p. 144): discipline controls strictly the activity of the body according to a strict daily schedule. The next way is “the organization of geneses” (Schrift, 2013, p. 144): It introduces “exercises to maximize individual efficiency” (Schrift, 2013, p. 144). Here, duration is divided into certain segments with certain analytical plans. At the end of each temporal segment, an examination is done to decide if a subject has reached the required level or not. Reaching the required level is possible through the exercise of certain tasks. The last way is “the composition of forces: discipline is the coordinator force of “all the parts of a system” (Bällan, 2010, p. 60). This coordination is done through discipline's use of “what Foucault calls “tactics” (ibid: p. 60), through which “the product of the various forces is increased by their calculated combination” (ibid: p. 60).

From what was discussed, Foucault concludes that the success of disciplinary power depends on three elements: hierarchical observation, normalizing judgment, and examination. In hierarchical observation, the obedience of what discipline imposes is assured by means of observation. The ruling group observes if the individuals behave in accordance with the objectives of the system of power or not. If an individual behaves in a different way from what the system wants, he will be regarded as an abnormal. Thus, slight departure from correct behavior will be punished. The third instrument of discipline, examination, combines the hierarchal observation and normalizing judgment. It examines, judges, selects, or excludes according to the conformity of the individuals to the norm. “That is to say, the modern individual is what he or she is by virtue of comparison with, conformity to, and differentiation from the norm, and it is this individual's individuality itself that is produced through the disciplinary power that examines and judges it” (Schrift, 2013, p. 145). In this way, the exercise of disciplinary power leads to what Foucault calls panopticism.

Foucault relates panopticism to the early modern society's measures for controlling contagious diseases. The infected ones were excluded from the society in order to reduce the risk of infection. The confinement of the diseased ones entailed a system of constant surveillance in which the dominant group controlled the people. This imprisonment of individuals represents for Foucault the model according to which the modern world controls the human beings. In this surveillance system,

... the individuals are inserted in a fixed place, in which the slightest movements are supervised, in which all events are recorded, in which an uninterrupted work of writing links the center and periphery in which ... each individual is constantly located, examined and distributed among the living beings, the sick and dead – all this constitutes a compact model of disciplinary mechanism. (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 1979 p. 197)

In the nineteenth century, the same system of constant surveillance was applied for identifying and controlling the abnormal individuals like “beggars, vagabonds, madmen, and the disorderly” (Bertens, 1995, p. 150). Foucault's metaphor for this type of order in the society is Panopticon, an architectural structure which Jeremy Bentham designed in the late eighteenth century. This kind of prison is made of one central tower around which the cells are built. The inside of all the cells are visible for the guardian in the central tower, while the internees cannot see the supervisor. They can never be certain whether they are being watched or not. This spatial technique exposes the individuals to the permanent visibility. So the person is forced to behave in a way as if one observer is always watching and monitoring him. This situation will result in internalization of certain behavioral code as norms.

According to Foucault, the Panopticon was destined to spread throughout the whole society, so that the modern men always bear this imprisonment in their mind. Therefore, power causes the human beings become responsible for and “complicit in their own confinement” (ibid: p. 151). As Schrift states:

The Panopticon thus leads to panopticism, and the disciplinary machine leads to the disciplinary society and the production of the modern individual who, by internalizing the supervisory gaze of the other, takes all the disciplinary tasks of society upon itself and forces itself to conform to social norms without any external authority imposing those norms. (p. 146)

Foucault claims Panopticon has finally spread throughout the modern society in the form of schools, barracks, factories and so on, wherein the individuals exercise to behave according to certain standards, under constant surveillance and examination, up to the point that those standards or norms are internalized within them. What results is a society of judges in which everyone will judge him and others according to the norms and subject to them his body, movements, gestures, behavior and thinking.

The normalization which Foucault attributes to panopticism is similar to the global homogenization. In social and cultural field, the homogenizing pressure of globalization has penetrated into all aspects of human life, from less important issues like the individual's appearance to more important ones such as the way he behaves and thinks and what the truth means for him. Globalization takes away the differences in the name of the constitution of an ideal globalized society. José Saramago, as an outstanding literary and public figure, declares its opposition to globalization as a hidden form of totalitarianism. Statements like "globalization will eat up the poor mouse of human rights, globalization manufactures exclusion, or totalitarianism's faces are many and globalisation is one of them" (qtd. in Rollason, 2004, p. 2), represent his denunciation of the standardizing and homogenizing impact of global mass culture.

Blindness is a great epitome of Panopticon. Saramago's strange blindness wipes out suddenly the physical interaction of the blinds with the world of colors, things and beings. This feature can be read as a hint of contemporary homogenization. The names, colors, identities, thoughts, or all the singularities as a whole, have disappeared alike what happens in a homogenized globalized world wherein the assimilation of the individuals with various personal, regional, cultural and political origins occurs. In Saramago's own words: "we know each other's bark or speech, as for the rest, features, colour of eyes or hair, they are of no importance, it is as if they did not exist" (*Blindness*, 1997, p. 23).

Blindness tells the story of a city in which all people get struck by white blindness. No one has a name, only roles – a doctor, a prostitute with dark glasses, a child, a man with an eye patch, a dog of tears, a woman who never gets blind and so on. Blindness has eliminated all names, jobs (among the blinds, there are police men who would be killed by the soldiers and an ophthalmologist who himself is blind and his professional skills would be of no use to the others), and thoughts. They never speak about their past and future does not have any meaning for them.

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault claims that the plague acted as an image against which the mechanisms of discipline were defined. It was because when plague strikes, the boundaries of normal and abnormal are blurred. Anyone can become sick, and therefore abnormal; and what is abnormal is particularly dangerous.

In *Blindness*, the blinds are abnormal and therefore dangerous for the society. So, the government quarantines them in a sanatorium. The government's domination over the life and death of its subjects is disguised as its duty to protect the public from an evil plague. The authorities decide what is correct and the people must obey. The sanatorium, functioning as a prison, is the first Panopticon of the novel. Its entrance is permanently lit and guarded by soldiers and anyone trying to escape will be shot on sight: "Behind the gate there was a light which outlined the black silhouette of a soldier ... he would only shoot if she, having descended the stairs, were to get nearer, after being warned, from that other invisible line which represented for him the frontier of his safety" (Saramago, 1997, p. 58).

The detainees can never count on any help from their guardians, even when a dictatorial regime is formed inside the prison. Like Foucault's Panopticon, the blind internees internalize the permanent presence of the guards at the gate of the sanatorium. The outstanding manifestation of this internalization is the moment that the fire is destroying the sanatorium, but the poisoners do not dare to leave their prison: "Then someone shouted, What are we doing here, why don't we get out, the reply, coming from amidst this sea of heads, needed only four words, The soldiers are there" (ibid: p. 80). The observing gaze of the authority and the rules it has legislated have been internalized within the being of the internees in such a way that oblige the prisoners to remain in their assigned space. They do not dare to break the defined rules. Only after the doctor's wife ventures to go out to ask for help, they realize that the soldiers are no longer there and they leave the place.

The sanatorium is the embodiment of the whole society. In fact, the whole country or the whole world, for Saramago's setting can be everywhere in the contemporary world, is Panopticon. The sanatorium only projects more straightforwardly the power relations which were already functioning in the social body. Saramago exposes it in the words of the doctor's wife: "There's no difference between inside and outside, between here and there" (ibid: p. 90).

The point that is worth mentioning is that, in *Blindness*, panopticism is not restricted to the places. In the text, panopticism may be also traced to the essence of the way the individuals consider themselves or behave towards others. From the first pages of the text, the power relations governing the relationships among the individuals are obvious. A good example is the way the patients are treated by the doctor in his office. The receptionist guides the first man who gets blind to the doctor's room, stating merely: "Doctor's orders, this man is an urgent case" (ibid: p. 7). Only the mother of a cross-eyed boy states some words of protest: "her right was her right, and that she was first and had been waiting for more than an hour" (ibid: p. 7). Other patients murmur few words supporting her; however, even that woman does not follow her complaining, because they know it would be entirely useless. The narrator explains that in the previous similar situations, the patients' complaint has not brought into any result but being made to wait longer. Here, the doctor, as the one having power at his disposal, controls his patients' will. The patients have already internalized within themselves that they are not allowed to object. Hence, it is better to be quiet than being punished. It accords with Foucault's view about the omnipresence of power relations within all kinds of relationships in the society, and that in these relations, everyone has its hierarchy.

The girl with dark glasses is another example of the influences of power working. She is a prostitute getting blind while she is with a man in a hotel. The police man taking her to her parents' house,

wanted to know, after asking her where she lived, if she had the money for the taxi, in these cases, the State doesn't pay, he warned her, a procedure which, let us note in passing, is not without a certain logic, insofar as these women belong to that considerable number who pay no taxes on their immoral earnings (ibid: p. 12).

Like most commercial transactions, prostitution is based on the sale of a commodity, sex. Under capitalism, sexual service is highly regulated and has an economic dimension. The government does not prevent the prostitution; it is an important industry whose profit the government does not like to lose. The policeman's words imply this fact. However, the working of power is not restricted to this point. Foucault especially argues that psychoanalysis of sexuality considers certain sexual practices as normal and other behaviors that do not agree with them as the abnormal and deviant. Accordingly, the individual sexual behavior, in modern society, is judged and manipulated according to these norms. In Foucault's view, "society does not seek to eliminate even 'deviant' or marginal sexual behaviors" (Booker, 1994, p. 13); but rather society needs such behaviors as negative models against which it can define proper conduct.

As a prostitute, the girl with dark glasses has a job and is a contributor of one commercial transaction in the context of capitalism. But she is simultaneously caught in the complicated web that the discourses on sex have created. In the sanatorium, she does not want others to know about her past, because she worries about others' judgment:

I'd also like to know what happened to that girl, What girl, asked the pharmacist's assistant, That girl from the hotel, what a shock she gave me, there in the middle of the room, as naked as the day she was born, wearing nothing but a pair of dark glasses, and screaming that she was blind, she's probably the one who infected me. The doctor's wife looked, saw the girl slowly remove her dark glasses, hiding her movements, then put them under her pillow, . . . With a shaky hand, the girl applied a few eye-drops. This would always allow her to say that these were not tears running from her eyes. (Saramago, 1997, p. 26)

The norms resulting of the discourses on sexuality allows the hotel maid to judge the girl frankly and makes that girl wish to be concealed from other's eyes. Moreover, she herself feels guilty about her profession. It is evident from her response to the policeman: "Yes, I have the money, and then under her breath, added, If only I didn't" (ibid: p. 12). The observing gaze internalized within her blames her for making money through a profession that is considered immoral by the society, as if blindness is its penalty. Thus, the girl is simultaneously oppressed by her own and the other's panopticism.

The doctor's wife is the only human who gets never blind. She witnesses the fast decay of human beings and the inevitable collapse of social order. The doctor's wife, from the outset, is the excluded in the panopticon society of *Blindness*. From her first confrontation with the plague, her husband's infection with the unknown virus, she displays a different reaction. She is supportive and does not care about her own infection:

He pushed his wife away almost violently, he himself drew back, Keep away, don't come near me, I might infect you, ... Leave me, leave me, No, I won't leave you, shouted his wife, what do you want, to go stumbling around bumping into the furniture, searching for the telephone without eyes to find the numbers you need in the telephone directory, while I calmly observe this spectacle, stuck inside a bell-jar to avoid contamination. She took him firmly by the arm and said, Come along, love. (ibid: p. 14)

As it was pointed out, panopticism controls the individuals both physically and psychologically. In Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, the main character, Winston Smith, adjusts his movements as if someone is always watching him. He is careful not to have a wrong posture even when his back is toward the telescreen. This feature is shown in *Blindness* repeatedly in the internees' following of the rope that shows them the right path to the supply of food or the occasions when they do not dare to approach the supply in fear of being shot if they go the wrong direction:

Attention, attention, the internees may come and collect their food, ... One of them declared, I'm not budging from here what they want to do is to catch us outside and then kill us all I'm not moving either, said another, Nor me, chipped in a third (ibid: p. 39).

The doctor's wife operates in contrast to this feature. When she goes to fetch the spade to bury the corpse, she does not even pretend to be blind despite being watched by the astonished eyes of the soldiers: "she thought, from here I'll make straight for the door, after all, what does it matter, even if you were to suspect that I'm not blind, what do I care" (ibid: p. 32).

Moreover, through this character the author expresses his sharp criticism of the media society and its outcome of voyeurism. The doctor's wife suffers from her state of being the observer who can see others while they are not aware that they are being watched. She considers it unethical. Her rejection of intrusion into the private moments of the blinds' lives is a clear rejection of the unlimited surveillance of Panopticon observer. Being the only and the last human able of seeing, she has the capability to "survey and profoundly understand the frailties and shortcomings of the human nature" (Simut, 2012, p. 116). However, for the doctor's wife, watching without being watched is mere obscenity:

The doctor's wife looked, saw the girl slowly remove her dark glasses, hiding her movements, then put them under her pillow, while asking the boy with the squint, Would you like another biscuit, For the first time since she had arrived there, the doctor's wife felt as if she were behind a microscope and observing the behaviour of a number of human beings who did not even suspect her presence, and this suddenly struck her as being contemptible and obscene. I have no right to look if the others cannot see me, she thought to herself. (Saramago, 1997, p. 26)

The doctor's wife recognizes that "her vision puts her in a position of authority" (Vieira, 2009, p. 15). However, she refuses this position of power and acts right on the contrary to Panopticon. She does not use her eyesight for controlling others, as it is expected in panopticism; rather she uses it as a means to help the blinds. Although she never loses her vision, she voluntarily enters a collective to which she does not belong. In the sanatorium and later in the city, though suffering from keeping her vision in a totally blind world: "you cannot know, what it means to have eyes in a world in which everyone else is blind, I am not a queen, no, I am simply the one who was born to see this horror, you can feel it, I both feel and see it" (Saramago, 1997, p. 102), she does not hesitate to help. She is present everywhere, ready to help the injured, organize the food distribution, help to bury the corpses, negotiate with the soldiers and console the upset blinds.

She attempts to embrace the ones who need her help. Her words after seeing the blindfolded statues in the church: "I thought that in order to have got to where we are someone else must have been blind" (ibid: p. 117), expresses Saramago's blunt criticism of the religion as "a central tool of the forces of repression" (Booker, 1994, p. 11). The church like other structures of power in the society necessitates the conformity of the individuals, here based on religious belief. However, the doctor's wife accepts the singularities of the individuals and avoids judgment and its consequent outcome of controlling. Her own judgment is never an obstacle to her free assistance to the detainees, whether that person is the thief of one blind man's car, or a prostitute with whom her husband had sex:

The girl with dark glasses began to weep, What an unhappy lot we are, she murmured, and then, I wanted it too, I wanted it too, you are not to blame, Be quiet the doctor's wife said gently, let's all keep quiet (Saramago, 1997, p. 65).

A real exception in this panoptic society, she is not blindly subject to everything the power relations have dictated. So, it is not surprising that she never loses her vision.

III. CONCLUSION

According to Foucault, in the modern society, panopticism has been inserted into all relationships. Indeed, the gaze is not something that is merely directed at the individuals; but socialization and its necessities have made the individuals subject to their own gaze in a way that they control their bodies, thoughts, actions and feelings.

The Portuguese author and Nobel Prize winner, José Saramago, in *Blindness* introduces the open-ended allegory of white blindness that affects the whole society except for one woman. Rather than viewing this condition as a physical impairment, this blindness could be read metaphorically as a comment on the situation of the humans in a world wherein the power relations govern. As Harold Bloom notes, "the open nature of the allegory in *Blindness* allows the reader to wonder if this is not another parable of the perpetual possibility of the return of Fascism, or of its first advent" (2005, p. 17, 18).

Saramago's *Blindness* is the embodiment of Foucauldian panopticism. The sanatorium is guarded by the soldiers who are put in the entrance by the army. They control the internees' movements. The slightest violation of the rules will be responded by shooting the one who has broken the certain rules. On the other hand, the blinds never see their jailers, but they behave as if the soldiers are present all the times. The great manifestation of the blinds internalization of the constant presence of the controlling observer is when the asylum is burning in the fire, but no one has the courage to leave the place.

However, the panopticism in *Blindness* is not restricted to the asylum or the country as a whole. Rather, it can be traced to the relationship between the individuals too. The blinds do not become blind, but rather they were already blind. Before the outbreak of blindness, the people interact within their relationships according to working of power, but they were not aware of it. One instance of this issue is the ophthalmologist behavior towards his patients. In his office, he has the upper place in the power hierarchy, thus, he is the one who controls his patients' will. Another example is the girl with dark glasses. She has a job but her deed does not follow the accepted norms on sexuality. While she is satisfied with her job and its income, she is ashamed of it. It is because of the girl self-internalization of the normal sexual behavior. Considering these norms, she thinks of herself as deviant and guilty.

But Saramago depicts one figure who does not suffer from blindness, the doctor's wife. The author uses this character as a symbolic figure through which the readers experience the horrors of a completely blind world. She suffers from isolation because she is a nonconformist in a homogenized blind world. In fact, her isolation originates less from her eyes which still see than from her action that is in opposition to the power relations. Maintaining one's eyesight provides a state of power for everybody within a community of blinds, but the doctor's wife does not look at her state in this way. Her behavior is in direct contrast with the Panopticon of her society. At some parts of the novel, where she observes the intimate moments of the people's lives, though involuntarily, she deeply suffers. She cannot be satisfied with the role of the Panopticon observer and rejects it. She uses her capacity for helping others and reducing their affliction. Her assistance embraces all humanity regardless of the judgments of the observing gaze of discourse, prejudice or the working of power as a whole.

In sum, Saramago's novel represents how power relations govern in the society covertly and overtly, though their operation may be hidden behinds claims such as norms, humans' well-being and so on. But they are only the euphemism of Foucauldian panopticism. In fact, at the center of all of these movements are there power relations functioning to fulfill certain objectives. In this world, the humans have been transformed to the individual subjects dependent upon what the power structures have defined. In *Blindness*, the individuals do not go blind, they were already

blind. Although they were not able to see their subjection to social constraints and power structures, but in practice they behave, think, and live according to what they have internalized as the norms. They are both oppressed and oppressor, oppressed under control of the authorities and oppressor when they are in the state of the authority within a relationship. Even when the person is the oppressor, he acts again under pressure of the norms that power structures have established and have been fixed within the person's mind. In Saramago's text, this blindly submission to power relations is embodied in the physical blindness of the characters. Saramago's protagonist is an excluded because she is the only person who does not follow blindly what power relations imposes. So, it is believable that she never loses her eyesight.

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Discussion on the First Lesson in Chinese Characters Teaching to the Foreign Students*

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Abstract—Beginning with the teaching design of the first Chinese characters lesson to foreign students, from the excitement of foreign students' interest in Chinese characters learning, relieving their psychological fear of it, the meaning of Chinese characters learning, and establishing a correct concept of Chinese characters, step by step, the aim of this article is to help foreign students understand Chinese characters, lead the students to learn Chinese characters easily and happily, and reach the ideal teaching effect finally.

Index Terms—foreign students, the first lesson, Chinese characters teaching

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, teaching Chinese as a second language has made a considerable development in China, and also made remarkable achievements. Then no need for reticence, that "Chinese characters is difficult to learn" is an issue we have to face, seems to become a universally accepted theory, a lot of foreign students have accepted it before they come to China. This existing pessimistic attitude not only brings a negative effect on Chinese Learners, but also plays a great negative role for international Chinese dissemination. That "Chinese characters is difficult to learn" is lack of convincing reason, and it is a false proposition (Li Quan 2010). The Chinese characters have a the deficiencies of nature that we can see the shape of it ,but can't know its pronunciation, which is also reflected in teaching practice, especially in the initial stage of learning Chinese characters, and it is different from the language of Phonics, like English. Certainly, according to that we can't make the final conclusion that "Chinese characters is difficult to learn", but we can't also underestimate that this existing pessimistic attitude bring a negative effect on Chinese Learners and play a great negative role for international Chinese dissemination.

It is not easy to learn Chinese characters, especially for the learners whose mother tongue is a phonetic writing. However, it can't be avoided in the conventional Chinese learning. Cui Yonghua (2008) pointed out, the ability of Chinese characters is the basic condition of Chinese learning; the ability of Chinese characters is the key of Chinese words accumulation, that if we solve the problem of Chinese character teaching well will be very important to improve the efficiency of Chinese teaching. The Chinese teaching practice proves that Chinese character is the key factor to affect the confidence, process, efficiency and Chinese level of Chinese learners, the success or failure of Chinese learning depends largely on the success or failure of Chinese characters. The breakthrough of Chinese character teaching is the breakthrough of Chinese language teaching.

Previous research about teaching of Chinese characters has achieved fruitful results (Chen Fu 1998, Lv Bisong 1999, Wan Yexin 2004, Sun Dejin 2006, Zhou Jian 2007, Zhao Jinming 2008, etc.) These studies Mainly concentrated in the Chinese character teaching principle, teaching method research, structure characteristic analysis of Chinese characters, Chinese character acquisition error analysis, etc. To some extent, the first lesson is very important for the foreigners in the Chinese characters learning. According to the author's teaching experience, this paper try to start from first Chinese characters lesson to foreign students, to stimulate foreign students' interests in learning Chinese characters, to help them overcome the blind fear of Chinese characters, and to establish a correct concept which is "Chinese characters can be learned and deserve to be learned".

II. TO STIMULATE FOREIGN STUDENTS' INTERESTS IN LEARNING CHINESE CHARACTERS

A. Let Foreign Students Understand Chinese Characters Is a Kind of Interesting Character

As a ideogram, Chinese characters have a lot of interests, so it can be explained full of wit and humor by teachers in the class.

In the first class, teacher can show the evolution of Chinese characters by image and text. It helps foreign students understand Chinese characters and cultivate their interest in Chinese characters. Because it is the first Chinese

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characters lesson, students know nothing about it, so we should choose simple and easy to understand materials for them. Such as pictograph, we can use the ancient Chinese characters to let the students combine the characters and pictures. For example "车" (car), teacher can show all script forms of "车" and the pictures of the ancient Chinese car on PPT, and encourage students to write it, let the students experience the evolution of Chinese characters directly. Another example is "明" (bright), it's a associative compounds. First, we can show the pictures and ancient script forms of "日" (sun) and "月" (moon), because "日" and "月" are pictograph, from ancient time to now the change is not big, and the outline is clear. Students can roughly guess the meaning of them, and the combination of "日" and "月" is "明".

B. *Let Foreign Students Feel the Beauty of Chinese Characters*

Although Chinese Characters only have 5 basic strokes, which are“丶 一 | 丿 ㇇”, but they become the most beautiful words in the world, because of their unique Line beauty and Structural beauty. They have an external form of beauty which phonographic alphabet haven't. By allowing foreign students feel the beauty of Chinese characters, to stimulate their interest in learning Chinese characters.

As mentioned above, foreign students have initially felt the Chinese characters similar to the picture when teacher show the evolution of Chinese characters by image and text. Teacher can also tell the students that the process of the evolution of Chinese characters is actually a beautification process. From ancient times to now, Chinese characters changed from picture writing to square writing, the strokes are very standard simple and smooth. Chinese characters formed a unique style of art in the long history of evolution, because of many reasons and conditions, but the most important reason is Chinese characters contain aesthetic features by themselves. (Dong Kun, 1996) In the first Chinese characters lesson teacher is necessary to show the famous calligraphy works to the students, it is need to pay attention to both the soft pen calligraphy and hard pen calligraphy. At the same time, pay attention to the evolution of Shang and Zhou ancient text, seal character, official script, regular script and other Chinese characters form. Such as teachers can take the character "马" (horse)as an example, Show "马" in different fonts, let students talk about the feelings of different fonts, and improve their understanding and interest of Chinese Calligraphy.

Teacher can also show the Chinese characters written by foreign students before, Of course, these works are good and bad. Although it is not really start learning Chinese characters, but in the process of comparison, they can distinguish between beauty or ugliness, good or bad. Let the students participate in the evaluation, and talk about their feelings. In the right time, teacher should encourage students to write good Chinese characters, to write standard and beautiful Chinese characters.

C. *Let Foreign Students Feel the Chinese Culture Contained in Chinese Characters*

Chinese character is the root of Chinese culture, In the first lesson, teacher can also inspire foreign students to learn Chinese characters by Chinese culture contained in Chinese characters.

Each Chinese character is a picture of Chinese history and culture, and the Chinese character can be regarded as the carrier of cultural information by itself. In the class, teacher should tell the students that there are a lot of historical and cultural information in the ancient Chinese vocabulary, especially the shape of Chinese characters, It records the cultural meanings of words, and give examples. Such as “好” (good)constitute by “女” and “子” from Oracle-Bone Inscription, in the character “女” is bigger than “子”, which means mother and child, and can also be understood as primary and secondary relationship. “Origin of Chinese Characters” explain“好 means 美” (beautiful). “美”constitute by “羊” (sheep) and “大” (big), in Oracle-Bone Inscription “美” is a standing person wearing a feather headdress, simplified Chinese characters written as “羊” and “大” is a mistake. In addition, Chinese Characters often used homophonic, In the Spring Festival, people paste Chinese Character “福” (good fortune)upside down, because it sounds like “good fortune is coming”. People eat “Niangao”, because it sounds like “Increased every year.”

In the first lesson, teacher need to show the cultural significance contained by Chinese characters to the foreign students, at the same time, teacher can also introduce Chinese characters influence in the world, to foster a sense of the cultural awareness and cultural identity, in order to stimulate their interest in learning Chinese characters. For example, as early as in the Sui and Tang Dynasties, Chinese characters spread to Korea and Japan with diplomatic relations, and made a positive and far-reaching impact on their culture. China's neighbors such as Vietnam and other Southeast Asian countries also deeply influenced by Chinese characters. For a long time, in East Asia has formed a “Chinese character culture circle”. Today, not only the Chinese people's social life cannot be separated from the Chinese characters, and the social life of Korean, Japanese and Singaporean is also the same, Chinese characters play an important role in inheriting civilization and spreading culture.

III. REDUCE THE FEAR OF FOREIGN STUDENTS IN LEARNING CHINESE CHARACTERS

A. *To Establish a Correct View about the Number of Chinese Characters*

The number of Chinese characters is very big, but some of them are not used frequently. There are only more than 3000 Chinese characters will be commonly used in daily life. These characters covering 99.9% words in general books. For the vast majority of learners, to learn one thousand or two thousand Chinese characters is enough.(Liu

Yanmei,2014) It is necessary to set up this correct view about the number of Chinese characters. Foreign students will produce the idea of "Chinese characters are difficult to learn", the large number of Chinese characters is also one of the reasons, Therefore, we should first get rid of the learners psychological fear about the number of Chinese characters, to distinguish the actual number of Chinese characters and the number of Chinese characters to be learned. (Li Quan, Ruan Chang, 2012) To tell students no need to worry about the number of Chinese characters in the first lesson. In addition, we also can from a native speaker's perspective, to tell the students that even learning Chinese from a young age, we cannot recognize all the Chinese characters, some of the Chinese characters are not commonly used and rare words, for teachers, also need to refer to the dictionary. Teacher can ease the fear of foreign students in this way.

B. Chinese Characters Stroke Order and Structure Have Regularity

Strokes are the lines use for construct Chinese characters, it's the smallest unit of Chinese characters. In modern Chinese the smallest Chinese character only have one stroke, such as “一, 乙” etc., and in modern Chinese Dictionary the most strokes of Chinese character is “龘”, the pronunciation is “nàng”, it has 36 strokes. When foreign students see a complex Chinese character has a lot of strokes, may cause fear to write these Chinese characters also. Therefore, teacher should tell them, the strokes of Chinese characters is fixed, the stroke order and the structure also has a lot of rules. Compare with English, when we learn 26 English alphabet, we can write English words, it's same in Chinese, if we master the order of Chinese characters strokes and structure, the writing of Chinese characters will not be difficult.

For example, Chinese Characters have 5 basic strokes: 丶 一 | 丿 ㇇, on this basis, there are 26 different shapes about these 5 strokes. (Su Peicheng, 1994) In the first lesson we should tell students that there are some basic orders when we write Chinese Characters, such as 1. “一” before “丨”, e.g. 十, 干, 丰. 2. “丿” before “㇇”, e.g. 八, 人, 入. 3. From top to bottom, e.g. 三, 京, 高. 4. From left to right, e.g. 川, 衍, 做. 5. From the outer to the inner, e.g. 月, 匀, 同. 6. The middle before two sides, e.g. 小, 水, 办. 7. Inside before surround, e.g. 回, 目, 国.

In addition, we can also show the Chinese characters regularity for foreign students in terms of structure, Chinese characters can be divided into Single-component characters and Multi-component characters from the structural point. Single-component characters only have one independent, integral part, such as 一, 人, 书, 乙, 水, 牛, etc.. The proportion of Single-component characters is not much, there are 280 Single-component characters in “Simplified Chinese Single-component characters table”, but most of them are very common to use, we need to master them, because they are often an integral part of compound characters. Compound characters consists of two or more parts, like above mentioned characters “龘”, teacher can ask students this character consists how many parts, When students answer correctly, teacher should encourage and praise them, let them reduce their fear of Chinese characters. And then introduce the structure of multi-component characters. Such as 1. Left-right structure: 你, 汉, 的; 2. Top-bottom structure: 字, 写, 是; 3. Enclosed structure: 厅, 起, 这 (enclosed on both sides), 风, 同, 医 (enclosed from three sides), 国, 因, 困 (enclosed from four sides). 3.3 The split and combination about multi-component characters' component

Most Chinese characters are multi-component characters, and these characters are composed of two or more components, it seems difficult to remember, but if you observe them carefully, it's easy to find that a lot of multi-component characters are composed of some single-component characters, such as “龘”, because of we studied one multi-component character, we will learn a few single-component characters at the same time, then Chinese characters is not as difficult as we imagine. Another example is “意”, this character is composed of “立” “日” “心”, and when “立” “日” composed together, It's another Chinese character “音”, it means when we master the character “意”, actually we can learn 5 different characters. Another fantastic character is “树”, this character is composed of “木” “又” “寸”, and these three components can combined into three characters (“权” “对” “村”) by each two of them. it means when we master the character “树”, actually we can learn 7 different characters. It is very interesting to split and compose Chinese characters, and the study in this process becomes easy and happy.

C. The Meaning Radicals and the Phonetic Radicals of Pictophonetic Characters

According to the statistics, more than 80% of Chinese characters are pictophonetic, Obviously it is the main characters, and also the focus of teaching. Pictophonetic characters always grouped together because of the same meaning radials or phonetic radicals. In the first lesson, in order to give foreign students such a recognition that "Chinese characters have a strong regularity", we can put some characters (pictophonetic) which have some kind of contact together, according to the combination rule of Chinese characters, and give some examples, to let students recognize the rules of Chinese Characters, and reduce their fears of study. For example “江, 河, 湖, 海” these characters, we can let the students find out the common ground of them, and then let they guess the meaning of “氵” after giving affirmation for students' correct answer. Finally by the explanation of “氵”, let students to know this meaning radials have relationship with “water”, when they meet other characters like “汗, 滴, 流”, etc. they will know these characters also have relationship with water. Another example is “我”, the students have studied this character in other courses before, first, teacher can let students write down the Pinyin of “我”, And read it out, then show them some other characters like “鹅, 蛾, 哦, 娥, 峨, 俄, 饿”, etc. It's easy to find out the common ground of these characters is

“我”,and then tell the students that the pronunciation of these words is similar, “我”is the phonetic radicals for them, so if meet a character like this, we can roughly guess it's pronunciation.

IV. THE BENEFITS OF FOREIGN STUDENTS LEARNING CHINESE CHARACTERS

From the above we discussed the teaching contents of the first Chinese characters lesson from two aspects, that is to stimulate interest in learning and to reduce the psychological fear. On the basis of this, we need to tell them the benefits of learning Chinese characters.

A. *It Is Good for Learning Other Chinese Language Courses*

Generally speaking, the foreign students who learning Chinese at the beginning, they not only need to learn the Chinese comprehensive course, but also need to learn listening, speaking, reading, writing and other basic skill courses. These Chinese courses are not isolated from each other, but have a close relationship with each other. The learning effect of one course will affect the other courses' learning, and the most typical one is Chinese characters course. Chinese characters as the written expression form of Chinese language, that you learn Chinese characters well will be very helpful for other Chinese language courses' learning. For example, May be a lot of spoken language learners believe that Chinese characters is not important, they can learn them or not, and only to learn spoken language is enough. However, learning Chinese characters will take all good result for spoken Chinese learning undoubtedly. Oral language and written language are the two most common forms of expression, mutual influence between the both is obvious, Foreign students to learn Chinese characters will enable the expression of spoken Chinese more proficient and authentic.

B. *Avoid Some Mistakes about Chinese Language*

In the first Chinese characters lesson, also need to give some examples and let foreign students understand that if they do not learn Chinese characters, may often make a variety of jokes in daily life. For example, there is a foreigner who knows a little Chinese, and he has a chat with Chinese friends, saying that the Chinese people are not modest. "Chinese people are very good, China Construction is very good, China Industrial and Commercial is very good, China Agriculture is very good, even China is very good" can be seen everywhere on the street, and point to a brand not far away at the same time. Originally, the brand which the foreigner pointed is a bank, because of “银” looks like “很”, and “行” has two different pronunciations, except xíng, we also can read h áng, “银行” is bank, “很行” is good, which foreigner could not distinguish, the Chinese friend listen to laugh. Through the joke, let the foreign students understand that if they can't learn Chinese characters may also make a similar mistake.

C. *Learn Chinese Character Well Can Help Them Understand Chinese Culture Better*

Chinese characters are the root of Chinese culture, and an important part of Chinese culture. In addition, Chinese characters also are the information carrier of Chinese culture. Xu Shen said in “Origin of Chinese Characters”, “The character is the basic of teaching knowledge and skills, it's the beginning of politics, and the way of the communication between the past and the future generations.” This classic comments, both pointed out Chinese characters is a tool for communication, but also play a very important role for the inherit of ideology and culture. If foreign students to learn Chinese characters, they can understand Chinese culture better and deeper.

V. FOREIGN STUDENTS SHOULD ESTABLISH A CORRECT VIEW OF CHINESE CHARACTERS LEARNING

A. *The First Step Is Always Difficult*

“Everything is difficult at the start”, Chinese character learning is no exception. As a kind of ideographic, Chinese characters are very different with phonographic. So, whether students from European and American, or students from Japan and Korea, at the beginning of Chinese character learning, they can't adapt and feel confused even difficult. It's very normal. Therefore, the students do not need to be panic and pessimistic, they will find that learning Chinese characters is a very interesting thing after some time.

B. *Hard Work and Perseverance Is the Foundation of Learning Chinese Characters*

“There is no shortcut to learning a foreign language, everyone is equal, have to work hard, what method cannot do without the efforts of the individual and hard work.” (Ji Xianlin, 2000, P.25) For many learners, Especially for the learners whose mother language is phonographic, Chinese and Chinese characters are a kind of new life, new habits and new thinking mode, so cannot be expected to master Chinese and Chinese characters easily, everyone should have a constant enthusiasm, enough investment, and patience. (Li Quan, 2010) In the process of learning Chinese characters, a lot of students often ask the teacher, is there a faster and better way to learn Chinese characters? Indeed as mentioned above, Chinese characters have a certain regularity, But only depend on a little method and some regulations, rather than hard work, easy to give up, work by fits and starts is definitely impossible.

C. *The Requirements of Chinese Characters*

In the first Chinese characters lesson, also need to mention some requirements about the class, such as finish the

homework on time, cooperate with teacher actively on the class, there will be a dictation in each class, these will be included in the student's usual performance, and so on. These strict requirements are good for students to really keep up with the rhythm of the class, to learn Chinese characters better.

VI. CONCLUSION

Chinese characters learning is a difficult problem in Chinese language learning, in the past, there are many studies focus on the teaching of Chinese characters, but this article discusses from four aspects, they are "To stimulate foreign students' interests in learning Chinese characters", "Reduce the fear of foreign students in learning Chinese characters", "The benefits of foreign students learning Chinese characters", "Foreign students should establish a correct view of Chinese characters learning". From the design of the first Chinese characters lesson, help foreign students to establish a comprehensive understanding of Chinese characters, stimulate their interests, reduce their learning pressure, then lead the students to enter the rich and colorful hall about Chinese characters relaxed and gladly. To help them learn more about China's long history and splendid culture, finally achieve the ideal effect of teaching.

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The Relationship between EFL Teachers' Assessment Literacy, Their Teaching Experience, and Their Age: A Case of Iranian EFL Teachers

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Abstract—In recent decades, issues of assessment design and implementation has gained increased attention in education, (Saad, et al 2013). It is believed that ability in deciding correct, practical, and fair assessment methods are requirements to use information properly in order to support instructional decisions. Teachers are required to be aware of various kinds of information gathered from an extensive series of assessment alternatives and their strengths and weaknesses (Mertler, 2009). The present study, aimed to shed light on the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' assessment literacy, their teaching experience, and age. To this end, 658 EFL teachers were selected to fill out a researcher made assessment literacy inventory which has gone through the validation and reliability processes. The obtained data were analyzed using SPSS program (version21). The results of data analysis indicated that there is a highly significant positive relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' assessment literacy and teaching experience. There also found a positive relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' assessment literacy and their age.

Index Terms—assessment literacy, teachers' teaching experience, age, EFL teacher

I. INTRODUCTION

Assessing students' performance is one of the most important duties of classroom teachers. Assessment is historically used as an important factor in determining students' educational success. It is also used to show differences in students' learning and rank students according to their level of achievement. Actually, assessment included relying on norm-referenced interpretations of students scores obtained from tests. But there seemed to be a limitation in this method, since these interpretations made determining specific areas of weakness and strength in students' learning difficult. Plake (1993) reported that "teachers spend up to 50 percent of their time on assessment-related activities." (Plake, 1993).

Recently, a great portion of professional development programs is connected with assessment literacy for teachers and/or administrators. Popham, W.J (2009), denotes that "after dividing educators' measurement-related issues into both classroom assessments, and accountability assessments, it is found that instructors' insufficient consideration in each of these firms could influence the value of education. Assessment literacy is seen, therefore, as a sine qua non for today's competent educator".

Assessment could be described as any technique, tool or strategy that teachers use to elicit evidence of students' progress towards the stated goals (Chen, 2003; Wishon, Crabtree, & Jones, 1998). Here, the common side of the definition relates to the way of assessing students' performance that is "the procedure of gathering information related to educational issues of students to support decision making about the improvement and language development of the student" (p. 363). This useful definition demonstrates that assessment is an implementation of control that is caught up in a range of topics about testers' and test-takers' voices, roles, and beliefs. Shohamy (2000), asserted that instructors, students, and other educators "create the assessment awareness by trying to make sense of the knowledge in a dialogical and co-operative way" (Shohamy, 2000, p. 136).

It is considered that teacher' assessment competence is an essential aspect that affects their assessment practices (Cheng et al., 2004). According to Brookhart (2011) there are a set of knowledge and skills that teachers should be aware of. Particularly, teachers should be able to understand the "learning progression" in the content area. This as states by Brookhart (2011), "permits educators to recognize where a student is set regarding learning objectives and assist teachers understand students' effort, and design steps in education and assessment, while assessing the students to reach the objective" (Brookhart, 2011, p. 7).

A. Research Questions

- Q1:** Is there any significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' assessment literacy their teaching experience?
Q2: Is there any significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' assessment literacy and their age?

B. Research Hypotheses

H02: There is no significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' assessment literacy and their teaching experience.

H03: There is no significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' assessment literacy and their age.

II. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Research in different parts of the world has demonstrated that many teachers are unsatisfactorily trained to understand, manage and understand the results of various kinds of assessments (e.g., Bol, Stephenson, O'Connell, & Nunnery, 1998; Stiggins & Conklin, 1992; Wiggins, 1989). Instructors who were not sufficiently trained and insufficiently talented in managing valid assessments, in general, recognized these to be more complicated to build up than conventional paper-and-pencil examinations. Furthermore, instructors' assessment performance were frequently not well supported their educational objectives and tended to require a low level of cognitive processing. A large number of instructors were observed not to be fine critics of the quality of their own assessment assignments (Bol & Strage, 1996).

In a related study, Zhang and Burry-Stock (2003) examined "assessment history and the norms for teacher ability in the classroom assessment of learners (AFT, NCME, & NEA, 1990) in order to present a self-report measurement aimed at measuring instructor assessment observations and self-recognized assessment ability. It is found that, secondary school teachers use more paper-and-pencil tests compared to elementary school teachers who occasionally used performance assessments.

In another study, Alkharusi, H. (2011) examined instructors' self-recognized assessment abilities as a purpose of gender, subject area, mark, teaching practice, and the assessment training. Applicants were 213 instructors of Oman teaching in Muscat public schools. To this end, a 25-item Self-recognized assessment ability inventory was designed and applied in the observation. The findings of the study demonstrated important variations on the self-recognized assessment abilities related to instructors' gender, subject area, scores, teaching practice, and assessment preparation.

III. METHODOLOGY

To collect the required data 658 Iranian EFL teachers teaching in different cities of Iran were selected. Having considered the whole number of English Language institutes in Iran 5000, and each institute has an average of 15 teachers the society of this study was regarded as the whole number of 75,000 English language teachers. Sample size was calculated according to Krejcie and Morgan's sample size table; considering the 99% level of confidence and 0.05 degree of accuracy. They were considered experienced teachers having university education (Bachelor or Master or PhD degree). The participants were both males and females from different age groups and different years of experiences. Their fields of study were English language teaching, Translation, and English literature. In present study, 658 teachers who were all Iranian English as a Foreign Language Instructors, teaching in different English institutes of different cities of Iran were selected randomly. They were from both genders and ranging from different ages with different years of teaching experiences. They were selected according to Morgan's table of sampling. For collecting the data, questionnaires of assessment literacy and self-efficacy (see appendix A and B) in both forms: papers and online (using Google drive) were represented to different English language teachers to answer the questions. Collected data were analyzed in SPSS software (version 21). Then, the correlation between these two variables was also analyzed.

A. Instrumentation

The needed data for this study were gathered through the application of one researcher's made questionnaire for assessing EFL teachers' assessment literacy. The questionnaire was made based on the assessment literacy standards of Michigan university (March 2013 V. 4.0). This 50 item researcher's made questionnaire is a self report inventory which was meant to measure EFL teachers' knowledge and skill of assessment. The reliability was estimated using Cronbach's Alpha .86.

B. Study Design

The design of the study was a correlation one. The two major variables were Iranian EFL teachers' assessment literacy and their teaching experience, and their age.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first question of the study was aimed to find out the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' assessment literacy and their teaching experience. In order to answer this research question, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used for each of the subscales of assessment literacy. Teachers were grouped into three groups of low (1-5 years old), mid (6-10 years old), and high (above 11) teaching experience groups.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR TEACHING EXPERIENCE

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Low	312	29.3651	4.28915	.54038	28.2849	30.4453	18.00	38.00
Mid	145	31.1739	6.05019	1.26155	28.5576	33.7902	16.00	40.00
High	201	37.7955	4.25129	.64091	36.5029	39.0880	19.00	40.00
Total	658	32.5385	5.98208	.52466	31.5004	33.5765	16.00	40.00

First, teaching dispositions was examined. Descriptive statistics for the three groups can be seen in Table 1. To see whether these differences are statistically significant, F value was checked (see Table 2).

TABLE 2
F VALUE FOR TEACHING EXPERIENCE REGARDING TEACHING DISPOSITIONS

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1893.241	2	946.621	44.149	.000
Within Groups	2723.067	656	21.441		
Total	4616.308	658			

As demonstrated by table 2, there is significant difference among the three groups concerning teaching dispositions [F (656, 2) = 44.14, $p < .05$]. To trace the accurate place of difference, post-hoc analysis with Tukey was run (see Table 3).

TABLE 3
MULTIPLE COMPARISONS OF THREE AGE GROUPS OF EXPERIENCE AND TEACHING DISPOSITIONS

(I) years	(J) years	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
dimension2	Low dimension3	-1.80883	1.12809	.248	-4.4841	.8664
	mid high	-8.43038*	.90975	.000	-10.5879	-6.2729
	Mid dimension3	1.80883	1.12809	.248	-.8664	4.4841
	mid high	-6.62154*	1.19145	.000	-9.4471	-3.7960
	High dimension3	8.43038*	.90975	.000	6.2729	10.5879
	mid	6.62154*	1.19145	.000	3.7960	9.4471

As shown by table 3, there is significant, meaningful difference between the low experience group and high experience group (mean difference= 8.43, $p < .05$). As the mean of the high experience (M= 37.79) is higher than that of the low experience (M= 29.36), it can be concluded that by increasing the teaching experience, teaching dispositions increases, too. Moreover, there is a statistically significant difference between the mid experience group and high experience group (mean difference= 6.62, $p < .05$). As the mean of the high experience (M= 37.79) is higher than that of the mid experience (M= 31.17), it can be concluded that by the increase of experience, teaching dispositions increases, too. As a result it can be inferred that there is a meaningful relationship between subscale of teaching dispositions and Iranian EFL teachers' teaching experience.

Then, teaching knowledge was examined.

TABLE 4
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THREE AGE GROUPS OF EXPERIENCE AND TEACHING KNOWLEDGE

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Low	312	80.7619	9.56086	1.20456	78.3540	83.1698	54.00	104.00
Mid	145	78.4348	10.62512	2.21549	73.8401	83.0294	58.00	101.00
High	201	89.5682	10.33035	1.55736	86.4275	92.7089	66.00	106.00
Total	658	83.3308	10.93277	.95887	81.4336	85.2279	54.00	106.00

Descriptive statistics for the three groups can be seen in Table 4. To see whether these differences are statistically significant, F value was checked (see Table 5).

TABLE 5
F VALUE FOR THREE AGE GROUPS OF EXPERIENCE AND TEACHING KNOWLEDGE

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2678.901	2	1339.450	13.353	.000
Within Groups	12739.876	656	100.314		
Total	15418.777	658			

As inferred from table 5, there is meaningful, positive difference among the three groups regarding teaching knowledge [F (656, 2) = 13.35, $p < .05$]. To find the accurate place of difference, post-hoc analysis with Tukey was run (see Table 6).

TABLE 6
MULTIPLE COMPARISONS OF THREE AGE GROUPS OF EXPERIENCE AND TEACHING KNOWLEDGE

(I) years	(J) years	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval		
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
dimension2	Low dimension3	Mid	2.32712	2.44003	.607	-3.4594	8.1137
		High	-8.80628*	1.96778	.000	-13.4729	-4.1397
	Mid dimension3	Low	-2.32712	2.44003	.607	-8.1137	3.4594
		High	-11.13340*	2.57708	.000	-17.2450	-5.0218
	High dimension3	Low	8.80628*	1.96778	.000	4.1397	13.4729
		Mid	11.13340*	2.57708	.000	5.0218	17.2450

It can be inferred from table 6 that, there is a statistically significant difference between the low experience group and high experience group (mean difference= 8.80, $p < .05$). As the mean of the high experience ($M = 89.56$) is higher than that of the low experience ($M = 80.76$), it can be concluded that by the increase of teaching experience, teaching knowledge increases, too. Moreover, there is a statistically significant difference between the mid experience group and high experience group (mean difference= 11.13, $p < .05$). As the mean of the high experience ($M = 89.56$) is higher than that of the mid experience ($M = 78.43$), it can be concluded that by increasing the experience, teaching knowledge increases, too. Therefore there is a meaningful relationship between subscale of teaching knowledge and Iranian EFL teachers' teaching experience.

Finally, teaching performance was examined.

Descriptive statistics for the three groups can be seen in Table 7. To see whether these differences are statistically significant, F value was checked (see Table 8).

TABLE 7
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE THREE GROUPS

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Low	312	35.2742	6.02228	.76483	33.7448	36.8036	16.00	54.00
Mid	145	36.9565	5.60421	1.16856	34.5331	39.3800	28.00	50.00
High	201	43.6136	8.49135	1.28012	41.0320	46.1952	20.00	50.00
Total	658	38.4186	7.83292	.68965	37.0540	39.7832	16.00	54.00

Descriptive statistics for the three groups can be seen in Table 7. To see whether these differences are statistically significant, F value was checked (see Table 8).

TABLE 8
F VALUE FOR THREE GROUPS OF EXPERIENCE REGARDING TEACHING PERFORMANCE

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1849.668	2	924.834	19.409	.000
Within Groups	6003.727	656	47.649		
Total	7853.395	658			

Table 8 indicates that, there found an important difference among the three groups with regard to teaching performance [$F(656, 2) = 19.40$, $p < .05$]. To place the accurate place of difference, post-hoc analysis with Tukey was run (see Table 9).

TABLE 9
MULTIPLE COMPARISONS OF THREE GROUPS OF EXPERIENCE AND TEACHING PERFORMANCE

(I) years	(J) years	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval		
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
dimension2	Low dimension3	mid	-1.68233	1.68529	.579	-5.6794	2.3147
		high	-8.33944*	1.36068	.000	-11.5666	-5.1123
	Mid dimension3	low	1.68233	1.68529	.579	-2.3147	5.6794
		high	-6.65711*	1.77612	.001	-10.8696	-2.4446
	High dimension3	low	8.33944*	1.36068	.000	5.1123	11.5666
		mid	6.65711*	1.77612	.001	2.4446	10.8696

Table 9 demonstrates that, there is meaningful difference between the low experience group and high experience group (mean difference= 8.33, $p < .05$). As the mean of the high experience ($M = 43.61$) is higher than that of the low experience ($M = 35.27$), it can be concluded that by the increase of teaching experience, teaching performance increases, too. Moreover, there is a statistically significant difference between the mid experience group and high experience group (mean difference= 6.65, $p < .05$). As the mean of the high experience ($M = 43.61$) is higher than that of the mid experience ($M = 36.95$), it can be concluded that by the increase of experience, teaching performance increases, too.

Therefore, it can be inferred that there is a meaningful relationship between subscale of teaching performance and Iranian EFL teachers' teaching experience.

The second question of the study was aimed to find out the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' assessment literacy and their age. In order to answer this research question, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used for each of the subscales of assessment literacy. Teachers were grouped into three groups of low (20-29 years old), mid (30-39 years old), and high (above 40) age groups.

First, teaching dispositions which relates to teachers' beliefs in assessment related matters was examined.

TABLE 10
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THREE AGE GROUPS

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Low	325	30.2031	4.67407	.58426	29.0356	31.3707	16.00	40.00
Mid	187	30.8846	6.32662	1.24075	28.3292	33.4400	18.00	39.00
High	146	37.3500	4.78539	.75664	35.8196	38.8804	19.00	40.00
Total	658	32.5385	5.98208	.52466	31.5004	33.5765	16.00	40.00

Descriptive statistics for the three groups can be seen in Table 10. As it is presented by the table the population of low age group was more than mid and high age groups. To see whether these differences are statistically significant, F value was checked (see Table 11).

TABLE 11
F VALUE FOR AGE GROUPS REGARDING TEACHER DISPOSITIONS

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1346.194	2	673.097	26.141	.000
Within Groups	3270.113	656	25.749		
Total	4616.308	658			

Table 11 shows, there is meaningful, significant difference among the three groups with regard to teaching dispositions [$F(656, 2) = 26.14, p < .05$]. To find the accurate place of difference, post-hoc analysis with Tukey was run (see Table 12).

TABLE 12
MEAN DIFFERENCES OF AGE GROUPS

(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval		
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
dimension3	Low	mid	-.68149	1.18011	.832	-3.4801	2.1172
	high	mid	-7.14688*	1.02277	.000	-9.5724	-4.7214
	Low	high	6.46538*	1.18011	.832	-2.1172	3.4801
	Mid	high	6.46538*	1.27831	.000	-9.4969	-3.4339
	High	Low	7.14688*	1.02277	.000	4.7214	9.5724
	Mid	High	6.46538*	1.27831	.000	3.4339	9.4969

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

Table 12 indicates, there significant difference between the low age group and high age group (mean difference= 7.14, $p < .05$). As the mean of the high age ($M = 37.35$) is higher than that of the low age ($M = 30.20$), it can be concluded that by increasing the age, teaching dispositions increases, too. Moreover, there is a statistically significant difference between the mid age group and high age group (mean difference= 6.46, $p < .05$). As the mean of the high age ($M = 37.35$) is higher than that of the mid age ($M = 30.88$), it can be concluded that by increase of the age, teaching dispositions increases, too. Therefore, it can be inferred from the analysis that there is a significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' teaching dispositions and their age.

Then, teaching knowledge that explains what teacher should know about assessment was examined.

TABLE 13
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE THREE AGE GROUPS

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Low	325	80.6406	8.94670	1.11834	78.4058	82.8754	63.00	103.00
Mid	187	79.5000	11.63873	2.28254	74.7990	84.2010	54.00	104.00
High	146	90.1250	10.49832	1.65993	86.7675	93.4825	66.00	106.00
Total	658	83.3308	10.93277	.95887	81.4336	85.2279	54.00	106.00

Descriptive statistics for the three groups can be seen in Table 13. To see whether these differences are statistically significant, F value was checked (see Table 14).

TABLE 14
F VALUE FOR THREE AGE GROUPS REGARDING TEACHER KNOWLEDGE

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2691.168	2	1345.584	13.427	.000
Within Groups	12727.609	656	100.217		
Total	15418.777	658			

Table 14 demonstrates that, there is meaningful difference among the three groups with regard to teaching dispositions [F (656, 2) = 13.42, p<.05]. To find the precise place of difference, post-hoc analysis with Tukey was run (see Table 15).

TABLE 15
MULTIPLE COMPARISONS OF THREE AGE GROUPS AND TEACHING DISPOSITIONS

(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval		
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
dimension2	Low dimension3	mid	1.14063	2.32818	.876	-4.3807	6.6619
		high	-9.48438*	2.01775	.000	-14.2695	-4.6993
	Mid dimension3	low	-1.14063	2.32818	.876	-6.6619	4.3807
		high	-10.62500*	2.52189	.000	-16.6057	-4.6443
	High dimension3	low	9.48438*	2.01775	.000	4.6993	14.2695
		mid	10.62500*	2.52189	.000	4.6443	16.6057

Table 15 indicates, there is significant difference between the low age group and high age group (mean difference= 9.48, p<.05). As the mean of the high age (M= 90.12) is higher than that of the low age (M= 80.64), it can be concluded that by increasing the age, teaching knowledge increases, too. Moreover, there is a statistically significant difference between the mid age group and high age group (mean difference= 10.62, p<.05). As the mean of the high age (M= 90.12) is higher than that of the mid age (M= 79.50), it can be concluded that by increasing the age, teaching knowledge increases, too. Therefore, there is a meaningful relationship between subscale of teaching knowledge and Iranian EFL teachers' age.

Finally, teaching performance was examined. Descriptive statistics for the three groups can be seen in Table 12. To see whether these differences are statistically significant, F value was checked (see Table 16).

TABLE 16
STATISTICAL DIFFERENCES FOR THREE AGE GROUPS

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Low	325	36.2540	6.21385	.78287	34.6890	37.8189	16.00	54.00
Mid	187	34.1923	4.81680	.94465	32.2468	36.1379	25.00	44.00
High	146	44.5750	8.17089	1.29193	41.9618	47.1882	20.00	50.00
Total	658	38.4186	7.83292	.68965	37.0540	39.7832	16.00	54.00

Descriptive statistics for different age groups is shown by table.

TABLE 17
F VALUE FOR THREE AGE GROUPS REGARDING TEACHER PERFORMANCE

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2275.645	2	1137.823	25.703	.000
Within Groups	5577.750	656	44.268		
Total	7853.395	658			

Table 17 indicates, there is a meaningful difference among the three groups regarding their teaching performance [F (656, 2) = 25.70, p<.05]. To find the accurate place of difference, post-hoc analysis with Tukey was run. (See table 18).

TABLE 18
MULTIPLE COMPARISONS OF THREE AGE GROUPS AND TEACHING PERFORMANCE

(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval		
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
dimension2	low dimension3	Mid	2.06166	1.55089	.382	-1.6166	5.7400
		High	-8.32103*	1.34512	.000	-11.5113	-5.1308
	mid dimension3	Low	-2.06166	1.55089	.382	-5.7400	1.6166
		High	-10.38269*	1.67610	.000	-14.3579	-6.4074
	high dimension3	Low	8.32103*	1.34512	.000	5.1308	11.5113
		Mid	10.38269*	1.67610	.000	6.4074	14.3579

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

Table 18 indicates, there is significant meaningful difference between the low age group and high age group (mean difference= 8.32, $p < .05$). As the mean of the high age ($M = 44.57$) is higher than that of the low age ($M = 36.25$), it can be concluded that by increasing the age, teaching performance increases, too. Moreover, there is a statistically significant difference between the mid age group and high age group (mean difference= 10.38, $p < .05$). As the mean of the high age ($M = 44.57$) is higher than that of the mid age ($M = 34.19$), it can be concluded that by the increase of age, teaching performance increases, too. Therefore, it can be inferred from the analysis that there is a significant relationship between subscale of teaching performance as one of assessment literacy subscales and Iranian EFL teachers' age.

V. CONCLUSION

Having investigated the relationship between EFL teachers' assessment literacy and their teaching experience, it was found that, EFL teachers with more years of teaching experience demonstrated to be more knowledgeable in assessment related matters. In other words, by increasing teaching experience, teachers' assessment literacy increases too. Therefore, the first hypothesis of the study which stated there is no relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' assessment literacy and their teaching experience is rejected.

Having recognized EFL teachers' assessment literacy and their age, it was revealed that there is a positive relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' assessment literacy and their age, therefore the second hypothesis of the research which claimed that, there is no relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' assessment literacy and their age is rejected.

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Learners' Gender, Reading Comprehension, and Reading Strategies in Descriptive and Narrative Macro-genres

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Abstract—This study investigated whether learners' gender could make difference in their reading comprehension and use of reading strategies in descriptive and narrative macro-genres. To this end, six short macro-genre-based reading passages with the same readability and length were prepared from which appropriate reading tests were constructed and administered to a total of 50 EFL intermediate male (n = 21) and female (n = 29) students. This was followed by administering reading strategies questionnaires to explore the learners' use of reading strategies in the descriptive and narrative macro-genres. Results of the study indicated that there was no statistically significant difference between male and female students' reading comprehension in these macro-genres. It was also shown that there was no significant difference observed between male and female learners in the overall use and employment of reading strategies in the descriptive and narrative macro-genres. The findings of the study hold implications for language teaching and testing, teacher training, and curriculum design.

Index Terms—descriptive and narrative macro-genres, reading strategy, reading comprehension

I. INTRODUCTION

In the area of reading research, gender is frequently explored as a mode of analysis (e.g., Logan & Johnston, 2010). Males and females have been shown to differ in many aspects of their reading choices (Coles & Hall, 2002; Merisuo-Storm, 2006), frequency of reading (Coles & Hall, 2002), attitudes towards reading (Coles & Hall, 2002; Logan & Johnston, 2009; Sainsbury & Schagen, 2004), motivation to read (Marinak & Gambrell, 2010), competency beliefs in reading (Wigfield et al., 1997), value of reading (Durik, Vida, & Eccles, 2006; Marinak & Gambrell, 2010; Wigfield et al., 1997), and reading skill (Ming-Chui & McBride-Chang, 2006; Mullis, Martin, Kennedy, & Foy, 2007). There are some studies (e.g., Brantmeier, 2004; Chiu & McBride-Chang, 2006) on the role of the learners' genders where significant differences between male and female learners in the reading comprehension have been reported. The authors of these studies reported that females outscored the males in their reading comprehensions, in general. There are, however, some other studies (e.g., Fahim & Barjesteh, 2012; Sotoudenama & Asadian, 2011) in which no significant difference between male and female learners' reading performance were indicated. Almost any reading text employed to develop the learners' proficiency in the reading skill at different levels of instruction shares some characteristics of these two macro-genres. Whether learner's gender plays any substantial role in understanding these text types and in employing the required reading strategies are issues of interest in the literature where no considerable study has been reported.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Gender Differences and Reading Comprehension

Gender refers to the social characteristics of people which are commonly associated with being male or female (Millard, 1997). Differences in the learner's gender identity often lead to differences in intellectual activities including reading. The characteristics associated with being male or female provide a better predictor of the learner's reading skill or motivation to read. From an early age, reading has been recognized as an activity more closely associated with females than males (Millard, 1997). For example, in a survey, learners reported that their mothers read more than their fathers, and that their mothers played a more significant role in teaching them how to read (Millard, 1997). This point may help explain why learners consider reading to be more a feminine activity (Dwyer, 1974). Reading can be contrasted with other academic subjects, such as mathematics, science, and sports, which are usually associated more

with males (Meece et al., 2006). Indeed, in a review of the literature in this area, Meece et al. (2006) found that boys considered mathematics, science, and sport as interesting topics while girls placed a higher value on reading. Learners' motivation to read is an area where consistent and substantial gender differences are found (Marinak & Gambrell, 2010; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Wang & Guthrie, 2004). This characteristic is stronger among the female learners than the male ones. Motivation is the individual characteristic that is supposed to play an important role in a learner's reading comprehension. The learners' success in the reading skill is associated with their motivation to read because it is regarded as an activity requiring deep involvement on the part of the readers (Gottfried, 1990; Wang & Guthrie, 2004).

It is very likely to find variations in the extent to which males and females identify themselves with masculine and feminine traits; therefore, it is interesting to examine whether learners' reading attainment or motivation to read is better predicted by their gender identity. Pajares and Valiante (2001), for instance, found that gender differences in performance and motivation could be explained by gender orientation. It seems logical to think that if gender differences are found in reading motivation and reading comprehension, then gender identity can explain more variance in these variables. It is also implied that gender identity may explain significant variances in the performance of learners in reading various text types.

B. Gender Differences in Strategic Behavior

Strategy employment and use in the context of second language acquisition may vary depending on the specific language skill that is being examined. There are few studies that have investigated the strategy use in specific L2 tasks and its relationship with gender. Among the few examples are Young and Oxford (1997) who investigated strategy use by males and females in L1 (English) and L2 (Spanish) settings; they found no significant difference in strategy use in L2 reading comprehension. However, males reported monitoring their reading pace, reading strategies, and paraphrasing strategies more often than females did. In light of these results, it may be concluded that gender-based differences in strategic behavior can be related to the level of specific strategies used to comprehend L2 passages. Similarly, Oxford, Park-Oh, Ito, and Sumrall (1993) and Oxford and Nykos (1989) reported that females used more cognitive strategies than males. A number of studies in this field (e.g., Kaylani, 1996; Sheorey, 1999) also found that females used significantly higher number of metacognitive strategies than males. Based on the research findings reported by Chavez (2001), it may be proposed that the main goals behind understanding strategy use and gender differences are to make L2 teachers aware of how gender can affect development and achievement of L2 reading, to support L2 teachers to use strategy awareness, to help the students of both genders improve their L2 reading skill through employing appropriate reading strategies.

C. Narrative Tasks and Reading Comprehension

Narrative task is a well-established task type in EFL/ESL literature which is frequently researched. Such a task type usually involves the creation of a story in response to some kind of stimulus: a picture strip or a short film, for example. As in most of the cases, the stimuli given are purely visual and their verbal representations depend on the storyteller to a great extent, though it is also used in the written mode. This task type, further, seems ideal as far as the manifestation of creativity is concerned (Albert & Kormos, 2004).

It is supposed that different task types make learners use a set of specific linguistic features and enforce them to resort to certain reading strategies. Narrative tasks, for example, are more complex both syntactically and lexically in comparison with argumentative tasks (Albert & Kormos, 2004). Such complexity in structure makes learners use specific reading strategies to overcome the possible comprehension problems. Robinson (1995), who studied narrative tasks of varying cognitive complexity, found that lexical variety (measured by the type-token ratio) and accuracy (measured by the number of error-free communication units) increased in cognitively more complex narrative tasks. Moreover, grammatical structure of narrative tasks affects learners' performance, that is, L2 performance is affected in predictable ways by design features and the structure of narrative tasks (Tavakoli & Foster, 2008). Cognitive load is another factor affecting learners' performance in understanding narrative tasks. The low cognitive load of narrative tasks requires the learners to take the narration in the present tense while they read the narrative text. This condition is called the here-and-now condition. High cognitive load, on the other hand, requires them to read the text and perceive the narration in the past tense which is called the there-and-then condition (Robinson et al., 1995). Evidence gathered from both child first language acquisition and adult SLA research shows that past time reference to events dislocated in time and space like that in a high cognitive load of a task is a more effortful and later developed ability than present tense reference to contextualized events like that of a low cognitive load of a narration task (Robinson et al., 1995).

Narrative tasks which require learners to signal time relations, to locate events and actions appropriately may cause difficulty for the readers. Such reading tasks can lead learners to focus on the internal and textual connections between elements of a narrative (Bygate, 1999). These tasks might be expected to make greater demands on learners' imaginative resources and on their ability to develop a fictitious scenario and maintain the discourse single-handedly, which could affect the difficulty of the reading task used and the number and type of strategies that they use while reading.

D. Descriptive Tasks and Reading Comprehension

Describing the characteristics of someone or something is the basic feature of descriptive tasks which can distinguish them from other task types. The language used in the description has ostensible patterns. In producing linear

descriptions of figures, for example, learners tend to facilitate the task by sequencing the content in one of a small number of ways, leading to specific patterns in the language (Al-Sohbani, 2014; Bax, 2006). The physical characteristics of the intended thing to be described can affect the grammatical structures required for the description. The nature of objects physically related within a room, for instance, whose layout is to be described, can affect the order in which nouns are combined within prepositional phrases, and this can affect the choice of preposition (Hyland, 2008). In other words, not only the discourse structure of genre but also the use of specific grammatical features can be affected by the nature of the descriptive task. These textual features are thought to affect the learners' reading comprehension in such texts.

In descriptive reading tasks, the reader may perceive the description of what he/she reads in the text using different techniques and strategies for descriptions. Therefore, the reading strategies which are employed for the description task are influenced by the structure of the task which can, in turn, affect the learners' understanding of the descriptive task. The description can be done from various angles depending on the context and learners' experience, inclinations, and the perceived difficulty of the descriptive task (Butzkam, 2000; Bygate, 1999; Zhou, 2011). Understanding such description can also be interpreted and made in various ways.

Although the language teaching literature is rich with regard to research studies and findings on various aspects of the concepts somehow related to the current study, in some specific fields and teaching areas not much work has been carried out and a sense of gap is felt. The correlation between male and female learners' reading comprehension of different macro-genre-based text types (i.e., descriptive, narrative, argumentative, and expository) as well as their use of reading strategies in the same texts, for example, seem to be important for EFL practitioners for which there seems to be a gap in literature. To fill the gap, the following research questions are posed:

1. *Is there a significant difference between male and female learners in their reading performances in the descriptive and narrative macro-genre-based text types?*
2. *Does gender make significant difference between male and female groups in their use of reading strategies in the descriptive and narrative macro-genres?*

III. METHOD

A. Participants

For this study, 50 participants from among students majoring in English in the English department of University of Lorestan were randomly (based on systematic random sampling) selected as the intended sample. Both males ($n=21$) and females ($n=29$) took part in the study. The participants were second year students having at least seven years of experience in English in academic centers. Their ages ranged from 18 to 25 with an age mean of 19.6; they were at the intermediate level based on the scores they got from the proficiency test (a standard test administered to determine participants' proficiency level in English). The criterion for specifying the intermediate level of the participants was based on "Guide to EFL Exams and Levels: Cambridge International Book Center" (intermediate level falls between 43 and 61 of TOEFL test score). The participants were voluntary and eager to take part in the study; they were also aware of how long the test might last. They reported having no special experience in attending formal or informal preparatory classes for genre-based reading texts. The participants reported Lacki (a regional language spoken in northwest of Lorestan, Iran) and Lori (the dominant language spoken in the center and some other regions of Lorestan province) as their first languages and Persian as their second language.

B. Design

This study employed a descriptive and comparative between-group design in which the learners' use of reading strategies served as the independent variable and their reading comprehension in the four macro-genre-based text types as the dependent variable. Comparisons of the performance of the two groups in the four major text types were examined through running *t*-tests.

C. Materials

Two main instruments were used in this study: reading strategies questionnaire, developed by Oxford (1990), and three short reading texts for each of the two macro-genres. In the case of the reading strategies questionnaire, Cronbach alpha, a measure of internal consistency, was chosen as the most appropriate reliability index. Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient is used on continuous data such as the Likert-type scale in the reading strategies questionnaire (Oxford & Burry, 1995). With the Persian translation of reading strategies questionnaire with 50 participants, the reliability index was .90. Concurrent criterion-related validity was employed to determine the validity of the instrument [criterion-related validity involves either predictive or concurrent relationships between the key variable, in this case reading strategy use, and other important variables, in this case language proficiency. Concurrent validity, as one form of criterion-related validity, is demonstrated when data are collected for all variables at one time (Oxford & Burry, 1995)]. The correlation between the reading strategies questionnaire and participants' scores in general English proficiency test was statistically significant, $r = .70$, $p = .030$. Besides, to prepare comparable reading texts, Coh-Metrix Common Core formula as the reading Text Ease and Readability Assessor (TERA), developed by Crossley and Greenfield (2008), was

used. Moreover, in order to determine the proficiency level of the participants, a standard proficiency reading test was used.

D. Procedures

For this correlational study, attempts were made to gather data from both qualitative and quantitative sources from the very beginning. In the process of selecting the intended reading texts for the research, some passages for the two macro-genres were selected and their readabilities were computed through the Coh-Metrix formula (Crossley & Greenfield, 2008) (TERA: text ease and readability assessor). Coh-Metrix analysis provided the readability indices for the selected reading texts. Furthermore, in the pilot study for the selected reading passages administered to the pilot group (20 EFL majors studying in Payame Noor University, Khorambad Branch, Lorestan, Iran), all the items meeting the item facility value between .25 and .75 and item discriminatory value more than .30 (see Baker, 1989) were selected to be used in the testing stage. Furthermore, Kuder-Richardson 21 formula was applied to determine the texts reliability figures. The reliability indices were .77 and .83 for the selected descriptive and narrative macro-genres, respectively.

Then, texts falling in the intermediate range in each genre were selected and given to 80 EFL students. Based on Cambridge Guide to TEFL Exams and Levels, the students whose scores fell between 49% and 60% of the total score (taken from TOEFL proficiency Test) were regarded as being in the intermediate level. Fifty participants with scores in the intermediate level were, finally, selected as the research sample.

Moreover, as long reading passages may lead to learners' boredom and consequently reduce the reliability and validity of the test (see Henning, 2012), for each macro-genre instead of using one long text, three shorter ones were prepared and appropriate reading tests were constructed. For the two macro-genres, accordingly, 6 short reading texts were prepared for administration, altogether. Preliminary instructions of how to perform the test were given to the participants as well as proctors before taking the test. In the first week, descriptive macro-genre reading texts were administered. This was followed by the reading strategies questionnaire. With three days interval, the same steps were followed for the narrative macro-genres. Moreover, to obtain more valid and reliable results, the reading strategies questionnaire was translated into Persian. Correspondences between the original and Persian equivalents of each item in the questionnaire were judged by three experienced English teachers. The translation output was, finally, judged and approved of by an expert in the field. Learners' options in reading strategies and their performances in reading macro-genre texts were, then, compiled for statistical analysis.

IV. RESULTS

A. Results for Male and Female Groups in the Use of Reading Strategies

As shown in Table 1, the mean scores of the female participants in the descriptive and narrative macro-genres in the use and application of reading strategies were bigger than those of the males.

TABLE 1.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR FEMALE AND MALE GROUPS IN READING STRATEGIES

Genre	Sex	N	Mean	SD	SEM
Descriptive	Female	29	100.06	15.55	2.88
	Male	21	94.28	12.79	2.79
Narrative	Female	29	96.89	15.35	2.85
	Male	21	89.80	25.27	5.51

Note: SD and SEM stand for standard deviation and standard error of means, respectively.

Independent samples of t-test for male and female groups in the use of reading strategies in descriptive and narrative macro-genres showed that the differences between the compared groups were not statistically significant in the descriptive macro-genre, $t = 1.39$, $p = .169$; neither was the difference between the two groups statistically significant in the narrative macro-genre, $t = 1.23$, $p = .224$ (see Table 2).

TABLE 2.
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES OF T-TEST FOR MALE AND FEMALE GROUPS IN READING STRATEGIES IN DESCRIPTIVE AND NARRATIVE MACRO-GENRES

Genre		CI								
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (two-tailed)	MD	SED	Lower	upper
Descriptive	EVA	.285	.596	1.39	48	.169	5.78	4.14	-2.55	14.11
	EVNA			1.44	47.14	.156	5.78	4.01	-2.29	13.86
Narrative	EVA	1.72	.195	1.23	48	.224	7.08	5.75	-4.48	18.66
	EVNA			1.10	30.56	.263	7.08	6.20	-5.58	19.75

Note: EVA, EVNA, MD, SED, and CI stand for equal variance assumed, equal variance not assumed, mean difference, standard error difference, and confidence interval, respectively.

B. Results for Male and Female Groups in Reading Performance

As shown in Table 3, descriptive statistics results show that males outperformed the females in reading performance in the descriptive macro-genre. In the narrative macro-genre, in contrast, females outscored the males in reading comprehension.

TABLE 3.
GROUP STATISTICS FOR READING PERFORMANCE IN THE DESCRIPTIVE AND NARRATIVE MACRO-GENRES

Genre	Sex	N	Mean	SD	Standard error of Mean
Descriptive	Female	29	10.62	4.44	.82
	Male	21	12.38	3.38	.73
Narrative	Female	29	10.82	4.05	.75
	Male	21	10.76	4.66	1.01

Note: N and SD represent number of participants and standard deviation, respectively.

TABLE 4.
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES OF T-TEST FOR COMPARING GROUPS IN THE DESCRIPTIVE AND NARRATIVE MACRO-GENRES IN READING PERFORMANCE

Genre		CI								
		F	Sig.	<i>t</i>	df	Sig. (two-tailed)	Mean Difference	Standard Error difference	Lower	Upper
Descriptive	EVA	3.62	.063	-1.52	48	.135	-1.76	1.15	-4.08	.56
	EVNA			-1.59	47.84	.118	-1.76	1.10	-3.98	.46
Narrative	EVA	.313	.578	.053	48	.958	.065	1.23	-2.42	2.55
	EVNA			.052	39.41	.959	.065	1.26	-2.49	2.62

Results of *t*-test comparisons drawn between males and females' reading performance in the descriptive macro-genre showed that there was no significant difference between the groups involved, $t = -1.52$, $p = .135$ (Table 4).

As shown in Table 4, there were no significant differences between the two groups in the narrative macro-genre, $t = .053$, $p = .95$, in terms of the participants' reading performances.

The general finding from the male and female groups comparison in reading comprehension as well as reading strategy use in the two macro-genres (i.e., descriptive and narrative) was that the compared groups belonged to the same population. The differences between the groups compared did not reach statistical significance with alpha level set at .05.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This study was motivated by the assumption that the learner's gender might make significant differences in the employment and use of reading strategies as well as reading comprehension in the descriptive and narrative macro-genres. Results of *t*-test comparisons between the male and female groups indicated that there was no statistically significant difference observed between the two groups in the use of reading strategies in the descriptive and narrative macro-genres.

Both male and female groups have the same field of study and it seems that this common background might have led them to use the strategies in similar ways: the previous learning experiences in such text types may have developed in parallel ways so that both groups had comparable repertoires of reading strategies. The way both genders approached the comprehension of the two macro-genre texts might have also been influenced by the students' previous experiences of tackling the reading problems in such text types. Previous experiences may have affected both genders' reading comprehension in similar ways, as well. Selection of intermediate level passages might have made the groups not to use specific reading strategies so that the differences between the groups involved were kept unnoticed. Presenting the students with higher levels and more challenging texts may, accordingly, contribute to the appearance of significant differences between the groups compared regarding the employment of reading strategies. Passage of time can decrease the gender differences in intellectual abilities including reading comprehension as well as reading strategy employment between the male and female learners (Rao et al., 2007; Zhang & Annul, 2008). Viewed psychologically, lack of significant difference between male and female students may be attributed to the point that the students were at a level (in terms of psychological maturation and development) that the differences between them regarding reading strategy use leveled off.

In EFL/ESL literature, for the role of gender in learners' performance, two psychological hypotheses are referred to: the similarities hypothesis (Hyde, 2005) and the differences hypothesis (Buss, 1989). In the gender similarities hypothesis, Hyde (2005) holds that males and females are alike on most (but not all) psychological variables including the learner's reading comprehension. Extensive evidence from meta-analyses of research studies on gender differences supports the gender similarities hypothesis (Hyde, 2005). A few notable exceptions are some motor behaviors (e.g., throwing distance) and some aspects of sexuality, which show large gender differences. It is time to consider the costs of overinflated claims of gender differences. Arguably, such claims cause harm in numerous realms, including females' opportunities in the workplace and their performances in educational contexts (Hyde, 2005). The findings of the current study are in line with the gender similarities hypothesis because in reading comprehension as an intellectual activity, the gender made no statistically significant difference between the male and the female learners. Thus, at the intermediate level and EFL context, the gender similarities hypothesis is given credence and is supported.

The current study findings corroborate those reported by Solak and Atlay (2014) where similar uses of reading strategies (in terms of frequency and type of reading strategies) in understanding reading texts by both genders were found. The current findings also support Tahriri and Divsar's (2011) findings claiming that gender and educational level cannot make significant difference between EFL students' reading performance. The findings of this study are, moreover, compatible with Taki and Soleimani's (2012) findings reporting no significant difference between males and females in the use of reading strategies in understanding reading passages.

There are, however, other contradictory research findings regarding males and females' use of reading strategies. Alexander and Jetton (2000), for instance, found that females' overall strategy use was significantly higher than males. Lee (2012) found that males reported greater number of strategies use than females in the use and application of reading strategies. In both of these studies, the reported findings indicate that the learner's gender contributes to significant differences between male and female groups regarding their employment of reading strategies.

The next issue examined in this study was the relationship between males' and females' reading comprehension in the descriptive and narrative texts. Results of the comparisons conducted between the male and the female learners revealed that there were no significant differences between the groups involved with regard to their reading comprehension. The current finding may be related to background information and previous experiences as a result of common course of study for both genders. The two groups of learners might have employed similar reading techniques and strategies which, in turn, led to comparable reading performance. The finding may also be attributed to the selection of reading passages not being challenging enough for the differences between the groups to appear. Presenting the groups with more challenging passages probably lets the differences between the two groups show themselves. Participants of this study reported having similar language backgrounds (Lacki and Lori) which might have made the students process the reading passages similarly. Equal time spent on studying English might also have contributed to the lack of significant difference between the male and female learners' reading comprehension.

Females are usually more motivated, both intrinsically and extrinsically, to read texts on various topics (Marinak & Gambrell, 2010; Pajares & Valiante, 2001). In EFL context and at the intermediate level, this motivation may have acted equally for both groups of learners which, in turn, did not let the differences in reading comprehension between the two groups reach the significant level.

The current study findings are in line with those reported by Meece and Miller (1999), Durik et al. (2006), Logan and Johnston (2009), and Sotoudehnama and Asadian (2011) in which no significant differences between male and female learners' reading comprehension were indicated. The findings of the study are, however, in contradiction with those of Coles and Hall (2002), Hall and Coles (1999), Sainsbury and Schagen (1999), and Smith (1990). In these studies, females were reported to significantly outperform the males in the comprehension of the reading texts. Bügel and Buunk (1996), and Dörnyei (2005), and Al-Shumaimeri (2006) showed that the male students performed significantly better than the female students in their reading performance of a familiar and an unfamiliar text. The findings of the current study hold implications for genre-based reading materials, teacher training, ESP courses, and testing.

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Analysis on Lexical Errors in Writings of Mongolian English Majors

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Abstract—The purpose of the study is to examine types of lexical errors committed by EFL Mongolian learners in their writing. A total of 525 errors in 62 English writings by Mongolian English majors were identified and analyzed. Supplementary information is also collected by means of questionnaire and interviews for more comprehensive understanding of the factors affecting the errors. Possible solutions are thus provided for the Mongolian learners to cope with particular difficulties in their writings in terms of lexical choice.

Index Terms—English writing, error analysis, lexical errors, Mongolian English majors

I. INTRODUCTION

Errors are common in foreign language learning process, which embodies the development of learners' interlanguage (Selinker, 1972). Error analysis, proposed and practiced in the 1960s, was explained by Corder (1981) as theoretically and practically applicable for it not only can indicate language learning process of the learners, but also can serve as guidance for teachers to take effective measures in correcting errors made by the learners. So error analysis has proved to be an effective way of teaching (Gui, 2000).

According to *National English Teaching Curriculum of Higher Education* in China, listening, speaking, reading and writing ability are cardinal language competence for English majors, writing ability being the most comprehensive one and a reflection of the learners' overall language competence. Writing involves word choice, i.e., vocabulary, together with phonetics and grammar being three fundamental elements in a language, has proved to be crucial since words make communication possible (Hatch & Brown, 2001). Therefore, vocabulary, or word choice in writing is a major symbol representing the learner's language development and competence. Researches concerning vocabulary in writing by way of Error Analysis have long been widely conducted, which focus on collocation errors in Chinese learners' writings (Chen, 2002), comparative analysis among Chinese and Korea learners (Cui & Tae-Ja, 2013), etc. He (2009) and Luo (2010) conducted a corpus-based study on lexical errors made by Chinese non-English majors and English majors separately.

The present study attempts to make an error analysis on lexical errors committed by EFL Mongolian English majors in their writing.

As for the participants in the study, it is known that China is featured as a multi-nationality country of 56 nationalities, with Han Nationality being the most populous one and other 55 ethnic groups. Of the 55 ethnic groups in China, the Mongolian ethnic group is among the top ten in terms of population (about 5,813,900, according to the national population census in 2000), among which 32.7% of the population live in towns and cities and 67.3% in countryside. Mongolian learners of English (especially English majors) act as a special group of talents for the whole country and others such as Mongolia since they can speak Mongolian, Chinese and English (or Japanese), which enriches manpower resources in international trade and tourism in minority regions. So in terms of their living environment and important role in the population, their education, especially English teaching and learning deserve particular attention. As for English learning, compared with students of Han nationality, they have more difficulties and some special characteristics in English learning, as well as a somewhat complex learning process since their mother tongue--Mongolian, second language--Han Chinese, English, and another foreign language (Russian, Japanese or French as another compulsory course for English majors) accompany their English learning.

The focus of the study is to find out the lexical errors in the compositions written by Mongolian English majors. Through the analysis of the errors, the study aims to find out the linguistic features of their writing and provide some suggestions on curriculum and teaching methodology for Mongolian learners of English.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Questions

1. What are major types of lexical errors in Mongolian EFL learners' writing?
2. What are particular difficulties that Mongolian EFL learners encounter in their writing in terms of lexical choice?
3. What are possible solutions to the difficulties?

B. Participants

Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region holds majority of Mongolian ethnic population (about 4,170,000), so Mongolian English learners here form a group that can be representative in their English learning process. An intact class of 31 Mongolian English majors (29 females and 2 males) is the subjects of the present study who are now studying in Inner Mongolia University for the Nationalities. They all speak Mongolian, and Chinese which is learned for communication from primary school, and are assigned as an intact Mongolian class in the university. It will take them 5 years to get BA degree as English majors (4 years for Han learners). One more year is required because of their poor English level in the entrance examination: they begin to learn English in the middle school with some do after entering the university, and the English score is just a reference in the entrance examination which results in little attention on English learning before they are enrolled in higher education; score of 60 is set as the entrance mark for ethnic English majors (100 for Han learners) in the remote areas (the full score is 150). So the former three years are considered as elementary with courses different from Han students, the other two years with same courses with Han counterparts.

C. Instruments: Writing Assignments, Questionnaire and Interviews Are Involved in This Study

Samples of English writing used for error analysis were collected longitudinally from this intact class: for their second semester (one year consists of two semesters) of the third year (June, 2014), they took part in the final exam of the writing course, with the essay writing entitled “*Credit Cards on the Campus*” (word limit: 120-150), and six months later, for their first term of the fourth year (Dec, 2014), they took part in the final exam of the writing course, with the essay writing entitled “*Hunting Jobs on the Internet*” (Word limit: 150-200). The genre of the two writings chosen is argumentative with an aim to elicit more various expressions to express the learners’ ideas. Moreover, the present study in which the writings are collected from two consecutive semesters is expected to have a more comprehensive view at the learning process of the Mongolian English majors in terms of lexical choice.

A questionnaire concerning vocabulary learning strategies was conducted among this intact class in June, 2014.

An interview concerning word-choice in English writing with 6 random-selected students in the intact class was carried out in Dec, 2014. And another interview with 3 teachers of writing courses was also conducted for qualitative analysis on the lexical errors in Mongolian English majors’ writings.

D. Data Collection and Data Analysis

Altogether 62 English writing papers were collected respectively after the exams. First, the researcher and two teachers of the writing course identified the errors from a macro level, which involves errors concerning spelling, grammar and semantics, in order to guarantee a comprehensive validity of the errors to be studied. The present study focuses on the errors from the lexical level, so for the second step, the researcher, together with the two teachers and another teacher of Mongolian nationality who is responsible for intensive reading course of the Mongolian class, worked together to identify and analyze the specific lexical errors in the writings. The dictionary *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* is taken as a reference in identifying the errors. The oral English teacher from America also provided constructive suggestions concerning proper word choice in the collected writings. The same error occurring in the same composition more than once is counted as one.

Classification of lexical errors is made according to James’ (2001) theory in Error Analysis, which includes formal errors and semantic errors. In semantic errors, collocation ones gain priority for analysis. And in the study it was found that Mongolian learners tended to commit some errors concerning part of speech. So mix-up of part of speech is taken into account and analyzed. So the errors for analysis in this study are as shown in table 1.

TABLE 1
CLASSIFICATION OF ERRORS

Lexical errors	Formal errors	Formal misselection	But I *few a bit differently. (feel)
		misformation	In *spide (spite) of
		distortion	*unconvenient/inconvenient)
	Collocation errors	*high (advanced) technology; To *expose (leak or disclose) your private information	*habbit (habit); *restrant (restaurant)
Mix-up of part of speech	Why do we *choice (chose) to use the credit card? To pursue popular thing *blind (blindly)		

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present study mainly covers lexical errors in terms of formal errors, collocation errors and mix-up of part of speech. A total of 525 errors in 62 English writings by Mongolian English majors were identified. The major types of lexical errors are listed in Table 1. As is shown in Table 1, formal error occurrence accounted for 51% (268), collocation errors 20% (105) and mix-up of part of speech 29% (152).

A. Formal Errors

In this study, there are 268 formal errors including formal misselection (140), misformation (56) and distortion (72).

Formal misselection:

Formal misselection refers to words mistakenly selected between word form and pronunciation close to the word. The followings are extracted from the writings by Mongolian English majors:

suffix type: emergence/emergency; favorable/favorite; electric/electrical

prefixing type: *(un)appropriate/(in)appropriate; *(un)loyal/(dis)loyal;

Vowel-based type: *purchase /purchase; *servey /survey); *convinience /convenience; *prevelant/prevalent; phenominon/phenomenon; secrit /secret; numourous/numerous;

Consonant-based type: *fathion (fashion); *conserved (concerned); In *spide (spite) of

The suffix type of errors resulted from poor distinction of some synonyms. For example, in the sentence

*Students can use credit cards when in *emergence.*

The student wanted to express that in some emergent occasions, people without enough cash at hand may use credit cards to help with an urgent need of money. But he failed to distinguish the slight spelling difference in *emergency* and *emergence* (which actually means emersion or growth).

As for the prefixing type of errors, it also can be attributed to the students' poor command of the negative prefixes. Some of them tended to overgeneralize the rules of adding negative prefixes to get antonyms. For example, words like *inaccurate*, *inexpensive*, *incorrect* are right, but the rule can not be applied to words like **inhonorable*, **infinished*, and so on. This kind of errors are also reflected in the course of lexicology. The researcher is responsible for this course in Mongolian classes, so in the classroom, students wrote down the rules about negative prefixes, and could remember very well examples presented by the teacher. However, in the exam paper, they committed similar errors as those in their writings in applying the rules. Moreover, there are only suffixes in Mongolian language, so prefixes as something new for Mongolian in learning a language press for more time and practice.

In terms of vowels, Mongolian and English have distinctive features. There are three aspects in the vowels of Mongolian language: (negative, positive, neutral), and form rather fixed combinations (negative vowels with negative phonetic symbols or neutral ones, positive with positive or neutral ones, etc.). While in English, various phonetic combinations with vowels may represent the same pronunciation or vice versa. Therefore, the flexibility and complexity of English phonetics may be one of the difficulties encountered by Mongolian learners. It can be proved in the interview, in which the Mongolian interviewees mentioned that they were familiar with the pronunciation of some words but failed to spell them correctly since it was easy to be at a loss when several letter combinations represented a single syllable.

Such is the case for consonants. There are 18 consonants in Mongolian language, which are characterized not by voiced or voiceless, but by aspirated or unaspirated. In this aspect, words like **pursude*/*pursuit*, **inspide*/*inspite* are typical examples appearing in Mongolian learners' writings. On the other hand, words like **fathion* /*fashion*; **conserved*/*concerned* may result from the students' carelessness. Moreover, according to Wu (2003), the most frequently used consonants exclusive to English embedded in the underlined letters like *five*, *very*, *zone*, *usually*, *thank*, *that* are the major difficulties for Mongolian students. Therefore, together with the difficulties and complexity of English phonetics, students tended to misspell words if they failed to pronounce the word correctly.

Misformation:

Misformation refers to words that don't exist in the target language, which either are the results influenced by the mother tongue or are coined by the learners from the sources of the target language. In this study, 56 misformation errors are identified, including 1 borrowings, 23 coinages and 32 calques.

Borrowing: People with a lot of credit cards can be called **cardMin*;

The example shows that lacking of proper noun may enable Mongolian learners to resort to Chinese colloquial expression “卡民” (which means a growing number of people tend to hold credit cards for their daily deals and business) , and create the word from the sources of the target language and L2, but not from their mother tongue. This example reflects a typical English learning way employed by Mongolian students. The word consists of two parts, *card* is an English word, and *Min* is Chinese pinyin meaning *people*. Mongolian learners are good at employing Chinese pinyin to help them in learning English. For instance, in the group discussion, they often speak Mongolian when they want to clarify their points, but as for written language, they hardly use their mother tongue. The researcher has noticed that some of the students write pinyin under a new word to remember the meaning of it if they can not remember the proper Chinese equivalent. So in the interview, the Mongolian students were asked about the impact of Mongolian and Chinese on their English learning. They mentioned that it would be easy and fast to solve some task problems if they speak Mongolian among classmates. On the other hand, they would speak Chinese when they communicate with their teachers since most of the teachers are of Han nationality. And some of them tend to remain silent or seldom communicate with teachers because of their poor Chinese and lack of confidence. For written English, they turn to Chinese pinyin if they can not figure out proper English word since they know there are many examples of Chinese pinyin accepted in English such as *lama*, *guanxi*, etc. So it would be a “safe” way to be accepted by the teacher. The students in the interview also mentioned that this way would save time for they do not need to experience complex language transfer: English--Mongolian--Chinese. It shows that Mongolian learners are somewhat skillful at utilizing their mother tongue and L2, which actually indicates a special superiority in language learning.

Coinage means that the new word is tailored to the structure of the target language. Words like **popularation*; **phenomenence*; **conventinal*; **visition*; **convients*; **;*; *subjection*; **explem*; **advancable* are some of the examples.

In the examples, there are some invented words that may result in confusion, such as *sujection, *explem, *analyct. But for most of the cases, Mongolian learners tend to create some words which are not accepted in the target language according to some rules, such as suffixes (*popularation; *phenomenence; *visition; *advancable;). The above data shows that it is easy for Mongolian learners to master basic rules in English learning, but as for language application, they tend to overgeneralize the rules. According to the researcher's classroom observation, most of the Mongolian students were very active in taking down the rules or important language points and also they could recall the important information as required. But what they lack reflected from their writings is more practice based on the rules.

Calques are also called loan translation. The followings are instances extracted from the Mongolian learners' writings:

- secret number (password);
- auto-machine (ATM);
- finance mind (commercially-mind people);
- eat our words (break up one's promise);
- mental job (mental work or brain work);
- civil official exam (civil service examination);
- stretch their hands to the parents for the money (ask their parents for money);
- sweep card (to use credit cards);
- trust degree (credit);
- the newest and nearest messages (latest messages);
- A *sudden condition (critical or emergent)

All the examples are literally translated from the sources of the Mongolian's L2--Chinese. In Chinese, we say “密码” (*password* in English), the Mongolian learner translated the word according to what he/she has learned from the target language: *secret* for “秘密的” and *number* for “码(数字)”. So *secret number* replaced the correct expression *password*. For another example, when we want to express that someone didn't do as he has promised, we say “食言”. Here “食” means “to eat” in Chinese. So the Mongolian learner wanted to express the same meaning, he/she failed to find the correct expression “break up one's promise” but translated the expression as “eat one's words” in Chinese way.

The examples indicate that Mongolian learners tend to make literal translation based on their L2-Chinese in English writings, from which we can see the great impact of Chinese on their English learning. Due to the conditions they meet: textbooks written in English and Chinese, teachers of Han nationality, test paper in English and Chinese and so on, they are exposed for most of the time to Chinese. Just as mentioned above, most of them try to remember the meaning of new words with Chinese explanation or pinyin. When it comes to expressing their ideas, they first search their mind for Chinese explanation or equivalent words, and then they try to figure out which English word can be close enough to express their intended meaning. This Chinese to English process is going through their writing.

Distortion:

Distortion refers to forms non-existent in the target language, which results from misapplication of one or more of the processing operations. Examples of them are:

- omission: rest(au)rant; disadvan(ta)ges; undou(b)tedly; alway(s); seriou(s)ly; effic(i)ent; opportun(i)ty;
- overinclusion: a *numbers (number) of; a *lots (lot) of; *habbit (habit); for *examples; in regulated *times (time);
- detaily (in detail); choosen (chosen); effectivelly (effectively); furture (future); compellicated (complicated);
- misordering: *recieve\receive; *available/available; brust/burst; morden/modern; nervous/noverus;
- blending: *troblem (trouble+problem)

Such kind of errors are very common in Mongolian learners' writings. Even they have experienced three years' intensive training as English majors, still their English level is not so optimistic. One of the reasons is that their English score was ranged from 60-80 (the full mark is 120) when they were enrolled in the university. According to the preferential policy for students from ethnic groups in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, they are allowed to be enrolled with a lower mark compared with Han students (60 vs. 100). They were educated as English beginners with textbooks and other learning materials of basic background. In the learning process, vocabulary is a major difficulty since they encounter a great burden of enlarging their vocabulary in the first three years since for the subsequent two years they will take the same courses with their Han counterparts. According to the teaching experience of the researcher, the Mongolia students perform well in exercises such as multiple choice, blank filling, etc, but have difficulties in oral work or writing tasks, which results from their poor lexical resources. According to the questionnaire concerning vocabulary learning strategies, Mongolian students hold the firm belief that rehearsal practice of words is monotonous and less useful and they seldom remember words by writing letter by letter. The above errors were probably influenced by their poor English level and vocabulary learning beliefs as well as strategy preference.

B. Collocation Errors

Collocation refers to two or more words that co-occur more often, which sound natural in the native language. Collocation on lexical level mainly involves word choice.

- Students have no *origin of money (source of income).
- *Take (withdraw cash) money from the auto-machine.
- *Electrical products (electronic products)

To *transport money (transfer of account).

A *long time work (a stable work)

A *dreamful job (a dream job)

The data indicates the trace of literal translation from Chinese, which also shows the great impact of Mongolian learners' L2--Chinese on their English learning. For most of the time, Mongolian learners tend to find equivalents in Chinese to express their ideas in English. Word equivalents among Chinese and English may have similar denotative meaning but differ in connotative meaning, which is realized in certain collocation and context. Because of Mongolian learners' limited English learning time, most of them still stay at the level of enlarging vocabulary, without too much practice on distinguishing the slight differences among synonyms. In the interview they also mentioned it was easy for them to feel confused on word choice when there are several words with the same meaning but apply for different collocation and contexts. The reason can be found in the questionnaire, which shows that they are aware of the importance of enlarging vocabulary and try their best to remember as more as possible. But strategies such as synonym/antonym association were seldom adopted. According to the teachers' experience, in the learning process, most of the Mongolian students are careful enough to take notes in vocabulary learning, such as explanation and usage. They also write down the synonyms or antonyms as the teacher explains or requires, but they seldom make self-initiative efforts in adding more information to a wider usage of the words, thus failing to produce native-like output.

On the other hand, this kind of errors may also be ascribed to the characteristic of both Chinese and Mongolian since in both of them, one word may have different meanings. For example, in English we say "to see a film, watch a movie, read a book, look at that boy", but we use one word "看" to fill in the collocations. So set phrases and collocations pose great difficulty for the Mongolian students in the process of English learning.

C. *Mix-up of Part of Speech*

Mix-up of part of speech mainly refers to the lexical errors that occur when the learner substitutes one word or expression for another from the other word class. In terms of lexical meaning, the substitute sounds accepted; but in terms of the requirement of part of speech, it is not correct.

According to the data in this study, errors concerning confusion of part of speech accounts for 29% of the total errors. Here are some examples:

It brings us great *comfortable (comfort) and convenience.

We use the credit card for its *convenient (convenience) and safety.

Why do we *choice (chose) to use the credit card?

Bank count (account)

To pursue popular thing *blind (blindly).

All these errors can be regarded as intralingual errors, which are caused by factors related to the target language, such as learners' incomplete application of rules (comfort), false concepts hypothesized when the learners don't fully comprehend a distinction in the target language (count), ignorance of the rule restriction or poor command of the word usage (choice, blind). According to the investigation on their vocabulary learning strategies, they seldom make use of grammatical structures to remember words, and for them, meaning gains priority to forms in dealing with English input and output. And in the interview, some of them also mentioned that they were poor at grammatical rules because they didn't have a systematic training on grammar in their high schools. When they were enrolled as English majors, they only had one grammar course of 40 hours lasting one semester. The limited time and practice apparently is not sufficient enough to draw their attention to grammatical rules in language output.

IV. CONCLUSION AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATION

To sum up, the most frequently committed errors by Mongolian English majors are formal errors (51%), with mix-up of part of speech (29%) running the second place and collocation errors accounted for 20%. These errors come down to misspelling, grammar and misuse of words. And from the error analysis, it can be concluded that the major difficulties Mongolian English majors encounter come from the impact both of their mother tongue and L2-Chinese.

As for the impact of their mother tongue, unlike English, Mongolian only has suffixes, so prefixes appear as new to the Mongolian students. Particularly the complexity of negative prefixes pose difficulties for them, which is reflected in the classroom teaching. And in the interview, three of the students said that they were aware of the importance of prefixes in word-formation as Mongolian suffixes help them learn their mother tongue. Most of the prefixes were easy to grasp in forming new words but negative ones challenged them a lot. They were quite confused when so many prefixes (such as dis, de, im, il, in, etc) denoting the same meaning but have to be added to different situations. So in the teaching process, teachers on one hand should emphasize the positive transfer of Mongolian, motivating students to learn prefixes well as they learn suffixes in their mother tongue. On the other hand, differences and difficulties such as negative prefixes should be drawn to great attention and consolidated by more writing practice.

Another impact from Mongolian concerns phonetics. Different from English, there are three aspects in the vowels of Mongolian language: negative, positive, neutral, and they form rather fixed combinations (negative vowels with negative phonetic symbols or neutral ones, positive with positive or neutral ones, etc.). So when a single syllable is realized by different combinations of vowels in English, Mongolian students fail to spell the words correctly, which

poses another difficulty in their English learning. Meanwhile, there are more consonants in English (28) than in Mongolian (18) which is characterized by aspirated or unaspirated. So mispronunciation may lead to misspelling. Therefore, in the teaching process, distinct features of English pronunciation should be clarified at the first stage, and reinforced by more written tasks.

As for the impact of Chinese, because of great exposure to Chinese from textbooks, teachers and Han counterparts, Mongolian students committed some errors by literal translation of Chinese into English (collocation errors and calques in formal errors). Synonyms are another difficulty for them since English has so many set phrases and fixed expressions. According to Krashen's input and output theory, much exposure to the target language and much practice in the target language may achieve the goal of language acquisition (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005). So occasions of English exposure should be offered and much practice on English reading and writing should be enhanced for Mongolian learners to get used to the native-like expressions and thinking way. Meanwhile, detailed semantic explanation of words and application practice in certain collocations are needed to improve Mongolian students' English writing.

Still there are some errors such as coinage reflecting the impact of English, which results from the learners' false hypotheses about the target language. It is very common for learners to build up hypotheses about the target language from their limited experience of it, and they will modify the hypotheses as learning proceeds, so the errors caused by false hypotheses may disappear in a natural way (Richards, 1974). Tolerance from teachers are of great importance in helping Mongolian learners release from particular anxiety and toward higher stage of writing practice.

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Assessment of Semantic Adequacy: English Translations of Persian Official Texts in Focus

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Abstract—Translation quality assessment is one of the growing fields of translation studies that focuses on the relationship between the source and target language. This relationship involves vocabulary, grammar, syntax and semantics in both languages. The semantic adequacy of the translation is one of the main concerns of experts in the field of translation. The present study was an attempt to evaluate the semantic adequacy of English translations of Persian official texts done at Iranian accredited translation offices. To this purpose, 90 Persian articles of association done at Iranian accredited offices (in the years 2012-2014), were selected and their quality was measured based on ATA (American Translation Association) framework which includes 22 errors types. Then, the related frequency chart and percentage diagram were devised based on the frequency of errors in each sample. Finally, the total percentage of errors which affects semantic adequacy was calculated. The results revealed that great effort should be made by Iranian accredited offices translators to reduce the number of errors in the translations of official texts. Actually, it was disclosed that due to the importance of semantic adequacy in translating such texts, translators are in urgent need of continuously enhancing their knowledge of language and translation.

Index Terms—legal translation, translation quality assessment, semantic adequacy, accredited offices

I. INTRODUCTION

Translation of legal and official texts is a serious challenge. Cao (2007) states that ‘in general the complexity and difficulty of legal translation is attributable to the nature of the law and the language that law uses, and the associated differences found in intercultural and inter-lingual communication in translating official texts’ (p. 13).

According to Mattila (2006):

It is clear to see that legal language is not based on ordinary language. For that reason, the grammar and – in general – the vocabulary of legal language are the same as ordinary language. However, legal language is a language for special purposes. This means, first of all, that a large number of legal terms exist whose properties vary according to the branches of the law. In addition, the legal languages of different countries and of different periods possess, to a varying degree, characteristics that distinguish them from ordinary written language (e.g., sentence structure). One may speak of a specific legal style. For those reasons, it often occurs that legal language may be incomprehensible from the standpoint of the general public. Legal language is often characterized as a technical language or “technolect”, which is to say a language used by a specialist profession. That is accurate, but only with certain reservations (p. 1).

Mattila (2006) also adds:

Europe, in a state of ongoing unification, increasingly needs translations of official texts (e.g., laws, judgments, administrative decisions, and private documents). The majority of these translations are very often done by linguist-translators, not by lawyers. Technical tools as aids to legal translation have been considerably developed over recent years. Legal translation will remain an essentially human activity, at least in the near future. At the end of the day, human control of automated translation or with the aid of computers is based on the culture and general knowledge of the translator. That is why the translator needs information on the characteristics of legal language from a universal standpoint, as well as on the history and features of the legal languages concerned. Given that translation tools and instruments are inevitably imperfect; this general knowledge is the key to eliminating mistakes and misunderstandings (p. 22).

In the modern sense, Mattila (2006) states:

Legal linguistics is a discipline that has only recently become established. However, legal language has aroused interest for thousands of years, from various angles. Law is necessarily bound to language (notably in matters of legal interpretation), and in that sense legal language has existed as long as the law. In certain contexts, the language aspect of law dominates: legal translation, legal lexicography, and legal rhetoric. In ancient times, the goals of interest in legal language were mainly practical (p. 5).

II. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Long and compound sentences as a part of legal and official texts' features necessitate profound understanding and scrutiny. Misapprehension can result in big errors. Understanding and experience in translating official texts are greatly required to create the most excellent result. Actually, in rendering such documents, the translator should discover their characteristic features and should be capable to employ the appropriate style. Williams (1989) believes:

'Translators and translation offices must be accountable for the quality of their works' ... 'translation quality assessment (TQA), in the eyes of many academics and practitioners, it is too subjective. The purpose of the translation is to determine how much effort should be expended to ensure quality. To make a realistic assessment, the evaluator must be able to determine that purpose with a reasonable degree of certainty. Yet, the question of how to judge that quality can never be answered' (pp. 1-2).

In the present study, the researchers tried to find to what extent the quality of English translations of Persian official texts done at Iranian accredited offices is semantically adequate. The study was conducted on the basis of ATA framework (2005). Actually, the researchers evaluated the quality of articles of association translated at accredited translation offices from 2012 to 2014. Since the quality of translation is very important, the study kept its central focus on the errors made by translators in accredited offices. It, thus, aimed to find answers to the following questions:

1. To what extent are the English translations of Persian articles of association done at Iranian accredited offices semantically adequate?
2. What are the most frequently observed errors in the English translations of Persian official texts done at Iranian accredited offices?

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design and Corpus

The present study is descriptive in nature and, therefore, the researchers descriptively investigated the quality of English translations of Persian official texts done at Iranian accredited offices to measure how much their translations are semantically adequate. To do so, it was needed to have some documents translated by official translators. Thus, 10 accredited offices were randomly chosen in Isfahan, the articles of associations were collected and the samples were investigated based on ATA Framework for Standard Error Marking (2005). Actually, since different forms of articles of association are valid according to Iranian organization for registration of deeds and properties, the corpus came to consist of the articles which were of similar nature in the Persian language.

B. Framework of the Study

ATA Framework for Standard Error Marking (2005) was the basis of data analysis in the present study. The criteria suggested in this framework for error marking are stated in the following table, with subsequent explanations for each of them. (Retrieved May 2015, from http://www.atanet.org/certification/aboutexams_error.php)

ATA FRAMEWORK FOR STANDARD ERROR MARKING (2005)

Code #	Criteria of each error
1	Incomplete Passage
2	Illegible
3	Misunderstanding of Original Text
4	Mistranslation into Target Language
5	Addition or Omission
6	Terminology, Word Choice
7	Register
8	Too Freely Translated
9	Too Literal, Word-for-word
10	False Cognate
11	Indecision, Giving More than One Option
12	Inconsistency, Same Term Translated Differently
13	Ambiguity
14	Grammar
15	Syntax (Phrase/Clause/Sentence structure)
16	Punctuation
17	Spelling
18	Accents and Other Diacritical Maries
19	Case (Upper/Lower)
20	Word Form
21	Usage
22	Style

1. Incomplete passage

A substantially unfinished passage is not correct. Missing titles, headings, or sentences within a passage may be marked as one or more errors of omission marked as incomplete passage, depending on how much is omitted.

2. Illegible

It is the translator's responsibility to ensure that the researcher can clearly understand what is written translators are instructed to use pen or dark pencil and to write firmly enough to produce legible photocopies. Deletions, insertions, and revisions are acceptable if they do not make the intent unclear.

3. Misunderstanding of original text

This category applies when the researcher can see—usually by back-translating the target-language text—that the error arises from misreading a word, for example, or misinterpreting the syntax of a sentence. In other words, the result is wrong because the translation was based on a misunderstood source text.

4. Mistranslation into target language

The meaning of the original text is not conveyed properly in the target language. For example, a term in the translated text might be much more general (*scientists* instead of *researchers*, *protein* instead of *albumin*) or more specific (*stallion* instead of *horse*) than the original term. Mistranslations can also involve the choice of prepositions, the use of definite and indefinite articles and the choice of verb tense and mood.

5. Addition or omission

Something is inserted that is not clearly expressed in the original text, or something essential to the meaning is left out. The tendency to insert “clarifying” material should generally be resisted. It is permissible to shorten the ponderous modes of expression that are common in some source texts, so long as the meaning does not suffer.

6. Terminology, word choice

This error often involves terms used in various technical contexts. This also applies to legal and financial contexts where words often have very specific meanings. In more general texts, the candidate might not have selected the most appropriate word among several that have similar (but not identical) meanings.

7. Register

The register (language level, degree of formality) of the source text should be preserved in the translation.

8. Too freely translated

Translators are translating the meaning and intent of the source text, not to rewrite it or improve upon it. The grader will carefully compare the translation to the source text. If a “creative” rendition changes the meaning, an error will be marked.

9. Too literal, word-for-word translation

Translations that follow the source text exactly may result in awkward, often incorrect renditions. Translate literally when it works, but not at the expense of clarity and natural syntax.

10. False cognate

In some language pairs, this is the most common type of error.

11. Indecision—gave more than one option

Translators will not choose the right word for the candidate. Even if both options are correct, an error will be marked. More points will be deducted if one or both options are incorrect.

12. Inconsistency (same term translated differently)

In general, a term that is used consistently in the source text should be translated consistently into the target language. Conversely, if the source text uses different terms for the same idea interchangeably, the translators should attempt to come up with a similar variety in the target language.

13. Ambiguity: If the meaning is clear in the source text but ambiguous in the translation, an error may be marked. The reader should not have to puzzle out the meaning.

14. Grammar

Grammatical errors include lack of agreement between subject and verb, incorrect verb tenses or verb forms, incorrect case of nouns, pronouns, or adjectives, and use of an adjective where an adverb is needed.

15. Syntax

The arrangement of words or other elements of a sentence should conform to the rules of the target language. Errors in this category include sentence fragments, improper modification, lack of parallelism, and unnatural word order. If incorrect syntax changes or obscures the meaning, the error is more serious.

16. Punctuation

The conventions of the target language should be followed, including those governing the use of accents and other diacritical marks, quotation marks, commas, semicolons, and colons. Incorrect or unclear paragraphing is counted as an error.

17. Spelling

There is less tolerance of spelling errors in some languages than in others, for reasons that derive from the language itself as well as from the national culture. In all languages, a spelling error that causes confusion about the intended meaning is more serious.

18. Accents and other diacritical marks

The conventions should be followed consistently. If incorrect or missing diacritical marks obscure the meaning, the error is more serious.

19. Case (upper/lower)

The conventions of the target language should be followed.

20. Word Form

The root of the word is correct, but the wrong form is used.

21. Usage

Correct and idiomatic usage of the target language is expected. Errors include use of the wrong preposition or misuse of a grammatical form.

22. Style

If the source text is characterized by a distinctive manner of expression—flowery, staccato, conversational, instructional—this should be reflected in the translation. Awkward or clumsy renditions that obscure the meaning may also be penalized. (Retrieved May 2015, from http://www.atanet.org/certification/aboutexams_error.php)

C. Procedures

There are many accredited translation offices in Iran working within a special framework determined by the judiciary. In the present study, the researchers tried to analyze and evaluate the quality of available translations in a selected number of such. To achieve this purpose, the following steps were taken:

First, available Persian and English articles of association translated by official translators in the years 2012, 2013 and 2014 were collected from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Isfahan branch.

Second, the articles were analyzed on the basis of 11 ('mistranslation into target language error', 'omission error', 'word choice error', 'incomplete passage error', etc.) out of 22 criteria proposed in ATA Framework for Standard Error Marking. These criteria are directly related to semantic adequacy.

Third, all the observed errors were formed in terms of frequency and percentage.

Forth, among all the observed errors, the errors which affect semantic adequacy were identified and their percentage was calculated.

Finally, in order to reduce the extent of mistakes in analysis, the researchers checked the texts 3 times in specified intervals (every 3 weeks).

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

A. Analysis of Data

In this section, the focus is on examples from the translated articles of association done at Iranian accredited translation offices. Forty five Persian samples were randomly chosen from 55, 56, and 64 articles of memorandum, with translations by two different translators. In order to reduce the level erroneous analysis, the researchers checked the exemplar texts 3 times in specified intervals (every 3 weeks). Below, just 2 examples of each article (for the sake of brevity), with their two English translations are stated, analyzed and explained.

Memorandum with 55 articles

Text 1

سهام شرکت- سهام شرکت باید بامضا صاحبان امضا مجاز شرکت رسیده و به مهر شرکت ممهور گردد.

Translation 1:

Stocks of the company:

Stock certificates must bear the signatures of signatories and be sealed by the company.

Translation 2:

Shares of the company:

The Shares should be signed and sealed by the authorized signatories.

Analysis: The first translation is semantically and grammatically correct. In the second translation, the whole sentence has just 1 error (*Mistranslation into Target Language*), i.e. the sentence

باید بامضا صاحبان امضا مجاز شرکت رسیده و به مهر شرکت ممهور گردد.

has been wrongly translated as "should be signed and sealed by the authorized signatories".

Text 2:

انتقال سهم طبق ماده 40 قانون تجارت در دفتر ثبت سهام شرکت ثبت و عمل خواهد شد و انتقال دهنده و انتقال گیرنده باید دفتر مذکور را امضا نماید.

Translation 1:

According to Article of the Commercial Act, transferring the shares should be registered in the registration book of the company and transferers and transferee must sign the a/m book.

Translation 2:

According to Article 40 of Trade Act, the transfer of registered shares must be entered in the Shares Book of the Company. The transferee and transferors must sign the said book entry.

Analysis: In the first translation "دفتر ثبت سهام شرکت" has been translated as "registration book". In a company, more than one registration book may exist and, therefore, the translator should refer to the specified book. So, here the word 'shares' has been *omitted* in the translation. Another mistake is that the abbreviation "a/m" has been used in this official translation (*register error*).

The second translation is semantically and grammatically correct.

In general, the analysis of the data in this section showed that 15 translations were completely correct while 15 errors were observed. The two translators have made 1 *mistranslation*, 3 *omissions*, 2 *register errors*, 2 *inconsistency errors*, 2

word choice errors, 1 grammar error, 2 spelling errors and 2 word form errors in their translations. These errors are formulated in the following figures in terms of frequency and percentage:

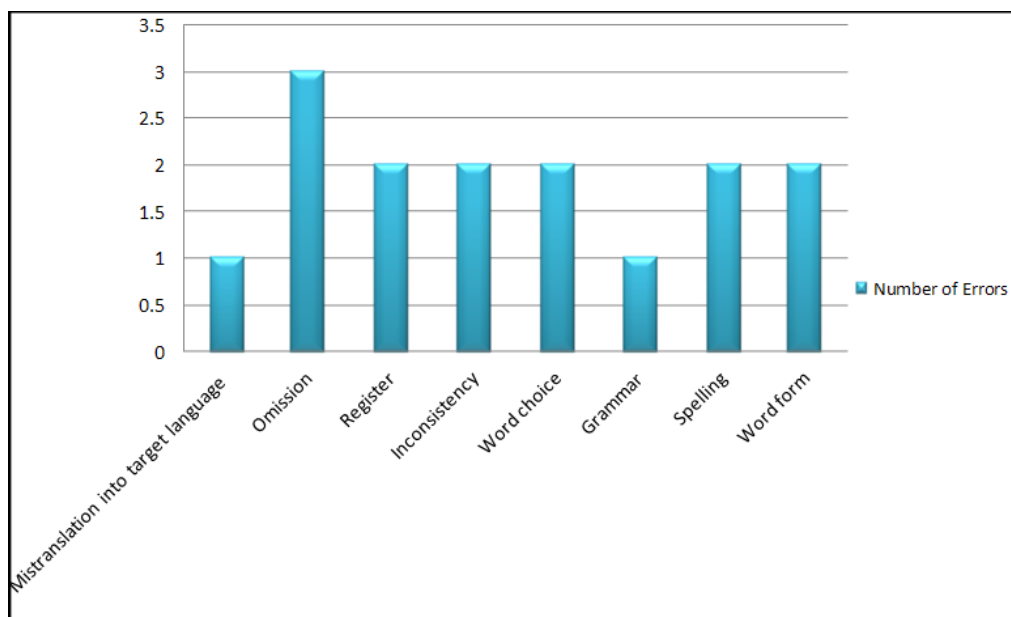


Figure 4.1: Frequency of errors in the memorandum with 55 articles

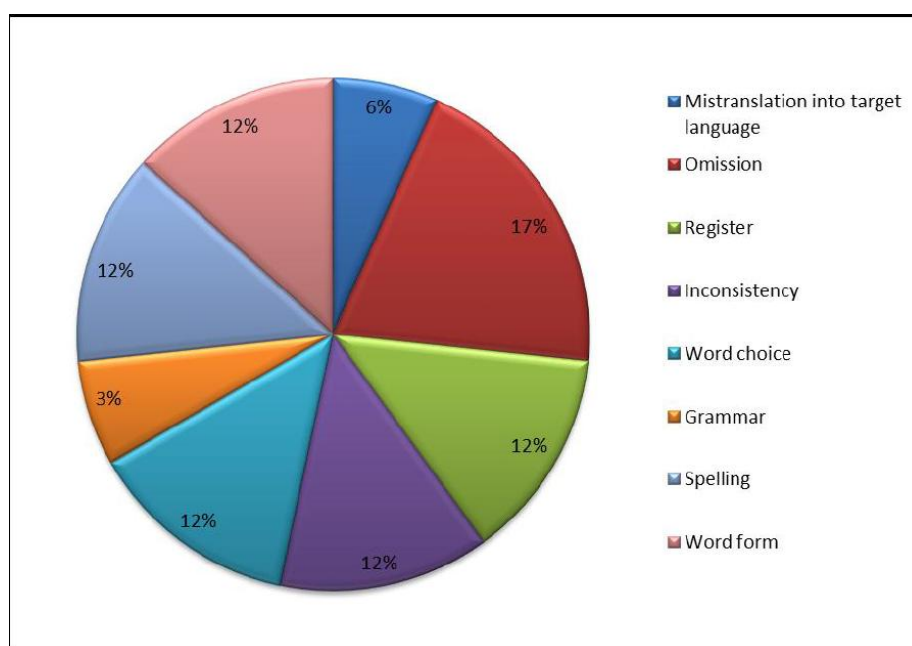


Figure 4.2: Percentage of errors in the memorandum with 55 articles

Memorandum with 56 articles

Text 1:

جلسات هنیت مدیره بر حسب ضرورت در محل شرکت منعقد می گردد مگر در صورت احتیاج که بنا به دعوت رئیس هنیت مدیره و یا مدیر عامل در محل دیگری که تعیین می شود تشکیل می گردد.

Translation 1:

The Board of Director's sessions will be held at the company's office, unless, if necessary in accordance with the chairman's invitation, it will be determined to be held in another place.

Translation 2:

The sessions of the board of directors, if necessary, are held in focus of the company, unless in case of need upon the invitation of the chairman of the board of director, it will be held elsewhere.

Analysis: The first translation is almost semantically and grammatically correct. In the second translation, the translator has made *word choice error* by translating محل شرکت as "focus of the company". The correct choice is *premise of company*.

Text 2:

سود سهام باید حداکثر ظرف سه ماه پس از تصویب مجمع به سهامداران شرکت پرداخت گردد.

Translation 1:

The dividend must be paid to shareholders not later than three months after it has been approved by the general assembly.

Translation 2:

The divided shall be paid to the shareholders within three mounts after being approved by the general meeting.

Analysis: The first translation is grammatically and semantically correct. In the second translation, the word divided has *spelling error*. Also, the translator has made *inconsistency error* by using the word "shareholders" in this article and "stockholder" in another article.

Based on the analysis of the whole data related to memorandum with 56 articles, the following information was obtained: Twenty five translations were completely correct and 5 errors were observed. The two translators have made 1 *omission*, 1 *addition*, 1 *word choice*, 1 *grammar* and 1 *spelling errors*. These errors are formulated in the following figures in terms of frequency and percentage:

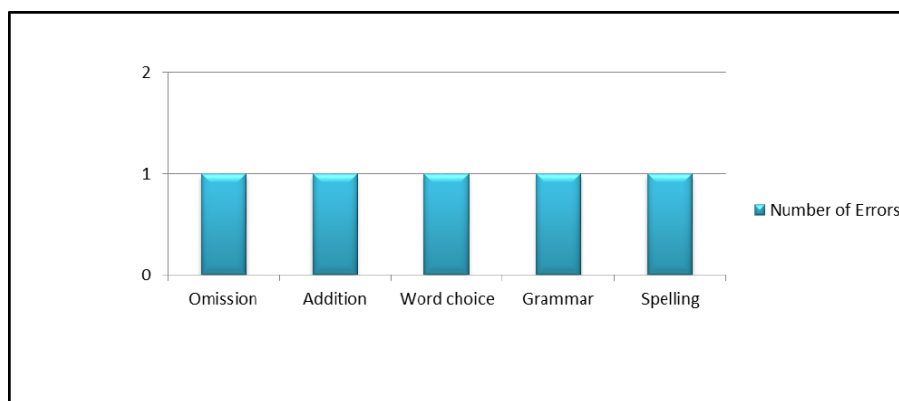


Figure 4.3: Frequency of errors in the memorandum with 56 articles

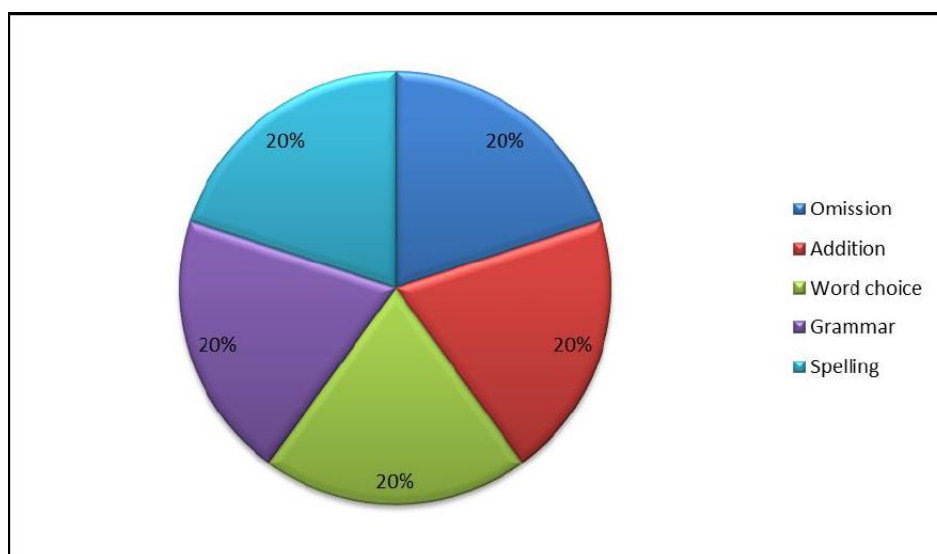


Figure 4.4: Percentage of errors in the memorandum with 56 articles

Memorandum with 64 articles:

Text 1:

اوراق سهام

یا بی نام است . اوراق سهام شرکت متحدالشکل و چاپی و دارای شماره ترتیب و حاوی نکات مذکور در ماده 26 لایحه کلیه سهام شرکت با نام و قانونی اصلاح قسمتی از قانون تجارت مصوب اسفند ماه 1347 بوده و به امضای دو نفر از مدیران شرکت که از طرف هیئت مدیره تعیین می شوند خواهد رسید و به مهر شرکت مهمور می گردد.

Translation 1

Shares of the Company: The Shares should be signed & sealed by two authorized signatories of the Co.

Translation 2

Bonds: All shares of the company are either named or unnamed. Company Bonds are uniform, printed and bear consecutive registry number. _ and contain the points stipulated by article 26 of the bill of modification of the law of commerce of march 1969, and are signed by two of the managers of the company that are elected by the board of directors and bear the seal of the company.

Analysis: In the first translation, many parts are absent in translation and thus, the meaning of the sentence is totally different from the original text; consequently, the translator has made *mistranslation into target language error*. Furthermore, *register error* has been made using “co.” instead of company. In the second translation, there is a *punctuation error* in the second line, i.e. the translator has used both colon and full stop successively in the sentence.

Text 2:

حق تقدم در خرید سهام جديد

در صورت افزايش سرمايه صاحبان سهام شرکت در خرید سهام جديد به نسبت سهامی که مالکند حق تقدم خواهند داشت ترتيب استفاده از اين حق تقدم طبق مقررات لايحه قانونی اصلاح قسمتی از قانون تجارت مصوب اسفند ماه 1347 خواهد بود.

Translation 1:

Priority in purchasing of the new shares: Case of Increase of the capital of the company, each shareholder will be given priority in purchasing a number of the new shares in proportion to the shares he/she already owns. Arrangements for exercising this priority shall be as stipulated by the regulations of the amendment of the law of commerce enacted on March 1969.

Translation 2:

Priority in purchasing new shares: In case of increase of capital, the shareholders of the Co. have priority in purchasing the new shares, and the manner of using the said priority will be as per Legal Bill of Commercial Law ratified in March 1969.

Analysis: The translation of the first text is correct grammatically and semantically. In the second translation, the sentence:

“صاحبان سهام شرکت در خرید سهام جديد به نسبت سهامی که مالکند حق تقدم خواهند داشت”

Is absent; hence, *incomplete passage error*. The translator has also made *register error*, using “co.”

Based on the analysis of all Articles in the memorandum with 64 articles, the following information was obtained: 10 translations were completely correct and 28 errors were observed. The two translators have made 4 *incomplete passage*, 6 *mistranslation*, 1 *punctuation*, 7 *word choice*, 6 *omission*, 1 *register*, 2 *grammar*, and 1 *addition errors* in their translations. These errors are formulated in the following figures in terms of frequency and percentage:

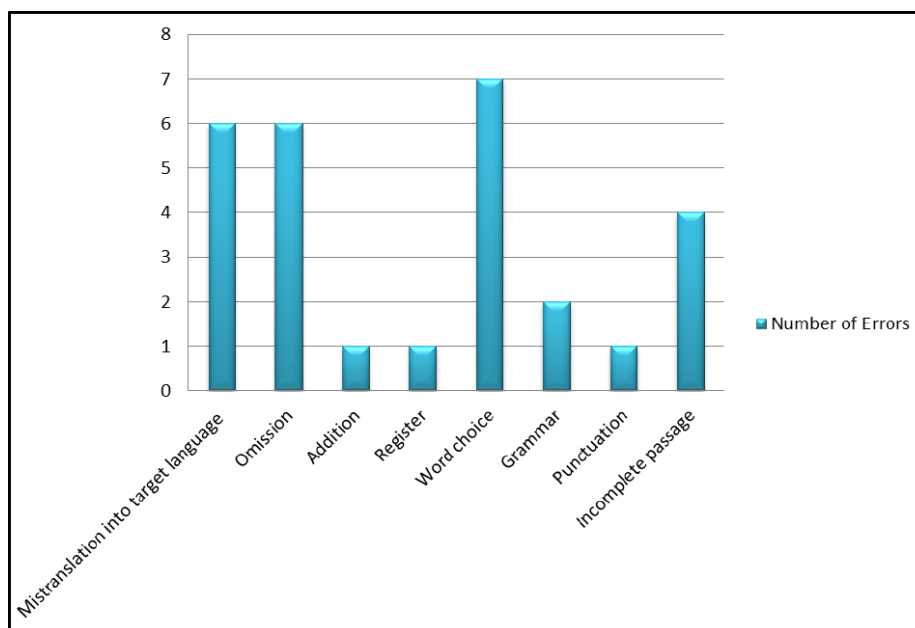


Figure 4.5: Frequency of errors in the memorandum with 64 articles

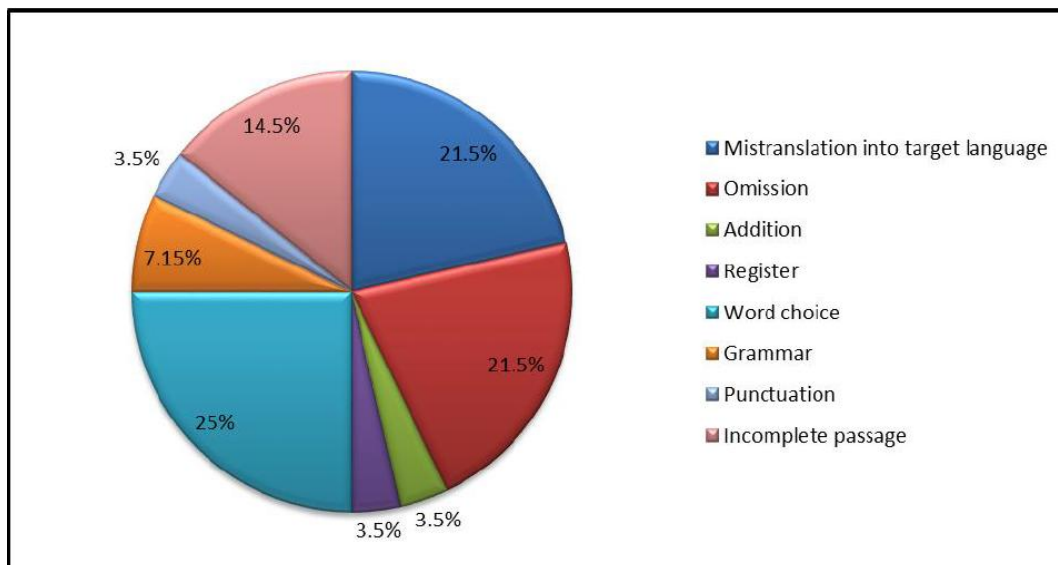


Figure 4.6: Percentage of errors in the memorandum with 64 articles

B. Results

In the following figures, the percentages of all errors are shown. The errors that affect semantic adequacy, causing the meaning of ST to be absent in TT are: ‘*mistranslation into target language error*’ (14%), ‘*omission error*’ (20%), ‘*word choice error*’ (20%) and finally, ‘*incomplete passage error*’ (8%). These results show that the translators were successful in translating many of the targeted texts. They also show that a number of translations are not semantically adequate, i.e. the translators were not able to adequately reproduce the meaning of source text in the target text.

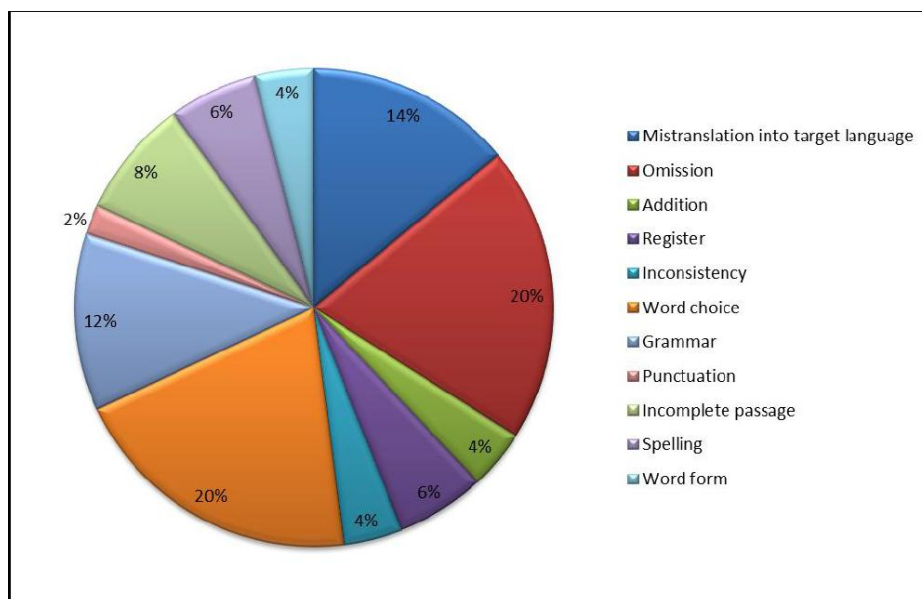


Figure 4.7: Percentage of all errors

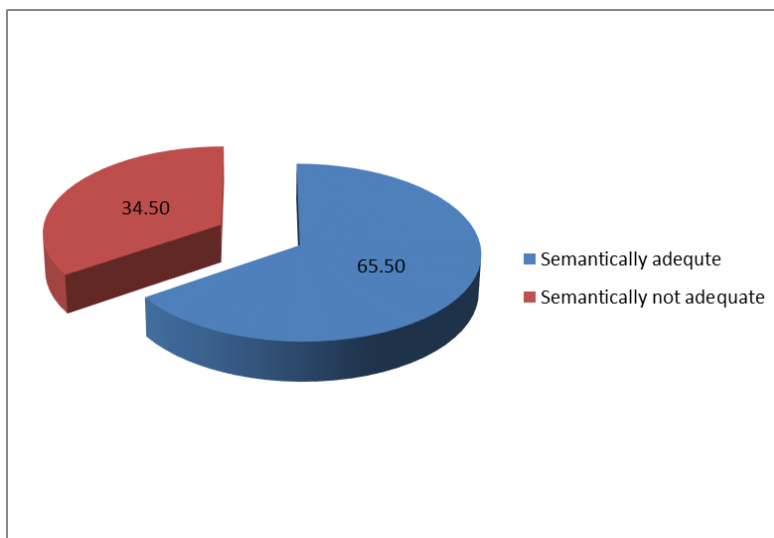


Figure 4.8: Percentage of semantic adequacy

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

A. Discussion of Results

In connection with the first research question of this study, the above results revealed that many of the articles under study have been translated correctly in terms of semantic adequacy, while a number of them have been erroneously rendered in this respect. This way, the semantic loads of words which carry the exact message of the source language have not been conveyed to the target language, which in some cases can lead to misunderstanding. As an example, when the translator does not translate a considerable part of a sentence and makes an “*incomplete passage error*”, the meaning of ST is not transferred properly to TT. Likewise, when a translator omits a word in a sentence that affects the meaning of the whole sentence (for example, using ‘registration book’ instead of ‘registration share book of the company’), the meaning of the original text is not carried over to the target language and thus, the translation turns out to be semantically adequate.

As for the second research question, it is to be noted that since translations were made by official translators of the judiciary, with due regard to the fact that these translators are usually acquainted with official texts and legal circumstances, the researchers not only expected lack of errors in their renderings, but also expected to learn from them. Unfortunately, upon analyzing the selected texts, the above-stated errors were observed. The causes behind such errors can be: 1) Time restriction which is usually imposed by customers, 2) Repetition of the same document forms during years and 3) Unfamiliarity of non-official translators (who work in accredited translation offices) with legal texts and legal translation.

B. Concluding Remarks

This study investigated translation quality assessment regarding English translations of Persian official texts done at Iranian accredited translation offices based on the ATA framework. Thus, effort was made to unearth the errors which translators of accredited offices make in the rendering the articles of association, and check to what extent such renderings are semantically adequate.

The findings of the study showed that there are definitely certain errors in such translations affecting semantic adequacy. Actually, by studying all the selected samples, it was revealed that ‘Mistranslation into target language error’ (14%), ‘omission error’ (20%), ‘word choice error’ (20%) and ‘incomplete passage error’ (8%) have respectively a negative impact on semantic adequacy of the English translations. In general, in all the ninety English samples, 31 errors were discovered to negatively affect semantic adequacy. It can, therefore, be concluded that translators of accredited offices should be more careful in doing their translations and do their utmost to make them semantically adequate, i.e. construct a quality product.

A final word is that the findings of this study may be useful for translation accredited offices, students of English language translation who like to be professional as legal translators and work in accredited offices, and generally those who need to be aware of importance of semantic adequacy in translation.

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An Interpretation of the Significance of ‘Time’: The Case of English and Persian Proverbs

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Abstract—This study aimed at investigating how people conceptualize time as an essential capacity of human cognitive processes and how such conceptualizations are reflected in a given language. Accordingly, English and Persian cross-culturally equivalent proverbs which reflect deeply rooted perspectives of the two languages were analyzed. After the classification of proverbs in four functions, Evan's (2007) model of temporal conception was utilized to analyze them. To understand the process of verb(s) and the role given to the word ‘time’ in those proverbs, Halliday's (1994) System of Transitivity was applied. Also, the frequency of senses and roles given to the word ‘time’ were calculated and compared to find out the dominant sense and roles, respectively and the probable cause(s) underlying their similarities and/or differences. Our findings indicated that English proverbs made use of more influential words and concepts about the significance of time. The overall results are discussed and implications are mentioned.

Index Terms—significance of time, proverb, language, culture, system of transitivity

I. INTRODUCTION

An appropriate use of the concept of time has long been a real challenge for all human societies. In addition, all over the world, different people perceive the concept of 'time' in quite different manners. That's why the provision of a comprehensive as well as operational definition for the concept of time in a non-controversial approach applicable to all natural languages and contexts has invariably eluded prominent philosophers and linguists. While different dictionaries suggest several definitions for the concept of 'time', the common ground in most definitions is that 'time' is a space. In *The Treasure of French Language*, for example, 'time' has been defined as “a coherent and uncertain space where there are organisms and objects and which is characterized by two properties of continuity and succession” (Imbs & Quommada, 2004, p. 908). Furthermore, in the *Dictionary of the French Language*, 'time' is also defined as "a space where it seems all organisms are irreversibly changing and transforming as well as events and phenomena which are consecutively in interaction with each other", (Robert, 2007, p. 625). In such definitions, there is only one general time. Elsewhere (Evans, 2007) the conception of time is depicted as “a neurological activity in the brain, innate timing mechanisms, which give rise to perceptual moments, and thus are in large part responsible for what we perceive” (p. 735). Therefore, it is possible that different neurological activities are the cause of different conception of time in different cultures or even within a certain culture. On the other hand, we have to empirically accredit that 'time' is a power imposed on our will, mind and spirit which can shape different modes in accordance with significant conducts by humans.

As one important factor in modern daily life and social interaction, time plays a large role in everyday communication among different societies with different cultural backgrounds. Obviously, where there exists no thorough understanding of the similarities and differences towards the meaning formation of time in people's mind, misunderstanding may occur in their social interactions. Proverbs are certainly one way to scrutinize people's thoughts and ideas towards different concepts. In addition, they are considered as one of the frequent units of language occurred in everyday communication. They are also rooted in folklore, religion, history and culture of a particular society (Honeck, 1997). Therefore, an investigation into the proverbs in different communities and cultures can reveal some hidden aspects of their people's viewpoint towards different social matters.

As a significant indicator of the culture and viewpoint of people, proverbs are mostly deprived of being the focus of the previous studies primarily conducted on people's conception of time. Smith (1961) sees ‘time’ as conceptually culture-bound. He believes that “cultures have different perspectives about time. In some cultures time is an important part of people's life while in the others it is not. Three distinct versions of cultures and their views on time can be considered: cultures run by time, cultures without time, and cultures with unique perspectives on time” (p. 83). Other researches in this area, to name a few, were about whether Chinese and English think differently about time reflected in Yahoo and Google news, (Chen, 2007), and using special features of language to think about time (Boroditsky, 2000; Casasanto & Boroditsky, 2008), in none of which the proverbs of the language of interest were used as the unit of study. Moreover, despite a seemingly contrastive viewpoint of Iranian and English people on time, almost

no research has so far been conducted on the viewpoint of Iranian and English people on time. Thus the need to do research on the nature of Iranian and English people's understanding of time reflected in their proverbs remains, especially to see whether the reported findings support that these two groups have the same or different meaning for time.

Accordingly, the current study is an attempt to answer the following research questions: (1) how do Persian and English proverbs reflect Iranian and English people's perspective towards the significance of time in everyday life? (2) If there is found any differences in perspective, what is the rationale behind such differences?

II. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

One of the major institutionalized mechanisms in comprehending abstract concepts such as time and the way individuals act with regard to that understanding is definitely the use of conceptual metaphor which is closely related to works of scholars such as Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Lakoff (1993). In its wide sense, conceptual metaphor is defined as "cognitive structures that allow us to conceptualize and understand one domain in terms of another" (Sharifian, 2015, p. 475). Recent studies have revealed that how use of language reflects culturally constructed metaphors (Kövecses, 2005; Quinn, 2005; Yu, 2003) that provide a basis of the way people from different cultures conceptualize their experiences differently. Such conceptual metaphors manifest themselves in almost all components of a given language including proverbs (Bartel, 1983) which reveal cross-cultural differences in their conceptual systems. In order to better understand a language or the way people of that language think, one may inevitably resort to the study of proverbs. The culture-specific attribute of proverbs manifests most when two languages are compared with each other. As a ubiquitous literary genre, proverbs have certainly a rich communicative function in different natural languages. Obviously, the extensive use of proverbs in a given language pertains to their crucial role they play in the negotiation of meanings among the speakers of that language. With this in mind, any failure to understand the metaphoric meaning of proverbs may break down any level of communication. Specifically, confusion may arise in terms of two cultures or languages in contact with each other.

A. *Proverbs: Definitions and Investigations*

The study of proverbs is termed as 'paremiology' and according to Mieder (2005), research on proverbs dates back to human written records. With respect to the origins of the proverbs, Meider (2004) postulates that proverbs are invented by people either intentionally or unintentionally, as expressed in its definition in Lord John Russell's: "A proverb is the wit of one and the wisdom of many." (ibid, p. 1). According to Dahl (2003), proverb is a product of the extremely popular medium of communication. In the view of Meider (1985, p. 119) proverb is defined as "a short, generally known sentence of the folk which contains wisdom, truth, morals, and traditional views in a metaphorical, fixed and memorable form and which is handed down from generation to generation". Norrick (1985, p. 78) asserts that "proverb is a traditional, conversational, didactic genre with general meaning, a potential free conversational turn, preferably with figurative meaning". Beside the aforementioned attempts to define proverb, there have been some efforts to investigate this complicated language unit. In his study entitled "Idiotisms, Proverbs, Maxims (sayings)", Greimas A. J. (1961) investigated proverbs and maxims using structural and linguistic methods. By evaluating Signifier and Signified, he compared their structures using syntagmatic axis and indicated how implicit meanings and semantic halo are produced (the examples provided are in French language).

As proverbs are deeply rooted in people's culture and thought pattern (Honeck, 1997), they can show the attitude of a particular society towards different social concepts (see, for example, Mieder & Lewandowska (2008)). Time may not be an exception in this regard. Obviously, not everyone all over the world looks at the concept of time in the same way due to the fact that their fundamental understanding of notions such as time is based on "conceptual mappings which do not appear to be universal" (Sharifian, 2009, p. 244). Some cultures are wary of time passing by, while others run their lives by the clock. This assumption can be reflected in the language expressions people use every day like in proverbs. These expressions are reflections of the ideas and beliefs of communities and societies which are used as the weakest base of logic in everyday communication (Partovi, 2000).

B. *The Nature of Temporal Expression and Concept of Time*

Two primary problems of the conception of temporal expressions include: the metaphysical and linguistic problem of time. The former can be elaborated as "if we are aware of time, and yet cannot be said to actually perceive it without, for instance, 'the precise ticking of clocks', which serve to measure its 'silence', what is the nature and status of time?" (Evans, 2004, p. 4). The linguistic problem states that although time is central to our understanding of other events, we do not use time's own terms to talk about it and use other events, e.g. motion and space (Casasanto and Boroditsky, 2008). To better understand the nature of temporal conceptions, we should first answer the question of how our minds receive the temporal conception. It is necessary to look at the problem from temporal cognition point of view, i.e. "that aspect of conceptual structure which relates to our conceptualization of time" (Evans, 2007, p. 733). This view postulates that "it concerns the mental function responsible for temporal experience at the pre-conceptual level, as well as organization and structuring of the temporal concepts at the conceptual level, i.e. within the conceptual system". But there is a third view which claims, as Evans puts it, "[...] whereas temporal experiences do not have a veridical

sensory-motor dimension in the same way that, say, a motion event has, they are nevertheless *phenomenologically real*" (Evans, 2008, p. 32) [emphasis added]. This level of temporal representation derives from our own experience of the concept of time.

Conception of time in different cultures has to date been the focus of very few researches. Boroditsky (2001), in a study of Mandarin and English conception of time, when they use English as a medium of interaction, showed that English people talk about time horizontally but Mandarin talk about time vertically. In another phase of this study it was shown that the degree that English and Mandarin think about time vertically depends on their age when they start learning English. In another study, Cassanto and Boroditsky (2008) investigated whether people *think* about time by the use of special representation even when they do not use language code. In so doing, they devised six psychological experiments and found that judging about temporal duration is dependent on special conception but not the reverse. They concluded that "our mental representation of things we can never see or touch may be built, in part, out of representation of physical experiences in perception and motor action" (ibid, p. 579).

After all, the question is how we can get into people's mind and find out the ways different languages conceptualize different abstract concepts such as time. Kimeny (2006) claimed that it is possible to get insight into people's world view by investigating their vocabulary and especially proverbs. In another study by Gibbs and Bietel (1995) it was suggested that "many proverbs reveals the presence of metaphorical schemes that are ubiquitous in everyday thought" (p.133). The previous research on this issue can be divided into two main categories. In the first category, the proverbs were analyzed in general without focusing on certain notions. In this regard, Zolfaghari (2009) investigated Persian proverbs from semantic and syntactic perspectives. He explained borrowed, foreign, broken and taboo vocabulary in Persian proverbs and distinguished the syntactic part of proverbial sentences and their types. In another study, Kolahdouz Mohammadi and Nabifar (2012) comparatively analyzed 200 Persian and English proverbs using Halliday's systemic functional linguistics which resulted in describing the distribution of Halliday's processes in Persian and English proverbs. In the second category of studies on proverbs, a specific notion was put as the center of investigation. Numerous studies have revealed the reflection of different concepts in proverbs, including the use of proverbs in literature (Kimilike, 2008; Hadissi, 2010; Zolfaghari, 2012), understanding psychological disorders of a society through proverbs (Alexander & Schmiere, 2010), doing useless tasks (Shafaghi & Timdari, 2014), woman (Zahedi & Imani, 2011; Masoumi & Rahiminejad, 2012), color (Aliakbari & Khosravian, 2013) and animal (Estaji & Nakhavali, 2011). As it is clear abstract concepts such as time were deprived of being the focus in past studies on conceptual reflections in proverbs. This paper aims to investigate the conception of time represented in Persian and English proverbs to find out any probable differences.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Corpus

Cross-culturally equivalent Persian and English proverbs related to the concept of time, from *The Comprehensive Dictionary of Persian Proverbs* (Dehgan, 2004), *A Versified Dictionary of Farsi Proverbs and their English Equivalents* (Mousavi, 1963), *Dehkhoda's (1980) Amsal o Hekam* for Persian proverbs and *Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs* (2004) for English ones were chosen as the corpus of the present study. The researchers checked the genuineness of the proverbs throughout the aforementioned sources and chose the common ones for analysis. The selected proverbs in the two languages were cross-checked with a comparative bilingual dictionary called *A Comprehensive Dictionary of Proverbs* (Gorjian & Molonia, 2004). This dictionary compiles Persian proverbs taken from Iranian culture along with their equivalent English ones from original proverbs and sayings in English literature. The authors of this dictionary have applied three methods in order to find the exact equivalents of the respective proverbs: 1. Entries wherein structural, semantic, as well as conceptual approaches are taken into account to find the equivalents. 2. Entries wherein structural and conceptual approaches are used through the same meaning equivalent but their literal meanings are not presented in Persian equivalents. 3. Entries wherein the conceptual translation is only suggested. It should be noted that as the nature of this study demands, we just took into account the proverbs in which the word 'time' was directly used.

B. Analytical Framework

Evans' (2007) model of conceptual meaning of time and Halliday's (1994) transitivity system were applied as the bases for analysis in the current study. Evans' (2007) model was applied in this study primarily because it was sought to find the conceptual viewpoints of people in Persian and English languages towards the senses of time as an abstract idea. Hence, the primary objective of the use of Evans' (2007) model was to compare and contrast the Persian and English proverbs in terms of the conceptual senses of time whereas Halliday's (1994) transitivity system aimed to find out the process of the verb(s) used in both Persian and English proverbs and the role given to the word 'time' in those proverbs as a means to reflect experiential meaning of time in the proverbs of the two languages. A brief explanation of the two models follows:

C. Evans' Model of Conceptual Meaning of Time

This model analyzes different concepts of time in terms of meaning, concept elaboration and distinct grammatical patterns which, in general, make a specific lexical concept for time as follows: **Duration sense**, in which the meaning

of time is associated with the notion of duration, elaborated as length and is grammatically considered as a mass noun. The **moment sense** determines a discrete temporal point, is elaborated based on ego-centric motion events, and is grammatically a count noun. In **Instance Sense**, time is thought of as an instance of a particular event, process, etc. With regard to lexical elaboration, time in this sense relates to something which is an instance of something else. In terms of grammatical structure, time in this sense can occur both in ordinal and cardinal numbers. The **Event Sense** indicates the beginning and end of an event sequence. The **Matrix Sense** refers to an unbounded entity which has unlimited elapse with an independent nature from what it subsumes. It is elaborated in terms of steady state and is a mass noun grammatically. The **Agentive Sense** has the ability to affect the environment or our lives in terms of bringing about a change of state which is grammatically a proper noun. Time in **Measurement System Sense** is used as a measurement system which correlates between a periodic behavior in the external world and our internal experience of duration. Time in **Commodity Sense** refers to an entity which is valuable and thus can be traded, acquired, etc. which is grammatically a mass noun. A summary of this model is given in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1.
SUMMARY OF LEXICAL CONCEPTS FOR TIME (EVANS, 2007: 748)

Name	Meaning	How elaborated	Grammatical encoding
Duration sense	Assessment of magnitude of duration	Length, e.g., a long time	Mass noun: can appear with definite article and some quantifiers
Sub-sense 1: protracted duration	Duration 'slower' than usual	Slow motion, e.g., time drags	
Sub-sense 2: temporal compression	Duration 'faster' than usual	Fast motion, e.g., time flies	
Moment sense	A discrete temporal 'point'	Ego- centred motion, e.g., the time is approaching...	Count noun: can appear with definite and indefinite articles
Instance sense	An occurrence of some kind	N/A	Count noun: can appear with ordinal and cardinal numbers
Event sense	A boundary-even of some kind	Ego- centred motion, e.g., Her time is approaching...	Count noun: cannot take articles but can be preceded by pronouns and possessive noun phrases
Matrix sense	An unbounded elapse conceived as the event subsuming all others	Non-terminal motion, e.g., time flows on forever	Mass noun: cannot be preceded by definite or indefinite articles
Agentive sense	A causal force responsible for change	Agent- centred action, e.g., time devours	Proper noun: cannot be preceded by definite or indefinite articles
Measurement- system sense	A means of measuring change and other behaviors, events, etc	Motion events oriented with respect to an inanimate centre, e.g., The time is moving towards 10	Proper noun or mass noun
Commodity sense	A resource	The manipulation of resources, e.g., We're spending time together	Mass noun

D. Halliday's Transitivity System

As a significant classification of Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar, Transitivity System analyzes various types of processes. Transitivity shows "how speakers encode in language their mental picture of reality and how they account for their experience of the world around them" (Simpson, 1993, p. 88). It is believed that "the particular form taken by the grammatical system of language is closely related to the social and personal needs that language is required to serve" (Halliday, 1970, p. 142). In Halliday's terms, these needs are called 'functions'. According to Halliday (ibid), these functions govern the form of clauses. They may be *representation* (ideational function), an *exchange* (interpersonal function), and a *message* (textual function), the first of which was used as the focus of this study due to its idea-revealing nature. For Halliday (1994), "process" is referred to as "the system of transitivity" (p.106) which essentially goes under the rubric of six main process types: **Material processes**, are expressed by verbs of "real tangible actions" (Eggins, 1994, p. 230) such as *walk, kick, speak, kill, and hit* which are processes of physical doing. Material verbs have as their principal participants an *actor (agent)*, that is, someone who performs the action, and a *goal (patient)*, the thing or person which is acted on. The 'actor' is obligatory, whereas the 'goal' is optional (Halliday, 1994). **Mental processes** are expressed by verbs to do with feeling, sensing, affection, and thinking. Verbs such as *love, hate, know, think, understand, and see*, fall into this category. According to Halliday, two participants are involved in this process: *senser (experiencer)*, a conscious being that feels or senses, and the *phenomenon (experienced)*, the one/thing that is sensed or felt. **Relational processes** are characteristically expressed by linking verbs such as *is, or have*. Halliday (ibid) subdivides this type of process into *attribution* and *identification*. *Carrier* and *attribute* are identified as participants in attribution processes, and *identified, identifier, token, and value* in identification ones. **Behavioral processes** are "typically processes of physiological and psychological behavior" (Eggins, 1994, p. 250), expressed by verbs such as *cough, yawn, and smile*. Halliday described them as half way between mental and material processes. These verbs have only one participant; the person who smiles or laughs is termed the *behavior*. **Verbal processes** are "processes of verbal action: saying" (ibid, p. 251), which include a large category of verbs such as *say, report, claim, and question*. Halliday regards the participant performing the saying as the *sayer*, what is said is the *verbiage*, and the person it is said to as the *target*. **Existential processes** consist of clauses in which there acts as a grammatical subject.

The only significant participant is the thing, or person, being affirmed as existing. This is termed the *existent* (Halliday, 1994). A schematic representation of this system is given in Table 2 below:

TABLE 2.
HALLIDAY'S TRANSITIVITY SYSTEM

Process	Definition	Participant
Material	it is the process of doing	a. Actor b. Goal c. Range d. Beneficiary
Mental	verbs to do with feeling, sensing, affection, and thinking	a. Senser b. Phenomenon
Relational	Being and relation among entities via identification, attribution, and possession	a. identifying 1. Token 2. Value b. Attributive 1. Carrier 2. Attribute 3. Circumstance
Behavioral	Physiological and psychological behavior	a. Behaver b. Behavior
Verbal	Activities related to information	a. Sayer b. Receiver c. Verbiage
Existential	Existing without predicting anything additional about it	Existence

E. Procedure

The design applied to conduct this study is descriptive. The procedure for data analysis was in two main phases as follows:

In the first phase of the study, the researchers divided Persian and English proverbs based on their functions in the respected language. Such classification resulted in the four functions of patience, value of time, significance of presence, and educational principle. The validity of the classification was cross-checked by two Ph.D. holders in Persian literature and two in Applied Linguistics. Then, based on Evans's (2007) model of conceptual senses of time in language, the selected Persian and English proverbs were compared and contrasted with each other. After that, Halliday's System of Transitivity was applied to the proverbs to find out the process of the verb(s) used in both Persian and English proverbs and the role given to the word 'time' in those proverbs.

In the second phase of the study, descriptive statistics were utilized to evaluate the relative frequency of the categories mentioned above for both English and Persian proverbs. Finally, the probable cause(s) underlying similarities and/or differences between the reflections of senses and role of the word 'time' in the proverbs were addressed.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, first the results of proverb analysis based on Evans' (2007) model of conceptual meaning will be detailed. Then, analysis of proverbs in terms of Halliday's (1994) Transitivity System will be presented and discussed. Finally, the overall results are discussed based on the previous studies.

A. Conceptual Meaning of Time Reflected in Persian and English Proverbs

The results of the analysis of English and Persian proverbs in terms of the senses used in both languages are presented in Table 3 below.

TABLE 3.
ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH AND PERSIAN PROVERBS IN TERMS OF THE SENSES AND FUNCTIONS (%)

Classification Sense	Significance of present		Patience		Value of time		Educational principle	
	P	E	P	E	P	E	P	E
Duration	5.88	0	0	0	11.76	6.44	0	6.44
Moment	5.88	0	0	0	0	3.22	0	3.22
Instance	0	3.22	0	0	0	0	0	6.44
Event	0	0	5.88	0	5.88	0	0	9.66
Matrix	0	0	0	0	11.76	19.32	23.2	3.22
Agentive	0	0	5.88	12.88	5.88	0	0	12.88
Measurement	0	0	0	0	0	3.22	0	0
Commodity	0	0	0	0	11.76	6.44	0	3.22

As the Table shows, approximately both languages have proverbs—although in different senses—about 'the value of time' with 47.04 % for Persian proverbs and 38.64% for English proverbs. Also, English language has twice as many proverbs about 'educational principle' as Persian (45.08% for English and 23.2% for Persian). This is while English still

has more proverbs about 'patience' but fewer about 'significance of present' than Persian. This quick comparison shows that English proverbs deal with the concept of time more than Persian ones.

To show the exact difference between the two languages in terms of proverb types regarding time, the minimum and maximum percent of proverbs about time used in different function classifications and senses were compared. As Table 3 presents, the minimum use of proverbs about time is in 'significance of present' and 'patience' for Persian language, while this is just in 'significance of present' for English. With respect to the minimum use of proverbs in Persian language, the above-mentioned Table shows the same proportion of the percent of proverbs for the two function classifications, i.e. 'significance of present' and 'patience' (11.76% for each classification). This similarity of the ratio in Persian uncovers that in Persian culture one has two options in dealing with opportunities; either to take advantage of it ('significance of present') or to wait ('patience') and let things happen. In contrast, the low frequency of proverbs on 'significance of present' in English (3.22%) demonstrates that in order to show this function, English people may resort to linguistic tools other than figurative ones. On the other hand, the maximum percent of proverbs in Persian and English about time was in 'value of time' and 'educational principle', respectively. This reveals that with regard to the transmission of cultural norms and knowledge to the next generation with the aid of time proverbs, it is evident that English people prefer to consider educational principle more transferrable via such proverbs; whereas, Persian people accentuate on the value of time to transmit their cultural understandings about time to their future generation. In addition, such comparison shows that the two languages are similar in this regard and their proverbs of time talk *less* about its importance without reference to its value or educational message.

Evans' (2007) model of conceptual meaning of time provides us with more detailed analysis of the similarities and differences in terms of the viewpoints of English and Persian languages toward time, especially when the senses cross with the function classifications. Accordingly, the following results can be obtained:

B. Proverbs with 'Significance of Present' Function

English and Persian languages, as reported above, are different regarding this function. A quick look at Table 3 can lead us to such point of difference: while English people only use proverbs related to 'significance of time' in 'instance' sense, Persian proverbs use it in 'moment' and 'duration' sense. This shows that Persian people see time in the present moment as something that moves towards them and that they may change their behavior based on what should be done at that time as in proverb (1). Also, they see the present time as something that may not stop and pass by without paying attention to what is going on, as in proverb (2). However, English people have a different view and understand the present time in comparison with other times (proverb (3)). In fact, if they want to imagine the present, they should remember another time and relate it to the present. Such view reveals that unlike Persian people who put an emphasis on the magnitude of duration to reflect the significance of present, English people consider the occurrence of the stated purpose in a specific time.

- (1) *væghtə kaar kərdən cholaagh əast o væghtə khordæn gholchomaagh*
When it is time to work, he is clumsy, but when it is time to eat, he is bully
- (2) *zəmaan bekhatərə kəsi əz gærdæš nəmistæd*
The flow of time never stops for anybody
- (3) *There is no time like the present*

C. Proverbs with 'Patience' Function

Contrary to the previous category, there is not much difference between English and Persian proverbs in 'patience' function. Both languages have proverbs in this function under the sense of 'agentive' which represents 'time' as something that can make a change in the environment as the examples provided in proverbs 4 and 5. This word for word equivalence in this example show that when people of both languages come to encourage others to be patient, they turn to the agentive sense of time to convince them that the passage of time can, by itself, be of great help. However, a slight difference can be found in the use of time under 'event' sense in this function. While Persian has one proverb (6) in this sense, English doesn't have any. This difference tells us that for Persian people 'patience' in time is meaningful only when they relate it to the beginning and end of events in the future to make the consequences vivid, especially in this case where the proverb user wants to talk about not doing something for ever by referring to a flower which never blossoms. On the other hand, we can trace no track of empty promise in English proverbs since the presence of such phenomenon may degrade the value of patience in English culture.

- (4) *Time is a great healer*
- (5) *zəmaan səfəa dəhənde æst*
Time is a healer
- (6) *væghte gole nei*
When the straw flowers

D. Proverbs with the 'Value of Time' Function

Although there are some differences in the use of proverbs in this function between the two languages with proverbs in 'event' and 'agentive' sense in Persian and not in English (proverbs 7 and 8) and in proverbs in 'moment' and 'measurement' sense in English and not in Persian (proverbs 9 and 10), similarities can be found in 'duration', proverbs

(11, and 12), 'matrix', proverbs (13 and 14), and 'commodity' senses, proverbs (15 and 16). This shows that in order to extend the value of time, both languages put an emphasis on the magnitude of the duration, i.e. the progression of the action in time. Also, the two languages see time as something precious like money, gold, something that flies away and cannot be found which reflects the amount of hard effort one should spend to grasp it.

- (7) *Zæmaan baa šətaab migozæræd*
Time passes quickly
- (8) *Zæmaan bæ æghæb bær næmigærædæd*
Time does not go back
- (9) *Take time while time is going away*
- (10) *One cannot turn back the clock*
- (11) *Væght tæng æast o æ'maal bəsiar*
Time is short and there are a lot of works to do
- (12) *Time flies*
- (13) *Zæmaanə gozæštə nəyaayæd bæ bær*
Time past cannot be recalled
- (14) *Lost time is never found again*
- (15) *Væght tælaast*
Time is gold
- (16) *Time is money*

E. Proverbs with 'Educational Principle' Function

As it can be seen in Table 3, most of the proverbs in different senses in this function belong to English language except for the 'matrix' sense in which Persian has more proverbs than English (see proverbs 17-19 below). This, comparing to the value of time function, reveals that English people exploit almost all senses about time as fully as possible to teach moral sense and behaviors, whereas Persian people do likewise to make people understand the value of time. Considering this huge gap in Persian proverbs in different senses under 'educational principle' and the large number of Persian proverbs in 'value of time' function, it can be concluded that compared to the English proverbs, Persian culture does not show interest in didactic pieces of advice on time as much as it shows to some precious things when talking about time. In other words, unlike Persian people, for English ones, the value of time is more understandable when used as a teaching point than as something worthy.

- (17) *Zæmaani mæiaasaai zə aamookhtæn*
Never be ignorant of learning
- (18) *Hær zæmaani raa mærdaanist*
Each time has its own men
- (19) *Procrastination is the thief of time*

F. Description of Time in Halliday's Transitivity System

Table 4 summarizes the results of the analysis of proverbs based on Transitivity System. With regard to mental and behavioral processes, it can be seen that none of the languages processes time using verbs to do with feeling, sensing, affection as well as thinking. Nor do they process time referring to physiological and psychological behaviors. Such similarity in the viewpoints of the people in both languages highlights the fact that the concept of time cannot transfer the above-mentioned processes. Meanwhile, a sharp contrast is observed in activities related to information i.e. verbal process. While 6.24% of English proverbs go under this category, no Persian proverbs make use of such process. The most frequent use of 'time' and the related concepts in proverbs are for 'goal' and 'actor' process in English (with 25% for both roles) and 'carrier' and 'actor' in Persian (both with 23.80%) from 'relational' and 'material' processes, respectively. It shows that Persian language views time as an element of being that takes a rather intangible quality contrary to the English one that uses time as a thing that takes a real tangible action. In other words, as examples in proverbs 20 and 21 illustrates, Persian people understand 'time' with letting it be by referring it to other entities while English people grasp it as the entity itself which receives a down-to-earth action.

TABLE 4.
THE QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH AND PERSIAN PROVERBS BASED ON TRANSITIVITY SYSTEM (%)

		Process		Process		
		Material		Relational		
		P	E	P	E	
Participant	Actor	23.80	25	Token	0	0
	Goal	9.52	25	Value	0	3.12
	Range	0	0	Carrier	23.80	12.5
	Beneficiary	0	0	Attribute	9.52	3.12
	Circumstance	14.28	6.25	Circumstance	9.52	9.37
		Mental		Behavioral		
		P	E	P	E	
		Participant	Senser	0	0	Behaver
Phonomenon	0		0	Behavior	0	0
Circumstance	0		0	Circumstance	0	0
		Verbal		Existential		
		P	E	P	E	
		Participant	Sayer	0	3.12	Existence
Reciever	0		3.12	Circumstance	0	0
Verbiage	0		0			
Circumstance	0		0			

This makes understanding the importance of time for English language users easier than Persian ones. Additionally, as the Table represents, there is no proverb with the use of 'mental' and 'behavioral' process in both Persian and English language. On the other hand, the concept of 'time' is used in 'goal', 'value', 'existence', 'sayer' and 'receiver' in English more than Persian, while in 'carrier' and 'attribute' it is utilized more in Persian and about the same in 'actor' in the two languages.

(20) *Zæmaanə gozæštə nəyaayæd bə bær*

Time past cannot be recalled

(21) *An inch of gold will not buy an inch of time*

Analysis of the English and Persian proverbs revealed that in most cases English proverbs used influential techniques, such as comparing the present with other times, use of tangible actions, comparing time with precious things that are difficult to grasp, and having an educational view in comparison with techniques Persian proverbs used like relating time to the beginning of an event in far future, use of intangible actions, and lack of educational view used in Persian proverbs. These techniques reveal the distinct conceptual metaphors of 'time' that Persian and English people embody and communicate which supports results of previous studies in this area including Kövecses (2005), Quinn, (2005), Sahrfian (2009), and Yu (2003). In addition, As Afifi (1992) puts, such conceptualizations can be preserved via proverbs. The results of the present study can enrich this line in that proverbs can even maintain techniques of influencing people about certain issues, especially abstract ones like 'time'.

The fact that proverbs of time, as shown above in detail, can be the mirror to the way people of a certain culture value time is in line with many studies documenting the guiding character of proverbs in dealing with the complexity of culture and its different elements (Gibbs & Bietel, 1995; Honeck, 1997, Partovi 2000; Dahl 2003; Mieder & Lewandowska 2008; Zahedi & Imani, 2011; Estaji & Nakhavali, 2011; Alikhani & Khosravian, 2013). Although this is particularly true for tangible concepts in proverbs, the data in this study reveals that such reflection happen for abstract concepts, such as time, as well.

Additionally, results confirm claims of previous researchers like Kimeny (2006), Honeck (1997) and Partovi (2000) that it is possible to get insight into a people's mental conceptualizations through investigating their proverbs used in everyday life. Ghobadi (2013) is also of the idea that not only is proverb a good instrument to unveil social and cultural beliefs of people, but also they can make people accept a certain ideology. The results of the present study can be another movement supporting culture-revealing function of proverbs in abstract concepts like 'time'.

V. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The research reported in this paper helped to illuminate some less acknowledged aspects of language reflected in proverbs. The investigation of linguistic patterns hidden in time-related proverbs of the two different languages in this study, namely Iranian and English languages, shed light onto the conceptualization of time by the natives of the two camps. This was done through the analysis of the proverbs of the two languages both conceptually and linguistically. To highlight the important findings of this study, reference can be made to the following points:

(I) Understanding and appreciating how two apparently different languages conceptualize an abstract concept like time may have some effects in the social communication of people from these two languages in their daily lives especially when it comes to important communication types like business and political interactions.

(II) Proverbs related to a certain concept like time reflect the communal sense of people in a society, though they may be different cross-culturally, in a way that the language users believe in the ideology the proverbs represents.

Research into the nature of language-culture relationship with the focus on proverbs can be furthered through (a) investigating proverbs that indirectly refer to the concept of time with the use of words, such as ‘tomorrow’, ‘last year’ and the like, (b) analyzing diachronically the *change(s)* in view points towards time cross-culturally during history, (c) pairing native speakers’ view from the two cultures with linguistic and conceptual analysis of the proverbs regarding time.

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Study on the Effect of Structural Priming on Chinese EFL Learners' Language Production

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Abstract—Structural priming refers to the phenomenon that people tend to reuse the structure which is previously heard, read or written when a sentence is produced. It's believed that it is the structural priming that makes the sentence structure function and that priming leads to the activation of the structure. Different from previous studies, the present study aimed to investigate the effects of structural priming on language production for relative clauses from the perspectives of pauses, latency and correctness, and to examine effects brought by different patterns of priming. After reviewing the previous studies, subjects were determined who shared the same first language background and were at the same stage in second language learning. Then, experimental materials were carefully chosen. Based on these materials, an experiment was conducted, which included three stages: pre-test, priming and post-test. Priming patterns were categorized as listening and speaking, reading and writing. By analyzing the statistics, it's found that the performance between pre-priming and post-priming was significantly different. Structural priming could improve the performance in language production and exert positive effects on language production for Chinese EFL learners. Moreover, the performance based on listening and speaking priming was significantly different from that based on reading and writing priming. Different patterns of priming produced different effects. It's hoped that the study could provide some implications for the improvement of second language teaching and further suggestions for future researches in this field.

Index Terms—structural priming, priming patterns, priming effects, EFL learners

I. INTRODUCTION

In the past few decades, a new form of repetition has arisen. Structural priming refers to the phenomenon that people tend to reuse the structure which is previously heard, read or written. In a classic experimental study, Bock (1986) found that speakers were inclined to repeat the similar sentence structure during language production. It revealed that the sentence structure of participants' previous experience affected their subsequent utterances (Bock, 1989; Bock & Loebell, 1990). Ever since, this phenomenon has been the subject of empirical study. As in other fields in cognitive psychology, the tendency to reuse the aspects of knowledge affected by the repetition can be used to judge the nature of that knowledge. The tendency to repeat certain aspects of sentence structure helps researchers discern some typical characteristics when people construct in language production.

Structural priming is identified with many different structures. Structural priming for spoken and written language production has been shown as the following types of structures in English: active vs. passive, prepositional vs. double object dative, and optional complementizer production (Bock, 1989; Ferreira, 2003; Pickering & Branigan, 1998; Pickering, Branigan, & McLean, 2002). Among these researchers, Bock is the pioneer in this area studying transitive structure and dative structure. While for priming structures like RC attachment and Noun-phrase relative clause, Branigan et al. (2000), Cleland and Pickering (2003) are leading researchers.

The repetition of sentence structures is a popular phenomenon in language use. The phenomenon of reoccurrence of previously experienced sentence structures can be found in spoken and written language production, which is shown at all levels of linguistic structure, from phonological factors through the consideration of phrases and sentences to the organization of the target language (DuBois, 1986; Schenkein, 1980; Tannen, 1987). It happens in children (Kempen, 1977) as well as in adults. No matter in the controlled experimental investigations or in our daily communication, structural priming occurs both in children and adults (Estival, 1985; Weiner & Labov, 1983; Bock, 1986, 1990; Pickering & Branigan, 1998; Smith & Wheeldon, 2001). In a word, structural repetition is pervasive.

In addition, researchers are also interested in the study of bilingual structural priming, considering whether second languages are learned differently than first or native languages and when and how bilinguals switch between languages in conversation (Myers-Scotton, 1997). To our relief, researchers have recently realized that structural priming provides a method for assessing structural representations and processes in bilinguals. True cases are found in languages such as: Dutch, German and Spanish. Schoonbaert et al. (2007) found priming between Dutch L1 speakers and English L2 learners. Dutch L1 were more likely to use an English prepositional-object structure after hearing an English prepositional-object structure than an English double-object structure in language production. Later, priming was found in English complex noun phrases (such as *the baby that is thin*) with Dutch L1 speakers (Bernolet, Hartsuiker, & Pickering, 2007). And the phenomenon of priming was also found between German L1 and English L2 in a picture description task for datives (Loebell & Bock, 2003), in which participants first repeated a priming sentence and then

described a picture in the other language. The result showed that English datives were produced more likely after priming of German dative sentences and vice-versa. Similar effects for dative sentences between Spanish and English were also found by using sentence recall (Meijer & Fox Tree, 2003).

Relative clauses are subordinate clauses that modify nouns, or pronouns, or noun phrases. For example, the phrase *The man who was sitting over there* contains the noun *man*, which is modified by the relative clause *who was sitting over there*; in sentence *He to whom I have written*, the phrase contains the pronoun *he* which is modified by the relative clause *to whom I have written*; in sentence *The bird in the tree, which is about to fly*, the complete phrase is the noun phrase.

In addition, according to the Spreading Activation Model (Pickering & Branigan, 1998), priming is the result of both combinatory nodes and lemma nodes under residual activation. On this basis, the experiment on the priming of complex noun phrases in language production was conducted (Cleland & Pickering, 2003). In the experiment, a confederate described a picture of a colored object using a noun-relative clause structure *the sheep that's red*. The result showed that there was an evident priming effect for noun-relative clause as the participants repeated the structure just used by the confederate. During the priming process, one influential factor is a lexical boost, when the noun in the priming sentence is the same as the one in target sentence, the tendency to repeat the structure is stronger; the other is semantic relatedness between the priming and target which enhance priming. Thus, priming effect will be strong with the same noun such as *sheep-sheep* rather than *knife-sheep*, and *the sheep that is red* being more likely after *the goat that is red* than after *the knife that is red* (Pickering, 2008). Indeed, the lexical boost and semantic relatedness can fully explain the semantic boost in target language processing, in which production of the target *the sheep that is red* leads to activation of the lemma *goat*. As the link between the lemma *goat* and the *N, RC* node keeps some activation from priming, the activation of *N, RC* node is strengthened (Schoonbaert et al., 2007).

Looking back into the previous studies conducted by numerous researchers, on the one hand, it is found that most experiments about structural priming center around dative structure, transitive structure and few experiments about noun-relative clause. Meanwhile, these studies are mostly about priming effect on L1 learners and between English and foreign languages such as German, French and Spanish. Few studies research about priming effect on Chinese EFL learners. On the other hand, previous studies are mostly conducted through a way that participants hear or read a certain sentence structure, then are asked to describe a given picture to see whether they follow the structure of the priming sentence. Therefore, this study takes a somewhat different measure of investigating structural priming, different patterns of structural priming are employed to see the effects.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Questions

The present study employs an experimental approach to investigate the effects of structural priming on language production among Chinese EFL learners and is intended to address the following research questions:

1. What is the effect of structural priming on target utterances?
2. Does priming effect differ with different priming patterns?

The first question aims to find effects of structural priming on language production, and how the former can influence the latter. It argues that under the influence of structural priming, whether the performance can be promoted with regard to aspects like: response time, fluency and errors. The second question aims to compare the different effects of priming after different priming patterns.

B. Subjects

The participants are fifty-six College English learners from the School of Public Administration, Nantong University, with an age ranging from 19-21 years old. These students are assigned to Class B among College English learners. Moreover, they all have received formal English education in their third year from primary school. They have studied English for about twelve years. Therefore, these students are equipped with enough knowledge about English and it is well believed that they are competent to do a good job in the experiment.

C. Design and Materials

The experiment involves three stages. Firstly, participants are required to describe a series of pictures which are respectively designed for the typical use of relative clauses. Participants' utterances are recorded. Secondly, the priming activity is taken. Participants are divided into two groups receiving different patterns of priming. The first group is asked to listen to sentences one by one and repeat them; the second group is asked to finish the gap filling task. Finally, participants finish another task of picture description and their utterances are also recorded for later analysis. An example of the activity is shown in Figure 1.

Stage 1
Picture Description

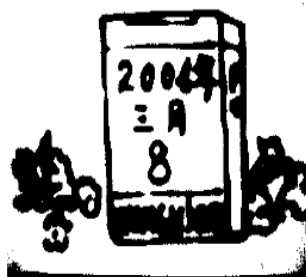


Reference words: which, that, who, whom,
whose, when, where and why

Stage 2
Priming

Group1 (listening and repeating)	Group2 (gap filling)
a. A shop should keep a stock of those goods which sell best. b. She studied hard at school when she was young, which contributes to her success in her career.	a. A shop should keep a stock of those goods sell best. b. She studied hard at school when she was young, contributes to her success in her career.

Stage 3
Picture Description



Reference words: which, that, who, whom,
whose, when, where and why

Figure 1. Activity Designed for Relative Clauses

For the relative clauses, with the given relative pronouns and relative adverbials, participants are expected to produce sentences like *An apple that seems fresh* or *There is an apple on the table which is fresh* instead of sentences like *There is an apple on the table* or *There is an apple on the table and it is fresh*.

D. Procedure

The experiment took place in a language lab with necessary equipment; the participants were told by the researcher that they would take part in an activity. Of course, they were not told what would be expected of this activity, which in a sense ensured the objectiveness of this study. Before the experiment, they were told to choose their own seats at random and turn on their computers. The researcher opened the recording system and got everything ready for recording. When everything was perfectly done, the activity started.

In this experiment, the first stage proceeded like this. Firstly, the participants were given a piece of paper (Named Paper No.1) on which there were five pictures designed for the relative clause. The paper was handed out one by one by their teacher to make sure that every participant received it. Then the researcher gave the instruction that they were given ten seconds to take an overall look at them and they should respond immediately on hearing the onset bell and they should try their best to create utterances which make sense. When participants began to describe these pictures, the recording system was also set to record their utterances, which was done without their notice. Secondly, when they had finished the description task, the participants were randomly divided into two groups. For the first group, as the researcher was reading 10 sentences (sentences of relative clause) to the students one by one, they were told to listen to them as attentively as they could and try their best to repeat those sentences. For the second group, they were given another piece of paper (Named Paper No.2) handed out by the researcher. The paper was designed for the purpose of structural priming through gap filling. Thirdly, after priming activity, both of the two groups were given another piece of paper (Named Paper No.3) with five pictures on it. The paper given to the two groups was the same. Then the researcher gave the same instruction as that given in the previous picture description. Participants' target utterances were also recorded.

E. Data Collection

The audio material was transcribed and the target utterances from picture description were scored for structural forms for data collection.

In the experiment, sentences were scored as wh- and that relative clauses which should contain a noun, or pronoun, or noun phrase followed by a subordinate clause functioning as modification (e.g., I often write to my brother who have been abroad for two years.). If the utterances contained other structures, these sentences were regarded as others in

analysis. In addition, parameters about the performance were also considered. They included fluency, latency and error rate, which were respectively scored on the condition that how many pauses were made during utterance, how much time consumed before utterance and how many mistakes concerning grammatical rules were made during utterance. Moreover, priming effects under the influence of two different patterns of priming were also measured.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Results

In the experiment, 280 sentences were yielded before the priming activity, and 280 sentences were produced after the priming activity. These two groups of statistics were compared based on three parameters: pauses, latency and errors. In addition, the priming effect on target sentences uttered after priming pattern one (140) was compared with the effect on target sentences uttered after priming pattern two. Paired-Samples T Test was employed to determine whether the effect of priming activity was significant and Independent-Samples T Test was employed to measure which pattern shows stronger influence.

1. Structural Priming in Different Groups

TABLE 1
PAIRED-SAMPLES T TEST OF THE EFFECT ON RELATIVE CLAUSES

Priming condition	Pauses			Latency			Errors		
	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
No Priming vs. Priming Pattern One	15.000	28	.000	8.007	28	.000	6.431	28	.000
No Priming vs. Priming Pattern Two	10.190	28	.000	11.082	28	.000	10.003	28	.000

*P<0.05

Table 1 shows two groups of statistics. Whether in the group of priming pattern one or in the group of priming pattern two, participants' language production was significantly improved with the results gained with no structural priming ($t(56) = 15.000, 8.007, 6.431, 10.190, 11.082$ and $10.003, p < 0.05$). The result demonstrated participants' fewer pauses and errors, and less time when producing language. Based on the data, it's found that structural priming are effective on relative clauses.

2. Structural Priming of Different Patterns

TABLE 2
GROUP STATISTICS OF DIFFERENT EFFECTS ON RELATIVE CLAUSES

Pattern	Pauses			Latency			Errors		
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
One	28	.9643	.74447	28	1.4643	.57620	28	1.0357	.74447
Two	28	.5714	.63413	28	.8571	.59094	28	.6429	.62148

TABLE 3
INDEPENDENT-SAMPLES T TEST

Priming Pattern	Pauses			Latency			Errors		
	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
One vs. Two	2.126	56	.038	3.892	56	.000	2.144	56	.037

*P<0.05

Table 2 & 3 demonstrate that language production primed by the second pattern in the experimental was significantly different from that primed by the first pattern ($t(56) = 2.126, 3.892$ and $2.144, p < 0.05$). By analyzing the two groups of statistics, it is found that the average score by pattern one (0.9643, 1.4643 and 1.0357) is significantly higher than the score by pattern two (0.5714, 0.8571 and 0.6429). To sum up, participants of priming pattern one have a higher mean of total mark in the analysis done on relative clauses, which indicates the stronger effect brought by priming pattern two.

B. Discussions

1. Significant Effects of Structural Priming

TABLE 4
THE PERFORMANCE IN TARGET UTTERANCES

Condition	Relative Clauses		
	Pauses (ts)	Latency (ms)	Error Rate (%)
No Priming	1080	22	20
Priming	430	11	7
Difference	650	11	13

Note. ts=times
ms= minutes
%= percentage

In the experiment, it is demonstrated that performance after priming is significantly superior to that after no priming. Firstly, target utterances have fewer pauses (respectively by 430, 1080) than utterances uttered after no priming. Apparently, participants' fluency in utterances is guaranteed. Secondly, less time is consumed before utterance (respectively by 11, 22), which also contributes to the fluency in the target utterances. Thirdly, error rate in target utterances is significantly reduced (respectively by 7, 20), which significantly improves the accuracy. Clearly, such a result provides the evidence compatible with the hypothesis that structural priming benefits participants by reducing the processing costs during structure generation (Bock, 1986; Levelt & Kelter, 1982).

The result has a number of implications for language production. It is evident that the result demonstrates that structural priming reduces the time of sentence structure production, which provides confirmation of the *effort reduction* theory advanced by Levelt and Kelter (1982), and Bock (1986). According to the theory, the function of structural persistence which is brought by structural priming is to reduce the processing costs of the language producer and so to promote the fluency and rapidity of utterance. Generally speaking, the reduced time which is 11ms in total might not seem like a tiny reduction in processing costs. However, it should be remembered that the figure represents the effort saved for only the first phrase of an utterance prior to utterance onset. Therefore, it is necessary to look at speakers' performance after onset. The number of pauses may reflect the time taken to articulate a sentence. Thus, we cannot rule out the possibility that structural persistence enables further reductions in the number of pauses beyond the initial phrase after utterance onset. The number of mistakes is another criterion to measure speakers' performance. Influenced by priming sentences, structural persistence enables enormous reductions in mistakes, which ensures the quality of target utterances. Generally, the current study provides evidence in line with the view that structural persistence can provide significant reduction in processing efforts and thus supports the hypothesis made in the study that structural priming exerts positive effects on language production.

2. Priming Effects of Different Priming Patterns

TABLE 5
PERFORMANCE OF DIFFERENT PRIMING PATTERNS

Pattern	Relative Clauses		
	Pauses (ts)	Latency (ms)	Error Rate (%)
One	269	6.8	0.87
Two	160	4.0	0.62
Difference	109	2.0	0.25

Note. ts=times
ms= minutes
%= percentage

From Table 5, it is evident that in the experiment conducted on relative clauses, the effect brought by priming pattern one is weaker than that brought by priming pattern two. Thus, what is behind the phenomenon that can contribute to the different effects?

It is known to all that the most basic of all human needs is the need to understand and be understood and the best way to understand people is to listen to them (Ralph, 1999), which implies the significance of listening and can be used to verify the findings in the study. Just as the best way to understand a person is by listening, the best way to master a structure is by listening. However, for the priming effects on relative clauses, priming pattern two exhibits stronger effect than priming pattern one. When the two groups of participants for the two patterns of priming were interviewed about their reaction in the priming activity, the group with listening and speaking priming responded that when they were listening to the given sentences, they felt quite puzzled because they had no pre-notice of the structure intended for description. As is known to all, the relative clause is a difficult part in grammar and difficult for learners to master, as it has different relative pronouns (that, which, who, whom, whose) and relative adverbials (when, where, why). Each is differently used based on the noun, pronoun and noun phrase before them. Thus, just listening to the priming sentence for once is not enough for them to get all the information, not less to repeat every part in the sentence. For the group with gap filling as priming activity, they responded that each gap was designed for the sensitiveness of the relative clause, before they made the decision about which relative pronouns or relative adverbials to choose, they had carefully read the whole sentence which helped a lot in later tasks. From participants' responses, it is reasonable to explain why the second group performed better.

IV. CONCLUSION

A. Findings of the Study

In the study of structural priming, many researchers have done a lot to investigate the effects of structural priming. Apart from the researches done on structural priming with L1 learners (Bock, 1986), more and more researches focus on L2 learners in order to identify the priming effect on L2 language learners (Leeman, 2003; Ayoun, 2001; Iwashita, 2003; McDonough, 2006), of which not many studies are centered on Chinese L2 learners. Thus, this study is devoted to explore the structural priming effect on Chinese EFL learners.

The major findings of the study are presented according to the research questions. As to the first research question, Chinese EFL learners' performance in target utterances is significantly enhanced by structural priming, which indicates

that structural priming functions in EFL learners. Moreover, the phenomenon of structural priming really exists in EFL learners' language production and target structures tend to follow priming structures. With regard to the second research question, effects of different priming patterns are examined. The results show that in relative clauses, participants who had received reading and writing priming performed better than those who had received listening and speaking priming. The result can be attributed to the different properties of the two priming patterns.

B. Limitations of the Study

In this study, the findings concerning the effects of structural priming on language production are reported. However, some limitations are inevitably constrained by objective conditions.

Firstly, only 56 participate in the experiments, and all of them are just from the same university. The size of samples is limited. Whether the results can be generalized to a larger scale depends on further research.


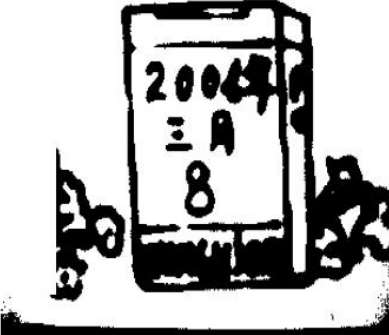


Secondly, types of participants involved in this study are limited. They are all Chinese EFL learners. The study can be further conducted between L1 learners and L2 learners to compare the similarities and differences.

Thirdly, there are some uncertain factors in the experiment. Great efforts are made to ensure the validity, but participants' involvement may be different due to such factors as memory, enthusiasm, concentration, etc., which more or less influence the results.

C. Summary

Structural priming, as a method to look into the mechanism of language processing, has been of considerable interest in psycholinguistic area. In general, it has effect on target utterances. It is believed that structural priming can cast light on structural representation and processing and the mechanisms underlying the language production. Moreover, it can allow us to get a thorough understanding of the development of EFL learners' structure representation. This thesis provides a different perspective in the research and is hoped to provide reference for practical English language teaching.

APPENDIX A. PICTURES FOR RELATIVE CLAUSES

	Before	After	
1	 <p>red apples</p>	 <p>Mothers' Day</p>	
2	 <p>my hometown</p>	 <p>I spent 4 years in this university.</p>	

3



Her songs are very popular among youngsters.



My friend introduced him to me.

4



overlook



It's going to rain.

5



The boy is a stranger to the old man.



A gift from my father.

Reference words: which, that, who, whom, whose, when, where and why

Reference words: which, that, who, whom, whose, when, where and why

APPENDIX B. PRIMING SENTENCES

Group1(listening and repeating)	Group2(gap filling)
a. A shop should keep a stock of those goods which sell best. b. She studied hard at school when she was young, which contributes to her success in her career.	a. A shop should keep a stock of those goods _____sell best. b. She studied hard at school when she was young, _____ contributes to her success in her career.
a. The letter that came this morning is from my father. b. I've got a bottle of beer, but I haven't got anything that I can open it with.	a. The letter _____ came this morning is from my father. b. I've got a bottle of beer, but I haven't got anything _____ I can open it with.
a. The student who answered the question was Joan. b. I know the man whom you described.	a. The student _____ answered the question was Joan. b. I know the man _____ you described.
a. I'd like a room whose window overlooks the sea. b. I fell in love with the girl whose brother was my best friend.	a. I'd like a room _____ window overlooks the sea. b. I fell in love with the girl _____ brother was my best friend.

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Individual Dynamic Assessment: An Analysis of Iranian EFL Learners' Listening Comprehension Errors

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Abstract—Error analysis is very important in facilitating listening comprehension. By error identifications, teachers can help learners to practice more in the problematic areas. However, only a few research studies investigated error analysis in listening comprehension and nearly no study has been conducted on the analysis of errors in a dynamic assessment-based (DA) instruction; therefore, the present study tends to investigate the listening source of errors which hinders listening comprehension of Iranian EFL learners. To achieve this, the present study conducted a detailed description of the listening process framework in an interactive EFL listening classroom. That is, an interactionist dynamic assessment-based approach was applied to investigate the source of EFL learners' listening comprehension errors. The participants included six lower intermediate students. The materials used in the enrichment sessions (eight sessions lasting for one hour in DA-based instruction) were listening tracks taken from Listening Advantage Book 3. The qualitative analysis of data revealed that the learners' listening comprehension problems could be categorized into (1) unknown words, (2) grammatical structures, (3) pronunciation, (4) lengthy sentences and (5) unfamiliar phrases or collocations. Finally, according to the findings, it can be concluded that learners' errors are indicators of learners' mastery in a performing task therefore; teachers can both figure out the level of their students and are able to understand what kinds of problems students encounter while practicing listening comprehension in classes and instruct them accordingly.

Index Terms—dynamic assessment, listening comprehension, error analysis

I. INTRODUCTION

Listening is considered as the most critical language skill for language learning and a prerequisite for the developments of other skills (Vandergrift, 1997). Following Nunan (2002), listening is a receptive skill and the manipulation of the receptive skills is both hard to achieve and needs a lot of patience on the part of both the teachers and the learners. However, in respect of listening process, the teacher can help the learner to actively engage himself/herself in learning.

Central to the entire discipline of teaching listening is the concept of error analysis. Errors are at the heart of our understanding of the learners' mastery in performing a task and a teacher can easily figure out their students' level on the basis of the committed errors. Not only error investigation could be of great help for teacher to plan instruction for remedial teaching but also the learners can figure out the problematic sources and practice more to progress. However, far too little attention has been paid to error analysis in the listening comprehension in general and in Iranian context in particular; therefore, the present study seeks to identify the learners' listening problems by analyzing the source of errors in Iranian EFL learners.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Dynamic Assessment (DA)

Assessment is a fact of daily life. In today's world, people are assessed to gain promotion at work, education or to get a driver's license. To do so, people make great effort to succeed and even any assistance during assessment is considered unfair (Birjandi & Mosalanezhad, 2010). The first serious discussions and analyses of dynamic assessment emerged more than 80 years ago by the Russian psychologist, L. S. Vygotsky. Vygotsky (1978) found out that what a learner can do independently is only the existent ability or knowledge, and a learner can act better even with others' assistance. (Lantolf & Poehner, 2004, p. 50) defines this approach to assessment as: "Dynamic assessment integrates assessment and instruction into a seamless, unified activity aimed at promoting learner development through

appropriate forms of mediation that are sensitive to the individual's (or in some cases a group's) current abilities. In essence, DA is a procedure for simultaneously assessing and promoting development that takes account of the individual's (or group's) zone of proximal development."

Back to previous debate, a large and growing body of literature has investigated dynamic assessment as an approach to assessment which varies from the former kinds of assessment. Anton (2009) believes that DA is as an alternative to traditional assessment not a complementary to them. DA allows observing individuals' independent performance to reveal the learners' existent knowledge. If one wishes to understand the processes of development, to help individuals overcome learning difficulties and to support the ongoing development, then merely solo performance observation as a former kind of assessment is insufficient. Instead, what is needed is active collaboration with individuals to enhance learner's development. Educationally, this means that assessment – understanding learners' abilities – and instruction – supporting learner development – are as integrated activities. This pedagogical approach is known as dynamic assessment (Poehner, 2008).

B. Approaches to Dynamic Assessment

Lantolf (2009) states that there has been two approaches to dynamic assessment. interactionist DA and interventionist DA. Considering both approaches, instruction as mediation and assessment are joined as a single activity with the aim of recognizing learning potential and promoting development. These two approaches have general kinds of mediation in common which could be available for the mediator. The latter encompasses a set of predetermined hints and clues that is offered to the learner through the learning process. The arranged hints are scaled from implicit to explicit. A distinctive feature of this approach is that mediational strategies do not depend to the responsiveness of the learners; henceforth, mediation could be provided to a large number of individuals simultaneously. According to Minick (1987, p. 119) interactionist dynamic assessment follows Vygotsky's preference for "qualitative assessment of psychological processes and dynamics of their qualitative development". Following Vygotsky as cited in (Lantolf, 2009), in educational assessment we cannot measure the learners' knowledge; in fact, interpretation of learning is needed and it can be provided by interaction and collaboration within learning. Consequently, mediation in interactionist DA is in contrast with mediation provided in interventionist DA; that is, mediation is not prefabricated but is negotiated and is in accordance with the learner responsiveness.

C. Corrective Feedback

The role of context-sensitive feedback has been less explored in language learning and it is almost ignored by former types of assessment (Ellis, 2009). Generally, the only feedback students received was their marks on the achievement tests and in fact, there was no immediate feedback regarding the context and the learning process. More precisely, the only focus was on the learning product (i.e., the marks) and almost all teachers followed product-oriented approaches to learning. Corrective feedback could be recognized as a helpful strategy in a dynamic-based instruction class. According to Ellis (2009) corrective feedback is a means of creating motivation and helps linguistic accuracy; that is, it allows learner to self-correct by the help of the teacher.

Following Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994), corrective feedback may happen explicitly or implicitly. In form of comprehension and checking, it occurs implicitly while, in case of providing the correct form by the teacher, or others, it may come by explanations that occur explicitly. They proposed a regulatory scale that moves from implicit to explicit feedback. Following the scale, the teacher encourages learners to self-correct, ask peers to help and finally teacher provides explicit feedback in form of explanation. Error correction in the learning process could be analyzed during active collaboration between learners and tutors. By providing feedback, self-correction is activated, so learners have more time to rethink and regulate their thought about the ongoing task.

D. Assessing Listening

Following Rost (2001), listening in language teaching is a complex process that helps people to understand the spoken language. It is very important for acquiring other skills and is very important to acquire a new language. "Listening is the channel in which we process language in real time- employing pacing, units of encoding and pausing that are unique to spoken language." (Rost, 2001, p. 7). According to Yun Kul (2010), a person who is learning a foreign language is expected to speak in that language, but in fact listening is a prerequisite for learning other skills as seen in children listen months before starting to talk. Particularly, listening comprehension lessons are good tools for teaching grammatical points and the new vocabularies in a contextualized context. In any language classroom, listening plays a crucial role in the development of other language skills and language learning. Listening can help students have a better comprehensible input and a better output while communicating.

Nunan (2002) believes that in the past, listening comprehension tended to be testing not teaching as the teacher played a tape and asked the learners to answer comprehension questions but the learners were not taught how to understand the text. In fact, a product-oriented approach was selected to test the listening and only the answers were important to the teacher not the process of acquiring the answers. There are other weaknesses that made this approach more testing than teaching. First, the students had no pre-listening activity in advance so, they had no idea of what is going to be heard and it can be called a highly unnatural situation. Second, the students were not informed what kinds of questions they would be asked after listening so, no choice but to listen to every detail and finally the listening material

was usually audiotaped, without almost any visual aids. On the contrary, dynamic assessment as a kind of process-oriented approach focuses on teaching the listening by manipulating the listening process through providing appropriate feedbacks.

Approaches to assessing listening

Following Buck (2001) there have been three approaches to assessing listening: discrete point approach, integrative approach and communicative approach.

Discrete point approach

Buck (2001), during the dominance of Audio-lingual method, discrete point testing was the most common approach to testing which is advocated by Lado. The fundamental idea in discrete point testing is the possibility of isolating the separate units of linguistic knowledge and test each separately. According to Lado (as cited in Buck, 2001) listening comprehension is a process of discriminating the sounds of language. Mainly, selected responses are used in discrete point testing. The most common ones are true/ false and multiple-choice options. Phonemic discrimination tasks, paragraph recognition and response evaluation are among discrete point testing tasks.

Integrative testing

Oller advocated integrative testing. "Whereas discrete point items attempt to test knowledge of language, one bit at a time, integrative tests attempt to assess a learner's capacity to use many bits all the same time" Oller (as cited in Buck, 2001). The basic idea is about using a language not knowing about it. Listening close, dictation, sentence repetition, statement evaluation and translation are the tasks in integrative testing.

Communicative testing

Communicative testing developed in response to communicative language teaching. Communicative language teaching is based on the idea for communication, in a particular situation with a particular purpose. Following Widdowson (as cited in Buck, 2001), by communicative testing, it is claimed to test the use of language not the usage and distinguishes between Chomsky's competence and performance and added that communicative tests should test performance not competence: simply put, they should test the language use in ordinary situations.

E. Error Analysis (EA)

Error analysis was proposed by Corder in the 1970s. Following Nzama (2010) error analysis (hereafter, EA) is a type of systematic, linguistic analysis of errors committed by the learners. Errors indicate the learners' level in their target language developmental stages (Lengo, 1995). As he continues, errors contain valuable information on how foreigners acquire a language. "They are significant in three different ways. First, to the teacher, in that they show how far towards the goal the learner has progressed. Second, they provide to the researcher evidence of how a language is acquired, what strategies the learner is employing in his learning of a language. Thirdly, they are indisputable to the learner himself because we can regard the making of errors as a device the learner uses in order to learn" (Corder, 1967, p. 161).

Regarding errors, native and foreign speakers differ greatly as a result of competence. Errors committed by language learners are due to the linguistic deficiency while the errors native speakers make, are as slips of the tongues (Lengo, 1995). "The study of error is part of the investigation of the process of language learning. In this respect it resembles methodologically the study of the acquisition of the mother tongue. It provides us with a picture of the linguistic development of a learner and may give us indications as to the learning process." (Corder, 1967, p. 125).

Following Al-haysoni (as cited in Sawalmeh, 2013) errors are advantageous for both the teachers and the learners. Errors provide valuable information for teachers in three ways. First, it help teachers to correct their errors second, to reinforce their teaching and finally to design remedial teaching. Corder (1981) believes that remedial teaching would be necessary if a mismatch is found out. Remedial teaching happens for the situations or the problematic areas in which they are contrary to the teachers' plan in teaching. Besides, learners are aware of their problems and plan to spend more time practicing the problematic areas.

III. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Students learning a foreign language encounter many problems. EFL learners have more problems in listening skill due to the fact that language teachers have ignored teaching the listening and just viewed it as testing. A great deal of researches have focused on testing the listening while teaching listening is of great importance. Teachers should help the learners how to come to the right responses by manipulating the listening process. In the present study, an attempt was made to help the learners by applying a dynamic-based instruction in listening class while providing context-sensitive feedback for individual learners. Meanwhile, errors are recognized by the instructor to identify the problematic sources for learning. Far too little attention has been paid to error analysis in listening and particularly listening in a dynamic-based instruction class; therefore, the present study aims at providing in-depth knowledge of the problematic areas hindering listening comprehension.

IV. RESEARCH QUESTION

- From analyzing the learners' responses in the listening practices, what factors do interfere with students' listening comprehension?

V. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The initial sample consisted of 20 students studying English as a foreign language. Finally, after administering Oxford Quick Placement test, six lower intermediate students ranging in age from 18 to 25 were excluded for the study on the basis of their level. Due to the guidelines of this test, those who scored 16-30 out of 40 were considered as lower intermediate learners and so were selected for the present study. Persian was the first language of all participants and they were selected from the students of Hafez English Language Institute in Tehran, Iran.

B. Instrumentation

Quick Placement Test

Quick Placement Test (QPT) is a time-saving and reliable English language proficiency test developed by Cambridge ESOL and Oxford University Press and validated in 20 countries by more than 6000 students. Considering practicality, it is quick and easy to administer. There are two versions of QPT: a paper and pen (P&P) version and a computer-based (CB) version which is an adaptive multiple-choice test marked by computer. In the present study P& P version consisting of two parts was used). Part 1 (question 1-40) was taken by candidates who are at or below intermediate level. Part 2 (questions 41-60), is taken only by who have higher ability. The participants of the present study took only the first part due to their proficiency level.

C. Instructional Materials

The main material in the present study was Listening Advantage Book 3 written by Kenny and Wada (2009). This book was a supplementary book for the lower intermediate students. Some units were chosen on the basis of students' familiarity with the topic in their main course book of the institute. The tracks used in enrichment sessions and DA-based listening instruction were similar in terms of the level of difficulty and delivery speed since they were chosen from one book.

D. Procedure

The following steps were taken as the procedures of the study (Table 1):

First, the class started with a warm up to bring the students into the topic. Then, the students listened to the listening track at first to the end to get familiar with the overall theme and context. After that, the teacher (mediator) replayed, paused portion by portion and asked any individual learner to repeat and finally while every student tried to repeat and make guesses, the mediator provided feedback according to the student's response. These mediations are in line with Aljaafreh and Lantolf's (1994) regulatory scale, moving from implicit to explicit varying from learner to learner.

TABLE 1
EXPERIMENT DESIGN: DYNAMIC ASSESSMENT SESSIONS

Assessment	Task Description	Materials	Mediation Offered
Placement test	Listening to a listening test in L2	Texts from listening advantage book	None
Enrichment program: Week 2 (two sessions per week)	1. Listening to a text in L2; 2. Independent oral text recall in L2 3. Oral text recall in L2 after mediation	A listening track selected from listening advantage book(using computers)	Flexible interaction(implicit to explicit) with the mediator
Enrichment program: Week 3 (two sessions per week)	1. Listening to a text in L2; 2. Independent oral text recall in L2 3. Oral text recall in L2 after mediation	A listening track selected from listening advantage book(part-time jobs)	Flexible interaction(implicit to explicit) with the mediator
Enrichment program: Week 4 (two sessions per week)	1. Listening to a text in L2; 2. Independent oral text recall in L2 3. Oral text recall in L2 after mediation	A listening track selected from listening advantage book(friends)	Flexible interaction(implicit to explicit) with the mediator
Enrichment program: Week 5 (two sessions per week)	1. Listening to a text in L2; 2. Independent oral text recall in L2 3. Oral text recall in L2 after mediation	A listening track selected from listening advantage book(health and body)	Flexible interaction (implicit to explicit) with the mediator
Enrichment program: Week 6(two sessions per week)	1. Listening to a text in L2; 2. Independent oral text recall in L2 3. Oral text recall in L2 after mediation	A listening track selected from listening advantage book(study after school)	Flexible interaction (implicit to explicit) with the mediator

The menu of the mediational strategies move from the most abstract (implicit) to the most concrete (explicit). After completion of DA-based instruction in listening, the data was recorded on a digital audio recorder and transcribed finally, the process of error analysis and specification was carried out.

VI. RESULTS

By analysis of the learners' responses a typology of problematic areas were identified which follows as:

Problematic areas
Unknown words
Grammatical structures
Pronunciation
Lengthy sentences
Unfamiliar phrases or collocations

Figure 1 Typology of problematic areas

Unknown words

Limited vocabulary knowledge is an important factor in comprehending the spoken discourse (Hsieh, 2009) In this situation, the learner could not recognize the word even with the teacher's feedback as it was absent in his/her schemata. The student tried to guess but it was unsuccessful and caused the learners' silence. Unknown words are indicators of learners' inability in comprehending the spoken discourse. As indicated in protocol 1, in lines 1 and 5 the learners' silence is seen.

Protocol 1

The speaker said: They started by teasing me.

S: silent

T: replayed

S: they started by.....

T: this is a verb and replayed

S: silent

T: introduced the verb and explained the meaning of "teasing"

S: repeated the entire sentence.

Grammatical structures

Sometimes, the grammatical structures are the main problems hindering the learners' listening comprehension. Mainly, the linguistic information causes trouble understanding what learners hear. Here, as seen in line 2 of protocol 2, the students were dealing with recognizing what kind of grammatical structure it was and so lost their concentration.

Protocol 2

The speaker said: I guess I could use my cellphone.

S: I guess I could using my cellphone.

T: asked "using" with a questioning tone and asked can we use "ing" after could?

S: oh, yes and repeated the entire sentence.

Pronunciation

Sometimes, the students are familiar with pronunciation but fail to recognize the word (lines 1 and 3). Mainly, the learners cannot recognize the words for the way they are pronounced. Following Ur (1984) if a word is pronounced differently from what is heard or learnt, it is natural that learners do not recognize it or even they think such a word does not exist. In addition, wrong pronunciation hinders listening comprehension so teachers should guide learners to listen to exact pronunciation of words and by doing that they will get the native speakers' utterances effective and efficient.

Protocol 3

The speaker said: I am new at doing it online.

S: I am new at myline

T: repeated what the student said and replayed

S: I am new on my line

T: asked "my line" with a questioning tone and replayed

S: guessed and repeated the entire sentence correctly.

Lengthy sentences

Hamouda (2013) states that long sentences could distract the learners' concentration and it is difficult to interpret the meaning of lengthy sentences. Moreover, it is very difficult to understand the meaning of any single word coming out of spoken discourse and the students feel disappointed while they do not understand long sentences. In addition, lengthy sentences can bring fatigue for the learners and need lots of energy to concentrate and comprehend. Totally, long sentences make lots of challenges for learners to comprehend the spoken discourse.

Protocol 4

The speaker said: John, you will be here most of the time standing just inside our shops welcoming the customers.

S: John you will be here most of.....

T: replayed

S: John you will be here most of the time standing..... Its too long teacher.

T: paused at shorter portion

S: repeated what he/she has heard.

Unfamiliar phrases or collocations

Phrases and collocations are a group of words that comes together and have a single meaning. According to Hsieh (2009) unfamiliar phrases or collocations seems as cluster of sounds for the learners which is meaningless too. When the learner heard the phrase, he/she had the tendency toward being silent and did not try to make any guesses for comprehending as it can be seen in lines 1 and 3.

Protocol 5

The speaker said: by that time, your name popped up.

S: by that time, your name.....

T: replayed

S: I cannot understand.....silent

T: popped up means appeared

S: repeated the entire sentence.

The primarily objective of the present study is to recognize the source of learner's errors and then help teacher for the adaptation of the remedial strategies in future teaching. Finally, after analyzing the learners' responses, the frequency of the learners' errors are presented below (Table 2).

TABLE 2
THE ANALYSIS OF ERRORS IN DA LISTENING CLASS

Dynamic assessment sessions	Unknown words	Grammatical structures	pronunciation	Lengthy sentences	Unfamiliar phrases or collocations
DA 1	5	5	8	10	4
DA 2	6	8	7	9	5
DA 3	5	9	7	11	4
DA 4	5	7	6	10	3
DA 5	3	6	8	8	5
DA 6	4	5	7	9	4
DA 7	2	6	7	6	2
DA 8	3	3	5	6	3
DA 1-8	33	49	55	76	30

VII. DISCUSSION

The present article set out with the aim of analyzing the source of learner's errors which hinder their listening comprehension. As indicated in table 2, the most interesting finding is that the lengthy sentences were the most frequently problematic area for the learners. To avoid this problem, language teachers should focus more on the lengthy sentences by spending more time practicing them and better comprehending for learners respectively.

Another important finding was that pronunciation was the second frequent problematic area for the learners. Unfortunately, pronunciation is ignored by both the language instructors and students. In addition, good pronunciation can bring about fluency too. Furthermore, grammatical structures and unknown words were analyzed as the third and fourth problematic areas as obstacles in listening comprehension. Finally, it can be noted that unfamiliar phrases or collocations did not cause much serious trouble for the students in the present study.

VIII. CONCLUSION

This paper has given an account of and the reasons for the widespread use of error analysis on listening comprehension for EFL learners. The findings suggest that in general, both the lengthy sentences and the pronunciation were the most problematic areas for the learners in hindering their listening comprehension. Moreover, unfamiliar phrases or collocations affect listening comprehension for less. These analysis offer insight for teachers to care more about the learners' errors and plan future instruction respectively.

The present study, however, makes several noteworthy suggestions for teachers. To avoid losing concentration of the learners in lengthy sentences, teachers could shorten the long sentences to shorter portions and help students to comprehend. Regarding pronunciation, language teachers can offer students to listen to the precise pronunciation of words and then they will have a better tendency toward listening. Considering unknown words, teachers can introduce the important words which have high meaning load in listening in order to help students overcome their obstacles for comprehending. Finally, while teachers understand the linguistic problems of the learners, they can plan for the instruction of the difficult linguistic items.

These findings also enhance the learners' understanding of overcoming their difficulties by improving their listening comprehension through listening strategies.

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Art as a Master Narrative in Paul Auster's *City of Glass*

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Abstract—The present essay investigates the status of art as a master narrative in *City of Glass* (1985) by the contemporary American novelist Paul Auster. The study is mainly done on the basis of Lyotard's philosophical ideology that defines postmodernism as "incredulity towards meta-narratives". He defines master narrative as a totalizing framework that plays the role of authorizing and legitimizing human knowledge and experience. He asserts that in the absence of meta-narratives of the past, the postmodern world is ruled by mini-narratives or little narratives that create a world of indeterminacy, meaninglessness, and disclosure. Due to the lack of transcendental ideologies of the past, all accepted ideas of the western civilization such as reality, human knowledge, and identity are called into question. Accordingly, the idea of art as a master narrative and as a source of absolute truth is taken into consideration in the current essay. The study is done on the basis of the role of literature and architecture as two significant branches of art in the context of *City of Glass* as a true representation of postmodern individual with all his worries, beliefs and disbeliefs, his fragmented self, and multiplicity of his philosophical, social, political concerns. Accordingly, the current essay traces the root of fragmentation, pluralism, and loss of contemporary subject to the loss of metaphysical certainties in the contemporary world.

Index Terms—postmodernism, art, master narrative, little narrative

I. INTRODUCTION

In the last century, there have happened so many changes, transformations, and developments in all aspects of life. The contemporary era is considered as a period of social, political, economic, and moral catastrophe. As a result of these transformations, so many debates have come into existence among the philosophical and theoretical figures of the world and the heritage of Enlightenment and foundations of western thought and philosophy are called into question. Accordingly, there is much confusion in the contemporary theoretical and philosophical ideologies that did not exist in the past, and any theorist lays his theoretical views and perspectives on his own distinct foundations, rather than the traditional master narratives that were the common universal foundation of all thoughts, theories, and philosophical perspectives.

To take the overall condition of contemporary era into consideration as a whole, it is an effort to break down the traditional conventions and norms. Most of the features of postmodernism are rooted in rejection of authorities and centers, either metaphysical or political. So, the postmodern world is against hierarchy and traditional aesthetic values.

John Francois Lyotard is one of the most significant philosophical and theoretical figures of contemporary postmodern way of thinking. The significance of his theories for the development of the present essay lies in the fact that he considers himself as a philosopher and takes postmodernism into account mainly from the perspective of the crisis in metaphysical philosophy. He mainly deals with the philosophical meta-narratives or grand-narratives and their status in the contemporary era in comparison to the modern age of reason.

Fredric Jameson in his introduction to Lyotard's "Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge", asserts that just as Habermas considers the postmodern period as "crisis of legitimation", Lyotard's main concern is also legitimation and its foundational status being shattered in contemporary era. Also, M.A.R. Habib in *A History of Literary Criticism and Theory* sees the postmodern condition as lack of "totalizing schemes of explanation, and the dissolution of human subjectivity" (M.A.R. Habib. 2005, p.566).

Lyotard points out that the collapse of traditional forms of legitimation which he calls master-narratives, leads to the advent of new forms of scientific legitimation. He takes two major master-narratives of traditional era into account, which are "the liberation of humanity" and "speculative unity of all knowledge." In his opinion, the justification of scientific work is not to produce a model of an outside reality, but to produce new ideas and new statements

Lyotard is mainly concerned with the nature of knowledge in an era that is totally different from traditional society. This era is characterized with computer technology, which has changed the whole world into a global village. According to him, the crisis of legitimation in this society of fragmentation, doubt, and uncertainty is of great significance. He puts his ideology in the framework of Wittgenstein's concept of language games that are defined as diverse types of utterance. The significant issue regarding language games is that they are not defined and legitimized in terms of some external absolute truth, but rather on the basis of their own internal rules. In the same way, postmodern knowledge is legitimized on the basis of little narratives rather than the master narratives of the past.

He argues that resorting to totalizing concepts for authority in contemporary condition is not reasonable. The traditional master narratives are not capable of legitimizing the changing condition of postmodern era. So, the contemporary world is a world of delegitimation and nihilism. Accordingly, since the foundations of traditional thought are shaken and searching for a transcendental authority is no longer credible, postmodern science and knowledge are not supposed to reach an agreement, but to find instabilities.

He asserts that all kinds of interaction can be organized as games having their own specific moves and rules. He describes these language games as following the rules established by their specific players. Since the rules are local, the rules of one game cannot be applied to other games. Then he turns to knowledge and characterizes both narrative and scientific knowledge as consisting of moves that are required to be legitimized. Narrative knowledge representative of pre-modern societies is legitimized in the process of being narrated and applied by people in their daily lives. Scientific knowledge on the other hand, is required to be legitimized through resorting to universal sources of truth or the grand narratives. These grand narratives are defined as overarching ideologies or systems of thought that encompass the whole body of knowledge and scientific knowledge.

In the 20th century however, science is delegitimized, since the traditional grand narratives through which science was legitimized are rejected. So, in the contemporary era, there is no consensus, and we must accept a multitude of language games. Therefore, absolute truth is replaced with local truth that is the main metaphysical view called into question in the contemporary era. Accordingly, the postmodern period is characterized as a mixture of different opposing perspectives, each acceptable in its own right.

II. DISCUSSION

Meta-narrative, also known as master-narrative or grand narrative is the key concept in Lyotard's theory of the postmodern condition. It is defined as an abstract idea that is so comprehensive that can be considered as an explanation to the historical experience and knowledge. Etymologically, meta means about and narrative means story. So, meta-narrative means a story about story. John Stephan defines it as "a global or totalizing cultural narrative schema which orders and explains knowledge and experience."

To clarify the term, giving some examples of meta-narrative is helpful. The enlightenment thinkers for example, believed that human beings are capable of achieving moral and social development through reason and rational thinking. Christians also believe that human nature has the capability of redemption and eternal life. Muslims on the other hand, believe that ultimate victory is for those who purify their heart and soul, and those who accept the divine nature of the world and the invitation of prophets would inherit the Earth. So, all meta-narratives cope with some kind of transcendental and spiritual truth, and imply a philosophy of history based on which knowledge and experience in general are explained.

The objective of this essay is to consider the status of art as a master narrative in the contemporary world, especially the fields of literature and architecture as two significant branches of art. There has always been a close relationship between art and other aspects of human life such as religion, politics, culture, science, and so on, all of which together created human civilization. Each period's art reflects the dominant ideology of that period and, at the same time is itself rooted in that ideology. Traditional idea of art's capacity to generate meaning and to provide a framework for signification and truth is refused in contemporary era. Contemporary literature especially metaphysical detective genre to which *City of Glass* belongs is filled with ideologies and formal characteristics specific to postmodern era.

City of Glass is the first book in *The New York Trilogy*. It is the story of Daniel Quinn, the protagonist who writes his own story in a red notebook. His wife and his son are dead and he wants to relieve himself through writing. From the very beginning, the story is founded on the basis of chance and misunderstanding. On a succession of evenings, late at night, Quinn receives a call. The caller wants to talk to a private detective called Paul Auster. At the beginning, he tries to tell the caller that he has the wrong number but the voice is too determined to accept any answer. At last, he agrees to meet his caller, whose name is Peter Stillman. Quinn assumes the identity of Paul Auster, and Peter Stillman wants Quinn to protect him from his insane father, whom Quinn should find for him. Then after a series of ups and downs, the protagonist's investigation ends with no closure.

Postmodern ideology calls into question the classical distinction between high and low culture. In the past, art was considered as a context for diverse opposing values and points of view fighting for dominance. The reader could draw moral, social, cultural, political, and religious values out of works of art, especially works of literature. For instance, the continuous conflict between good and bad in classical literature always led to the victory of good. Interpretation was considered as a way of grasping the meaning hidden in a work of art. Thus, the work of art was supposed to contain meaning and be useful for the society. In fact, this kind of art is characterized as a device for glorifying man as the most

significant creature of the world through representation of his ideas. So, the field of art was so significant in the past and was considered as a master narrative that contained meaning.

However, with the advent of postmodern era, art was taken into account as representation of the chaotic and fragmented reality of the contemporary world. All traditional methods and techniques are replaced with innovation and fragmentation to liberate man from the limitations and constraints of traditional art. The contemporary postmodern condition is reflected in all kinds of art like painting, sculpture, dance, music, poetry, and literature that are filled with images of uncertainty, deconstruction, dehumanization, and fragmentation.

To take it into account on the basis of Lyotard's theory of legitimation, although the postmodern art is liberated from the grand narratives and no trace of universal truth can be found in it, it is under the authority of little narratives. For example, chance and contingency are among these little narratives. In other words, the criteria of judging the legitimacy of a work of art have changed in the current era and a piece of art is no longer judged on the basis of its moral, social or religious values.

Two significant characteristics of postmodern literature that are in contrast with the idea of art as a master narrative are pastiche and intertextuality. Jameson argues that today's literature is characterized with pastiche that is a celebration of heterogeneity and fragmentation. Intertextuality that is found to a large extent in Auster's work refers to a reliance on other works of literature either by the author himself or by other writers, contemporary or classical. These techniques that are commonplace in Auster's works are representative of postmodernist incredulity towards master narratives.

This ideology is evident in the formal structure of Paul Auster's works. The structure of *City of Glass* is highly fragmented. There is no linear development of the narrative but rather, it seems that the narrative is moving in a circular pattern that will never stop. There are so many levels of reality and fiction the protagonist goes through in search of meaning and reality. He goes from one story to another, from one role to another, from one identity to another, and finally ends in nothingness and disclosure. So, the postmodern world of this novel contains no meaning and Quinn's search for meaning is doomed to failure. Accordingly, contemporary art is not capable of constructing people's identities for it does not contain any values or master narratives. So, it is impossible to understand the world through literature.

Umberto Eco (1994) argues that in postmodern fiction, the fictional world in which the characters inhabit is a rhizomatic world. He describes this realm as "so structured that every path can be connected with every other one." So, there is "no exit into full meaning or certitude." This rhizomatic pattern is evident in *City of Glass*. Quinn goes through different roles and identities throughout the story, from Daniel Quinn as a writer to William Wilson and then to Max Work and from Max work to Paul Auster, and in the end to Quinn as fictional character with no real identity. The search for meaning is also limited to the city with its fragmented internal and external structure. Accordingly, the world of fiction is filled with uncertainty, fragmentation, and skepticism, and does not contain any absolute reality or meaning. So, it can no longer be considered as a master narrative or even containing a master narrative.

Metafiction is one of the main features of postmodern literature in general, and Paul Auster's works in particular. Metaphysical detective genre as a representative of Lyotard's idea of postmodern philosophy and ideology applies this technique to a large extent. It is defined as a technique in fictional writing that draws attention to the process of writing fiction. The reader is constantly reminded that he is reading a work of fiction that is not real. This technique is rooted in the contemporary questioning of reality and truth. Accordingly, Patricia Waugh in her *Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-conscious fiction* (1984), defines the term as "fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artifact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality" (Patricia Waugh, 1984, p.2).

In a work of metafiction, the reader cannot understand reality and everything changes into fiction. The narrator often intrudes the narration to remind the reader of being in a fictional world, either addressing him or her directly or indirectly. In these works, the status of author as an authoritative figure is shaken and the reader is to grasp the meaning of the text. The rules and conventions are destroyed leading reality to become a suspect concept that cannot be understood.

In a work of art, the narrative is a framework through which the reader enters the fictional work, or looks at the fictional world as distinct from the real world. So, the fictional world of the characters is separated from the real world of the reader. However, metafiction calls this framework into question usually through references to the acts of reading and writing that are prevalent in Paul Auster's works. In such cases, the author intrudes into the narration and destroys the framework that separated the author and narrator. For example, in *City of Glass* the narrator receives a call from a man seeking a detective called Paul Auster from the "Auster Detective Agency." So, to take it into account from the perspective of McHale's theory of ontological postmodern fiction, this is the point at which "different worlds are placed in confrontation, or when boundaries between worlds are violated." He characterizes the dominant of postmodernism as:

Postmodernist fiction deploys strategies which engage and foreground questions like ... 'Which world is this? What to be done in it? Which of my selves is to do it?' other typical postmodern questions bear either on the ontology of the literary text itself or on the ontology of the world it projects, for instance: What is a world? What kinds of worlds are there, how are they constituted, and how do they differ? What happens when different kinds of world are placed in confrontation, or when boundaries between worlds are violated? What is the mode of existence of the world (or worlds) it projects? How is a projected world structured? And so on. (qtd. in Nicole 33)

This definition could be used when taking kinds of detective fiction into consideration. Accordingly, while reading a metaphysical detective, a series of ontological questions comes to the reader's mind that leads him to uncertainty about the nature of crime. This can be related to Lyotard's ideology that deals basically with such ontological questions about the postmodern society and postmodern subjects.

David Harvey (1990) in his *The Condition of Postmodernity*, asserts that metaphysical detective fiction is characterized with "fragmentation, indeterminacy, and intense distrust of all universal or totalizing discourses" that are "the hallmark of postmodern thought." To use Lyotard's terminology, this is the overall condition of incredulity towards meta-narratives in the postmodern era. Accordingly, the existence of absolute meaning is rejected.

In contrast to the well-constructed world of traditional detective, postmodern detective is loosely constructed. There are so many clues leading to still more clues that lead astray the detective. There is little opportunity for the detective as well as the reader to find the solution and resolve the mystery. The story is filled with opposing clues and evidence that do not absolutely negate each other. So, the reader remains in an uncertain situation, not knowing what to do. John G. Cowelti in his 2012 essay "Some Notes on the Structure of *The confidence Man*" describes this situation as:

Something is presented, a character, an incident, an idea, anything which might give the reader some clue to the interpretation of the represented reality; then a counter incident or idea appears, powerful enough to destroy the usefulness of the first clue, but insufficient to provide a foundation for a new interpretation of what has been presented. We are left in the air with no way of resolving two mutually exclusive possibilities (qtd. In Bursikova).

Accordingly, the fictional world of the postmodern detective is characterized as a labyrinth that is defined as a construction that is essentially ambiguous. From the point of view of the outside viewers it is so well constructed and amazing, but from the point of view of those stuck in it, it is representative of a chaotic world devoid of any meaning or sense. To take it into account from the perspective of confusion, it characterizes the fictional world of metaphysical detective. The detective is filled with confusion and bewilderment in a chaotic world of clues and evidence. The detective is lost in the labyrinth of the fictional world and is not capable of solving the mystery and attaining closure.

On the basis of the definition given by Merivale and Sweeny, metaphysical detective shatters the assumption that human mind, given enough time and evidence can solve a mystery and attain a reasonable conclusion or closure. For instance, in *City of Glass*, Quinn's ideology is depicted as:

He had always imagined that the key to good detective work was a close observation of details. The more accurate the scrutiny, the more successful the results. The implication was that human behavior could be understood, that beneath the infinite façade of gestures, tics and silences there was finally a coherence, an order a source of motivation. But after struggling to take in all these surface effects, Quinn felt no closer to Stillman than when he first started following him. He had lived Stillman's life, walked at his pace, seen what he had seen, and the only thing he felt now was the man's impenetrability. (Paul Auster, p.65)

So, in the metaphysical detective, the narrator moves from the traditional role of a viewer to the postmodern role of entering the labyrinth of the narrative in search of truth and meaning. He is walking in a chaotic labyrinthine city, searching for a solution. Everything changes so rapidly in this postmodern city. But in the end, he understands that there is no such thing as a center or a solution to the mystery, and his efforts are in vain. In many cases the exhausted detective leaves the mystery unresolved. Thus, the story remains open-ended and it is up to the reader to draw a conclusion.

Postmodern texts are characterized with two kinds of reading. The first one is paranoid reading and the second one conjecture reading. According to Bran Nicole, paranoid reading came into existence on the basis of the notion of postmodernism as the age of suspicion and is rooted in the ideology of critics such as Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud who claim that the literal meaning of a text conceals the connotative meanings that lie beneath the denotative signification of the text. They take interpretation into account as the process of revealing the hidden meanings. Thus, the reader is expected to analyze a series of diverse patterns and images represented in the work, find relations between them and grasp the meaning of the text.

The second technique of reading, conjecture, is closer to the postmodern detective and its open-endedness. Umberto Eco in his *Reflections on the Name of the Rose* characterizes this technique as making a hypothesis on the basis of the events of the narrative that the events have a logical meaning that can be grasped. He then draws a comparison between conjecture and the concept of labyrinth and specifies two kinds of labyrinth: the classical maze and the postmodern mannerist maze. According to him, the classical maze is linear; it goes from the entrance to the center and then to the exit. Mannerist maze on the other hand, is "a kind of tree, a structure with roots, with many blind alleys. There is only one exit, but you can get it wrong" (Umberto Eco, 1994, p.57).

In *The Cambridge Companion to Postmodern Fiction*, Bran Nicole uses the Metaphor of rhizome to clarify the issue:

The metaphor of the rhizome (a botanical term for a kind of plant stem) is used by the philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in their book *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1980) to enable us to picture the relation of things to other things in philosophy, language, the arts, and social sciences- according to principles of connection, heterogeneity, multiplicity, and rupture-in a way that provides an alternative to a straightforward linear of interpretation which is central to paranoid reading. Unlike the roots of a tree 'which plots a point, fixes an order', the value of the rhizome is that 'any point ... can be connected to any other, and must be' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, 7) (Bran Nicole, p. 67)

On the basis of this ideology, metaphysical detective can be compared to a maze in which the postmodern metropolis is represented in contrast to the locked room of the classical detective. Thus, the detective has to cope with a wide domain of clues that like the branches of a rhizome lead to more and more clues. Since there is no structuring principle, everything has the potential to carry a meaning. So, the postmodern detective is not expected to have a clear ending at which all questions are answered. In the end, the mystery is not resolved, and the story is left open-ended. As a whole, the detective can find no way out of the maze and if he attains closure, it won't reveal any absolute truth.

The story of Tower of Babel can also be considered as a challenge to the idea of art as a master narrative. This story is represented in Henry Dark's *The New Babel* that is put within Stillman's book. Stillman asserts that *The New Babel* is "the most visionary account of the new continent that had been written up to that time" (Paul Auster, p.46). The Tower of Babel is characterized as a place of order, unity, and language of heaven, and also as a symbol of Nimrod's universal power. He points out that when constructing the tower, all people were striving to attain the communal objective that was unity and harmony:

The building of the Tower became the obsessive, overriding passion of mankind, more important finally than life itself. Bricks became more precious than people. Women laborers did not even stop to give birth to their children; they secured the newborn in their aprons and went right on working. Apparently, there were three different groups involved in the construction: those who wanted to dwell in heaven, those who wanted to wage war against God, and those who wanted to worship idols. At the same time, they were united in their efforts—"And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech." (Paul Auster, p.44)

Stillman draws a parallel between the story of Babel and America as a new Babel. In his opinion, the overall idea of the book is construction of paradise in America. Henry Dark argues that paradise is not a place to be discovered but it is inherent within human beings: "Rather, its existence was imminent within man himself: the idea of a beyond he might someday create in the here and now" (Paul Auster, p.47). Accordingly, man is capable of constructing the paradise mainly through recreation of the language of heaven: "Therefore, Dark contended, it would indeed be possible for man to speak the original language of innocence and to recover, whole and unbroken, the truth within himself" (Paul Auster, p. 47).

Then, he argues that according to *The Bible*, the movement of human life and civilization has always been westward, and concludes that America is the utopian new Babel of unity and meaning in which the language of heaven would be restored:

For the city of Babel—or Babylon—was situated in Mesopotamia, far East of the land of the Hebrews. If Babel lay to the west of anything, it was Eden, the original site of mankind. Man's duty to scatter himself across the whole earth—in response to God's command to "be fertile . . . and fill the earth"—would inevitably move along a western course. And what more western land in all Christendom, Dark asked, than America? (Paul Auster, p.48)

So, he asserts that it's time for a change in the history of man, and predicts that the new Babel would be constructed in 1960:

... its very shape aspiring toward the heavens, a symbol of the resurrection of the human spirit. History would be written in reverse. What had fallen would be raised up; what had been broken would be made whole. Once completed, the Tower would be large enough to hold every inhabitant of the New World. There would be a room for each person, and once he entered that room, he would forget everything he knew. After forty days and forty nights, he would emerge a new man, speaking God's language, prepared to inhabit the second, everlasting paradise. (Paul Auster, p.48-9)

Ironically, the date predicted for construction of paradise of unity and meaning corresponds with the peak of postmodernism. So, not only America is not unified, but also it is going more and more into the depths of heterogeneity and meaninglessness. Instead of creating a huge tower with enough space for the whole population of the new world, the contemporary architecture constructs small apartments that are like separated cells. The society represented in *City of Glass* with its diverse ideologies and ways of living as mentioned earlier is in sharp contrast with the idea of America as a place of metaphysical and social unity.

In fact, *The City of Glass* is a representation of the overall condition of postmodern era as characterized by Lyotard. His metaphysical ideology of rejection of master narratives that has brought about so many changes in all aspects of contemporary life is evident within the story. Little narratives such as chance and capital that have replaced the classical master narratives have created so much uncertainty, ambiguity, and fragmentation. These features are evident within the internal realm of the characters as well as the external realm of the city. Stillman refers to both these realms when talking to Quinn:

I have come to New York because it is the most forlorn of places, the most abject. The brokenness is everywhere, the disarray is universal. You have only to open your eyes to see it. The broken people, the broken things, the broken thoughts. The whole city is a junk heap. It suits my purpose admirably. I find the streets an endless source of material, an inexhaustible storehouse of shattered things. (Paul Auster, p.77)

Accordingly, the postmodern literary works are devoid of any dominant meaning capable of encompassing the whole body of the work. So, it is the reader's task to get a meaning out of the text according to his own understanding and interpretation. Since the contemporary world is devoid of meta-narratives and ruled on the basis of language games, the text is characterized as a labyrinth with so many diverse directions, and it is not clear whether or not the reader arrives at a meaning.

III. CONCLUSION

Lyotard as one of the most significant philosophers of the contemporary era defines postmodernism as incredulity toward master narratives. In this way, he takes into account the condition of knowledge in contemporary developed societies. He defines a master narrative as a universal totalizing framework that orders and explains human knowledge and experience. He asserts that these frameworks had an authoritative role in the past and everything was authorized and legitimized on the basis of these universal rules. He then argues that these principles and frameworks are not credible within the context of postmodernism in which no genre of concepts or points of view is privileged over the others.

In his opinion, the postmodern era is characterized with continuous change and increasing development due to the rising development of science and scientific knowledge, especially in the field of computer and technology. So, the rules governing the world have also changed. With the master narratives being replaced with micro-narratives or little narratives, the rules of legitimation are totally transformed. Little narratives are defined as incompatible desires, points of view, and ways of thinking specific to each person in the current era. Accordingly, believing in the little narratives creates a world of fragmentation and disagreement.

This theoretical and metaphysical condition has strongly influenced all aspects of postmodern life, especially in developed societies like America that is the setting of *City of Glass*. With authority and legitimation losing their central status, postmodernism is considered as an age of social and cultural heterogeneity and plurality. Fundamental changes in different aspects of life have created an age described with different names such as the age of consumerism, late capitalism, and the virtual and digital age. The transformations and developments that happened in the second half of the twentieth century reached their peak in the 1980s and the world changed into a world of plurality and fragmentation.

Thus, all social, cultural, and regional boundaries were crossed and the difference between high and low culture, high and low social classes as well as the differences in other aspects of life were no longer acceptable. With the development of technology and the appearance of virtual space and global village, the geographical boundaries were also crossed. So, the social, political, historical, cultural, and moral conditions became more and more unstable and decentered. These transformations were inevitably reflected in the field of arts in the field of arts in general and literature in particular.

Paul Auster's works are strongly influenced by the postmodernist literary tradition. His *New York Trilogy* belongs to the genre of metaphysical detective fiction that is a true postmodern genre. This genre is a true representative of postmodern condition as characterized by Lyotard. It belongs to the age of incredulity. While the classical detective belonged to the age of reason, meaning, and closure, the postmodern detective is filled with the feeling of loss, lack of meaning, and disclosure in a world described as a rhizomatic maze.

Art is taken into account as a significant master narrative in this essay. Literature as a branch of art cannot be considered as a legitimizing power for it is characterized with pastiche and intertextuality that represent the fragmented nature of postmodern world. On the other hand, architecture that was supposed to construct the new Tower of Babel as a place of unity and meaning has constructed skyscrapers with distinct cells for each postmodern subject as well as labyrinthine streets in which the contemporary subject gets lost. So, the overall condition is the condition of disagreement and fragmentation.

As a whole, *City of Glass* is a true representation of postmodern world with all its fragmentation and plurality. *New York City* is depicted as the epitome of social, cultural, and metaphysical condition of contemporary era. The postmodern city is a threatening place that creates the feeling of skepticism and uncertainty in citizens. So, the contemporary subject prefers his own internal arena.

Accordingly, since the problem of postmodern man is inherent in the nature of postmodernism itself, it seems that there is no solution to this condition. Postmodernism and the problems of identity and reality are interrelated. So, in order to save the postmodern man, it is required to undo the postmodernist movement and go back to the traditional master narratives. Postmodern man must resort to a center, to a point of reference in order to grasp meaning out of his life and to understand the nature of his identity. Although this solution seems impossible, it seems that there is no other option.

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Genre Analysis and Advanced English Teaching

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Abstract—This paper intends to discuss advanced English teaching of English majors from the perspective of genre analysis. Based on the presentation and discussion of a sample lesson, with examples and detailed illustration, this study is aimed to explore how to improve advanced English teaching of English majors through surface-level description of language in use and deep-level explanation of communicative purposes and writing tactics of various discourses. The paper concludes that in advanced English teaching, the teacher's job is to lead students to the appreciation of different genres, as well as the understanding of the esthetic values achieved through writing styles.

Index Terms—genre analysis, advanced English teaching, English majors

I. INTRODUCTION

Genre analysis is the study of how language is used within a particular setting, which is the product of multidisciplinary research covering stylistic analysis as well as discourse analysis. Since genre analysis focuses on the study of the regularities of structure that distinguish one type of text from another, it is particularly helpful in advanced English teaching for expanding the teaching of English beyond language knowledge and course book. Thus, this article aims to discuss advanced English teaching of English majors from the perspective of genre analysis.

In my university, *Advanced Reading* is an obligatory course for English major seniors. Besides helping students lay a solid foundation for language acquisition, one of the objectives of the course is to guide students to high-level reading and appreciation. The application of genre analysis to teaching practice is believed to be a good try and beneficial to students. It is well recognized that Advanced English teaching doesn't only include the explanation and description of the text, it also involves an interaction between teachers and students, an interaction between students and writers. Thus, during the teaching process, each text should be viewed as essentially interactive in nature, being created from the discussion to appreciation. In addition, the genre-based approach will direct students' attention to the socio-cultural, institutional and organizational constraints and expectations of a particular genre. In this way, students will learn to perceive different patterns and styles of various texts so as to understand how texts function in certain context and have an insightful understanding.

II. THEORETICAL BASIS

Genre is generally defined as “a distinctive category of discourse of any type, spoken or written”(Swales, 1990, p.33) that serves as “responses by speakers or writers to the demands of a social context” (Johns, 2002, p.3). Or put it in another way, genres are how things get done and how language is used to achieve its purpose. Defining genre in this way, we can find that there are as many different genre types as there are recognizable social activity types in our culture. Therefore, various types of genre in language use can range from literary discourse, such as poems, dramas, novels, narratives, expositions, argumentations, fables, ballads, etc. to non-literary types, such as lectures, seminars, recipes, manuals, news report, emails, and etc. Thus, genre can embrace each of the linguistically realized activity types.

However, there are different definitions for genre and different approaches to genre study (Martin, 1985; Couture, 1986; Hyon, 1996; Hyland, 2004; Johns, 2002, 2003; Paltridge, 2001). Originally genre was defined as a staged goal-oriented social process, emphasizing a series of phases of meaning making that are designed to accomplish something through interactions with others. This notion of genre stresses the functional model of language, revealing the way in which a particular culture manages to coordinate different and recurrent language resources to construct particular meanings that are valued within the specific cultural context. Then the concept of genre has been expanded to include all purposeful uses of language. Although there are different theoretical trends and schools of genre studies, the consensus has been achieved by many researchers that genres are social practices that have developed to enable us to achieve our goals (Martin, 1985; Painter, 2001, as cited in Derewianka, 2003). One of these trends expresses major interests in such contexts as social, culture and history (Hyon, 1996; Flowerdew, 2002; Hyland, 2002; Johns, 2002). Some other researchers position themselves within the New Rhetorical School (Miller, 1984; Bazerman, 1994; Freedman & Medway, 1994), focusing their studies on the way genres either realize certain social cultural purposes or form particular frameworks through involvement into varied contexts. There is another group of researchers dealing with discourse analysis, focusing on pedagogical exploration on enhancing students' communicative competence in

their future professional and academic areas. In line with them are those who are doing English for Specific Purposes (Swales, 1990; Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998), specifically, probing into varied genres in practical situation. Besides, the school of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) associates the social cultural context with specific linguistic features. The central concepts have greatly influenced the design of school curriculum and syllabus and have become the mostly probed area regarding genre study and genre-based English language teaching.

In recent years the concept of genre has been much discussed and has become one of the most important and influential factors in language education. Actually, increasing attention has been given to the notion of genre and its application in language teaching and learning. This interest has especially helped English teachers the world over because it has assisted to show how language is used in various contexts and how we can apply this knowledge in our classrooms.

The present study holds that genre analysis is the study of how language is used within a particular context. Thus, in the practice of genre analysis, the first step is to be clear what genre the text belongs to, and then to describe the discourse from the point of view of the particular situation in which it occurred. Further, the overall purpose and function of the text should be addressed. Following that, the schematic structure and discourse patterns as well as the generic potential of the discourse are to be discussed.

It is well accepted that different genres carry different structures and patterns, and produce a staged purposeful social process through which a culture is realized in language. The past decades have seen a significant growth in the field of genre-based language researches. Many of these researches focus on levels of discourse structure which have been variously referred to in the literature as the 'schematic structure', 'generic structure', and 'generic structural potential' for a particular genre. By schematic structure, we mean the staging organization, and the generic potential refers to all the linguistically-achieved activity types recognized as meaningful in a given culture, or the possible configurations of register variables allowed within a given culture at a given time.

Upon the understanding of the general knowledge of genre analysis, the attention of this article is specifically focused on the discussion of discourse patterns, which refer to the organization and structure of written discourses. It can't be denied that genres vary significantly along a number of different parameters, in terms of the mode or medium through which they are expressed; in the extent to which they are likely to exhibit language-specific tendencies, in terms of the field and topic of the discourse. However, for whatever genres, certain types of discourse patterns are frequently employed to deliver message and transfer ideas.

Discourse pattern refers to the logical arrangement of ideas, the development of texts. Since logical arrangement of ideas is cultural-bound, for English discourse, there are some patterns that are commonly recognized and accepted. Among other things, the most generally accepted patterns include *the problem-solution pattern*, *the general-particular pattern*, *the hypothetical-real pattern* and *the matching pattern*. It is not exaggerating to state that without perceiving the discourse pattern, one can't read nor write for comprehension. In addition to that, discourse pattern is tied to literacy skills, thus in advanced reading teaching for English majors, it is essential to call students awareness of discourse pattern and the arrangement of discourse ideas.

III. SAMPLE LESSON PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION

In order to show how to carry out genre-based approach to English language teaching, this paper intends to discuss the topic through the following sample lesson. The teaching material is from the text book widely used in China for English major seniors. The text that is chosen as the sample lesson is Lesson Seven "*The Virtues of Ambition*", written by Joseph Epstein. Joseph Epstein is an American essayist, short story writer and editor. From 1974 to 1998, he was the editor of *the Phi Beta Kappa Society's The American Scholar* magazine. From 1974 to 2002, Joseph Epstein was a lecturer at Northwestern University. As a long-time contributor of essays and short stories to *The New Criterion* and *Commentary*, he is also a contributing editor at *The Weekly Standard*. In 2003, he was awarded a National Humanities Medal by the National Endowment for the Humanities. "*The Virtues of Ambition*" is taken from *Ambition: The Secret Passion* published in 1980.

'*The Virtues of Ambition*' is an argumentation, aiming to argue for ambition. To achieve the aim of the argumentative writing, the article is developed through various ways, such as examples, definition, classification, comparison and contrast, logical analysis, cause and effect, analogy, and etc. The author holds that "We decide what is important and what is trivial in life. We decide that what makes us significant is either what we do or what refuse to do. ... We decide. We choose. And as we decide and choose, so are our lives formed." (Joseph Epstein, *The Virtues of Ambition*, in *Advanced English*, 1996, p.232) Very effectively the author succeeds in convincing the readers the virtues of ambition.

But how does the author develop the discourse specifically so as to achieve the purpose of the argumentation? What discourse patterns are specifically applied in the development of the article? How can we guide the students to comprehend and then appreciate the text? These are the tasks to be fulfilled by this lesson. The following presents the design and process of the sample lesson.

A. Aim

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

1. acquaint themselves with the general knowledge of discourse patterns in genre analysis,

2. get to know various discourse patterns for different genres,
3. be clear about the structure of the hypothetical-real pattern and the matching pattern,
4. appreciate the stylistic features of the text,
5. perceive the communicative message and the theme of the article,
6. be able to define various discourse patterns in reading.

B. Materials: The Following Materials Are Needed

1. text book: *Advanced English* (Wu Yiyun & Huang Guanfu, 1996)
2. slide providing general knowledge of genre analysis
3. handout of after-class activities (see **Appendix**)

C. Procedure

Pre-task

1. Show the slide to the students and illustrate the general knowledge of discourse patterns in genre analysis.

According to Johnson and Johnson, “Genres are types of spoken and written discourse recognized by a discourse community” (Johnson & Johnson, 1999, p.140). In other words, genre analysis is the study of how language is used within a particular setting. Thus, it tries to focus on the study of discourse types and styles, whether they are lectures, conversations, speeches, notices, advertisements, research papers, letters, news, novels, poems, dramas, short stories, essays, and whether they are narrating, expository, argumentative or descriptive. It is clearly the case that each genre has its typical features: linguistic features (grammatical or lexical choices), paralinguistic features (print size, gestures) or contextual and pragmatic features (setting, purpose). Genres, however, vary significantly along quite a number of different parameters. They vary according to complexity of rhetorical purpose; in terms of the mode or medium through which they are expressed; in the degree to which exemplars of the genre are prepared or constructed in advance of their communicative instantiation, as well as in the extent to which they are likely to exhibit universal or language-specific tendencies. Nevertheless, no matter what genre the text belongs to, certain discourse patterns are applied to develop the text so as to achieve its communicative purposes. Accordingly, different genres have different preference for certain kinds of discourse patterns. Here are some of the discourse patterns that are generally accepted and most frequently used: the problem-solution pattern, the general-particular pattern, the hypothetical-real pattern and the matching pattern.

2. Discuss the features of the hypothetical-real pattern and the matching pattern.

The hypothetical-real pattern is usually composed of two parts, a supposition (or a claim), and the justification for the writer’s viewpoint (support or counterclaim). The second part is supposed to be the main body of the text where the author would try his best to make his points clear, whether he is for or against the claims above mentioned. Before we get down to the second part we know nothing about the writer’s stand, we therefore call the first part “hypothesis”, the second part is regarded as the “true”, “real” part, because it is in this part that we can get to know the writer’s attitude and point of view. The pattern is frequently used in political journalism, argumentative writings and so on.

The matching pattern often carries the aim to make comparisons between things, so as to find out the similarities and differences between them. In a discourse, this pattern is commonly embedded with other patterns. The pattern is not only often present in exposition, argumentation, letter writing, but also in narration, poetry and any other genres.

While task

1. Ask students to read through the text “The Virtues of Ambition” by Joseph Epstein (from *Advanced English* Wu Yiyun & Huang Guanfu, 1996)

2. Get students to talk about the theme of the text.

Through various means, the author argues for ambition very effectively. Joseph Epstein (1996) holds that although it could be defined differently, ambition is morally a two-sided street, it is essential to one’s life, it forms one’s destiny and shapes one’s life.

3. Get students to discuss the writing style of the text.

This is an essay of argumentation, with the aim of arguing for the virtues of ambition. The author begins the article by the definition of “ambition”, which sounds quite disapproval. Then, by listing all the negative things about and attacks on ambition, the author, however, succeeds in proving the statement “Ambition is morally a two-sided street”. Very effectively, the author argues for ambition through comparison and contrast, cause and effect, logical analysis, paradox and examples. Thus, readers are convinced that although the outcome of our dreams and ambition might be unpredictable, it is essential to our life. The essay is proved to be persuading, convincing and appealing.

4. Ask students to discuss the following two paragraphs from the text in detail and pay special attention to their generic structure and discourse pattern.

(1) “There is a strong view that holds that success is a myth, and ambition therefore a sham. Does this mean that success does not really exist? That achievement is at bottom empty? That the efforts of men and women are of no significance alongside the force of movements and events? Now not all success, obviously, is worth esteeming, nor all ambition worth cultivating. Which are and which are not is something one soon enough learns on one's own. But even the most cynical secretly admit that success exists; that achievement counts for a great deal; and that the true myth is that the actions of men and women are useless. To believe otherwise is to take on a point of view that is likely to be deranging. It is, in its implications, to remove all motives for competence, interest in attainment, and regard for

posterity.” (Joseph Epstein, *The Virtues of Ambition*, in *Advanced English*, 1996, p.231-232)

The first sentence is a hypothesis__ success is a myth and ambition is a sham. Then, three questions are immediately followed, exciting great attention and at the same time, showing a strong emotion__ the author seems overwhelmed with indignation. The fifth sentence serves to pave the ground for the author's arguments, and the following sentences express the author's attitude, counterclaim and reasoning __ success does exist and achievement is of great importance. Therefore, the discourse pattern of this paragraph is the hypothetical-real pattern.

By the hypothetical-real pattern, the author succeeds in convincing the readers the importance of ambition. Rather than stating the views subjectively, the author presents the idea tactfully.

(2) Many people are naturally distrustful of ambition, feeling that it represents something intractable in human nature. Thus John Dean entitled his book about his involvement in the Watergate affair during the Nixon administration *Blind Ambition*, as if ambition were to blame for his ignoble actions, and not the constellation of qualities that make up his rather shabby character. Ambition, it must once again be underscored, is morally a two-sided street. Place next to John Dean Andrew Carnegie, who among other philanthropic acts, bought the library of Lord Acton, at a time when Acton was in financial distress, and assigned its custodianship to Acton, who never was told who his benefactor was. Need much more be said on the subject than that, important though ambition is there are some things that one must not sacrifice to it? (Joseph Epstein, *The Virtues of Ambition*, in *Advanced English*, 1996, p.229-230)

The hypothetical-real pattern and matching pattern are embedded with each other here. Hypothesis is given in the first sentence and then followed by an example, offering a kind of illustration. It seems that John Dean attributes his involvement in the Watergate affair to his “Blind Ambition”. The author's position on the topic is clarified in the third sentence __ ambition is morally a two-sided street. That is to say there is nothing wrong with ambition and the point is how to manage it, how to realize it. In the rest of the text, another example is provided, producing great contrast to the first example and presenting justifications for the counterarguments as well. What Andrew Carnegie has done shows his ambition, which illustrates clearly what is great ambition. The last sentence is a rhetoric question, a question with no need for an answer. By now, everything is evident, ambition is important to everybody, but we can never sacrifice morality, conscience and our principles for it. Thus, the text is highly patterned and by comparison and contrast, the author voices his opinion in an effective and impressive way.

Post task (see Appendix)

1. Distribute copies of passages to students and let them work in pairs.
2. Get students to read the essays and identify the discourse patterns.
3. Get students to discuss the language styles and generic structures.
4. Ask students to write an essay entitled “My Ambition”, with both hypothetical-real pattern and matching pattern involved.

Through teaching practice, it is evident that the application of genre analysis to classroom teaching is beneficial and meaningful. Firstly, genre analysis shows a true interest in the use of language to achieve communicative purposes. Secondly, genre analysis provides a dynamic explanation of language use and it combines the advantage of a sociolinguistics perspective with those of a cognitive perspective. Thirdly, motivated by applied linguistic concerns, it can be well applied to language teaching at various levels. Fourthly, genre analysis is wide in vision, while taking specific differentiation in various language applications into consideration.

IV. CONCLUDING REMARKS

This article is aimed to explore how to apply the genre-based approach to advanced English teaching of English majors through various stages: by surface-level description of language in use; by deep-level explanation of communicative purposes and writing tactics of various genres; by genre analysis of discourse patterns of different texts and by stylistic appreciation of high-level organization and structures of various genres. In advanced English teaching, the teacher's job is to lead students to the perception and appreciation of different genres, the understanding of the esthetic values achieved through writing styles. Hopefully the study can provide insights into improving advanced English teaching of English majors elsewhere.

The author of this article has been trying to manage her *Advanced Reading* class from the perspective of genre analysis, which proves quite helpful in improving students' ability of reading and appreciation. Since in advanced English teaching, the teacher's job is not only to explain and let students have a comprehension of the text, but also to lead students to the appreciation of different genres, the understanding of the esthetic values achieved through writing styles. The sample lesson presents the actual practice of English reading class. In the teaching process, a considerable amount of interaction is involved among the teacher and the students, and among the students themselves as well. Besides, from the post task they can get knowledge, deep understanding, practice and fun. Thus, it is a great way to convert a supposedly boring aspect of language learning into one that students look forward to with anticipation and ambition!

APPENDIX. READING ACTIVITIES FOR POST WORK

Directions: Read the following passages and do the activities in pairs and groups:

- 1) Discuss what text pattern is the dominant one in each of the passages.
- 2) Talk about the discourse styles and tell by what means the author tries to achieve his communicative purpose.

Passage 1

Every other critic has said that *On Food and Cooking* is brilliant, a revelation, and a unique combination of scientific insight and literacy which sweeps aside all myth and jargon as none have done before. McGee's book is indeed well written, is full of good things and is good to have on the shelves as a continuing source of reference and quotes. But it also has its fair share of mistakes, omissions and misalignments of emphasis.

(C. Tudge, Review of H. McGee 1986 *On Food and Cooking*, London: Allen & Unwin, in *New Scientist* 6 November 1986, 112 (1533), p.56)

Passage 2

It is interesting to note that iconic models only represent certain features of that portion of the real world they simulate. For example, a map will only contain those features which are of interest to the person using the map. Similarly, architects' models will be limited to include those features which are of interest to the person considering employing the architect.

(Hoey, 1983, p.113)

Passage 3

If there be any one on whose ear my frequent praise of practical activities has a harsh and displeasing sound because he is wholly devoted to contemplative philosophy, let me assure him that he is the enemy of his own desires. In natural philosophy practical results are not only means to improve human well-being. They are also the guarantee of truth. There is a true rule in religion, that a man must show his faith by his works. The same rule holds good in philosophy. Science too must be known by its works. It is by the witness of works rather by logic or even observation that truth is revealed and established. It follows from this that the improvement of man's lot and improvement of man's mind are one and the same thing.

(Francis Bacon)

Passage 4

Sir,

William Mann, in his review (January 30) of a concert from Manchester wrote that I had the singer Ella Lee in mind when composing my Third Symphony. I gather he heard this announced during the radio prologue to the broadcast.

May I beg the courtesy of your columns to set the record straight? The announcement was incorrect. Indeed, rarely, if ever, have I had a particular performer in mind when composing a major work.

Yours,
Michael Tippett
(Hoey, 1983, p.128)

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Semantic Skill in Persian-speaking in Identical Twins

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Abstract—Lexical Vocabulary is the special ability of children to learn many things about words. The aim of this paper was to study specific aspects in the development of the language acquisition skills of Persian-speaking identical twins and compare them with fraternal twins and singletons. The test subjects were 109 children. In this paper, the main tests and their composite quotient in Test of Language Development (TOLD-3)¹ whose validity and reliability have already been verified by Iranian researchers are used. Three subtests; picture Vocabulary (understanding words), relational Vocabulary (Mediating vocabulary) and Oral Vocabulary (Defining words) were analyzed to assess understanding and meaningful use of spoken words in semantic skill. The statistical analysis of the data was done by using the SPSS software package, version 16. The results of the study show that no significant difference among semantic *quotient* scores exists for the three groups. The statistical significance of this test is $P=0.536$. The results of this research show that Persian-speaking twins, both identical and fraternal, are not at a greater risk of delayed development of language skills than singletons. This result is similar to results obtained in other countries.

Index Terms—semantic quotient, identical twins, fraternal twins, singletons, Persian-speaking, test of language development (TOLD-3)

I. INTRODUCTION

Language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of voluntarily produced symbols (Sapir, 1921) Saussure believed that a language can be compared to a sheet of paper. Thought is one side of the sheet and sound the reverse side. Just as it is impossible to take a pair of scissors and cut one side of the paper without at the same time cutting the other, so it is impossible in a language to isolate sound from thought, or thought from sound." (Saussure, 1983).

The rules of a language, also called grammar, are learned as one acquires a language. These rules include phonology, the sound system, morphology, the structure of words, syntax, the combination of words into sentences, semantics, the ways in which sounds and meanings are related, and the lexicon, or mental dictionary of words. When you know a language, you know words in that language, i.e. sound units that are related to specific meanings. However, the sounds and meanings of words are arbitrary. For the most part, there is no relationship between the way a word is pronounced (or signed) and its meaning (Fromkin and Rodman, 2002). The only language [people] ever speak perfectly is the one they learn in babyhood, when no one can teach them anything is a first language acquisition. Language users are able to produce and understand an unlimited number of sentences. This can only happen if, as children, they have acquired the grammar for their language. Children acquire grammatical rules comes from their speech errors, which often provide valuable clues about how the acquisition process works (William O'gradi, 2003).

Child's language acquisition is an unconscious process in which the child learns his/her mother's tongue. In all children, regardless of their cultural background, language acquisition occurs at about the same age, and follows similar stages. In the late 19th century, research on child development with emphasis on language acquisition, started. Many researchers kept extensive diaries of their children's development, including language (e.g., Ament 1899; Baudouin de Courtenay 1974; Compayré 1896; Lindner 1898; Major 1906; Preyer 1882; Ronjat 1913; Stern&Stern 1928; Sully 1896; Taine 1870; see also Campbell 2006). Previous studies have reported contradictory results with regard to the child's acquisition. Study of twins is a valuable method for studying language acquisition in children: by comparing identical and fraternal twins, as well as twins of different sex, one can obtain some information regarding the genetic and sexual factors affecting language acquisition. Cunningham et al. said (2008) twins resulting from the fertilization of two separate eggs are more common, and are called di-zygotic or fraternal twins. In one third of the cases, twins develop from the division of one fertilized egg. Such twins are called mono-zygotic or identical twins.

Day (1932), Hay et al. (1984), Dood and McEvoy (1994), Zazzo (1960), and Savic (1980) show that language skills in twins, as well as in multiplets, lag behind the language skills of children of the same age. The effect is more

¹ Test of Language Development (TOLD)- 3rd edition

pronounced for boys. Kobayashi et al. (2000) have studied the special features in the language of twins. They carried out the Japanese version of the Illinois Test on a sample consisting of 24 pairs of twins 3 to 4 years of age. Their work indicates that their language skills fall in the normal range. Several previous studies have investigated the influences of genetic and environmental on development of language skills such as vocabulary, phonology, syntax, and lexical knowledge (Hohnen & Stevenson, 1999; DeThorne, 2006; Kovas et al., 2005; Petrill, Deater-Deckard, Thompson, Samuelsson et al., 2005, 2007). However, other works, such as Philip et al. (2000), Plumin et al. (1988), Rithweld et al. (2000), have shown that both genetic and environmental factors can affect the early development of language skills in children. Thrope (2006) in an article title "Twin children's language development" reviewed the evidence on twin language by addressing five key questions. So, Result of her study show that in twins language delay is related to the social language.

In Iran several studies have examined the process of language acquisition in children, yet none of these studies involved twins except for Mir-Dehghani and Imani (2012) who in an article title "the difference between sex and abilities of twins to use Persian vocabularies in the framework of The MacArthur-Bates Communicative Development Inventories" have considered a few cases of twin pairs. Their results show that there is a significant difference with the average performance of twins in the lexical words. While in other respects the performance is close to similar average between them. The variety of lexical words in boy better than the girl.

Teymouri and Dokhani (2014) have shown in a case study that identical twins in semantic skill were not different from a singleton in subtests, but had a better performance in compound yield. No time lag was observed in language acquisition skills. In another phonological study conducted by Teymouri and Dokhani (2014) showed that comparatively fraternal twins had a significant difference than identical twins and singletons. The results of this research show that Persian-speaking fraternal twins, are at a greater risk of delayed development of language skills than two other subjects group. Teymouri et.al. (2014 and 2015), also surveyed Speech and language development of IVF Children. The results showed that IVF children are not at great risk of speech and language development delay.

II. METHODOLOGY

In this work the visual, relational, and oral vocabulary of 14 pairs of identical twins, 41 single children, and 20 pairs of fraternal twins, all aged between 3 and 6 were examined using TOLD -3 tests. TOLD test is comprised of nine subtests which are subdivided into main and complementary tests. TOLD has Nine subtests which measure various aspects of oral language: The main tests include Six Subtests which are Picture Vocabulary, Relational Vocabulary, oral Vocabulary, Syntactic Understanding, Sentence Imitation, Morphological Completion, and Three Complementary tests: Word Discrimination, Word Analysis, and Word Articulation. The composites score as a results of the these 6 subtests were used for the major dimensions of language: Spoken Language Quotient, Listening Quotient, Organizing Quotient, Speaking Quotient, Semantic Quotient, Syntax Quotient and overall language ability.

The present study was a case-control study. Participants were Iranian identical and fraternal twins and singletons tested in Tehran. The samples in the present study included 41 singletons including 19 boys and 22 girls, 14 pair identical twins; 16 boys and 12 girls and 20 pair fraternal twins with the same 20 boys and 20 girls. All of the children were Farsi-speaking females and male that all aged between 3 and 6, who attended nursery schools in Tehran. In this study, we did not control for non-lingual factors such as the educational level of the parents and their social standing. The participants of the study were selected randomly from the kindergartens of Tehran City. A correct answer is scored as one; an incorrect answer is scored as zero. When participant answer 5 incorrect answers continuously, stopped the subtest. The time for each subtest are about 20-25 minute. Informed consent was obtained from the parents before the fill the questionnaire.

The first subtest was a picture vocabulary which is a semantic test. This test has a 30 items and measure the understanding of children from meaning is relevant to Persian words. The children would be shown one of the four pictures as an answer of meaning the word that examiner asks him/her. The next subtest was relational vocabulary which also is a semantic test and has a 30 items. This test measures the abilities of children in an oral speech and shows the relationship between two words. This is not a picture writing and children should be understood the word meaning and indicated their meaning class and expressed their relationship. The last subtest was an oral vocabulary. This subtest had 28 items and show the abilities of children in the oral introducing of common Persian words which asks him/ her by examiner. The last subtest was an oral vocabulary. These subtests had 28 items and show the abilities of children in the oral introducing of common Persian words which asks him/ her by examiner.

The best sign of children function in the subtest is measured by standard scores. Standard scores are the converted form of the first scores. In fact, the standard score prepared to measure of innate individual abilities of speech in children for examiner.

The semantic quotient, in fact; is the sum of scores in three subtests, picture vocabulary, relational vocabulary and oral vocabulary. This test has a high level of validity. The statistical analysis of the data was performed by using the SPSS software package, version 16. The variables were described by descriptive statistics. As all outcome variables were categorical, Variance test and Tukey Test, as applicable, were used and a P. Value <0.05 was taken as significant. The results of this research are shown in tables and graphs.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

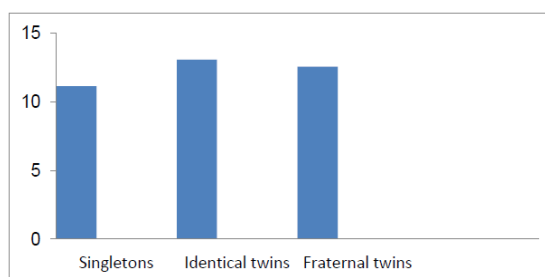
A. Picture Vocabulary Subtest

What has been discussed in table one is a comparison of the grades of main subtest which was done variance analysis test to compare grades of three different subject groups. In all statistical tests, the level of meaning is than 0.5 is a sign of meaningfulness of the test.

Statistical points are relevant to the variable of the picture vocabularies which are shown in table one. The data which are shown in this table show that there is a massive difference between the three different participant groups exist (singletons, 11.14; identical twins, 13.07 and Fraternal twins, 12.5). In other words the variance analysis survey shows that there is a meaningful difference among the results of the three participant groups exist. The level of meaningful difference is at 0.021.

TABLE I.
THE COMPARISON OF THE GRADES OF THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE THREE GROUPS. (SINGLETONS, IDENTICAL TWINS AND FRATERNAL TWINS)

Subtest	Participants	number	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error	Minimum	Maximum	P-Value	Result
Picture Vocabulary	Singletons	41	11.14	3.19	0.49	4	17	0.021	Meaningfulness
	Identical twins	28	13.07	2.70	0.51	6	18		
	Fraternal twins	40	12.55	2.94	0.46	5	18		
	total	109	12.15	3.06	0.29	4	18		



Graph I. The comparison of the grades of the participants of the three groups (singletons, identical twins and fraternal TWINS).

TABLE II.
THE COMPARISON OF THE GRADES OF THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE THREE GROUPS

subjects	number	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
singletons	41	11.14	
Fraternal twins	40	12.55	12.55
Identical twins	28		13.07
total		0.124	0.744

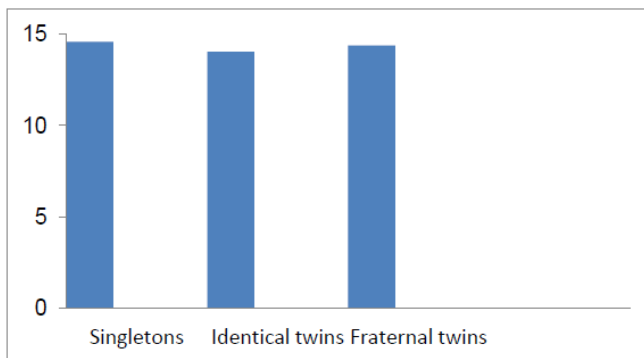
Whenever in a variance analysis test the level of meaningfulness is concerned. To show the difference among each member of the group the method of one by one comparison is utilized. The average shows that among the singletons 11.14 were the grade, 12.55 were the grade of fraternal twins and 13.07 were the grade of identical twins. By the means of the online survey, it is shown that the average of identical twins is the highest of all and singletons score the lowest and the fraternal twins sat in the middle. In other words, it can be concluded that the online survey is reaffirmed by the means of Toukey survey.

B. Relational Vocabulary Subtest

All statistical points with regard to relational vocabulary subtest are shown in table three. The data show that there is a no meaningful difference between the three different subject groups exist (singletons, 14/58; identical twins, 14/03 and fraternal twins, 14/37). In other words the online survey shows that there is no meaningful difference among the results of the three subject groups exist. The level of meaningful difference is at 0.607.

TABLE III.
THE COMPARISON OF THE GRADES OF THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE THREE GROUPS. (SINGLETONS, IDENTICAL TWINS AND FRATERNAL TWINS)

Subtest	Participants	number	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error	Minimum	Maximum	P-Value	Result
Relational Vocabulary	Singletons	41	14.58	2.59	0.40	6	19	0.607	No meaningfulness
	Identical twins	28	14.03	1.79	0.32	11	18		
	Fraternal twins	40	14.37	2.15	0.34	9	18		
	total	109	14.36	2.23	0.21	6	19		



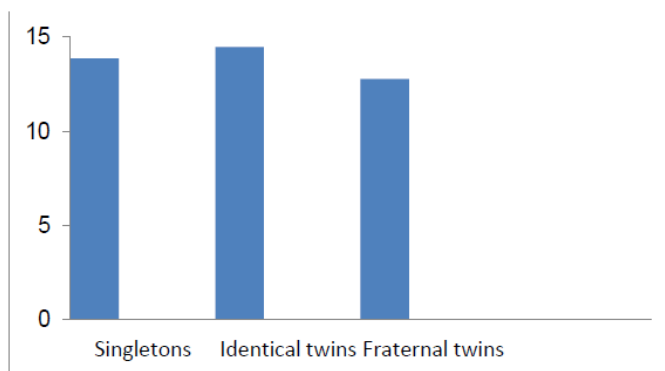
Graph II. The comparison of the grades of the participants of the three groups (singleton, identical twins and fraternal twins).

C. Oral Vocabulary Subtest

Statistical points are relevant to the variable of the oral vocabularies which are shown in table four. The data which are shown in this table show that there is a no difference between the three different subject group exist (singletons, 13.87; identical twins, 13.46 and fraternal twins, 12.77). So, the comparison of three subjects group which done with variance statistical test shows that there is no meaningful difference between the results of the three subjects group exist. The level of meaningful difference is at 0.153.

TABLE IV.
THE COMPARISON OF THE GRADES OF THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE THREE GROUPS. (SINGLETONS, IDENTICAL TWINS AND FRATERNAL TWINS)

Subtest	Participants	number	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error	Minimum	Maximum	P-Value	Result
Oral Vocabulary	Singletons	41	13.87	3.08	0.48	7	18	0.153	no meaningful
	Identical twins	28	13.46	2.56	0.48	10	18		
	Fraternal twins	40	12.77	1.87	0.29	10	16		
	total	109	13.36	2.58	0.24	7	18		



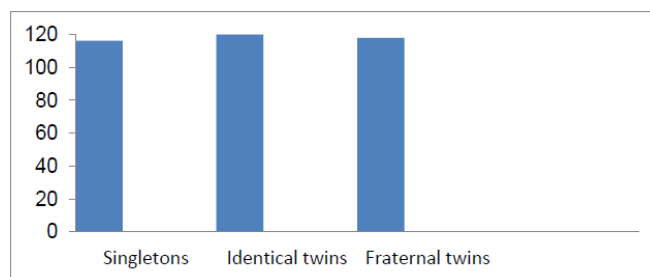
Graph III. The comparison of the grades of the participants of the three groups (singletons, identical twins and fraternal twins).

D. Semantic Quotient

The statistical points are related to the semantic quotient are shown in table Five. According to the table Five and Graph 4, indicated that no significant differences between three groups of participants (singletons, 116.17; identical twins, 119.89; and fraternal twins 117.88). The level of meaningful difference is at 0.536

TABLE V.
THE COMPARISON OF THE GRADES OF THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE THREE GROUPS. (SINGLETONS, IDENTICAL TWINS AND FRATERNAL TWINS)

Subtest	Participants	number	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error	Minimum	Maximum	P-Value	Result
Semantic Quotient	Singletons	41	116.17	18.27	2.85	46	148	0.536	no meaningful
	Identical twins	28	119.89	9.24	1.74	98	134		
	Fraternal twins	40	117.88	9.98	1.57	46	136		
	total	109	117.75	13.53	1.29	46	148		



Graph IV. The comparison of the grades of the participants of the three groups (singletons, identical twins and fraternal twins).

IV. CONCLUSION

The purpose of the present study was to investigate semantic skill in the development of the language acquisition of Persian-speaking identical twins and compare them with fraternal twins and singletons. According to the findings of this study, at the level of subtest which was done in three groups of participants is shown that within the picture vocabularies identical twins had been an improved performance than two other groups. In other subtest, the performance of three groups of participant was not a significant difference. Semantic quotient in the three groups of participants was not significantly different. It seems all subjects during this test were similar grade, that is shown that two groups of twins (identical and fraternal) square measure adequate the singletons. Although fraternal twins are at a bit risk of language delay within the level of the subtests, but they have not a great risk in the semantic skill. However, it seems that identical twin children are not at great risk of language development delay in semantic skill.

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The Relationship among EFL Teachers, Students' Attitudes & Their Teaching-learning Achievements in English

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Abstract—This study is an attempt to investigate the relationship among attitudes of English language students and teachers towards each other and students' achievement at public female high schools of Rasht. Three-hundred and thirty five English female language students and ten female English language teachers from Rasht high schools participated in this study. Participants' demographic status was also sought as well as their three aspects of attitude (Affective, behavioral, and cognitive). Student questionnaire in this study is based on an adopted one (AMTB) including thirty items in a four-point Likert scale. Teacher questionnaire consisted of nine items on students' study skills, appearance, aptitude, behavior, and intelligence in a four-likert scale. The *Pearson correlation* and *paired sample t-test* were utilized to analyze the data. The findings suggested that female high school students of Rasht hold positive attitude towards their language teacher, and there exist a significant relationship among student-teacher attitude and students' achievement. The implication added to the body of English language learning knowledge and resource available to enrich the learning experience and impact on students' achievement.

Index Terms—attitude, achievement, EFL, teacher, learner

I. INTRODUCTION

Language learning is considered as the basis of human existence that can help us to express our opinions, hopes, and even our dreams (Tavil, 2009). Crystal (1997) stated that attitudes are the feelings people have about their own language or the languages of others. Therefore, language attitude is a construct that shows linguistic behavior in particular.

Greenwald (1989) believed “attitudes are pervasive, predict behavior, are a force in perception and memory, and they serve various psychological functions.” From a psychological point of view, there are three components that construct individual's attitudes (Cherry, 2012). This model is known as the ABC model of attitudes that are Affective, Behavioral, and Cognitive components. According to Eagly and Chaiken (1993), attitude is “a psychological tendency expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor”. Bohner and Wänke (2002) reported “attitudes represent an evaluative response towards an object and can be defined as a summary evaluation of an object or thought.”

A large body of research targeted the correlation between attitude and achievement in Iran (Alavi & Kaivanpanah, 2007; Shirbagi, 2010; Chalak & kassian, 2010; Dehghan & Jalilzadeh, 2011; Saeidi & Rimani Nikou, 2012; Hazratzad & Gheitanichian, 2012; Soleimani & Hanafi, 2013). Generally speaking, all of them admit that learners' positive attitude towards a language determines their success in learning the language. The students' continuous lack of success in a school subject, in particular learning English can make them to believe that they can never be successful that is to accept failure. Thus, developing positive attitude towards learning language and language teacher deems necessary. Kariminia and Salehizadeh (2007) believed that special attention have to be paid to the relationship among teachers and learners' attitude towards each other and their achievement in learning English in contexts where language learning happens mainly in formal classroom settings, and teachers are the main source of language input to students that directly influence students' learning.

Student's attitude is not separate from learning; therefore, it should be the crucial part of foreign language learning. Based on Schibeci and Riley (1986), attitudes influence achievement, rather than achievements influencing attitudes. Therefore, both negative and positive attitudes have numerous influences on the success of language learning. Studies show that affective variables have significant influence on language success (Eveyik, 1999; Gardner, 1985; Skehan, 1989; Spolsky, 1989).

The relationship among teachers' attitude and behavior and the students' academic achievement has been endorsed by a large body of research. Bowie and Bond (1994) along with Tauber (1997) approved that teachers' negative attitude and behaviors are precisely related to students' failure in learning a language. Sarwar (2002) claimed that high academic achievers have better study habits and more positive study attitudes than low academic achievers.

There are different hypotheses about attitudes and achievement. In this study, we can describe attitude in terms of learners' attitude, teachers' attitude, and also learners' achievement in learning process. Stipek (2002) investigated that those students who perceived a more nurturing relationship with teachers tended to have better attitude towards academia and often did better than their peers who lacked the same support system. Furthermore, Marzano & Kendall (2008) argued, "the quality of teacher-student relationship is the keystone for all other aspects of classroom management". However, it is the teacher who plays the greatest role in setting the atmosphere (Whitaker, 2004).

This study seeks to discover the relationship among attitudes of English language students and teachers towards each other and students' achievement at public female high schools of Rasht. Four Null Hypothesis is proposed to take the helm of the present study that are: 1) H₀: There is no significant systematic relationship between teacher's attitude towards students and students' attitude towards their teacher, 2) H₀: There is no significant systematic relationship between students' attitude and the age of students, 3) H₀: There is no significant relationship between students' attitude towards teachers and their achievement, 4) H₀: There is no significant relationship between attitude of teachers and students' academic achievement.

II. MATERIAL

Six high schools of Rasht, from first to third grade participated in this study. The sample consisted of the high school students in their first (37.3 %), second (41.5%) and third (21.2%) year of school. They were fourteen to nineteen years old. These four hundred female participants were randomly selected from 9970 Rasht female high school students. Thirty-five students did not fill the questionnaire completely, thus were excluded. Thirty students who took part in the pilot study did not take part in the actual study. A total number of three-hundred and thirty five female students participated in this research hence. On the other side, ten female teachers practicing the selected English classes were included as well. Their background of teaching was between eighteen to twenty years teaching at different grades of school year.

III. INSTRUMENTATION

In this study, the data were collected from three sources: first, the student questionnaire which was administered by the researcher in the absence of their English teacher. Second, the teacher questionnaire which was completed outside the classroom by each respective participant English teacher, exactly at the same time the participant students were busy completing their questionnaires. Third, the students were evaluated by their achievement that is outlined in detail.

The researcher utilized a *student questionnaire* based on AMTB questionnaire. The student questionnaire consisted of the demographic information including students' age, years of study and background (whether received parents, private or institute instruction) and thirty items included students' attitudes towards their English teacher. The student questionnaire was distributed among the first, second and third grades at public female high schools of Guilan province in Iran. The questions were answered on a four-point Likert scale from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". The questionnaire was translated into Persian for clear understanding of the items. Also a *teacher questionnaire* was distributed among ten teachers including nine items on teachers' attitudes towards their students in terms of students' English skill abilities. The questions were answered on a four-point scale (poor, average, good and very good). Teacher questionnaire was distributed among ten participant teachers. Drawn upon the data, teachers' work experience reached from eighteen to twenty, and all of them had taught in different grades of school year. By the same token, Students were assessed through *achievement test* that are the students' final exam scores, their class activities and their midterm marks. No standard test was utilized as the evaluation system differs to a very large extent in Iran.

IV. DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

A. The Pilot Study

The student questionnaire was translated to Persian and piloted to make sure that the items were valid and reliable. Right after piloting the questionnaire to check for the reliability and validity (the Cronbach's Alfa of .954 for 30 items), it was finalized for the large-scale data collection. The thirty piloted students did not take part in the actual study. The data were then collected from high school students in the female high schools in Rasht during school year in 2013-2014.

B. Design of the Study

This study is descriptive in nature, and the groups were randomly chosen. Descriptive statistics were used to determine the frequency, means, and percentages. T-test and Pearson test were conducted to determine the correlation between the students' successes and their attitudes towards their teacher. The dependent, independent and control variables here are respectively students' English achievement, their age, and attitudes of teachers and students. The teacher questionnaire included twelve items while the student questionnaire was divided into two sections: biographical

information and a thirty-item attitude questions. In the term of students' English background knowledge, 23% of the students attended the private classes, institute classes, or received parental instruction. Total of 77% students had no English background knowledge, 18.6% of the students had one to four and 4.5% five to nine years of English background knowledge. In terms of teachers' teaching experience, teachers had about 30% eighteen, 40% nineteen, and 30% twenty years of teaching experience.

Descriptive analysis indicated that about 11.4% of the teachers hold negative attitudes towards their students. Thus, about 88.6 percent of teachers' responses were positive while about 78.8 percent of the students showed positive attitude towards teachers' behaviors. Furthermore, it was confirmed that about 66.4 percent of respondents supported their teachers' teaching methodology. The majority of the students (about 80.5 percent agreed and strongly agreed) were satisfied with teachers' power of classroom monitoring. An overall 74.4 percent of students agreed that their teachers encourage students to increase their learning motivation and about 66.8 percent of respondents agreed that their teachers help them to maintain independence. However, forty-two percent of respondents disagreed with their teachers' ability in using different evaluation techniques.

To test the first research hypothesis which targeted the relationship between teachers' attitude towards students as well as students' attitude towards their teachers, Pearson's Correlation (Table 1) is implemented after checking for normality which showed there is a moderate correlation between two variables ($p < 0/000$ and $r = 0/202$, $N = 313$).

TABLE 1.
STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS TEACHERS & TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD STUDENTS

		Teacher attitude	Student attitude
Teacher attitude	Pearson Correlation	1	.202(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	335	335
Student attitude	Pearson Correlation	.202(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	335	335

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

Table 1 shows that significant value is smaller than 0.05, therefore the relationship is positive. The value of intensity is 0.202, thus the amount of intensity is medium. On the other hand, with calculating the coefficients of the two variables, we can determine the amount of shared variance between the two variables by squaring the correlation coefficient. In table 1, the value of Pearson is 0/202 ($r = 0/202$); with squaring this value, we can see that there is only 4% common variance. As a result, the teachers' attitudes explain only four percent of the variance of students' attitude. Hence, the first null hypothesis is rejected.

TABLE 2.
CORRELATION BETWEEN AGES OF STUDENTS & STUDENTS' ATTITUDES

		Age	S attitude
Age	Pearson Correlation	1	.460
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	335	335
S attitude	Pearson Correlation	.460	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	335	335

In table 2, the Pearson correlation ($p < 0/000$ and $r = 0/460$, $n = 335$) found the correlation between two variables significant; the correlation coefficient is medium and positive. Thus, the older students show positive attitudes towards their teachers. This finding is in line with Erdogan, et al. (2008).

The third research hypothesis seek the relationship between students' attitude and students' achievement divided here into two groups of achievements with final scores above 10 ($N = 225$) and below 10 ($N = 110$). The relationship between two variables for the former and the latter groups were both statistically significant ($\text{sig} = 0/013$, $r = 0/0345$; $\text{sig} = 0.016$, $r = 0.229$). Thus, there is a high positive relation between students' attitudes and their achievements so that the hypothesis is rejected.

TABLE 3.
TEACHERS' ATTITUDES & STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT, WITH OBTAINED SCORES ABOVE 10

		Final exam	Teacher
Final exam	Pearson Correlation	1	.560(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	225	10
t. attitude	Pearson Correlation	.560(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	10	10

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

The fourth research hypothesis assessed the relationship between the teachers' attitudes towards the students and their achievement. As it is shown in Table 3, the attitudes of teachers towards the students' success and failures are statistically significant ($\text{sig}=0.000$). Drawn upon the finding, the final null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis that emphasized the relationship between the two variables is approved.

TABLE 4.
PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	First exam	12.6624	335	4.45696	.24387
	Final exam	14.4559	335	4.42324	.24203

TABLE 5.
PAIRED SAMPLES TEST

	Paired Differences					T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Upper	Lower			
First Exam Final exam	1.79100	2.07336	.11345	.98341	1.42974	10.635	335	.000

Paired sample T-test was used to investigate the differences between two scores obtained from the pre-test (first test at the beginning of the academic year as background knowledge) and post-test (average of students' final exam scores, their class activities and their midterm scores). As we can see in table 4, 12.66 and 14.45 are the mean of students' scores which has been enhanced in the pre-test and the post-test. Since the test is statically significant ($\text{sig. (2-tailed): .000}$) and the difference between two scores is 1.79, we concluded that teacher's procedures increased students' attitude towards their teachers after the first test. Null hypothesis that emphasize no differences between two scores is rejected. Criteria for students' achievement were by comparing the first exam as background knowledge at the first semester with the data was collected at the end of the final semester (average of students' final exam scores, their class activities and their midterm scores).

V. RESULTS OF HYPOTHESES TESTING

In the female high school of Rasht in Iran, there is a significant relationship between attitude and achievement. They do assist in shedding light to other variables that could influence students' achievement levels. It is important to say that students with the positive attitudes are more successful than with the negative ones. In term of students' age, older students show more respect and positive attitudes towards their teacher.

VI. DISCUSSION

Williams et al. (2002) asserted that learners' perceptions and interpretations had been found to have the greatest influence on achievement and claimed that, in some cases, students' perceptions of teacher behaviors might not correspond with their teachers' intentions. A major trend in language syllabus design has been the use of information from learners on curriculum decision-making (Nunan, 1993). Students should be active in their learning context, not only passive assemblers of information. Learning is a product of learners' own actions and is based not only on the learners' previous skills and knowledge but also on their experience and interest. De Corte (1993) proposed that "if learners have a role in defining and choosing the goals, the course content, and the methodology, learning will be more relevant to them." Attitudes are not very stable and sometimes, negative attitudes are substituted by positive ones and vice versa. Thus, there is not one-way relation from the learner to others but there is much scope of interrelationship between the attitudes and success or failure in the second language learning. Researchers often tend to overlook teachers as a potential source of problems in the classroom (Kearney, et al., 1991). Furthermore, policy makers often focus on curriculum and curricula aspects; they neglect the importance of teacher-student interaction. Kearney et al. (1991) considered teacher's misbehaviors as interfering factor on students' learning.

A number of pedagogical implications can be put forward here. First, Teachers are to consider the proper instructional resources for their educational material, in order to create an interesting class. They are required to be aware of their students' needs beyond the academic instruction. Kormos and Csizer (2008) claimed that teacher, materials, and class activities are instrumental in shaping attitudes to learning. Second, teachers need to outline the plan for succeeding their students in learning English. Ataei (2000) emphasized the importance of conducting a detailed and systematic needs analysis. Teachers can provide instructional and problem-solving strategies to prevent students from failure. Students' language learning procedures should be conducted on the basis of their field of study. Third, there is a necessity for reduction of the negative attitude which related to the students' achievement in learning language. Mantle-Bromley (1995) also stated that if the students' attitudes towards learning a foreign language influence their attempts, teachers should be knowledgeable about issues that related to attitudes. Findings of Bromley's study showed that teachers can change the attitudes of the students with negative attitudes towards the target language culture.

VII. CONCLUSION

This study focused on the correlation among students' attitudes towards their teachers, teachers' attitudes towards their students and students' achievement in learning English language. The findings of this study enlightened Female high school students of Rasht show positive dyadic attitudes towards English teachers if their teachers show positive attitudes towards them. This provided adequate answers to the research questions contradicting the idea that there is no relationship between attitudes and English language learners' achievement (Lunara, 1999) or there is a weak relationship between learners' positive attitudes and students' achievement (karas,1997). The findings were also in line with Saracaloğlu, (1996).

It is shown that only a few percent of the participants showed negative attitudes towards their English teachers and there was a significant correlation between students' grades and attitudes. There might be other reasons for the students to become successful, such as instructional methods and the subject materials used.

The research supports this notion that teachers are the main source of language input to the students; influence their learning directly (Kariminia & Salehizadeh, 2007). Also, teachers have a vital role in provoking their learners' academic achievement and their quality can highly influence students' outcome (Campbell, et al., 2004). Teachers can provide a non-threatening environment for learning and make students think positively about the teacher and the educational materials. Teachers' emotional factors such as kindness and caring have an impact on the students' attitudes towards learning language.

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An Ecological Interpretation of *Love Medicine*

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Abstract—Louise Erdrich is one of the most prolific, important and successful contemporary Native American writers. *Love Medicine* is her representative work, which represents the lives of Chippewa Indians in reservation and reveals the irreversible and devastating influence on Indian tribes exerted by the white. The Indians suffered a lot and the living environment in reservation are devastated, yet the Indians never yield; they unite together and make the best use of their close relationship with nature, rebuilding the harmony between men and women, man and nature. This paper analyzes the interdependent and indivisible relationship between the traditional Indians and their lands, so as to reveal Native Americans' ecological awareness and encourage people to think about the causes of the ecological crisis today.

Index Terms—Louise Erdrich, *Love Medicine*, ecological consciousness, nature, harmony

I. INTRODUCTION

Louise Erdrich, born in 1954, is universally acknowledged as one of the most important native writers in American Literature. She is one of the most prolific and successful contemporary American writers. Up to now, she has published 13 novels, one short collection, one anthology, etc. North Dakota is Louise Erdrich's birthplace. She is of German American and Chippewa descent. Her tetralogy of Chippewa includes *Love Medicine* (1993), *The Beet Queen* (1996), *Tracks* (1989) and *The Bingo Palace* (1992) together making up a grand family saga, which displays the life of the Indians in North Dakota dispossessed of their land and the subsequent destinies of their following generations.

Among these works mentioned above, her first novel, *Love Medicine* contributes most to her reputation to a great extent. The book published in 1984 won her the National Book Critics Award. *Love Medicine* represents the lives of Chippewa Indian in Turtle Mountain Reservation, talking a lot about home, banishing and returning to homeland, identification and survival. The structure of the novel is a collection of eighteen linked stories related to lots of different characters from 4 families in Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation in North Dakota: the Kashpaws, the Lamartines, the Pillagers and the Morisseys. By the vivid description of the family sagas of four generation of Indians, *Love Medicine* shows Erdrich's well-versed knowledge of Indian traditions and demonstrates the fundamental effect of environment and regional landscape on the construction of identities of the main characters. Consequently, it brings forth the stark differences between the Indian and white culture in interpreting nature.

Native Americans as the earliest inhabitants of the North America were discriminated in the past centuries, and granted citizenship only in 1924. Before the Europeans arrived, they lived in harmony with nature on the continent for a long time and cultivated their own splendid cultures and traditions. However, the academic studies of their ways of life and their interactions with nature have only appeared in recent decades along with the rise of ecological literature. The study of *Love Medicine* in foreign countries started in late 1980s and early 1990s. The Ecological wisdom of *Love Medicine* has attracted the attention of the domestic and foreign scholars. However, a systematic and in-depth research of *Love Medicine* is still in need. Based on previous study, this paper aims at representing the living condition of the Native Americans and interpreting the ecological thoughts in *Love Medicine*. The author of this paper will analyze the destruction of the natural environment in reservation due to the discrimination of the white as well as the indiscernible relations between the traditional Indians and their lands. This paper will shed light on Native American's ecological wisdom and make people reflect the deep reason of the ecological crisis in modern society. By exploring into a different culture, this paper wishes to absorb and disseminate ecological wisdom of the Native people and arouse the awareness of maintaining ecological equilibrium.

II. DETERIORATED LIVING ENVIRONMENT IN RESERVATION

A. Deprivation of Land

To Native Americans, land is something with great meaning and importance, something connecting them between their tribes and family. They do not regard land as a commodity but take it an indispensable part of their life and a symbol of the great nature (Allen, 1991). This attachment to land is the source of sense of belonging. However, since the white arrived, things have changed dramatically. The unwelcome newcomers exerted havoc on Indian tribes. The whites drove the Indians away from their homeland by making a set of policies and treaties for their own benefits. The Native

Americans have been discriminated and oppressed by a government dominated by the white for centuries. They have to try very hard to survive in harsh surroundings. It is impossible for us to fully understand *Love Medicine* without knowing the losses and miseries that Native Americans had suffered in the colonial history.

In 1830, the American government passed the Indian Removal Act which forced Native Americans to move from the fertile east to the barren west. The white wanted more land to spread their faith. They wanted to be the master of the nature. But in the eyes of native people, the bridal land is very closely related to their lives, it is more than just a source of food and a place to build their homes. The white despised the Indians' way of life and the way they use their land, so they tried every possible way to seize land from the American Indians. Then American government reached out their hands to the Great Prairie and built the railway, leaving only a small part of land called "the reservations" for the Native Americans. In *Love Medicine*, Lulu witnesses their miserable experience under the dominance of the white government and complains: "How many times did we move? The Chippewa had started off way on the other side of the five great lakes. How we were shoved out on this lonesome knob of prairie my grandmother used to tell. It is too long a story to get into now" (Erdrich, 1993, p.282). Native Americans suffered a lot for being deprived of land, fortune, culture and even freedom. They even revolted against the U.S. Government, but compared with the mighty force of the government, their fighting back seemed insignificant. And their defeat is inevitable.

In 1871, the Dawes General Allotment Act stipulated the allocation of land to American Indians and changed the Indians' original economic system. But the hidden purpose of U.S. Government behind enacting this act is to take away more land from the Indians by trickery. After distributing the lands that the U.S. Government planned to give to the American Indians, the white kept the rest of the fertile land for sale. Ironically, those land inevitably fell into the hands of the whites. What's more, with the implementation of the act, Indians' societal structure have fallen with it. According to history, between 1887 and 1934, when the Allotment Act finally went into effect, the U.S. government divested Native Americans about 90 million acres or about two thirds of their total holdings. The white government nibbles Native Americans' territory and gains a lot of benefits from making use of their land (Steven, 2000). There are more acts like the ones discussed above, which by appearance seem to be beneficial to the American Indians, while the truth is quite different. There is fraud behind those policies. The American government don't really want to help the American Indians. Their kindness is nothing but a charade. The policy made by the white bring not benefits but destruction to the reservation. As Erdrich states in *Love Medicine*, the land policy in reservation is a joke. In reality, this policy is the cause of the land loss in reservation, and finally their loss of home.

Before the white came, the Indian reservation was pastoral, picturesque and peaceful; however, the white policy destroys the landscape and break downs the natural beauty. The white replaces farms and pastures in reservation with factories and mines. Fields and air in reservation are heavily polluted, and the rich lands become barren after giving way to factories or mines. The living environment in reservation is gradually deteriorating. Erdrich gives a vivid description of the living situation in reservation. In *Love Medicine*, when Albertine hears the death of June, she returns to the reservation and describes the beautiful scenery: "all along the highway that early summer the land was beautiful. The sky stretched bare. Tattered silver windbreaks bounded flat, plowed fields that the government had paid to lie fallow" (Louise, 1993, p. 11). But when she drives close to reservation and sees the wild, shabby sights of reservation, she changes her tone: "At the end of the big farms and the blowing fields was the reservation. ..Even in the distance you could sense hills from their opposites—pits, dried sloughs, ditches of cattails, potholes and then the water. There would be water in the hills when there wasn't any on the plains, the highway narrowed off and tangled, then turned to gravel with ruts, holes, and blue alfalfa bunching in the ditches. Small hills reared up. Dogs leaped from nowhere and ran themselves out fiercely. The dust hung thick" (Louise, 1993, p. 11).

The description vividly portrays the worsened living environment of Native Americans. The land of reservation has become barren and dilapidated. Compared with the outside world, the reservation is just like a hell.

B. *Bewildered Native Americans*

According to ecological theory, people's identity and landscape are closely related, especially for native people living in harmony with nature. And through analyzing how a person calls his hometown, we can know what his feeling is for his hometown. In *Love Medicine*, the American Indians talks about their hometown in a tone full of nostalgia and even sadness. The sadness is resulted from the loss of land they suffered. When the character Lulu was at school learning the language of the white, all she thinks about is to go back to the reservation to learn their native language. She finds the language of the white disgusting. She finds the language of the white is full of hypocrisy and lies. And only when she is standing on the land of reservation can she find a sense of belonging:

"I was in love with the whole world and all that lived in its rainy arms. Sometimes I'd look out on my yard and the green leaves would be glowing. I'd see the oil slick on the wing of a grackle, I'd hear the wind rushing, rolling, like the far-off sound of waterfalls. Then I'd open my mouth wide, my cars wide, my heart and I'd let everything inside" (Erdrich, 1993, p. 276).

These words show that only in one's own land can one be completely free and full of strength. Nector is among the first American Indians who have received the white culture. He tries to blend into the world of the white. After graduation, he tries to be an actor or the white's model only to find the fact that to the white "the only interesting Indian is dead, or dying by falling backwards off a horse" (Louise, 1993, p. 124). And finally he goes back to the reservation and becomes a chief. *Love Medicine* begins with June's death on her way back to the reservation. She dies in the very

beginning of the novel. June is also one of those who went to the white world to look for a bright future. She is a charming lady praised as the Indian lady of America. The outside world fascinates her. She worked as a receptionist and then worked at a beauty parlor, but she was discriminated everywhere. After being ridiculed by her customer for her race, she quits her job. She tries very hard to improve her life but fails. Finally she made up her mind to go back to the reservation, but was frozen to death on her way home. Another character Lipsha is brought up in the reservation. He is a contemporary healer of the American Indians, having a magic power of healing by touch. However, under the continual influence of the white's culture, he falls into crisis in belief. He wavers in his faith, having no firm belief of the white culture or the traditional culture. Through account the life story of the Indians, Erdrich discloses the bewilderment and embarrassment of the American Indians caused by loss of land and traditions.

III. ANALYSIS OF ECOLOGICAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN *LOVE MEDICINE*

A. *Native Americans' Affinity with Land*

American Indians hold the opinion that all parts of nature is inseparable, believing that all things under heaven are equals. Human beings are just an equal member of the nature. The water, mountain, animals, plants and human beings should not be separated. For traditional Indians, land is their identity, land is their life, so the loss of land results in the loss of self-identity (Gao, 2006). In *Love Medicine*, Louise Erdrich describes the painful experience of American Indians due to being separated from their land, and Native people's affinity towards their land is fully revealed. Louise Erdrich also depicts some Indians characters that have a close relationship with nature. Even though they don't have a happy life under the domination of the white they still relate themselves to nature closely. They are proud of their inherent closeness with nature and strive to protect nature. Lulu is described as a powerful protector of nature in the novel. She is tough-minded, holds deep love for nature, and devotes herself to preventing the land from being destroyed by the white government. Lulu, as a child of nature, expresses her love for nature:

"When I (Lulu) came back to the reservation after my long years gone, I saw the leaves of the poplars applaud high in wind. I saw the ducks barrel down, reaching to the glitter of the slough water. Wind chopped the clouds to rolls that rose and puffed whiter, whiter. Blue June berry, tough diamond willow. I watched my own face float over the grass, traveling alongside me in the dust of the bus window, and I grinned, showed my teeth. They could not cage me anymore" (Louise, 1993, p. 69).

From these sentences, it is easy to see that Lulu has an intimate relationship with nature. She wants the freedom and hates to be separated from nature. And she wants to live a life with a close relationship with nature. Marrying Moses also indicates Lulu's love for nature. After getting married, Lulu and Moses have a life with a close relationship with nature. They stay inside his cave day after day, never leaving except to bathe in the lake. They plunge into the freezing water, dizzy, steam flowing down their thighs, and then on the shore they embrace again, twisting like otters. They eat rosehips and cold potatoes. Actually, Lulu's love for Moses, to a certain extent, embodies her love for nature.

In a word, Lulu is a representative of outstanding women. She respects nature, takes care of nature as her child, and tries to help people who are confronted with loss of land and home. In face of the white invasion, Lulu and Marie united together to change their fates, stopping the white from taking away their land. They stick at controlling the deteriorating living environment and proposing solutions to the environmental problems.

Like Lulu, the elder generation of Indians have profound feelings toward their land in spite of the influence of modern gold-worship and utilitarianism, and they believe land is their home and can't be measured by money. They have a firm belief that land will last forever while money burns like tinder, flowing off like water. When the characters in the novel face the brutal fate to be driven out of their home land, some of them commit suicides because they can't endure the great pain; some of them take a little soil from this land, for they will be homeless souls from then on. Their belief that human being is just an equal member of nature also proves their intimacy with the land. The traditional American Indians respect all things on earth; they are not ego-centered; they believe their serene lives are based on the support of lives of other organisms. It pains them to see what the white are doing to their land. What the white people did on the reservation is threatening all members of nature. They poisoned the land and polluted the rivers. Their behaviors are posing a great threat to the American Indians who rely on the nature to survive.

With less and less land left for them, the food problem emerges for the American Indians. And the numbers of animals have reduced so greatly due to white people's irresponsible exploitation of nature that it is no more enough to feed the American Indians. In American Indians' opinion, the whites were abusing and poisoning their mother nature, and there will be consequences. Once the balance of ecology in that area is broken down, the chain effects following it will bring pain and disasters to people who live there.

B. *Native Americans' Kinship with Animals*

American Indians have always shared a common faith that nature should be revered. All creatures under heaven are connected. Creatures are just the same spirits in different forms and human beings are no exception (He, 2011). For example, when American Indian hunts down a bear, he would cry and kiss the head of the bear for forgiveness, calling it brother. In many stories told by the American Indians, the creatures and landscapes coexist in a way as if they are the kin of human beings. In other words, everything in nature is one part of a big family. For instance, the earth is often called the mother and the sun, the father.

In *Love Medicine*, Erdrich depicts a world where traditional Native Americans live harmoniously with creatures of nature. For instance, Lulu is brought up by Nanapush who is a traditional tribal hunter. When Lulu was young, she “buried my face in the cloth of his rough shirt, and breathed the woods smoke and dried ink, the trapper’s musk and sun heated dryness of his old man’s skin.” (Erdrich, 1993, p. 69) Under the influence of Nanapush, Lulu develops her sincere love for animals and nature. What’s more, guided by those principles, Lulu often teaches the young generation the traditional idea about animal of their ancestors. When Lulu sees the picture of buffalo, she reminds the young people to remember: “The four-legged people, once they helped us two-leggeds” (Erdrich, 1993, p. 307). That is what she tries to instill into the minds of the young generation of her tribe.

The numerous rituals of Native Americas before they hunt also prove their respect for the animals. They believe that animals were their food sent by a lenient god. So they will have fast, dance and chant spells before they hunt (Wang, 2014). In *Love Medicine* Hector recalls his feeling when hunting with Eli in the woods:

“Alone in the woods, checking the trapline, I find a wounded animal that hasn’t died well, or worse, it’s still living, so that I have to put it out of its misery. Sometimes it’s only a big bird I only winged. When I do what I have to do, my throat swelled closed sometimes. I touch the suffering bodies like they were killed saints I should handle with gentle reverence” (Erdrich, 1993, p. 66).

From the description, we can feel traditional Indians’ prudent and respectful attitude towards animals when hunting.

In western world prevails the idea that animals are destructible. They have little rights. They are to be slaughtered and harnessed. This ideology is also reflected in western literature. The whites have a lot books describing the behavior of killing wild animals for fun and to show their bravery. While from the perspective of American Indians, this kind of behavior is utterly arrogant and cruel. The insatiable greed of the white people drives them to kill more animal over the capacity of the land, breaking the balance of the local ecological system. This is quite different from traditional American Indians’ hunting style, which is far more merciful and moderate. These two kinds of hunting mode represents two different ideologies. The whites believe in money and goods, they want more and more, their appetite is insatiable. They regard nature as opposing to human beings. This is also reflected in many of their slogans like “conquering nature”. But Native Americans believe that every life including animal, plant and even rock has its own spirit and should be respected.

C. *Harmony as the Characteristic of Native American Culture*

The reason why Native Americans become the research focus of so many scholars is that they have a unique way of life, a harmonious way of living. Their life style seems to be the cure of our environmental problems. Their wisdom of living in harmony with nature has become the source of inspirations to many contemporary writers. Nowadays, many researchers are exploring the theme on ecology, ecological wisdom and living in harmony with nature. More and more people are realizing the inner connection between human beings and everything else on earth, promoting the environment friendly technologies. The old European and North American resource-consuming style of development is not welcome any more. Human beings are forced to get rid of their old lifestyle because environmental problems are becoming more and more severe. This phenomenon of modern society is also reflected in *Love Medicine*. By analyzing the ecological consciousness of the Native Americans, we may find a new way to deal with the environmental crisis that is happening all around the world.

Native Americans differ from Euro-Americans in their attitude toward nature. The Europeans hold the views that wilderness is something they must conquer. When they first set foot on the land of America, they are psychologically hostile to this new environment. However, American Indians always revere the nature. They live in harmony with nature instead of fighting against it. They have the awareness that it is better to cooperate with nature than to do things against nature’s law as the white did. This reverence toward nature is reflected in their numerous ceremonies and rituals in their daily lives. For a very long time, Native Americans lived by agriculture, fishing and hunting. All their daily activities were to interact with nature. In this way, they have created a civilization featuring a harmony with nature. Nature and their culture is closely connected. They use nature as a source of imagination and creation. And the reverence to nature revealed in their daily rituals make their culture a part of nature’s order. Thus harmony becomes the characteristics of American Indian culture. For the traditional American Indians, the biggest difference between them and the modern people are that their love and respect for nature is engraved in their souls and revealed in their various rituals of daily life while we just know it by rote. They have a talent of living harmoniously with nature. In the novel, many characters such as Lulu, Marie, Nector and Lipsha lose themselves in the society of the white. They don’t know who they are and where they belong. Only when they return to the reservation do they finally find their position and inner peace.

Not only do the American Indians live in harmony with nature, they also lead a harmonious life inside their family and community. Lulu and Marie are both important characters in *Love Medicine*. Together they bring up a lot of homeless children. The relationship between Lulu and Marie begins with rivals because they both are in love with the same man Nector. Marie is Nector’s wife while Lulu his mistress. They are rivals and they should hate each other. But after Nector dies they become good friends and help each other. When Lulu has an operation on her eyes, Marie comes to take care of her. “I (Lulu) thought her voice was like music in itself, ripe and quiet...I gave her a pillow I’d made out of those foam rubber petals they sell in kits. This was nice, I never learned how to do this kind of thing. I appreciate you coming here to help me get my vision” (Louise, 1993, p. 293). The harmonious relationship between them can be easily

seen from the above sentences. The harmony among tribal community becomes strengthened even when they are being persecuted by the white. Lipsha is brought up by Lulu and Marie. When his magic power of touch fails, he falls into confusion about his belief. Under the instruction of Lulu and Marie he gradually realizes his root is in the reservation and the real power of love medicine lies in love and tolerance handed down from one generation to another within their tribe. In the end of the novel, he forgives his mother June for abandoning him and brings his mother's soul back home. His magical power of touch also comes back. Also, Lulu helps Moses regain the ability of speaking, walking and living. Before Lulu comes to the island, Moses speaks the old language and uses words that have been lost for a long time. When Lulu comes to the island, she always tries her best to help Moses regain the ability of living as a normal person. And thanks to Lulu's help, Moses finds his voice again and returns to community as a normal person with no problems in communication.

Actually, in the novel women start to take a more and more significant role in family and community, such as Marie. Marie is a great mother in the reservation; she handles family affairs alone. She earns money by her own hands to support family. And later she even provides financial support for Nector. Her contributions in Nector's success can't be ignored. At the end of the novel, women and men begin to live together in harmony, they commence helping and appreciating each other. And they realize their traditional culture is of vital importance and the prosperity of the community is based on respect, care and love. Retrieving the harmony of between man and nature, between community members is the much emphasized theme of Erdrich's works. Native Americans hold the opinion that individual exists among community and family, thus fully revealing the essence of Native American culture featuring a harmonious coexistence with nature and tribes.

IV. CONCLUSION

This paper analyzes the ecological consciousness of Native Americans in *Love Medicine*. Louise Erdrich depicts the stories of the American Indians trying to save their traditions, culture and land. Through these stories Erdrich tries to awake people to recognize the kinship between human beings and nature. The stories of the main characters in *Love Medicine* prove that there is an umbilical cord between human being and nature and many things on earth are closely connected.

Besides, It can also be seen from *Love Medicine* that ecological feelings of Erdrich is different from nostalgic and pastoral sentiments in Caucasian mainstream literature. When Erdrich depicts their unique landscapes on the reservation, she pays more attention to tribal culture and tradition. Her stress on harmony between man and nature and returning to tradition coincides with modern ecologists who advocate we should keep harmonious interpersonal relationship and live harmoniously with nature in today's pluralistic society.

Ecological crisis is a pressing issue besetting the whole world. In recent years, human beings have experienced a lot of unprecedented natural catastrophes. Our earth has been heavily polluted. Our living conditions are worsening. Humans begin to realize the development of society can't be separated from the harmonious relationship with nature. Many writers and literary critics have realized this ecological crisis and are trying to absorb the ecological wisdom of the Native Americans who are known for their primitive yet harmonious way of life. Through the research, the author finds that the ecological wisdom of Native Americans should be valued and made good use of. In fact, in order to fight the current environmental crisis, one should bear in mind that protecting earth is of priority because it is the base where we build our civilization.

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Self-Efficacy and Anxiety among EFL Learners with Different Kinds of Multiple Intelligences

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Abstract—The present study was an attempt to investigate the relationship between the self-efficacy and anxiety of EFL learners with different kinds of multiple intelligences. Accordingly, three questionnaires were used: the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE), the Endler Multidimensional Anxiety Scales (EMAS), and the Multiple Intelligence Development Assessment Scales (MIDAS). A total of 246 undergraduate and graduate students aged 19 to 27 participated in this study. The researchers carried out a series of both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses and the results indicated that there is a positive correlation between anxiety and self-efficacy. The results also showed a significant relationship between linguistically intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy and anxiety and that anxiety cannot be a predictor for EFL learners' self-efficacy.

Index Terms—self-efficacy, anxiety, multiple intelligences

I. INTRODUCTION

The discipline of second language learning and its research literature have manifested a sizeable focus on determining those factors that seem more likely to have an effect on the process of language learning in more recent times. Accordingly, one such factor identified as an affective variable is self-efficacy; the latter influences human decision, behaviors, and endeavors to overcome challenges (Bandura, 1986). To this end, the way people choose their behavior is affected by self-efficacy.

Self-efficacy is predominantly defined as the belief that one holds in their capabilities to achieve a goal or an outcome (Rudy, Davis, & Matthews, 2012). In his early writings, Bandura (1977) defines self-efficacy as “the conviction that one can successfully execute the behavior required to produce the desired outcome” (p. 193). Self-efficacy is a cognitive belief that can be evident in behavior. Hackett and Betz (1981), who were among the early researchers discussing self-efficacy, note that this construct is related to the subjective probability of achieving a desired outcome. Individuals with a strong sense of efficacy tend to maintain persistence in tasks when faced with adversity.

As stated by Bandura (1984), a strong self-efficacy produces higher levels of achievement within individuals. Compared with learners who doubt their capabilities, “those who feel self-efficacious about learning or performing a task completely are apt to participate more readily, work harder, persist longer when they encounter difficulties, and achieve at higher levels” (Schunk & Meece, 2005, p. 71).

Gist and Mitchel (1992) believe that self-efficacy is an individual's estimate of their ability to conduct a specific task. They further argue that those who anticipate they can undertake a task well do better than those who think they would not succeed and that efficacy perceptions also may be influenced by differences in personality, motivation, and the task itself. According to Bandura (1994), learners who hold a high degree of self-efficacy are not intimidated and challenged by sophisticated tasks and projects; quite the contrary, they regard them as an opportunity for growth and development. Attempts to provide a universal definition of self-efficacy are sometimes obscured by the existence of pertinent constructs such as self-concept, self-esteem, and locus of control. However, Bandura (2006) asserts that albeit they are self-referential, self-efficacy is vividly different from all other self-constructs since it involves judgments of capabilities which are specific to a particular task.

There is at times a twilight zone governing the definition of self-efficacy. Ormrod (2008) believes that self-efficacy is similar to self-concept, but with an important distinction. He writes that, “Self-efficacy is more specific in the domain or tasks or situations” (p. 125). He continues that, “A student may have high self-efficacy as he or she performs mathematics skills, but in the language arts classes, he or she may have a low self-efficacy, believing he or she is not good enough or the subject is too hard” (p. 125).

There is also the notion of perceived self-efficacy which is one's belief in the aptitude to navigate through and manage prospective situations which forecasts motivational directions and mathematic achievement (Stevens, Olivarez, Lan, & Tallend-Runnels, 2004). Accordingly, Bandura (1994) also states that, “Perceived self-efficacy is defined as people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives” (p. 77). He offered not only a solution for teachers in their classrooms today but for the future, to build students with a strong sense of belief so that they can succeed.

Furthermore, perceived self-efficacy is one's beliefs about their capacity to perform actions at specific levels (Bandura, 2006). Bandura further argues that efficacy judgments are "concerned not with the number of skills you have, but with what you believe you can do with what you have under a variety of circumstances" (p. 37). Self-efficacy beliefs can influence human functioning in numerous ways. Bandura's self-efficacy theory provides a clear understanding of behavior that occurs when a person feels like he does not have control of situation.

Self-efficacy is commonly interconnected with certain emotional issues, including anxiety disorders. According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy constitutes the key factor of human agency and a powerful resource in protecting persons from psychological strains such as anxiety. Indeed, self-efficacy hugely influences test anxiety, which refers to individuals' beliefs that they have the ability to succeed at a specific task. Self-efficacy also affects how one perceives potential threats. Bandura assumed the important roles of both threatening events and self-efficacy in anxiety arousal (Nie, Lau, & Liau, 2011).

Anxiety is a state of fear, tension, and discomfort in response to a real or perceived threat. Despite the fact that anxiety is considered a normal response to temporary periods of stress or uncertain conditions, it is possible that prolonged, intense, or inappropriate periods of anxiety may impair daily functioning, thence becoming an anxiety disorder (Schmoyer, 2007).

The kind of anxiety EFL learners manifest, sometimes in the form of nervous feelings or unclear fear (Scovel, 1978), is not a single independent variable; rather, it happens to be a phenomenon involving several other dependent variables. Thus, the issue of student anxiety needs to be addressed from a variety of perspectives and approaches.

Anxiety can be a symptom of a number of illnesses known as anxiety disorders. These disorders are a group of serious and treatable health problems caused by a combination of biological and environmental factors. Social anxiety is defined as "a marked and persistent fear of one or more social or performance situations in which the person is exposed to unfamiliar people or to possible scrutiny by others" (American Psychiatric Association, 1994, p. 416). According to this suggestion, there is evidence that individuals who tend to be socially anxious "judge their own performance in a negative fashion, emphasizing their shortcomings and underestimating their behavioral skills relative to the evaluation of their conversational partner, in comparison to a non-clinical control group or compared to participants with low levels of social anxiety" (Hampel, Weis, Hiller, & Witthoft, 2011, p. 545).

Perhaps contrary to anxiety which is often associated with a negative impact on language learning, there is the construct of intelligence with its usually positively perceived influence on learning in general and language learning in particular. Gardner's (1983) Multiple Intelligences Theory (MI) "has been used as a tool for understanding the relationship between language, learning, and intelligence" (Savas, 2012, p. 851) because, as Christison (1998) points out, ELT specialists and practitioners endorse MI theory and its principles. This wide endorsement, Christison argues, is due to the fact that through MI theory, an effective framework for language learning can be presented since the theory is compatible with the very complex nature of language learning.

MI theory, first introduced by Gardner (1983) has attracted considerable attention because it made educators and researchers question the notion of intelligence as one single entity. According to this approach, "intelligence entails the ability to solve problems or fashion products that are of consequence in a particular setting or community" (Gardner, 1993, p. 15). Gardner (2006) proposes eight main types of intelligences instead of one broad category of intelligence: logical-mathematical, linguistic, musical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic (recently existential is added too but remains immeasurable).

According to Gardner (as cited in Savas, 2012), everyone has all of these intelligences at different levels and each individual has a unique intelligence profile. "No two people, not even twins, have the same intelligence profile since the development of intelligence is not determined by genetics alone; cultural and environmental factors also influence the type of intelligence individuals have" (p. 851).

Gardner (1983) defines intelligence as "the ability to solve problems or to create fashion products, that are valued within one or more cultural settings" (p. 81). "This definition challenged the traditional psychological view of intelligence as a single capacity that drives logical and mathematical thought" (Savas, 2012, p. 852). Accordingly, Gardner (1993) described intelligence as a bio-psychological capacity which may be impacted by experience, culture, and motivational factors. He further asserts that intelligence is the ability to solve problems.

Different researchers have studied extensively learners' self-efficacy, anxiety, and multiple intelligences and a pattern has been identified where high levels of self-efficacy are related to higher levels of self-achievements and lower levels of anxiety. Most studies on the relationships among students' self-efficacy and test anxiety have focused on elementary and secondary students (Mutton, Brown, & Lent, 1991).

Some studies that cover a wide range of issues show the significant relationship between test anxiety and academic self-efficacy (Lian, Davey, Wake, & Cashell, 2011), social anxiety and social intelligence (Hampel et al., 2011), and self-efficacy and social anxiety. Furthermore, several studies demonstrate a negative correlation between learners' self-efficacy and anxiety (Cheng, 2004; Muris, 2002; Wang & Liu, 2000).

Many studies in ELT suggest a negative relationship between L2 anxiety and self-perception of competence in the second language, akin to the concept of self-efficacy (Cheng, 2004; Horwitz, Horwitz, & Scope, 1986; Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley, 1997). Due to the importance of the role of affective factors which influence language anxiety and EFL learners' self-efficacy, it appears important to examine the effect domain of other affective factors which have not

been given due attention particularly when there seems to be a scarcity of research – if any – on the relationship among EFL learners' self-efficacy, anxiety, and multiple intelligences. Hence, the purpose of this research was thus to examine and find the relationship among EFL learners' anxiety, self-efficacy, and multiple intelligences and also to investigate any difference among the anxiety and self-efficacy of EFL learners with different kinds of multiple intelligences. Accordingly, the following null hypotheses were raised:

- H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between logically intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy and anxiety.*
H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between linguistically intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy and anxiety.
H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between musically intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy and anxiety.
H₀₄: There is no significant relationship between spatially intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy and anxiety.
H₀₅: There is no significant relationship between kinesthetically intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy and anxiety.
H₀₆: There is no significant relationship between interpersonally intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy and anxiety.
H₀₇: There is no significant relationship between intrapersonally intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy and anxiety.
H₀₈: There is no significant relationship between naturalistically intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy and anxiety.
H₀₉: There is no significant difference among the self-efficacy of EFL learners with different kinds of multiple intelligences.
H₁₀: There is no significant difference among the anxiety of EFL learners with different kinds of multiple intelligences.

In case a significant relationship were found among the variables, the following hypotheses were raised:

- H₁₁: Anxiety is not a significant predictor of logically intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy.*
H₁₂: Anxiety is not a significant predictor of linguistically intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy.
H₁₃: Anxiety is not a significant predictor of musically intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy.
H₁₄: Anxiety is not a significant predictor of spatially intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy.
H₁₅: Anxiety is not a significant predictor of kinesthetically intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy.
H₁₆: Anxiety is not a significant predictor of interpersonally intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy.
H₁₇: Anxiety is not a significant predictor of intrapersonally intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy.
H₁₈: Anxiety is not a significant predictor of naturalistically intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy.

II. METHOD

A. Participants

The participants in this study were 246 undergraduate and graduate EFL learners aged between 19 and 27. All of the participants expressed their willingness to fill out the three questionnaires.

B. Instrumentations

1. Endler Multidimensional Anxiety Scales (EMAS)

The EMAS is composed of three individual scales: The EMAS-State (EMAS-S), EMAS-Trait (EMAS-T), and the EMAS-Perception (EMAS-P) Scales. The EMAS-S is a 20-item measure that assesses state anxiety on a five-point intensity scale which is also summed to produce a Total State Anxiety score. The facets of the EMAS-T scale are social evaluation, physical danger, ambiguous, and daily routines. The EMAS-T is rated on a five-point intensity scale so it produces four scores for each dimension of trait anxiety. The EMAS-Perception (EMAS-P) assesses a respondent's perception of the type and degree of threat in her/his immediate situation. The scale is composed of five questions, and also three additional open-ended questions provided regarding specific aspects of their current situation. It takes 30 minutes to complete this questionnaire.

The results of the factor analyses conducted on the EMAS variants showed that the multidimensional structure was tenable and that they were valid tools (Miclea, Ciuca, & Albu, 2009).

2. General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE)

The GSE is a 10-item, four-point self-report instrument, designed to assess a general sense of perceived self-efficacy with the aim in mind to predict coping with daily hassles as well as adaptation after experiencing all kinds of stressful life events. The four-point scale ranges from "not at all true" to "exactly true". The responses on all 10 questions are summed to provide a total score. The range is from 10-40 points. There is no cut-off score for the GSE. A median split is used to categorize the sample into high and low self-efficacy beliefs. The GSE has been shown to be highly reliable (with Cronbach's alphas ranging from 0.79 to 0.90) and well-validated measure of anxiety symptomatology (Schwarzer, Mueller, & Greenglass, 1995). This instrument also takes approximately 30 minutes.

3. Multiple Intelligence Development Assessment Scales (MIDAS)

The MIDAS is an instrument used to measure multiple intelligences. The measure is a screening instrument to determine the characteristics of an individual's MI dispositions. The MIDAS purports to provide an objective measure of the multiple intelligences as reported by the person or by a knowledgeable informant. The MIDAS which finds the dominant intelligence of the learner consists of 106 five-point Likert scale with scale anchors specific to the content of the items in subsections of eight intelligences: Musical, Spatial, Kinesthetic, Linguistic, Logical, Interpersonal, Intrapersonal, and Naturalist. The reading level of the questionnaire is approximately sixth grade. Items surveyed the participants' skill level, amount of participation regarding skills, and their level of enthusiasm relative to the activities

of personal preferences reflected in the item. The MIDAS instrument contains 10 main scale and 27 subscales. The MIDAS can be scored by a computerized scoring service provided by the publisher. The approximate time for this questionnaire is one hour.

Score for the eight intelligences appears on the profile as percentage scores (zero-100) based upon the total number of completed items. Scores are reported for the main scales and corresponding subscales. The rating of the questionnaire of this study is done according to the suggestion of Shearer (1996) through several correspondence, employing a Likert Scale as follows: The item response values should be scaled 1 for Never, 2 for Rarely, 3 for Sometimes, 4 for Often, and 5 for All the times; 6 is also for I don't know which indicates missing value.

Exploratory factor analysis of the final 80-item version identified an appropriate 7-factor solution and the findings indicate high internal consistency estimates, inter-rater ratings, and test-retest statistics (Shearer & Branton, 2006).

C. Procedure

The researchers selected the students from both Payameh Noor University of Ghom and also a number of language schools (all the participants were university students). No specific training was required for the administration of any of the questionnaires used in this study. They were all self-report instruments and once the participants were provided a short briefing in Farsi on the purpose of the research, they were requested to complete the three questionnaires either in class or at home after which they had to email them to the researcher. Emphasis was laid on the timing of the questionnaire for those participants filling them at home.

Once all the completed questionnaires were gathered by the researchers, the data analysis was conducted.

III. RESULTS

The details of the statistical analyses are presented and discussed in a chronological order of administering the three instruments and testing the hypotheses.

A. Descriptive Statistics

1. Administering the MIDAS

Table 1 below contains the number of the learners belonging to each intelligence category. As the table below displays, the number of the learners in each subcategory varied from a maximum of 33 to a minimum of 28.

TABLE 1.
NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH MI CATEGORY

MI Category	Natural	Intrapersonal	Interpersonal	Kinesthetic	Spatial	Musical	Linguistic	Logical
Number	28	33	33	32	32	29	31	28

2. Administering the EMAS

Table 2 below displays the descriptive statistics of the 246 participants on the EMAS disaggregated by their intelligence subcategory. While the musical group held the highest mean (63.28), the spatial subcategory manifested the lowest mean (58.97).

TABLE 2.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF SCORES OF THE 246 PARTICIPANTS DISAGGREGATED BY THEIR INTELLIGENCE ON THE EMAS

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
Logical	28	38	82	61.89	8.465	-.217	.441
Linguistic	31	50	75	62.19	5.412	-.262	.421
Musical	29	34	86	63.28	8.791	-.713	.434
Spatial	32	26	79	58.97	9.690	-.179	.414
Kinesthetic	32	33	76	61.34	7.868	-.071	.414
Interpersonal	33	34	72	59.67	7.377	-.637	.409
Intrapersonal	33	33	79	61.52	9.741	-.766	.409
Natural	29	20	75	59.79	9.221	-.712	.434
Valid N (listwise)	28						

Furthermore, as can be calculated based on the data in the above table, all the skewness ratios (statistic / standard error) fell within the ± 1.96 range and thus resembled normalcy.

3. Administering the GSE

The descriptive statistics of the participants on the GSE again disaggregated by their intelligence subcategory appears in Table 3. The natural group held the highest mean (31.07) while the spatial subcategory the lowest mean (29.41). The skewness ratios also fell within the acceptable range and thus resembled normalcy.

TABLE 3.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF SCORES OF THE 246 PARTICIPANTS DISAGGREGATED BY THEIR INTELLIGENCE ON THE GSE

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
Logical	28	24	34	29.93	2.666	-.372	.441
Linguistic	31	22	36	30.23	4.031	-.529	.421
Musical	29	22	34	29.72	3.473	-.701	.434
Spatial	32	22	36	29.41	3.723	-.438	.414
Kinesthetic	32	23	36	30.25	4.265	-.347	.414
Interpersonal	33	19	36	29.97	4.455	-.484	.409
Intrapersonal	33	22	36	29.94	3.807	-.439	.409
Natural	29	23	36	31.07	3.081	-.790	.434
Valid N (listwise)	28						

B. Testing Hypotheses

To verify the first eight null hypotheses of the study, the researchers conducted a series of Pearson correlation coefficient tests. The prerequisites for these tests (i.e. normalcy, linearity, and homoscedasticity of the scores) were established a priori but not reported here in the interest of brevity.

1. Null Hypothesis 1

To test the first hypothesis, i.e. whether a significant relationship existed between logically intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy and anxiety, the researchers ran the correlation which was not significant at the 0.01 level ($r = 0.074$, $p = 0.710 > 0.05$) and the first null hypothesis was not rejected. In other words, *there is no significant relationship between logically intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy and anxiety.*

2. Null Hypothesis 2

To test the second hypothesis, i.e. whether a significant relationship existed between linguistically intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy and anxiety, a correlation was run. The correlation coefficient turned out to be significant at the 0.01 level ($r = 0.501$, $p = 0.004 < 0.05$). Furthermore, R^2 (or common variance) which is the effect size for correlation came out to be 0.25. This is a strong effect size (Larson-Hall, 2010). As a result, the researchers were able to reject the second null hypothesis. In other words, *there is a significant relationship between linguistically intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy and anxiety.*

3. Null Hypothesis 3

A correlation was run to test the third hypothesis of the study. The correlation coefficient was not significant at the 0.01 level ($r = 0.022$, $p = 0.908 > 0.05$). Hence, the third null hypothesis was not rejected and *there is no significant relationship between musically intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy and anxiety.*

4. Null Hypothesis 4

The researchers ran the correlation to test the fourth hypothesis of the study: the correlation was not significant at the 0.01 level ($r = 0.086$, $p = 0.639 > 0.05$). Hence, the fourth null hypothesis was not rejected and *there is no significant relationship between spatially intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy and anxiety.*

5. Null Hypothesis 5

To test the fifth null hypothesis, i.e. whether a significant relationship existed between kinesthetically intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy and anxiety, the researchers ran a correlation which was not significant at the 0.01 level ($r = 0.158$, $p = 0.388 > 0.05$). Hence, the fifth null hypothesis was not rejected. In other words: *There is no significant relationship between kinesthetically intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy and anxiety.*

6. Null Hypothesis 6

The researchers ran the correlation to test the sixth null hypothesis of the study. Again, the correlation was not significant at the 0.01 level ($r = 0.059$, $p = 0.746 > 0.05$). Hence, the sixth null hypothesis was not rejected: *there is no significant relationship between interpersonally intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy and anxiety.*

7. Null Hypothesis 7

The researchers thus ran the correlation to test the seventh null hypothesis of the study: the correlation was not significant at the 0.01 level ($r = -0.077$, $p = 0.672 > 0.05$). Hence, the seventh null hypothesis was not rejected and *there is no significant relationship between intrapersonally intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy and anxiety.*

8. Null Hypothesis 8

The researchers thus ran the correlation to test the eighth null hypothesis of the study and the correlation was not significant at the 0.01 level ($r = 0.171$, $p = 0.374 > 0.05$). Hence, the eighth null hypothesis was not rejected and *there is no significant relationship between naturalistically intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy and anxiety.*

To test the ninth and 10th null hypotheses of the study, the researchers conducted two sets of one-way ANOVAs as again the distribution of scores had proven normality (Tables 2 and 3).

9. Null Hypothesis 9

To test the ninth hypothesis, i.e. whether a significant difference existed among the self-efficacy of EFL learners with different kinds of multiple intelligences, the researcher conducted the first ANOVA. Prior to that, the Levene's test of homogeneity of variances was checked ($p = 0.140 > 0.05$).

Subsequently, the ANOVA was run. As Table 4 demonstrates below, the difference between the eight groups was indeed significant ($F_{(7, 236)} = 191.58, p = 0.0005 < 0.05$).

TABLE 4.
ONE-WAY ANOVA ON THE SCORES OF THE 246 LEARNERS DISAGGREGATED BY THEIR INTELLIGENCE SUBCATEGORY ON THE GSE

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	24945.616	7	3563.659	191.580	.000
Within Groups	4389.937	236	18.601		
Total	29335.553	243			

In other words, the null hypothesis was rejected as *there is a significant difference among the self-efficacy of EFL learners with different kinds of multiple intelligences*.

To identify where the differences lay, i.e. which groups performed in a significantly different manner from one another on the GSE, a post hoc Tukey HSD test was run on the scores (Table 5).

TABLE 5.
MULTIPLE COMPARISONS (TUKEY HSD TEST)

(I) Group	(J) Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	2	-.297	1.124	1.000	-3.74	3.14
	3	.204	1.143	1.000	-3.29	3.70
	4	.204	1.143	1.000	-3.29	3.70
	5	-.321	1.116	1.000	-3.73	3.09
	6	-29.738*	1.108	.000	-33.13	-26.35
	7	-.011	1.108	1.000	-3.40	3.38
	8	-1.140	1.143	.974	-4.64	2.35
	2	1	.297	1.124	1.000	-3.14
3		.502	1.114	1.000	-2.91	3.91
4		.502	1.114	1.000	-2.91	3.91
5		-.024	1.087	1.000	-3.35	3.30
6		-29.441*	1.079	.000	-32.74	-26.14
7		.286	1.079	1.000	-3.01	3.59
8		-.843	1.114	.995	-4.25	2.56
3		1	-.204	1.143	1.000	-3.70
	2	-.502	1.114	1.000	-3.91	2.91
	4	.000	1.133	1.000	-3.46	3.46
	5	-.526	1.106	1.000	-3.91	2.86
	6	-29.943*	1.098	.000	-33.30	-26.59
	7	-.215	1.098	1.000	-3.57	3.14
	8	-1.345	1.133	.935	-4.81	2.12
	4	1	-.204	1.143	1.000	-3.70
2		-.502	1.114	1.000	-3.91	2.91
3		.000	1.133	1.000	-3.46	3.46
5		-.526	1.106	1.000	-3.91	2.86
6		-29.943*	1.098	.000	-33.30	-26.59
7		-.215	1.098	1.000	-3.57	3.14
8		-1.345	1.133	.935	-4.81	2.12
5		1	.321	1.116	1.000	-3.09
	2	.024	1.087	1.000	-3.30	3.35
	3	.526	1.106	1.000	-2.86	3.91
	4	.526	1.106	1.000	-2.86	3.91
	6	-29.417*	1.070	.000	-32.69	-26.14
	7	.311	1.070	1.000	-2.96	3.58
	8	-.819	1.106	.996	-4.20	2.56
	6	1	29.738*	1.108	.000	26.35
2		29.441*	1.079	.000	26.14	32.74
3		29.943*	1.098	.000	26.59	33.30
4		29.943*	1.098	.000	26.59	33.30
5		29.417*	1.070	.000	26.14	32.69
7		29.727*	1.062	.000	26.48	32.97
8		28.598*	1.098	.000	25.24	31.96
7		1	.011	1.108	1.000	-3.38
	2	-.286	1.079	1.000	-3.59	3.01
	3	.215	1.098	1.000	-3.14	3.57
	4	.215	1.098	1.000	-3.14	3.57
	5	-.311	1.070	1.000	-3.58	2.96
	6	-29.727*	1.062	.000	-32.97	-26.48
	8	-1.130	1.098	.970	-4.49	2.23
	8	1	1.140	1.143	.974	-2.35
2		.843	1.114	.995	-2.56	4.25
3		1.345	1.133	.935	-2.12	4.81
4		1.345	1.133	.935	-2.12	4.81
5		.819	1.106	.996	-2.56	4.20
6		-28.598*	1.098	.000	-31.96	-25.24
7		1.130	1.098	.970	-2.23	4.49

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

The above table demonstrates that there was a significant difference in the GSE scores of interpersonally intelligent EFL learners with all the other seven subcategories.

10. Null Hypothesis 10

To test the 10th null hypothesis, i.e. whether a significant difference existed among the anxiety of learners with different kinds of multiple intelligences, the researcher conducted the second ANOVA. again, the Levene's test of homogeneity of variances was checked of course and this assumption was met ($p = 0.581 > 0.05$).

Subsequently, the ANOVA was run. As Table 6 demonstrates below, the difference between the eight groups was not significant ($F_{(7, 236)} = 0.929, p = 0.485 > 0.05$).

TABLE 16.
ONE-WAY ANOVA ON THE SCORES OF THE 246 LEARNERS DISAGGREGATED BY THEIR INTELLIGENCE SUBCATEGORY ON THE EMAS

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	461.585	7	65.941	.929	.485
Within Groups	16965.832	239	70.987		
Total	17427.417	246			

In other words, the null hypothesis was not rejected as *there is no significant difference among the anxiety of EFL learners with different kinds of multiple intelligences*.

Since only the second null hypothesis was rejected in this study meaning that there is a significant correlation between linguistically intelligent EFL learners' self-efficacy and anxiety, only the 12th null hypothesis (i.e. whether a significant difference between linguistically intelligent EFL learners' prediction of self-efficacy existed by their anxiety) could be tested as a result. For this of course running a linear regression was required. The assumptions for this regression, i.e. normality and homoscedasticity had already been established. Table 7 below represents R and R square for this regression analysis.

TABLE 7.
MODEL SUMMARY – R AND R SQUARE

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate
1	.097a	.009	.005	3.72132

a. Predictor: (constant), Learners' anxiety
b. Dependent variable: Self-efficacy

As reported in Table 7, the R came out to be 0.097 and R square 0.009. Table 8 reports the results of the ANOVA ($F_{1,245} = 2.339, p = 0.127 > 0.05$) which proved not significant.

TABLE 8.
REGRESSION OUTPUT: ANOVA TABLE

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	32.390	1	32.390	2.339	.127a
	Residual	3392.816	245	13.848		
	Total	3425.206	246			

a. Predictors: (constant), Learners' anxiety
b. Dependent variable: Self-efficacy

The 12th null hypothesis of this study was thus not rejected meaning that anxiety was not a significant predictor of self-efficacy among EFL learners.

IV. DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicated that there were a significant relationship between anxiety and self-efficacy among EFL learners with different multiple intelligences. While only partially supporting the hypothesis that as anxiety increases, general self-efficacy beliefs decrease, the results do support the concept that anxiety cannot be evaluated as a whole, but better assessed by its dimensions (Endler, Parker, Bagby, & Cox, 1991).

Therefore, the results indicate that different factors of anxiety interact differentially with general self-efficacy beliefs, because previous research has indicated that anxiety is related to poor perception of self-efficacy (Beck, 1976; Kavanagh, & Bower 1985; Stanley 2002). The results of the current research is further consistent with a past research too which indicates that anxiety is related to general self-efficacy beliefs (Grimm & Nachmias, 1977). Furthermore, socially anxious individuals are under-achievers in social interactions compared to non-anxious control participants (Baker & Edelman, 2002). Here the result is consistent with other empirical studies which explore similar relations in other countries. A number of studies have explored how self-related beliefs (e.g., self-efficacy, self-concept) relate to test anxiety (e.g. Bonaccio & Reeve, 2010; Kesici, Balogu, & Deniz, 2011; Putwain, Langdale, Woods, & Nicholson, 2011).

The predominant trend in MI theorization indicates that all intelligence types have to interact (Moran, Kornhaber, & Gardner, 2006). Christison (1998) also stated that, "Intelligence works together in complex ways. No intelligences are always interacting with each other" (p. 2). "Due to the complex nature of human language learning and processing, interaction of intelligences play even a bigger role" (Savas, 2012, p. 853). Bellanca, Chapman, and Swartz (1997) also claim that, "Because language distinguishes human behavior and identifies the ability of humans to reason, the verbal/linguistic intelligence crosses all disciplines". This is how language learning is synonymous with employing all intelligences and linguistic intelligence alone cannot be responsible for language learning.

V. CONCLUSION

Self-efficacy is not a quality that some people have or have not in a fixed quantity from their birth, rather, an attribute which develops with the passage of time. It shapes through experience and can be changed or enhanced. A teacher may play a crucial role in enhancing a positive feeling about efficacy among students. This may be achieved through

developing self-efficacy by using different learning strategies, which can increase this quality among students towards English language learning.

As self-efficacy is the ability of a person's judgment to perform a particular activity, it shows how students are confident about performing a specific task. Individuals who are confident about their assigned task and have high levels of self-efficacy may do better rather than talented ones although they are not perfect but as they are guarded by their beliefs rather than reality, they perform better. In fact individuals will successfully complete those activities that fall within their efficacy (Pajares, 2000).

Teachers are one of the most influential elements for the success of any educational system as they can construct learning environments that promote students' progress. Teachers can use strategies to reduce students' stress, fatigue, or anxiety which an English learner may face during his learning processes. They can develop a strong sense of personal competence in the students, and can also help in the development of students' self-efficacy towards English learning.

Syllabus designers should provide context for learners to articulate and refine their prior understandings, purposes, and intentions for new learning. A syllabus usually involves the learners in decisions making regarding the goals, content, presentation, assessment of the course and could also help a learner's need and increase their self-efficacy. Learners with high self-efficacy see difficult tasks as challenging and work attentively to master them, and learners with low self-efficacy learn helplessness. So poor self-efficacy and poor motivation will negatively affect a student's ability to do well. In directing a syllabus, a designer must know which syllabus works more effectively.

The following three recommendations for future research are based upon the results of this study.

1. First, replicating this research with different samples including other age groups or among female participants seems very critical in order to be able to generalize the findings.
2. A gender comparison based on the performance of female and male EFL learners on the three constructs may provide further detailed information about the issue at stake.
3. Perhaps a comparative study among different language proficiency levels may provide useful information too.

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Collocational Use: A Contrastive Analysis of Strategies Used by Iranian EFL Learners

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Abstract—Despite the role of collocations in many aspects of second language learning, its significance has been neglected by the contrastive analysts in ELT. The current study aimed at investigating learners' use of collocations by analyzing their written performance. It was conducted using 102 male and female EFL learners majoring in English Translation and English Language and Literature at Hakim Sabzevari University in Iran. The researchers analyzed the data to determine the sources of collocational errors, and the strategy types utilized by learners in order to overcome their collocational deficiencies. The percentage of errors resulting from lack or inadequate familiarity of the students with collocations was 75%. The results of the study showed that most of the students' errors in writing did not originate from their insufficient knowledge of the grammar but from their inability with regard to the combination of language units. Moreover, the findings revealed that learners made use of four strategy types including transfer, synonym, repetition and paraphrase to overcome their collocational problems, with transfer strategy ranking as the most frequently used strategy followed by the use of synonym. The implications and applications of the study are discussed.

Index Terms—collocation, lexical collocation, grammatical collocations, collocational errors

I. INTRODUCTION

So far, teaching experts have always been engrossed by how to fragment the language into pieces and stipulate what learners really acquire when they learn a new language. Linguists, both pure and applied, often classify language into segmental units as sounds, words, rules of grammar and discourse. However, since 1930s, some pioneer figures in the field have urged those engaged with language teaching to recognize the fact that certain words usually follow other words and that success in language fluency mostly depends on mastery of these word combinations. Palmer in 1933 first adopted the term "collocation" for these recurrent sets of collocational words which come together.

Nowadays, it is widely believed that collocations (e.g. mass destruction, harsh criticism, fast color, bitter disappointment) are significant parts of native speaker competence and must be incorporated into second or foreign language learning syllabus (Hussein, 1990; Bahns & Eldaw, 1993; Farghal & Obiedat, 1995; Hills, 2000; Nesselhauf, 2003); however, it appears to be a neglected essential in most recent research studies in applied linguistics which have focused upon the grammatical and phonological levels and other aspects of language especially lexis and collocations to the rather exclusion of some other aspects of language.

In fact, the real complexity of collocational knowledge and use was largely neglected to a great extent over the past two decades despite the fact that enormous advances in corpus linguistics and the accessibility to wide collections of electronic text has suggested new insights on how words or sets of words are disseminated in a certain language (Webb & Kagimoto, 2011). Smart software for the examination of language corpora has enabled researchers and L2 specialists to study more genuinely the nature of collocations to the extent that Kennedy (2003) believes that it could, "challenge syntax-based approaches to language description and instructional method." (p. 467). Wray (2002) proposed that collocations are of cardinal position for learners to achieve a higher degree of competence in the process of learning a second language, but they are similarly of some importance for learners with less determined goals, as they not only improve accuracy but also fluency. However, while some plans on the teaching of collocations have been proposed recently, it is largely uncertain how and which of the excessive number of collocations should be taught. In order to answer such questions, it is undoubtedly vital to recognize the area of difficulties that the ESL/EFL learners have in regard with collocations.

The current study has intended to examine the utilization of English collocations (both lexical and linguistic) in area of EFL composition from a contrastive viewpoint. While some collocational studies have been conducted in the field of connected phonetics by experts in ELT, a contrastive investigation of collocational slips appear to be ignored in the literature. Indeed, learners facing a collocational problem have a tendency to use one of the strategies of lexical simplification including transfer, synonym, repetition, and paraphrasing (Howarth, 1998). Apart from paraphrasing which is regarded as a great technique in second language acquisition, the other categories are likely to result in

collocational mistakes in language learning. The use of transfer is the result of the learners' L1 influence, and appeal to synonyms can be taken as a result of the unawareness of collocational restrictions between lexical items. The use of repetition can be viewed as a direct outcome of the learners' inadequate knowledge of word combinations.

Hence, the objective of this study was to recognize the methods that Iranian EFL learners resort to when they attempt to deal with their deficient knowledge of collocational knowledge. To this end, using an interpretive qualitative research, we analyzed the students' errors in essays to identify the number of collocational errors, and then, to find the types of strategies that learners utilize to overcome their inadequate learning of word combination. The researchers, following the guidelines proposed by Howarth (1998), attempted to examine the use of strategies of lexical simplification including synonym, transfer, repetition and paraphrasing by EFL Iranian learners in written English.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Historical Background of Collocation Studies

The issue of collocations and their importance was first discussed in the 1980s. However, the early reports were mostly made by practitioners who suggested that collocations should be embedded into language classroom practice (Hsu, 2007). Since 1990s, the vitality of collocations came to the attention of EFL/ESL experts by criticizing that the main foreign language teaching methods such as "grammar translation method" and "communicative approach" restrain the role of vocabulary (Hsu, 2007). The argument further was strengthening by (Bahns & Eldaw, 1993; Benson, Benson, & Ilson, 1986; Herbst, 1996) that L2 learners have actual difficulties with word combinations even at higher levels.

Zhang (1993)'s study was among the very first empirical studies on collocations. He examined the correlations of the L2 learners' knowledge of collocations, application of collocations, and English writing fluency. In the subsequent and rather similar studies, Al-Zahrani (1998) investigated collocations with regard to speaking skill. Zhang (1993) concluded that native speakers performed meaningfully better than non-native speakers on the collocation test (CT) and that native speakers' advantage of word combinations outweighs that of non-natives with regard to the use of accurate collocations in writing. Indeed, Zhang's results showed that knowledge of collocations is an indicator of fluency in written communication, and quality of collocations, in diversity and accuracy terms, indicate the quality of writing. Al-Zahrani (1998) who investigated the collocational knowledge of 81 Saudi EFL students and the correlation between the competency of lexical collocations and the participants' overall language proficiency reported a significant relationship between the students' knowledge of collocations and their general language proficiency, and that writing tests can better illustrate students' proficiency of lexical collocations than that of TOEFL test since the relationship between the writing test and the students' knowledge of lexical collocations was significant.

In Iranian context, the relationship between collocational knowledge and cloze test performance was carefully examined by Keshavarz and Salimi (2007). They found a high association between EFL learners' collocational proficiency and their performance on cloze tests. Koosha and Jafarpoor (2005) suggested the likelihood of developing a new method on teaching collocations, particularly collocations of prepositions, by implementing concordance resources. Parts of their findings were also in line with the findings of Bahns (1993) that EFL/ESL learners mostly transfer collocations from their first language to their L2, and language interference is the cardinal source of learners' errors in L2 production. Koosha and Jafarpoor (2005)'s main focus was on collocational knowledge of prepositions. To the best of our knowledge, no study has been reported on writing skill from contrastive analysis stance in Iran.

B. Collocations: Definitions and Classifications

Various definitions of collocations have been suggested by different scholars (e.g. Bahns & Eldaw, 1993; Benson, et al, 1986; Lewis, 2000; McCarthy & O'Dell, 2005; Nation, 1990; Sinclair, et al, 2004) and almost all of them defined collocation based on the co-occurrence of words. The concept of *collocation* can be divided as "*col-* (from *com-* meaning "together, with"), *-loc-* (meaning "to place or put"), *-ate* (a verb suffix), and *-ion* (a noun suffix)" (Nation, 1990, p. 32). McCarthy & O'Dell (2005) define collocation as adjacent word grouping with other words that could be constructed semantically and syntactically as chunks that are acceptable and understandable by native speakers such as: *too* collocates with *much* or *late*; the word *tall* appears to collocate with *building* and *high* with *mountain*. Lewis (2000) proposed that collocation can be regarded as the unpredicted natural co-occurrence with lexical items in a context. Researchers have attempted to categorize collocations into different classifications (Benson, et al., 1986; Hill, 2000; Lewis, 2000). According to one major classification scheme, collocations fall into two main groups: lexical collocations and grammatical collocations.

1. Lexical Collocations

Lexical collocations consist of two content words or open class words, which include nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Lewis categorized lexical collocations into six types as:

Adjective + noun *a difficult decision*

Verb + noun *submit a report*

Noun + noun *radio station*

Verb + adverb *examine thoroughly*

Adverb + adjective *extremely inconvenient*

Noun + verb *the fog closed in*

(Lewis, 2000, p. 133)

2. Grammatical Collocations

Grammatical collocations are derived from the combination of one open class word, e.g. noun, verb, adjective, etc., and one closed class, which is mainly a preposition such as:

Adjective + preposition *aware of*

Verb + preposition *step into*

Noun + preposition *emphasis on*

(Lewis, 2000, p. 134)

C. L1 Transfer of Collocational Knowledge?

Language transfer is regarded as an important factor of second language acquisition influencing EFL learners' production of collocations (Nesselhauf, 2003). When EFL learners want to create collocation, they refer to their first language to discover an appropriate word for creating collocation in target language. When such cases happen, it seems that L1 has an impact on L2. This phenomenon is referred to by linguists as *transfer*. Transfer can be positive or negative. Positive transfer occurs when the patterns of L1 and L2 are the same whereas negative transfer occurs when the patterns of students' L1 and L2 are different, in which case problems may arise (Ellis, 1994, p.300). For instance, Swedish and Chinese learners in Wang & Shaw (2008)'s study formed L2 collocations such as **do changes, *do a great effort, and *make damage* all of which reflect negative L1 transfer.

D. Learners' Strategies in L2 Collocation Learning

In addition to L1 transfer, previous studies have illustrated the use of learning strategies in the process of L2 collocation acquisition including the consideration of aspects such as synonym, repetition and paraphrases well as other related constructs. One of the most common strategies used by learners is the use of synonyms for the purpose of enhancing their communicative effectiveness. As indicated by Farghal & Obiedat (1995), Arabic EFL students displaced an English word with its equivalent word possibly on the assumption that they can be utilized reciprocally, which by and large results in deviations in the target language. Likewise, Howarth (1996, 1998) showed English learner problems' emanating from a false analogy between collocates of two synonymous words. For instance, the erroneous combination **adopt ways* was believed to be caused by analogy with *adopt an approach*.

EFL learner, in other words, may take the view that a word can be replaced by its synonyms in every context, which is not always that case. Such a strategy often leads to improper collocations in the target language (Phoocharoensil, 2010). Some examples of deviant combinations influenced by synonymy are **peaceable home* for *peaceful home* and **authentically believe* for *truly believe*.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

102 EFL students of both sexes majoring in English translation and English language and literature of Hakim Sabzevari University participated in this study. They were studying an advanced writing course. Nearly all of the students were between 4rd and 6th semesters. The students participated in this study quiet voluntarily.

B. Instrumentation

To analyze the learners' collocational use, the researchers used the students' written assignments in their advanced writing and essay writing courses. To this end, students were asked to write about an unforgettable experience they have had which was assumed to be motivating and thought-provoking. This test was a 35- minute writing task.

C. Data Collection Procedure

In order to compare the use of collocations in the writing of native and nonnative English speakers, the study used a contrastive analysis as the main analytical method. To achieve this, the students were asked to participate in a specific writing task quite voluntarily, and the problematic collocations drawn from the students' writings were identified and analyzed by the researchers. After that, to see whether a lexical or grammatical collocation is appropriate, *Oxford Collocations Dictionary for Learners of English* (Lea, 2002), and the online American National Corpus (<http://americannationalcorpus.org>) were used as criteria, and one native speaker of English language helped the researchers in analyzing the data.

D. Data Analysis

The students' collocational errors were first detected and then examined with reference to the strategies of lexical simplification including synonym, transfer, repetition and paraphrasing and finally the problematic collocations or combinations of words were tabulated alongside their correct collocations according to the strategy types employed by the learners to cope with their lack of or incomplete knowledge of collocational problems. The researchers preferred to focus on hypothesis-generating trends so that they could provide indicators for more extensive or in-depth research in this regard.

Research Questions

1. What are the sources of Iranian EFL learners' collocational errors in writing?
2. What types of strategies are utilized by Iranian EFL learners in order to overcome their collocational deficiencies in writing tasks?

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Regarding the first research question, findings showed that the number of errors resulting from deficient knowledge of collocations was 253 out of 337 errors. Therefore, it was concluded that 75% of the students' errors were attributable to their absence of or imperfect knowledge of collocations. Results of this study revealed the considerable impact of EFL learners' implementation of lexical and grammatical collocations on their writing accuracy and fluency.

To answer the second research question regarding the most dominant strategy used by the students, the researchers organized a table based on the problematic collocations, correct collocations and the appropriate strategy used by the students. Some samples of tabulated data are sorted out in Table 1.

TABLE 1:
PROBLEMATIC COLLOCATIONS, CORRECT COLLOCATIONS, AND STRATEGIES APPLIED

Problematic Collocations	Correct Collocations	Str. Applied
bring some reasons	state some reasons	transfer
learn knowledge	gain knowledge	transfer
he was satisfied from his progress	he was satisfied with his progress	transfer
the suitable income	the sufficient income	transfer
interest causes me to be active	interest motivates me to be active	Transfer
pour the corns into the pan and put the door	pour the corns into the pan and cover the pan	transfer
arrange your suitcase	pack your suitcase	transfer
separate eggs' and potatoes' shell	peel the eggs and the potatoes	transfer
in an off day	on an off day	transfer
They are just regular people	they are just ordinary people	transfer
sharing of benzene	Allocating quotas for benzene	transfer
group sports and private sports	team sports and individual sports	transfer
Language shows our personalities	language reflects our personalities	transfer
Amir would fall into problems	Amir would run into problems	transfer
It's a topic of girls	It's a girl thing	transfer
intensive coffee	Strong coffee'	transfer
depend with	depend on	transfer
skillful in	skillful at	transfer
look formoney	earn money	transfer
buildimpression	make an impression	transfer
In time	On time	transfer
The air was fresh	Nice day	synonym
the rate of population received to 29%	the rate of population reached 29%	synonym
I have a little tendency to learn English	I have a slight tendency to learn English	synonym
the method of living	the way/ style of living	synonym
spread a blanket to sit on	throw off a blanket to sit on	synonym
Prepare facility (building a table)	prepare the tools	synonym
Heavy traffic	Huge traffic jam	synonym
the first step is to provide ingredients	the first step is to prepare ingredients	synonym
Full breakfast	Balanced breakfast	synonym
to destroy poverty	to eradicate poverty	synonym
a lot of efficient actions	a lot of effective actions	synonym
I went to college to improve my personality	I went to college to develop my personality	synonym
air pollution is harmful specially in big cities	air pollution is harmful especially in big cities	synonym
causes me to be active	motivates me to be active	Synonym
poverty causes crime	poverty breeds crime	synonym
Responds/repplies the telephone.	answer the telephone	synonym
we should fight many problems	we should combat many problems	synonym
Take food which you don't usually eat	take foods which are not staple	paraphrase
let it to be free of water	drain it	paraphrase
The color of her hair was a special one, between white and black. I think it was like a chocolate	her hair was milky	paraphrase
Exactly/ pretty/ too quiet.	unusually/abnormally quiet	Paraphrase
I want to marry a boy who is very rich	I want to marry money	paraphrase
I like it very much	I like it enormously/ a lot	repetition
It was a very bad film	It was an awful film	repetition
There are several things that I decided to study	There are several reasons that I decided to study	repetition
English translation major	English translation major	

The types of strategies applied by students to overcome their lack or imperfect knowledge of collocations from the most frequent to the least were as follows: Transfer (47.4%), Synonym (35.1%), Paraphrase (8.9%), and Repetition (8.6%) as they are shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2:
TYPES OF STRATEGY APPLIED BY THE STUDENTS

Strategy	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
transfer	120	47.4	47.4	47.4
synonym	89	35.1	35.1	82.5
repetition	21	8.6	8.6	91.1
paraphrase	22	8.9	8.9	100
Total	253	100.0	100.0	

As it can be seen, results of obtained data show that the most frequently used strategy by students in order to cope with their collocational problems was transfer.

The results of this study showed that *transfer* seems to be the most widely employed strategy that the students applied to overcome their collocational problems, emerging from their negative transfer of Persian collocations, or as it is called, from interlingual errors. This is in line with findings of Bahns (1993) who claim that EFL/ESL learners occasionally transfer collocations from their first language improperly to the second language, and that language interference is the main source of learners' errors in L2 production. Some other interesting findings in relation to the types of strategies of lexical simplification are discussed below:

First, with reference to *transfer*, the students' collocational errors are both grammatical and lexical, but lexical errors outnumber the grammatical ones. The grammatical errors were mainly due to the students' lack of knowledge to use the correct prepositions, perhaps because of the fact that while learning vocabulary items, they fail to notice the certain prepositions that accompany them. Teachers are partly responsible for students' errors regarding the use of right prepositions. They should repeatedly inform the learners to learn the vocabulary items with the prepositions that accompany them. Recently, there is a trend in language teaching methodology in favor of consciousness rising to teaching grammar. Teachers are advised to raise the learner awareness to prepositions. In reflective teaching, the teachers who are viewed as the researchers are asked to reflect on the extent to which they focus on prepositions.

The lexical errors resulting from the students' lack or inadequate knowledge of collocations reveal that the students tend to transfer collocations used in their native language to English language. They must be aware that different languages have their specific collocations. The student who says *hit the first gear* for *select the first gear*, or *lady movement* for *flamboyant movement*, *correct the mirror* for *adjust the mirror* has not built such awareness. It is unfortunate that many ESL/EFL teachers seem to underrate the importance of collocations and they disregard the fundamental role of lexicon in language education. It is seen that students majoring in English Translation use wrong collocations in their English to Persian translations for they have not recognized the significance of collocations in translation.

Second, as for the *synonym* strategy, the students employed synonym as the second most frequently used strategy of lexical simplification to compensate for their collocational problems. It seems that they are of the view that any words collocate freely with other lexical items. This is partly true. Indeed, some lexical items collocate freely, like *take a look/ a rest/ notice/ time*, which are called free or unrestricted collocations. However, this is not true in case of two other categories of collocations including *semi-restricted* and *restricted* collocations. In semi-restricted collocation, the number of substitutes which can replace the elements of collocations is more restricted, e.g. *harbor doubt/ grudges/ uncertainty/ suspicion* and in restricted collocations, the elements of collocations are fixed like *dead drunk*. The basic point is that the students should not generalize unrestricted collocations' rules to semi-restricted and restricted collocations. The phrase *under the poverty level* instead of *below the poverty level* used by one of the students, or *fighting sports are dangerous* for *combat sports are dangerous* show their lack of knowledge about semi-restricted and restricted collocations.

Third, as for the *paraphrase* strategy, it seems that the students did not know the most appropriate lexical items to convey their messages. For this reason, they tried to paraphrase what they want to express, say, *time passes very hard* instead of *time drags*. Although paraphrasing does not always lead to ill-formed sentences, it shows inadequate knowledge of vocabulary on the part of the students. Indeed, this is a compensatory strategy that the students use to compensate for missing knowledge of collocations. Brown (2000) also refers to circumlocution strategy by which the learners describe or exemplify the target object of action whenever they do not know the right word, for example *the thing you open bottles for corkscrew*. Or, the sentence used by a student *I was not able to pass study skills last term for I failed to pass study skills last term* is another example of circumlocution.

Fourth, with reference to *repetition* strategy, the researchers came to the conclusion that the students used a limited number of known collocations like *very, good, bad, very much*, and *thing* repeatedly and they actually tend to overuse them. In this case, the students may convey a general meaning, but certainly, they fail to convey their meanings clearly and precisely. For example: *we can talk about many things* for *we have so much to talk about*, or *Whirlpool is a good movie* for *Whirlpool is a great/ wonderful movie*, or *communication is one of the most important things* for *communication is an important factor*.

As indicated by Hsu (2007), four noteworthy reasons add to the vitality of collocations in SL studies. First, practitioners in ELT believe that major foreign language teaching methods or approaches like GTM and Communicative Approaches downplay the role of vocabulary (Nation, 2000; Schmitt, 2000). Second, Lewis (1997) suggested designing a collocation-based syllabus and implementing the lexical approach (Lewis, 1993). Third, online

corpora, for example, English National Corpus and American National Corpus, give access to a plentiful resource for valid English writings. Previously, resources such as Oxford Collocations Lexicon for Understudies of English (Lea, 2002) provide EFL/ESL specialists and learners with broad reference and access to English collocations.

V. CONCLUSION

Since collocations account for a great deal of language use (Ellis, 1996; Wray, 2002), the current research illustrates that in Iranian educational system, textbook writers, syllabus designers, and teachers disregard the collocation learning of Iranian learners of English. For example, The English textbooks of four years of high school do not cover collocational learning and teaching. Therefore, teachers are obliged to build on their own in teaching collocations to help learners to build up collocational knowledge.

Based on the study conducted and the results obtained, it can be suggested that the issue of collocational errors requires further investigations and advancement in other language skills including listening, speaking and other large-scale studies into writing skill in the Iranian context to detect the number of errors in relation to collocations and then to identify the types of strategy that EFL learners apply to overcome their collocational problems in spoken and written English. In the domain of computer-assisted language learning, the need for more research on collocations is clear, especially on EFL learners' online writing fluency.

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Application of “Combined Method” in Characters Teaching of TCFL*

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Abstract—Chinese characters are considered to be the most difficult part in TCFL. Considering the characteristics of the three elements “shape, sound, meaning” in a Chinese characters, we make use of the “combined method” of the three elements in teaching, which will form polymerizations from three aspects. Thus, the isolated Chinese characters will form a big network, greatly improve the reproduction rate Chinese characters finally, and reach the result of learning the new by restudying the old.

Index Terms—contact, sound, shape, meaning, Chinese character teaching

I. INTRODUCTION

As the record symbol of Chinese language, Chinese characters include rich cultural information, and for the foreign students learning Chinese, Chinese characters are considered to be the most difficult part all along. Famous linguist in china Lv Shuxiang once thought that why the Chinese characters are so difficult to learn, because they are difficult to recognize, difficult to write, the number of Chinese characters is very big, and there are a lot of crossing relation among the shape, pronunciation, meaning, they are easily to be mistaken. In our opinion, the reasons why they are difficult to learn are the following, first, because it is ideographic characters, which is huge different from Alphabetic writing word; the second is the large number, the total of it is more than sixty thousand, and the characters commonly used in daily life are three thousand or so, if memorized word by word in isolation, it is very easy to forget; the third is the diversity of Chinese characters strokes, complex structure, characters of similar appearance which is difficult to distinguish. Therefore, how to improve and enhance the characters teaching and learning in TCFL is a topic of ongoing research.

Previous research about teaching of Chinese characters has achieved fruitful results (Chen Fu 1998, Lv Bisong 1999, Wan Yexin 2004, Sun Dejin 2006, Zhou Jian 2007, Zhao Jinming 2008, etc.) These studies mainly concentrated in the Chinese character teaching principle, teaching method research, structure characteristic analysis of Chinese characters, Chinese character acquisition error analysis, etc. Some of these achievements has become the consensus, such as in Chinese characters teaching, recognize and write should be separated, it is considered that more recognize and less write, Chinese characters teaching should combine with other Chinese courses teaching, for example, should combine with the compressive reading class, spoken class, and so on.

Through teaching practice we come to find, Considering the characteristics of “shape, sound, meaning” in a Chinese characters, making use of “combined method” of the three elements in teaching, which will form polymerization from three aspects. Thus, The isolated Chinese characters will form a big network, greatly improve the reproduction rate Chinese characters finally, and reach the result of learning the new by restudying the old.

II. WHY USE “COMBINED METHOD” IN CHARACTERS TEACHING OF TCFL?

A. Objective, Features of the Chinese Characters and “Combined Method”

Text is the record of language, As mentioned above, Chinese character is ideographic character, which is huge different from Alphabetic writing word. The former record semantics directly, and record voice indirectly, in contrast, the latter record voice directly, and record semantics indirectly. Chinese characters is only ideograms used in the world, So the shape always carries the meaning information which can be analyzed.(Wang Ning, 2002)Each Chinese character has a pronunciation, and each one has a shape, for the foreign students, it is very difficult to recognize and memorize. conformation of Chinese character is very complex, every Chinese character can be analyzed from many different levels, it is highly-synthetic, and the amount of information of it is very large. One Chinese character includes the information as following, 1.pronunciation information, 2.meaning information, 3.the whole shape features information, 4.kinds of components information, 5.compenents structure information, 6.kinds of strokes information, 7.the number of strokes information, 8.the length of strokes information, 9, the strokes order information, 10, radical information,11. Other related information.(Zhang Huifen,1997)For Chinese people, so much amount of information in Chinese characters is very difficult to accept if there isn't a suitable way, let alone the foreign students, the Chinese characters difficult degree

* TCFL=Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language

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in writing and recognition can be imagined. In addition, due to the early form of Chinese characters proceeding from the shape and meaning, according to the character – creation principle, it is easier for foreign students to master pictographic characters, indicative characters and associative characters. However, after thousands of years of shape evolution, the characters have lost ideographic function for a long time, most of them become neither ideographic nor phonetic. In the foreign students' eyes, Chinese characters are a pure bunch of word marks combined by zigzag strokes disorderedly, and most of these characters are common-used words and morphemes. In view of the uniqueness of Chinese characters, we believe that the Chinese characters teaching to the foreign students must highlight the characteristics of Chinese characters "ideographic" and Chinese character configuration of regularity and motivation, and make use of "combined method" of the three elements "shape, sound, meaning" in teaching, to improve the students' learning efficiency of Chinese characters.

B. *Subjectively, Teaching Object and "Combined Method"*

For the Chinese characters teaching of TCFL, teaching object is the foreign students. From this point of view, the Chinese characters teaching to the foreign students is different from the general Chinese characters teaching. First, Foreign students knew little about Chinese characters, if some students have known something about it, maybe just a sense of mystery and fear, which has been discussed in the above. Second, the teaching objects are adults, they only have the knowledge and skills of the alphabetic writing, and they have almost no knowledge about the Chinese and Chinese characters, is very strange to the Chinese traditional culture and modern culture. Third, The memory of the foreign students is not as good as the Chinese students, and their environment of Chinese characters is not as good as the Chinese students immersed in the Chinese characters as they grow up, but their understanding ability is stronger, and most of them have higher Chinese language quality and cultural quality. They have a certain knowledge base and understanding ability, and have accumulated a certain life experience and learning experience, they can't, also needn't to follow a gradual natural acquisition law completely, from easy to difficult, from less to more. Unlike children, adults have their own acquisition law, the Chinese characters teaching to them should follow the rules of second language acquisition. For those characteristics of the foreign students discussed above, how to carry out the effective Chinese characters teaching? The best way is to cultivate students' interest of Chinese characters, to guide the students to explore and experience of Chinese character laws and configuration of regularity and motivation, and to take advantage of the rule and the motivation to memorize the Chinese characters. According to our teaching experience, "combined method" is an effective method to achieve this goal.

III. THE PRONUNCIATION CONTACT OF CHINESE CHARACTERS AND WORDS

A. *The Contact of Homophone*

Number of homophones in the Chinese characters statistics are hard to count up, there are about 12000 prefix words in the "Modern Chinese Dictionary", but only 316 kinds of pronunciation, therefore, There will be a large number of homonyms. For the foreign students learning Chinese at beginning, they know very few Chinese knowledge, when meeting the homophone in Chinese learning, they may be very confused. Teachers were often asked about homophone in the class, at this time, we should tell the foreign students, being different from the spelling alphabet, which record phonemes and is used by Most people in the world, each Chinese character consists of various strokes formed by different dots or lines as the basic components, and it is a morpheme-writing, because Chinese character consists of the individual word which is the record of Chinese morpheme. Chinese syllables are very few, Homophone words in Chinese is a very common phenomenon. At the same time, Teachers can inspire the students to say that their own understanding of the homophone phenomenon, and let them say the difference among their meaning and shape. For example, "一(yī one)—衣(yī cloth)" "白(bái white)—百(bǎi hundred)" "常常(chángcháng often)—尝尝(chángcháng taste)" "反应(fǎnying reaction)—反映(fǎnying reflect)" and so on, On the one hand, using the homophones in Chinese, we can inspire them to think more, For example, when learning the Chinese characters "尝", we will extend to the word "尝尝", then, we can inspire the students we had learned another word which has the same Pinyin "常常"; on the other hand, Because of the same sound, and the similar shape sometimes, the word representation which is learned previously and comparison of memory, will deepen students' understanding of this group words.

B. *The Contact of Polyphones*

Polyphones in Chinese character is another part of the sound Contact in teaching Chinese characters to foreigners, and is a difficult for the foreign students.

There are two aspects in Polyphones: Polyphones with the same meaning and Polyphones with different meaning. The former such as "系", which has two pronunciation "jì" and "xì", meaning of them are "Tied up". In the teaching, we should tell the students the nuances of two meanings. Generally speaking, we call "long-Tied up" is "xì", Such as, for "horse" "ship" "Kite" and "short-Tied up" is "jì", and "short-Tied up" is "jì", Such as, for "Shoes" "button". The latter such as "得", foreign students often learn several Pinyin of it at the beginning, and can't learn them well, using the "combined method", we can contact different conditions of them in teaching, match specific sound up with specific words, sentence (context). Thus, the students will clarify the meaning and usage of "得". For example, in "得到"(dédào,

get; obtain) “获得” (huò dé get; obtain), “得” is verb, “已经十点了, 我得 (dēi) 走了” (Ten, I have to go.), “得” is auxiliary verb, the meaning of it is “need” “should”, but “玛丽的汉语说得 (de) 非常好” (Marie speaks Chinese very well), “得” is auxiliary, used in the after of adjectives and verbs, connecting the complement of degree or result. There are a lot of polyphonic words, such as “大夫” “东西” “肚子”, each has two pronunciations, the pronunciations of “大夫” are “dàifu” and “dàfū”, “dàifu” is doctor, and “dàfū” is a ancient official titles. “东西” has two pronunciations “dōngxī” and “dōngxì”, the former is directions east and west, and the latter one refers to various things.

Using the “combined method”, teachers match specific sound up with specific context, Let the students have a better understanding of the polyphones, on the basis of which to establish the mental character and word lexicon, and read the polyphone word pronunciation accurately in the specific context, and understand how to use them.

IV. SHAPE CONTACT OF CHINESE CHARACTERS

Chinese Characters can be divided into three levels: strokes, character component, whole word, the strokes is the smallest unit of Chinese characters, character component is the configuration of Chinese characters, in the characters, they have many functions, for example, express characters’ meaning, sound, and shape, the whole character is unit of using, and it is entity of shape, sound, and meaning. According to this, we will analyse the shape contact of Chinese characters from the character component contact and the whole characters contact.

A. *The Contact among the Chinese Characters with Similar Shape*

For the foreign students, Chinese is so difficult to learn is that large numbers of similar characters and words whose shape and stroke are very similar, the characteristic is that the stroke number of these characters are the same or similar, there is only some little difference of “丶 一 | 丿 ㇇” in the key parts, so we can’t be careless in learning, and can not be negligent in writing, a little difference may make big mistake. For example, “己—巳” “土—土” “千—干—于” “王—丰” “午—牛”, etc, the strokes of them are the same, and shapes are similar, only a little difference. However, the shapes and structures of these characters “兔—免” “体—休” “鸟—乌” are the same, the difference of them is that one more or less stroke, and some ones’ shapes and strokes are the same, only the position of one stroke is different, for example, “太—犬” “乒—乓” “玉—主”, etc, some characters even have the same components, only positions are different, for example, “杏—呆” “部—陪”, etc, in the Chinese character teaching to foreign students, We must clarify the characteristics of the shape of the similar word first, and then we can focus on the explanation and differentiation in teaching. The importance of differentiation is similar characters of single-component, we should make it clear where is the difference. For example, “土—土”, the difference between them is the long or short of the bottom “一”. and the difference between “干—千” is upper “丿” and“㇇”

B. *The Contact among the Chinese Characters with the Same Radicals and Components*

From the perspective of character shape, the structures of many characters are the same, most of the components and radicals are the same, the difference is one component. For example, top-bottom structure characters, “密—蜜” “睛—晴” “荷—菏” “复—夏” etc; left-right structure characters, “活—话” “没—设” “姐—妹” “料—科” etc; enclosed structure characters, “庠—痒” “间—问” “同—用” “区—匹” “国—图” etc; left-middle-right characters, “辨—辩—辨—瓣” “微—徵—徽” “褪—腿” etc. In Chinese character teaching, we should summarize these characters with the same structures and components occasionally, keep these characters appear in their brain continually, certainly, using different teaching method, we can ask questions, according to the context, play games, competition of guessing word, and so on. in addition, the structures of some characters are similar, and each component of each characters is the same, For example, “森—森—晶—品—磊” “林—朋—从—竹—双” “哥—多”, etc, which will also form different polymerization, to enhance the memory of students to these characters.

V. MEANING CONTACT OF CHINESE CHARACTERS AND WORDS

The meaning of Chinese characters and words as a link, Chinese characters and words can form different polymerization, which is mainly reflected in the synonymy, antonym, polysemantic and the same kind words .

A. *The Contact of Synonymy*

In Chinese, the same thing, the same nature and state, the same motion, may be expressed by several different words, which will form different polymerization, and the synonymy came into being. For example, the synonymy about things phenomenon, “盗—贼”(thief), “言—语”(speak), “道—路”(road), “仇人—敌人”(enemy), “父亲—爸爸”(father), etc; about motion, “购—买”(buy), “售—卖”(sell), “步行—走路”(walk), “说话—聊天”(chat), etc; about nature and state, “胖—肥”(fat), “缓—慢”(slow), “疼—痛”(painful), “平静—安静”(peaceful), “美丽—漂亮—好看”(beautiful), etc. Consistent with the basic meaning of these synonyms, but also there is a large or small, or explicit or implicit differences between them. These differences, especially some of subtle differences, which is the teachers need to focus on in the teaching. When learning, the foreign students not only need to pay attention to the same between synonyms,

but also need to identify the “differences” between them, classifying these words furtherly, We compare and learn the synonymy words together, on the one hand, we will have a deeper understanding of word meaning and the memory to the characters’ forms, on the other hand, we differentiate the language units of similar meaning. Of course, in the process of differentiation, we should put these synonyms in larger locale, such as in phrases, in sentences, and their meaning can be highlighted, we will learn about the synonyms’ differences in scope of expression, extent, color, style, matching, etc, and then we will know how to use them in a different appropriate environment.

B. *The Contact of Antonym*

We should pay attention to the antonyms in the process of Chinese Teaching to foreign students, these antonyms or reflect things phenomenon, or reflect the nature of the state, or reflect the motion, For example, the antonym about things phenomenon, “左(left)—右(right)”, “早(early)—晚(late)”, “睡(sleep)—醒(awake)”, “古代(old time)—现代(modern time)”, “朋友(friend)—敌人(enemy)”, etc; about nature and state, “近(near)—远(far)”, “高(high)—低(low)”, “大(big)—小(small)”, “漂亮(beautiful)—丑陋(ugly)”, “纯洁(pure)—肮脏(dirty)”, etc; about motion, “买(buy)—卖(sell)”, “出(exit)—入(enter)”, “爱(love)—恨(hate)”, “增加(increase)—减少(decrease)”, etc. There are many antonym polymerization in Chinese, learning them together, we will have a deeper understanding of the meaning of words from both positive and negative aspects, and master their forms and pronunciations better.

C. *The Contact of the Same Kind Words*

According to some criteria, we can classify things in the objective world, some things belong to the same big category, but belong to different small categories respectively, or belong to a whole, but belong to different parts respectively, the same kind words have the meaning of the same concept, and reflect the same category meaning, and they will form different polymerization, which reflects the link and the systematicness of objective things systemic. There will be some differences when the objective world is divided by people, because of differences in language and culture. For the foreign students, most of whom have had a systematic understanding to the objective world, but lack of the understanding of the specific performance in another language. According to the characteristic, we can make full use of their formed systemic cognition to objective things, and summarized the members of polymerization pertinently. For example, the same kind words about taste, 酸(sour), 甜(sweet), 苦(bitter), 辣(spicy), 咸(salty), etc; about color, 红(red), 绿(green), 黄(yellow), 白(white), 黑(black), 青(green), 紫(purple), 蓝(blue), etc; about natural phenomena, 风(wind), 雨(rain), 雷(thunder), 电(lightning), 云(cloud), 雪(snow), etc; about animals, 猫(cat), 狗(dog), 虎(tiger), 鸡(chicken), 鸭(duck), 牛(cow), 羊(sheep), 鱼(fish), 鸟(bird), 狮(lion), 蝇(fly), 熊(bear), 猴(monkey), etc; about relatives, 爸(father), 妈(mother), 弟(brother), 父(father), 姑(aunt), 姐(sister), 叔(uncle), 孙(grandson), 爷(grandfather), etc. These same kind words can help the learners recognize ,understanding and memorize other words and characters in semantic fields, in turn, studying the related words in the same semantic field will strengthen their understanding of the links between people and things, things and things.

D. *The Contact of Polysemantic*

In Chinese, most characters and words have not only a meaning, but have two, three or even more meanings, there are links between some of these meanings, and some have no link, but can form some polymerizations by the same word as a link, in the character teaching of TCFL, we can make use of these polymerizations, and timely explain the meaning of other words with context, which is an appropriate character and word teaching methods. As we all know, the Chinese word “打” has many meaning, for example, fights; scoop up; engaged; striking object with hand or utensils; manufacturing, and so on, we can explain some common meanings of it in daily life with sentence and words“打架”(fight) “打饭”(get or buy canteen meals) “打工”(do work for others) “打门”(knock the door) “打毛衣”(knitting), etc, and the foreign students will have a deeper understanding of “打”. Another example “家” has the meaning "family home", such as, “我的家在北京”(my home in Beijing), In addition, “people who grasp some specialized knowledge or engage in certain specific activities” in the words of 画家(painters), 政治家(politicians), 科学家(scientists), furthermore, “家”can be used as measure word, we can say “一家饭馆”(a restaurant) “一家书店”(a bookstore). Through the links and explanation of polysemantic, foreign students will have a more structured understanding to the meaning of characters and words, of course, will have more profound memories.

VI. SUMMARY

Above, we analyse the characters teaching Chinese as a foreign language from the following three angles, the Contact in the sound of Chinese characters and words, shape contact of Chinese characters, meaning contact of Chinese characters and words, while, that we carry out the Chinese characters teaching from the above three aspects is significance in the following aspects. First, It's not hard to see from the characteristic of the Chinese characters with similar shape, shape of Chinese characters carry the heavy responsibility of recording Chinese words’ pronunciation and meaning , which behind the shape of similar Chinese characters will be the password in the foreign students’ opinion, however, the structure and shape of Chinese characters have strong regularity, that we put the characters with the same

or similar structures or shapes together is aim to let the learners find the regularities, once they master the structure of Chinese characters and the regularities of characters shape showing mean or sound, and have a corresponding sense of Chinese characters, the confusion to the Chinese characters with similar shape will decrease. Second, with the contact of sound of Chinese characters and words, shape contact of Chinese characters, meaning contact of Chinese characters and words, each of which will form different polymerization, teachers can compare them in teaching, and the students can have a much deeper understanding and impression of them, certainly, the errors will be reduced. Third, teachers teach the Chinese characters with the context(Words and sentences)through the contact of the three aspects on pronunciation, shape, meaning, the reproduction rate of Chinese characters words will be Greatly improved, and reach the result of learning the new by restudying the old.

The contact among the characters can be from multiple directions, the Chinese characters teaching to foreign students can take pronunciation as a link, and also shape ,meaning as a link, and teacher should pay attention to the sound contact, the shape contact and the meaning contact of Chinese characters, the contact can occur as the occasion demands, certainly ,we can carry out the contact teaching systematically, thus, the students will grasp the similarities and differences of the sound, form and meaning of characters and words, which improve the effect of the Chinese character learning that knowing the new with the old and increasing the repetition rate of Chinese characters.

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