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To Build a Culturally Sensitive Educator: A Clinical Model Highlighting the Importance of Innovative ESL Strategies in Early Field Placement Classes Teaching ELL Middle Level Students

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Abstract—With the growth of diversity in twenty first century classrooms, teachers increasingly need to demonstrate and understanding of cultural dimensions, particularly language diversity, from a variety of perspectives to be effective in classrooms. Pre-service educators in particular need to understand the importance of language when providing high quality educational experiences for our nation’s children and must be able to articulate the relationship between critical pedagogy and educational curriculum, pedagogy and assessment. By modelling various strategies in the college classroom, teacher candidates gain a better understanding of the socio-cultural and academic instructional needs of English Language Learners in content area classrooms.

Index Terms—second language pedagogy, teacher preparation, second language teaching and learning strategies, clinical field experiences, curriculum

I. INTRODUCTION

In 2010, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education released a policy brief outlining the importance of a strong clinical experience for pre-service teachers. Arguing that knowing content knowledge is important yet not sufficient enough for effective teaching, the brief points to the need for a solid, diverse clinical experience for teaching candidates early in their program. Three critical features of this type of preparation consist of: (1) a tight integration between course work and clinical work in schools, (2) an extensive and intensive supervision of the clinical field placement, and (3) close, proactive relationships with schools that serve diverse learners effectively and develop and model good teaching. In addition, teacher candidates should strive to “contribute to the development of classrooms and schools that value diversity and civic-mindedness.” (“American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education Policy Brief,” 2010)

This paper outlines the following: program design, cultural considerations, various socio-cultural strategies in the college classroom, and ELL strategies in the middle level classroom.

II. DESIGN MODEL

Program Design

The Secondary Education Department at Kutztown University of PA, one of the fourteen universities in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, recognized the need for an earlier, and more diverse, clinical experience. Realizing that secondary education teaching candidates did not get consistent supervision until student teaching, we created a new model which would provide a supervised clinical experience starting with their acceptance into the education program through their capstone student teaching placement. The reason for the restructuring of courses was twofold; first, it created a seamless, less repetitive program that provided teaching candidates with the ability to reflect about student learning early in their coursework, and also allowed pre-service educators, the majority whom were Caucasian, to be exposed to the diverse cultures which enrich in Pennsylvania public schools. Research has indicated that programs offering short-term cultural immersions have raised the cultural awareness of pre-service educators. Such experiences (Willard-Holt, 2001) enhance the candidate’s knowledge of other cultures and heighten their conceptual awareness of student academic and personal growth and interpersonal connections. Similar, shorter programs had proven successful in the past. (Stachowski & Mahan, 1998; Wiest, 1998). Our goal was to provide a sustained experience of observation and classroom interaction.

The restructuring of the program resulted in the creation of two new courses, Principles of Learning and Principles of Teaching. Both courses are six credit clinically-based classes that examine various aspects of education theory and

practice. Principles of Learning is a six credit clinically based course that examines how aspects of learner language, culture, prior knowledge, and experience influence the learning process in the school setting. This course provides a bridge between theories of learning and current practice by placing teaching candidates in a weekly, supervised experience. Teaching candidates meet for 6 hours each week, in two three-hour blocks. During the first block, candidates meet on campus with their professor, providing the theory-based component of the course. The second block takes place in a secondary school setting. Students in this course observe in one of four middle schools chosen for their diverse population. Harrison Morton Middle School & South Mountain Middle School, in the Allentown Area School District, has a student population consisting of 63% Hispanic with 80% eligible for free or reduced lunch. The two middle schools in Reading School District, Northeast and Northwest, consist of 76% Hispanic students with 80% eligible for free or reduced priced lunches. The University community partnership is mutually beneficial; pre-service candidates receive an early immersion experience with diverse populations while middle school students spend time with college students who often serve as role models and mentors. This proves to be an important collaboration since studies have shown Latino students often do not seek or complete college programs because they lack an understanding of how to prepare for college or remain goal oriented. (Gandara, 2010)

Principles of Teaching, taken second semester junior year, provides teaching candidates with a common language to talk about teaching and clear, concrete levels of performance for teaching candidates to use in reflecting upon the work of the classroom teacher. The goals of the Principles of Teaching course include having candidates develop lesson and unit plans aligned to state and national standards, utilizing techniques of grading and evaluation appropriate for an inclusive classroom, analyzing data to make instructional decisions, and identifying instructional research-validated literacy interventions to identified student needs. Once again, candidates spend three hours on campus discussing general methodology and then an additional three hours in one of four rural or suburban high schools.

Lesson Design

While pre-service candidates are not working directly with English language learner populations in these placements, they are required to create lesson plans that take language acquisition into consideration. The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model, designed by the Center for Applied Linguistics, is a research-based instructional model that requires pre-service candidates to consider language and culture when planning instruction. The SIOP Model for lesson creation consists of eight components: lesson preparation, building background, comprehensible input, strategies, interaction, practice/application, lesson delivery, and review & assessment. By incorporating and connecting each of these components, pre-service educators are able to “design and deliver lessons that address the academic and linguistic needs of English learners.” (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2015) The course requires the creation of lesson plans based on a modified SIOP template. (Appendix 1)

Curricular Considerations

All Secondary Education teaching candidates are required to take one to two history courses as part of their general education requirements. In addition, Secondary Education students studying to become social studies teachers are required to take additional history courses focusing on various regions of the world. All Secondary Education pre-service candidates are encouraged to take one of two courses offered in Latin American history at the University – History of Colonial Latin America or History of Modern Latin America. In addition, various topics courses are offered in the field of Latin American history. The rationale in the course syllabi states that, “In contemporary politics, economics, and international affairs Latin America plays a prominent role. It is impossible to appreciate this without an understanding of the area’s past. While these courses are beneficial to all students in terms of general education, those in teacher education and Liberal Arts, especially Spanish language majors, will find it helpful as part of their professional preparation. The Modern Latin American course is particularly beneficial for pre-service candidates, with a focus on the “search for historical explanations of problems of underdevelopment, and examine the stages of modernization in different Latin American countries. Culture and society are as important as economy and politics in this course. Not only does the course appraise the development of Latin American historiography, but also utilizes to non-traditional methods and sources, such as analysis of poetry, music, films in an open discussions format.

Working closely with the History department, Secondary Education professors have created assignments in the class that draw upon the content of these history courses to better prepare pre-service candidates for the field. During their field experience in Reading and Allentown, students need to complete ethnographic field studies, keep journal entries, and complete a case study of a student in one of their observed classes. Another important aspect of the course is the need to outline to candidates what “being Latino” constitutes. Identity formation among youth is essential, particularly in the middle grades.

III. SOCIO-CULTURAL STRATEGIES IN THE COLLEGE CLASSROOM SETTING

A. Introducing Culture

The first challenge undertaken in Principles of Learning course is to address the teacher candidate’s understanding and expectation of Hispanic students. In 2014, the study body of Kutztown University’s College of Education was 92% white, with a majority of those students coming from Pennsylvania suburban areas with low Hispanic populations. Only 3% of teacher candidates identify as Spanish speakers. (“Kutztown Institutional Research,” 2011) This demographic for the College of Education is representative of the larger U.S. teaching workforce, with the majority of teachers coming

from white, middle class backgrounds. (Sleeter, 2001) From information gathered in a journal entry assigned in of Principle of Learning students, only three of sixty seven students surveyed said they had experience with Hispanic population. Jeffrey Wayman states in a 2002 study examining student perceptions of teacher ethnic bias that although the perception of teacher bias is not overtly prevalent, there is a heightened degree of prejudice towards students who are Mexican American and male. (Wayman, 2002) Both districts visited by teacher candidates have a Mexican American population, with Reading's Mexican American population at 8% (http://proximityone.com/pa_sdc.htm, 2012) Further studies show that school age children, particularly in middle school, are aware of teacher practice towards them in relation to ethnic groups. (Wehlage & Rutter, 1986) Armed with this information, KU faculty were cognizant entering the course of the immediate need to familiarize teacher candidates with the challenges and concerns facing Hispanic students in the schools in which they would be observing.

B. Journaling

The first classroom assignment candidates need to complete is a journal entry outlining their perceptions of the school neighborhood and population. Prior to the first field assignment, teacher candidates are told to visit their school neighborhood and conduct an ethnographic field study. First, candidates are required to research the current demographic statistics of both the community and the school district, focusing on levels of poverty, ethnicity, and language preference. They are asked to analyze the district website and review school policies and procedures. In addition, they need to discuss student performance on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSAs), the standards-based, criterion-referenced assessment used to measure a student's attainment of the academic standards required under the Revised Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Candidates then spend an afternoon in the school's neighborhood observing the community and visiting local businesses and restaurants. Based on their research and observations, they must draw conclusions on what they think will be the largest challenges facing their middle school students and examine how ethnicity and class possibly affect student learning. After findings are reviewed by the instructor, students discuss their findings and thoughts in a whole class "check in" session. The check in begins with students setting the rules for engagement for the activity, including length of discussion by each person sharing. Students are to share their experiences completing the ethnographic field study and their overall impressions of the community. After discussing the experience they "check out" by sharing something they learnt from the session, or suggest an application of the new knowledge. Discussing early perceptions of the neighborhood and student body is a crucial first step in introducing candidates to the Latino culture and having them face their own possible prejudices based on ethnicity and socio- economic status.

The goal of this first assignment is more than just raising awareness of the differences between the teacher candidate and Hispanic students. Paul Gorski (2009) argues that a conservative approach towards multicultural teacher education prepares teacher candidates to recognize differences in culture without altering the basic curricular structure which generally benefits the dominant culture. Instead, teacher candidates are asked to reflect on their own communities and neighborhoods in relation to those of their observation schools and reflect on the institutional structures (i.e., high stakes testing, school facilities, and district policies) that might contribute towards the success or failure of students. Throughout the course, candidates are then asked to refer this ethnographic study when designing culturally relevant teaching strategies and culturally responsive classroom management plans.

Throughout the course of the semester, candidates are required to keep a journal that reflects what they are observing in the classroom and how it relates to the theory presented in class. According to Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995), reflecting on diversity is an integral part of any early field experience. The purpose of journaling their observations in the classroom is multifaceted; they need to relate theory to practice, reflect on their own emerging philosophies in regards to teaching and learning, and voice their perceptions on how students learn in a classroom setting. Thirteen journal entries are required throughout the course of the semester, with four of the journal entries directly relating to ethnicity and language. Candidates are asked to reflect on their understanding of how children/adolescents acquire language and describe the language acquisition observed in their classroom. They need to outline how their classroom supports language and promote literacy, and how student diversity is recognized in this school and in this classroom. All journal entries conclude with a reflection discussing how does this understanding of language acquisition and ethnicity contribute to their overall understanding of how children/adolescents learn.

Sharing their journal reflections in the classroom is another important part of the process towards developing an understanding of Hispanic culture and language. When pre-service candidates are able to share their observations, it gives them the opportunity to engage in critical conversations often surrounding the issues of privilege and oppression. It also allows them to verbally formulate ideas on the connection between curricular policy and classroom performance based on culture. (Pewewardy, 2005) The hope is that these journal reflections allow candidates to explore a deeper understanding of their own educational context, reflect on possible privileges they received being of the dominant culture, and gain a greater appreciation of the challenges facing Hispanic students.

C. Identify Formation

Another important aspect of the course is the need to outline to candidates what "being Hispanic" constitutes. Identity formation among youth is essential, particularly in the middle grades. Theories formulated by Steinberg, Bonfenbrenner, Rowe, and Marcia stress this period of adolescence as a critical developmental period in which self-

understanding emerge to form a more solid individual identity. (Steinberg & Bonfenbrenner, 1989; Rowe & Marcia, 1980). However, ethnicity also plays a significant role in how adolescents define themselves. Ethnic identity influences how one views themselves in the larger context of school and society. Furthermore, when one is assured of their ethnic heritage and identifies with others who share their cultural background, they exhibit a stronger confidence in their abilities. (Martin & Chiodo, 2004) In the Reading School District, 43,935 students identify as Hispanic, with the largest majority (23,490) being Puerto Rican, 7,203 Mexican American, 535 Cuban, and 11,707 identifying as “other.” In Allentown School District, 39,396 are Hispanic, with 23,989 Puerto Rican, 1,733 Mexican American, 385 Cuban, and 13,289 considering themselves “other.” (United States Census Bureau, 2010) Both districts have a large percentage of Dominican students who might account for the “other” category. Walking the halls of the schools, there is an outward demonstration of ethnic pride among students who proudly display flags and other ethnic symbols to show unity.

However, too often this ethnic pride serves as a deterrent to academic success. La Roche and Shriberg (2004) argue that Latino students often experience a “mismatch” between their cultural heritage and the prevalent school culture and policy. Furthermore, this contention between ethnic pride and class practice and policy, which is often founded in dominant culture ideals, is reflected in their poor performance on high stakes testing. Both Northwest and South Mountain Middle schools are in their second year of corrective action, with the poorest tests score of the PSSAs (Pennsylvania State System of Assessment) being among ELL populations. If pre-service educators are made aware of the importance of individual Latino cultures and values; particularly respect towards authority figures, family loyalty and attachments, and a tendency to work best collaboratively, they can best gear instruction to be more culturally sensitive and respectful of ethnic pride. (Comas-Diaz & Griffith 1988; Trent, Pernell & Stephens, 1995)

D. Ethnographic Case Study

To assure that candidates have a strong understanding of the ethnic differences between Hispanic students, they are required to complete a case study of a student in their middle school classroom. Students conduct descriptive qualitative field research in the form of a Case Study. Candidates need to select a student from one of the micro-cultural Hispanic groups. Upon attaining permission of the subject and guardian if the subject is under 18, they need to set up an interview schedule. Candidates are encouraged to use open-ended questions that cannot be answered with a “yes” or a “no.” They are required to use reflective listening and probing follow-up questions when the subject does not offer enough information. The Case Study interview questions must have the student reflect on the unique nature of their ethnic heritage as well as their school involvement and adolescent experiences. The narrative Case Study Report must demonstrate the candidate’s ability to conduct a positive interview and an understanding of both culture and learning theory.

The case study proves to be an effective tool in analyzing the importance of ethnic heritage among the middle school students observed. As an instructional strategy, the case study can “bridge the gap between theory and practice and between the academy and the workplace.” (Barkley, Cross, & Major, 2005) They also give students practice identifying the parameters of a problem, recognizing and articulating positions, evaluating courses of action, and arguing different points of view. Ultimately, the case studies provide narratives that present realistic and often complex situations which aid a candidate’s understanding of the importance of social identity and ethnic pride among their students. Students cease being seen as Hispanic and are respected for their unique cultural identity.

IV. ELL STRATEGIES IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL CLASSROOM

Armed with a working knowledge of the struggles their students face in both the community and school, teacher candidates are encouraged to approach students in the classroom with a critical eye towards language and culture. Both Reading and Allentown School District’s student populations have a high percentage of English language learners. This increasing population of ELLs bring with them unique and diverse educational challenges and cultural needs. It is important that these challenges and needs are recognized and addressed in order for ELLs to attain significant progress in the classroom so they are able to participate meaningfully and productively in their educational opportunity. Furthermore, it is important for teachers to have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to meet the needs of the students in their diverse classrooms. (Farrell 2006) Candidates are offered an introduction to understanding and addressing the socio-cultural and academic instructional needs of English Language Learners in content area classrooms. Additionally language acquisition and development, lesson design and adaptation, use of English Language Proficiency Standards, need for multiple/authentic formative and summative assessments, and legal responsibilities related to serving English Language Learners in the content area classroom are explored.

The first step in exploring effective ELL strategies for middle school students is to reflect on what strategies work best for each individual discipline. Students approach this task through analysis and discussion. Strategies are introduced in class organized around their usefulness in regards to testing, drawing upon prior knowledge, scaffolding, and word retention. Peer groups are formed based on content area to discuss the individual strategies and then each peer group comes to a consensus on what strategies would work best for their particular discipline (Rodriquez, 2012) The groups must then model a lesson for their content using the most effective strategy. This review of effective strategies takes place throughout the course of the semester and proves invaluable in demonstrating how various strategies work best for each discipline. According to journal entries, students find the demonstration of various strategies in class

beneficial when actually using the strategy in the field. They wrote they were more comfortable with the strategy and have a better understanding of its use.

A. *Literacy Development*

One particularly useful strategy for all disciplines centers on reinforcing literacy development. The implementation of nonverbal visual cues and graphic organizers strengthens an ELLs understanding of the relationship between language and concepts. (Lambert & Carpenter, 2005) At the beginning of the semester, candidates are asked to create a name using symbols instead of letters. They must draw an image of something that best represents their character based on the letters found in their name. Candidates then introduce themselves to one another, trying to figure out other names based on the illustrations. The activity highlights the importance of non-verbal clues in adding students who struggle with language acquisition and might be in the early stages of language development. From this activity, candidates are then encouraged to create a picture dictionary for the rest of the semester for words and concepts introduced in class that they find particularly difficult to remember or understand. Both activities focus on the importance of developing a connection for their students between content material, personal relevance, and key terms used in class. (Vacca-Rizopoulos & Nicoletti, 2009)

B. *Levels of Language Acquisition*

Candidates also learn the significance of recognizing levels of language acquisition. Although an ELL student might converse in English successfully, it can take anywhere from four to seven years to acquire a proficient rate of academic English to succeed in class. (Cummins, 2000) One of the largest challenges facing candidates in the field is assessing the level of language acquisition among their middle school students. Often, low-income Latino students enter secondary school with gaps in their school experience. There is little continuity between the grade levels and they often suffer from lack of technology literacy at home or in previous schools. Candidates must be aware that a student's academic IQ, country of origin, and culture does not determine the rate at which a student acquires academic English. (Rubinstein-Avila, 2006) Candidates are encouraged to employ strategies which determine levels of academic English and to tailor lessons to the student's individual needs. To best meet the needs of students and accurately assess language proficiency, candidates are encouraged to create Sheltered Instruction Operation Protocol, or SIOP, lesson plans. A SIOP plan scaffolds instruction and allows for a variety of instruction in class based on student need.

V. CONCLUSION

"A vital first step," according to La Roche and Shriberg, "for all who care about improving the quality and appropriateness of the instruction that Latino children receive at schools is a knowledge of common Latino values ... [and] an urgent need to develop more sophisticated education models that are responsive to Latino's cultural characteristics." (La Roche & Shriberg, 2004) The restructuring of the clinical experience for pre-service candidates has been a successful endeavor. The early clinical field model immersing pre-service educators into Latino culture and language is the first step towards preparing culturally sensitive and effective classroom teachers. The continuation of the model to allow candidates to explore instructional strategies in Principles of Teaching strengthens their pedagogical knowledge base, ultimately preparing pre-service candidates for student teaching. Coordinating cohort groups during student teaching, a practice that has proved successful for our graduate students, allows for an exchange of dialogue and provides fluency to the program.

Giving pre-service candidates the opportunity to explore ethnic diversity and language acquisition through weekly classroom observations strengthens their understanding of culture and allows them to build a strong knowledge base prior to their final clinical teaching assignment. The early clinical field model immersing pre-service educators into Latino culture and language is the first step towards preparing culturally sensitive and effective classroom teachers.

APPENDIX

TABLE 1
KUTZTOWN UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
SIOP LESSON PLAN FORMAT

➤	Subject:	
➤	Grade Level:	
➤	Duration:	
➤	Essential Question:	
	○	Must be stated as a question
	○	Also include where and how this lesson fits in relation to the entire unit
➤	Standards	
	○	Include PA Core Standards
	○	Learned Society Standards
➤	Instructional Objectives: (Use Bloom's Verbs)	
	○	Needs to include:
	➤	Content Objectives
	➤	Language Objectives
➤	Content-specific Vocabulary:	
	○	All vocabulary must include definitions with student friendly language
➤	Materials / Resources / Equipment:	
	○	Generally, materials are items that will be used up whereas equipment refers to things that are reusable. Resources refer to things that are needed to support the learning, typically a textbook, video, website, etc.
➤	Instructional Procedures:	
	○	This section must begin with 'Content Information' or "hook" that describes the background knowledge the teacher must have in order to successfully teach the lesson. Hook must include:
	➤	Links to experience
	➤	Links to learning
	○	The procedures section should be written in sequence and in sufficient depth as to allow the reader to fully understand what the teacher is thinking, what the students are expected to be doing, and what the teacher's next steps are. Each instructional procedure must also include the amount of time allotted to it and modeling of the procedure must be clearly outlined.
	○	Higher-order questions that will be asked of students should be documented.
	○	Methods of instructional supports and differentiation should also be documented.
➤	Student Activities (Check all that apply for activities throughout lesson)	
	○	Scaffolding: <input type="checkbox"/> Modeling <input type="checkbox"/> Guided <input type="checkbox"/> Independent
	○	Grouping: <input type="checkbox"/> Whole Class <input type="checkbox"/> Small Group <input type="checkbox"/> Partners <input type="checkbox"/>
	○	Independent
	○	Processes: <input type="checkbox"/> Reading <input type="checkbox"/> Writing <input type="checkbox"/> Listening <input type="checkbox"/>
	○	Speaking
	○	Objectives
	○	Strategies: <input type="checkbox"/> Hands-on <input type="checkbox"/> Meaningful <input type="checkbox"/> Links to
➤	Formative Assessment:	
	○	Including: individual, group, written, oral
	○	Includes a review of key vocabulary
➤	Summative Assessments/Assignments:	
	○	Homework, graded classwork
➤	Self Evaluation:	
	○	Completed by the student at the completion of lesson
*When submitting a lesson plan, be sure to also submit any supplemental materials, i.e. PowerPoint slides, student worksheets, etc.		

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An Investigation into EFL Learners' Perception towards L2 Pragmatic Instruction

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Abstract—The present study investigated EFL students' perception toward the pragmatic instruction provided as a part of regular English curricula. A total of 52 university students from various majors participated in the study. The treatment was given for nine weeks during the regular class hours in terms of four speech acts, compliments, apologies, requests, and refusals, with the goal of enhancing the learners' pragmatic awareness as well as pragmatic competence. A questionnaire and the learners' reflection journals were adopted as data collection instruments, and an eclectic design was adopted to analyze their perception. Both the intermediate and low groups showed positive perception in terms of the four major categories—interest, usefulness, importance, and motivation, yet more than half of the learners from the low group found that learning L2 pragmatics was difficult due to the complexity and length of some of the sentence patterns of formulaic expressions. Further, there were significant differences between subjects regarding the category of *difficulty* for each speech act. Nevertheless, the learners expressed that pragmatic instruction facilitated their communication skills, enhanced their pragmatic awareness on intercultural differences, as well as instilled confidence in English interactions. These findings imply learners' motivation and needs for learning L2 pragmatic features.

Index Terms—learner's perception, pragmatic instruction, speech acts, linguistic proficiency

I. INTRODUCTION

According to the public demand for communicative competence around the nation as well as further on the globe, Korean Ministry of Education revised the national curriculum of English for secondary education so as to improve learners' communicative competence in English. However, although one of the goals for English teaching is enhancing communicative competence, the focus of English classes in Korea mostly remains the same due to the washback effect of the College Scholastic Ability Test as the English portion of this exam mainly measures learners' reading and listening comprehension skills. Due to these aspects, formal education for English regularly lays emphasis on learners' internalization of grammar rules and vocabulary, and majorly relies on the grammar translation method. Nevertheless, given that nowadays there are more opportunities for learners to interact with people from diverse cultures and languages, ways to improve the learners' pragmatic competence—which is a subconstituent of communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980)—should be considered in English teaching and learning in order to achieve successful English communication. Pragmatic competence is generally referred to as the ability of communicating appropriately according to the situation where the conversation takes place, in consideration of the power and the distance of the interlocutors. As it plays a crucial role in social interaction, more attention should be paid to the learners' development of second language (L2) pragmatics.

Research of interlanguage pragmatics had been in the marginal area of the studies of second language acquisition (SLA) until the 1970s when comparative studies regarding specific speech acts or discourse features started to be conducted. Recently, interlanguage pragmatics has been more popularly researched, directing attention to the teachability of pragmatic features in classroom settings. These studies discovered that not only adult learners with low language proficiency but also adolescent learners could learn pragmatic features (Langer, 2011; Li, 2012; Yang, 2006). In addition, they compared the effects of different pedagogical interventions, such as explicit or implicit instruction in teaching L2 pragmatics (Li, 2012; Rose & Ng, 2001; Takahashi, 2001), and revealed that the learners who received explicit instruction outperformed those with implicit instruction or exposure to the target features (Abrams, 2014; Halenko & Jones, 2011; House, 1996; Kasper & Roever, 2005; Li, 2012; Morrow, 1996; Rose, 2005; Soler, 2005; Takahashi, 2001, 2005; Tateyama, 2001; Yang, 2006).

Nevertheless, a majority of interventional studies of pragmatic instruction have mainly examined the effects of pragmatic instruction on learners' pragmatic competence. Also, there were even fewer studies with EFL learners who have limited access to authentic use of English outside the classroom. Further, as the studies concerning pragmatic instruction started only in the last two decades, the research investigating learners' perception is scarce although the effect of pragmatic instruction is closely linked with learners' perception toward it. Additionally, interventional studies have not yet been widely conducted with Korean learners in particular, thereby resulting in almost no studies examining learners' perception towards learning L2 pragmatic features.

In this regard, the present study aims to account for the previous research gaps mentioned above. It purposes to investigate ELF learners' perception toward pragmatic instruction given in a formal educational setting as well as to

compare the perceptions between intermediate and low language proficiency groups. Further, it also aims to explore how the learners have felt about learning L2 pragmatic features throughout the instruction period with an analysis of their reflection journals. The instruction was provided in terms of four speech acts, complimenting, apologizing, requesting, and refusing as they are considered to be essential in human communication as well as these speech acts display some differences in their realizations across cultures. The findings of this study will offer some insights into L2 language teaching as this study is one of the first works in examining the EFL learners' perception toward pragmatic instruction as related with two levels of language proficiency.

To achieve this, the present study will posit two research questions:

- 1) What are EFL learners' perceptions toward pragmatic instruction in terms of five categories—interest, usefulness, importance, motivation, and difficulty? Are there any differences in the learners' perception between the intermediate and the low groups?
- 2) What are EFL learners' perceptions toward learning pragmatic features of the four speech acts?

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

A. *The Definition of Pragmatic Competence*

Pragmatic competence is considered to be a construct of communicative competence, and generally covers a narrower scope than communicative competence does. As Roever (2011) highlighted, it is included as a part of major models of communicative competence (Bachman, 1990; Canale, 1983; Canale & Swain, 1980). For instance, in Canale and Swain's (1980) model, the construct of sociolinguistic competence displays similar properties with pragmatic competence, in that it is concerned with the sociocultural rules of language use and discourse. According to Canale and Swain, knowing these rules would be crucial in interpreting utterances for social meaning as well as the speaker's intention. Likewise, Savignon (1983) underscored the understanding of the social context of the conversation, and noted that it is essential to grasp the roles of the interlocutors, the messages they share, and the functions of the interaction in achieving appropriateness in language use.

Along this line, Bachman and Palmer (1996) presented two major components of language competence: organizational knowledge and pragmatic knowledge. Under the category of pragmatic knowledge were more concrete aspects, functional knowledge and sociolinguistic knowledge, which were distinguished from Canale and Swain's (1980) model. To delineate these types of knowledge specifically, functional knowledge enables us to interpret relationships between utterances and the intentions of the speaker, also called illocutionary competence. On the other hand, sociolinguistic knowledge is required to produce or interpret language which is appropriate to a particular context (Bachman & Palmer, 1996), incorporating knowledge of dialects/varieties, registers, natural or idiomatic, expressions, cultural references, and figures of speech.

As shown in the explanation about pragmatic competence through the examination of the influential models of communicative competence, pragmatic competence is mainly concerned with appropriate language uses in each social context where conversation occurs. In relation to this aspect, Mey (1993) referred to pragmatics as a study of language use in human communication which is determined by the social norms. In a similar vein, Crystal (1997) noted:

Pragmatics is the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication (p. 301).

Considering Mey's (1993) and Crystal's (1997) arguments, pragmatics mostly covers a range of the social aspects of language. However, as seen in two subfields of pragmatics, sociopragmatics and pragmalinguistics, it also focuses on linguistic structures of utterances since various language functions cannot be achieved without appropriate linguistic formations.

B. *Previous Studies of Learners' Perception towards Learning L2 Pragmatic Features*

L2 pragmatics has not received much attention in the field of second language acquisition despite its increasing significance in communication. It has been only a few decades since SLA scholars more extensively started to research interlanguage pragmatics including conversation routines, pragmatic formulae, and speech acts. Furthermore, research concerning the effects of pragmatic instruction is still in its infancy, and thereby the studies investigating the learners' perceptions toward L2 pragmatic instruction are conspicuously absent in the literature of interlanguage pragmatics. However, as Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998) argued, high grammatical competence does not equate to concomitant pragmatic competence. Also, Olshtain and Cohen (1991) similarly noted that in successful speaking, using the appropriate words and forms in the given situation are crucial, rather than knowing grammatically correct ones. Although it is highly challenging for L2 learners to acquire pragmatic knowledge appropriate to a variety of situations in the target culture, pragmatic instruction, particularly explicit instruction provided with metapragmatic explanation, could facilitate L2 learners' pragmatic competence as the previous studies have shown (Abrams, 2014; Halenko & Jones, 2011; House, 1996; Kasper & Roever, 2005; Li, 2012; Morrow, 1996; Rose, 2005; Soler, 2005; Takahashi, 2001, 2005; Tateyama, 2001; Yang, 2006). Therefore, it is crucial to investigate the learners' perception towards pragmatic instruction to identify the most effective means of instruction.

A few studies have demonstrated that L2 learners showed a positive attitude towards pragmatic instruction provided (Chen, 2009; Liu, 2007). Liu (2007) investigated the effectiveness of explicit pragmatic instruction on the acquisition of requests. Liu examined Taiwanese learners' perceptions toward pragmatic instruction by dividing participants into three groups--(1) the control group, (2) teacher Instruction (TI) group who were given explicit pragmatic instruction in a classroom setting from an instructor; and (3) computer-mediated communication (CMC) group that learned pragmatics explicitly through e-mail and Web CT discussion with English native speaking partners--and examined. The two experimental groups indicated that pragmatic instruction in general was "practical and essential for their learning of English" (p. 89). In addition, most of the participants believed that learning pragmatics helped them communicate in English and that they gained more knowledge concerning L2 pragmatics after receiving instruction.

Likewise, Chen (2009) examined learner perceptions of instruction in L2 pragmatics. The learners in this study were provided with instruction on the speech act of complaints with the use of a chapter in a conversation book as well as metapragmatic instruction through handouts. 40 participants wrote self-reports which revealed their positive attitude toward pragmatic instruction.

Although both of the studies examined above included a few of participants who thought that instruction was not very beneficial, the studies imply that pragmatic instruction is essentially necessary and helpful for L2 learners to communicate more successfully.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The participants for the present study were 56 students from several different majors in a large university in South Korea ranging in age from 20 to 27. The students were selected from two intact classes taught by the researcher of this study, and they had received formal English education in South Korea for 10 years. Before providing pragmatic instruction, the students were divided into two groups depending on their English proficiency levels, intermediate and low levels, based on the evaluation of oral interviews. Two questions (e.g. *What do you like to do in your free time?; Tell me about the best trip that you've had*) were asked at random in the interview with some follow-up questions and their answers were scored by two raters who completed a workshop for evaluation of oral interview. Interrater reliability between the two raters indicated fairly high reliability (Pearson's $r=.737$). In addition, a demographic questionnaire asking the participants' basic information was also administered, and four participants who had an experience of living in a foreign country were excluded from the data analyses in order to achieve homogeneity of the participants. Among the 52 students, 27 were assigned to the intermediate level and 25 to the low proficiency level.

B. The Procedure of the Treatment

Pragmatic instruction was given as the treatment in the current study was designed to facilitate both pragmatic awareness and competence of the students in terms of the four speech acts of complimenting, apologizing, requesting, and refusing. Pragmatic instruction was delivered as a part of the curriculum for a language course, *English I*—the major goal of the course is to help students improve productive skills, such as speaking and writing—throughout the academic semester. The treatment was provided for a total of nine weeks, two weeks for each speech act, and one week of review was assigned to the end of the treatment.

The instruction was comprised of four sessions, each of which was allotted for 30 minutes, twice a week for two weeks. The treatment for this study was developed based on the previous studies regarding pragmatic instruction (Bardovi-Harlig & Griffin, 2005; Halenko & Jones, 2011; Martínez-Flor & Soler, 2007; Olshtain & Cohen, 1991) and included a range of input-providing and output-prompting activities to help the students better notice the pragmatic features throughout the instruction as well as produce grammatically and pragmatically appropriate expressions. Among the four sessions, the first two sessions centered on enhancing the students' pragmatic awareness, and the other two sessions were assigned to focus on the improvement of their pragmatic competence, based on the PPP (Presentation-Practice-Production) methodology (McCarthy, 1998).

To delineate the treatment procedures in more detail, the first session was planned to offer metapragmatic information concerning how social variables, such as social status and power distance between interlocutors, might influence the conversation. Then, they watched several movie clips entailing the related speech acts and were given some time to complete a hand-out about dialogic assessment and evaluation of a situation. The second session was designed to demonstrate the exemplary expressions for the speech act and explain the lexico-grammatical aspects of the expressions. Further, the pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic aspects of the expressions were examined with regard to the influence of social variables on the expressions with the exploration of contextual information. They were also asked to write a reflection journal about their experience of learning pragmatic features. In the third session, the students were given opportunities to practice performing the speech act in a few situations embedded with different social variables and received teacher's feedback on their responses in terms of both grammatical and pragmatic rules. The last session provided the students opportunities for communicative practice, based on real-life situations. They wrote a short dialogue including the speech act and then role-played it, followed by the teacher's feedback on pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics in order to raise the students' pragmatic awareness as well as enhance their

competence. They were requested to write a reflection journal concerning what they learned and how they felt about learning pragmatic features. Table 2 shows a brief explanation of the treatment provided in this study.

TABLE 2.
SUMMARY OF THE PROCEDURES OF THE TREATMENT

Session 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing metapragmatic instruction (T)
Focusing on Pragmatic Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watching video clips about the speech act (S) • Answering questions regarding pragmatic features on a hand-out given (S) • Discussing the answers in pairs and in class (ST)
Session 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrating a few exemplary expressions for the speech act (T)
Focusing on Pragmatic Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explaining lexico-grammatical and contextual aspects of the expressions (T) • Watching video clips about the speech act and discussing the pragmatic features employed in them (S) • Giving an assignment to write a reflection journal (T)
Session 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing a few different situations requiring to perform the speech act (T)
Focusing on Pragmatic Competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving feedback on students' responses (T) • Practicing performing the speech act in pairs (S)
Session 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requesting to write a short dialogue with inclusion of the speech act for a role-play in groups of four people (T)
Focusing on Pragmatic Competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practicing their script (S) • Role-play in front of the class (S) • Giving feedback on the realization of the speech act discussing pragmatic features employed (ST) • Giving an assignment to write a reflection journal (T)

* The capital letters S and T represent students and the teacher, respectively, who conducted the presented tasks in class.

C. Data Collection

A combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection instruments were employed to obtain data for this study. A questionnaire asking the students' perceptions toward learning L2 pragmatic features was constructed based on the preliminary interview with the students who received pragmatic instruction in a pilot study. It consisted of 29 questions which asked the degree of interest, motivation, helpfulness, importance, and difficulty of learning the speech acts for each of the four speech acts on a four-point Likert scale with different semantic differential (e.g. 4.Very interested; 3.Fairly interested; 2.Not much interested; 1.Not interested), mixed with several open-ended questions asking the reason of their choices (See Appendix A). The major categories of the questionnaire were constructed based on the pilot study, and the questionnaire was administered after the last session of the pragmatic instruction. Additionally, as for the qualitative data, the students were requested to write a reflection journal every week concerning what they had learned or thought with regard to pragmatic instruction, and their reflection journals were employed for the in-depth analysis of the learners' perception.

D. Data Analysis

In order to identify the difference in the learners' perception according to their language proficiency level, a one-way MANOVA was conducted. In addition, independent sample *t*-tests were also employed to find the difference in the learners' perception in terms of each major category of the questionnaire. Finally, descriptive statistics using crosstabulation were conducted using SPSS 19 in order to identify and compare the frequency distribution of the variables according to the language proficiency levels.

Further, the content of the students' reflection journals were analyzed qualitatively to obtain triangulation of data from the questionnaire and providing more in-depth description of the emerging themes from the questionnaire. In order to discover the themes, their journals were repeatedly examined through three phases of coding--open coding, axial coding, and selective coding--following Dörnyei (2007)'s suggestion. Through these processes, several major themes were discovered, and this study investigated the learners' perception, based on the themes, which were helpfulness of learning polite expressions, usefulness of learning a variety of expressions, and enhancing intercultural communication skills as well as their motivation for learning them.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

A. Differences in Learners' Perception toward Pragmatic Instruction

A one-way MANOVA was conducted to examine the main effect on learners' perception toward pragmatic instruction between the intermediate and low groups. However, the results showed that there was no significant effect found between two groups (Wilks' $\Lambda=0.27$, $p > 0.05$). In addition, independent sample *t*-tests were performed separately on dependent variables like *interesting*, *useful*, *motivating*, *important*, and *difficult* for the examination between subjects. The results also revealed that there were no statistically significant differences between subjects ($p=.814$ for *interest*, $p=.829$ for *usefulness*, $p=.152$ for *motivation*, $p=.705$ for *importance*, and $p=.088$ for *difficulty*). It is estimated that the reason that there were no significant differences in the perceptions between the intermediate and low groups highlights the learners' positive attitudes towards pragmatic instruction which is supported by the fact that both groups showed high ratings on each category concerning the instruction.

In order to examine the data more specifically according to the learners' levels, a crosstabulation was conducted to display counts and percentages of the categories. It was found that learners in the study demonstrated positive perceptions toward pragmatic instruction on the whole. Also, they showed a similar tendency in their perceptions to the three categories, *interest*, *usefulness*, and *importance*. 75% of the learners responded that learning L2 pragmatic features was interesting, about 98% of the learners responded that the instruction was useful, and 96.2% noted that it was important to learn L2 pragmatics.

Interestingly, the learners in both the intermediate and low groups displayed an almost identical distribution of responses for the three categories. About 74% and 76% of the learners from the intermediate group and the low group, respectively, expressed that learning L2 pragmatics was interesting. As for the category of the usefulness of the instruction, only one learner from the intermediate group displayed any negative perception. Also, approximately 96% of the learners in each group responded that learning L2 pragmatics was important. Table 3 shows the detailed information of descriptive statistics.

TABLE 3
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THREE CATEGORIES

Variables	Level		Not at all	Not very	Fairly	Very	Total	
Interesting	Inter	Count	0	7	15	5	27	
		% within level	.0%	25.9%	55.6%	18.5%	100%	
		% within interesting	.0%	58.3%	50.0%	55.6%	51.9%	
		% of total	.0%	13.5%	28.8%	9.6%	51.9%	
	Low	Count	1	5	15	4	25	
		% within level	4.0%	20.0%	60.0%	16.0%	100%	
		% within interesting	100%	41.7%	50.0%	44.4%	48.1%	
		% of Total	1.9%	9.6%	28.8%	7.7%	48.1%	
	Total		Count	1	12	30	9	52
			% of Total	1.9%	23.1%	57.7%	17.3%	100%
	Useful	Inter	Count	0	1	14	12	27
			% within level	.0%	3.7%	51.9%	44.4%	100%
% within useful			.0%	100%	50.0%	52.2%	51.9%	
% of Total			0%	1.9%	26.9%	23.1%	51.9%	
Low		Count	0	0	14	11	25	
		% within level	.0%	.0%	56.0%	44.0%	100%	
		% within useful	.0%	.0%	50.0%	47.8%	48.1%	
		% of Total	.0%	.0%	26.9%	21.2%	48.1%	
Total		Count	0	1	28	23	52	
		% of Total	0%	1.9%	53.8%	44.2%	100%	
Important		Inter	Count	0	1	17	9	27
			% within level	.0%	3.7%	63.0%	33.3%	100%
	% within important		.0%	50.0%	50.0%	56.3%	51.9%	
	% of Total		.0%	1.9%	32.7%	17.3%	51.9%	
	Low	Count	0	1	17	7	25	
		% within level	.0%	4.0%	68.0%	28.0%	100%	
		% within important	.0%	50.0%	50.0%	43.8%	48.1%	
		% of Total	.0%	1.9%	32.7%	13.5%	48.1%	
	Total		Count	0	2	34	16	52
			% of Total	.0%	3.8%	65.4%	30.8%	100%

In addition, the responses of the open-ended questions were examined in terms of the three categories—*interest*, *usefulness*, and *importance*. It was inferred that the learners expressed their perception positively on account of the frequent use of the expressions as well as interpersonal properties embedded in the expressions. The learners who responded positively with regard to the category of *interest* commonly answered as follows:

1. *Learning L2 pragmatics is very practical and different from what we have learned in our language classes so far.*¹ (from S 12)

2. *It is interesting to learn them because I can learn the polite way of talking in English.* (from S 22)

The statements above were extremely similar with the students' reports in Chen's (2009) study which investigated students' perceptions toward learning complaint strategies. They wrote that the instruction was a fresh experience and helped them to make complaints more appropriately, using polite language. Additionally, as for asking the usefulness of the instruction, a majority of learners underscored the frequent use of the expressions and responded, as seen in the examples below.

3. *They are everyday expressions, so I can use them often.* (from S 9)

4. *It helps us to improve intercultural communication skills.* (from S 12)

5. *I think I will be able to use them often in the future.* (from S 17)

The learners also commented on sociolinguistic qualities of the expressions in terms of the category of *important*, as presented in the following examples.

6. *These expressions are very important in human relationships.* (from S 15)

¹ Student's responses were written in Korean then translated to English.

7. *These expressions are the basic elements of communication with others. (from S 21)*

8. *It is important to learn because we will use these expressions often. (from S 33)*

Nevertheless, there were also some negative responses about the pragmatic instruction although they were marginal. It was reported by the learners that the instruction was not very interesting because they had already learned those expressions before. Also, learning L2 pragmatics was not very useful or important as they do not usually have contact with native English speakers in their regular lives.

The learners' negative comments regarding the EFL context was closely linked with the results regarding the category of motivation for learning L2 pragmatics. As shown in Table 4, about a quarter of the learners answered that L2 pragmatic features were not very motivating to learn due to limited opportunities to speak English. Nonetheless, congruent with the results concerning the three categories examined above, more than two thirds of the learners responded positively and noted that it was motivating for the exactly opposite reason from those who responded negatively. The positive responders wrote that learning L2 pragmatics was motivating as these expressions would be used regularly in their future.

TABLE 4
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE CATEGORY OF MOTIVATION

Variables	Level		Not at all	Not very	Fairly	Very	Total
Motivating	Inter	Count	0	8	15	4	27
		% within level	.0%	29.6%	55.6%	14.8%	100%
		% within motivating	.0%	66.7%	51.7%	36.4%	51.9%
		% of Total	.0%	15.4%	28.8%	7.7%	51.9%
	Low	Count	0	4	14	7	25
		% within level	.0%	16.0%	56.0%	28.0%	100%
		% within motivating	.0%	33.3%	48.3%	63.6%	48.1%
		% of Total	.0%	7.7%	26.9%	13.5%	48.1%
Total	Count	0	12	29	11	52	
	% of Total	.0%	23.1%	55.8%	21.2%	100%	

While the learners showed a similar tendency in their perceptions toward pragmatic instruction in terms of the four categories—*interest*, *usefulness*, *importance*, and *motivation*, they showed a noticeable difference in the degree of *difficulty* in learning them. Although the result was not significant between-subject examination ($p=.088$), confirmed by an independent sample *t*-test, the learners displayed some disparity in their responses. Two thirds of the learners in the intermediate group reported that learning L2 pragmatic features was *not at all* or *very difficult*. However, about a half of the learners in the low group answered that they were *fairly* or *very difficult*. Examining their responses of the open-ended question in-depth, the intermediate group attributed easiness of learning L2 pragmatics about the four speech acts to the regular input and output opportunities of the expressions with their native English speaking teachers in the classroom. Furthermore, they noted that these expressions were so routinized that they could employ them with ease for various situations. However, the low group reported that the patterns of the expressions were unfamiliar to them as well as complex to utilize. It was estimated that the low group did not possess sufficient linguistic facility to notice input like the intermediate group or utilize the routinized patterns of the expressions. In addition, it appeared that the degree of familiarity with the expressions is associated with Schmidt's (1993) noticing hypothesis that input can be intake when they attend to the target features. These features may have been salient to the intermediate group through the input and output activities given during the instruction, and they seemed to internalize the patterns better than the low group due to their higher linguistic facility.

B. Learners' Perception toward Learning Four Speech Acts

A one-way MANOVA was conducted several times to identify the main effect on the four speech acts (compliments, apologies, requests, and refusals) between the two proficiency groups. The results demonstrated that there was no significant effect found in terms of the four categories, which were *interest*, *usefulness*, *importance*, and *motivation*. Further, the between-subjects examination also indicated that there were no significant differences between the intermediate and low groups in terms of each speech act for the four categories. As discussed above, statistical significance was not found as most of the learners expressed the positive attitudes. However, there was significance for the category asking the degree of difficulty in learning L2 pragmatics regarding four speech acts, as seen in *Wilks' Lambda* values in Table 5.

TABLE 5
SUMMARY OF MANOVA RESULTS FOR FOUR SPEECH ACTS AND LEVELS

	F	Df	p	Partial Eta Squared
Interest	.442	47	.777	.036
Usefulness	.577	47	.681	.047
Importance	.430	47	.786	.035
Motivation	.833	47	.511	.066
Difficulty	3.424	47	.015*	.226

Also, there was a significant difference between the intermediate and low groups in the category of *difficulty*, as seen in Table 6. As discussed in the previous section, more learners in the low group expressed that learning L2 pragmatic features of the four speech acts were *very* or *fairly difficult* on account of unfamiliarity of the expressions. Further, although the speech act of refusals was not in the significance level of $p < .05$, it approached significance ($p = .053$).

TABLE 6
SUMMARY OF BETWEEN-SUBJECTS TESTS

Level	Group	M	SD	F	p
Compliments	Intermediate	2.11	0.58	4.172	.046*
	Low	2.44	0.58		
Apologies	Intermediate	2.07	0.66	6.424	.014*
	Low	2.52	0.59		
Requests	Intermediate	2.22	0.58	13.741	.001**
	Low	2.84	0.62		
Refusals	Intermediate	2.26	0.71	3.928	.053
	Low	2.60	0.50		

The learners' reflection journals revealed that learning L2 pragmatics was challenging as it consisted of some unfamiliar expressions and sentence patterns that the learners had not acquired yet. For instance, in terms of the instruction on compliments, the learners had a hard time making exclamatory sentences, particularly for the learners of the low group, as the sentence patterns are dissimilar between those starting with *how* and *what* (e.g., "*How nice (your shirt is)!*", "*What a nice shirt (it is)!*") Also, they expressed difficulty in making the reasons or excuses for apologies and requests. It is noteworthy that most of the learners pointed out the complexity of the sentence patterns of the requests. Before the pragmatic instruction, they commonly employed the monoclausal patterns like "*Can/could/would you + Verb*" or "*Please___*," in making requests. However, the instruction included an explanation about pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics as well as a range of examples of the constituents that make requests: alerter (e.g., "*Excuse me.*"), head act (e.g., "*I was wondering if you could help me.*"), and adjunct (e.g., "*I have to finish this work, but I don't know how to do it.*"). They noted that biclausal expressions of requests such as "*Do you mind if Subject Verb?*" "*I wonder if Subject Verb*", "*If you are not very busy, could you Verb?*" were tricky to make grammatically correct as seen in the examples below.

- *I leaned various expressions about requests and refusals. However, although they sound more appropriate, it is very difficult for me to make a sentence. They are too long and complex. (from S 40)*

- *I don't know exactly what to do in making correct sentences by using them. It is hard to express my reasons for the request and refusal. (from S 43)*

Also, they noted that since there were multiple exemplar expressions for each speech act, they felt rather burdened to utilize them appropriately to different situations. Interestingly, it appeared that these expressions were memorized by the learners instead of the learners becoming familiarized with them for communicative purposes. This aspect seemed to be associated with their previous experience of learning English in Korea as well as the learning context where the opportunities for authentic input and output are not common. Below are the examples of the learners' perception related to this point.

- *I learned a lot of useful expressions. I will memorize them all to use them as automatically as I say "I'm sorry." (from S 4)*

- *I usually made a request using "Would you ~?" I realized through the instruction that there were a number of expressions for requests. However, although these expressions seemed useful, it is very difficult to memorize the grammar rules. (from S 46)*

Nevertheless, despite EFL context where the learners have fewer opportunities for authentic communication, a majority of learners acknowledged the importance of learning L2 pragmatic features for the four speech acts, similar to the findings of Liu (2007). They wrote that pragmatic instruction helped them to enhance intercultural communication skills by learning English formulaic expressions.

- *In Korea, there are a lot of sarcastic expressions for compliments, such as "Don't you think you look too nice today?" I realized from the instruction that English compliments are usually directed to the subject to be complimented, so I thought that I should be careful not to translate Korean words directly in English. It can cause so many errors in meaning and misunderstanding. (from S 13)*

- *I used to just add the word "please" to make a polite request. It was really meaningful to learn appropriate way to make requests to professors. It will be helpful in the future when I go study abroad. (from S 20)*

- *I didn't know if there was a polite way of speaking in English. Because they call older people's names, I thought that I could say anything in English. (from S 46)*

- *There are a lot of things that I did not know because I am not from English speaking countries. The expressions for apologies are one example. I thought that I would practice more in order to reduce unintentional mistakes in communication. (from S 8)*

Remarkably, a number of learners noted that they had learned a lot of useful information about the realizations of the four speech acts. Most learners thought that they already knew the expressions, but admitted that the instruction was helpful in performing speech acts.

- *When I had to refuse the invitation, I usually said, "Sorry, I can't." I felt like saying more as I thought that I was being rude, but I did not know how and what to say. It was great to know the expressions like "I wish I could, but I can't," "I would love to, but I can't," "I have a prior appointment," etc.. (from S 10)*

- *It was great to learn to start the request with "Sorry to bother you" instead of direct question. I always felt a bit strange to make a request to my English professor. (from S 29)*

- *I always used the same expression. But, I learned various expressions this time. (from S 33)*

Most importantly, it was revealed that the learners gained some confidence in communicating in English and were motivated to utilize the expressions, as seen in the examples.

- *I used the expressions that I had learned from this lesson when I talked with my native English teacher. He complimented my English and I gained some confidence in using them. I will practice hard to use them more. (from S 2)*

- *Even though I wanted to say something, I did not say it because I did not know what to say. But now I learned all these expressions, so I will use them confidently in the future. (from S 42)*

- *They are very basic and essential expressions, so I think I can use them often. (from S 47)*

To conclude, the learners displayed positive perceptions toward learning L2 pragmatics, in general. They noted that the instruction was helpful in enhancing their communicational skills with regards to politeness and intercultural differences, as well as gaining confidence for English conversation. Additionally, although they also expressed some difficulties performing biclausal requests and making reasons for their apologies or refusals, they noted that it was motivating to learn. These findings reflect the EFL learners' needs in English learning in the current era and suggest the need for incorporating L2 pragmatics into the curriculum.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

This study sought to investigate the EFL learners' perceptions towards learning L2 pragmatic features. The results were mainly examined to see if there is any difference in the learners' perceptions in terms of five categories--*interest, usefulness, importance, motivation, and difficulty*--depending on their language proficiency levels as well as in terms of the four speech acts (compliments, apologies, requests, and refusals). The participants received explicit pragmatic instruction with regard to the four speech acts for nine weeks, and a questionnaire and the learners' reflection journals were employed for the data analyses. The findings showed that the learners expressed positive perceptions toward the pragmatic instruction, in general. It was found that a majority of the learners answered that learning L2 pragmatic features was very or fairly interesting, useful, motivating, and important. They noted that pragmatic instruction could help them enhance basic English communication skills as the expressions they learned are frequently used in everyday conversation. Also, the learners appeared to have a fresh experience of learning about politeness in relation to English. It was revealed that they found it important to learn L2 pragmatics as they became aware of the social aspects of the situation where the conversation occurs as well as intercultural differences. However, although most of the learners answered positively in light of motivation, a quarter of the learners reported oppositely based on the lack of practicality for using the expressions in their life. This reflects the common challenges that teachers in EFL settings face with their students and calls for attention from language teachers. Additionally, as for the comparison of the results between the intermediate and low groups, it was found that there was no statistical difference in the learners' perceptions. Nevertheless, they showed some disparity in the results regarding the category of *difficulty* for learning L2 pragmatics; meaning that more than two thirds of the intermediate learners answered that it was not difficult whereas around half of the low learners found it difficult on account of unfamiliarity with the expressions.

The investigation of the results concerning each speech act demonstrated that there was no significant main effect on their perceptions between two groups with regard to each speech act. The learners did not show any differences in *interest, usefulness, importance, and motivation* in terms of learning the four speech acts. However, the between-subject examination showed that there was a significant difference between the two groups concerning the category of *difficulty*. This result was attributed to a variety of expressions, complexity of some sentence patterns--exclamatory expressions for compliments and biclausal requesting patterns, in particular-- and consideration of different social aspects of the interlocutors and the specific conversational situations. Nevertheless, the learners' perception journals showed that learning L2 pragmatic features regarding the four speech acts was highly valuable to them. This instruction appeared to provide an opportunity to help them notice their deficiency in performing the speech acts as well as recognize the importance of learning L2 pragmatics as it enhanced their pragmatic awareness in terms of politeness, negative L1 transfer, and intercultural communication. Remarkably, they reported that it gave them a degree of confidence in English communication as well as motivation to learn. Another interesting finding is that a good number of the learners in the low group perceived formulaic expression that were introduced during the instruction as a collection of discrete grammar items which they should learn by rote and expressed the sense of pressure and burden of memorizing a variety of different expressions. These expressions carry communicative purposes and could be acquired by regular use in life

instead of the rote memorization. In this regard, different approaches and methods of language teaching designed for EFL learners should be practiced in consideration of the deficiency of EFL learners' communicative opportunities.

The findings of the present study highlighted the learners' need for pragmatic instruction. The knowledge of L2 pragmatic aspects, particularly for the speech acts in this study, can instill confidence and motivation for the L2 learners as the expressions are frequently employed in everyday conversation. Further, pragmatic instruction appears to be essential for EFL learners as they usually lack authentic input or output opportunities, so they might not be well-equipped to carry the illocutionary force that they intended in real situations. Also, it seems plausible to encounter communication breakdown or misunderstanding due to a lack of interpersonal or intercultural communicative skills since there are some major or minor differences in the expressions to perform the illocutionary acts as seen in the previous research. To this end, concrete efforts to include pragmatic instruction need to be taken into consideration. Also, a pragmatic instructional model should be designed based on experimental research so that language teachers as well as learners can achieve better effects from the instruction. In order to ensure good pedagogical practices, teacher training programs for L2 pragmatics should be developed especially for nonnative English teachers as they might not hold enough practical knowledge of L2 pragmatics themselves and have some difficulty gathering related information in an EFL settings. Finally, it would be helpful to create materials for teaching and learning about L2 pragmatics based on the contents of multimedia assisted language learning. Blended learning could offer vast resources of input and numerous output opportunities for EFL learners beyond the limitations of their classrooms.

APPENDIX. QUESTIONNAIRE ON STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF PRAGMATIC INSTRUCTION

Please check under the appropriate item.

1. How interested are you in learning the pragmatic features of the specific speech acts?

Very interested (4) Fairly interested (3) Not particularly interested (2) Not interested (1)

Write the reason why you marked the item.

→ _____

2. How interested are you in learning the pragmatic features of the speech act of compliments in a target language?

Very interested (4) Fairly interested (3) Not very interested (2) Not at all interested (1)

3. How interested are you in learning the pragmatic features of the speech act of apologies in a target language?

Very interested (4) Fairly interested (3) Not very interested (2) Not at all interested (1)

4. How interested are you in learning the pragmatic features of the speech act of requests in a target language?

Very interested (4) Fairly interested (3) Not very interested (2) Not at all interested (1)

5. How interested are you in learning the pragmatic features of the speech act of refusals in a target language?

Very interested (4) Fairly interested (3) Not very interested (2) Not at all interested (1)

6. How useful is it to learn the pragmatic features of the specific speech acts?

Very useful (4) Fairly useful (3) Not very useful (2) Not at all useful (1)

Write the reason why you marked the item.

→ _____

7. How useful is it to learn the pragmatic features of the speech act of compliments in a target language?

Very useful (4) Fairly useful (3) Not very useful (2) Not at all useful (1)

8. How useful is it to learn the pragmatic features of the speech act of apologies in a target language?

Very useful (4) Fairly useful (3) Not very useful (2) Not at all useful (1)

9. How useful is it to learn the pragmatic features of the speech act of requests in a target language?

Very useful (4) Fairly useful (3) Not very useful (2) Not at all useful (1)

10. How useful is it to learn the pragmatic features of the speech act of refusals in a target language?

Very useful (4) Fairly useful (3) Not very useful (2) Not at all useful (1)

11. How motivating is it to learn the pragmatic features of the specific speech acts?

Very motivating (4) Fairly motivating (3) Not very motivating (2) Not at all motivating (1)

Write the reason why you marked the item.

→ _____

12. How motivating is it to learn the pragmatic features of the speech act of compliments in a target language?

Very motivating (4) Fairly motivating (3) Not very motivating (2) Not at all motivating (1)

13. How motivating is it to learn the pragmatic features of the speech act of apologies in a target language?

Very motivating (4) Fairly motivating (3) Not very motivating (2) Not at all motivating (1)

14. How motivating is it to learn the pragmatic features of the speech act of requesting in a target language?

Very motivating (4) Fairly motivating (3) Not very motivating (2) Not at all motivating (1)

15. How motivating is it to learn the pragmatic features of the speech act of refusing in a target language?

Very motivating (4) Fairly motivating (3) Not very motivating (2) Not at all motivating (1)

16. How difficult is it to learn the pragmatic features of the specific speech acts?

Very difficult (4) Fairly difficult (3) Not very difficult (2) Not at all difficult (1)

Write the reason why you marked the item.

→ _____

17. How difficult is it to learn the pragmatic features of the speech act of compliments in a target language?

Very difficult (4) __ Fairly difficult (3) __ Not very difficult (2) __ Not at all difficult (1) __

18. How difficult is it to learn the pragmatic features of the speech act of apologies in a target language?

Very difficult (4) __ Fairly difficult (3) __ Not very difficult (2) __ Not at all difficult (1) __

19. How difficult is it to learn the pragmatic features of the speech act of requests in a target language?

Very difficult (4) __ Fairly difficult (3) __ Not very difficult (2) __ Not at all difficult (1) __

20. How difficult is it to learn the pragmatic features of the speech act of refusals in a target language?

Very difficult (4) __ Fairly difficult (3) __ Not very difficult (2) __ Not at all difficult (1) __

21. How important is it to learn the pragmatic features of the specific speech acts?

Very important (4) __ Fairly important (3) __ Not very important (2) __ Not at all important (1) __

Write the reason why you marked the item.

→ _____

22. How important is it to learn the pragmatic features of the speech act of compliments in a target language?

Very important (4) __ Fairly important (3) __ Not very important (2) __ Not at all important (1) __

23. How important is it to learn the pragmatic features of the speech act of apologies in a target language?

Very important (4) __ Fairly important (3) __ Not very important (2) __ Not at all important (1) __

24. How important is it to learn the pragmatic features of the speech act of requests in a target language?

Very important (4) __ Fairly important (3) __ Not very important (2) __ Not at all important (1) __

25. How important is it to learn the pragmatic features of the speech act of refusals in a target language?

Very important (4) __ Fairly important (3) __ Not very important (2) __ Not at all important (1) __

26. Have you ever learned the pragmatic features of the specific speech acts in your English class before?

Yes / No (If yes, when did you learn?)

27. What do you think is important to learn in English class? (Multiple responses are allowed.)

Grammar __ Speaking __ Vocabulary __ Reading __

Listening __ Pragmatics __ Writing __ Pronunciation __

28. Is learning pragmatic features of the specific speech acts in English class necessary?

Very necessary (4) __ Fairly necessary (3) __ Not very necessary (2) __ Not at all necessary (1) __

Write the reason why you marked the item.

→ _____

29. Is the use of movies appropriate in learning pragmatics?

Very appropriate (4) __ Fairly appropriate (3) __ Not very appropriate (2) __ Not at all appropriate (1) __

Write the reason why you marked the item.

→ _____

Background Information

Please mark next to the appropriate item or fill in the blank.

Gender: Male Female

Age: 18-20 21-23 24-26 27-29 30+

Have you lived in an English speaking country? (e.g. Canada, U.S.A. England, etc.)

Yes No (If yes, how long did you live there? _____)

School year: _____

Major: _____

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The English Language and Afro Saxons: A Systemic Study of the Communicative Qualities of a Selection of African Prose Passages

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Abstract—This paper studies the discourse strategies and communicative potential of the English language in a selection of Afro Saxon prose passages. The term ‘Afro Saxons’ was first coined by Kenyan scholar, Ali Mazrui, in 1975, by analogy with ‘Anglo Saxons’, to refer to the linguistic phenomenon in which the English language is increasingly becoming the ‘first language’ functionally of a great many black and African people. This study, therefore, enlarges upon this concept and undertakes to elaborate on the ways in which the communicative and expressive possibilities of English are exemplified in a selection of some of the most lyrical and dramatic prose extracts by some African writers. Mounted upon the theoretical platforms of Mazrui, and Halliday’s systemic functional grammar (SFG) with its contextual parameters of the ideational (field), interpersonal (tenor) and textual (mode) metafunctions, the research appraises the attitudes to the increasing global status of English. Then employing two Anglo Saxon prose passages as the control, it investigates in some detail the organic configurations of discourse such as transitivity, mood, thematic structure, cohesion and coherence in passages from Armah, Achebe and Soyinka, and concludes that, based on the effective use of the figurative and expressive metafunctions of the language, these authors may indeed be referred to as Afro Saxons.

Index Terms—Afro Saxons, systemic grammar, ideational, interpersonal, textual, transitivity

I. INTRODUCTION

English as a Global Language

Although the English language was first spoken in England about 1,600 years ago (Jowitt, 2014), it had always been in existence before then. Geographically, it originated from north western Germany from where it was brought to England. The past 500 years or more have, however, witnessed the rapid rise of the language, formerly of these Germanic invaders numbering a mere five or six million people, to the status of the everyday speech of over three thousand million people worldwide (Crystal, 2003). This phenomenal growth has no doubt been aided in part by the existence of a gigantic and immensely influential linguistic and cultural offspring of Britain, the United States of America. Added to this is the existence of millions more in Australia, New Zealand, Canada as well as the new nations of Africa, Asia and the Caribbean, who use the language as either a first or a second language.

There is clear evidence at present that English is the world’s dominant, and, perhaps, the most powerful language leading other world languages such as French, Russian, Portuguese and German. Armstrong (1993, p.65) states that the serious business of the modern world is carried on in English followed by French, German and Russian, and that ‘all other languages lag behind as vehicles for understanding and participating in the main business of the modern world’. He adds that to be confined to Spanish is to lag thirty years behind the times in science, engineering, business and scholarship. To be confined to Arabic is to lag at least fifty years behind.

It has to be conceded, however, that English owes many of these other languages much of its vocabulary, French, for instance, in the areas of fashion, culinary art, etiquette and social graces, and Italian for the vocabulary of music. Similarly, attitudes to English have not always been so clear cut and laudatory. At a point, the language was seen as ‘a tongue of small reach, stretching no further than the [British Isles], and not there over all’ (Mulcaster, 1987, p.39), and before then even, Francis Bacon had written in 1600 that when men were better educated, the English language would be obsolete (Mackay, 1987). Yet, as it is today, both Mulcaster and Bacon would probably be surprised at the enormous staying power of the language. As Boulton (1980) observes, it is a great advantage for the English language, making it superior to all other world languages, to have absorbed vocabulary from many languages, for, ‘this gives a great range of shades of meaning’ (p.9). The very rich vocabulary of English makes it possible to choose words not only with regard to the meaning but also with some consideration of the sound, associations and the appropriateness to the context.

David Crystal argues that English is now the language most widely taught also as a foreign language in over 100 countries such as China, Russia, Germany, Spain, Egypt and Brazil in most of which countries it is the chief foreign

language to be encountered in schools and often displacing another language in the process. According to him, English replaced French as the foreign language in schools in Algeria (a French colony) in 1996 for example (Crystal, 2003, p.5). He goes on to observe that a language achieves a genuinely global status when it develops a special role that is recognised in every country:

To achieve such a status, a language has to be taken up by other countries around the world. They must decide to give it a special place within their communities, even though they may have few (or no) mother tongue speakers. The role of an official language is today best illustrated by English, which now has some kind of special status in over seventy countries such as Ghana, Nigeria, India, Singapore and Vanuatu (Crystal, 2003, p.4).

Echoing Bolton's view above about the versatility of the English language, Crystal refers to the easiness of grammatical construction, paucity of inflection, an almost total disregard of the distinction of gender save those of nature, simplicity and precision of terminations and auxiliary verbs, majesty, vigour and copiousness of expression as the markedly attractive features of the English language which make it particularly suitable as the world's dominant language. Again, he says:

Learners sometimes comment on the 'familiarity' of English vocabulary, deriving from the way English has over the centuries borrowed thousands of new words from the languages with which it has been in contact. The 'welcome' given to the foreign vocabulary places English in contrast to some languages (notably French) which have tried to keep it out, and gives it a cosmopolitan character which many see as an advantage for a global language (p.8).

However, as the study has already hinted, within this phenomenal spread of the English language globally, there have been challenges and doubts occasioned, for instance, by the possessive attitude of some of the original speakers of the language. These attitudes negate Crystal's position that one predictable consequence of a language becoming a global language is that nobody owns it. Yet again, there are the ambivalent attitudes of its second language and foreign speakers. On the one hand, to them, English is 'a necessary evil' to bridge the communication gap between themselves and some of their fellow countrymen. On the other hand, they abhor the way in which their own mother tongues struggle with extinction against the English language. Again, Crystal (2003) describes this complicated situation in the following way:

If English is your mother tongue, you may have mixed feelings about the way English is spreading around the world. You may feel pride that your language is the one which has been so successful; but your pride may be tinged with concern, when you realize that people in other countries may not want to use the language in the same way that you do, and are changing it to suit themselves ... And if English is not your mother tongue, you may still have mixed feelings about it. You may be strongly motivated to learn it because you know it will put you in touch with more people than any other language; ... you will feel pride in your achievement, and savour the communicative power you have at your disposal, but you may none the less feel that mother-tongue speakers of English have an unfair advantage over you (pp.2-3).

The majority of these ambivalent attitudes often result from the rejection of some varieties of the language. A common exclamation often heard among the British, for instance, as alluded to by Crystal, is: 'Look what the Americans have done to English', yet even the Americans are often heard to exclaim: 'Hey, look, you've got an accent', when they encounter striking variations of English which are emerging around the world.

Some have even called for the abrogation of the proprietorial rights of the British over the language. Ufot (2009, p. 7) reports of the statement of Meghani, a Kenyan, to the effect that:

It is not at all wisdom on the part of a tiny British population in this wide world to claim that English as presented and pronounced by Americans, Canadians, Africans, Indians and the people of Madras State is not English. It may not be the Queen's English, but then what? Strictly speaking English cannot be called 'English' at all, since it is a universal language belonging to all. It is difficult to understand why it is still known by that horrible name; it should have had another name.

There was of course a swift 'British' rejoinder reiterating the cultural and geographical exclusiveness of the English language and suggesting an alternative name for the non-native variety:

As one who holds that the English language is an autochthonous product of that civilization (bounded on the North by the Thames and on the South by the English Channel) I feel that your correspondent's suggestions should be acted on immediately or, as he would probably prefer to put it, implemented forthwith. There is, however, no need to coin a new name for the 'universal' language. There is a time-honoured one – Pidgin English (Ufot, 2009, p.7).

There are scholars who have cautioned against these inordinately possessive and prescriptive attitudes towards the English language. Brazil (2008), for instance, feels that the desire to protect the 'home-grown product' from external interference is as questionable as the wish to prescribe standards for English speakers outside the British Isles. Achebe's famous statement about a world language needing to pay the price of submission to many different kinds of use is also apposite to this discourse. Boulton (1980) goes radically further to make a case for the competence of speakers of the non-native varieties of English and says:

Foreigners often speak English more grammatically than we do, because they have learned it as a foreign language, with rules; the foreigner is usually bewildered, not by grammar, but by idiom, which is unpredictable and completely irregular. The intelligent foreigner who knows some English never says, 'We was' or 'I wanted' (p.21).

Nor does he say 'He don't ...', as often heard in certain varieties of English in the United States, this research might add.

II. ENGLISH AND AFRO SAXONS

The expression 'Afro Saxons' was coined by Mazrui (1975), by analogy with 'Anglo Saxons', to refer to the phenomenon in which the English language is increasingly becoming the 'first language' functionally of a great many black and African people. According to Mazrui.

English is already becoming the first language in the functional sense of dominating the lives of many Africans. It seems possible that English will continue to be the first language functionally of large numbers of Africans critically placed in the destinies of their nations for the rest of the century. But in addition it looks feasible that English will become increasingly also the first language chronologically of many African children.... This emergence of black people who speak and write English as a native language chronologically is what we have termed the emergence of Afro Saxons in the world (pp.10-11).

Mazrui went on to predict that by the turn of the century, there would be more black people in the world who speak and write English as their native language than there would be British people. It now appears that Mazrui's predictions have been borne out essentially by contemporary linguistic events. Already, African Americans alone whose mother-tongue is English are 'nearly the equivalent of, if not more than half, the population of Great Britain'. Secondly, in Nigeria, for instance, more people are estimated to speak English than in the UK. Crystal (2003, pp. 62-65) puts the figure of active English speakers at 60,000,000 for Nigeria, and 58,190,000 for the UK.

From the above, it does appear that the position of the English language cannot and will never be seriously challenged by any indigenous language, as more and more people speak and write in English in Africa. Forty years after Mazrui's prediction, evidence of the burgeoning growth of Afro Saxons abounds most especially in the literary world in writers like Armah, Achebe, Soyinka and a host of others whose prose skills best exemplify the Saxonian textual configurations reminiscent of Joseph Addison's and Samuel Johnson's Anglo Saxon models.

For these Afro Saxon writers, the English language is an African language which contributes somewhat positively to their mind styles, and so, together with a number of other writers and critics, they have tended to repudiate the extreme positions of those who reject the language completely. Morehouse (1994) finds it remarkable that English has not been rejected by Achebe, Armah and Soyinka as a symbol of colonialism despite their numerous ascerbic satires against colonialism. Blyden (1988) believes that these African writers have represented the English language effectively in their works. Roscoe (2001) suggests that despite the colonial history of the language in Africa, writers choosing to use it face a dilemma of the odds between its universality and the clash with local idiom and imagery. He goes on to proffer an 'Africanized English idiom' (a kind of Afro Saxon English) as the solution (p.29).

This is not to suggest that the concept of Afro Saxon English finds favour with all African writers. A good many writers frown at the employment of a language which is accompanied by aesthetic and cultural precepts 'alien' to Africa. Okpaku (1989) describes it as 'invalid and dangerous' (p.139). Ladimeji (1982) accuses the English language of shedding very little light but much distortion on African literature (Ngara, 1982, p.5). Ngugi wa Thiong'o, who no longer writes in the English language, had long ago predicted a bleak future for the language when, describing it as merely 'a stop gap', he claimed that it would not be used always and that it was 'a temporary phenomenon that is dying' (Egejuru, 1980, p.54). But this is obviously not a carefully thought out statement because it loses sight of Mazrui's concept of Afro Saxons, which has now been validated. It ignored, or could not foresee, the current phenomenon of globalisation of which the English language is in a pole position.

The problem of language in African literary circles transcends these narrowly idealistic and irredentist postulations. It is the position of this paper that Afro Saxon literature is not just African literature, but a part of world literature in the English language. Its characteristics include the dialectics of colonialism, acts of courage in relation to the parameters of societal decay and regeneration, and a unique blend of traditional, political and modernist imagery delivered in an individualist idiom. Afro Saxons like Achebe, Armah, Soyinka and Okri employ the English language to capture experience which are typically 'African' in a manner that makes the experiences memorable to both Africans and non-Africans alike.

Thus, it can be said that no matter how mixed the feelings about English are, in Nigeria, for instance, people still favour the learning and use of the English language and are proud when their children are considered to be competent in the language enough for their accent, pronunciation and written performance to compete with those of the Anglo Saxons. Many now consciously neglect their mother tongue. Mixed feelings, if any, are greatly in favour of using the English language, on the whole. Afro Saxons tend to grow in number each day. Since English is now the global language in a global village, Afro Saxons do not wish to be left behind. Because of the structures of these countries, English has taken a pre-eminent position effortlessly in such domains as the law court, the educational system, the government and the media. As a result, parents encourage their children to become Afro Saxons so that they will not encounter any problems in the globalised village into which the world has effectively turned. In the next section, the study sets out in detail the theoretical basis for the investigation of Afro Saxon prose extracts in terms of their functional significance and competence.

III. SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR

Systemic functional grammar (SFG), also referred to as systemic functional linguistics (SFL), is a theory of language which is rooted in anthropology. It is associated with the work of M.A.K Halliday begun in the late 1960s and developed from his earlier scale and category grammar first outlined in 1961, which itself was built on the ideas of J.R. Firth and Karl Buhler (Fish, 1981; Teich, 1999; Wales, 2011). The theory has been developed further, notably by Halliday himself.

The crucial characteristic of the theory is its orientation outside linguistics towards sociology. It emphasizes the notion of system seen as a network of options or of choices. In SFG, each major aspect of grammar is analyzable in terms of a set of options, each dependent on the context or environment. The system of grammatical mood, for instance, involves a basic choice of indicative or imperative; the indicative involves a further choice between declarative and interrogative, while the imperative can be either 'inclusive' or 'exclusive' (i.e. first person or second person). But of course, these choices are not always binary, as SFG allows for flexibility and 'delicacy' of subdivision, which result in the breaking down of the boundary between grammar and meaning. This has been especially popular in the analysis of verbal functions such as transitivity.

According to Halliday (1994, p.112), the systemic model is functional and works in three distinct but closely related senses in its interpretation of texts. It is a functional grammar which construes all the units of a language as an organic configuration of functions in which each part is interpreted as functional with respect to the whole. Here, language is viewed as a social semiotic in which the contextual determinants of a language such as culture and situation are indispensable in the proper study of that language. In SFG, language is a means of doing, providing a linguistic behaviour potential which is ultimately defined by the context of culture.

Furthermore, language use depends on choice among the linguistic possibilities and is therefore primarily a social resource with which speakers and hearers act meaningfully. SFG is concerned with providing an answer to the question: how is language organised to convey meaning? Meaning in SFG is defined by the linguistic behaviour potential. Thus, as Halliday himself states it, whereas in semantics a speaker CAN mean, in SFG the emphasis is on the realisation of what the speaker does (Teich, 1999). Semiotic systems develop and function in a context, and so meaning is a product of the relationship between the system and its environment. and function, in turn, has various aspects that are simultaneously fulfilled whenever language is used.

More fundamentally, there are three crucial parts to Halliday's SFG which are germane to this study. In the first part are the categories – unit, structure, class and system. The first two, unit and structure, are categories of chain, that is, they refer to the syntagmatic axis or axis of combination. The category of unit, relates the constituents of discourse to one another in combination i.e. morpheme, word, group, clause and sentence. Structure involves syntagmatic relationships within units i.e. subject, predictor, complement and adjunct. The categories of class and system involve choice, of the axis of selection. Class contains nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs, items which can be substituted for one another at certain points in a unit. System refers to the systematic relationship between elements of structure, such as concord and voice. These categories together enable the linguist to analyse the text horizontally or vertically.

The second part of the concept concerns the three scales of abstraction which link the categories to each other and to the linguistic data. These are rank, exponence and delicacy. The scale of rank refers to the occurrence of constituents within the structure of another unit. This leads to words operating in the structure of phrases/groups, and phrases/groups in turn, operating within clauses. But often rankshifting occurs when a clause, for example, operates in the structure of another clause, or of a group, or even a word, leading to what is referred to as first, second and third degree rankshifts respectively.

Exponence refers to the relationship between the data and the abstractions of the system allowing a recursive relation between the description and the actual lexical items of the text. Finally, delicacy refers to the degree or depth of details provided. Descriptions which extend right down to the constituent words of a sentence are more 'delicate' than those which terminate at clause or phrase levels.

The third part of the theory is a modification of Buhler's tripartite classification of language into three functions often referred to as metafunctions. These are ideational, interpersonal and textual functions. The ideational function refers to the expression of content. According to Halliday, it is concerned with 'the speaker's experience of the real world', and it is:

that part of the grammar concerned with the expression of experience, including both the processes within and beyond the self – the phenomena of the external world and those of consciousness – and the logical relations deducible from them (Teich, 1999, p.21).

Thus, ideationally, a text is evaluated for its representation of reality and participants, as well as the information in clauses and sentences. It is subdivided into experiential, which refers to the processes, events, the participants and circumstances, and then logical, which refers to the organising relations expressed, for instance, by dependencies (elaborating, expanding, extending, comparative, etc) and taxis (parataxis or hypotaxis).

The interpersonal metafunctions involves the expression of the speaker's attitudes and evaluations, and of the relationship he sets up between himself and the listener. It relates to the contextual parameter of tenor, and in Halliday's words, expresses 'the speaker's role in the speech situation, his personal commitment and his interaction with others' (Teich, 1999, p.24). In sum, it is the relationship a text establishes with its audience.

Finally, the textual metafunction refers to the way in which language makes links with itself and with the extra linguistic situation. And according to Halliday, it is concerned with the creation of text, the expression of the structure of information, and the relation of each part of the discourse to the whole and to the setting. For the three metafunctions then, as summarised by him:

we need to make some reference to the categories of our experience; we need to take on some role of the interpersonal situation; and we need to embody these in the form of text (Teich, 1999, p.9).

It is also important to add that these metafunctions developed from Halliday's triple categorization of registers and context of situation, that is, field, tenor and mode respectively. Field is concerned with what is going on in a situation (including subject matter), tenor reflects interpersonal relations and the roles participants adopt, and mode refers to the status assigned to the text, including the medium and channel of communication. The core components of these metafunctions are, for ideational, transitivity; for interpersonal, mood; and for textual, thematic structure, cohesion and coherence.

IV. TRANSITIVITY

Transitivity is part of the ideational metafunction of language because it is concerned with the transmission of ideas. Transitivity carries out this ideational function of language by the expression of processes. Halliday states that our most powerful conception of reality consists of 'goings-on'; of doing, happening, feeling, being sorted out in the grammar of the clause, and which are products of our conception of the world or point of view (Halliday, 1978). Transitivity is concerned with the process type encoded in a clause and the participants involved. It is the configuration of processes and participants at clause level. In grammar, it describes what is known in other theories as semantic relations, deep cases or theta roles, and together with the systems for circumstantials (adjuncts), for verb tense, for noun type (common noun versus proper noun), for types of prepositional group (location in time or space) etc, it describes the experiential part of the ideational multifunction.

Transitivity in SFG is construed in a much more expanded sense than in traditional grammars in which it merely denotes verbs which take direct objects. Here, transitivity, according to Simpson (2007, p. 22), refers to:

the way meanings are encoded in the clause and to the way different types of *process* are represented in language. Transitivity normally picks out three key components of processes. The first is the process itself, which is typically realised in grammar by the verb phrase. The second is the *participant(s)* associated with the process, typically realised by *noun phrases*.... Transitivity also picks out the *circumstances* associated with the process. This third element is typically expressed by *prepositional* and *adverb* phrases which.... fill up the Adjunct element in clause structure.

Transitivity is, thus, part of a broader, semantic configuration of relations involving processes (the verb phrase), participant roles (the noun phrase) and circumstance (adverbials). Simpson (2007) goes on to identify six types of processes now categorised, by grammatical as well as semantic criteria, into:

- (i) **Material Processes** (doing): *jump, swim, break, etc*
Participant roles: *Actor* and *Goal*
e.g. Peter jumped the fence.
Actor: Peter
Process: jumped
Goal: the fence
- (ii) **Mental Processes** (sensing): *notice, fear, love, hate, etc*
Participant roles: *Sensor* and *Phenomenon*
e.g. Elizabeth noticed the error.
Sensor: Elizabeth
Process: noticed
Phenomenon: the error
- (iii) **Relational Processes** (being): *is, stands for, has, etc.*
Participant roles: *Identified* and *Identifier/Carrier* and *Attribute*
e.g. Achebe is Africa's best novelist. His novels are very witty.
Identified: Achebe
Process: is
Identifier: Africa's best novelist
Carrier: His novels
Process: are
Attribute: very witty
- (iv) **Behavioural Processes** (doing/sensing): *breathe, cough, cry, laugh, etc.*
Participant roles: *Behaver* and *Circumstances*
e.g. The athlete breathed in and out. She laughed at the joke.
Behaver: The athlete/She
Process: breathed/laughed
Circumstances: in and out/at the joke

(v) **Verbalisation Processes** (saying): *claim, announce, state, etc*Participant roles: *Sayer, Verbiage* and *Receiver*

e.g. The witness claimed that he saw the murder. The President announced his decision to the National Assembly

Sayer: The witness/The President

Process: claimed/announced

Verbiage: that he saw the murder/his decision

Receiver: /to the National Assembly

(vi) **Existential Processes** (existing/happening) *is, was, etc*Participant roles: dummy '*there*' and *Existent*

e.g. There was an accident. There was a fire.

Dummy '*there*'/'*there*'

Process: was/was

Existent: an accident/a fight

rather than, for instance: 'An accident occurred' or 'A fight broke out/erupted', which would then convert it to material transitivity processes.

In sum, therefore, transitivity is the relationship between the action of the Actor (or its variants) and its effect on the Goal (or its variants). These essentially replace the traditional categories of subject and object. Transitivity is, thus, so central to the ideational function of language that it is indispensable in the analysis of prose especially as it concerns Afro Saxon point of view and mind style.

V. MOOD

The mood system in SFG is, again, slightly different from its traditional grammatical variant where it is signaled basically by differences of verb forms corresponding to different sentence types such as indicative and subjunctive, and semantic contrasts of modality. Trask (2000) identifies five moods including:

Indicative (factual utterance): Susie is being hired.

Subjunctive (doubtful/real utterance): I suggest she be hired! Imperative (commanding utterance): Hire her!

Optative (wishful utterance): May she be hired.

Interrogative (questioning utterance): Will she be hired?

(pp.83-84)

In SFG, the mood system is closely related to the interpersonal metafunction (tenor) of language. The basic contrast here involves distinctions of illocutionary force, that is, whether it is indicative or interrogative. The declarative refers to sentences which have the force of statements whereas the interrogatives are used to ask questions. The imperative mood, on the other hand, has the force of commands or requests. Thus, we speak of the choice between declarative and interrogative, and of indicative and declarative, for instance, being ordered in delicacy, the ever finer discrimination of choices.

VI. THEMATIC STRUCTURE

In SFG, thematisation involves the theme and rheme which are usually the initial and non-initial elements in a clause structure corresponding respectively to the subject and predicate or sometimes topic and comment. These terms distinguish the informational value of utterances. Whereas theme in systemic grammar carries the least significance in content and is commonly associated with given information and almost always occurring as the grammatical subject of the utterance, the rheme coincides with the 'theme' of a work, that is, the point of a literary work, its central idea derived from the interpretation of the plot, imagery and symbolism and sometimes from the title of the work itself. Linking the theme and rheme are elements referred to as transitional elements (usually the predicator or verb phrase).

Although the theme commonly occurs initially, this is not always so especially in a connected discourse, but it will always be the element with the lowest communicative value. In SFG, the theme is any initial element whether conjunction, adverbial or nominal phrase including the subject or the complement if it is placed initially. For instance, in the statement.

Your rage, I defy.

the theme is: 'Your rage' whereas the rheme, which is the most important part of the message, is: 'I defy'.

The entire discourse on thematic structure in SFG stems from the perceived weakness of the traditional classification of the subject of clause structure. Halliday (1994, p.30) provides the theoretical basis for this solution by making references to the following three broad definitions of the term 'subject' in traditional grammar:

i) that which is the concern of the message;

ii) that of which something is being predicated; and,

iii) the doer of the action.

and then observes that: 'these three definitions are obviously not synonymous: they are defining different concepts.... Is it possible for the category of "subject" to embrace all these different meanings at one and the same time?' (p.31)

Halliday then proceeds to trace the markedly different functions of these subjects to their later categorization as:

- i) Psychological Subject: the concern of the message, i.e. the mind of the speaker at the production of the clause;
- ii) Grammatical Subject: that of which something is predicated, seen as grammatical because of its purely formal nature determining various formal features such as case, concord, number without any particular meaning; and,
- iii) Logical Subject: doer of the action, i.e. logical in the sense of the relationship between things, as opposed to 'grammatical' (symbols) relationship.

Thus, in the sentence:

The Duke gave my aunt this teapot.

the three definitions of the term 'subject' are combined in the element: 'The Duke'. But in a sentence like:

This teapot, my aunt was given by the Duke.

There are the following subject configurations:

- i) Psychological Subject: This teapot
- ii) Grammatical subject: My aunt
- iii) Logical Subject: the Duke

And to these different realizations of the term 'subject', Halliday assigns the terms *Theme*, *Subject* and *Actor* as follows:

- i) Psychological Subject: Theme
- ii) Grammatical Subject: Subject
- iii) Logical Subject: Actor

Finally, the question of themes and rhemes, which have their realization in English most notably in word order, focus and intonation, corresponds to the textual metafunction (mode/medium) in SFG.

VII. COHESION AND COHERENCE

Cohesion and coherence refer respectively to the grammatical and semantic connections which tie up a piece of discourse or text. Cohesion is a crucial device of discourse. With coherence, it confers intelligibility on any piece of discourse, and distinguishes it from individual strings of sentences. Wales (2011, p.66) describes it as 'the means (phonological, grammatical, lexical, semantic) of linking sentences into larger units (paragraphs, chapters, etc), i.e. of making them "stick together"'. Coherence is the semantic aspect of cohesion. But whereas cohesion is strictly a property of the individual words and phrases and their syntactic connectedness, coherence is a property of the entire text created by its 'senseness' and context. Coherence is sometimes seen as referring to the underlying development of propositions in terms of semantic relations and speech acts, in contrast to cohesion, which is concerned with surface features of connectivity.

Some scholars like Widdowson (1979) associate cohesion with text, and coherence with discourse, a distinction seen as unsatisfactory by Wales on the grounds that:

Text, no less than discourse, is 'coherent' if it makes sense, has a unity, and is therefore well formed. Indeed, a text without coherence is hardly a 'text' at all; and we certainly expect even conversation to be coherent in the sense of being relevant and clear (Wales, 2011, p.67).

Coherence without cohesion depends considerably on inference and the mental activity of the reader or addressee. It is in coherence that the mental representation of the connectedness of discourse is most observed to exist. Discourse coherence is a marked feature of dramatic dialogue, which usually occurs without the non sequiturs, digressions and redundancies that are features of colloquial discourse.

These aspects of SFG, which, like, thematic structure above, represent the textual metafunctions of language, combine with the ideational and interpersonal metafunctions to present the stylistic scholar with the tools for exhaustive investigation of the communicative qualities of language. They are seen as such by this study in the proper analysis of the written communicative competence of Afro Saxon writing. In the following sections, the paper employs two short prose passages from Joseph Addison and Samuel Johnson as quality control, and proceeds to apply the foregoing theoretical postulations to an analysis of a selection of prose passages each from Ayi Kwei Armah, Chinua Achebe and Wole Soyinka.

VIII. PROSE TEXTURE

[1.8.1] When I look upon the tombs of the great, every emotion of envy dies in me; when I read the epitaphs of the beautiful, every inordinate desire goes out: when I meet with the grief of the parents upon a tombstone, my heart melts with compassion; when I see the tombs of the parents themselves, I consider the vanity of grieving for those whom we must quickly follow. When I see kings lying by those who deposed them, when I consider rival wits placed side by side, or the holy men that divided the world with their contests and disputes, I reflect with sorrow on the little competitions, factions and debates of mankind. When I read the several dates of the tombs, of some that died yesterday, and some six hundred years ago, I consider that great day when we shall all of us be contemporaries, and make our appearances together. (Joseph Addison, 1771)

[1.8.2] Mr. James Macpherson,

I received your foolish and impudent letter. Any violence offered me I shall do my best to repel, and what I cannot do for myself, the law shall do for me. I hope I shall not be deterred from detecting what I think a cheat by the menaces of a ruffian.

What would you have me retract? I thought your book an imposture; I think it an imposture still. For this opinion I have given my reasons to the public which I here dare you to refute. Your rage I defy. Your abilities, since your *Homer*, are not so formidable: and what I hear of your morals inclines me to pay regard, not to what you shall say, but to what you shall prove. You may print this if you will. (Sam Johnson, 1775)

[1.8.3] We are not stunted in spirit, we are not Europeans, we are not Christians that we should invent fables a child would laugh at and harden our eyes to preach them daylight and deep night as truth. We are not so warped in soul, we are not Arabs, we are not Muslims to fabricate a desert god chanting madness in the wilderness, and call our creature creator. That is not way. (Ayi Kwei Armah, 1973)

[1.8.4] A man who has just come in from the rain and dried his body and put on dry clothes is more reluctant to go out again than another who has been indoors all the time. The trouble with our new nation – as I saw it then lying on the bed – was that none of us had been indoors long enough to be able to say ‘To hell with it’. Then a handful of us – the smart and the lucky and hardly ever the best – had scrambled for the one shelter our former rulers left, and had taken it over and barricaded themselves in. And from within they sought to persuade the rest through numerous loudspeakers, that the first phase of the struggle had been won and that the next phase – the extension of our house – was even more important and called for new and original tactics; it required that all argument should cease and the whole people speak with one voice and that any more dissent and argument outside the door of the shelter would subvert and bring down the whole house. (Chinua Achebe, 1975)

[1.8.5] The farewell smile on the British face was broken razor, the hand outstretched for a genteel handshake, or snapped up in a farewell salute, cunning crab claws whose sidewise sleight of motion hid the toxification of the passage it traversed and the sowing of tares such as the falsification of the nation’s population figures. The parting gift of the British to themselves was thus a solid base in a region that the colonial power had rendered pliable to her will, one that would guarantee continuing control over the vast nation for decades to come – at least with the centennial of the anniversary of the Treaty of Berlin – and maybe even until the third millennium – why not? All the signatories would meet and compare notes, crow over who had completely lost out, and who were still in business. (Wole Soyinka, 1994)

IX. IDEATIONAL METAQUALITIES

There are remarkable similarities not just in the ‘common core’ phraseology of all texts but also in the fact that encoded in the grammar of the clauses of each text is the muscular and supple mental picture of the author’s reality. The texts all consist of clause complexes with significant propositional content exteriorised by three main types of participant processes, causal circumstantials as well as logical dependencies and taxis, namely, relational, mental and material processes, as well as hypotaxis.

Text [1.8.1] and [1.8.2], employed as quality control, feature the experiential skills of the ‘writers of graceful verses’, Joseph Addison and Samuel Johnson (Long, 2013, p.279). In his extract entitled ‘Tombs of Westminster’, Addison immerses himself in his favourite subject matter, ‘the little vanities and all the big vices’ of his time, but he does so with ‘kindly ridicule and gentle humour’ which take speedy improvement for granted. Johnson himself says of Addison’s prose:

Whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison.... Give nights and days, sir, to the study of Addison if you mean to be a good writer, or, what is more worth, an honest man (Long, 2013, p.282).

In text [1.8.2], Johnson addresses his epistolary masterpiece to Scottish poet, James Macpherson, who claimed to have translated the ancient Gaelic epic poetry of a third century Scottish bard named Ossian. Johnson had maintained that the translations were a fraud and published his reasons, to which Macpherson responded with threats of physical violence against Johnson. Johnson’s letter came to be regarded as an epistolary locus classicus, and Johnson himself, as a result, was described as ‘the dictator of English letters’ (Long, 2013, p.287).

Like these Anglo Saxon past masters of the written word, the Afro Saxon ‘kindly ridicule and gentle humour’ are nicely resonant in texts [1.8.3], [1.8.4] and [1.8.5] in which Armah, Achebe and Soyinka take turns to repudiate colonial, post-colonial and neo-colonial helplessness through their individual expressive reconstruction of the Afro Saxon way. Armah’s extract has been described by Soyinka as ‘a visionary reconstruction of the past for the purposes of social direction’ (Booth, 1981, p.8). Achebe’s gentle but vigorously controlled wry, self-mocking narrative humour in [1.8.4], a memorable Afro Saxon description of African post-colonial politics, is spoken by one of his most complicated and controversial narrative voices named Odili. With Soyinka’s surgically sarcastic attack on British colonial treachery in text [1.8.5] through a good deal of ‘kindly ridicule’, these Afro Saxon texts match their Anglo Saxon counterparts ideationally, textually and interpersonally.

X. TRANSITIVITY

Like the control texts, transitivity in the Afro Saxon texts is secured chiefly by relational, mental and material processes, with the mental dominating the former while the relational dominates the latter. This is significant because it is the relational processes which relate the mental to the material processes.

Mental Processes

- (i) Sensor: When/every... envy
Process: look/dies
Phenomenon: upon ... great/in me
- (ii) Sensor: I
Process: received
Phenomenon: your ... letter

Relational Processes

- (iii) Identified: We/We We
Process: are/are/are
Identified: not... spirit/not Europeans / not Christians... truth
- (iv) Identified: A man ... clothes
Process: is
Identifier: more... time
- (v) Identified: The farewell... face/The ... themselves
Process: was/ was/ was
Identifier: broken razor/cunning ... figures/thus... millennium

As indicated earlier, the relational transitivity process, the most complicated of the six ideational categories, is preferred by the Afro Saxons, who are concerned chiefly with the expressive and figurative possibilities of the English language in expressing a complicated phenomenon such as colonialism. The subsequent clauses for the control texts also follow a similar pattern of preference for mental and material processes as follows

Addison	Johnson
Sensor: When I / When I	Goal: Any... me/your rage
Process: read/meet	Actor: I/I
Phenomenon: the... beautiful/with... tombstone	Process: shall... repel/defy
Sensor: every... desire/my heart	Identified: Your... <i>Homer</i>
Process: goes/melts	Process: are
Phenomenon: out/with compassion	Identifier: not... formidable

The dominant rhetorical anaphora created by the repetitive use of ‘when’ clause complexes underscores Addison’s point of view about life’s little vanities and big vices. It creates two types of anaphora, textual and grammatical anaphora. These parallel repetitive structures run through the rest of the extracts. The dramatic nature of the transitivity is further underscored by their logical dependencies and taxis. Text [1.8.1] for instance consists of six major clause complexes while [1.8.2] is made up of nine. Whereas the former presents us with the most predictable type of taxis consisting faithfully of hypotactic dependencies in which every initial clause is introduced by the binder ‘when’, the latter illustrates various degrees of interdependence with the exception of clauses one: ‘I received... letter’; and nine: ‘What... retract’, which are independent.

Addison skillfully balances his pairs of clauses by an initial beta clause which expresses the vanity:

When I look upon the tombs...

When I read the epitaphs...

When I see kings..., etc

Followed consistently by the resolving alpha clause:

... every emotion of envy

... every inordinate desire

... I reflect ...

In Johnson’s text, between clauses two (‘Any violence...repel’) and three (‘offered me’), there is a relation of hypotaxis, between three and four (I shall... myself), it is paratactic, and between ‘... and what ... me’, there is a relation of hypotaxis. The rest of the clause complexes, except between ‘I thought ... still’, are hypotactic.

The Afro Saxon texts match this pattern effectively. In Armah’s text, the relation between the structures:

We are not... spirit/we... Europeans/we... Christians

is one of parataxis whereas the type of interdependence is extending. Between the three parallel structures and the beta clauses:

that we... fables/a child would... at

there is a hypotactic relation with an elaborating interdependency. A similar relation is set up in the next set of clause complexes with:

We... soul/we... Arabs/we... Muslims

demonstrating a relation of parataxis with an extending interdependence.

Achebe’s pattern of taxis and interdependence relations follows roughly similar complexity. The relation between:

A man who... rain/dried... body/put... clothes... again

and:

than... time

is hypotactic, while the type of interdependence is comparative. Similarly, the relationship between:

The trouble... that/as I ... bed/none... say/To...it

is hypotactic while the interdependence is extending. Achebe's style here is complicated by, at once, Odili's complex role as a victim, an architect and a commentator on the complex mix of corruption, decay and post colonialism.

In text [1.8.5], Soyinka also sets up an initial paratactic relation between: 'The farewell smile... razor' and 'the hand... claws'. But between those two structures and the relative clause: 'whose...figures', there is a relation of hypotaxis whereas the type of interdependence is elaborating. This elaboration is continued in the next clause complex: 'The parting gift... why not?' There are four clauses here as follows:

The parting...region(alpha)/that...will(beta)

one that...millennium(beta)/why not? (alpha)

all setting up a relation of hypotaxis.

The major cognitive tropes which dominate the discourse of these Afro Saxon texts, like those of their Anglo Saxon counterparts, are metaphors, synecdoche, metonymy and elegant variation.

Here are a few examples.

(i) Metaphor/synecdoche/metonymy

a) epitaphs of the beautiful/rival wits/that great day [1.8.1]

b) a cheat/the menaces of a ruffian/the law/an imposture your Homer [1.8.2]

c) fables/a desert god/our creature/our way [1.8.3]

d) rain/ our house/the door of the shelter [1.8.4]

e) the British face/broken razor/cunning crab claws/sowing of tares/ the parting gift [1.8.5]

(ii) Elegant variation

(a) the colonial power [1.8.5]

Thus, all the Afro Saxon texts, like their Anglo Saxon counterparts, express disenchantment, sarcasm and anger through a similar set of ideational tools.

XI. INTERPERSONAL METAQUALITIES

The interpersonal qualities of these texts are exemplified by the distinctions of illocutionary force often illustrated, as we have observed before, by the mood system and corresponding to tenor of discourse. All the texts, except [1.8.2], are clearly expressive, i.e. addresser-oriented. [1.8.2] is conative, that is, addressee-oriented because Johnson addresses a specific entity, Macpherson, directly. Yet, like the rest of the texts, [1.8.2] is dominated by the most obvious linguistic marker of the interpersonal style – the first person pronouns, *I* and *we*. And even though this is formally absent in [1.8.5], the expressiveness of Soyinka's disenchantment is nonetheless vigorously addresser-oriented mostly in third person characterisations such as 'the British face', 'broken razor', 'cunning crab claws' etc.

XII. MOOD

All the texts are dominated clearly by the declarative mood both grammatically and pragmatically as follows:

When I look... me/When I read ... out [1.8.1]

I received your... letter/I thought ... still [1.8.2]

We are not ... truth /We are not... creator [1.8.4]

A man who... time /The trouble ... it [1.8.4]

The farewell... figures/all the signatures... business [1.8.5]

But there are two instances of indicative interrogatives in [1.8.2] and [1.8.5]:

What would you... retract? [1.8.2]

Why not? [1.8.5]

which, because they are essentially rhetorical, have the pragmatic (illocutionary) force of declaratives. This preference for indicative declaratives argues the superior moral and linguistic compass of their authors.

XIII. TEXTUAL METAQUALITIES

In all the texts, the force of given and new information is structured by means of thematisation as well as cohesion and coherence as follows:

(a) Thematic Structure

As indicated already, the theme occurs initially whereas the rheme pushes forward the message. Let us consider the following examples:

i) Theme: When I... great/Rheme: every... dies in me

ii) Theme: I (subject) /Process: received/Rheme: your... letter

- iii) Theme : We/Process: are /Rheme: stunted... truth
- iv) Theme: A man... clothes/ Process: is Rheme: reluctant... time
- v) Theme: The farewell... face/Process: was/Rheme: broken razor

The most interesting thematised element occurs in [1.8.2] in:

Your rage I defy.

as follows:

Theme: Your rage (psychological subject)

Rheme: Actor: I (logical subject)

Process: defy

This fronting or inversion for emphasis by Johnson presents us with what Quirk et al (1985) refer to as the ‘marked theme’ (Wales, 2011, p.424). But when Achebe, in text [1.8.4], says:

We had been in the rain together until yesterday.

it is somewhat difficult to determine precisely which is the theme or rheme because all parts of the clause, except ‘in the rain’, constitute new information. It would, therefore, seem that the circumstantial adjunct ‘until yesterday’, would satisfy this requirement of theme, but why is it in the initial position?

(b) Cohesion and Coherence

Cohesion and coherence in these texts are seen chiefly in anaphora. The texts reverberate with rhetorical repetition of lexical items as well as consistency in tense marking. In text [1.8.1] anaphora occurs chiefly in the repetition of the adverbial binder *when* and pronoun *I* at the beginning of a succession of clauses:

When I... / when I... / when I...

The deictic pronouns: *I, me, those, whom, them, we, our*, etc, predominate. The tenses are mainly in the present whereas coherence is also seen in the ideas expressed by ‘that great day’, ‘contemporary’ and ‘make our appearance together’. In text [1.8.2], cohesion and coherence are achieved also by the repetition of the first person and second person pronouns, which occur fifteen times in the parallel, antithetical structures, as well as in the word ‘still’ as follows:

I thought... imposture/ I think... still

Your rage... / Your abilities...

Pay regard not... but to what you... / You... this... will

Here again, the tenses are mainly in the present.

In text [1.8.3], cohesion and coherence are achieved through rhetorical anaphora, similar to [1.8.1], in which the first person plural pronoun *we* is repeated at the beginning of a succession of clauses:

We are not... / we are not... / we are not...

Indeed, the repetition of the expressions ‘are not’ and the second person pronoun ‘our’, (‘our creature’ and ‘our way’) reinforces the cohesion. In [1.8.4], cohesion is wrought through anaphora in the lexical repetition of deictics:

A man *who...* /dried *his* body / then *another* who...

The trouble with *our...*/as I saw.../our former rulers/our house

The tense here begins with present perfect:

has just come/(has) dried/(has) been

and swiftly progresses to simple past and then past perfect tense:

saw, was, had, been, had scrambled, had taken, etc.

In Soyinka’s text, cohesion is achieved mainly by the repetition of the relational process verb *was* in the first and third sentences:

The farewell smile... *was*/ the parting... *was*

It also occurs in its ellipsis in the structure:

...the hand outstretched ... (*was*) cunning crab claws

as well as in the words:

whose sidewise ... /... the British to *themselves*

colonial power (the British)/... to *her* will/*one* that

the vast nation (Nigeria)

and also in the consistency of verb tenses – *was, hid, traversed, was, would* and *were*. These enable the effective cohesion and coherence in the construction of Soyinka’s textual representation of reality.

XIV. CONCLUSION

It is fairly certain now that there exists what can be objectively referred to as Afro Saxon prose as part of the larger communicative metafunctions of the English language. Ideationally, in terms of their referential and logical components of transitivity, taxis and interdependence, Armah, Achebe and Soyinka in these texts effectively match the Addisonian and Johnsonian styles in the way in which they exemplify the figurative and expressive possibilities of the English language. Their chief concerns, dialectics and distress of colonial and postcolonial politics, correspond to the larger politics of man as seen in the Anglo Saxon texts, yet experientially and logically, their mind styles are dominated by the complex relational processes of transitivity manifested mainly by the predicator *is/was* and flanked by the ‘Identified’ and ‘Identifier’ participant roles.

Interpersonally, Afro Saxon prose is dominated by indicative declaratives corresponding with the urgency of the tenor of their discourse, which brooks none of the luxury of indicative interrogatives or even imperatives. The task of communicating to their addressees, it seems, supersedes other linguistic luxuries. But more importantly, it reveals the choices made by each writer, choices made possible by the communicative possibilities of the English language.

The textual relations and configurations of these extracts are set up by their unique thematic structures in which the message of anticolonial feeling occupies the regular theme position in clause structure while the dominant properties of cohesion and coherence are set up by repetition. It can, thus, safely be said that Mazrui's thesis about the existence of Afro Saxons finds its grandest expression in the communicative qualities of Armah's, Achebe's and Soyinka's prose styles.

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Sri Aurobindo's Yogic Discovery of the 'One Original Language' of Mankind: A Linguistic Exploration

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Abstract—On a very high plane of yogic consciousness Sri Aurobindo discovers the existence of the 'one original language' of mankind. Such 'one original language' of mankind, he says, is based on certain eternal types of sound. It exists on the summit of spiritual consciousness, 'Overmind Consciousness' he terms it. It comes to be intelligible to the matter-oriented intellectual mind of linguistic world since Noam Chomsky finds mind at the centre of language, mind which is free from the 'stimulus control'. Further, Ferdinand de Saussure's linguistic vision of the existence of the basic structure of language gives an unmistakable indication of the linguistic base of the one original language, and, therefore, requires us to make a linguistic exploration to materialise this vision of the 'one original language' of mankind.

Index Terms—one original language, basic structure of language, the plane of universal, mantra, overmind consciousness, supramental consciousness and sound

I. INTRODUCTION

Therefore mankind has one original language based on certain eternal types of sound, developed by certain laws of rhythmic variation, perfectly harmonious and symmetrical in its structure and evolution. (Sri Aurobindo, 1991, p.505)

Though the intellectual mind of the Linguistics has found 'word', or to say, linguistic sign to be arbitrary in nature, the spiritualists have found it to be revelatory and creative. Such a creative and revelatory feature of the linguistic sign they find in Mantra, the highest poetry, for the Mantra, as the Vedic Rishis say, is the revealed poetry. It is creative in nature. Sri Aurobindo (1991) whom we find to be a yogi of the unknown eternal heights in his literary works like *Savitri*, *The Life Divine* and other works which reveal the higher Divine Truth says that Mantra is the poetic expression of the deepest spiritual reality (p. 17). He explains that we find such poetic expression of the deepest spiritual reality when poetry is written from some higher plane of, what he terms, the Intuitive Mind Consciousness and the Overmind Consciousness, the two upper most planes of the spiritual consciousness on the plane of Mind. In other words, Mantra is the poetry which is written from some higher plane of the Intuitive Mind Consciousness and the Overmind Consciousness. He has discovered four planes of the spiritual consciousness existing above the intellectual plane of the Mind-Consciousness, nay, the 'mental mind' as he terms, —the spiritual mind-consciousness wherein one has the knowledge and realisation of the One Divine, the One Cosmic Self, or wherein one comes to be aware of the existence of the One Divine in one's self. They are, what he calls, the Higher Mind, the Illumined Mind, the Intuitive Mind and the Overmind. He discovers the one original language of mankind on the Overmind plane of the Spiritual Consciousness, the highest plane of Mantric Consciousness. Beyond these planes of the spiritual consciousness, or to say, the world of the Spiritual Mind there exists the transcendent plane of existence and consciousness, the Sovereign World of the Infinite, the 'Supramental' he calls it. The 'one original language' of the mankind he discovers to be existing on the Overmind plane of Consciousness since it is the plane of cosmic consciousness. In such original language of mankind we find 'an absolute expression of Truth which already exists in the Infinite above our mental comprehension' (Sri Aurobindo, 1988, p. 124). In such a situation 'Word' is 'above our power of mental construction' (124), says Sri Aurobindo.

At first instance a linguistic exploration of the one original language and the 'Word' which is 'above our power of mental construction' appears to be impossible since the matter-oriented linguistic mind is not constitutionally capable of rising to such highest plane of the spiritual consciousness where the one original language of mankind dwells, and to the plane beyond it. But since the One Divine comes to be Many bringing the world of creation into existence without effacing Its Sovereign Divine Oneness on the plane of Its Sovereign Existence and within the creation, too, as the Isha Upanishad says (35)¹, the present paper makes an attempt to discover the plane into which the matter-oriented mind of the linguistics culminates to enter into the world of the spiritual consciousness as a result of evolution and discover the existence of the one original language of the mankind eventually.

¹ The aforesaid vision of the Isha Upanishad comes to be intelligible to the scientific mind when it finds that the basic white spectrum of the sun ray does not lose its existence even when it is found to be in seven colours in a prism. It is found to be in its original sovereign state when it comes out of the prism.

II. SRI AUROBINDO'S YOGIC VISION OF MANKIND

Sri Aurobindo's yogic vision of evolution transcends the biological vision of Charles Darwin and Lamarck. The biological, or to say, the scientific vision is found to be an eclipsed one when he reveals the truth of a phenomenon, inverse to the phenomenon of evolution without which evolution is not possible. Such inverse phenomenon is, what he calls, 'involution'. In his epic prose *The Life Divine* he says:

We speak of the evolution of Life in Matter, the evolution of Mind in Matter; but evolution is a word which merely states the phenomenon without explaining it. For there seems to be no reason why Life should evolve out of material elements or Mind out of living form, unless we accept the Vedantic solution that Life is already involved in Matter and Mind in Life because in essence Matter is a form of veiled Life, Life a form of veiled Consciousness. And there seems to be little objection to a farther step in the series and the admission that mental consciousness may itself be only a form and a veil of higher states which are beyond Mind. (1990, p. 3)

He (1990) further says:

...Matter could not have become animate if the principle of Life had not been there constituting Matter and emerging as a phenomenon of Life-in-Matter; Life-in-Matter could not have begun to feel, perceive, think, reason, if the principle of Mind had not been there behind life and substance, constituting it as its field of operation and emergent in the phenomenon of a thinking life and body: so too spirituality emerging in Mind is the sign of a power which itself has founded and constituted life, mind and body and is now emerging as a spiritual being in a living and thinking body. How far this emergence will go, whether it will become dominant and transform its instrument, is a subsequent question; but what is necessary to posit is the existence of Spirit as something else than Mind and greater than Mind, spirituality as something other than mentality and the spiritual being therefore as something distinct from the mental being: Spirit is a final evolutionary emergence because it is the original involutionary element and factor. Evolution is an inverse action of the involution: what is an ultimate and last derivation in the involution is the first to appear in the evolution; what was original and primal in the involution is in evolution the last and supreme emergence. (p. 853)

Such a vision of Sri Aurobindo reveals that Spirit which exists beyond Mind comes down to be Mind bringing the creation into existence. It assumes the form of, what we earlier saw, the Overmind Consciousness, the highest plane of Mind. It is this Spirit, or what we earlier noted as 'Supramental', which further descends and appears as other different lower planes of spiritual consciousness on the plane of Mind, such as the Intuitive Mind Consciousness, the Illumined Mind Consciousness, the Higher Mind, and further appears as different lower planes of mind-consciousness. Since the descent of the Spirit, or to say, the Supramental continues, it comes to be, what we call, Life, and further Matter. Such a descent of the Spirit is the involution without which evolution cannot take place. Under the pressure of the involutionary force Life evolves out of Matter, Mind out of Life and other higher planes of consciousness out of Mind as stated earlier. During the course of the involution of the Spirit different planes of existence and consciousness come into existence in their supraphysical state and their material appearances take place later on in course of evolution, the evolution which begins after the creation of Matter. With the creation of the Overmind plane of Existence, the first plane of Creation as a result of the involution of the Spirit the language which comes into existence supraphysically on this plane is the 'one original language' of the mankind. The 'one original language' later on assumes the material appearance when evolution reaches the summit of creation, the Overmind plane of Consciousness, 'heaven' (p. 505), he (1991) calls.

The vision of the existence of the 'one original language' in its supraphysical existence cannot be questioned for the reason that evolution is the unfoldment in the material form of what is already concealed in Matter. Further, we get an unmistakable indication of the existence of the one original language in its supraphysical state in Ferdinand de Saussure's 'Structuralism' and Noam Chomsky's vision of 'Mind' at the centre of language.

III. STRUCTURALISM AND 'ONE ORIGINAL LANGUAGE'

The truth of the existence of the one original language of mankind descends into the intellectual mind-consciousness of the noted Swiss linguist and founding father of Structuralism Ferdinand de Saussure. On an examination, it is found that it is on account of the descent of such a truth into his being that he visualises the basic structure of language. He discovers the existence of the basic structure of language on the plane of Universal. Linguists call the plane of Universal as 'abstraction'. Jonathan Cullar says:

... structure can be defined at various levels of abstraction. (Rivkin and Ryan, 2002, p. 74)

The structuralists discover the basic constituents of structure on the 'extreme level of abstraction' (Sturrock 2003: 28). Such a vision of the plane of abstraction takes us into the domain of the spiritual consciousness, the domain which is not accessible to the matter-oriented intellectual mind of the linguists. It is on account of this inaccessibility of the matter-oriented intellectual mind that the spiritual domain comes to be abstract to it. The existence of the spiritual domain is not clearly visible to it. When we enter into the domain and reach its highest plane as a result of evolution, to use Sri Aurobindo's terminology, the Overmind Consciousness which is, as we noted earlier, the cosmic consciousness, the one original language of mankind is discerned. Such a plane of cosmic consciousness can be viewed as structuralists' 'extreme level of abstraction'. Since the plane of the Overmind Consciousness is far beyond the reach of the matter-oriented intellectual mind, it can make only a mental construction of the cosmic consciousness.

The nineteenth century diachronic linguistics reveals the truth of the evolution of the corporeal aspect of language. In such an evolution Saussure discovers the existence of ‘something’ which survives the mortality of the corporeal aspect of language. This ‘something’ is, what he calls, the ‘basic system’ of language, the system which was called ‘basic structure’ later on with the passage of time. The discovery of the basic structure of language makes him the father of Structuralism. Such basic structure reveals the truth of the one original language. In the absence of the basic structure the evolutionary mind of man cannot visualise the existence of the one original language of mankind, the basic which is universal and survives all evolutionary changes. In fact, the very discovery of the basic structure or system reveals the prior existence of the basic or original language since language requires a structure, or to say, a system to exist, nay, manifest on the terrestrial plane. For, a structure in itself is not language. It points to the prior existence of a language of which it is structure. On a deeper study, we find that structure in itself has no significance if it is not the pedestal of something higher and transcendent. In fact, it comes into existence only for the manifestation of this higher and transcendent. Furthermore, the corporeal aspect of language is found to be evolving to enter into the basic structure of language for the manifestation of the one original language of mankind in course of spiritual evolution.

On further examination, it is found that the basic structure which the structuralists discover is the initial physical manifestation of the one original language of mankind. In fact, such physical manifestation is the passage which can take us into the domain of the one original language. The one original language appears as the basic structure to some of the structuralists in the form of, to be specific, grammar, or to be more specific, generativism or Bloomfieldian generativism etc. for the reason that the intellectual mind of the linguists is under the gravitational pull of Matter. It can visualise the corporeality alone of the language. When it transcends the corporeality, it visualises language, the one original language. The transcendence takes place when the mind is free from the gravitational pull of Matter, or to say, from, what the linguists term, the ‘stimulus control’. It will, then, be able to visualise the one original language on the plane of Universal, the Cosmic Consciousness which is expressive of the Truth existing in the ‘Infinite above’ as noted earlier.

We notice the initial manifestation of the one original language of mankind on its corporeal level on the other hand as well when different languages of West and East, such as English, German, Dutch, Gothic, Old Irish, Sanskrit etc. are examined by the renowned linguists of the world. In the examination of these languages something identical among them has been discovered. The linguists have found irrefutable data which lead us to discover the one original language of mankind which they find to be ‘a common origin’ (A. C. Bough, Thomas Cable, 2002, p. 16) of all languages of the world.

But what is even more important, Sanskrit preserves an unusually full system of declensions and conjugations by which it became clear that the inflections of these languages could likewise be traced to a common origin. (p. 16)

Further,

It is easy to perceive a close kinship between English and German. *Milch* and *Milk*, *brot* and *bread*, *fleisch* and *flesh*, *wasser* and *water* are obviously words that have diverged from a common form. (15-16)

In a footnote the noted linguists A. C. Bough and Thomas Cable report that Sir William Jones, a renowned British linguist who was a Judge of the Supreme Court in India, too, has found a ‘common, earlier source’ of all languages:

In a famous paper of 1786, Sir William Jones who served as a Supreme Court justice in India proposed that the affinity of Sanskrit to Greek and Latin could be placed by positing a common, earlier source. See Garland Canon, *The Life and Mind of Oriental Jones: Sir William Jones, the Father of Modern Linguistics* (Cambridge, UK, 1990), pp. 241-70. (2002, p. 16)

Such a discovery of ‘a common origin’ or a ‘common, earlier source’ by the linguists goes to reveal unmistakably the existence of the one original language of the mankind at the base of all the languages of the world. It is to be noted here that Sri Aurobindo has found that as a result of involution, in which the separative principle of Existence is in operation, the one original language suffered ‘change, detrition, collapse’ (1991: 505) and consequently, different languages and vernaculars came into existence on the lower planes of existence. These different languages and vernaculars are, thus, found to have originated from the one original language. Therefore, something identical has been found in these languages. ‘A common origin’ or a ‘common earlier source’, now, comes to be the unmistakable indication of the one original language of mankind.

IV. UNIVERSAL AS SUPRAPHYSICAL IN SAUSSURE

Saussure has a very clear vision of the Universal in language. Such ‘Universal’ he finds to be supraphysical in nature, and, therefore, he finds it to be unmanifest. It manifests itself in, what he calls, *parole*, the human speech. Jonathan Cullar says:

Within linguistics itself there are disagreements about what precisely belongs to *langue* and *parole*: whether, for example, an account of the linguistic system should specify the acoustic and articulatory features that distinguish one phoneme from another (/p/ is “voiceless” and /b/ “voiced”), or whether such features as “voiced” and “voiceless” should be thought of as the manifestations in *parole* of what, in *la langue* itself, is a purely formal and abstract distinction. Such debates need not concern the structuralist, except in so far as they indicate that structure can be defined

at various levels of abstraction.² What does concern him is a pair of distinctions which the differentiation of *langue* from *parole* is designed to cover: between rule and behavior and between the functional and the nonfunctional. (Rivkin and Ryan, 2002, Pp.74-75)

The very 'manifestations in *parole* of what, in *la langue*' reveals the existence of two planes, the plane of *langue* which is unmanifest, and the plane of *parole* which is manifest. The manifestations in *parole* speak of the supraphysical nature of the plane of *langue*, the Universal which is unmanifest. Saussure talks of such unmanifest, that is to say, supraphysical universe in language. The evolution of the corporeal aspect of language, the truth of which the diachronic linguistics reveals as we have noted earlier, can, thus, be taken as the gradual manifestations of the Universal on the different planes of evolution. In such evolution, harmony and symmetry of language emerge gradually on the successive higher planes of language manifesting the One which exists on the plane of *la langue*. Furthermore, the emergence of harmony and symmetry in language in evolution unmistakably shows that the principle of the basic structure governs such evolution of language, for in the absence of the basic structure or the One in *la langue* there is no question of the emergence of harmony and symmetry. Saussure very categorically reveals that the principle of the basic structure operates in the evolution of language. In fact, he does not use the term 'basic structure' as noted earlier. He speaks of the one system or law which goes to present the picture of basic structure. He makes a comparison between language and a game of chess in order to bring the operation of the principle of the basic system or law, or what we call, basic structure, at the base into notice. Such operation reveals the *a priori* existence of the One Law which is the plane of Universal:

First, a state of the set of chessmen corresponds closely to a state of language. The respective value of the pieces depends on their position on the chessboard just as each linguistic term derives its value from its opposition to all the other terms.

In the second place, the system is always momentary; it varies from one position to the next. It is also true that values depend above all else on an unchangeable convention, the set of rules that exists before a game begins and persists after each move. Rules that are agreed upon once and for all exist in language too. (82)

The very 'unchangeable convention, the set of rules that exists before a game begins and persists after each move' speaks of the principle of the basic system or structure of language, the Universal which is working at the base of the linguistic evolution.

In the world of linguistics the plane of Universal, or to say, the basic structure is viewed in two different ways by the structuralists. The American Structuralism finds grammar to be universal. According to it, in the evolution of language grammar remains constant. The 'One' within the Universal reigns supreme in grammar. Hence, grammar is universal. On the other hand, Saussure discovers 'a power' existing within a linguistic sign. Such power is universal and unmanifest, he says. It is this unmanifest power which is responsible for signification of 'sign', more to say, text surviving the mortality of the corporeal aspect of language, he further says. The 'One' within this power, too, reigns supreme.

V. NOAM CHOMSKY AND UNIVERSAL

Noam Chomsky, a celebrated American linguist of the present day who differs from American Structuralists like Leonard Bloomfield discovers mind at the centre of language. Mind, he says, is responsible for infinite creativity of language.

Chomsky rightly rejects Bloomfield's assertion that habit is instrumental in language-formation since the latter fails to recognise the infinite creativity of language. Chomsky (2014) further reveals that the mind which is responsible for the infinite creativity of language is not under the gravitational pull of Matter in human body, or, of, what he calls, the 'stimulus control'. He (2014) says:

... the normal use of language is not only innovative and potentially infinite in scope, but also free from the control of detectable stimuli, either external or internal. It is because of this freedom from stimulus control that language can serve as an instrument of thought and self-expression, as it does not only for the exceptionally gifted and talent, but also, in fact, for every normal human. (2014, p. 11)

Such a discovery in the world of linguistics of a language which is free from stimulus control reveals the pre-existence of a mind which, too, is free from 'the control of detectable stimuli, either external or internal' in the being of man. The revelation of the existence of such a mind takes place for the reason that the stimulus free language can be the instrument of that 'thought' alone which is the product of the mind which, too, is free from the control of the stimulus of physical nature either external or internal. In other words, such mind is free from the gravitational pull of Matter in our being. In the absence of the pre-existence of the thought of the mind which is free from the stimulus control we cannot think of a language which is free from such stimulus control to be the instrument of such thought. Such language, thus, comes to be of the domain of the stimulus free mind, or to say, of the mind which is free from the gravitational pull of Matter. On a deeper examination, we find that the stimulus free language exists within the stimulus free mind itself, showing a truth further that such a mind has its own language affirming the existence of language in its

²Cf. N.C. Spence, "A Hardy Perennial: The Problem of *la langue* and *la parole*," *Archivumlinguisticum*9 (1957), pp. 1-27.

supraphysical state. Further, when he says that the stimulus free 'language can serve as an instrument of thought' he visualises the transcendence and prior existence of this mind, the transcendence which goes to make it spiritual in nature.

When he further speaks of 'self-expression', of which the stimulus free language is the instrument, he visualises a deeper self of man which transcends the aforesaid 'detectable stimuli, either external or internal'. The discovery of Chomsky of such a 'self' and, further, of its expression takes us deeper showing a transcendent self in man's being. Such transcendent self can be very logically viewed as the Divine Self which is the inmost self of man. With this, he takes us higher into the world of the spiritual mind-consciousness which is free from the gravitational pull of Matter as Sri Aurobindo discovers. Man embodies it as a result of his evolution to the plane of such a higher plane of consciousness. Here Chomsky's 'self-expression' comes to be the expression of the Divine Self, the expression which is revealed further as the one original language of mankind on the highest plane of the spiritual consciousness, the Overmind Consciousness as noted earlier.

Sri Aurobindo makes it clear that the intellectual plane of Mind is under the gravitational pull of Matter. It is on account of such subjection that we find that it is subject to the control of 'stimuli'. He makes it also clear that since on the plane of the spiritual mind-consciousness man has the knowledge and realisation of the One Divine, or the One Cosmic Self, there is no gravitational pull of Matter here. So, the language of such mind is stimulus free. Sri Aurobindo makes it clear further that a man is free from the gravitational pull of Matter in his being on the spiritual plane of the Mind-Consciousness only when he undergoes, what the yogi calls, 'psychic transformation' which is the soul-transformation, prior to his ascent to the plane of the spiritual mind-consciousness. The psychic transformation³ is the soul-transformation of man's body, life and mind. Sri Aurobindo discovers that man is made up of body, life and mind, at the centre of which is Soul, the Divine Self in his being. Such soul-transformation, or to say, the psychic transformation of body, life and mind takes place when Soul, the Divine Self in man's being comes in front to take over their command in course of the evolution of man's yogic consciousness to execute Its Will. Consequent upon the taking over of their command by It, Its Consciousness percolates into them as a result of which they undergo transformation, and come to be receptive to the Divine rejecting 'that' which is undivine. He uses the term 'psychicisation', too, for the psychic transformation of body, life and mind.

Hence, the thought of which language is an instrument comes to be the thought of the yogic and spiritual mind of man, or to say, of the 'psychicised spiritual mind'. Sri Aurobindo says that the 'Higher Mind', the first plane of the spiritual mind-consciousness transcends the plane of the intellectual mind, nay, what he calls, the 'mental mind' since it comes into existence first before the intellectual mind comes into existence in course of the involutory journey of the Spirit. It is not subject to the divisive principle of the Mind-Consciousness. The consciousness comes under the subjection of the divisive principle of the Mind when it descends further and comes to be, what we call the 'mental mind', or the 'intellectual mind' as we commonly call it. Here, it comes under the subjection of the divisive principle of the Mind to the extent that loses its awareness of the existence of the One Divine, the One Cosmic Self, of which it was aware on the spiritual planes of Mind. In the perspective of the mind which is evolving to its higher planes, the consciousness in the spiritual mind is found to tend irreversibly to lose its divisive principle, and continues to lose the divisiveness with its ascent to the successive higher planes of the spiritual consciousness. A movement towards the integrality of consciousness is discovered in this ascent consequently. There is a gradual emergence of the vision of the One Divine on these higher planes of the spiritual mind-consciousness on account of such movement, and accordingly in the being of man when he ascends these planes.

The Higher Mind is, as we may view, the condensed form of the spiritual light and vision of the Divine Truth. The Divine Transcendent Supramental comes to be the Higher Mind in course of Its involutory journey assuming a special character in which 'thought' dominates. Explaining the feature of the Higher Mind Sri Aurobindo (1990) says:

It is therefore a power that has proceeded from the Overmind, —but with the Supermind as its ulterior origin, —as all these greater powers have proceeded: but its special character, its activity of consciousness are dominated by Thought: it is luminous thought-mind, a mind of Spirit-born conceptual knowledge. (p. 939)

Language, therefore, comes essentially to be the instrument of thought of the spiritual plane of the Mind-Consciousness for the expression of Truth which, as we have noted, 'already exists in the Infinite', or to say, on the Supramental plane.

Further, on an examination of the 'power' existing within the linguistic sign, of which Saussure speaks, it is found that such power is the power of the 'mind', to be more specific, the spiritual mind at the base of the linguistic sign. Such mind-power is responsible for the creation and the signification of linguistic sign, or to say, text. Therefore, the world of the 'Universal' of which Saussure speaks can be viewed as the world of Mind which Chomsky visualises.

Further, the infinite creativity which Chomsky finds in language can conclusively be attributed to the spiritual mind which is brought into existence and nourished by the Supramental, —the spiritual mind of which the Overmind, wherein the one original language of mankind exists, is the summit as noted earlier. The intellectual mind requires to undergo psychic and spiritual transformations for such infinite creativity. The infinite creativity manifests in all those literary works which have been written from the planes of the spiritual consciousness, the culmination of which we find in the works of the Supramental Consciousness such as Sri Aurobindo's *The Life Divine* and his epic poem *Savitri*.

³ Sri Aurobindo uses the term 'psychic' as adjective of 'Soul'.

Chomsky's very vision that the stimulus free language is not only for the 'exceptionally gifted and talented but also, in fact, for every normal human' does not go to contradict the above finding of the spiritual mind of which language is the instrument. After the above examination the 'exceptionally gifted and talented', man comes to be the one who is spiritually gifted and talented, not one who is intellectually gifted and talented. We have to take note of the yogic discovery that the very language of a normal man is in indirect control of the transcendent Divine Self within his being. Chomsky implicitly speaks of the potentiality of man's destined evolution to the spiritual planes of consciousness. Such truth, therefore, makes the normal man capable of rising to the higher plane of consciousness for the infinite creativity in his language.

VI. CONCEPT OF 'WORD' OR 'LINGUISTIC SIGN'

'Word', or to say, 'linguistic sign' is admittedly a form of sound, of which phoneme is the fundamental unit. Saussure discovers the sound element along with a concept, 'signified' he calls it, in the linguistic sign. Even though he takes sound as the 'psychological imprint of sound' (2002: 78), sound comes to be at the base. Sri Aurobindo (1988) goes deeper and finds the human speech to be 'a particular application of the principle of sound' (p. 125). He (1988) says:

... let us examine the relation of human speech to sound in general. We see at once that speech is only a particular application of the principle of sound, a vibration made by pressure of the breath in its passage through the throat and mouth. (p. 125)

Such a discovery of 'word' to be essentially a form of sound requires us to enter into the world of sound, which Science reveals, in order to have a deeper truth for the linguistic discovery of the one original language of mankind.

VII. CONCEPT OF SOUND IN PHYSICS AND ITS FEATURES

Sound is essentially a vibration which takes place in the medium in which it travels. Such vibration takes place when a pressure is exerted. Physics defines it as a vibration 'that propagates as a typically audible mechanical wave of pressure and displacement' affirming the aforesaid vision of Sri Aurobindo. On a further examination, the scientific world discovers sound to be creative in nature. It is found destructive as well. 'Constructive interference' and 'destructive interference' it finds in sound. By 'interference' Physics means redistribution of energy. Such creative and destructive features manifest in two different situations affirming the creative feature of the linguistic signs in the Mantra. Earlier, the physicists discovered a plane of subtle physical existence. 'Ether' they called it. It was, then, found to be the medium necessary to support the propagation of electromagnetic radiation, as also the medium of sound to travel. Sound on the plane of ether was found creative in nature. Later on, the concept of ether as medium of electromagnetic radiation and sound was withdrawn and, subsequently, the existence, too, of the plane of ether was also rejected. However, the existence of the plane of ether still remains a subject of exploration in the world of Science. The scientific reason for the existence of ether has not yet been nullified even though the mechanical proof of the existence of ether could not be discovered. Albert Einstein, the most celebrated Physicist and Mathematician affirms its existence. It is said that the fifth-dimension, of which Kaulza-Klien theory speaks, corresponds to the existence of the plane of ether (Oxford Dictionary of Physics, 2009, p. 174). On the yogic plane of Consciousness Sri Aurobindo (1988), too, discovers the existence of the plane of ether (Pp. 126-127). On the plane of ether he finds creativity in sound. He finds creativity in sound to the extent that it brings about the gross material creation into existence. He categorically says that the material creation comes into existence by the sound on the plane of ether (Pp.126-127). Such creative force he finds behind the creation of every form on the lower planes, too, of Matter.

Though the question whether the plane of ether is in existence or not is not very much relevant on the point of the creativity in sound since creativity in sound is an admitted scientific truth, an attempt to discover the plane of ether would be appreciated here as it would further strengthen the thesis of the paper.

The existence of the plane of ether is unmistakably affirmed when Einstein in his Theory of Special Relativity discovers the existence of the four-dimensional plane, the plane of spacelessness and timelessness, and proves further that the three-dimensional plane of existence is the projection of the four-dimensional plane of existence in a similar manner in which a shadow is a two-dimensional projection of a three-dimensional object. In such projection the four-dimensional plane of existence comes to be the plane of three-dimensional existence with Space and Time to be two incompatible realities without effacing its four-dimensionality in which spacelessness and timelessness, or to say, spacetime continues to be one transcendent being, and exists sovereign. The point, or to say, the plane of existence where the four-dimensional plane of existence comes to be the three-dimensional plane of existence is found to be the highest plane of the material creation. Such a highest plane of the three-dimensional plane of existence can be viewed as the plane of ether. Since the four-dimensional plane of existence itself is not physically visible, the materiality remains subtle on this highest plane due to which ether was found earlier to be the subtle physical plane of existence. The very attempt to discover the mechanical proof of the ether, the ether which is the subtle state of Matter, is bound to fail since the mechanical proof is a thing of the gross Matter.

The subtlety of the Matter, for which we use the term 'ether' is all the more intelligible when we enter into, what the Quantum Theory calls, the 'probability wave' at the sub-atomic plane of Matter. It is the probability wave which comes

to be particle and vice-versa, says the discoverer of the 'probability wave'. Since the 'probability wave' is, admittedly, not a wave of the three-dimensional gross Matter, it is unmistakably a wave coming from the plane where materiality is at its subtlest and, thus, not physically visible. It is not physically visible as it is 'abstract mathematical quantity' (Fritjof Capra, 1982, p. 166). The abstract mathematical quantities which are not physically visible reveal the existence of the subtle plane of material existence where the four-dimensional plane of existence comes to be the three-dimensional plane of existence giving an unmistakable indication of the further higher existence of the supraphysical plane. Further, since the Quantum Theory has nullified the classical concepts of 'solid objects and of strictly deterministic laws' (p. 78), one cannot deny the existence of the plane of ether, thus, the etheric sound which, according to Sri Aurobindo, brings about the material creation into existence as noted earlier.

VIII. EVOLUTION OF SOUND AND THE 'ONE ORIGINAL LANGUAGE'

Earlier, we found a hierarchy of existence in the universe while discussing the involution-evolution phenomenon. In such a hierarchy Matter comes to be the lowest plane of existence. It is brought into existence by the plane of Life, the plane of Life which originates from the plane of Mind. The Mind itself is found to have originated from the transcendent plane of existence, the 'Supramental' as Sri Aurobindo terms. Therefore, it is supramental vibration which exists at the base of material vibration, or sound. It makes the physical sound pregnant with the vital, the mental and the supramental features. Sri Aurobindo (1988) says:

Let us realise then that a vibration of sound on the material plane presupposes a corresponding vibration on the vital without which it could not have come into play; that again presupposes a corresponding originative vibration on the mental; the mental presupposes a corresponding originative vibration on the supramental at the very root of things. But a mental vibration implies thought and perception and a supramental vibration implies a supreme vision and discernment. All vibration of sound on that higher plane is, then, instinct with and expressive of this supreme discernment of a truth in things and is at the same time creative, instinct with a supreme power which casts into forms the truth discerned and eventually, descending from plane to plane, reproduces it in the physical form or object created in Matter by etheric sound. (p. 126)

Consequent upon evolution from Matter to Life, the latent vital vibration in the material vibration emerges, and synchronises itself with the material. With its emergence and its synchronisation with the material vibration these two vibrations come to be the one integral vibration. Such integral vibration comes into existence as the material vibration undergoes evolutionary transformation as a result of evolution from Matter to Life. A new state of material vibration we witness. The very gross Matter at the centre of material vibration is found to be transformed. It is affirmed when the transformation of Matter is witnessed when Life emerges in Matter in a unicellular body. In other words, with the transformation of Matter when Life emerges in a unicellular body, the material vibration, too, undergoes transformation. In this new state the vital vibration dominates. Further, when mental vibration emerges with the upward movement of the evolutionary force to the mental plane, the material and the vital transformations both undergo an evolutionary transformation on the pattern of the transformation of the material vibration in the previous case. Again we have a new state of material vibration along with a new state of vital vibration since Matter and Life both undergo transformation with the emergence of Mind in Matter and Life. In man who is a mental being Matter and Life both are found to have undergone transformation and he has a new and different Matter, i.e. his body which is transcendent to its previous state, and Life which, too, is transcendent to its previous state. Here, the mental vibration synchronises itself with the material and the vital vibrations in the similar way in which earlier the vital vibration synchronised itself with the material vibration. We have an integral material, vital and mental vibration. In this new state the mental vibration takes over the command of the material and the vital vibrations. Therefore, Chomsky finds 'mind' at the centre of language, of which 'the surface structure', according to the Port Royal Theory of 1660, comes to be the 'signal'.

The evolutionary force continues to move upward and enters into the domain of the Supramental. Consequently, the latent supramental vibration emerges with the further result that the supramental transformation of the synchronised and integral material, vital and mental vibrations takes place. The Sovereign Supramental finally asserts Itself. We witness the supramental vibration in this new state of existence. In other words, vibration recovers its original state while evolving into the supramental vibration. As we see several colours in a rainbow, we see the material, the vital and the mental vibrations in the transcendent Supramental vibration. More to say, as the different colours come to be the white spectrum of the sun ray, the material, the vital and the mental vibrations come to be the supramental vibration. In other words, as the white spectrum of the sunlight comes to be different colours while passing through a prism, the supramental vibration is found to be the mental, the vital and the material vibrations in view of the involutory phenomenon which, as we have earlier found, is responsible for evolution. It comes to be in its original state when it reaches its sovereign plane in the same manner in which the white spectrum of the sun-ray comes back to its original state when it comes out of the prism in its forward journey.

Prior to the emergence of the supramental vibration, when the evolutionary force reaches the plane of the Overmind Consciousness, we witness overmental vibration wherein we discover the existence of the one original language of mankind. Or to say, the material appearance of the original language of mankind takes place at the moment when there is the emergence of the overmental vibration, the one original language which had already come into existence in its

supraphysical state in course of involutory phenomenon. Such phenomenon, as we have already discussed, preceded evolution.

IX. NOAM CHOMSKY AND EVOLUTION TOWARDS THE 'ONE ORIGINAL LANGUAGE'

It has now very scientifically emerged that the supramental vibration is at the base of the vibration on the material plane. We have seen that it makes the material vibration, of which a word-sign is a form, pregnant with the features of all the higher planes of existence and consciousness, the Life-plane, the Mind-plane and finally of the Supramental plane. With the rise of the evolutionary force on these planes sound unfolds these higher features. Creativity in sound unfolds its vital, mental and supramental features in course of evolution. This is very much manifest in the Port-Royal Theory of 1660 when it speaks of the manifestation of Mind in language. The theory reveals the truth of mind at the deeper levels of language, and therefore, goes to distinguish the surface structure of language and the deep structure of language. The Port-Royal Theory (Chomsky, 2014) categorically says:

... surface structure corresponds only to sound—to the corporeal aspect of language; but when the signal is produced, with its surface structure, there takes place a corresponding mental analysis into what we may call the deep structure, a formal structure that relates directly not to the sound but to the meaning. (p. 15)

Sound, thus, comes to be the 'signal' of the Truth existing on the higher planes of existence. The 'surface structure', therefore, comes to be the reflection, nay, the manifestation of the 'deep structure', nay, the truth itself, 'meaning' he terms. On a deeper examination the 'meaning' is discovered to be the mental vision of the Truth. The Port-Royal Theory finds such truth to be 'mind'. Chomsky (2014) makes it all the more clear:

... the transformational operations relating deep and surface structure are actual mental operations, performed by the mind when a sentence is produced or understood. (p. 16)

Such discovery speaks of the emergence of the mental vibration which is in command of the vibration, that is sound, which exists on the material plane. Going deeper, we find that it is essentially that vibration which we find on the plane of the spiritual mind since Chomsky's 'thought' is found to be the 'thought' of the spiritual mind as discussed earlier, the summit of which is the plane of the Overmind Consciousness, the plane of the 'one original language of mankind' as already discussed earlier. Since the vibration on the material plane is pregnant with the mental and supramental features, it comes to be revelatory and creative in the form of the one original language. That is why the linguistic sign has been found revelatory and creative on the plane of Mantra by the spiritualists.

X. 'DIVINE WILL': THE SUPRAMENTAL VIBRATION

Since the mind of which Chomsky speaks is essentially the spiritual mind on account of being free from the gravitational pull of Matter, the supramental consciousness which, being the integral consciousness, exists beyond the plane of creation is destined to manifest in language in course of future evolution. In fact, the supramental feature is found in Sri Aurobindo's epic *Savitri* which he has written from the Supramental plane of Consciousness. The epic is the precursor of the manifestation of the supramental vibration in the earth-nature in general and language in particular affirming Chomsky's vision of language as 'innovative and potentially infinite'. The Supramental Truth emerges out of it. But prior to the supramental manifestation, we witness the manifestation of the Overmind Consciousness wherein the 'one original language' of mankind exists. Such manifestation one witnesses in the *Vedas*, the *Upanishads* and the *Gita* which Sri Aurobindo has found to have been written from the plane of the Overmind Consciousness. Such poetic masterpieces, too, are 'innovative and potentially infinite' like all the works produced by the planes of the spiritual consciousness.

On the plane of the supramental consciousness the epic discerns very clearly the pre-creation state of existence and the descent of the Supramental Consciousness from Its Sovereign Supramental plane into the earth-existence bringing about the consequent supramental transformation of the earth. The most physical, too, is shown in the epic to have been transformed as a result of the descent of the supramental consciousness into the terrestrial existence. Satyavan's coming back to life as a result of Savitri's supramental yoga, the yoga by which the mortal principle in command of the creation comes to its end, goes to reveal the supramental transformation of the most physical. It is to be noted that Sri Aurobindo has got 'supreme vision and discernment' of such truth, the 'supreme vision and discernment of Truth' which are the essential features of the Supramental as he states earlier, for mind being the product of creation and separative principle cannot transcend the creation and visualise the pre-creation state of existence and the supramental transformation of the most physical. On the plane of such 'supreme vision and discernment' Sri Aurobindo discovers the aforesaid descent of the Supramental into the terrestrial existence and the consequent transformation of the terrestrial existence. Such truth does not descend into the Overmind Consciousness since the Overmind Consciousness is not the integral consciousness. It evades the vision of the Vedic and the Upanishadic Rishis and that of the *Gita* too.

Further, on the supramental plane we discover the 'Divine Will'. The Divine Will reigns supreme. The Divine wills to manifest Its delight in Its creation. It is on account of the Divine Will that the creation comes into existence and exists. Such 'Divine Will' is the supramental vibration since we find a pressure in It, too, the pressure which is at the root of vibration on the material plane of existence as discovered by the scientists. The 'Will' itself comes to be 'vibration'. Since such truth is yet to come into the vision of the scientific mind, the Uncertainty Principle of Werner Heisenberg

prevails in the world of Physics, to be more specific, in the Quantum Theory. The scientific mind which is under the gravitational pull of Matter having no vision of the truth of the Divine Will in the creation rejects A. S. Eddington's vision of the 'mind-stuff' (Eddington 1929: 276) and Einstein's refusal, too, of the uncertainty at the base of material creation. Such Divine Will is found to be at the base of the vibrations on all the planes of creation by the spiritual and the supramental consciousnesses. The emergence of the supramental vibration, or to say, the vibration recovering its original state comes to be found as the Divine Will. Everywhere we find the Divine Will as a result of which the creation has taken place, and, therefore, the Divine Ananda prevails upon the earth. It prevails upon the other parts, too, of the creation as well.

Once again on the plane of the most physical, the truth of the 'mind-stuff' or consciousness at the base of physical creation is found in the domain of Science when we enter into the realm of the Biological Sciences. Cells in the living organism have been found to have consciousness. They mutate consciously at their own will.

In a historic experiment last year⁴ biologists proved conclusively that cells can mutate intelligently, that cells can consciously decide to mutate to adapt to changed circumstances. This experiment has demonstrated that evolution is not a product of chance but of a conscious adaptation.

(*The Advent*, a Quarterly, April, 1990, *The Technology of Consciousness* by Sraddhalu Ranade, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry)

Such a discovery in the realm of the Biological Sciences has turned the scientific mind very decisively towards the realisation of the truth of the Divine Will in the terrestrial existence. In fact, there is a decisive emergence earlier of a vision towards the truth of the Divine Will in the world of Physics wherein the 'mind-stuff' has been found to be at the base of the conversion of particle into wave and vice-versa irrespective of the fact that the vision of the 'mind-stuff' is yet to be accepted unanimously by the scientists. Such 'Divine Will' exists at the base of Einstein's rejection, too, of the uncertainty at the base of material creation. We are in scientific need of examining the 'Uncertainty Principle' in the background of Einstein's unquestioned discovery of the three-dimensional world as the *projection* of the four-dimensional plane of existence in his Theory of Special Relativity for the further realisation of the Divine Will in the creation.

The linguistic exploration, thus, evolves into the yogic consciousness of Sri Aurobindo to find the vision of the one original language of mankind for the expression of the Divine Truth existing on the plane of Eternity as the Divine Will. Such expression of the one original language of the mankind on the plane of the Overmind Consciousness prepares the terrestrial existence for its sovereign supramental transformation. It reveals that yoga is the ultimate and destined evolutionary culmination as a result of which one evolves to the planes of the spiritual consciousness. In such yoga 'it is the Divine who is the Sadhaka and the Sadhana; it is his Shakti with her light, power, knowledge, consciousness, Ananda, acting upon the adhara, and when it is opened to her, pouring into it with these divine force that makes the Sadhana Possible (Sri Aurobindo: *The Mother* 2013: 8).

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⁴ 1989



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Analyzing Arabic Translation Methods of English Similes: A Case Study of *The Old Man and The Sea* by Ernest Hemingway

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Abstract—Simile is one of the most important literary devices. It is widely used as a figure of speech in literary works. However, simile can pose significant challenges in literary translation since different languages might use and interpret similes differently. The present research aims at investigating the translation strategies employed in Arabic to render English similes in a literary text. The translation model proposed by Pierini (2007) is utilized as a framework of this study. The researcher selected "*The Old Man and The Sea*" novel by Ernest Hemingway and its two Arabic translations as a case study. The novel's two Arabic translations are by The United Publishers referred to later as target text 1 (TT1) and Ziad Zakaria referred to later as target text 2 (TT2). First, the researcher randomly collected 40 similes as the study data. Then, their Arabic translations are identified. Next, the data is compared and analyzed to determine their translation techniques. After analysis, the research found that literal translation is a prominent strategy in rendering English similes to Arabic.

Index Terms—translation, translation methods, simile translation, literary translation, English-Arabic translation

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Recognizing Similes

Figures of speech are widely used in literature. Tajali (2003, p.100) states that figures of speech provide beauty and clarity in the text. However, Tajali (2003) did not consider their figurative meaning which might lead to ambiguity resulting in mistranslation. Despite that there are various kinds of figure of speech; some are more popular than others. As Richards (1965, p. 105) states that, "the two most common figures of speech are metaphor and simile". Therefore, there is a great emphasis regarding metaphor and simile in translation research. Mollanazar (2001, p. 46), for instance, argues that simile translation is a complex process involving recognition and analysis. This shows the importance of examining this topic in the translation field, especially since this area is rarely investigated between English and Arabic.

Similes can be identified easily since they use distinctive markers. Mary Oliver (1994, p. 101) states that words such as "like" or "as" are employed by the simile to express comparisons. Furthermore, Pierini (2007, p. 27-8) argues that English similes can be recognized via various indicators such as: (a). Adjectives: the same as, similar to; (b). Verbs: act like, look like, resemble, seem, sound like; (c). Conjunctions: as though/ if; (d). Nouns: some kind of, a sort of; and (e). Prepositions: as/ like. Such indicators can assist the translator to identify similes. Therefore, identifying similes may not be considered as hard as translating them.

On the other hand, while identifying similes is relatively easy, translating them requires comprehending their contextual aspects. Larson (1984, p.247) explains that appropriate comprehension of similes involves identifying the topic and the image of the simile. This means that if the translator fails in this task, there is a risk of simile misinterpretation. Moreover, simile is divided into three major components which are image, similarity point, and topic (Larson, 1984, p.247). Those components are explained by Larson (1984, p. 247) as follows: The topic is the object of similarity; the image is the value compared with the topic; and the similarity point is the established relation between the topic and the image. For instance, in the following simile "Sam is as blind as a bat", while "Sam" is the topic, "bat" is the image and "blindness" is the similarity point. As a result, it is critical to identify and analyze the SL simile before it is translated into the TL to avoid misinterpretation.

B. Simile Translation Techniques

Most translation methods are universal since they can be applied in various languages. As Neubert and Shreve (1992, p. 52) state that "a strategy is a generalization about typical courses-of-action exhibited by professional translators". Nevertheless, different translation scholars view translation strategies from various perspectives. For instance, Loescher (1991, p. 8) views the strategies of translation as "a potentially conscious procedure for solving a problem faced in translating a text". Consciousness of the translation process appears to be a major player in the selection and application of translation methods. This has been noticed by Cohen (1984, p.70) who argues that "the element of consciousness is what distinguishes strategies from these processes that are not strategic".

Nevertheless, a translation strategy is not only a way of translation rather it is a sophisticated manner of thinking. Venuti (1998, p. 240) observes that translation strategies "involve the basic tasks of choosing the foreign text to be translated and developing a method to translate it". Therefore, Venuti (1998) believes the translation strategy determines the selection of the ST and later attempt to invent an appropriate method of translation. However, Venuti's (1998) view is limited to the selection of SL texts and application of a certain method. It is clear that this view neither include the challenges facing the translators nor the manner of addressing them.

On the other hand, some researchers view translation strategy as a multiple process that contains various stages. For example, Jaaskelainen (2005, p.71) believes that a strategy is, "a series of competencies, a set of steps or processes that favor the acquisition, storage, and utilization of information". This definition entails that translation strategies are in fact a bundle of steps taken by translators to tackle the ST. Such translation steps are used to translate the ST till the translator achieves the required results. Pierini (2007, p.31) presented a translation model that includes six translation techniques to deal with simile. This model contains various steps towards simile translation.

The first strategy is literal translation. As Newmark (1981, p.88) argues that when SL and TL share a common simile, it is possible to employ literal translation. Moreover, Larson (1984, p. 280) agrees that when simile is understood by receptors, literal translation can be applied. The second translation strategy is replacing the SL image with a different TL image. In this strategy, the translator can replace the SL simile by a TL one since the simile is not shared between the SL and TL (Newmark, 1981, p. 89). Further, Larson argues that the translator can substitute the SL simile with a TL simile which conveys the same meaning (1984, p. 253).

The third strategy is the reduction of the simile to its sense. Newmark (1981, p. 91) believes that the translator can measure the importance of the meaning and reduce it accordingly. This technique can be used to minimize the image of the simile in the TL. The fourth translation technique is retention of the simile and explicating the similarity points. In this strategy, the translator is allowed to preserve the original simile while inserting information in the TL. As Chestman (2000, p. 108) explains that the addition of information facilitate understanding. The fifth translation strategy is called replacement of the simile with a gloss. In this method, the translator attempt to make the simile vivid by means of adding notes in the TL. Finally, the last technique is called omission in which translators delete the simile if it is considered problematic in the TL.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature contains a lot of important studies that highlight the topic of simile and simile translation. Therefore, the literature will be divided into two categories which are (A) research on simile and (B) research on simile translation. First, research on simile will be looked at and later research on simile translation will be highlighted.

A. Research on Simile

One of the most significant studies is conducted by Nguyen, T, & Zuckermann, G (2012) who investigate Vietnamese similes. To be more specific, this paper studies Vietnamese similes in terms of structure, rhyme and semantic. It attempts to compare and contrast Vietnamese similes with others such as British. Data has been collected from various resources. After data analysis, the paper categorizes Vietnamese similes into two major types which are meaning simile and rhyme simile. In addition, the results show that there are shared features between Vietnamese and cockney similes in terms of rhyme. Finally, the study concludes that even though similes are different in various cultures, they might share some features. The significance of this research is that it illustrates that similes can differ as well as share some aspects among different languages and culture. This can either simplify the translation process or make it more challenging.

In another research, Fadaee, E (2011) conducted a study that evaluates the impact of using figurative language namely simile in literary texts. The researcher used the novel "*Animal Farm*" by George Orwell as a case study. The researcher employed Newmark's (1988), Fromilhague's (1995) and Rokni's (2009) categorizations as the research framework. The researcher analyzed the data to identify literal and figurative meanings of similes and metaphors. The analysis shows that the author of the novel used the figurative rather than the literal meaning of similes in an attempt to convey his ideas implicitly. For instance, the analysis shows that figurative meaning occupied a highly critical percentage of 86.9% in the novel. Finally, the study concludes that figurative language is affective in conveying indirect and abstract messages. This discovery can guide the translation since it shows that similes contain both literal and figurative meanings which entails that the figurative meaning should be put into account in the translation.

Another study was carried out by Arenales, M. A. (2010) who investigates similes beyond their linguistic domain. This study investigates similes as a cultural product rather than a linguistic one. The researcher discusses the role of culture in constructing the contextual meaning of similes. For instance, the researcher analyzes the cultural meaning of the simile "The night came like a great lady, slowly dragging a long black coat studded with diamonds." He explains that the receiver of this simile would require some cultural knowledge to comprehend its implicit meaning. After analysis and discussion, the research shows that culture is a critical player in the meaning construction and comprehension of similes. As a result, the importance of this study is reflected in the findings that indicate a link between culture and similes. This indication proposes that similes acquire a cultural meaning which should be considered in the translation.

In addition, Moon, R (2008) examines the semantic aspects of English similes. His study shed light on semantic variations and survival of similes in the present English lexicon. This study is corpus-based descriptive research. The paper discussed and analyzed the data which is taken from different resources such as literature, media and other texts. After analysis, the study finds that simile maintenance within the lexicon is due to their popular usage and high frequency in novels. Therefore, this means that literary translators should expect to encounter similes in a high frequency especially when translating novels.

B. Research on Simile Translation

A critical study is carried out by Fadaee, E (2011) who explores the translation strategies of figurative speech into Persian in the novel "*Animal Farm*" by George Orwell. The researcher used Larson (1984) and Newmark (1988) translation theories as a framework of this paper. Simile is collected from the novel. Next, their correspondence is identified in six Persian translations. Then, the researcher compared and analyzed the data and their translations in order to identify the employed translation methods. After analysis, the study shows that various translation methods have been employed. The research also shows that faithfulness towards the source text plays a major role in the selection of translation strategies. The paper concludes that the six Persian translations have used more similes than the original text in forms of addition and explications. The outcomes of this research paper are important since they illustrates that translators might add more similes in the TT than what is found in the original to satisfy TL needs.

Moreover, in another significant research, Rapi, L and Miçoni, H (2014) explored similes in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* novel by the British writer Thomas Hardy and its Albanian translation. The study first analyzes the structure of the similes. Then, their semantic and stylistic functions are analyzed. Finally, the English similes are compared to their Albanian translation to find out the points of similarity and differences. The study shows that there is no significant difference in terms of the semantic content between the SL and TL. However, the study shows that there is a critical difference at the level of stylistics which is apparent in the manipulation and naturalization strategies used by the TL translator. The study reveals that the translator tends to add information in the TT to make it more explicit. As a result, the importance of this research finding lays in the tendency of translators to be creative as they manipulate simile translation to satisfy TT standards.

In addition, Shamsaefard, M., Fumani, M. & Nemati, A. (2013) conducted an important study in which they investigate simile translation strategies in four Persian translations of Hamlet. The researcher employs Pierini (2007) translation model as a framework of this study. The investigated Persian translations are by Pasargadi, Shahin, Beh Azin and Farzad. First, the researcher collected 85 similes as the data. Next, the researcher analyzed and compared the data with its Persian translations to identify their translation methods. After analysis, the study shows that literal translation is the most applied strategy. The results of this research are critical since they show a ST faithfulness tendency by the translators as they preferred literal translation.

Another insightful study is presented by Zohdi, M., & Saedi, A. (2011) who analyze the translation of simile from Persian to English. To be more specific, this paper seeks to identify the most adequate English similes translation of Rubaiyat poem by the Persian poet Omar Khayyam. This study examines the translations of Persian simile to English by Arberry and FitzGerald. First, the researcher analyzed and compared the translations with the original in accordance with Larson (1984) translation model. After analysis, the study shows that the translators employed various translation strategies including literal translation, literal translation plus addition, omission, translation with different simile and translation of meaning without simile. The research concludes that Arberry translation is more adequate due to the fact that he did not delete any of the similes in the translation. This finding shows that omission is not a desirable strategy to employ with similes.

One of the most critical research papers was conducted by Pierini (2007) who investigates the translation of English similes into Italian. To be more specific, the research discusses the translation issues of English similes into Italian. First, the study collected the data from various genres. Next, the collected data is discussed, analyzed and compared with their translations. After analysis, the study identified the translation difficulties of similes which include systematic and cultural problems. Such problems are attributed to the linguistic and cultural gaps. Finally, the research proposed six translation methods of similes which are literal translation; replacement; reduction; retention with explicitation; replacement with a gloss and deletion. Such procedures are used as a framework in this present study.

In conclusion, the literature covered several aspects of simile translation presenting significant research papers which enriched this research area in translation studies. However, it is also clear that there is a critical lack of research in simile translation from English literary texts to Arabic which this paper intends to fill.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research paper aims at identifying the translation methods used by Arabic translators while dealing with English similes in literary texts. To achieve this goal, the study employs Pierini (2007) translation model as a framework of this paper. The researcher selected the case study which is a novel by Ernest Hemingway entitled "*The Old Man and The Sea*" and the novel's two Arabic translations. The Arabic translations are by The United Publishers referred to later as target text 1 (TT1) and Ziad Zakaria referred to later as target text 2 (TT2). First, 40 similes are collected randomly from the novel. Then, the researcher identified their Arabic translations. Next, the data is analyzed and compared with

its translations. After analysis, the researcher will identify the employed translation techniques. Pierini (2007, p. 31) translation model of simile includes the following methods:

- 1- Literal translation
- 2- Vehicle Replacement with another in the TT
- 3- Simile Reduction to its sense
- 4- Vehicle retention and explicitation of similarity points
- 5- Vehicle Replacement using a gloss
- 6- Simile Omission

IV. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

There are forty similes collected from the novel and their two translations. Each simile is granted 2.5% when it is translated; otherwise, it will receive a zero percent while the forty similes together constitute 100%. Table.1 illustrates the frequency of translation methods employed by TT1 and TT2. According to table.1, overall, it is clear that literal translation method is the most applied translation strategy achieving a highly significant proportion of 95% in TT1 and 37.5% in TT2. This suggests that literal translation is the prominent translation techniques used to render English similes to Arabic.

TABLE 1:
FREQUENCY OF TRANSLATION METHODS IN TT1 AND TT2

Strategy	TT1	%	TT2	%
Literal translation	38	95	15	37.5
Reduction of simile	1	2.5	5	12.5
Omission of simile	0	0	11	27.5
Retaining plus explicitation	0	0	4	10
Replacement of vehicle	1	2.5	5	12.5
Total	40	100	40	100

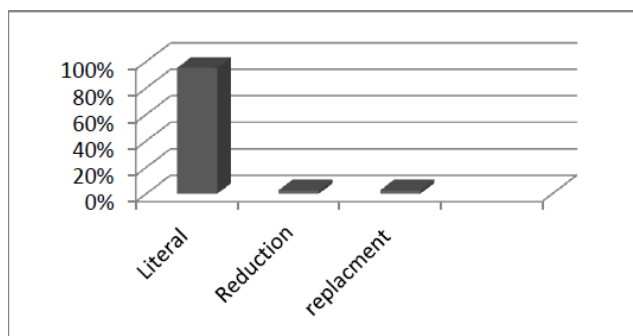


Figure 1: TT1 Translation Methods frequency

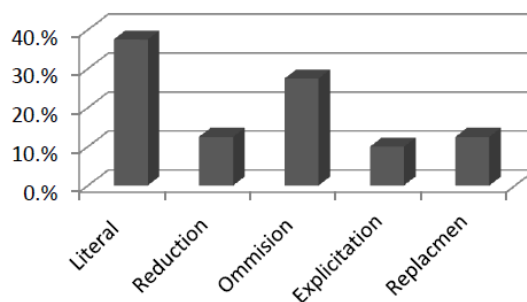


Figure 2: TT2 Translation Methods frequency

A. Literal Translation

As it is demonstrated in the table.1, the most frequent method is occupied by literal translation. While TT1 percentage was critically high at a proportion of 95%, the percentage accomplished by TT2 was 37.5%. Some translation scholars might prefer literal translation since it ensures faithfulness towards the ST. For instance, Zhongying (1994, p. 97), is in favor of literal translation method as he argues that "[i]n China, it is agreed by many that one should translate literally..." Moreover, Peter Newmark (1988) has debated literal translation in depth. He argues that "literal translation is correct and must not be avoided, if it secures referential and pragmatic equivalence to the original" (Newmark, 1988, p. 68). He further explains that "literal translation is the first step in translation" (Newmark, 1988, p.76). However,

Newmark (1988, p. 76) acknowledges that the literal method might distort the translation as he argues that it should be avoided when it causes misunderstanding.

Apparently, faithfulness was the aim of both translators. For instance, in item no.7, it is found that both TT1 and TT2 used literal translation method. The example in item no.7, is the simile "Lions... they played like young cats" In this simile, while the topic is "lions", the image is "young cats" and the point of similarity is "playing". Since the elements found in the English simile are rather shared by both languages, there is no need to add or delete due to the fact that such aspects can be comprehensible in Arabic. Therefore, both translators preferred to use the literal strategy.

Example1 from Item no.7

SL: Lions... they played like young cats

TT1: كانت هذه الاسود تلعب مثل القطط الصغيرة

Transliteration: kanat hatheh alosod tala'ab methl algetat alshgherah

TT2: السباع التي تلهو على الشاطئ كما تلهو القطط

Transliteration: asebha alati talho ala alshati kama talho algetat

Another significant usage of literal translation is present in the following example "His left hand was still as tight as the gripped claws of an eagle" from item no.23. In this example, the "hand" which is the topic of this simile is compared to the "eagle claws" while the comparison point is "tightness" of the grip. Since the image, topic, and comparison point are present in both cultures, the Arab readers have no issues regarding the comprehension of this example. Hence, the meaning of this simile can be conveyed in Arabic without any further adjustment. As a result, both translators employed literal translation as the most appropriate translation technique.

Example2 in Item no.23

SL: His left hand was still as tight as the gripped claws of an eagle

TT1: وكانت يده لاتزال متصلبة كمخالب نسر محكم الغلق

Transliteration: wakanat yadaho latazal motasalebah ka mikhlab nasar mohkam alghag

TT2: كانت يسراه لاتزال منقبضة كأنها مخالب نسر

Transliteration: Kanat yadah latazal mongabedhah kanaha mekhlab alnasar

B. Reduction of the Simile to Its Sense

In this strategy the simile is reduced to its sense in the translation. According to table.1, this technique was used in TT2 more than TT1. To be more specific, TT2 applied the reduction technique at a proportion of 12.5% in comparison to only 2.5% in TT1. This strategy is usually employed when the simile do not exist or hard to comprehend in the target text. As a solution, the translator would reduce the simile to its sense avoiding any possible vagueness in the translation.

A significant example is the simile "as painful as the spur of a fighting cock in one's hell" in item no.25. This simile compares "bone spur pain" which is the simile's topic to "the spur of a fighting cock in one's hell" which is the image while the point of similarity is "pain degree". In this instance, the translator in TT1 preferred to be as faithful as possible to the ST by selecting literal translation technique. Nevertheless, TT2 translator opted to use reduction strategy in this example. TT2 translator reduced the simile to its sense in which he compares the pain of "bone spur" to the "pain experienced in a fight". This reduction has made the simile vivid in Arabic since it is a common sense that the pain experienced in a fight would be so extreme.

Example 3 in Item no. 25

ST: Can it be as painful as the spur of a fighting cock in one's hell?

TT1: هل يمكن ان يكون مؤلما مثل مهماز في كعب ديك يقاتل في مصارعة الديوك؟

Transliteration: hal yomken an yakon molema methl mihmaz fi kab deak yokatel fi mosarat aldo yok?

TT2: اترها تؤلم الم الديكة عندما تتصارع؟

Transliteration: ataraha tolem alam aldyakah endama tatasara?

In addition, there is another important example in item no.17 which is "the clouds that looked like high snow mountains above them". In this simile, there is a comparison between "clouds" which is the simile's topic and "high snow mountains" which is the image while the similarity point is "big size". In TT1, the translator implemented literal translation. However, TT2 translator applied reduction strategy probably since most Arab countries are not familiar with the image of "snow mountains". There is a difference in the environmental conditions between the west and the Arab world. While snow is a normal scene in western countries, it is not the case in the Arab states. As a result, the simile in TT2 is reduced to its sense in Arabic to "clouds started to gather" reducing the image "mountains of snow" in the simile.

Example 4 in Item no. 17

ST: the clouds that looked like high snow mountains above them

TT1: والسحب التي تعلوها والتي بدت كجبال الثلج

Transliteration: wasohob alati taloha walati badat kajebal althalj

TT2: وكانت السحب تتجمع وتتنند

Transliteration: wakanat alsobh tatajama waktaethen

C. Omission

Omission is one of the proposed translation methods by Pierini (2007) in which the translator deletes the simile. Translators usually tend use this technique when they encounter translation problems that cannot be resolved and might

cause confusion or considered unnecessary. This translation strategy is found in TT2 while it is never used by TT1. To be more specific, omission method has been employed in 11 instances which represent a considerable proportion of 27.5%.

One of the most significant examples of omission found in TT1 is the English simile "Portuguese man of war ... it floated cheerfully as a bubble" present in item no.13. This simile compares "Portuguese man of war" which is the topic to "as a bubble" which is the image while the point of comparison is "floatation". TT1 translator used literal translation while TT2 translator selected the omission strategy. TT2 translator preferred to omit the English simile since there is a risk of ambiguity due to the fact that "Portuguese man of war" is not commonly known by Arabs since the majority of Arabs are more accustomed to desert creature rather than sea creatures. Even though there are some Arabs who live near the sea, they are considered a minority since the majority are living in areas far away from the marine life. As a result, the simile cannot be grasped by the most Arabic readership which prompted the use of the omission technique.

Example 5 in Item no. 13

ST: Portuguese man of war ... it floated cheerfully as a bubble

(Literal translation) TT1: قنديل البحر ... كان يطفوا بسعادة كفقاعة

Transliteration: *kandel albahr ... kan yatfo bisadah kafoga'ah*

TT2: No translation

Another omission example is the English simile in item no.16 "The tops of the blue hills that showed white as though they were snow-capped". This simile uses "The tops of the blue hills" as a topic and compares it to "as though they were snow-capped" while the similarity point is "being white". The translation in TT1 employed literal translation to render this simile while TT2 translator preferred omission. In this instance, the omission method is preferred by TT2 translator since the comparison between the whiteness of mountains top and snow may not be realized by TT Arab readers. As it is explained before that snow is a common aspect in the west while it is not common in the Arab world since the environment is warmer in the Arab states. Since this simile is not shared between English and Arabic, it is deleted in TT2.

Example 6 in Item no. 16

ST: The tops of the blue hills that showed white as though they were snow-capped

TT1: قمم التلال الزرقاء التي ظهرت بيضاء وكأنها مغطاة بالثلوج

Transliteration: *kemam altlal alzarka alati dhaharat badha wakanaha mogatat bitholog*

TT2: No translation

D. Retention and Explicitating of Simile

Basically, this strategy preserves the original simile and further clarifies it to eliminate any possible misunderstanding. While TT1 translator did not use this method, TT2 employed it with four instances at a low percentage of 10%. This technique is one of less popular strategies as far as this study is concerned.

One of the examples of using retention and explicitation is found in the simile "But do you think my hands were as great a handicap as the bone spurs?" in item no.37. This simile is comparing "my hands" to "the bone spurs" while the similarity point is "great a handicap". In this instance, the translator in TT1 used literal translation while TT2 translator used retention of simile and explicitation strategy. Since this simile is not clear in Arabic, TT2 translator preferred to make it explicit. In TT2, the translator compares "my hands disable me" to "as the bone spurs that disables baseball players". The translator of TT2 added more information to make the ST simile explicit in Arabic while retaining the English simile at the same time.

Example 7 in Item no. 37

ST: But do you think my hands were as great a handicap as the bone spurs?

(Literal translation) TT1: ولكن هل تظن ان يدي كانتا تمثلان عقبة كالنتوء العظمي؟

Transliteration: *walaken hal tadhon ana yadya Kanata tomathelan akabat kanoto aladhme?*

TT2: ولكن هل يمكن ليدي ان تعوقاني عن العمل كما يعوق نخس العظام قديمي لآعب البيسبول؟

Transliteration: *walaken hal yomken lydia an taokanani an alamal kama yaok nkhs alaetham laeb albasbol?*

Another interesting example is "...continue to fight as the fighting cocks do" in item no.26. This simile compares "continuing to fight" to "a fighting cock" while the point of comparison is "as fighting cocks do" since they "cocks" continue the fighting match despite danger and injuries that might happen to them during the fight. In TT1, the translator used literal strategy, TT2 translator opted retention and explicitation. It is clear that the translator in TT2 added information that does not exist in the original for the purpose of making the simile explicit in Arabic. For instance, TT2 translator adds "like cocks when they fight and have their eyes injured however they still continue the fight". By adding such information, the simile is explicit and hence easy to comprehend in Arabic.

Example 8 in Item no. 26

ST: ...continue to fight as the fighting cocks do

TT1: مواصلة القتال كما تفعل الديوك

TT2: مثل الديكة حينما تتصارع وتفقأ عيونها ومع هذا تواصل المعركة

E. Replacement of Vehicle

This translation strategy has the lowest frequency in this case study. To be more specific, the frequency of this method in TT1 is 2.5% while it is 12.5% in TT2 which is considerably the lowest proportion in comparison with other techniques.

One of the examples is "His tail which was sharp as a scythe..." in items no.18. In this instance, there is a comparison between "the fish's tail" and "scythe" in "sharpness". It is found that TT1 translator employed literal translation. However, TT2 translator used the replacement of vehicle method. In TT2, it is clear that the translator replaced the vehicle "scythe" with "sword". Even though literal translation successfully translated this simile, TT2 translator felt that replacement of vehicle is necessary. TT2 translator preferred to use the word "sword" as an appropriate substitution to the vehicle "scythe" since the former is more familiar and commonly used in Arabic than the later.

Example 9 in Item no. 18

ST: His tail which was sharp as a scythe...

TT1: ذيله والذي كان حادا كالمنجل

Transliteration: *thailoh walathe kan hada kalmengal*

TT2: ذيله الصارم كحد السيف

Transliteration: *thailoh alsarem zahad alsaiif*

Another vivid example is the English simile "shrimps ... they jumped and kicked like sand fleas" in item no.32. This simile compares "shrimps" which is the simile's topic with "sand fleas" and the comparison point is "jumped and kicked". While TT1 used literal translation, TT2 employed the replacement method. To be more specific, TT2 translator replaced "sand fleas" with "sand grains" in the Arabic translation since "sand fleas" is not commonly used in the Arabic. In addition, in Arabic language and culture, fleas are not usually compared to shrimps. As a result, since there was a risk of misinterpretation, the TT2 translator preferred to use the replacement of vehicle method to render this simile.

Example 10 in Item no. 32

ST: ...shrimps ...they jumped and kicked like sand fleas

TT1: الجمبري... وقد ظلت تتقفز وتضرب مثل براغيث الرمال

Transliteration: *aljambariy ... wagad dhalat tagfez wa tadhreb methl barageth alrimal*

TT2: الجمبريات.. جعلت تتواثب كحبات الرمل

Transliteration: *aljambariyat...ja'alat tatawathab ka habat alrimal*

V. CONCLUSION

This study investigated the translation methods used in Arabic to deal with English similes. This research used Pierini (2007) translation model as a framework. The researcher selected a novel entitled "The Old Man and The Sea" by Ernest Hemingway and its two Arabic translations for the purpose of this paper. The novel's two Arabic translations are by The United Publishers labeled as target text 1 (TT1) and Ziad Zakaria labeled as target text 2 (TT2). First, the researcher collected the data which includes 40 similes. Next, their Arabic translations are identified. Then, the researcher compared, analyzed and discussed their translation strategies. After discussion, the study shows that literal translation is the most applied strategy in Arabic. For instance, TT1 applied literal translation 95% while TT2 used it in 37.5%. In addition, the research shows that TT2 translator implemented more translation methods in comparison to TT1. In conclusion, the researcher observed a tendency towards literal translation in an attempt to render English similes by both translators in this study.

Appendix

Item.No	SL Simile	TL1 by	Translation strategy	%	TL2 by	Translation strategy	%
.1	It looked like the flag of permanent defeat	وبدا مثل علم منكمس نوما اعلنا عن الهزيمة	Literal	2.5	كانما هو علم للهزيمة المتصلة	Literal	2.5
.2	They were as old as erosions in a fishless desert	كانت قديمة بقدم التاكلات في صحراء بلا سمك	Literal	2.5	فهي جميعا قديمة قدم الحفريات في صحراء عديمة السمك	Literal	2.5
.3	...His eyes and they were the same color as the sea. P. 37	عينيه اللتين كانتا بنفس لون البحر	Literal	2.5	عيناه كانتا في صفا مياه البحر	replacement	2.5
.4	Hope and his confidence had never gone but now they were freshening as when the breeze rises. P. 43	ان الامل والثقة اللذين يملاانه لم يتبددا من قبل قط ولكنهما الان كانا يتجددان كما يحدث عند هبوب النسيم	Literal	2.5	ولما يزل به كثير من الامل وكثير من الثقة وكانما انعشتها في كيانه خطرة التسمات	Literal	2.5
.5	The mast was nearly as long as the one room of the shack. P. 45	كان حجم الصاري مساويا لحجم الكوخ المكون من حجره واحد	Literal	2.5	No Translation	Omission of simile	2.5

.6	His shirt had been patched so many times that it was like the sail 51	وقد قام بتريق قميصه عدة مرات حتى انه صار شبيها بالشراع	Literal	2.5	اما قميصه فقد تكاثرت عليك الرقع حتى شابه شراع زورقه	Literal	2.5
.7	Lions... they played like young cats... p. 61	كانت هذه الاسود تلعب مثل القطط الصغيرة	Literal	2.5	السياع التي تلهو على الشاطئ كما تلهو القطط	Literal	2.5
.8	Birds so delicate and fine as those sea swallows	تتسم الطيور بكل هذه الرقة والضعف مثل عصافير البحر	Literal	2.5	لماذا خلقت هذه الطيور الصغيره بهذه الرقة وهذا اللطف	Reduction of simile	2.5
.9	They spoke of her as a contestant or a place or even an enemy	يتحدثون عنه بوصفه منافسا او مكانا او حتى عدوا	Literal	2.5	يتحدثون عنه كمنافس او كمجرد مكان من الكون واحيانا كعدو خصيم	Literal	2.5
.10	The old man always thought of her as feminine. P.96	العجوز كان يفكر فيه دوما بصفتها انثى ...	Literal	2.5	اما العجوز فكان يتخيله دائما انثى ...	Literal	2.5
.11	Each line, as thick around as a big pencil. P.71	كل خيط والذي يتساوى سمكة مع سمك قلم رصاص كبير	Literal	2.5	وكان كل حبل من حبال الصيد يستدير في قامه القلم الرصاص	Literal	2.5
.12	The clouds over the land now rose like mountains	السحب التي تعلوا اليابسة الان مرتفعة كالجبال	Literal	2.5	بدت السحب فوق الارض كأنما هي جبال	Literal	2.5
.13	Portuguese man of war ... it floated cheerfully as a bubble	قنديل البحر ... كان يطفوا بسعادة كفقاعة	Literal	2.5	No translation	Omission of simile	2.5
.14	...the tiny fish that were coloured like the trailing filaments	الاسماك التي كانت بنفس لون الخيوط العائمة	Literal	2.5	No translation	Omission of simile	2.5
.15	Poisonings... struck like a whiplash	اللدغات السامة ... ويكون وقعها كالسوط	Literal	2.5	No translation	Omission of simile	2.5
.16	The tops of the blue hills that showed white as though they were snow-capped	قمم التلال الزرقاء التي ظهرت بيضاء وكانها مغطاة بالثلوج	Literal	2.5	No translation	Omission of simile	2.5
.17	the clouds that looked like high snow mountains above them. P.83	والسحب التي تعلوها والتي بدت كجبال الثلج	Literal	2.5	وكانت السحب تتجمع وقتئذ	Reduction of simile	2.5
.18	His tail which was sharp as a scythe...	ذيله والذي كان حادا كالمنجل	Literal	2.5	ذيله الصارم كحد السيف	replacement	2.5
.19	Her colour turned to a colour almost like the backing of mirrors. P. 97	حتى اصبح لونها مطابقا للون ظهر المرايا	Literal	2.5	No translation	Omission of simile	2.5
.20	...the cramped hand that was almost as stiff as rigor mortis. P.111	متصلية كالجسد الموشك على مفارقة الحياة	Literal	2.5	No Translation	Omission of simile	2.5
.21	He looked at the sky and saw the white cumulus built like friendly piles of ice creams	وراء ركام سحب النفاض الذي يشبه الاكوام الوندية للايس كريم	Literal	2.5	رأى اكداس السحب تتجمع كأنها تلال لذيذة من المتلجات	Replacement of image	2.5
.22	His sword (fish) was as long as a baseball bat and tapered like a rapier	كان سيفها يتساوى في طوله مع طول مضرب البيسبول وكان مستدقا كسيف المبارزة	Literal	2.5	اما رمحها فكان طويلا كمضرب الكره وقد استدق طرفه كالسيف	Literal	2.5
.23	His left hand was still as tight as the gripped claws of an eagle. P.119	وكانت يده لاتزال متصلية كمخالب نسر محكم الغلق	Literal	2.5	كانت يسراه لاتزال منقبضة كأنها مخالب نسر	Literal	2.5
.24	His purple pectoral fins set wide as wings... P.123	زعانفها الصدرية الارجوانية الميسوطة كالاجنحة	Literal	2.5	No translation	Omission of simile	2.5
.25	Can it be as painful as the spur of a fighting cock in one's hell?	هل يمكن ان يكون مؤلما مثل مهباز في كعب ديك يقاتل في مصارعة الديوك؟	Literal	2.5	اتراها تؤلم الم الديكة عندما تتصارع؟	Reduction of simile	2.5

.26	...continue to fight as the fighting cocks do. P.125	مواصلة القتال كما تفعل الديوك	Literal	2.5	الام الديكة حينما تتصارع وتقا عيونها ومع هذا تواصل المعركة	Retaining plus explicitation	2.5
.27	... I am as clear as the stars that are my brothers... P.139	ان تفكري صاف صفاء النجوم	Literal	2.5	ان فكري يلمع كالنجوم	Replacement with a different vehicle	2.5
.28	He saw him first as a dark shadow that took so long to pass. P. 159	راها في البداية كظل داكن استغرق فترة طويلة كي يمر	Literal	2.5	No translation	Omission of simile	2.5
.29	Fish's eye looked as detached as the mirrors in a periscope or as a saint in a procession P.169	وبدت عين السمكة منفصلة كالمرايا في منظار الافق او كقديس في موكب	Literal	2.5	اما عينيها فكانتا كعيني منظار بحري او كعيني راهب متبتل	Reduction of simile	2.5
.30	...fish...he was so big it was like lashing a much bigger skiff...	كانت ضخمة للغاية حتى انها كانت اشبه بقارب اخر اكبر مربوط بقاربه	Literal	2.5	No translation	Omission of simile	2.5
.31	They would sail as cleanly as possible	يستطيعان الابحار باسهل ما يمكن	Literal	2.5	وطاب سير الزورق في البحر	Reduction of simile	2.5
.32	...shrimps ...they jumped and kicked like sand fleas. 171	الجمبري... وقد ظلت تقفز وتضرب مثل براغيث الرمال	Literal	2.5	الجمبريات... جعلت تتواثب كحبات الرمل	Replacement with a different vehicle	2.5
.33	...shark built to swim as fast as the fastest fish in the sea	قرشا... احد اسرع المخلوقات في البحر	Replacement with a different vehicle	2.5	القرش... سريعا كاسرع سمكة في الماء	Literal	2.5
.34	teeth ...shaped like a man's fingers when they are crisped like claws.	الاسنان... حيث اتخذت شكل اصابع الانسان عندما تتجدد كالمخالب	Literal	2.5	اسنانه... كانت على شكل اصابع يدي الانسان حينما تنقبض فتصبح كالمخالب	Literal	2.5
.35	They were nearly as long as the fingers of the old man and they had razor-sharp cutting edges P.175	وكان طولها مساويا تقريبا لطول اصابع يد العجوز وكان لها حواف حادة كالشفرة	Literal	2.5	وكانت في طول اصابع العجوز وحدها قاطع كالموسى	Literal	2.5
.36	When the fish had been hit it was as though he himself were hit. P. 179	فيعد ان تعرضت السمكة للهجوم شعر وكأنه هو من تعرض للهجوم	Literal	2.5	No translation	Omission of simile	2.5
.37	But do you think my hands were as great a handicap as the bone spurs?181	ولكن هل تظن ان يدي كانتا تمثلان عقبة كالنتوء العظمي؟	Literal	2.5	ولكن هل يمكن ليدي ان تعوقني عن العمل كما يعوق نخس العظام قديمي لاعب البيسبول؟	Retaining plus explicitation	2.5
.38	Fishing kills me exactly as it keeps me alive. P.183	ان الصيد يقتلني تماما كما يبقيني على قيد الحياة	Literal	2.5	ان الصيد يقتلني كما انه مصدر حياتي	Retaining plus explicitation	2.5
.39	The fish now made a trail for all sharks as wide as a highway through the sea. P.191	السمكة تترك الان اثرا يساوي عرضه عرض طريق سريع لكل اسماك القرش عبر البحر	Literal	2.5	ادرك ان القروش قد مزقت لحم السمكة بحيث جعل الدم يتدفق منها ويصنع شريطا دمويا طويلا عريضا في المياه خليقا باجتذاب كل انواع القرش	Retaining plus explicitation	
.40	The shark that came was a single shovel-nose. he came like a pig to the trough if a pig had a mouth so wide... P. 193	القرش التالي الذي اتى كان من النوع الجاروفي. اتى كحيوان يتوجه الى المعلف ذلك لو كان هناك حيوان له فم واسع	Reduction of simile	2.5	وجاء قرش اخر وكان من نوع محدودب الانف كان شكله كالخنزير وحنكه كحمك الخنزير واسع	Literal	2.5

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Pedagogical Efficiency of Teacher-led Whole-class Scaffolding as a Pre-writing Task

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Abstract—Task-based language teaching (TBLT) can provide learners with more authentic communicative activities, particularly in foreign language context, where learners may experience few such opportunities. From the perspective of sociocultural theory (SCT), scaffolding is a process of supportive interaction that occurs when learners are communicating with each other. There are situations in which the mediation of the teacher as an expert is necessary in the scaffolding process to advance the learners' zone of proximal development. The present study sought to extend the scope of TBLT through SCT. More specifically, it was an attempt to investigate the effects of teacher-led whole-class scaffolding as pre-task on the writing proficiency of EFL learners. To this end, fifty Iranian female learners of English at intermediate level of general English proficiency took part in the study which was based on post-test only equivalent groups design. The participants were asked to evaluate some ELT textbooks based on a checklist and write a report respectively. The control group did not receive any pre-task activities; however, the experimental group participated in scaffolding as a pre-task. The results revealed that the trial of pre-task improved the writing performance in such areas as content, organization, grammar, and vocabulary.

Index Terms—sociocultural theory, task-based language teaching, pre-task, scaffolding, writing

I. INTRODUCTION

Tasks have been employed to make language teaching more communicative. Nevertheless, in contexts where few opportunities exist for experiencing authentic communication, like foreign language situations, tasks can be used to plan a communicative curriculum (Ellis, 2003, p.30). However, a basic practical concern is how to fit the tasks into the teaching cycle. Numerous approaches have been proposed in this regard; this variety may be partly due to the different definitions of a task. According to Widdowson (1998), the distinction between an exercise and a task is not 'form' versus 'meaning', but the 'type of meaning' is important. In other words, whereas a task deals with 'pragmatic meaning', an exercise is concerned with 'semantic meaning'. Another important point is the components of a task. As Wright (1987) claims, tasks are comprised of two principal elements: 'input data' and 'instructional questions'; however, Nunan (1989, p. 48) identifies three components including 'input', 'activities', and 'goals'. Ellis (2003) adds another element that is 'procedures'. Procedures concern the methodological options available to researchers and teachers for implementing tasks. Such procedures are independent of both the input and the conditions of the tasks. According to him (ibid), one of the current task-based research is to investigate the effects of various procedures on task performance. Thus, a framework for describing a task is necessary to both researchers and teachers since without which neither research nor teaching can be carried out efficiently.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A number of recent studies have focused on sociocultural theory (SCT) of mind, according to which all learning, including language learning, is socially constructed. Based on the Vygotskian account of language learning, when second or foreign language learners interact with other language users such as teachers, native speakers or other learners, they can perform such language functions which they are not able to do by themselves. They can internalize these functions by practicing and learning to perform them independently. This process involves "a progression from the inter-mental to intra-mental, as the learners shift from object and other regulation to self-regulation" (Ellis, 2003, p.24). Recently, this theoretical perspective has led to task-based studies that investigate 'scaffolding' and 'collaborative dialogue', that is the supportive interactions that arise when learners communicate with others (Aljafreh & Lantolf, 1994; Baleghizadeh, Memar & Memar, 2011; Barnard & Campbell, 2005; Donato, 1994; Hosseinpour & Biria, 2014; Nassaji & Cumming, 2000; Nassaji & Swain, 2000; Swain & Lapkin, 1998).

A primary means of mediation is verbal interaction which can be monologic or dialogic. Whereas both can serve to mediate learning, dialogic interaction is seen as central. "Dialogic interaction enables an expert, such as a teacher to create a context in which novices can participate actively in their own learning; meanwhile the expert can fine-tune the support that the novices are given" (Anton, 1999as cited in Panahi et.al, 2013). As Vygotsky (1987) puts it, new

elaborate psychological processes become available as a result of initial production of these processes in social interaction. Applied to language learning, this means that learners first manifest new linguistic forms and functions in interactions with others and subsequently internalize and use them independently.

Scaffolding is the “dialogic process by which one speaker assists another in performing a function that he or she cannot perform alone” (Ellis, 2003, p.180 as cited in Samana, 2013). Swain (2000, p. 102) uses the term ‘collaborative dialogue’ defined as dialogue in which speakers are engaged in problem solving and knowledge building. Another frequently used term ‘instructional conversation’ (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988) refers to pedagogic interaction that is teacher-led and directed toward a curricular goal, for example, enabling students to perform a structure that they have not yet internalized but is conversational in nature (Donato, 2000). According to Ellis (2000), where tasks result in scaffolding, collaboration, and instructional conversation, learners are expected to extend their knowledge of second or foreign language.

There are contradictory ideas about scaffolding. Some scholars believe that scaffolding is not dependent on the presence of an expert. It can also arise in interactions between learners. Dicamilla and Anton (1997) showed how learners make use of repetition to provide scaffolded help for each other. Ohta (1995) illustrated how learners scaffold each other’s contributions in a role-playing task. She also notes that in learner-learner interactions, the notions of novice and expert are ‘fluid conceptions’ that is the same learner can function as both expert and novice at different times in a conversation. In this regard, Dobao (2012), Hosseinpour and Biria (2014), and Shehadeh (2011) showed the efficiency of collaboration and scaffolded help in improving the writing quality of foreign language learners. However, as Swain and Lapkin (1998) have shown, peer mediation is not always effective; occasions can arise when ‘expert’ mediation is required. Lantolf (2000a) refers to a study by Platt and Troudi (1997) which showed how a teacher’s belief that peers rather than expert mediation was more effective in promoting learning had a negative effect when it came to certain content areas. Lantolf (2000a) goes on to comment that “while peer assistance is effective for learning every day functional language, it may not be as effective for development of academic language”. Definitely, there will be situations where the mediation provided by an ‘expert’ language user is required to negotiate a learner’s zone of proximal development (Ellis, 2003). On the other hand, teachers who are interested in SCT favor whole-class scaffolding since ‘the practical circumstances force most teachers to plan activities on the scale of class or groups’ (Mercer & Fisher, 1997, p.209). To overcome this problem, several techniques have been proposed including peer teaching (Guk & Kellog, 2007), collaborative learning (Donato, 1994; Hosseinpour & Biria, 2014; Shehadeh, 2012), simplifying a task through a template (Verity, 2005), and low-structured scaffolding (Balegizadeh et al., 2011).

In order to design a task-based lesson, one should consider the stages or components of a lesson including a task as its main part. Different designs have been recommended (Estaire & Zanon, 1994; Lee, 2000; Prabhu, 1987; Skehan, 1996; Willis, 1996). However, as Skehan (1996) states, they all have three common stages: pre-task, during task, and post-task. These phases reflect the chronology of a task-based lesson. Only ‘during task’ phase is obligatory in task-based lesson (Ellis, 2003). Although options of pre-task and post-task are non-obligatory, they can ensure the effectiveness of task performance.

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The function of pre-task is to make students ready to perform the task in ways that will enhance acquisition. Lee (2000) emphasizes the importance of “framing the task to be performed” and proposes that “one way of doing this is through providing an advanced organizer of what the students will be required to do and the nature of the outcomes to arrive at” (as cited in Ellis, 2009). Dornyei (2001) emphasizes the motivational aspect of presenting a task. Skehan (1996, p.25) proposes two options for the pre-task stage: “1) an emphasis on the general cognitive demands of the task, and 2) an emphasis on linguistic factors”. According to Ellis (2003, p. 245), these alternatives can be performed in any of the following ways: “1) supporting learners in performing a similar task to the one they will perform in ‘during task’ stage, 2) providing learners with a model of how to perform the task, 3) engaging learners in non-task activities designed to prepare them to perform the task, and 4) strategic planning of the main task performance”.

The present study aimed at increasing our understanding of the effects of pre-writing task on the writing performance of foreign language learners. In this way, it focused on goal-oriented academic writing which is one of the course requirements of most university programs not just the writing courses. Academic writing seems to be one of the challenges faced by Iranian learners of English as a foreign language. Therefore, inspired by SCT, this study made an attempt to find out whether teacher-led scaffolding as a pre-writing task would improve the writing performance of learners in terms of content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics of writing. The following research questions guided the study: 1) does teacher-led scaffolding as a pre-writing task help Iranian EFL learners to improve their writing performance? and 2) which components of the writing are improved through the performance of teacher-led scaffolding as a pre-writing task?

Based on the findings of previous research, it was hypothesized that mediation provided by the teacher as an expert would be effective in promoting the writing quality of the learners. It was expected that teacher-led scaffolding would decrease the content load of the task and increase the writing ability respectively.

IV. METHOD

This experimental classroom research was based on the pos-test only equivalent-groups design.

A. *Participants*

Fifty senior (i.e. fourth year) female students of TEFL took part in this study. Their age ranged from 22-28 years old. Persian was the language they spoke as their first language. Based on the results of oxford placement test, their level of general English proficiency was intermediate. They attended 'Textbook Evaluation' class which was one of the required courses to get their Bachelor degree in TEFL. They were randomly assigned to two groups, namely, the control and the experimental group.

B. *Materials*

The implemented materials consisted of five parts: 1) the OPT, 2) a textbook evaluation checklist, 3) two sets of ELT materials including the Interchange and the Headway series, 4) textbook evaluation reports, and 5) an analytic writing rubric. First, the OPT was applied to find out the general English proficiency of the students. Then, students in both groups were provided with the checklist for course book evaluation which was proposed by Ur (2012, p.200). Next, they were asked to evaluate and write a report based on a set of ELT textbook: the Headway was assigned to the control group and the Interchange to the experimental one. After that, a collection of fifty reports was collected through the post-test. Finally, the analytical writing scale prepared by Hedgcock and Leftkowitz (1992) was applied by two raters to score the reports. The scale was comprised of five components including 1) content, 2) organization, 3) grammar, 4) vocabulary, and 5) mechanics of writing. Four proficiency levels were described for each component: poor, fair, good, and excellent.

C. *Procedures*

The fifty TEFL students who had enrolled for the 'Textbook Evaluation' course were randomly assigned to the control and experimental groups that is there were twenty five people in each group. Participants in both groups were supposed to write an evaluative report (i.e. the main writing task) analyzing a set of ELT materials based on the evaluation checklist during the class time in one session. The control group received no pre-task activities; where, the students were supposed to evaluate the books and write their reports individually. The cycle of activity lasted for three hours in the control group. However, a teacher-led whole-class scaffolding activity was carried out as a pre-writing task in the experimental group that is the students were supposed to have a whole-class discussion of their findings which were the results of textbook evaluation. The discussion was led by the teacher as an expert, but it was mainly student-centered. In other words, the teacher took part in the discussion whenever the students failed to express their ideas or anytime they didn't do the activity correctly. More importantly, the focus was on the content not form. After the pre-task which lasted two hours, they were allowed to write down their reports based on what they had discussed. Regarding the extra time needed for the pre-task, the whole cycle of the activity took five hours. Finally, the reports collected through the main writing task were rated blindly by two raters based on the writing scale by Hedgcock and Leftkowitz (1992). The raters discussed and resolved disagreements and reached a high level of congruity after rating 10 reports; so that, the inter-rater reliability of .81 was obtained. Finally, a series of independent sample t-tests were applied to compare the two groups statistically.

V. RESULTS

In order to answer the research questions, a series of independent sample t-tests were carried out to compare the writing performance of the control and experimental groups based on the writing rubric which consisted of 5 components including content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics of writing. Table I shows descriptive statistics for both groups. Referring back to the writing scale, it became clear that considering the total score, the writing proficiency of the control group was generally at the 'fair' level ($M = 63.44$); however, the experimental group's performance was generally at 'good' level ($M = 76.88$). Taking a look at the mean scores of the components of writing, the results are as follows: the content of reports written by the control group was at 'fair' level ($M = 19.56$) which was lower than the experimental group ($M = 24.20$). This was also the case with the organization of writing that was at the 'fair' level for the control group ($M = 12.64$), but at the 'good' level for the experimental group ($M = 15.80$). However, it was a little different for grammar: the control group again was at 'fair' level ($M = 15.00$), but the experimental group was at 'average' level ($M = 17.64$). The range of vocabulary applied by the control group was at 'fair' level ($M = 12.72$), but the experimental group at 'good' level ($M = 15.48$).

TABLE I.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF BOTH GROUPS

	group	N	Mean	SD	SE
Content	CG	25	19.56	2.647	.529
	EG	25	24.20	4.010	.802
Organization	CG	25	12.64	2.307	.461
	EG	25	15.80	2.872	.574
Grammar	CG	25	15.00	4.282	.856
	EG	25	17.64	4.212	.842
Vocabulary	CG	25	12.72	2.638	.528
	EG	25	15.48	2.740	.548
Mechanics	CG	25	3.52	.510	.102
	EG	25	3.76	.597	.119
Total Score	CG	25	63.44	11.529	2.306
	EG	25	76.88	13.869	2.774

*CG: Control Group, EG: Experimental Group

On the contrary, the two groups were rather similar in their performance of mechanics of writing that is both the control group ($M = 3.52$) and the experimental one ($M = 3.76$) were at the 'average' level. In order to investigate the differences between the two groups, a series of independent t-tests were carried out, the results of which are represented in Table II.

TABLE II
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TESTS

		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	.980	.313	-4.828	48	.000	-4.640	.961	-6.572	-2.708
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.828	41.575	.000	-4.640	.961	-6.580	-2.700
Organization	Equal variances assumed	.950	.335	-4.289	48	.000	-3.160	.737	-4.642	-1.678
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.289	45.868	.000	-3.160	.737	-4.643	-1.677
Grammar	Equal variances assumed	1.245	.270	-2.198	48	.033	-2.640	1.201	-5.055	-.225
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.198	47.987	.033	-2.640	1.201	-5.055	-.225
Vocabulary	Equal variances assumed	.064	.801	-3.628	48	.001	-2.760	.761	-4.290	-1.230
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.628	47.931	.001	-2.760	.761	-4.290	-1.230
Mechanics	Equal variances assumed	.037	.848	-1.528	48	.133	-.240	.157	-.556	.076
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.528	46.849	.133	-.240	.157	-.556	.076
Total Score	Equal variances assumed	.216	.644	-3.726	48	.001	-13.440	3.607	-20.693	-6.187
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.726	46.449	.001	-13.440	3.607	-20.699	-6.181

The Levene's test indicated that the variances of scores for the two groups are assumed to be equal since the sig. value is larger than .05 for all components including content ($p = .313$), organization ($p = .335$), grammar ($p = .270$), vocabulary ($p = .801$), mechanics ($p = .848$), and the total score ($p = .644$); therefore equal variances are assumed in the interpretation of the findings. The results of independent t-tests revealed statistically significant differences between the two groups at .05 level of significance as follows: content ($p = .000$), organization ($p = .000$), grammar ($p = .033$), vocabulary ($p = .001$), and the total score ($p = .001$). However, the experimental group did not differ significantly regarding the mechanics of writing ($p = .13$). Based on the guidelines proposed by Cohen (1988, p. 284-7), the magnitude of the differences (i.e. Eta squared) was calculated to estimate the effect size. As Cohen (ibid) claims, if Eta squared equals or gets larger than .14, it will be considered as a large effect. The results indicated that the effect size considered to be large with regard to such aspects of writing as content (.32), organization (.27), vocabulary (.21), and the total score (.22), but not grammar (.09) which was regarded as a moderate effect size based on the Cohen's criteria (ibid).

VI. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Results showed that teacher-led whole-class scaffolding as pre-writing task had a significant effect on improving the writing quality of Iranian foreign language learners. More specifically, this activity had a larger effect on such aspects of writing as content, organization, and vocabulary in comparison with grammar. However, it does not seem to have any significant effects on mechanics of writing. In other words, the writing performance of the students in the experimental group was better than the control group because the former experienced scaffolding as a pre-writing task. That is the option of pre-task improved the effectiveness of task performance. Therefore, the findings approves Ellis (2003), Lee (2000), and Skehan (1996) who emphasize the importance of pre-task as a framing activity and propose that providing an advanced organizer of what the students will be required to do and familiarizing them with the nature of the outcomes to attain will improve the task performance.

The findings are therefore in line with the sociocultural theory of learning, which views language learning as socially constructed. More specifically, the results support the claims of Anton (1999), Ellis (2003), and Mercer and Fisher (1997) that dialogic interaction, in this case teacher-led whole-class scaffolding, assists the teacher to create a context in which learners can participate actively in their own learning, and the teacher as an expert can modify the support that learners contribute to. On the other hand, this study goes in for the suggestions proposed by Van Lier (1988) and Verrity (2005) that emphasized the importance of the students' centrality in scaffolding. In this regard, Baleghizadeh et al. (2011), and also Bernard and Campbell (2005) claimed that students should not be spoon-fed with too much hints. In other words, they should not be deprived of free exploration while performing a task; so that, the teacher do not need to provide the students with too many guides during writing activities. As it was explained before, in this research the participants were not provide with any hints during the writing task; so, the better writing performance of the participants in the experimental group can be attributed to the pre-task which was a whole-class teacher led scaffolding in which the students played the central role in the oral discussion of the content of their findings regarding textbook evaluation.

In conclusion, this study indicated the pedagogical efficiency of teacher-led whole-class scaffolding as a pre-writing task. Teachers can benefit from this technique in that they don't need to put a lot of energy and efforts to guide the students during the writing task by preparing the students with an advanced organizer of what they will be required to do. Definitely, this study was not without its limitations. The results were limited to the female students at the intermediate level of general language proficiency, and it just investigated a special form of scaffolding. Further studies in this regard may focus on other forms of scaffolding and compare them to find out the most effective activity. It is also possible to investigate how different components of writing are influenced by different forms of scaffolding as a pre-task. Another option is to test the efficiency of this technique in other contexts with students at lower or upper levels of general English proficiency. Finally, it is suggested to carry out a gender study to see if males are different from females in performing scaffolding or compare them with mixed gender groups.

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A Comparative Study of the Phonological Awareness of Pre-school Persian Monolingual and Turkish-Persian Bilingual Children

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Abstract—Phonological awareness refers to the ability to conjecture and maneuver the phonemic segments of speech. Given the weight of phonological awareness in budding literacy skills, it is vital to focus more on its possible differences among pre-school children to plan for training programs in kindergartens. To this end, two groups of 30 Turkish-Persian bilingual and Persian monolingual pre-school children were chosen to explore whether pre-school bilinguals have any advantage over the monolinguals in terms of phonological awareness. In doing so, Soleymani and Dastjerdi's Phonological Awareness Test (2002) was used. The independent samples t-tests revealed the advantage of pre-school Turkish-Persian over Persian monolingual children in some aspects of phonological awareness. The findings of the study may have implications for language education.

Index Terms—metalinguistic awareness, phonological awareness, bilingual children, literacy, phoneme

I. INTRODUCTION

The term “metalinguistic awareness”, according to Bialystok (1988), can be referred to as the knowledge, the ability, and the awareness in language development. Nagy and Anderson (1998) also define metalinguistic awareness as the ability to manipulate linguistic units and to reflect on structural properties of language. A topic of studies regarding metalinguistic awareness has been children's awareness of phonological units.

Phonological awareness, that is, the ability to manipulate and reflect on sound units (Bialystok 2001, 2002), is one of the four general types of metalinguistic ability which develops separately from and later than basic speaking and listening skills (Tunmer & Herriman, 1984; Tunmer, Herriman, & Nesdale, 1988). Tunmer and Herriman (1984) define phonological awareness as the ability to reflect on and manipulate the phonemic segments of speech. Phonological awareness can be measured by many different tasks such as recognition of rhyme, sound-to-word matching, isolating single sounds from words, blending, deleting phonemes, and other even more complex manipulations, like children's secret languages (Savin, 1972; Mann, 1991, as cited in Stahl & Murray, 1994).

The individual ability to attend the phonological or sound structure of language has been shown to be closely related to the development of literacy and may foster acquisition of literacy skills particularly reading skills (Bradley & Bryant, 1983; Bryant & Goswami, 1987). Decoding in the early grades is critically important for children. Evidence show that children who do not have a successful start in learning to read cannot become proficient readers (Frances, Shaywitz, Stuebing, Shaywitz, & Fletcher, 1996; Stewart, 2004) since knowledge of grapheme-phoneme correspondences is closely related to the acquisition of basic reading skills (Backman, Bruck, Hebert, & Seidenberg, 1984; Manis & Morrison, 1985). As Stanovich (1986) points out, even small differences in reading ability at early ages often develop into very large differences in literacy skills and academic achievement. Given the importance of phonological awareness in developing literacy skills, it is crucial to pay further attention to its possible differences among preschool children to plan for training programs in kindergartens.

Vygotsky (1962) proposed that one of the factors that may facilitate children's metalinguistic development is bilingualism (See also Clark, 1978; Slobin, 1978). Since then, research has explored this idea. According to Bialystok, Majumder, and Martin (2003), the results of the studies have been mixed, but the majority of studies have reported an advantage for bilingual children (Bialystok et al., 2003). If such an advantage could be found for phonological awareness, it would contribute to deeper understanding of metalinguistic ability, early literacy, and bilingual influences on cognitive development.

II. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

To date, the comparison of the phonological awareness between bilingual and monolingual children has been a subject of a number of studies. Several studies (Bialystok, 2001; Bialystok, 2002; Verhoeven, 2007, for example) show that the phonological processing of bilingual children is different from that of monolingual children and that bilingual children are assumed to develop higher levels of phonological awareness. Research has also shown the bilingual advantages over monolinguals in different tasks regarding phonological awareness (Rubin & Turner, 1989; Yelland et al., 1993; Campbell & Sais, 1995). However, null and even negative bilingual effects have also been reported (Chiappe & Siegel, 1999; Bialystok et al., 2003)

Rubin and Turner (1989) compared the phonological awareness of English-speaking first-grade children in English programs to those in French immersion programs. The results showed that minimally bilingual children in the immersion group performed better than children in the English program.

Yelland et al. (1993) studied English children who had limited exposure to Italian at the early stages of bilingualism in kindergarten and Grade 1. Children made judgments of the sound structure of words by determining whether simple pictures depicted an object that had a long name or a short name. For bilinguals, they found an initial advantage that disappeared by the end of Grade 1. Further, the bilinguals showed an advantage over monolinguals in word recognition in Grade 1.

In a longitudinal study from kindergarten to first grade, Bruck and Genesee (1995) compared monolingual English-speaking children with children attending French schools on a variety of tasks. They conclude that bilingualism has selective rather than universal effects on the development of phonological awareness.

Campbell and Sais (1995) compared 5-year-old bilingual and monolingual children on several phonological tasks, namely, detecting a mismatch in the initial sound of a set of words, detecting a mismatch in meaning, deleting morphemes from words, and identifying letters. Bilingual children showed advantage over the monolinguals on the first three tasks but the two groups were the same on the letter identification task.

In another study, Chiappe and Siegel (1999) used phoneme deletion and substitution tasks. The results of their study revealed no significant difference between English-speaking monolingual children and Punjabi–English bilingual children.

Mumtaz and Humphreys (2001) tested the phonological awareness skills of bilingual Urdu–English and monolingual English 7-year-old children. They found that bilingual children had superior phonological awareness compared to monolingual ones.

However, according to Yopp (1988), performance on some measures of phonological awareness such as those which were used in the reviewed studies (e.g. odd-one-out, deletion, substitution, phoneme-reversal, and letter identification tasks) may place heavy demands on working memory and may be influenced by, or depend on skills that are acquired as a result of learning to read; thus, affecting the results of the studies. In addition, as Bialystok et al. (2003) point out, in order to show that there is a bilingual advantage in the development of phonological awareness, the generality of the claim needs to be assured. In other words, when identifying the effects of bilingualism on phonological awareness all kinds of issues such as language-specific effects, participants' variables, and task variations must be addressed. For instance, if bilinguals who speak different languages perform differently from each other, the source of variation may be language-specific and not bilingualism or if different tasks produce between group differences, it cannot be concluded that there is necessarily an advantage to being bilingual but rather that there is an interaction between bilingualism and specific tasks.

For such reasons, Bialystok et al. (2003) attempted to limit the generalizability of claims which relate bilingualism to the development of phonological awareness by isolating the role of bilingualism in children's development of phonological awareness through cross-sectional designs which examined monolingual and bilingual children at three points in literacy acquisition between kindergarten and Grade 2. The first study showed that monolingual and bilingual children performed equally on a complex task requiring phoneme substitution. The second study indicated the same results and also demonstrated a significant role for the language of literacy instruction. The third study showed that Spanish–English bilinguals performed better than English-speaking monolinguals on a phoneme segmentation task, but Chinese–English bilinguals performed worse. Other measures of phonological awareness did not differ among the three groups. Only a phoneme segmentation task was able to separate the groups, but no general facilitation of bilingualism was found.

Finally, Canbay (2011) compared a pre-school Turkish–English bilingual child, an age-matched monolingual Turkish child, and a monolingual English child in terms of phonological awareness. Word recognition task based on initial phoneme identification was used to test the phonological awareness of children. The results revealed that the bilingual child had an advantage over his/her monolingual peers. A problem with this study is that in order to assess the phonological awareness of bilingual and monolingual pre-school children only one kind of task, word recognition through the initial phoneme, was used. Another problem is the limited number of participants, that is, only one in each group.

As the review of literature reveals, research on the effect of bilingualism on phonological awareness has yielded mixed results so far. The research findings appear to be influenced by the nature of the languages being studied, the participants' variables, and the types of the tasks (Bialystok et al., 2003). Variations in the tasks, procedures, and materials used to measure phonological awareness have resulted in differing estimates of the level of phonological awareness in children at different ages (Tunmer & Rohl, 1991). In addition, according to Soleymani and Dastjerdi (2005), most phonological awareness tests such as Bruce's (1964), North and Parker's (1993), Shirazi's (1996), Bernnan and Ireson's (1997), and

Kashani's (1997) are inappropriate for preschool children since they impose extraneous operations and require some skills that depend on or are influenced by the reading skills. Consequently, it seems that further research is required in order to make more specific predictions about any advantage of bilingualism in phonological awareness since no consensus has been reached yet.

As such, this study aimed at comparing the preschool Turkish-Persian bilingual children and Persian monolingual children in terms of phonological awareness to explore whether there is any difference between bilingual and monolingual children.

III. THE STUDY

A. Research Question and Hypothesis

Based on what mentioned before, the research attempts to find answer to the following question:

-- Do Turkish-Persian bilingual preschool children demonstrate any advantages in phonological awareness over their Persian monolingual peers?

To provide more objective answer to the above question, the following hypothesis was constructed to be tested out:

-- Turkish-Persian bilingual pre-school children demonstrate no advantages in phonological awareness over their Persian monolingual peers.

B. Participants

The participants of this study were 30 Persian monolingual and 30 Turkish-Persian bilingual pre-school children from different kindergartens in Iran. In order to make a sound comparison and also to control any possible effects of gender and age on the results of the study, only 5-6 year old female participants were chosen based on availability sampling. Furthermore, the participants' records in the kindergartens were examined carefully to make certain that they matched in terms of general intelligence, family background, and socioeconomic status and also to ensure that there were not any cases of impairment or hearing loss among children.

C. Instrumentation

In order to assess the phonological awareness of bilingual and monolingual pre-school children in this study, Soleymani and Dastjerdi's Phonological Awareness Test (2002) was used (see Appendix A). This is a visual test containing 10 subtests each of which assesses one area of phonological awareness, namely, syllable segmentation, alliteration recognition, rhyme recognition, phoneme combination, recognition of words with the same initial phoneme, recognition of words with the same final phoneme, phoneme segmentation, final phoneme naming and deletion, middle phoneme deletion, and initial phoneme naming and deletion. Each subtest consists of 10 items. Each item contains a number of pictures depending on the purpose of the subtest (Appendix A).

Validity and Reliability of the test have been confirmed by Soleymani and Dastjerdi (2005). Reliability is reported 0.84 to 0.96 for the subscales of the test. Validity of the test was estimated through calculating correlation coefficients between the test scores and other standard tests and the coefficients 0.56 and 0.60 were obtained (Soleymani & Dastjerdi, 2005).

This test shows a number of advantages over other available ones: First, it is less boring and more comprehensible for preschool children and also does not require reading skills because of being visual. Second, it covers almost all areas of phonological awareness. Third, it is arranged based on age groups and has clear manual for administration and scoring (Soleymani & Dastjerdi, 2005).

D. Procedure

As Carroll (2008) states, phonological awareness is not an all-or-nothing event; that is, there is a sequence in the development of phonological awareness: an awareness of syllables, onsets, and rhymes typically develops before an awareness of phonemes (Goswami & Bryant, 1990). Soleymani and Dastjerdi (2002, 2005) also mention that for different age groups, specific subtests are more appropriate. According to the authors, ANOVA and Tukey test confirm the ability of the test to differentiate between age groups. Therefore, based on the test manual, for the participants' age group, i.e., 5-6 years old, only subtests 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 are applicable (Appendix A provides examples of items in each subtest):

Subtest 2: alliteration recognition: The child shows two pictures which have the same initial syllable.

Subtest 3: rhyme recognition: The child shows two pictures which rhyme the same.

Subtest 4: phoneme combination: The examiner says each phoneme separately for each picture; the child shows the matching pictures.

Subtest 5: recognition of words with the same initial phoneme: The child shows two pictures with the same initial phoneme.

Subtest 6: recognition of words with the same final phoneme: The child shows two pictures with the same final phoneme.

For each subtest, first, each participant was guided through guiding pictures, then s/he took the main test. For each individual, taking the test took about 30 minutes. The participants' performance was later recorded on the test score sheet; each correct item added 1 mark to the individual's total score. Then, the total score and the score of each subtest were determined for each group. Recorded data were then analyzed by means of SPSS16. Independent samples t-tests were

used to compare the two groups in terms of their phonological awareness.

IV. RESULTS

The purpose of the study was to compare the phonological awareness of pre-school Turkish-Persian bilingual with that of Persian monolingual children. Independent samples t-tests were used to analyze the data taken from Turkish-Persian bilingual and Persian monolingual pre-school groups. The SPSS software used for analyzing independent samples t-tests produced a pair of tables: one table in which group statistics is displayed that compares the means, standard deviation, and standard error of the mean of each group in a particular subtest and the other table in which the variances and mean scores of two independent groups in each subtests are compared. For the ease of comparison in the tables, the subtests of alliteration recognition, rhyme recognition, phoneme combination, recognition of words with the same initial phoneme, and recognition of words with the same final phoneme from Soleymani and Dastjerdi's Phonological Awareness Test (2002) were labeled 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, respectively. Tables 1 and 2 present the results of the data analysis.

TABLE 1
GROUP STATISTICS

Subtests	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
2	Turkish-Persian	30	8.40	1.070	.195
	Persian monolingual	30	8.23	.728	.133
3	Turkish-Persian	30	8.40	.675	.123
	Persian monolingual	30	8.27	.785	.143
4	Turkish-Persian	30	9.93	.254	.046
	Persian monolingual	30	9.47	.571	.104
5	Turkish-Persian	30	9.47	.571	.104
	Persian monolingual	30	9.30	.535	.098
6	Turkish-Persian	30	8.37	.556	.102
	Persian monolingual	30	8.17	.699	.128

Table 1 compares the performances of 30 Turkish-Persian bilinguals and 30 Persian monolingual pre-school children in the phonological awareness subtests. This table shows that every mean score of Turkish-Persian bilingual group is greater than that of the Persian monolingual group in each subtest of phonological awareness. More accurately, the bilingual group's mean scores in all the phonological awareness subtests are greater than the mean scores of the monolingual group.

In order to measure whether the differences in the means of the two groups are significant and to test out the research hypothesis, the statistical analyses of independent samples t-tests are required. Table 2, which is the tabular form of statistical analyses of independent samples t-tests, compares the equality of the variances and mean scores of the two independent groups to reveal the significance of their differences.

TABLE 2
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TESTS: COMPARISONS OF THE EQUALITY OF VARIANCES AND MEAN SCORES

Subtests		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
2	Equal variances assumed	6.882	.011	.705	58	.483	.167	.236	-.306	.640
	Equal variances not assumed			.705	51.109	.484	.167	.236	-.308	.641
3	Equal variances assumed	.217	.643	.706	58	.483	.133	.189	-.245	.512
	Equal variances not assumed			.706	56.720	.483	.133	.189	-.245	.512
4	Equal variances assumed	62.283	.000	4.089	58	.000	.467	.114	.238	.695
	Equal variances not assumed			4.089	40.009	.000	.467	.114	.236	.697
5	Equal variances assumed	1.432	.236	1.166	58	.248	.167	.143	-.119	.453
	Equal variances not assumed			1.166	57.751	.248	.167	.143	-.119	.453
6	Equal variances assumed	.337	.564	1.227	58	.225	.200	.163	-.126	.526
	Equal variances not assumed			1.227	55.210	.225	.200	.163	-.127	.527

In Table 2, regarding Levene's test, the observed p-value for the second subtest is .011 ($p < 0.05$), so we can reject the null of Levene's test and conclude that the variance in phonological awareness of Turkish-Persian bilinguals is

significantly different from that of Persian monolingual pre-school children. The observed p-values for the third, fifth, and sixth subtests are .643, .236, and .564 ($p > 0.05$), respectively; therefore, the variances in phonological awareness of Turkish-Persian bilinguals are not significantly different from that of Persian monolingual pre-school children. In the fourth subtest, $p < 0.001$ shows the significant difference between Turkish-Persian and Persian pre-school children in phonological awareness.

Just the p-value of t-test in the fourth phonological awareness subtest is less than $\alpha = 0.05$ ($p < 0.05$) and the p-values of t-test in the phonological awareness subtests of 2, 3, 5, and 6 are $p > 0.05$; thus, there is statistically significant difference between the two means only in the fourth phonological awareness subtest.

V. DISCUSSION

The results of the analysis revealed that Turkish-Persian preschool children outperformed in phonological awareness subtests of 2 and 4. Subtest 2 relates to the alliteration recognition in which the child is showed two pictures, which have the same initial syllable. Subtest 4 deals with the phoneme combination test, in which the examiner says each phoneme separately for each picture then the child shows the matching picture. The performance of the two groups was not statistically significant in the subtests of rhyme recognition (3), recognition of words with the same initial phoneme (5), and recognition of words with the same final phoneme (6); hence, the participants performed approximately indistinguishable in these three subtests of phonological awareness. The possible explanation for the difference in the performance of the two groups may be the linguistic background knowledge of bilingual participants who can comprehend and produce at least two languages.

The findings of the present study are in the same line with the findings of Bialystok (2001; 2002), and Verhoeven (2007) and indicate that the phonological processing of bilingual children is different from that of monolingual children and the bilingual children are presumed to build up higher levels of phonological awareness. The present study may confirm their findings that bilingual children take advantage of higher levels of phonological awareness regarding the alliteration recognition and phoneme combination in comparison with their monolingual counterparts.

Findings of the present study support the results of some previous studies (Rubin & Turner, 1989; Bruck & Genesee, 1995; Campbell & Sais, 1995; Canbay, 2011), which have compared phonological awareness in monolinguals and bilinguals and reported the superiority of bilinguals over monolinguals concerning phonological awareness. It seems literally acceptable that bilingualism may smooth the progress of children's metalinguistic development especially their phonological awareness (Vygotsky, 1962; Clark, 1978; Slobin, 1978).

However, the results of the present study are contrary to the findings of Chiappe and Siegel (1999) and Bialystok et al. (2003). Chiappe and Siegel (1999) divulged no significant difference in phonological awareness between English-speaking monolingual children and Punjabi-English bilingual children. The possible explanation for such differences in the findings can be due to the differences in the contexts of these studies, the instruments and tasks used to obtain data, and the nature and kind of the bilingual language of the participants (i.e. Chinese, French, Turkish, or Hindi as the second language of the bilingual group may be influential in the findings of previous studies). Bialystok et al. (2003) reported negative effects of bilingualism on phonological awareness and concluded that different groups of children assessed by different tasks could demonstrate no clear and consistent effect of bilingualism on the acquisition of phonological awareness.

Although the present study showed the advantage of pre-school bilinguals over monolinguals concerning phonological awareness, it should not be overestimated because pre-school bilingual children revealed more phonological awareness than their monolingual counterparts only in the alliteration recognition and phoneme combination subtests and approximately all the participants performed equally in the other phonological awareness subtests. It is assumed that bilinguals process language in higher levels than monolinguals (Bialystok, 2001; 2002; Verhoeven, 2007) that can be mentioned as one of the reasons for the differences in the phonological awareness of them.

Phonological awareness is a complex process that may be influenced by various elements; for instance, the use of different tests or tasks, or the similarities and differences between the two languages may affect participants' phonological processing in the language being studied (Tunmer & Rohl, 1991). Since the outcomes of the studies conducted on phonological awareness of bilinguals and monolinguals have been muddled up, as Bialystok et al. (2003) indicate, the generalizability of claims relating bilingualism to the development of phonological awareness needs to be limited and literacy instruction needs to be more individualized depending on linguistic background. However, further research is called for to examine more varied groups of pre-school children to screen more variables that sway phonological processing.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The literature on phonological awareness (Bradley & Bryant, 1985; Lundberg, Frost, & Petersen, 1988; Stewart, 2004) suggests that phonological awareness plays a strong role in the development of literacy skills and even small differences in phonological awareness skills may lead to great difficulties in later reading and writing development. As Tunmer & Rohl (1991) state, phonological awareness training can help the development of subsequent reading and spelling skills when it is given in kindergarten before reading and writing instruction begins. Since the findings of this study revealed

the advantage of Turkish-Persian bilingual pre-school children over their Persian monolingual counterparts in some aspects of phonological awareness such as alliteration recognition and phoneme combination, phonological awareness training should be an integral part of preschool programs for monolinguals in order to prepare them for achieving higher levels of phonological processing to be able to sharpen their literacy skills.

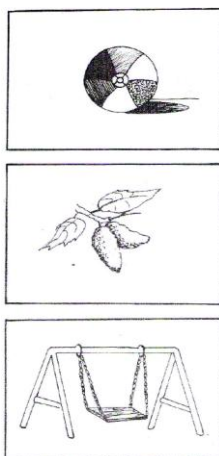
The findings of the study may have implications for children/language learners, parents, teachers, teacher trainers, teacher training programs, and task designers. The findings make children/language learners and their parents more familiar with the factors that can influence the phonological success. The individual's capability to concentrate on the phonological or sound structure of language has been revealed to be directly pertinent to the escalation of literacy and may promote acquisition of literacy skills and academic achievement (Bradley & Bryant, 1983; Stanovich, 1986; Bryant & Goswami, 1987); hence, by knowing children's phonological abilities and disabilities, teachers, teacher trainers, task designers, and teacher training programs can find ways of preparing students for achieving higher levels of phonological processing. By having more phonologically aware children, the probability of having successful language learners will be enhanced.

Research on the effects of bilingualism on phonological awareness has capitulated varied results so far (e.g. Chiappe & Siegel, 1999; Bialystok et al., 2003). Furthermore, the research findings seem to be swayed by the nature of the languages being studied and the types of tasks or tests used. Therefore, it comes into sight that further research is needed in order to make more specific predictions about any advantage of bilingualism in phonological awareness since no concurrence has been achieved yet.

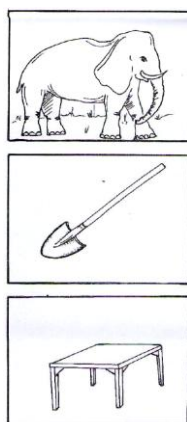
APPENDIX

Samples of the Items in *Soleymani and Dastjerdi Phonological Awareness Test (2002)*

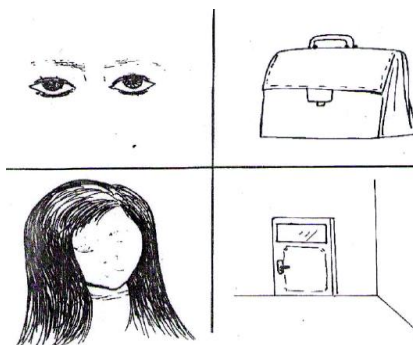
Subtest 2: alliteration recognition: The child shows two pictures which have the same initial syllable.



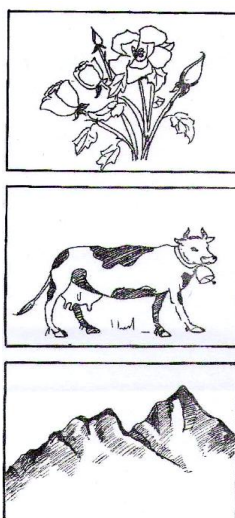
Subtest 3: rhyme recognition: The child shows two pictures which rhyme.



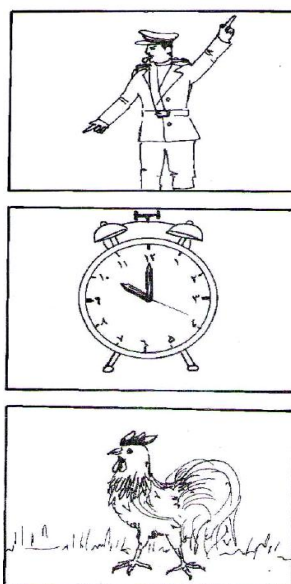
Subtest 4: phoneme combination: The examiner says each phoneme separately for each picture; the child shows the matching picture.



Subtest 5: recognition of words with the same initial phoneme: The child shows two pictures with the same initial phoneme.



Subtest6: recognition of words with the same final phoneme: The child shows two pictures with the same final phoneme.



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Structural Complexity and Saliency in Interpretation of Familiar Metaphors

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Abstract—Metaphors are argued as being a sub-species of analogy. Processing of metaphor interpretation, on the other hand, is postulated as being based on *structure mapping*. A principle underlying this proposition that raises question is *systematicity* which regulates that “alignments that form deeply interconnected structures, in which higher order relations constrain lower order relations, are preferred”. The current research investigates the empirical basis of this proposition which implicates that interpretations of familiar metaphors that have a higher level of complexity and consistent with the base domains receive priority treatment and are thus predicted by the Graded Saliency Hypothesis to result in faster speed of processing. Interpretations of metaphors were gathered through a survey and two interpretations for each metaphor were selected and prepared as experiment lexical targets; one representing targets with more complex relational structure and the other representing targets having less complex structure. A lexical decision task experiment was conducted to test reaction time by three groups of subjects to these targets after each corresponding metaphor was presented on a computer screen. Results showed that mean reaction time for targets with more complex underlying relational structure was fastest with 450.83ms (SD = 60.588) compared to less complex targets and unrelated targets. A one-way between subjects ANOVA showed significance in differences of mean times among the three categories. A post hoc Holm analysis showed that mean RT for the more complex targets was significantly different from the less complex targets at $p < .05$. We conclude that maximally consistent structures are the basis of metaphor processing. It is also a factor motivating saliency of certain interpretations among alternative interpretations of familiar metaphors.

Index Terms—structure mapping, systematicity, familiar metaphors, Graded Saliency Hypothesis, relational structure

I. INTRODUCTION

Metaphors have been theorized as mapping of conceptual components (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980), alignments of structural relations (Gentner, 1983), and category-inclusion statements (Glucksberg and Keysar, 2003), among others. *Structure-mapping theory* (Gentner, 1983, Gentner and Bowdle, 2001) is an effective account of how the metaphorical process works. The strength of this theory is that it explains a central element in the interaction between domains in a metaphor, namely, the interaction between conceptual systems (Gentner and Bowdle, 2001, p. 226). The theory follows the principle of *systematicity* which implicates that among alternative interpretations of metaphors, those which reflect maximal structural consistency (“maximal structurally consistent match”) are preferred.

There has been no well-established empirical basis for Gentner and Bowdle’s claim of the systematicity principle. Nevertheless, Gentner’s (1983) and Gentner and Bowdle’s (2001) theory remains a useful tool for further investigations into mental processing of metaphors. The current research aims to study the empirical basis of the theory for metaphors that are categorically familiar. The rationale for this is that structure mapping theory seems more appropriate in explaining processing of novel metaphors than familiar metaphors. This is because the theory looks at metaphors in terms of domain comparison through a two-stage process of *alignment* and *projection*. It seems quite unlikely for same stages of processing to take place in interpretation of familiar metaphors. The current study implements an experimental method to find out whether or not the systematicity principle is relevant in interpretation familiar metaphors.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In response to the intensely growing metaphor research at the time, Gentner and Bowdle (2001) expressed the need to go back to the question of how metaphors are processed in the human mind. They state that,

“Indeed, it has recently been claimed that metaphors may be the primary ... mechanism for reasoning with abstract concepts- metaphors allow us to structure vague or ambiguous ideas in terms of more concrete realms of experience (e.g., Gibbs, 1994; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Lakoff & Turner, 1989). Given such claims, the question of how metaphors are processed has taken a central place in the cognitive sciences” (p. 223-224).

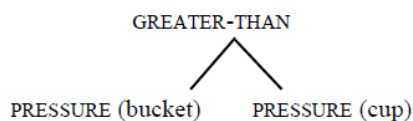
In a previous work, Gentner (1983) posits that metaphors are essentially a sub-species of analogy, involving a process of matching structures between two conceptual systems, during which links are subsequently aligned by way of analogical connectivity. Gentner and Bowdle (2001, p. 226) postulates metaphor processing as being based on what they refer to as *structure mapping*, i.e., the highlighting of existing systematic structural commonality between domains. This principle rules out the possibility of mapping of random aspects between the base and target domains.

One aspect of Gentner dan Bowdle’s (2001) proposition that raises question is the notion of systematicity which regulates that “alignments that form deeply interconnected structures, in which higher order relations constrain lower order relations, are preferred”. This principle implicates that among alternative interpretations of metaphors, those which reflect maximal structural consistency or a “maximal structurally consistent match” (Fallkenhainer, Forbus, & Gentner 1989) are prioritized over less consistent ones. Interpretations that have both higher level of complexity and consistency with the base domain receive priority treatment during processing, resulting in faster speed of processing predicted by the Graded Salience Hypothesis (Giora 1997).

In order to test the validity of this proposition, there are several reasons why it is appropriate to resort to Giora’s (2003) notion of *graded salience*. First, Giora (2003) maintains that, “lexical access mechanism is ordered: more salient meanings...are accessed faster than and reach sufficient levels of activation before less salient ones” (2003: 43). Secondly, in supporting her proposition, Giora (1997) also makes use of findings by researchers in the area of literal meaning processing, particularly metaphors. Thirdly, in suggesting the usefulness of the lexical decision experiment method for studying the mental representation of language, Hason and Giora (2007) make mention of research on metaphor processing, i.e., Blasko and Connine’s (1993) study which implemented lexical decision experiment as a method to find out how quickly people responded to metaphoric meaning in comparison to literal meaning of metaphor expressions and also to determine which existing models of metaphor processing can empirically hold. Apart from referring to other researchers using the lexical decision task, Giora et al. (2005) had also implemented the same method in an investigation aiming at modeling linguistic representation.

Based on the above reasoning, this research implements the lexical decision experimental method to test whether the principle of systematicity holds in metaphor interpretation. In order to do this, it is necessary to have a well grounded principle to determine degree of structural complexity underlying the interpretations.

The analysis used to determine degree of complexity of relational structures is based on the notion that system of relations can be understood as structural properties or interrelationships between facts (Falkenhaner, Forbus and Gentner, 1989), i.e., as a propositional statement, e.g. “Pressure in the bucket is greater than pressure in the cup” can be expressed as GREATER-THAN (PRESSURE (bucket), PRESSURE (cup)) or as a tree diagram shown below. This is with the exception that propositional statements which only contain a predicate, therefore being attributive in nature, cannot be represented diagrammatically in tree form.



Gentner (1983) identified types of relational structures based on their degree of complexity. Type 1 are structures in which the predicate structure expresses attributes, e.g. LARGE (X). Type 2 are structures in which the predicate structure expresses relations, e.g. COLLIDE (X, Y). While Type 3 are structures in which the predicate structure expresses *higher-order* relations, e.g. CAUSE [COLLIDE(X, Y), STRIKE (Y, Z)].

To determine the degree of complexity of relational structure between a metaphor and a particular interpretation, an analysis of conditional necessity and sufficiency (necessary and sufficient conditions) is implemented. Fine (2002, p. 254) mentions a variety of necessities by saying that,

“There are the necessary truths of logic, mathematics and metaphysics, the necessary connections among events in the natural world, the necessary or unconditional principles of ethics, and many other forms of necessary truth or connection”.

The philosophical notion above corresponds with Jackendoff’s (1987) *mentalist postulate* that, “meaning in natural language is an information structure that is mentally encoded by human beings” (p. 122). Saeed (2003) explains this position as “meaning of a sentence is a conceptual structure” (p. 266). The notion to exemplify this principle is *necessary semantic entailment* as shown in the following example.

George killed the dragon
The dragon died.

From an entailment point of view, the above expressions can be taken to relate two events:

x killed y entails y died.

Jackendoff (1987) argues that there is a semantic element underwriting this statement namely:

x cause E to occur (E=event)

This is applicable to other statements:

- 1) He lifted the cup. x cause the cup to rise
- 2) Alex persuaded John that that the blue car is better. y came to believe that the blue car is better.

Therefore, through semantic decomposition analysis, entailment relations can be seen in lexical items, as in the case of the words “kill”, “raise”, and “persuade” which all possess underlying entailment relations bound by causation relationship.

To analyze these relations, the following steps are implemented:

1. Define the propositional meaning of the metaphor.
2. Analyze any existing antecedent or consequent underlying the concept
3. Determine whether existing antecedent or consequence is structurally componential in the meaning of the interpretation based on necessary and sufficient condition analysis.

e.g.

	Necessary	Sufficient
A died	: A not alive (necessary)	caused by event (not necessarily)
X killed Y	: Y not alive (necessary)	caused A (necessarily)

III. EXPERIMENT

A. Method

The aim is to investigate the whether the reading of familiar metaphors facilitate faster retrieval of higher-order (more complex relational structure) related targets than retrieval of lower-order (less complex relational structure) related targets by implementing a lexical decision task (LDT). For this purpose, unrelated targets are used as control, namely, words which are semantically unrelated to the metaphor.

The LDT is used to verify that the prediction of the theory that the reaction time for non words and unrelated targets should be higher, meaning that it takes more time for individuals to make their decisions because they still need to access the words (unrelated words). Faster reaction time in making the correct decision in this case signifies that certain relevant features had already been preaccessed when subjects listened to and read the familiar metaphor (priming effect). A difference in reaction time between words shows the effect of priming by related metaphor expressions.

Giora argued (2003) that access to information, including lexical meanings, is dominated by salience; the mechanism of retrieval of lexical information (lexical access) operates in an ordered manner, causing meanings that are foremost to be accessed faster as compared to less salient meanings (Graded Salience Hypothesis). Lexical access is viewed as “reaching sufficient levels of activation”. The procedure goes that after a prestimulus momentarily appear on the screen, a few moments later the stimuli appears. For this, subjects had been instructed to respond, deciding whether that string is a word in their language or not. For example, in the experiment by Meyer and Schvaneveldt (1971) subjects were on average faster in giving response that *butter* is a word (in English) when it was preceded by the word *bread* than when it was preceded by the word *nurse*.

	Prestimuli	Stimuli	Correct Response	Mean RT
Group A:	bread	butter	“yes”	300ms
Group B:	nurse	butter	“yes”	750ms

As a hypothetical example, subjects are predicted to respond slower to *butter* after having read *knife* than having read *bread*, but faster than having read *nurse*.

e.g.

Group C:	knife	butter	“yes”	500ms
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The difference in response times is accounted to the likelihood that lexical access of BUTTER occurred during prestimulus. When the subject was reading *bread* the concept *butter* and *knife* were automatically accessed. However, although related, *knife* was less salient to the interpretation of the concept, indicating the prevailing networking arrangement between concepts in the mind. In contrast, it took more time to access *nurse* because of an absence of conceptual relatedness with *butter*.

B. Norming Survey (Preparation of Metaphor Interpretations as Experiment Targets)

Twenty two Metaphors were collected from magazines (targeted for adult readership, adult female-specific readership, and younger age group readership). The survey involved 77 native Indonesian respondents, ages ranging between 20 and 50 years old. A survey of familiarity was conducted with the result showing all metaphors qualified as “familiar” (>5.5 on a scale of 1-7).

In the survey, respondents were also asked to give their interpretation of the metaphor by answering using a maximum of four words. The interpretations were gathered and dominant interpretations can be determined. For example, for the metaphor *Bisnis salon menjamur* ‘Salon business “mushrooms”’, the three most dominant interpretations were *membanyak* ‘increase in quantity’, *berkembang* ‘develop’, and *menyebar* ‘spread’.

TABLE 1:
METAPHOR INTERPRETATIONS GATHERED THROUGH SURVEY

Data	Interpretation	Glos	Freq.	%
1	<i>membanyak</i>	increase in quantity	25	32.47
2	<i>berkembang</i>	develop	23	29.87
3	<i>menyebar</i>	spread	14	18.18
4	<i>meledak</i>	explode	4	5.20
5	<i>menyeluruh</i>	comprehensive	4	5.20
6	<i>menjalar</i>	to vine	3	3.90
7	<i>tidak beroperasi</i>	not operating	2	2.60
8	<i>bercabang</i>	branch out	2	2.60

C. Degree of Complexity of Interpretations

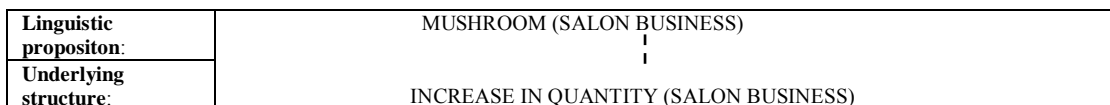
As mentioned earlier degrees of complexity can be determined by analysis of necessary and sufficient conditions which corresponds to the principle of necessary semantic entailment (Jackendoff (1987). In the sentence Salon business mushrooms, for example, “increase in quantity” was one of the dominant interpretations (32.47%). Its propositional expression is INCREASE IN QUANTITY (Salon Business). In this case, the interpretation INCREASE IN QUANTITY (Salon business) does not unambiguously entail a particular consequent or antecedent (see analysis below).

Context: Salon business “mushrooms”.

Interpretation (1): INCREASE IN QUANTITY (SALON BUSINESS)

Antecedents/consequence: Possible antecedents: 1) Static area: the number of salons increases but occupying a static area; 2) Increasing quantity: the number of salons increases occupying a larger area.

Conclusion: Ambiguous antecedents and not necessary



Another relatively dominant interpretation gathered was SPREAD (18.18%). The metaphorical interaction of domains is TO SPREAD IS TO MUSHROOM. The interpretation can be expressed propositionally as SPREAD (SALON BUSINESS).

Multiplication of unbounded entities logically entails SPREAD. It is an understood knowledge when a person gives the interpretation INCREASE IN QUANTITY. This meaning component is considered a necessary substructure of the interpretation’s schema.

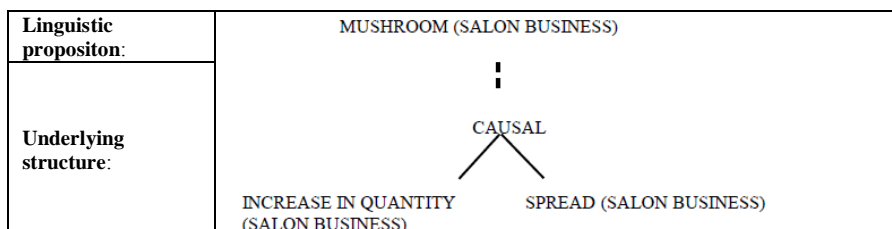
Context: Salon business “mushrooms”.

Interpretation (2): SPREAD (SALON BUSINESS)

Antecedents/Consequences: Since salon business is a bounded entity, therefore in order to spread it must multiply.

Conclusion: INCREASE IN QUANTITY is an antecedent of SPREAD.

Type of Relation: CAUSAL



Based on the above analysis, it is concluded that the interpretation “spread” is of a higher degree of structural complexity compared to the interpretation “increase in quantity”.

The sentence *Bisnis salon menjamur* does not explicitly present an X IS Y statement. Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) model of mapping is implemented to bring out the relevant interacting of domains. For the interpretation “increase in quantity” (32.47%), the mapping is TO INCREASE IN QUANTITY IS TO MUSHROOM. The interpretation can be expressed propositionally as INCREASE IN QUANTITY (SALON BUSINESS).

Based on this method of analysis, among dominant interpretations, two interpretations can be prepared that represent the independent variable in the experiment, namely, complexity which vary in degree. Accordingly, the two types of experimental targets are:

- 1) Lexical Targets (metaphor interpretations) having more complex relational structure
 - 2) Lexical Targets (metaphor interpretations) having less complex relational structure.
- Unrelated targets were prepared as the experiment control.

TABLE 2:
METAPHORS AND EXPERIMENT TARGETS

METAPHORS		TARGETS		
		UNRELATED	HIGHER ORDER	LOWER ORDER
M1	<i>Bisnis salon menjamur</i> 'Salon businesses "mushroom"'	<i>bernyanyi</i> 'sing'	<i>menyebarkan</i> 'spread'	<i>membanyak</i> 'increase quantity'
M2	<i>Ia mengejar impian itu</i> 'She "chases" her dream'	<i>saudara mereka</i> 'their relative'	<i>berusaha keras</i> 'endeavor'	<i>memperoleh</i> 'obtain'
M3	<i>Bencana mencabut nyawa</i> 'Disaster "plucks" life'	<i>kemeja</i> 'shirt'	<i>mengeluarkan</i> 'take out'	<i>mengakhiri</i> 'end'
M4	<i>Dia menggali bakatnya</i> 'She "digs" her talent'	<i>memandikan</i> 'to shower'	<i>mengeluarkan</i> 'take out'	<i>memunculkan</i> 'uncover'
M5	<i>Mereka kebanjiran pesanan</i> 'They are flooded with orders'	<i>melemparkan</i> 'throw'	<i>kelebihan</i> 'overload'	<i>sangat banyak</i> 'plenty'
M6	<i>Modernisasi dan tradisi sering berbenturan</i> 'Modernization and tradition often collide'	<i>peristiwa</i> 'event'	<i>bertabrakan</i> 'crash'	<i>bertentangan</i> 'contradict'
M7	<i>Dia melaju ke final</i> 'She advances to the finals'	<i>tidak menulis</i> 'not write'	<i>tidak terhalang</i> 'unobstructed'	<i>tidak berhenti</i> 'not stop'
M8	<i>Kasus investasi menimpa ratusan orang</i> 'Investment case descends on hundreds of people'	<i>tunggu</i> 'wait'	<i>jatuh ke</i> 'fall'	<i>kena</i> 'hit'
M9	<i>Komentar dari publik berdatangan</i> 'Comments from the public are "arriving"'	<i>selimut</i> 'blanket'	<i>bermunculan</i> 'emerging'	<i>menuju</i> 'directed'
M10	<i>Menonton drama membuat kita terhanyut.</i> 'Watching drama make us drowned'	<i>bola lampu mati</i> 'dead bulb'	<i>tidak bisa menahan</i> 'could not withhold'	<i>terbawa perasaan</i> 'carried by emotion'
M11	<i>Persiapan mereka MATANG sebelum liburan.</i> 'Their preparation was "ripe" before the break'	<i>tukar tambah</i> 'trade in'	<i>sangat siap</i> 'very ready'	<i>sangat baik</i> 'very good'
M12	<i>Tampilan layar smartphone ini tajam</i> 'This smartphone's screen display is sharp'.	<i>pikiran</i> 'thought'	<i>jelas</i> 'clear'	<i>bagus</i> 'good'
M13	<i>Dia adalah seorang bintang</i> 'She is a star'	<i>kemampuan</i> 'ability'	<i>menonjol</i> 'salient'	<i>menarik</i> 'attractive'
M14	<i>Dia bekerja dengan pikiran jernih</i> 'She works with a "water-clear" mind'	<i>kuat</i> 'strong'	<i>jelas</i> 'clear'	<i>bersih</i> 'clean'
M15	<i>Dia tulang punggung keluarga</i> 'He is the backbone of the family'.	<i>bersyukur saja</i> 'just thankful'	<i>pemikul beban</i> 'burden bearer'	<i>sumber utama</i> 'main source'
M16	<i>Sikap Positif tertanam</i> 'Positive attitude is "planted"'. .	<i>temani</i> 'accompany'	<i>sudah masuk</i> 'already entered'	<i>di dalam</i> 'inside'
M17	<i>Pak Andin menutup pembicaraan</i> 'Mr. Andin closed the discussion'.	<i>tidak mengenal</i> 'not recognize'	<i>sudah selesai</i> 'already over'	<i>tidak terbuka</i> 'not open'
M18	<i>Dia terserang penyakit</i> 'She is "attacked" by disease'.	<i>main</i> 'play'	<i>kalah</i> 'defeat'	<i>terkena</i> 'contracted'
M19	<i>Hal itu tercermin dalam semboyan bangsa</i> 'That idea is "mirrored" in the nation's motto'	<i>mengoleskan</i> 'rub'	<i>dipantulkan</i> 'reflected'	<i>digambarkan</i> 'illustrate'
M20	Targets for <i>Tarian daerah mengandung arti</i> 'Local dance "contains" meaning'	<i>menggoreng</i> 'fry'	<i>memiliki</i> 'possess'	<i>di dalam</i> 'inside'
M21	<i>Tarian daerah mengandung arti</i> 'Local dance "contains" meaning'.	<i>meja belajar</i> 'study desk'	<i>tidak bisa lepas</i> 'inseparable'	<i>menjadi bagian</i> 'be part of'
M22	<i>Kebiasaan itu melekat pada kita</i> 'The custom is "affixed" to us'.	<i>bukan kesalahan</i> 'not a mistake'	<i>tidak nampak lagi</i> 'no longer seen'	<i>tidak ada</i> 'not exist'

In order for content of the task to be consistent with the instructions given to the subjects, a number metaphors were included which were followed by nonwords (see example below) comprising to approximately one third of the whole task. Related and unrelated targets are distributed relatively evenly across Group A, B and C.

e.g.,

Metaphor

Dia membantah ada dana mengalir kepadanya.
He denied there were funds "flowing" to him.

Nonword Target

menafii

Dia berupaya menjauhkan pikiran itu.
He tried to distant the thought.

kamulz

D. Materials

The experiment was conducted in the Language and Multimedia Laboratory at the Methodist University of Indonesia. The lab facilitated Acer Aspire Z1650 all-in-one computers and headsets suitable and necessary for the experiment. The experiment used 15 sets of computers to allow for better control of the running of the experiment. The computers were installed with psycholinguistics experimentation program. Specially marked keyboards were used for the computers, with the "L" marked with green color and the "M" marked with red color.

E. Participants

Ninety students from 2nd, 4th and 6th semester English Major Students at the Methodist University of Indonesia participated. This is considered sufficient as the basic aim is to produce a description of the pattern of semantic processing, in which individuals are predicted to have insignificant degrees of differences in the semantic networking of concepts (Edwards, 1960).

Following the micro-cosmos principle of universality, a relatively small sample size is considered adequate in a study of semantics such as the current research. In a study by Newman et al. (2009) at Indiana University, examining the influence of lexical processing on sentence comprehension processing, 17 people from the university community took part as subjects. In the study, Newman et al. concluded that facilitation of lexical access facilitated sentence comprehension. A native speaker is considered to have to have a representation of the system of the language in his mind. Furthermore, it is common to involve university students as subjects in psycholinguistic experimentations (Edwards, 1960). Thibodeau and Boroditsky (2011) as well as Blasko and Connine (1993) used university students as subjects in experimental semantics research.

F. Procedure

The experiment was run for 3-12 subjects at a time in order to ensure a well controlled operation. This allowed the subjects to be properly prepared in terms of information about what the experiment was going to be like. For the 12 computers used during each run, 4 computers were installed with Group-A targets, 4 with Group-B targets and the other 4 with Group-C targets.

A separate test set was prepared to be used in a practice run so that subjects can be fully oriented with the task. They were informed that the experiment is conducted for the purpose of studying word meaning and that it lasts approximately 20. The instructions were that, "1) a sentence will appear on the screen for a few seconds and that simultaneously they will hear the exact sentence on the headphones; 2) after the sentence disappear from the screen, a few seconds later a word or a phrase will appear on the screen; 3) decide if the word is a real word in or not; 4) to response, press either the red key for *no* or the green key for *yes*".

Subjects were all asked to repeat the practice set once. This was to ensure that they were comfortable with the procedure and have no confusion about which button to press to give their response.

G. Design

The results were analyzed using a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to evaluate the significance of differences. The significance of the different mean times above can be assessed by an single-factor ANOVA analysis using Microsoft Excel Data Analysis. A post hoc Holm test is carried out for pair wise comparison of the settings.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The fastest mean reaction time (RT) was for higher-order targets (more complex relational structures) with 452.97ms (SD = 61.22). Next was the mean RT for lower-order targets (less complex relational structures) with 498.11ms (SD = 76.29). While unrelated targets had the slowest mean RT with 548.55ms (SD = 87.923) (see Figure 1).



Figure 1: Mean reaction times for experiment targets

A one-way between subjects analysis of variance (ANOVA) showed a significance in differences of mean times among the three categories at the $p < .01$ level for the three conditions [$F(2, 63) = 7.74, p = 0.001$]. The post hoc comparisons using the Holm Analysis showed that mean RT for higher-order targets was significantly different from lower-order targets (Group B targets vs C targets) at $p < .05$.

Among the metaphors tested, there were 14 metaphors in which higher-order relations (more complex relational structures) were fastest while there were 2 others in which higher-order relations were not the fastest among the targets, but were faster than lower-order relations (less complex relational structures). Mean RT for higher-order targets was significantly faster than mean RT for lower-order ones. Overall, 16 out of the 22 metaphors (73%) had faster RTs for higher-order relations compared to lower-order relations.

Giora (2003) suggests that in metaphor comprehension, saliency plays a dominant role in the initial access and subsequent selection of relevant information and that saliency can be measured in terms of relatively faster RT's in a

lexical decision setting. Hasson and Giora (2007) argue that comprehension begins with initial activation of lexical information. Based on this, access to information, including lexical meanings, is dominated by salience. According to the graded salience hypothesis, the mechanism of retrieval of lexical information (lexical access) operates in an ordered manner, causing meanings that are foremost to be accessed faster as compared to less salient meanings.

The speed of lexical access can be explained as shorter time needed for a meaning to reach sufficient levels of activation. In contrast, less salient information takes more time to access or may not even be activated at all. Giora (2003) maintains that salient interpretations of metaphors are more likely to be activated while less salient meanings have less likelihood of activation. Giora (2003) explains that one of the factors why certain meanings are foremost in the mind allowing them to reach activation levels faster than other meanings, is the prototypical effect.

The fact that higher-order targets are accessed faster than lower-order targets during metaphor meaning processing indicates that the interpretation of familiar metaphors are grounded on relational structure, particularly more complex ones.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The research provides empirical evidence that for familiar metaphors, interpretations that have more complex underlying relational structures are accessed faster than less complex ones. Interpretation of familiar metaphors therefore is grounded on maximally consistent structures. We conclude that complexity of relational structures is a significant factor in the saliency of interpretations of familiar metaphor as more complex structures are processed faster.

Despite the effectiveness of structure mapping theory in explaining metaphor processing, it remains a question whether familiar metaphors have any need to go through the sequential processes of alignment and projection on the basis of the fact that meaning of familiar metaphors is unlikely to remain permanently based on comparison of conceptual domains. There is a possibility that it may, at some point, become an independent schematic concept, ruling out the need for domain comparison.

Having empirically demonstrated that more maximally consistent structures are prioritized over less complex ones, an alternative explanation to Gentner and Bowdle's (2001) sequential stages of alignment and projection is needed to account for the faster processing of structurally more complex relations in familiar metaphor interpretation.

APPENDIX

TABLE:
REACTION TIME COMPARISON FOR DIFFERENT TARGETS

	REACTION TIME (ms)		
	UNRELATED	HIGHER-ORDER	LOWER-ORDER
1	488.61	486.53	575.05
2	622.60	446.57	575.82
3	515.16	529.88	506.58
4	678.18	436.63	545.95
5	553.05	447.46	407.61
6	438.55	425.91	553.47
7	570.24	629.63	600.27
8	467.40	506.06	478.09
9	413.05	471.00	494.00
10	576.84	583.72	565.78
11	686.85	372.25	357.25
12	472.58	358.91	405.53
13	415.14	401.52	632.09
14	481.21	333.82	374.36
15	671.21	382.38	498.14
16	506.77	465.89	521.00
17	646.90	476.36	519.61
18	484.55	461.27	514.26
19	551.29	459.67	587.39
20	691.80	413.92	462.35
21	552.46	439.84	577.79
22	576.56	508.46	482.68
M:	548.23	456.26	510.69
SD:	88.49	69.73	74.42

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Attributions for Success and Failure: Gender and Language Proficiency Differences among Iranian EFL Learners

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Abstract—The study examined the attributions of Iranian English language learners for their successes and failures in learning English as foreign language and to determine the relationship between learners' gender and attributions. Moreover, the relationship between their proficiency level and attributions was investigated. To this end, the Attribution Theory for Foreign Language Learners Questionnaire (ATFLL) was administered to 200 English language students studying in different private language institutes of Kerman and Mashhad, Iran. A theoretical framework adopted from Weiner (1986) was applied to categorize students' responses based on attributions (ability, effort, task difficulty and luck). To analyze the data, SPSS 22.0 was employed. The results of the study indicated that learners attributed their success and failure to both internal and external factors but giving more priority to external factors. Furthermore, it was revealed that there were significant relationships between learner's gender, proficiency level and attributions.

Index Terms—attribution theory, ATFLL questionnaire, gender difference, proficiency level

I. INTRODUCTION

Attribution theory as a topic in social psychology is a relatively renewed notion and has attracted the attention of a lot of researchers in different disciplines, ranging from sports psychology to first and second language education. One area in naïve psychology that specifically deals with the causes of success and failure is attribution theory. Weiner (1979) said, "Attributions are the perceived causes that individuals select or construct for events in their lives. A basic assumption of attribution theory is that a person's understanding of the causes of past events influences his future actions". Weiner (1986) as the initial developer of attribution theory believed that the main factors impacting attributions are ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck (Graham, 1991).

Attribution Theory contends that in general, students attempt to defend their motivation or use a self-protective bias by explaining away failing regarding external and uncontrollable factors including bad luck or maybe weak teaching or maybe internally as a result of their own deficiency effort. Concurrently, they make an effort to sustain a good self-image or maybe self-enhancement by attributing accomplishment for their own hard work and ability. Hence, these learners able to activate the self-enhancement and self-protective biases effectively as well as they will be more hands-on, more chronic along with self-directed even facing duplicated failing. On the other hand, poor achievers ascribe success to external factors such as luck and failure to lack of ability. These kinds of learners presume failure and inadequate success and persuade themselves that more attempt will be ineffective because they do not think they have the essential characteristics to succeed (Smith, 2012). It also seems that the process of attribution is at the heart of crucial innovations occurring within the educational systems and the way learners tend to learn the immediate material, therefore, it needs to be studied thoroughly in order to inform any further changes that might be useful and needed. Afterwards, the impact of internal and external factors in the EFL context of attribution should be investigated through more researches because for the EFL learners, internal as well as external factors become the major source of hindrance or improvement in the process of attribution.

In the present study, the researcher aimed at finding out to what Iranian EFL learners attribute their success and failures. Besides, the role of gender and proficiency level was considered to see whether they could be influential factors.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Attribution theory is the internal along with external explanations connected with what exactly is taking place at the rear of your own as well as other people's behaviors. This specific concept deals with "why" and "whats" that people understand the events, judge and act on them (Manusov & Spitzberg, 2008).

Heider (1958) was the initial to offer a psychological theory of attribution. He introduced the "Naive Psychology", he assumed that people behave on the basis of their thinking. As a result, thinking must be considered in the event that psychologists have been to be able to be the cause of man behavior. This will be accurate whether the thinking were logical or definitely not. Heider (1958) also recommended that you may find out quite a lot through psychology. This individual considered that people are naive psychologists seeking to sound right on the social earth. People have a tendency to discover cause as well as effect associations actually in which there is probably none.

According to Weiner (1986) in school accomplishments scientific studies the particular four almost all mentioned causes are ability, effort, task difficulty and luck (Weiner, 1986). Weiner's causal construction possesses three dimensions, such as locus of cause, stability of cause and controllability of cause. By means of locus of cause he intended if it is internal or external. As an example, ability is an internal cause. The second dimension of Weiner's causal structure is stability of the cause. For example, in the event that intelligence is recognized to become fixed, it is a stable cause. However, if intelligence is usually thought to be growing based on considered to be increasing on the basis of learner's knowledge, it is really an unstable cause. The final dimension is controllability. By way of example, luck is definitely an uncontrollable factor, even though effort is a controllable cause (Pishghadam and Motakef, 2011). According to Oxford (2002) attribution theory is significant, even so, it has not been researched adequately within the domain of language learning (Pishghadam, Fatemi and asghari, 2012).

Williams, Burden and also Al-Baharna (2001) investigated learners' attributions of achievement and also failure within learning English by means of displaying the role of attribution inside learners' motivation along with cultural history (Pishghadam, Fatemi and asghari, 2012). Williams, Burden, Poulet and Maun (2004) suggested that some factors such as gender, age and perceived success can be influential in ascribing success and failure to attributions. Takahashi (2003) focused on the relationship between reading proficiency level of university students and their attribution. In this way, Peacock (2010) tried out to analyze the connection among attribution, proficiency, gender, and academic discipline. Furthermore, Wu (2011) researched students' attribution preferences and also gender difference throughout learning English. Involving these kinds of scientific studies Pishghadam and Modarresi (2008) created and validated a questionnaire named ATFL to look into the particular factors English language learners attribute their achievements and breakdowns to (Pishghadam, Fatemi and asghari, 2012). The study exhibited that college students largely attributed their own successes along with failures throughout language learning to intrinsic motivation and language policy Pishghadam and Motakef (2011) used ATFL questionnaire to examine the attributions of high school students with different majors. The results showed that university students from different majors attributed their successes and failures to different factors. In the same year, Pishghadam and Zabihi (2011) investigated the role of attributional dimensions and causal attributions in learners' English language successes and failures. They illustrated that effort and stable attribution have an important role in predicting students' achievements. In the same vein, Burden, Poulet and Maun (2004) found that the larger part of attributions for both success and failure were considered internal. Additionally, Hassaskhah, and Vahabi (2010) believed that effort was the most cited reason for failure in language finding out.

In educational psychology, considerable awareness has been offered to the learner's attributions with regards to their achievements and failures, on the other hand, little study have been carried out in the area of foreign language learning (Williams, Burden, Poulet, & Maun, 2004).

Having reviewed the literature, the researchers realized the importance of attributional factors in language learning among EFL learners. Thus, this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

Q1: What do Iranian EFL learners attribute their language successes and failures to?

Q2: Are there any significant differences between attributional responses of Iranian EFL learners with regard to gender?

Q3: Are there any significant differences between attributional responses of Iranian EFL learners with regard to proficiency level?

III. METHODOLOGY

A. *Participants*

Participants were 200 language learners studying at different private language institutes in Kerman and Mashhad, Iran. They were both males and females with the age ranging from 17-32 and their language proficiency varied from elementary to advanced level. , 127 of whom were female and 73 male

B. *Instrumentation*

Theory for Foreign Language Learners Questionnaire (ATFL) designed and validated by Pishghadam and Modarresi (2008), was used to measure students' attributions. Thorough this questionnaire, questions analyze four factors: ability, effort, luck, and task difficulty that suggested by Weiner (1974) because four units of attributions. This particular 30-item list of questions is in the 5-point Likert-type scale using "strongly agree" at one conclude and "strongly disagree" at the other and it is in Persian language. The reliability for this questionnaire was 0.84 as it was reported.

C. Procedure

The above mentioned questionnaire distributed among EFL learners during class hours by prior arrangement with the instructors. It took about 10 to 15 minutes for the respondents to complete the questionnaire.

The data were analyzed utilizing SPSS software 22.0. They were calculated and interpreted in terms of descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation and standard error of mean). To examine the relationship between learners' proficiency level, gender and attributions, Independent Sample Test was employed.

D. Analytical Framework

The analytical framework chosen for this study was that of Weiner (1979). He believed that ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck are the most important attributions which can be classified as internal and external.

TABLE 2.
ATTRIBUTIONS

Internal	External
Ability	Task difficulty
Effort	Luck

The above scheme (Table 3.2) was adopted from Weiner (1979) to categorize the students' responses from the questionnaire.

IV. RESULTS

As mentioned, ATFL questionnaire was used to explore the factors to which EFL learners attribute their failures and successes in learning English. The differences in means and standard deviations for external and internal attributions are reported in Table 3.

TABLE 3.
EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL ATTRIBUTIONS

Variables	Mean	Maximum	Minimum	Std. Deviation
External	3.48	4.29	2.53	0.33
Internal	2.84	4.38	1.85	0.52

The finding demonstrated a significant difference between internal and external attributions among students without regarding their level and gender-.

TABLE 4. 15
DIFFERENCES IN ATTRIBUTIONS

Variables	Mean	Maximum	Minimum	Std. Deviation
Ability	3.64	4.86	2.71	0.4
Effort	3.36	3.4	1.9	0.42
Task difficulty	2.67	4.6	1.4	0.63
Luck	2.29	4.63	1.75	0.62

Moreover, the above Table (4. 15) revealed the differences in means and standard deviations for subdivisions (ability, effort, task difficulty and luck) of internal and external attributions. It was shown that students attributed their success and failure more often to ability ($M = 3.64$) and less often to luck ($M = 2.29$).

In order to answer the second research question, an Independent Sample Test was computed to examine the relationship between gender and attributions.

TABLE 4. 7
GENDER AND ATTRIBUTIONS

	Gender	N	Mean	Std.Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Ability	Male	73	3.7965	.37185	.04352
	Female	127	3.5523	.38993	.03460
Effort	Male	73	3.4082	.46120	.05398
	Female	127	3.3331	.37986	.03371
Task difficulty	Male	73	2.6466	.61057	.07146
	Female	127	2.6913	.64378	.05713
Luck	Male	73	3.1147	.52653	.06163
	Female	127	3.8553	.65964	.05853

Group statistics

INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST

		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std.Error Ddifference	%95 Confidence Interval of the Ddifference	
								Lower		Upper
Ability	Equal variances assumed	1.718	.191	4.335	198	.000	.2442	.05632	.13311	.35524
	Equal variances not assumed			4.392	156.135	.000	.2442	.05560	.13435	.35400
Effort	Equal variances assumed	2.923	.089	198	1.244	.215	.0751	.06041	-.04398	.19428
	Equal variances not assumed			127.978	1.181	.240	.0751	.06364	-.05077	.20107
Task difficulty	Equal variances assumed	.614	.434	-482	198	.630	-.0448	.09281	-.22779	.1382
	Equal variances not assumed			-489	156.826	.625	-.0448	.09149	-.22547	.13595
Luck	Equal variances assumed	5.955	.016	2.874	198	.004	.2594	.09027	.08140	.4374
	Equal variances not assumed			3.052	177.813	.003	.2594	.08499	.09168	.42714

Table 4.7 highlights the results of t-test that there is a significant difference in scores for males (M= 3.7, SD= 0.37) and females (M= 3.5, SD= 0.38); (p = 0.00 < 0.05) in ability; moreover, there is a significant relationship between males (M= 3.1, SD= 0.52) and females (M= 3.8, SD= 0.65); (p = 0.003 < 0.05) with regard to luck.

However, the above Table depicts that there is no significant difference in scores for males (M= 3.4, SD= 0.46) and females (M= 3.3, SD= 0.37); (p = 0.215 > 0.05) with respect to effort. In the same way, a significant relationship (p = 0.630 > 0.05) between gender (males (M= 2.6, SD= 0.71) and females (M= 2.6 SD= 0.57)) and task difficulty was illustrated.

Another interest of this study was to determine if there were any significant relationships between the level of proficiency and attributions. For this aim, Independent Sample Test was applied.

TABLE 4.11
PROFICIENCY LEVEL AND ATTRIBUTIONS

	Level	N	Mean	Std.Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Effort	Elementary	101	3.2901	.47990	.04775
	Advanced	99	3.4323	.31488	.03165
Ability	Elementary	101	3.5262	.34813	.03464
	Advanced	99	3.7590	.41707	.04192
Task difficulty	Elementary	101	2.5267	.60115	.05982
	Advanced	99	2.8263	.62704	.06302
Luck	Elementary	101	2.9121	.41666	.04146
	Advanced	99	2.9886	.78411	.07881

Group statistics

INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Ddifference	%95 Confidence Interval of the Ddifference	
								Lower		Upper
Effort	Equal variances assumed	23.724	.000	-2.473	198	.014	-.1422	.05752	-.25565	-.02880
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.483	173.066	.014	-.1422	.05729	-.25529	-.02915
Ability	Equal variances assumed	1.451	.230	-4.290	198	.000	-.2329	.05428	-.33989	-.12581
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.282	190.494	.000	-.2329	.05438	-.34011	-.12559
Task difficulty	Equal variances assumed	.251	.617	-3.449	198	.001	-.2995	.08685	-.47080	-.12826
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.447	197.236	.001	-.2995	.08689	-.47088	-.12818
Luck	Equal variances assumed	55.944	.000	-.864	198	.389	-.0765	.08855	-.25112	.09811
	Equal variances not assumed			-.859	148.600	.392	-.0765	.08905	-.25247	.09945

The above Table (4.11) reveals a significant difference between elementary students (M= 3.2, SD= 0.47) and advanced students (M= 3.4, SD= 0.31); (p = 0.014 < 0.05) in effort. Similarly, it shows that there is a significant relationship (p = 0.000 < 0.05) between ability and the proficiency level of students (elementary students (M = 3.5, SD = 0.34) and advanced students (M = 3.7, SD = 0.41)). Additionally, the results demonstrates a significant relationship (p

= 0.001 < 0.05) between the proficiency level of students (elementary (M= 2.52, SD = 0.60) and advanced (M= 2.82, SD = 0.63)) and task difficulty.

On the contrary, there was no significant relationships ($p = 0.392 > 0.05$) between students' proficiency level (elementary (M = 2.91, SD = 0.41) and advanced (M = 2.98, SD = 0.78)) and luck as an external attribution.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

As previously mentioned, Weiner's framework (1974) (ability, effort, luck, and task difficulty) was implemented in this study. Considering the manipulation of the data, the researcher came up with different results and findings. Apparently, the finding demonstrated a significant difference between internal and external attributions among students without regarding their proficiency level and gender. In other words, EFL students attribute their achievements to external more than internal factors in the process of learning English. Additionally, it is suggested that regarding the attribution sub-constructs or regarding attributions in separate (ability, effort, task difficulty and luck), students attributed their success and failure more often to ability (M = 3.64) and less often to luck (M = 2.29). In this manner, William and Burden (1999) conducted a qualitative analysis to obtain the main factors of learners' attributions, how various people assemble different factors to attribute their achievements and failures to (Fatemi and Asghari 2012). They presented that students attributed their success to external factors more than internal attributions. Additionally, they suggested that attribution regarding success and failure can be impacted by individual's age, social interactions, contexts, feelings, and environment (Fatemi and Asghari 2012). Mynatt and Doherty (2002), and Ushioda (2001) reported that people attribute their bad performances to external attributions and good performances to internal factors. Boruchovitch (2004) claimed that students attribute their success and failure to ability more than other attributions.

The results revealed that there were significant differences between males and females in ability as an internal attribution and luck as an external attribution. It seems that male students attribute their success and failure to ability more than female students. In other words, females attribute their success and failures to luck more than male learners. In similar way, Felder, Felder, Mauney, Hamrin and Dietz (1995) believed that men are more likely to attribute their success and failure to ability than women. Beyer (1998, 1999) found that males ascribed their successes to ability more than females. Sweeney, Moreland and Gruber (1982) highlighted that females attributed their failures to external attributions, while males ascribed to internal attributions. Nevertheless, some other researchers point to the fact that there are no significant differences between male and female learners in their attributions for their achievements (Travis, Phillippi & Henley, 1991; Hyde, 2005; Wu, 2011; Pishghadam & Motakef, 2011)

According to the third research question, there is a meaningful relationship between proficiency level and attributions. Elementary students attributed their achievements to ability, effort and task difficulty less than advanced student while, there was no significant difference between learners' proficiency level and luck as an external attribution. This means that the learners attributed part of their success to their proficiency level which is highly influenced by factors such as trying hard, and their inner ability as well as how difficult the immediate exam is. The results confirmed some other researches. According to Adiba (2004), students with high level of proficiency attributed their good and bad performances to ability and effort as internal attributions and students with low level of proficiency attributed their achievements to task difficulty and luck as external attributions. In a study carried out by Edwin and Talif (1990), it was shown that there is a significant relationship between proficiency level of students and their attributions. Peacock (2010) conducted a research which showed a close correlation between proficiency level, gender and attribution. On the contrary, Yilmaz (2012) investigated that there is no meaningful correlation between the learners' proficiency levels and their perceived attributions in general.

Applying the findings of this study and other studies in this area, some consciousness-raising programs can be designed to make learners as well as teachers more aware of the potential influence the internal as well as external factors may have on their life style in general and their language achievements in particular. The results are also essential for teachers as the ones who carry over the perspectives of English in an EFL context. This means that teachers who are carrying the responsibility of teaching and providing the needed input, should be aware of other surrounding factors (internal and external) which directly and indirectly put the learning process and the students' achievements under influence. It can be claimed that if they get to know the attribution difference between boys and girls as their students, it can have pedagogical implication in that teacher's awareness of this difference can help them treat both sexes accordingly (Tulu, 2008). Moreover, the findings of this study could be of great benefit for ministry of education as well as all those who have a role in providing the foundation and basis for teaching and learning English as a foreign language. They can think of developing ways and contexts in which the negative boundaries to learning and teaching a language is minimized and teachers as well as learners perform at their outmost, so that a balance between the two is maintained.

Further studies can be planned to check the effects of one or more of these internal or external factors on how well students perform on different tasks or examinations. Furthermore, it would be interesting to investigate the role of the majors EFL learners are studying on minimizing the extent of the impact the internal as well as external factors might have on students' learning process.

As a matter of fact, internal and external factors in the process of attribution are two concepts that have a lot of capacity for being explored from different aspects in the realm of language teaching and learning.

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The Effect of Input-based and Output-based Instruction on EFL Learners' Autonomy in Writing

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Abstract—The current research investigates the comparative effects of input-based and output-based task-induced activities on EFL learners' autonomy in writing. 35 learners were homogenized out of 70 Pre-intermediate EFL learners. The methodology was that at first session, a task of writing - similar to the writing tasks in their book- was given to all the participants in both experimental groups of input-based and output-based. During six treatment sessions some vocabularies related to the writing task is taught to the students. In input-based group the words are just taught and given to learners without asking them to use these words during the process of learning the lessons, but in the output-based group the teacher asks the students to produce the meaning of the words or try to use these vocabularies. At the seventh session, the same task is given to both groups as the post-test to see whether input and output-based instruction has positive effect on the results of their writing production. The writings are assessed in terms of measurements, fluency, accuracy and complexity. The data are analyzed using paired T-test. The paper concludes that output-based task-induced activities were more effective in improving learners' autonomy in Writing.

Index Terms—input-based, output-based, task-induced activities, autonomy, accuracy, fluency, complexity

I. INTRODUCTION

Majority of scholars acknowledged the important role of input in Second language Acquisition and it is widely approved that exposure to the input may not necessarily lead the learners to achieve L2 high proficiency level. Beside input, it has been recognized that Output also plays a vital role in the process of SLA. There are conflicting viewpoints according to the primacy of input or output for SLA. The controversy about the role of input and output in second language learning was very helpful for the researchers to know how to compare the effects of input-based and output-based instruction on L2 development. (Rassaei, 2012) The understanding of how input and output affect comprehension and production of L2 forms and structures has been considered as a vital issue in SLA research and different studies have tried to examine the relative effects of input-based and output-based instructions (Allen, 2000; DeKeyser & Sokalski, 1996; Erlam, 2003; Nagata, 1998; Salaberry, 1997).

In terms of the concept of Learner autonomy, it has been proved by some scholars around the world that Language learners have learned a lot more whenever they themselves acts as teachers, by preparing a lesson plan, selecting teaching methodology and learning materials, determining class activities and assessing learning results. It is believed that L2 learners can develop their ability to learn by being knowing the procedures they are involved in, by contextualizing their learning experiences, by being actively engaged in the learning situation and by taking charge of sorting out their learning experience (Esch, 1996, p.37).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Task-based Language Teaching

Task-based Language Teaching constitutes a strong version of CLT (Ellis, 2004). According to the definition given by Ellis (2009), TBLT is a L2 or FL teaching methodology that tries to involve learners in authentic context through leading learners to do various tasks. The goal of this approach is to enable learners to acquire a new language as well as to develop the knowledge that they already have. In other words; this approach encourages L2 learners to use their own linguistic knowledge to learn a new language system. Based on TBLT methodology, teaching is based mainly on tasks. Such teaching makes use of a procedural syllabus. (Ellis, 2004, P.351)

B. Defining a Task

In order to clarify the meaning of the task, the following definitions are extracted from the book TBLT by Ellis (2004):

As Prabhu (1987) defines it, a task can be assumed as an activity which demand learners to arrive at findings from given information through a thinking process which allows teachers to control and regulate that process.

Skehan (1998) indicated that meaning is primary in a task which itself can be considered as an activity. There is somehow a kind of priority in Task completion and the evaluation of task performance is in terms of task results. (p.95)

A task as Swain, Skehan and Bygate (2001) indicated is an activity which demands learners to apply language, with emphasis on meaning, to get to an objective. (p.11)

C. Characteristics of Task

Ellis (2004) identified some of the critical features of a task that are presented bellow.

A task is a kind of work plan which focuses on meaning and involves language use in real-world. It may involve all or one of four language skills having a clearly defined communicative outcome.

D. Definitions of Learner Autonomy

Transferring responsibility from teachers to learners can be called 'learner autonomy', although there are different labels related to this concept (Cotterall & Crabbe, 1999, p.3). All the definitions of autonomy refer to the capability of the Language learner to act independently and in cooperation with other learners, to be considered as a responsible person. In order to fully understand the concept of Learner Autonomy, linguistics have provided many definitions in different ways which are presented below:

As Holec (1981) indicated, autonomy occurs when the learner become responsible for his own learning. (p.3) Dickinson (1987) assumed that autonomy is the situation in which the learner himself tries to make decisions related to learning and he/she takes the charge of the implementation of these decisions. Little (1990) believes that learner autonomy is connected to the learner's psychological relation to the process and learning content. According to Pennycook's (1997) viewpoint, development of autonomy is to become the author of one's own world. (p.45) "It is the capacity for a certain range of highly explicit behavior that embraces both the process and the content of learning (as cited in Cotterall & Crabbe, 1999, p.11). As it can be inferred from the definitions provided above, educators and linguists do not agree on the term 'learner autonomy'. But as it is obvious, all the definitions are illustrating the same thing. Learners themselves build knowledge and every learner takes use of his own experience and knowledge to perform the task presented to him (Candy, 1991, p. 270). It can be stated that each learner can be the author of his own world of education. Although so many definitions have been provided for it, the concept of learner autonomy has not been fully understood yet (Oxford, 2003).

E. Learner Autonomy as the Main Goal of Educational Setting

During the process of CLT development, recent innovations in classroom exercises have emphasized the value of pair work or group work learning, learner-centeredness, and autonomy and shared decision-making in the classroom. In some educational settings based on learner autonomy, the majority of students believed that they could acquire new things through doing things with their hands, with their mouth and more importantly with their minds. The learners realized that the teacher was not the dominant person in the classroom, but the students were. It has completely changed the traditional way of teaching with students staying standstill and listening while the teacher is giving a lecture as the only authority in the class. Learner autonomy has been widely flourished in education since 1970s. Nowadays, autonomy is accepted as an appropriate objective in education worldwide, and most of the teachers know that it is important to help learners become more autonomous. (Wenden, 1991). In Education, the development of autonomy in the learner should be considered as an important issue (Nunan, 1988). Language teaching has developed so rapidly and the attention toward the learner autonomy has been increased. In other words, the interest to define how learners make conscious efforts to master a foreign or second language, is increasing. Learners who accept responsibility for their learning are more likely to achieve their learning targets in a shorter period of time and they generally has a positive view to further learning. If the students are not trained how to learn by their own, they will have little encouragement to continue learning outside the Classroom settings (Lee, 1998). Both teachers and students should know about the goal of language education and that is to develop learner autonomy. For any Language learner who wants to become autonomous, he/she should improve to learn independently if there is not a teacher available. It is vital for students to acquire the habit of learning steadily, and continue doing that after finishing their academic or institutional studies.

In order to promote learner autonomy, accepted as the ultimate goal of education, it should be determined how to promote learner autonomy and how to make learners take charge-at least temporarily of the whole or part of the learning process. It is no so hard for them to be able to produce a well-formed and appropriately predetermined plan, when the teachers decide in advance what to teach and where and when and in what order they should present the material. When learners are involved in the process of decision-making and they are properly aware of learning procedures, sharing their opinions through negotiation, they will have excellent learning. (Curran, 1968). Therefore, it is so important for teachers to provide suitable materials for learners in order to help students develop their own autonomy and be aware that they are somehow responsible for their process of language learning. We trust that a classroom based on negotiated knowledge and procedures help the learner to obtain equal level of autonomy and there will be a good learning community. (Breen and Littlejohn, 2000, p.22).

F. Input-based Instruction (Structured-input Instruction)

Today there is an agreement upon the fact that learners' exposure to input plays a crucial role in SLA so that it has been proved to be impossible to achieve a new language without considering the role of input. In structured –input instruction, the learners pay attention to the form of the target structure and process input for meaning through tasks that do not require them to produce the target structure. The structured-input group receives explicit instruction on the key grammatical item and practices this feature through input-based activities. (As Anna-Maria Andreou indicated in her paper in Conference: ECER 2008, From Teaching to Learning?)

VanPatten's processing instruction (PI) is a kind of input-based instructional technique which affects the acquisition of target language forms by involving learners in processing structured input.

G. Output-based Instruction (Meaning-oriented Output- based Instruction)

In meaning-oriented output- based instruction, the learners are intended to focus only on meaningful activities, in which students attend to the meaning of both the stimulus and the response, and are given opportunities to produce language. This area of research has found a fertile ground in Second Language Acquisition and there are now a number of studies that have contrasted structured-input and output-based instruction on tests of comprehension and production. One type of output-based instruction was applied in traditional audio-lingual classrooms in which the structures of target language were practiced through a number of different mechanical drills without any focus on communicative context. Swain (1985, 1995, 2000, 2005) indicates that output is as considerable as input in L2 knowledge development to higher levels. Swain (1985) claims that output drew students attention from the semantic processing needed for comprehending input toward the syntactic processing necessary for encoding meaning (p.249). One crucial function of output is helping learners become aware of the gap which exist between their current linguistic knowledge and the target language system. (Swain, 1995, 2005)

H. Related Empirical Studies on Input-based and Out-put Based Instruction

A number of empirical studies have been done that compared the effects of input practice to output-based instruction with the aim to require learners to utter comprehensible output. However, the outcomes of these studies are contrary. Many of these studies revealed that input-based and output-based are both effective in L2 development. Several other studies showed that input-based and output-based instructions are effective in developing SLA equally (Erlam, Loewen, and Philp, 2009, Farley, 2001b) Some others provided evidence showing that the input-based instruction was more advantageous than the output one. (e.g., Benati, 2005; Farley, 2001a; Lee and Benati, 2006) The findings of several studies showed that output-based instruction was superior comparing to input-based one. (Toth, 2006, Morgan-Short and Bowden, 2006, Allen, 2000)

The findings of the study done by Erlam et al. (2009) revealed that both instructional groups significantly outperformed the control group that did not receive any instruction. Toth (2006) investigated the role of input and output in second language acquisition of Spanish morphosyntax and the results showed that both groups improved equally on a grammar task, but the output group performed better than its counterpart in a task of controlled production.

Benati (2001) examined the effects of processing instruction and output-based grammar instruction and the results showed that the processing instruction group surpassed the output-based group in a task of interpretation while both groups arrived at equal achievements in a production task. Morgan-Short and Bowden (2006) did a laboratory research study to investigate the effects of input-based instruction for both processing instruction and meaningful output-based instruction. The outcome of their study revealed that both groups had significant gains comparing to the control group from pre-tests to post-tests. According to these findings, this can be concluded that both input-based and output-based instruction might result in linguistic development. (p. 31).

There are also several researches that offer that the role of output is secondary to the role of input and output only acts as a facilitator to reach to a developed second language system (Benati, 2001; VanPatten & Cadierno, 1993; VanPatten & Wong, 2004). The results of these studies manifested that performance of those learners receiving instruction with no output practice was as well in tasks of comprehension and production as those receiving output-based instruction.

Ellis (2012) indicated that the outcomes of previously done studies comparing the effects of input-based and output-based instruction are contradictory and mixed. According to VanPatten's processing instruction model, one of the preceding studies' constraints is that they focused mostly on input-based instruction and did not take account of other kinds of input-based instructions, such as textual enrichment or input enhancement. Some of the studies provided evidence that output has a more effective role in second language development than it has been considered before, and they used output in a more communicative setting (e.g., Toth, 2006; Erlam et al., 2009). As Ellis (2012) states, the advantages of input-based and production-based instructions depend on the negotiations that emerge while giving the instruction. To this end, we investigate the effects of input-based instruction and compare them with the effects of output-based instruction on the development of Learner autonomy in writing.

I. Related Empirical Studies on Learner Autonomy

Zejun Ma and Peng Gao (2010) attempted to develop syllabuses in the language classroom in order to aid learners decide about their learning progress by negotiations. In this way, the value of collaborative learning, learner-centeredness, learner autonomy and shared decision making were all emphasized. They could conclude that through

contents, ways of assessment, negotiations of purposes, learners follow various steps of producing language and through transferring the energy into students' hands, they become highly provoked and deeply involved in the learning procedure and they can take charge of their own learning. According to some of the participants' comments, it seemed that the teacher was given some freedom in class, but the learners could learn more than just staring at the teacher and some students believed that It was an innovative and original method, which motivated them to learn vigorously by themselves.

Haiyan Wang did a study in china in 2011 and he concluded that there is little evidence that autonomy is more appropriate in some contexts or countries but not in other cultures. The results showed that although the eastern and western language learners come from different backgrounds, there are still substantial similarities. These are the importance of building self-confidence and self-reliance, freedom of choice, collaboration, and mutual respect of the individual. (as cited in Wang, 2011)

The findings of the study done by Filiz Yalcin Tilfarlioglu and Fatma Seyma Ciftci in Turkey (2011) have revealed that there exist a obvious direct relationship between self-efficacy and learner autonomy ($r=.667$, $p>.01$) and they found out that learner autonomy and self-efficacy influence on educational success positively according to the outcome of several regression analysis. In this current study, it is found out that the relationship between self-efficacy and learner autonomy and also academic success play a crucial role in language learning and teaching.

J. Research Questions and Hypothesis

By considering the literature review presented above, the present study attempted to investigate the following research question and research hypotheses:

RQ1: What are the effects of input-based and output-based instruction on learners' autonomy in writing?

H0: There isn't any significant difference between input-based instruction and EFL Learners' successful writing task performance.

H1: There isn't any significant difference between output-based instruction and EFL Learners' successful writing task performance.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The participants of the current study were 35 learners who were homogenized out of 70 Pre-intermediate learners studying English at Kish language school in Rasht. All of them were female.

B. Data Collection Instrument

In this study, the accuracy is measured by counting the number of Error Free T-unit (EFTs) per T-unit (Arent, 2003; Rahimpour, 2008; Salimi, Dadashpour, and Asadollahfam, 2011, Salimi & Fatollahnejad, 2012).

The fluency of the written production of language learners has been measured by words per T-units (Ishikawa, 2006; Kuiken and Vedder, 2007, Salimi, Dadashpour & Asadollahfam, 2011, Salimi & Fatollahnejad, 2012).

Measuring lexical and syntactic complexity can be assumed as complexity measurement. Lexical complexity of the written text was not considered because the learners were free to ask the teacher for explanation about the intended lexical item. A measure of the ratio of the number of clauses to total number of T-units was adopted taking account of syntactic complexity (Mehnert, 1998; Ellis and Yuan, 2004; Salimi, Dadashpour, and Asadollahfam, 2011). (as cited in Salimi & Fatollahnejad, 2012)

C. Procedure

A quasi-experimental design with a pretest-treatment-posttest sequence was used. The methodology applied for this study was that at first session, a pre-task that was a task of writing - similar to the writing tasks in their class book- was given to all the participants in both experimental groups of input-based and output-based. During six treatment sessions some useful vocabularies related to the writing task is taught to the students. In input-based group the words are just taught and given to 12 learners without drawing their attention or asking them to use these words during the process of learning the lessons, but in the output-based group the teacher asks the students to produce the meaning of the words or try to use these vocabularies while speaking or writing. At the seventh session, the same task is given to both groups as the post-test (post-task) to see whether input and output-based instruction has positive effect on the results of their writing production. In order to quantify the data gathered, the writing texts are assessed in terms of measurements, fluency, accuracy and complexity. The quantitative data are analyzed using paired T-test.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Paired T-test was applied to compare the means of fluency, accuracy and complexity of the written productions between two groups. The descriptive statistics (the mean scores and standard deviations) and also the results of independent samples T-test for the two experimental groups is shown in tables below.

TABLE 1:
COMPARISON OF THE MEANS OF FLUENCY OF WRITTEN PRODUCTION BETWEEN TWO GROUPS

Accuracy Measure	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Input-based group	18	2.287	0.733
Output-based group	18	2.367	0.750

Table 1 shows descriptive statistics of the comparison of the means of fluency for input-based group. The mean of Input-based group was a bit less than the mean in the Output-based group and the results of t-test showed that input-based group is not significantly different from output-based group $t(34) = -0.3234$, $p > 0/05$ and it does not reject the null-hypotheses.

TABLE 2
SHOWS THE RESULTS OF INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST FOR MEANS OF FLUENCY FOR THE TWO EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS.

Independent Samples t-Test		
t-Statistic	-0.3234	Result
Degrees of Freedom	34	Do not reject the null hypothesis.
Critical Value	2.0322	Conclusion
95% Confidence Interval	[-0.5944, 0.7544]	Group A is not significantly different from Group B, $t(34) = -0.3234$, $p > .05$.

TABLE 3:
COMPARISON OF THE MEANS OF ACCURACY OF WRITTEN PRODUCTION BETWEEN TWO GROUPS

Accuracy Measure	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Input-based group	18	0.797	0.1223
Output-based group	18	0.796	0.1006

As it is obvious in the above table, the mean of the accuracy was the same in the input-based and Output-based groups and the results of t-test showed that input-based group is not significantly different from output-based group $t(34) = 0.0298$, $p > 0/05$ and it does not reject the null-hypotheses.

TABLE 4
SHOWS THE RESULTS OF INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST FOR MEANS OF ACCURACY FOR THE TWO EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS.

Independent Samples t-Test		
t-Statistic	0.0298	Result
Degrees of Freedom	34	Do not reject the null hypothesis.
Critical Value	2.0322	Conclusion
95% Confidence Interval	[-0.1007, 0.1029]	Group A is not significantly different from Group B, $t(34) = 0.0298$, $p > .05$.

There was not any significant difference between means of two groups the null hypothesis stating "There isn't any significant difference between the input-based instruction and output-based instruction in terms of their effects on EFL Learners' successful writing task performance" is accepted.

TABLE 5:
COMPARISON OF THE MEANS OF COMPLEXITY OF WRITTEN PRODUCTION BETWEEN TWO GROUPS

Accuracy Measure	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Input-based group	18	1.028	0.188
Output-based group	18	1.261	0.190

As we can see in the above table, the mean of the accuracy was the same in the input-based and Output-based groups and the results of t-test showed that input-based group is not significantly different from output-based group $t(34) = 0.0298$, $p > 0/05$ and it does not reject the null-hypotheses.

TABLE 6
SHOWS THE RESULTS OF INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST FOR MEANS OF COMPLEXITY FOR THE TWO EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS.

Independent Samples t-Test		
t-Statistic	-3.679	Result
Degrees of Freedom	34	Reject the null hypothesis.
Critical Value	2.0322	Conclusion
95% Confidence Interval	[0.0601, 0.4043]	Group A is significantly different from Group B, $t(34) = -3.679$, $p < .05$. We are 95% confident that the mean difference lies between 0.0601 and 0.4043.

V. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Decision-making collaboratively requires leveling each learner's plan with that of others as well as the adjusting specific aims with individual's choices for learning. In group works, the autonomy has to be practiced a lot in an interconnected way (Breen & Littlejohn, 2000, p.22). While completing the tasks the students must be fully involved in a way that to be really helpful for themselves and also for their classmates. Beside all the facts mentioned above, autonomy enables learners to begin to take charge of their learning in a way that will be efficient in terms of objectives that they have for themselves in their mind. Practicing negotiated syllabus helps students to decrease the level of dependency on the teacher. Once this has happened, negotiation becomes an ongoing process with no doubt. It is determined in the College English Teaching Syllabus (1999) that Language learners should become autonomous with the teachers guiding them to learn appropriate language learning methods and to develop their self-learning abilities.

According to the results of the study, it was found out that there was no significant difference between input-based instruction and output-based one in terms of Accuracy as the means for both groups were the same. From the statistic analysis of fluency measure, the means of output-based group was a bit higher than the input-based one that showed a little difference in the EFL learners' written production. The mean of output-based group in the analysis of complexity was 1.26 and it was higher than that of the input-based group. Considering the outcomes, it can be concluded that the written production of the students in output-based group were better comparing to their counterparts. After final investigation according to the findings of other scholars, this can be indicated that if the EFL learners try to write through output-based instruction, they can produce more fluent and complex essays. Actually, in most of the cases it was seen that the students at the lower levels try to produce utterances or essays which are more accurate but as they become more fluent in producing L2 and their production becomes more complex. The participants in the current study were at PI level and most of them were very hardworking students and they were eager to learn English and they tried hard to produce what they have learned through previous terms or sessions and through investigating their essay writings it was clearly obvious that they preferred output-based instruction to improve their English and have more complex production and more fluent essays as well.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The development of a suitable learning and teaching environment partially depends on the educational system of a country. Language education system in Iran can be determined as a authority-oriented, old established and teacher-centered system since it is still run by the instructors. Most of the educators in Iran are not trained to be autonomous. As Little (2005) indicates, teachers without the ability of autonomy may have negative influence on the progress of autonomous and self-efficacious learners. Therefore, in Iran, no effective act has been done to improve these issues in educational settings. By investigating different studies done on the field of learner autonomy in Iran, it has been clear that group work is the only activity to improve learner autonomy which should be presented in the lesson plans and the curriculums. As Harmer (2001) claims, group work is an effective feature in the concept of learner autonomy. However, there should be more language exercise that help students become aware of abilities they own, so that they can control their own learning while learning a second language.

Iranian learners need to become critical thinkers. One possible solution can be making L2 learners be aware of their capabilities and develop their autonomy through educational program (Cotterall, 2000). As educators and instructors believe, the rules of self-efficacy and autonomy should be interdependent to the learning aims, tasks, strategies of learning, learning procedure and reflection on learning (Cotterall, 2000)

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2. R. Rahimy, K. Shams, "An investigation of the effectiveness of Vocabulary Learning Strategies On Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary test score", *International Educational Studies Journal*, Canada (Published in October 2012).

Studies of Translation Norms of *Ai Xi La Ge* by Ma Junwu: Within the Framework of Andrew Chesterman's Theory of Translation Norms

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Abstract—*Ai Xi La Ge*, which is translated by Ma Junwu is the first complete Chinese translated text of *The Isles of Greece* by Byron. It has a far-reaching influence. This thesis attempts to study the translation norms of *Ai Xi La Ge* under the influences of social-cultural conditions and translating habits of the translator from the four aspects of expectancy norms, accountability norm, communication norm and relation norm within the framework of Andrew Chesterman's theory of translation norms.

Index Terms—translated text, translation norms, *Ai Xi La Ge*, Ma Junwu, Andrew Chesterman

I. INTRODUCTION

The Isles of Greece is a sixteen-stanza poem in the eighty-sixth stanza of the third chapter of *Don Juan*, which is a long narrative and satirical poem full of patriotism and nationalism written by Byron. *The Isles of Greece* recalls the splendid civilization and brave characters in former days, making a comparison with the fallen Greece and decadent spirit, to arouse the patriotism and rebellious spirit of the Greek people and encourage them to fight for freedom. The decline and fall of Greece is just a true portrayal of China in the late Qing Dynasty. This arouses the spiritual resonance of literary intellectuals and noble-minded patriots and evokes their poetry concern and patriotism. This poem is found and introduced into China by Liang Qichao in 1902 for the first time. There have been seven Chinese versions from 1902 to the 1820s, including partially translation and complete translation. This thesis puts the emphasis on Ma Junwu's version, titled by *Ai Xi La Ge* (meaning the song of grieving for Greece in Chinese). It attempts to study the translation norms of Ma Junwu's translated text under the influences of social-cultural conditions and translating habits of the translator from the four aspects of expectancy norms, accountability norm, communication norm and relation norm within the framework of Andrew Chesterman's theory of translation norms.

II. THE CONCEPT OF "NORM" AND ITS APPLICATION IN TRANSLATION STUDIES

"Norm" is originally a sociological concept. Bartsch defines it as "social reality of correctness notions" (Bartsch, 1987, p.xiv). "Norm" is a kind of "social reality" and its existence is finally decided by people in society. So "norm" has the quality of inter-subjectivity, just like Itkonen says that "norms not known to exist do not exist". The concept of "norm" is first transplanted in translation studies by Levý and Holmes, and Toury systematizes the study of translation norms and enhances it to a theoretical level. Toury, who is a Israeli translation theorist, starts his study of translation norms in the year of 1973 (Toury, 1999, p.10-13). He applies the concept of "translation norm" in the study of Hebrew literary translation and finishes his book *Translational Norms and Literary Translation into Hebrew, 1930-1945* in 1977. In 1980, Toury makes a more detailed discussion of translation norms' nature, classification and establishment. Then after Toury, Hermans and Chesterman also make a deep study of translation norms. Hermans holds the opinion that under the descriptive paradigm, norm can "provide the first level of abstraction and the first step towards an explanation of the choices and decisions which translators make" (Hermans, 2004, p.79). Chesterman gathers different opinions on translation from different angles in a more macro-framework to propose his own theory of translation norms.

Chesterman borrows the concept of "meme" from sociology and applies it in his theory of translation norms. Chesterman thinks that "translation memes" refer to memes that convey and reflect translation and translation theory and they affect the way translators think and translate. Once some "memes" occupy the leading position at a certain history stage and gradually gain a model status widely accepted by people, these "memes" become "translation norms". Chesterman (2012, p.5-70) classifies translation norms into expectancy norms and professional norms corresponding to product norms and process norms in sociology. Professional norms can be further classified into accountability norm, communication norm and relation norm.

III. ANALYSIS ON TRANSLATION NORMS OF *AI XI LA GE*

In this section, an attempt is made to investigate the translation norms of *Ai Xi La Ge* by Ma Junwu from the four aspects of expectancy norms, accountability norm, communication norm and relation norm. From the angle of

translators, since accountability norm, communication norm and relation norm which are subordinate to and determined by expectancy norms, and different norms are not independent but inter-related, the underlying reasons behind norms inevitably have overlapping parts. For example, the following accountability norm and relation norm of Ma Junwu's translated text we will talk about. The former one refers to that the translator tends to be loyal to readers and the latter one refers to that the original text and the translated text has a similarity of effect. And the reason why the translated text conforms to the two norms is the popular translation purpose---utility. We will make a concrete analysis in the following part.

A. Analysis on Expectancy Norms of *Ai Xi La Ge*

Expectancy norms are established by the expectations of readers of a translation. The expectations can include text type, discourse conventions, style, register, appropriate degree of grammaticality, statistical distribution of text features of all kind, collocations, lexical choice and so on. These expectations are influenced by many factors like "the prevalent translation tradition in the target culture", "the form of parallel texts" or "economic or ideological factors, power relations within and between cultures" and the like (Chesterman, 2012, p.64). So expectancy norms are neither static, nor monolithic, but always change. Translators choose to conform to different expectancy norms to produce different translated texts according to different needs.

The first one to translate *The Isles of Greece* completely is Ma Junwu who finished it in the year of 1905. Firstly, Ma Junwu's complete translation adopts the free verse before the Tang Dynasty. This literary form of Ma Junwu's translation is called "free seven-character verse" by Liu Wuji (Liu Wjuji, 1986, p.208). This literary form is different from modern-style poetry in Tang Dynasty. Modern-style poetry in Tang Dynasty has strict requirements in rhyme, tone and antithetical parallelism. The "free seven-character verse" is not so strict in that aspect and it has a flexible line length, so it does not reads like the modern-style poetry in Tang Dynasty and thus has not so high artistic values. Many lines also read like jingles (Wang Dongfeng, 2011, p.22), such as "Xi la dao, Xi la dao, Shi ren Sha Fu an zai zai? Ai guo zhi shi chuan zui zao." and "Mo shuo shen dian er zu shi, Fan hua yi xi jin xiao chen. Wan yu ai ming xia zi se, Qun zhu luan luo mei ren qin." The way that foreign poems are translated in the form of Chinese traditional poems can bring readers a sense of familiarity with strong Chinese poem flavor (Guo Yanli, 1997, p.100-101).

Secondly, Ma Junwu translates it in classical Chinese. In the last ten years of Qing Dynasty, a massive vernacular movement rose. "There were four hundred million people in China, less than fifty millions are literate, less than twenty millions can read newspapers and little left can read classical Chinese" (Yu Xiaozhi, 2013, p.202). So after the Hundred Days Reform Movement failed, the vernacular movement rose. The main advertising medium was newspaper and journal in vernacular Chinese and the aim was to expand the revolutionary propaganda, enlighten people and reform society. Although Ma Junwu translated the poem in classical Chinese, it is close to vernacular Chinese, so it is not so hard to understand which is because that Ma Junwu hopes to promote the ideas of saving China and enlighten people through his translations. Although *Ai Xi La Ge* is written in free verse, it is still restricted in word number; classical Chinese has the requirements of conciseness in language and "the contents of the original are complicated" (Liu Wuji, 1986, p.216). All these reasons lead to that it cannot be translated line for line, but add lines so as to translate all the meanings of the original. As a result, although there are six lines in each stanza in the original, it is extended to ten lines in stanza 1, 2, 5, 6, 14 in the translated text. Take stanza 2 for example.

Mo shuo Shen Dian er zu shi, Fan hua yi xi jin xiao chen.
Wan yu ai ming xia zi se, Qun zhu luan luo mei ren qin.
Yi nan hai an shang zong heng, Ying kui yu jin dian sheng ming.
Xia zi mei ren sheng ju di, Qiao ran wan lai jin wu sheng.
Yu jie hu! Qin sheng yao ye xiang xi qu, Xi nian fu dao jin he chu?
(Ma Junwu, 1991, p.439)

The remaining eleven stanzas have six lines each like the original. For example, stanza 3 as follows:

Ma la dun hou shan ru dai, Ma la dun qian heng bi hai.
Wo lai du wei pian ke you, You meng xi la shi zi you.
Yu jie hu! Xian li shi xiang bo si zhong, Ning si shen wei nu li zhong.
(Ma Junwu, 1991, p.439)

Ma Junwu lived in the time that China was invaded and oppressed by imperialism and society had great changes. He made the acquaintance of some revolutionaries like Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao and was influenced by them to devote himself to overthrowing feudal rule and reforming society. Ma Junwu studied abroad for many times to look for the way of saving China. He learned from the prosperity of the Western Europe that the reason why the Western Europe became a new prosperous, strong and civilized world from the stage of barbarism two or three hundred years ago was their moral transform (Tu Guoyuan, 2015, p.33). So, Ma Junwu thought that "China's reform should be started with moral transform" (Zeng Degui, 2000, p.182), and if we wanted to reform China, we should "firstly awaken the people who were still oppressed and constrained by feudal rule and still in the state of ignorance, numbness and unconsciousness from their sleep and help them get independence and liberation of themselves and then fight for independence and liberation of nation to establish a new modern China" (Tan Zhaoyi, 2002, p.115).

Ma Junwu considers readers' reading habits and adopts the literary form of "free seven-character verse" and language form of plain classical Chinese which eliminates readers' foreignness to the translated text and close the distance

between readers and the translated text. Ma Junwu's translated text conforms to the expectancy norms of readers expecting translated text to be easily accepted on the aspect of language.

B. Analysis on Accountability Norm of *Ai Xi La Ge*

Accountability norm refers to that translator should be loyal to the original writer, the commissioner of the translation, the translator himself or herself, the prospective readership and any other relevant parties (Chersterman, 2012, p.68).

It is actually an ethical norm which requires translators to be "loyal". The "ethical convention" put forward by Nord holds similar opinions that "besides the demands that translators translate according to the purpose of translation, translators need to abide by certain ethics (referring to not cheating the original writers)" (Li Dechao & Deng Jing, 2004, p.72). Nord's functional translation ideas are established on the two points of "function" and "loyalty". "Loyalty" refers to the interpersonal relationship between the translator, the source-text sender, the target-text addressees and the initiator (Nord, 2001, p.126). It belongs to the interpersonal category referring to a social relationship between people and cannot be mixed up with concepts of fidelity or faithfulness that refer to a text relationship between the source and the target texts (Nord, 2001, p.125). In other words, the "loyalty" in Nord's theory does not mean that translators should make sure that the original text identifies with the translated text both in contents and form, but means that translators should translate with the attitude of being loyal to the original writer, translated text reader, commissioner of the translation and any other relevant parties. After adjusting the relationships between relevant parties, if there is need to sacrifice the identification between the original and the target texts in contents and form to fulfill a translation task, we can also say that the translator is "loyal".

The *Isles of Greece* were written before Greece's independence movement and Ma Junwu translated it in the year of 1905 before the Revolution of 1911 which aims to overthrow feudal autocratic governance, save China from the national crisis and fight for national independence, democracy and prosperity. Although the time when Byron wrote the poem and Ma Junwu translated it had a difference of nearly one hundred years, the social and historical reasons of writing and translating it were similar. The writer and translator both "sorrowed for the lost glory in history, raised the voice in sad but stirring songs and promoted national freedom in writing" (Liu Wuji, 1986, p.208). Ma Junwu hoped to convey the meaning of "sorrow for the lost civilization, dissatisfaction with the present situation and the hope for the future" to translated text readers, hoping that they could share the same reading experience with the original text readers. In order to achieve the aim, Ma Junwu "revised the original text" in the way of deleting contents in the original text or adding new contents to the translated text.

Ma Junwu uses the way of deleting in the translating of proper nouns, deleting the names of people and areas that he considers to be irrelevant. For example, the Polycrates (the dictator of the isle of Samon) in stanza 11 and Heracleidan (the descendant of Hercules) in stanza 13 (Liao Qiyi, 2010, p.31).

Ma Junwu also uses the way of adding, making use of a subject to add his own ideas. Take stanza 6 for example:

Original: 'Tis something, in the dearth of fame,
 Though link'd among a fetter'd race,
 To feel at least a patriot's shame,
 Even as I sing, suffuse my face;
 For what is left the poet here?
 For Greeks a blush — for Greece a tear. (Liu Wuji, 1986, p.260)

Translation: Yi zhao gong she jin cheng xu, Ke lian guo zhong sui wei nu.
 Guang rong hu bang xi yang luo, Ming yu dou sui qiu cao ku.
 Qi qu guo tu zuo lie dao, Zhui nian su xi shang huai bao.
 Wo jin piao bo yi shi ren, Dui ci you can si bu zao.
 Yu jie hu! Wo wei xi la ji pin cu, Wo wei xi la yi tong ku.
 (Ma Junwu, 1991, p.440-441)

The lines of "Yi zhao gong she jin cheng xu", "Guang rong hu bang xi yang luo, Ming yu dou sui qiu cao ku" are not mentioned in the original text which Liu Wuji calls it "duck-stuffing" translation and "not faithful to the original text" (Liu Wuji, 1986, p.217-218). However, it is precisely that Ma Junwu deliberately adds those lines into the translated text to elaborate his distressed feeling for the fall of Greece. What is more, he wants to express his grief over China's same fate as Greece and convey his feeling to the translated text readers, hoping that they can have the same reading experience as that of the original text readers.

Not only in the stanzas with 10 lines that Ma Junwu adopts the way of adding, but also in the stanzas with 6 lines that the same translating way is adopted. For example, stanza 8:

Original text: What, silent still? and silent all?
 Ah! no; — the voices of the dead
 Sound like a distant torrent's fall,
 And answer, "Let one living head,
 But one arise, — we come, we come!"
 'Tis but the living who are dumb. (Liu Wuji, 1986, p.261)

Translated text: Bu wen xi la sheng ren sheng, Dan wen gui sheng zuo chao ming.
 Gui yue sheng zhe yi ren qi, Wo cao sui si you zhu ru.

Yu jie hu! Xi la zhi ren kou jin yin, Gui sheng xiang da hai tian yin.
(Ma Junwu, 1991, p.441)

Ma Junwu consolidates the line 2 and line 3 in the original text to one line of “Dan wen gui sheng zuo chao ming” and add “Wo cao sui si you zhu ru”, “Gui sheng xiang da hai tian yin” in the translated text.

Besides, Ma Junwu adds “Yu jie hu” (referring to an interjection in classical Chinese) before the last two lines in every stanza in the translated text to strengthen the tone and express the impassioned emotions in the original.

The reason why Ma Junwu adopts the translating way of deleting and adding or adds the interjection of “Yu jie hu” is that he wants to convey the emotions that the original text readers get from the original to the translated text readers. Ma Junwu’s translated text conforms to the accountability norm of being loyal to readers.

C. Analysis on Communication Norm of Ai Xi La Ge

Communication norm refers to that “a translator should act in such a way as to optimize communication, as required by the situation, between all the parties involved” (Chesterman, 2012, p.69).

It means that a translator plays a role of a communicator who mediate between all the parties, convey their ideas to each party and present them in the translated text last, including the translator’s own ideas.

In Chesterman’s opinion, a translator performs act A (etc.) because this act conforms to overall communicative maxims, principles that are accepted as valid for any type of communication, not just translation. These would include four Gricean maxims of quantity, quality, relevance and manner (Chesterman, 2012, p.77). The four maxims require that any communication should be sufficient, true, relevant and clear (Grice, 1975, p.41-58). Chesterman thinks that the four maxims can also be applied in translation which is a particular type of communication. Grice holds the opinion that the observance of some of the maxims is a matter of less urgency than is the observance of others during the communication process. In some situations, a participant may deliberately fail to fulfill some maxims to achieve his own goal in the exchange (Grice, 1975, p.46-49). In translating process, the same cases that a participant deliberately fails to fulfill some maxims can happen from which we can disclose the reasons behind the cases. In this section, we attempt to investigate what communication norm Ai Xi La Ge conforms to by analyzing the maxims that Ai Xi La Ge observes.

The quantity maxim requires that: 1) Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purpose of the exchange); 2) Do not make your contribution more informative than is required (Grice, 1975, p.45). In translation, the particular type of communication, it means that: 1) all contents of the original text should be included in the translated text; 2) no new contents are added in the translated text.

This maxim requires that the translated text should not delete or add any content, making sure that the translated text and the original text have the same amount of contents. Take stanza 11 for example to analyze if the translated text observes the quantity maxim.

Original text: Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
We will not think of themes like these!
It made Anacreon's song divine:
He served — but served Polycrates —
A tyrant; but our masters then
Were still, at least, our countrymen. (Liu Wuji, 1986, p.262)

Translated text: Qie zhuo sha ming ying jiu bei, nao ren shi shi bu xu ti.
Dang nian zheng zhi cong duo shu, Wei yi a ming ke lang shi.
Yu jie hu! Guo min zi shi guo quan zhu, Fen fen bao jun he zu shu.
(Ma Junwu, 1991, p.443)

In section 2.2, we have discussed that Ma Junwu adopts the way of deleting or adding in translating process. For example, in stanza 11. Ma Junwu translates the first two lines faithfully, without deleting or adding any content. In translated text, line 3 of “Dang nian zheng zhi cong duo shu” which is supposed to be the translation of line 3 in the original text actually has not much relevance with that in the original. And line 4 of “Wei yi a ming ke lang shi” in the translated text is neither the translation of line 4 nor the translation of line 3 in the original text. So line 3 and 4 are nearly not translated. And nearly only “tyrant” in the original text in Line 5 and 6 is translated, leaving other contents untranslated.

From the above, Ma Junwu’s translated text does not observe the quantity maxim.

The quality maxim requires that: 1) Do not say what you believe to be false; 2) Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence (Grice, 1975, p.46). In translation, the particular type of communication, it means that for the contents that deviate from the objective world or counter to common sense, translators should revise them to accord with the objective world and the common sense, or make explanations so as not to mislead the readers.

However, some phenomenon that are impossible in the real world can happen in literary works. It will not confuse readers, instead, it strengthens the artistic effect. Translators will keep these contents in the translated texts also. There is one description that is impossible in the real world in stanza 8.

Original text: What, silent still? and silent all?
Ah! no; — the voices of the dead
Sound like a distant torrent's fall,

And answer, "Let one living head,
But one arise, — we come, we come!"
'Tis but the living who are dumb. (Liu Wuji, 1986, p.261)

Translated text: Bu wen xi la sheng ren sheng, Dan wen gui sheng zuo chao ming.
Gui yue sheng zhe yi ren qi, Wo cao sui si you zhu ru.
Yu jie hu! Xi la zhi ren kou jin yin, Gui sheng xiang da hai tian yin.
(Ma Junwu, 1991, p.441)

In the original text, "the dead.....answer, 'Let one living head, But one arise, — we come, we come!'" which means that "the dead" respond and talk. This is not possible in the real world. However, the translator makes no revisions or explanations but translates it into "Gui yue sheng zhe yi ren qi, Wo cao sui si you zhu ru". Although it is not translated according to quality maxim, it can maintain the artistic effect which is necessary in literary translation.

Ma Junwu's translated text does not observe the quality maxim.

There is only one requirement in relation maxim, that is "be relevant" (Grice, 1975, p.46). In translation, the particular type of communication, it means that translated text should be related with the original text in that the two texts should not have a large difference in content. The reason why we describe it like that is because that the translation itself implies the restriction of "original text" which means that translation is not as free as creation. Translation is produced on the basis of the "original", so translation act always observe the relation maxim. Translation texts only have the difference of degree of observing relation maxim, but no difference of whether observing relation maxim.

It is the same with Ma Junwu's translated text. In the above discussion, especially the discussion of quantity maxim, we know that Ma Junwu adopts the translating way of deleting and adding, either deleting some original contents or adding his own comments or feelings in the translated text. Many examples have been listed in the discussion of quantity maxim, so no more examples are listed in the discussion of relation maxim.

Ma Junwu's translated text observes relation maxim.

The manner maxim requires that: 1) Avoid obscurity of expression; 2) Avoid ambiguity; 3) Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity); 4) Be orderly (Grice, 1975, p.46). In translation, the particular type of communication, it means that the language of translated text is plain, clear and easy to understand.

In the discussion of expectancy norms, we have discussed that Ma Junwu's translated text is written in classical Chinese because the translated text conforms to the expectancy norms of readers expecting translated text to be easily accepted on the aspect of language.

Before the New Culture Movement, although there was vernacular movement in the late Qing Dynasty, vernacular did not take the place of classical Chinese. *Ai Xi La Ge* was translated in 1905 when classical Chinese was still in the dominant position. Ma Junwu followed the tendency of writing, translating it in classical Chinese which was obscure and hard to understand for most people. Only a small amount of people had the chance to study classical Chinese, so it could not be spread. Ma Junwu's translated text is not plain and hard for most people, so it does not observe the relation maxim.

After the analysis on the four maxims, we find that Ma Junwu's translated text observes the relation maxim. So, it is concluded that Ma Junwu's translated text conforms to the communication norm of being relevant.

D. Analysis on Relation Norm of *Ai Xi La Ge*

Relation norm refers to that "a translator should act in such a way that an appropriate relation of relevant similarity is established and maintained between the source text and the target text" (Chesterman, 2012, p.69).

Traditional translation theory holds the opinion that the original text and the translated text should have a relationship of "equivalence" which means that the two texts should be "equal" in form, content and every other aspect. With the development of translation theory, the former relatively closed translation standard, like "equivalence", becomes not effective when it comes to more varieties of translation phenomenon. This is because that those translation critics are not aware of that "every translation task sets its own profile of 'equivalence priorities'" (Chesterman, 2012, p.69), which is fulfilled by translators. Translators first assess all conditions including text type, the wishes of the commissioner, the intentions of the original writer and the assumed needs of the prospective readers, and then decide what kind of relation is "appropriate" between the original text and the translated text. "Equivalence" is only one relation among varieties of "appropriate" relations. Toury holds similar opinions that "equivalence" is only a functional-relational concept which is used to describe the assumed translated text and the original text (Toury, 2001, p.86). "It no longer has the traditional prescriptive features" (Wang Yunhong, 2013, p.9). The appropriateness of the relation between the original text and the translated text is determined by the wishes of the commissioners, the prospective readers, translators themselves and so on. According to Chesterman, there are many possible relations between the original text and the translated text. Translators decide what relation is "appropriate" after assessing all elements. There are formal similarity, stylistic similarity, semantic similarity, similarity of effect and so on.

As the first complete translated text of *The Isles of Greece*, *Ai Xi La Ge* has great influences. Many translators give their comments on it. Su Manshu, who translated it right after Ma Junwu, thought that "my friend Ma Junwu translated *The Isles of Greece* by Byron in a faithful way, but not as good as the two stanzas in *Xin Xiao Shuo* (referring to a journal meaning "new novels" in Chinese) in that Ma Junwu's translated text was not as bold as Liang Qichao's" (Su Manshu, 1985, p.122-123). Hu Shi "considered that Jun Wu's translated text had the deficiency of corruption which led

to distortion, making it not a good translation” (Hu Shi, 1991, p.94). Liu Wuji pointed out that Ma Junwu “deliberately revised the original text and preferred expressiveness to faithfulness” (Liu Wuji, 1986, p.218). No matter it is “a faithful way”, or “corruption”, or “revision of the original text”, they are translating ways that Ma Junwu adopts to achieve his goal which is “to express his own political ideas”. Through these ways, Ma Junwu makes the original emotions clearer in the translated text and arouses readers’ patriotic resonance, attaining the same effect as that of the original. For example, Ma Junwu revises a little in stanza 1.

Original text: The isles of Greece, the isles of Greece!
 Where burning Sappho loved and sung,
 Where grew the arts of war and peace,
 Where Delos rose, and Phoebus sprung!
 Eternal summer gilds them yet,
 But all, except their sun, is set. (Liu Wuji, 1986, p.258)

Translated text: Xi la dao, Xi la dao,
 Shi ren sha fu an zai zai? Ai guo zhi shi chuan zui zao.
 Zhan zheng ping he wan qian shu, Qi shu jie zi xi la chu.
 De lei, fei bu liang ying xiong, Su yuan jie shi xi la zu.
 Yu jie hu! Man shuo nian nian xia ri chang, Wan ban xiao xie sheng xie yang.
 (Ma Junwu, 1991, p.438)

Apart from that Ma Junwu translated the original 6 lines to 10 lines, he added two words which showed the translating goal of Ma Junwu. “Sappho” is a female poet in ancient Greece who is famous for her love poems. However, Ma Junwu translated her poems in to “ai guo zhi shi” (meaning patriotic poems in Chinese); “Delos” and “Pheobus” were also titled with “ying xiong” (meaning hero in Chinese). Readers will relate this translated text with “national emotions” the moment they read it.

Just as Liu Wuji said, Ma Junwu “took free translation as the principle and did not translate literally” (Liu Wuji, 1986, p.216). Ma Junwu always added his own comments, extending the original 6 lines to 10 lines which after all was the result of his translation aim. Take stanza 5 for example:

Original text: And where are they? and where art thou,
 My country? On thy voiceless shore
 The heroic lay is tuneless now —
 The heroic bosom beats no more!
 And must thy lyre, so long divine,
 Degenerate into hands like mine? (Liu Wuji, 1986, p.260)

Translated text: Xi la zhi min bu ke yu, Xi la zhi guo zai he chu?
 Dan yu hai an si dang nian, Hai an chen chen yi wu yu.
 Duo shao ying xiong gu dai shi, Zhi jin chuan song lei you chui.
 Qin huang se lao hao hua xie, Dang shi ying xiong qi jin shi.
 Yu jie hu! Yu zuo shen sheng xi la ge, Cai bo qi nai xi la he!
 (Ma Junwu, 1991, p.440)

In this stanza, the original line 1 and 2 are extended to line 1, 2, 3, 4 and the original line 3 to line 5 and 6. Line 6 of “Zhi jin chuan song lei you chui” is new content added by Ma Junwu which does not exist in the original. Besides, “Qin huang se lao hao hua xie”, “Yu zuo shen sheng xi la ge, Cai bo qi nai xi la he” are all Ma Junwu’s expressions of his own emotions about the similarity of comparison of Greece’s glorious past and humiliating present to that of China. The translation purpose can also be found in the preface in which Ma Junwu says “Byron grieves for Greece and I grieve for China” (Ma Junwu, 1991, p.438). The purpose of Byron writing this poem is to arouse the patriotic enthusiasm of the Greek people, encourage them to fight for independence and freedom. The purpose of Ma Junwu translating it is to awake Chinese people to know the reality of China’s being humiliated and fight up through this translated text, hoping to attain the same effect as that of the original. Ma Junwu’s translated text conforms to the relation norm of similarity of effect.

IV. CONCLUSION

After the above analysis, we find that *Ai Xi La Ge* by Ma Junwu conforms to the following translation norms: the expectancy norms of readers expecting translated text to be easily accepted on the aspect of language; the accountability norm of being loyal to readers; the communication norm of being relevant; the relation norm of similarity of effect. The reason why it conforms to the above translation norms is mainly decided by the social-cultural background when the translated text is produced and Ma Junwu’s identity and life experience. Both the two aspects together determine the translation norms that a translated text conforms to.

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The Relationship between Critical Thinking Ability of Iranian English Translation Students and Their Translation Ability

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Abstract—The purpose of the present study was to examine the relationship between critical thinking and translation ability of Iranian English translation students. Moreover, the difference between critical thinking skills of males and females was explored. The participants of this study were 86 Iranian senior English translation students of Islamic Azad University, Islamshahr branch. For gathering data two kinds of instruments were used: a critical thinking questionnaire (The Persian version of CCTST- form B) and English to Persian translation test. The findings revealed no significant difference between critical thinking abilities of females and males. Thus it can be concluded that gender has no role in critical thinking abilities of the Iranian EFL learners. Furthermore, the results of this study indicated that learners with more critical abilities were more successful in translation performance. These findings highlight the importance of teaching thinking skills to our learners and Integrating problem solving activities that need critical thinking in our teaching and learning process.

Index Terms—critical thinking, translation ability, Iranian English translation students

I. INTRODUCTION

All aspects of our private and social life are affected by the way we think, and education is not an exception. Recent movements in the educational system underline the significance of critical thinking skills for academic studies and life. It is highly recognized that learning to think is one of the most important objectives of educational setting. Dewey (1933) confirmed that the essential aim of education is learning to think. Likewise, Moon (2008) asserts that critical thinking can be regarded as a central aim of learning and a core of higher education, and learners who reach those levels of requirements can be considered as critical thinkers.

Ennis (2011) characterized critical thinking as the ability to think logically and make good decisions in doing something or believing something. Carr (1990) highlights the importance of teaching higher order thinking skills and states that learners should be qualified to think rationally, analyze, compare and evaluate questions. It entails special skills as to detect a problem, analyze it, and make inferences to solve it.

Michael Scriven & Richard Paul at the 8th Annual International Conference on Critical Thinking and Education Reform, summer 1987 stated that, "Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action."

The idea of critical thinking is not new, it returns to the teaching routine of Socrates 2500 years ago. Socrates was the one who acknowledged a technique of questioning and examining for the verification of facts. Plato, Aristotle, and the Greek doubters followed Socrates' performance. Descartes' thinking has also had implications for contemporary education. His systematic doubt initiated empiricism and the western scientific method. During the Renaissance, various scholars in Europe raised critical thinking for questioning certain issues (Paul, Elder, and Bartell, 1997). In the late 20th century, logical and analytical thinking has regained the importance. The 'Thinking Skills' and the associated 'Philosophy for Children' movements attempted to integrate logic and critical thinking into the school programs (Lipman et al. 1980).

Translation, being a very challenging and complex process, calls for different skills and knowledge areas. Translation associates with various cognitive and critical thinking abilities.

As specified by Newmark (1998), demonstrating the learner's knowledge of the foreign language, translation from L1 to L2 and L2 to L1 in the advance phase of foreign language teaching is recognized as the fifth skill. Translation needs exploring abilities, as Machida (2011) states "When learners are translating, they can see what makes sense and what doesn't. When their comprehension or production in SL/FL doesn't make sense to them, they can go into details of the language. For example, they may explore not only words, but sub-word level such as morphology, or beyond words and sentences, and their inquiry may extend to non-linguistic, cultural issues" (p.742).

Alves et al. (2003) believe that translation, similar to many other qualified capacities, requires not only innate abilities but also theoretical learning and practical training. Shahvali (1997) goes further and claims that, theoretical knowledge and practical skills alone are not enough to prepare students for developments in the field. It is necessary to focus on students' self-updating ability and to improve their related mental, planning, and communicative skills.

Gonzalez Davies (2004) confirms the above arguments and concludes that translation studies has a complex and multilayered quality which still needs exploration.

A. *Statement of the Problem*

One of the important abilities English translation students are expected to master at the end of their university education is the ability to translate competently. While so many classes are presented for EFL translation students at universities, the output is usually less than satisfactory. It can be seen that even senior or graduated students of translation are not able to translate appropriately because they lack necessary grammatical and vocabulary knowledge, which in turn leads to comprehension problems. Using ineffective and unproductive strategies can be considered as another source of this inefficiency.

B. *Significance of the Study*

Training capable translators is a basic goal in translators' training program in Iran and should be given a high priority. It can be seen that most translating problems have remained unsolved because translation is a challenging and difficult area for Iranian students. Considering this fact, the key questions are: what skills and strategies are required to develop translating skills? And how can we train a good translator? According to National Network for Translation, a competent translator must have various skills as: professionalism, networking skills, attention to detail, flexibility/adaptability, organizational skills, writing skills, general knowledge, analytical skills, subject knowledge, curiosity, excellent knowledge of the foreign language, IT skills, picking up new ideas quickly, good cultural awareness, love of reading and research skills. Most of these characteristics such as: flexibility/adaptability, organizational skills, attention to detail, analytical skills, research skills and curiosity require deep understanding and thinking skills. According to Huit (1998), thinking has an essential role in one's achievement and success especially in the information era. A critical thinker asks right questions, collects related data, and reaches dependable conclusions and as a result live more efficiently (Center for Critical Thinking, 1996).

A critical thinker is honest, flexible, unbiased, well-informed, skilled in search of related information, concentrated on analysis, and careful in making judgments (Diestler, 2001; Halpern, 2003; Petress, 2004).

For training critical thinkers meaningful instruction is required to prevent learners from superficial and unreflective learning and offer them the necessary tools for understanding the world around them (Chaffee, 1985).

In this manner, how to think instead of what to think should be stressed and learners should be urged to participate in class activities enthusiastically.

Thus the results of this study can be taken into consideration in the pedagogical process by university instructors.

C. *Research Questions*

In this study, it was tried to identify how much Iranian English translation students think critically and how much this ability relates to their performance on a translation test. Moreover, the possible difference between critical thinking ability of male and female learners was investigated.

Having these aims in mind, the following questions were formulated:

1. Is there any significant relationship between the critical thinking ability of Iranian translation students and their translation performance?
2. Do male and female Iranian translation students show any significant difference considering their critical ability?

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

According to Atkinson (1997), critical thinking is one of the major issues in educational setting nowadays. Numerous studies highlight its effect on various aspects of foreign /second language learning, including language proficiency, reading and listening comprehension, using learning strategies, vocabulary learning, and translation. Some of them are as follow:

Rashid and Hashim (2008) tried to examine the relationship between critical thinking and language proficiency. For this purpose 280 undergraduate students of University Utara Malaysia took the Cornell Critical Thinking Test (CCTT) and English language proficiency test. The findings revealed a significant correlation between English language proficiency of Malaysian students and their critical thinking ability.

Fahim et al. (2010) investigated the relationship between Iranian EFL test takers' critical thinking ability and their performance on the reading section of TOEFL. The results showed advantage of those with greater critical thinking abilities. It was concluded that critical thinking has significant role in answering reading comprehension questions.

In another similar study Kamali and Fahim (2011) studied the relationship between resilience, reading comprehension of texts containing unknown vocabulary items and critical thinking skill of Iranian EFL intermediate

students. The findings illustrated that levels of critical thinking had significant effect on the learners' reading ability which in line with the results of the aforementioned study.

In a different study, Nour Mohammadi et al. (2012) focusing on reading strategies and their relationship with critical thinking ability of Iranian EFL Learners found that meta-cognitive strategy was the most used reading strategy among learners. Besides a low positive significant correlation between learners' critical thinking ability and their general use of reading strategies was detected. Their finding further showed that males' critical thinking ability was higher than females.

In another study on reading comprehension, Sheikhi (2009) found that the students' critical thinking correlated with their reading comprehension, and the autonomy and critical thinking are significantly related to each other. Moreover, strong relationship between reading comprehension and autonomy was detected.

In another research, relationship between critical thinking ability, L2 vocabulary learning strategies, and L2 vocabulary knowledge of Iranian EFL learners was detected. The findings demonstrated that vocabulary knowledge of Iranian EFL learners was significantly related to their critical thinking skill. Moreover, subjects' critical thinking ability was correlated positively with memorization, determination, meta-cognitive, and cognitive strategies of L2 vocabulary learning but not with social ones.

A different but related study was conducted by Rahimi and Soryani (2014), to discover the possible relationship between critical thinking abilities of Iranian EFL teachers and their instructing vocabulary learning strategy. The findings disclosed that strategy teaching inversely and significantly correlated with inductive reasoning, inferencing, and analysis; however, the correlation of deductive reasoning skills and evaluation was not significant.

Moreover, Mirzai (2008) in his research found that high critical thinking Iranian EFL students performed better than the low critical thinking ones concerning lexical inferencing.

Nikoopour et al. (2011) conducted another study to examine the relationship between critical thinking of Iranian EFL learners and their use of indirect and direct language learning strategies. The results revealed a significant relationship between critical thinking and the use of particular indirect and direct language learning strategies, such as meta-cognitive, cognitive, and social, but the findings did not show any significant relationship with memory, compensation, and affective strategies.

The effect of learners' learning style on critical thinking ability was investigated by Myers and Dyer (2006) as well. They found that critical thinking skills of female and male are not significantly different. But, learners who prefer theoretical chronological learning styles gained noticeably upper critical thinking scores. Moreover, there was not seen any significant difference in critical thinking ability of learners who favored other learning styles.

Nour Mohammadi et al. (2014) conducted a further study on critical thinking to explore its relationship with listening comprehension ability of Iranian EFL learners. The results indicated a strong positive correlation between listening comprehension ability and critical thinking skills. Besides, the findings suggested a significant dissimilarity between high and low critical thinkers concerning their listening comprehension ability.

In another research, Magno (2010) tried to investigate the effect of meta-cognitive skills on growing critical thinking skills of 240 Freshmen College students in Philippines. Using the Pearson Product Moment correlation, it was found that the features of critical thinking abilities are significantly related to the aspects of meta-cognition.

To close, Bolori and Naghipoor (2013), explored the relationship between 100 Iranian EFL learners' critical thinking skills with their translation performance. The participants divided into two groups of high and low groups of critical thinking. The results presented a difference between high and low group and their score on translation M/C test. It means that the higher the learners' skill of critical thinking, the better their score on the M/C translation tests.

Considering the above literature, the role of critical thinking in education is recognized; those learners who are more critical seems to be more successful in learning particularly foreign language learning.

III. METHOD

A. Participants

The participants of this study were 86 Iranian senior English translation students of Islamic Azad University, Islamshahr branch. The sample was selected based on their availability. The subjects consisted of 62 (72.1%) female and 24 (27.9%) male. Their average age range was 26.7. (See Table 2)

B. Instruments

Two kinds of instruments were used in this study:

1. *California Critical Thinking Skill Test -Form B (CCTST)*

The Persian version of CCTST- form B including 34 items was administered to measure students' critical thinking skills. The overall score of this test is 34. According to Facione (1990), for testing critical thinking of adults at levels above high school, form B of CCTST is appropriate. The CCTST reveals the test-takers' critical thinking skills necessary to succeed in professional and educational settings where making decisions, reasoning, identifying and resolving problems are essential.

Five components for measuring critical thinking ability are: analysis, evaluation, inference, deductive reasoning, and inductive reasoning. The reliability of CCTST after applying KR20 as stated by Facione (1990) was equal to .78 to .80. For the Persian version of CCTST, applied in this study, Mahboobi et al. (2012) have reported the reliability of .87.

2. English to Persian translation test

The translation test consists of ten English quotations from brilliant figures. One point was given for each appropriate translation. The overall scoring of translation part is 10. Quotation is defined as “something that a person says or writes that is repeated or used by someone else in another piece of writing or a speech” (Merriam- Webster Dictionary). A good quote can be the heart of a motivating article. Good quotes help to tell a story and boost the believability of a speech. Words that are crafted well can leave a long-term impression on the world.

Since translating these well-crafted words needs deep understanding and analyzing, the researchers of the present study chose quotes for translation test. Rendering these quotes appropriately can show the complexities and depth of translating. Translators should be able to analyze the text to see what makes sense and what doesn't; they need advanced analytical skills and awareness.

In the present study, unlike Boloori and Naghipoor (2013) who explored the relationship between learners' critical thinking skills with their translation ability by using multiple choice as a translation test, the production test was used.

A multiple choice translation test measures competence or comprehension, while a translation production test measures performance. They assess two different but connected constructs (Birjandi and Farahzad, 1997).

C. Data Collection Procedure

In one session, both critical thinking questionnaire and translation test were administered to the participants. The allocated time for answering CCTST was about 50 minutes, and for translation test 40 minutes.

After collecting the answer sheets, SPSS program was applied to estimate the correlation between critical thinking and translation ability. For this purpose Pearson Product- Moment Correlation was employed. Furthermore, for identifying the probable difference between male and female critical thinking skill a t-test was applied.

IV. RESULTS

The results of the study are reported in two sections of descriptive and inferential statistics.

First, descriptive analysis of the data consisting of the mean, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis, maximum and minimum scores is demonstrated.

Then, for examining if there is a significant difference among scores of different groups, one sample T-test, independent sample T-test and multiple regression analysis were applied.

A. Descriptive Statistics

TABLE 1
SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION BASED ON GENDER

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	62	72.1
Male	24	27.9
Total	86	100

As table 1 shows, females formed %72.1, and male %27.9 of the sample population.

TABLE 2
SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION BASED ON AGE

Age	Frequency	Valid Percentage
20-25	47	61
26-30	13	16.9
31-35	7	9.1
36 and above	10	13
Total	77	100

Table 2 represents age distribution of the sample. As it can be seen, the maximum population related to the age range of 20-25 which is 61%, and the minimum related to the age range of 31-35 which is 9.1%.

TABLE 3
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF TRANSLATION TEST

Variable	Mean	SD	Min. Score	Max. score	Kurtosis	Skewness
Translation	3.02	1.76	0	6	-1.06	-0.31

The maximum obtainable score from translation test was 10. However, as illustrated in table 3, the range of translation scores is within 0 to 6, and the mean score is equal to 3.02. Moreover, considering skewness and kurtosis of the scores, the distribution is normal.

TABLE 4
SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION BASED ON CRITICAL THINKING ABILITY

Scores	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
0-10	63	73.3	73.3
11-20	23	26.7	100
21-34	0	0	100
Total	86	100	

As table 4 illustrates, critical thinking ability is divided in to three levels based on the acquired scores. At the first level, the score range is 0-10; at the second level it is 11-20, and at the third level the distribution is 21-34. As it can be seen, most of the subjects (73.3%) are located in the first group which is below the cutoff point, signifying that they are under desirable level of critical ability. There is no subjects in level three which is related to desirable level of critical ability.

In table 5 descriptive statistics of critical thinking ability is depicted.

TABLE 5
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF CRITICAL THINKING

Variable	Mean	SD	Min.	Max.	Kurtosis	Skweness
Critical thinking	9.07	3.45	2	20	0.572	0.767

As it can be seen the mean score is equal to 9.07. The minimum score is 2 and the maximum one is 20. The overall score of this questionnaire is 34.

Considering skewness and kurtosis of the score variables, the distribution is considered normal.

In the following table, descriptive statistics of the components of critical thinking skills is reported.

TABLE 6
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF CRITICAL THINKING ABILITIES' CATEGORIES

Components	Mean	SD	Min.	Max.	Kurtosis	Skweness
Evaluation	3.32	2.03	0	9	0.51	0.73
Analysis	2.67	1.53	0	8	0.87	0.61
Inference	3.07	1.44	0	7	0.44	0.35
Inductive reasoning	3.05	2.11	0	8	-0.17	0.69
Deductive reasoning	3.5	1.48	1	8	0.22	0.61

Considering *evaluation component*, this subscale is scored on a scale ranging between 0 and 14. The minimum obtained score here is 0 and the maximum is 9, and the achieved mean is 3.32. In *analysis component*, the subscale is scored on a scale ranging between 0 and 9. The achieved mean is 2.67; the minimum obtained score is 0 and the maximum is 8. In *inference component*, the subscale is scored on a scale ranging between 0 and 11. The achieved mean is 3.07; the minimum score is 0 and the maximum is 7. In *inductive reasoning* the subscale is scored on a scale ranging between 0 and 14. The achieved mean is 3.05; the minimum score is 0 and the maximum is 8. Finally, in *deductive reasoning section*, the subscale is scored on a scale ranging between 0 and 16. The achieved mean is 3.5; the minimum score is 1 and the maximum is 8. Moreover, all components show normal distribution, regarding their skewness and kurtosis.

B. Inferential Statistics

1. Research Question 1: Is there any significant relationship between the critical thinking ability of Iranian translation students and their translation performance?

For answering this question, Pearson and Spearman correlation formula were applied.

TABLE 7
COEFFICIENT OF CORRELATION BETWEEN CRITICAL THINKING AND TRANSLATION ABILITY

Variable	Significance level	Coefficient of Correlation	Scale
Translation ability	0.034	0.232	Interval(Pearson)

As illustrated in the table, the obtained coefficient of correlation between critical ability and translation ability is 0.232 which is considered significant at $p \leq 0.05$ level. It means as critical abilities of students increase, their translation scores raise as well. Thus, our answer to the first research question is positive; there is a significant relationship between the critical thinking ability of Iranian translation students and their translation ability.

TABLE 8
CORRELATION BETWEEN COMPONENTS OF CRITICAL THINKING AND TRANSLATION SCORE

		Evaluation	Analysis	Inference	Inductive reasoning	Deductive reasoning
Translation score	Coefficient of Correlation	0.233	0.309	-0.116	0.093	0.254
	Significance level	0.033	0.004	0.292	0.398	0.020

Studying critical thinking components, it was found that analysis and deductive reasoning components have significant relationship with translation score at $p \leq 0.01$ level of significance, besides evaluation category showed

significant relationship at $p \leq 0.05$. Consequently, it can be concluded that evaluation, analysis, and deductive reasoning abilities are related to translation performance in our students. The higher the learners' skills in evaluation, analysis and deductive reasoning, the better their translation scores would be. However, inference and inductive reasoning abilities haven't shown any significant relationship with translation ability.

2. Research Question 2: 2. Do male and female Iranian translation students show any significant difference considering their critical ability?

For finding any possible difference among male and female skills, independent sample T-test was utilized.

TABLE 9
MALE AND FEMALE DIFFERENCE ON CRITICAL THINKING ABILITIES

	Groups	Mean	Levene's Test		t Test			
			F Value	Sig.	Mean difference	t Value	df	Sig.
Critical Thinking	Male	9.33	1.628	0.206	0.366	0.405	36.152	0.688
	Female	8.97						

The figures in table 9 signify that the difference between males' and females' critical thinking is not significant.

TABLE 10
MALE AND FEMALE DIFFERENCE ON CRITICAL THINKING COMPONENTS

Variable	Groups	Mean	T Test				Levene's Test	
			Sig.	df	T value	Mean difference	Sig.	F value
Evaluation	Female	3.13	0.197	34.817	-1.315	0.704	0.16	2.009
	Male	3.83						
Analysis	Female	2.6	0.481	37.828	0.712	-0.278	0.483	0.496
	Male	2.9						
Inference	Female	3.2	0.065	46.536	1.89	0.616	593	0.288
	Male	2.6						
Inductive Reasoning	Female	3.5	0.99	36.47	0.012	0.007	0.095	2.849
	Male	3.4						
Deductive Reasoning	Female	3.39	0.484	34.896	-0.781	0.279	0.368	0.818
	Male	3.7						

Table 10 shows the difference between males' and females' critical thinking subscales of English translation students at Islamshahr Islamic Azad University.

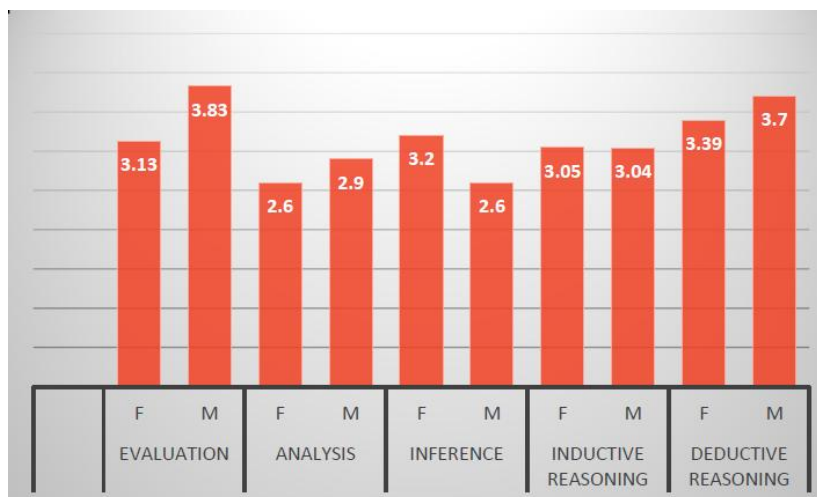


Figure 1. Comparison of males' and females' critical thinking components

As figures in Table 9 and 10 signify, not only critical thinking skills in general but also the critical thinking components of male and female does not show any significant difference.

Discussion and implication for pedagogy

The purpose of the present study was to investigate if there was any significant relationship between critical thinking abilities of Iranian English translation students and their translation ability. Moreover, the difference between critical thinking skills of males and females was explored.

Contrary to Nour Mohammadi et al. (2012) findings, no significant difference between critical thinking abilities of females and males was detected in this study. Thus it can be concluded that gender has no role in critical thinking abilities of the Iranian English translation students, and it is not an effective factor in thinking abilities and the way one thinks.

Furthermore, the results of this study indicated that learners with superior level of critical thinking had better translation performance. The obtained result suggests that the higher level critical thinkers not only analyze the message

of source language text better, but also synthesize it more effectively in comparison to lower level ones. This positive relationship between critical thinking and translation ability is in line with the results of copious previous research papers that confirmed the significant role of critical thinking on various aspects of language teaching and learning (Fahim et al., 2010; Niko pour et al., 2011; Rashid & Hashim, 2008; Kamali & Fahim, 2011; Myers & Dyer, 2006; Mango, 2010).

One of the basic skills that students should gain for academic success is critical thinking and critical thinkers achieve more in their academic tasks; besides, by developing these skills they become more capable to integrate with their society (Fahim and Komijani, 2010). Huit (1998) marks, "The movement to the information age has focused attention on good thinking as an important element of life success". In this way, as Chalesworth (2004) states, one learns to think for oneself and develop his mind to its fullest potential. Intellectually involved students value questions more than answers, strive for comprehension over rote memorization, and then as a basic element of these processes, students learn how to learn.

Human beings have the ability to be logical and reasonable. But this ability must be developed. According to Barnes (2005), our students deemed the "teacher as God syndrome..... and if instructor-centered approaches to college teaching continue, students will neither learn the content of our disciplines nor learn to think critically about them". She further adds that "thought must be taught!" In line with Barnes, Halpern (1999) indicates that "there are identifiable critical thinking skills that can be taught and learned, and when students learn these skills and apply them appropriately, they become better thinkers" (p. 70). She recommends that university students should receive explicit instruction in how to think.

Unfortunately, according to Paul, Elder, and Bartell, (1997) studies reveal three worrying facts: (1) most college faculty at all levels lack a substantive concept of critical thinking; (2) most faculty don't realize they lack a substantive concept and instead believe they understand critical thinking sufficiently and are already successfully teaching it within their discipline; (3) despite reform efforts, lecture, rote memorization, and (largely ineffective) short-term study strategies are still the norm in college instruction and learning today."

These facts highlight the importance of Integrating problem solving activities that need critical thinking in our teaching and learning process. Accordingly, special attention should be given to designing syllabus, developing materials and training teachers to enhance learners' critical thinking.

For improving critical thinking, teachers themselves are key elements. According to Meyers, "Students will learn to think critically when faculty challenge learners about what they think they believe" (Chet Meyers, personal communication, Sept. 2004). For this purpose, Elder (2005) suggests a professional development model based on critical thinking for training teachers. She believes critical thinking is not one of many potential "angles" for professional development, rather it is the leading force for it. Barnes (2005) asserts in her article that "Personally and professionally, participation in the critical thinking 'movement' has changed me and many of my colleagues forever." (p.12)

Finally, it should be mentioned that only through well-designed, long-term planning such a significant notion of critical thinking can be developed in our educational system. Short-term strategies are needed, undeniably. But without long-term planning nothing important happens. Deep learning cannot be achieved.

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The Relationship between EFL Learners' Extensive Reading and English Language Proficiency

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Abstract—The present study aims at investigating the effects of extensive reading (ER) on language proficiency of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. A Preliminary English Test (PET) was administered to 106 male and female university students. The participants were selected as intermediate learners and were divided into three groups (one control and two experimental groups). During the ten sessions of the treatment, ten short stories (authentic and simplified) were provided to the two homogenous groups (two experimental groups). The first experimental group received authentic reading texts and the second experimental group received simplified reading texts, while the participants of the control group followed the ordinary reading course at the university. All three groups received post-tests administered after the treatment. The results of the t-tests revealed that there is no significant difference in reading scores across the posttest between two experimental groups. The results of ANOVA also revealed that there is a significant difference between the scores of the control group and experimental groups' participants. Based on the interview result after the post-test, all of the participants (100%) agreed that they had positive attitude toward extensive reading after participating in the treatment sessions. The study suggests, however, students' curriculum courses should include extensive reading texts in order to develop EFL language proficiency.

Index Terms—extensive reading, simplified texts, authentic texts, graded readers

I. INTRODUCTION

In the field of language teaching and learning, numerous studies have been conducted that shed some light upon different aspects of reading comprehension (Atkins, 1998; Coady & Huckin, 1997; Harley, 1995; Hatch and Brown, 1995; Huckin, Haynes, & Coady, 1993; Nation, 2001; Read, 2000; Schmitt, 2000; Schmitt and McCarthy, 1997; Wesche and Paribakht, 1999). This radical change is reflected in the view expressed by Beglar and Hunt (2005) which states that “reading comprehension is the crucial, and in some senses, the central component in successful foreign language acquisition. (p. 7)”

In Iran, the most frequent kind of reading which is practiced at universities is *intensive reading*. In this form of reading, students should carefully analyze the text with the hope of understanding the text carefully (Bamford and Day, 1997). This way of teaching reading texts has been considered as a pedagogical practice, which is a language lesson not a reading lesson (Susser and Robb, 1990). Based on Department of Curriculum and Instruction Development (2008), this is a good justification for the fact that most of Iranian university students are not good at reading English texts. They are not fluent because they translate each word into their first language while reading a text. They analyze the written text word by word and it hinders their normal way of reading. As a result, they will face many difficulties in reading a text. Overall, it leads to the development of a negative attitude toward second language learning texts.

In order to overcome this problem, students should read large quantities of reading comprehension texts based on their level as a pleasure. In the long run, when extensive reading is practiced, they will be fluent readers and at the same time they could improve their reading speed, vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension and will have a possible positive attitude toward English reading comprehension texts (Ford, 1996; Gray, 1986; Sharpe, 1995). According to Nation (1997), extensive reading is the best remedy for those who are not good at reading comprehension. By reading extensively, students can improve all their English skills such as reading, writing, and spelling, grammar, etc. (Krashen, 1993, 2004). Consequently, students will gain knowledge of learning to read well, which is the first step for language learners to get the right pass for acquiring a new language (Alderson, 1984).

According to Siramard (1992), English knowledge is one of the best tools for communication and promoting everyone's knowledge of the technology. Most Iranian students, thus, choose to take part in different English classes in

order to develop their knowledge. There has been a renewed interest in the nature of reading comprehension and its role in learning and teaching in recent years (Richards & Renandya, 2002). This is due to several reasons, such as the influence of comprehension-based approaches to language development, the research efforts of applied linguists, and the development of computer-based language corpora (Nunan, 1999).

In sum, reading is the best way to pass language problems successfully, develop the writing style, extend the vocabulary knowledge, improve grammar, and advance the spelling problems. Due to the paucity of research on extensive reading in second or foreign language learning in Iranian context, the present study sought to investigate extensive reading through finding answers to the following research questions:

1. Does extensive reading affect the language proficiency of EFL students?
2. What is the EFL learners' attitude toward the use of ER?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Cho & Krashen (1994), in an extensive reading program, the readers choose the materials by themselves from a series of graded readers with the aim of achieving them in a specific target time and period. Graded readers are in the form of short stories which are classified according to the grammar and vocabulary and are controlled for a specific age of students (Day and Bamford, 1998). It is hard to deny the benefits of extensive reading. Many studies have been conducted for nearly 20 years to show the usefulness of extensive reading approach in various aspects of language learning.

Elley and Mangubhai (1983) conducted a study on two hundred elementary students. The students participated in the extensive reading program for a year. The results showed that their receptive skills (reading and words recognition) improved significantly. In the second year of exposure to extensive reading texts, other abilities (oral and written production) of the subjects improved too.

Another study was conducted on extensive reading by Hafiz and Tudor (1989). The participants were Turkish students who took part in a four month extensive program. The researchers found an improvement in the reading and writing ability. Robb and Susser (1989) conducted a similar study in Japan with Taiwanese students who participated in an extensive reading program. They found that the students reading proficiency made a substantial improvement. Based on Elley (1991)'s study on extensive reading program, the primary level students of Singapore who took part in this study improved in many areas of English language, such as listening, reading, and writing. Lai (1993) found improvement in speaking and writing among secondary students who participated in a four-week extensive reading program in Korea.

Cho and Krashen (1994) found that by exposing the students to extensive reading, the attitudes of the readers can change and their language proficiency can improve. They performed their study with 80 adults who were Chinese living in the United States. The participants read the stories that were designed for senior high school boys and the texts were appropriate for 5 grade level. At the end of the treatment, the result confirmed the researcher's hypothesis of improving in language proficiency. Polak & Krashen (1988) found that extensive reading program is very useful for reading comprehension. They conducted their survey among junior students of Korea for about 9 weeks. The results showed that they improved a lot in their reading comprehension. According to Mason and Krashen (1997), extensive reading can have a positive effect on readers. They performed an experiment on Japanese high school students and the results showed gains in positive affective and an improvement in comprehension.

Pigada and Schmitt (2006) reported an increase in vocabulary knowledge among Japanese university students in the United States after taking part in an extensive reading program for one month. They found that students can acquire vocabulary by being exposed to extensive reading texts. Day & Bamford (2002) conducted an experiment with Japanese high school student. They gave them extensive reading at their level and the students read them silently in their free time for entertainment. The result was positive, and the students acquired a good knowledge of vocabulary incidentally.

A survey was conducted by Yamazaki (1996) with high school students of Africa. The students engaged in this extensive reading program for 8 weeks. In the end, the results showed that their vocabulary knowledge increased. Pigada and Schmitt (2006), who conducted a two month case study in the U.S., reported an increase in vocabulary knowledge of 29 year old African learners of French. In addition to vocabulary, they improved in spelling, meaning understanding and comprehending the grammatical points.

Sakar and Ercetin (2005) studied 44 adult intermediate level learners and found that learners prefer authentic texts significantly more than the simplified texts. They also found a positive relationship between authentic reading texts and comprehension and suggest that simplified texts may be useful for the lower-level learners to process additional information better. Merlot (2000) found similar effects especially for intermediate and upper-intermediate students and stated that the learners can improve their grammatical, structural and lexical part of their language through exposing to authentic texts.

In a small study of 13 second-year German students, Chun and Payne (2004) concluded that students who had a lower level of language proficiency used simplified texts in order to understand the text better. They suggest that a rich multimedia environment (comprehensible input) increases the cognitive load on students and this can have an impact on comprehension.

In a small study of 55 second-year German students, Chun and Payne (2004) concluded that students who had a

higher verbal working memory capacity prefer authentic reading texts more than modified texts. They suggest that higher level reading texts increases the cognitive load on students and this can have an impact on reading comprehension.

Fan (2003) reports on the use of simplified reading texts by Chinese fourth grade students, using different graded readers and short stories for about 10 weeks and the researcher reported a significant difference between their pre- and post-test scores. Fan found that the majority of students (90%) decided to continue reading after the treatment. Hafiz & Tudor (1989) reports on the result of a survey about the use of simplified and authentic texts by international students entering a university in England for the 1995-1996 academic years. 50 students used simplified and 50 students used authentic texts as their extensive reading texts. Both groups took part in a proficiency test after two month exposure to reading texts. The result showed that the authentic group members better performance.

A study by William & Moran (1989) involved 254 Chinese and Japanese ESL students in Vancouver, Canada. Her study differs from other studies on reading texts use in that it employed modified and authentic texts. They found that 87% of the Japanese students who read modified texts got better remark in their posttest. Krashen (1993) investigated the effects of extensive reading on reading comprehension of EFL learners, using 105 American college students of Spanish. The students were assigned to read short stories (simplified and authentic) on the computer screen. The computer was programmed to track the subjects' spending time. Krashen (1993) found that the experimental group with access to the authentic texts performed better in both immediate and delayed tests than the group with access to the simplified texts and benefited more. The experimental group also achieved higher reading comprehension scores than the control group.

Mason & Krashen (1997) was one of the early researchers who investigated the effects of extensive reading on reading comprehension of EFL learners. They compared simplified texts with authentic texts in effectiveness for improving a reading comprehension task. Each of 200 beginning-level Brazilian learners of English took part in a reading comprehension tests after the treatment. Students were able to understand 89% of the passage in the simplified group, and 75% in the authentic group, so it indicates that the extensive reading texts improved the reading comprehension for beginners. According to Yamazaki (1996), eighty Japanese undergraduate and graduate students took part in his experiment. They took two types of vocabulary tests (immediate and delayed test). The scores on both the tests were higher among the authentic group than in the modified group. However, there was no significant difference on the test scores between the two conditions.

Schmitt & McCarthy (1997) also investigated the relative effects of modified texts to real texts on empirical and perceived efficiency of these texts on language proficiency of EFL learners. Seventy-seven university students took a comprehension test that required answering the test comprehension. They also completed a survey about their perceptions of the two types of texts. The results indicated that there were no differences between the two types of dictionaries but the participants overwhelmingly preferred authentic texts more than modified.

A more recent experiment by Kobayashi (2000) was an attempt to examine how Japanese EFL learners evaluate extensive reading texts when using authentic and modified texts. Eighty six college students and sixty high school students read both authentic and modified English texts. A week after the experiment, they were given two types of tests: modified and authentic. Students also answered a questionnaire about their impressions on the kinds of texts they had used. Kobayashi (2000) found no significant differences in respect to either the number of words they had learned, although the college students group tended to read more authentic texts. There were no significant differences in their grades at the end of treatment.

III. METHOD

A. *Participants*

The participants of this study consisted of one hundred six (n=106) male and female university students, ranging in age from 20 to 22, who were in their second semester. They were all majoring in English translation at Adib University, Sari, Iran. All of them were native speakers of Persian who were selected for convenience. They had learned English for six years; three years in guidance school and three years in high school prior to pre-university studies. The reason why university students were selected was that they had passed the university entrance examination in English translation and had enough knowledge to read intermediate graded readers stage (3 and 4). Although the participants were purportedly homogeneous in terms of their common experience in English learning, a Preliminary English Test (PET) was administered to them in order to determine their level of general English proficiency. Based on the PET, one hundred six students were selected.

Furthermore, the participants were assessed based on their first semester reading course grade by their first semester English professor. Therefore being homogeneous in terms of the level of English language proficiency, they were assessed based on their previous reading course grade. Table 3.1 shows the demographic information of the participants.

TABLE 3.1
PARTICIPANTS' DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Category	Description	Number
Experimental group 1 (authentic)	University students	35
Experimental group 2 (simplified)	University students	36
Control group	University students	35
	Total	106

B. Design

In this study, the researchers used a true-experimental design. Participants were assigned to the experimental and control groups by random assignment before the use of pretest on the dependent variable. The experimental subjects were exposed to the treatment for a specified time, after which the two groups were measured on the dependent variables. Post-tests were run after the treatment to compare the means of the groups.

C. Research Instruments

The reading passages used in this study were selected from the graded readers of two famous publishers (Oxford Graded Readers and Penguin Readers) (see Appendices A). These graded readers series were chosen based on their popularity among extensive reading researchers (Bamford & Day, 1997). They used reading texts from these publications for their different extensive studies. Prior to the treatment sessions, proficiency tests were used both for obtaining homogeneous groups and as a pretest. In order to ensure the homogeneity of the groups, the Preliminary English Test (PET) was administered to the participants. Based on the results interpreted by referring to the test guide level, the majority of scores ranged from 40 to 80 which indicated that they were intermediate level learners.

The second research instrument used in the present research for data collection was an open-ended interview with the participants at the end of the treatment in order to analyze the participants' attitudes toward extensive reading.

D. Procedure

The experimental procedure consisted of three stages: Pretests, Treatments, and Posttests. One week before the study, a standardized English proficiency test (Preliminary English Test) was administered to a total of 112 participants. Those participants who were located two standard deviations above and below the mean were selected to participate in this study. Having analyzed the data, 106 participants were selected as the intermediate-level learners. The other six participants were deleted. Three students scored much higher than the others who were excluded from the participants. Three other students performed lower than what was expected. They were excluded as well. Once the researcher made certain that the participants formed a homogenous sample, the participants were randomly divided into three groups. The researcher ran the pre-test on the 21st of February at 11 o'clock. There were 5 questions in the reading PET test (pre-test), and the exam time was about 45 minutes. The students were supposed to read the reading text in each section and answer the comprehension questions after the text.

Having completed the pre-test stage, the participants in the two experimental groups received the treatments in 10 sessions. The participants in the two experimental groups read 10 short stories during the treatment. During the treatment sessions, the researcher and the participants tried to discuss and consult with each other about the content of the story. The classes for both groups were held one session a week, beginning at 11:30 in the morning until half past twelve and instructed by one of the present researchers. The treatment sessions of one experimental (simplified) group were held on Saturdays while the treatment sessions of the other experimental were held on Sundays on a computer site of the university. In all classes, the researcher spent about one hour in order to solve the participant's misunderstanding and reading comprehension problems. The first experimental group used *authentic texts* for their treatment while the second experimental group used *simplified texts* for their treatment. Students in both groups were instructed to read the texts and understand it without using their dictionaries.

The post-test was administered in the thirteenth session; the participants in all three groups received the modified version of the PET test. The test was a reading comprehension test consisting of five parts items to be answered in 45 minutes under the supervision of a teacher. Every part consisted of a short or long paragraph that the participants were supposed to read and answer the questions about the texts. They were informed that incorrect responses would have no negative points.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

One hundred six students were selected from a population of university students and were purportedly homogeneous in terms of their standardized English proficiency test (Preliminary English Test) scores, to make sure about their level of general English proficiency. Based on PET-test leveling result and the obtained scores of the participants, the participants were considered intermediate level. It should be reminded that a t-test is a statistical test which is employed to make sure whether significant (non-chance) differences can be found between two means or not (Bamford & Day, 1997). The results of the pre-test performance of the participants are shown in Table 4.1.

A. Results of Proficiency Test

TABLE 4.1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR PRETEST RESULTS ON PROFICIENCY TEST

	authentic1	simplified1	control1
Mean	50.3143	45.5278	45.6000
N	35	36	35
Std. Deviation	20.20887	15.29983	20.17453
Std. Error of Mean	3.41592	2.54997	3.41012
Minimum	21.00	21.00	19.00
Maximum	108.00	85.00	116.00

As it could be seen in Table 4.1, the mean scores of authentic, simplified and control groups are 50.3143 and 45.5278, and 45.6000 respectively. The results in this table show that the size of mean difference is small among the groups but in order to make it clear whether the mean difference is small or big at the beginning of the study, the researcher conducted a one way ANOVA in order to analyze it accurately. In table 4.2 you will see the result of one way ANOVA. Based on the result of ANOVA (.471>0.5), it could be claimed that there is no significant difference between the groups at the beginning of the treatment and they are homogeneous. Therefore, the three groups did not differ significantly in their performance on the pre-test at .05 level of significance indicating the fact that the three groups were similar before the start of the experiment.

TABLE 4.2
ANALYSIS OF THE PRE-TEST MEAN DIFFERENCE OF THE THREE GROUPS (TWO EXPERIMENTAL AND ONE CONTROL)
ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	529.236	2	264.618	.759	.471
Within Groups	35916.915	103	348.708		
Total	36446.151	105			

- The significant level has set at <.05

B. Results of Posttest for the Control and Experimental Groups

The results obtained from the post-tests are presented in 4.3. In order to see whether the treatment given to the experimental groups had any effects on their language proficiency and to see if the participants in these groups performed significantly different on their post-test, another ANOVA was conducted. The results of the second ANOVA are presented in Table 4.4.

TABLE 4.3
RESULTS OF POSTTEST FOR THE CONTROL AND EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Minimum	Maximum
Authentic 2	35	67.8571	19.21571	3.24805	33.00	113.00
Simplified 2	36	67.2778	16.14862	2.69144	30.00	102.00
Control 2	35	49.8000	19.34638	3.27013	25.00	118.00
Total	106	61.6981	19.95479	1.93818	25.00	118.00

The mean and standard deviation of the experimental group's pre- and post-tests were calculated through the use of SPSS 20. We sought to know which kinds of texts had a better effect on participant's language proficiency at the end of the treatment. In order to examine the differences and see whether they were significant, an independent sample t-test was applied. The results demonstrated in Table 4.5 indicate that the mean difference between the two experimental groups' scores, which measured at the time of the posttest, was not significant. Therefore, it indicates that the both reading texts (simplified and authentic) had the same effect for the participants.

TABLE 4.4
THE RESULTS OF POST-TESTS

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	7403.232	2	3701.616	11.081	.000
Within Groups	34407.108	103	334.050		
Total	41810.340	105			

Based on the result of the Table 4.3, there is a significant difference between the mean score of the control group and the experimental groups after the treatment. Thus, it could be claimed that that the treatment period was effective for the experimental groups' participants.

TABLE 4.5
 PAIRED SAMPLES TEST (POST-TEST)

Post test difference	Paired Differences			t	f	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean			
Pair 1 authentic2- simplified2	-.02857	28.91212	4.88704	-.006	4	.995

As Table 4.5 shows, the probability value is bigger than the level of significance, $P = 0.995 > .05$. Thus, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of PET test between the participants in extensive group 1 (authentic) and extensive group 2 (simplified) on their post-test. Their mean scores were, 67.85 and 67.88, respectively (Table 4.3). Therefore, the second null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in PET scores across the posttest between simplified and authentic groups of experimental groups is accepted. The result of the present study is in contrast to the previous studies (Sakar and Ercetin, 2005; Merlot, 2000) that claimed that authentic text can have more influence on reader's language proficiency.

As Table 4.3 indicates, the mean score of the posttest in experimental groups are 67.8571 and 67.2778, while that of control group is 49.8000. In order to examine the differences between experimental groups and control group's post-test scores, and see whether their mean scores were significant, an independent sample t-test was applied twice, once between authentic 2 and control 2 and once between simplified 2 and control 2 (table 4.6). The results demonstrated in Table 4.4 and 4.6 indicate that the mean difference between both groups' scores measured at the time of the posttest was significant. Therefore, the first null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in PET scores across the posttest between experimental groups (simplified and authentic) and control group, is rejected.

TABLE 4.6
 PAIRED SAMPLES TEST

	Paired Differences			t	f	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean			
Pair 1 authentic2-control	18.05714	23.50337	3.97279	4.545	34	.000
Pair 2 simplified2-control1	18.08571	27.75881	4.69209	3.855	34	.000

C. Comparing the Pre- and Post-tests

By analyzing the participants' performance (Table 4.7) on both pre- and post-tests, the researchers came to the conclusion that in all groups the participants performed better in their post-test as their mean scores indicates. In comparison to control group, the experimental groups performed remarkably better than the control group. It indicates that extensive reading had a positive effect on the language proficiency of the participants, and comparing the two t-values of the experimental groups (table 4.8) indicates that the participants in the simplified group performed better, although their differences were not significant.

TABLE 4.7
 COMPARING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PARTICIPANTS IN THEIR PRE- AND POST-TEST

	authentic1	authentic2	simplified1	simplified2	control1	control2
Mean	50.3143	67.8571	45.5278	67.2778	45.6000	49.8000
N	35	35	36	36	35	35
Std. Deviation	20.20887	19.21571	15.29983	16.14862	20.17453	19.34638

TABLE 4.8
 PAIRED SAMPLES TEST (T-VALUE)

	Paired Differences	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
					Mean
Pair 1 authentic1 - authentic2	17.54286	10.42154	9.959	34	.000
Pair 2 simplified1 - simplified2	21.75000	8.41894	15.501	35	.000
Pair 3 control1 - control2	4.20000	4.07142	6.103	34	.000

As Table 4.7 shows, each of the experimental groups' post-test mean scores are remarkably higher than their pre-test mean scores, so it indicates that the treatment had affected the participants positively, whereas the subjects in the control group who did not have any treatment course in this study did not improve significantly. Looking at the sig (2tailed) value in table 4.8, which is less than .05 ($p < .000$), we can reach this conclusion that there is a significant difference between their performance on pre- and post-reading comprehension tests, especially for the experimental groups.

TABLE 4.9
 PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS OF THREE GROUPS
 (DIFFERENCES OF THE MEAN SCORES (PRE AND POST) AMONG THREE GROUPS)

Paired Samples Statistics		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	authentic1	50.3143	35	20.20887	3.41592
	authentic2	67.8571	35	19.21571	3.24805
Pair 2	simplified1	45.5278	36	15.29983	2.54997
	simplified2	67.2778	36	16.14862	2.69144
Pair 3	control1	45.6000	35	20.17453	3.41012
	control2	49.8000	35	19.34638	3.27013

Based on the numerical data of Table 4.9, the mean score (pre-test) of all three groups were very close (in favor for the authentic extensive reading group). It is understood that the students are at the same reading comprehension level. After conducting the treatment (extensive reading), the mean scores of these three groups (simplified, authentic, control) were compared and it was found that the participants in the experimental groups (simplified and authentic) performed better than those in the control group on their posttest. Therefore, based on these numerical data (table 4.9), we can answer the first research question which was about the effect of extensive reading texts on language proficiency of the students.

According to the mean scores of the post-test within the experimental groups, it was found that the participants in both experimental groups had a better performance and got better scores. The mean score difference within the authentic and simplified groups were 17.5428 and 21.75 respectively and by comparing the mean score of the pre and post-tests in control group, we came to this conclusion that their post-test mean score was higher than the pre-test with a mean difference of 4.2. Based on the differences between the pre- and post-test scores of the simplified and authentic groups which are 21.75 and 17.54 respectively, it could be concluded that the participants in the simplified group outperformed the other participants in the authentic group.

D. Open-ended Interview Results

In this section, the results of the open-ended interview with 40 participants (20 participants from authentic group and 20 participants from simplified group) are presented. The participants in the interview session answered 7 questions related to extensive reading texts and their attitudes about it. The interview questions and the responses by the interviewees are presented below.

Q1: What do you think about extensive reading?

All the interviewees (100%) in both simplified and authentic groups had the same point of view. All of them considered extensive reading texts useful for them and had positive attitudes toward extensive reading. Some of them (75%) answered that reading English is useful for their future career and they can get various kinds of information when they expose to English reading texts. 26 students (65%) pointed that they felt anxious when they did not know all the words before the treatment. However, they claimed that, after being exposed to the treatment on extensive reading, they feel that they can read many texts without anxiety although they do not know some of the meanings of the new words. About 45% (18 students) said that reading English is enjoyable and useful when get a good grade in class.

Q2: Do you think extensive reading is useful for you? If so, why do you think extensive reading is useful? Do you want to continue extensive reading? Why or why not?

The answers of all the interviewees were the same as the answers to the previous question. All of them (100%) considered the extensive reading useful and they pointed that it is a reasonable way of improving the second language. All of them pointed that they want to continue reading because when they read English texts as a hobby in their free time they enjoy reading English books and reading extensive reading short stories will broaden their view. 15 students (38%) commented that reading English books developed their literacy skills and helped them to understand English literature better. All of them unanimously agreed that Extensive reading (ER) was useful and interesting for them because it improved their language proficiency.

Q3: What was your attitude toward reading texts before participating in this treatment study?

Only 5 students (13%) had positive attitudes toward reading texts. The rest of the learners (87%) did not have positive attitudes toward reading texts. They said they had many problems with reading. As an example, they pointed that when they read English texts they felt that reading the texts was difficult for them, they got so confused and they could not remember what they were reading and they felt intimidated whenever they encountered unknown grammar or vocabulary and they got nervous and confused when they could not understand every word. They did not feel confident when they read in English. They also were not satisfied with the level of reading ability that they had achieved so far in English. They believed that this way of exposure to reading texts would extend their confidence, motivation, autonomy and helped them to improve their reading comprehension. They also mentioned that they benefited from in-class activities related to extensive reading.

Q4: Do you believe that ER improves your English?

About 32 interviewees (80%) mentioned that their grammar, vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension improved significantly in this period. 10 student commented that their reading speed improved. And about 37% of the

participants pointed that their reading fluency extended.

Q5: Do you think learning to read English is an important skill for developing language proficiency in a foreign language?

About 37 of the participants (92.5%) mentioned that extensive reading texts are one of the best ways for improving language proficiency. Moreover; about 8% of the participants did not consider extensive reading texts as the main way of improving language proficiency.

Q6: What was your experience after taking part in this treatment study? Was it an interesting experience?

All of the participants unanimously agreed that they had a great experience during the treatment and they enjoyed the extensive reading classes. They also wanted to take part in the treatment sessions again and have another experience.

Q7: Which one do you like more, intensive or extensive reading?

About 36 of the participants (90%) considered extensive reading better than intensive classes based on their experience. They think they enjoy extensive reading (ER) texts better than intensive reading (IR) texts and they mentioned that dealing with intensive reading is tedious and boring. According to their point of view, they can learn English better through exposure to extensive texts which are at their level of proficiency. They mentioned that they can learn different aspects of English language (vocabulary, grammar etc.) easier by reading the kinds of texts that you enjoy, read in your free time and without any pressure. The rest of the participants (10%) think that although extensive reading is an effective way of improving English language, intensive reading is more effective.

E. Discussion

The main result of this study is that both groups in the experimental groups (simplified and authentic) showed a significant improvement after taking part in the treatment. Such an improvement was not observed in the control group. Significant differences were found between control and experimental groups in language proficiency learning and as measured by the PET posttests suggesting that achievement in experimental groups improved as a result of exposure to extensive reading texts. This means that use of extensive reading proved to be a powerful tool for improving students' achievement in second language learners' language proficiency. This finding is consistent with findings of prior studies using this form of technology in extensive reading such as Bamford and Day (2005), Day and Bamford (1998), and Hill and Thomas, (1988).

Findings of the study reported here also revealed that learners will indeed learn significantly better when they are provided with extensive reading texts (both authentic and simplified). This is congruent with the language proficiency Theory (Eskey and Grabe (1986), which states that information coded in authentic texts are as effective for learning as information coded in simplified form of the texts. Furthermore, the findings of this study confirmed the previous findings of studies carried out by such researchers as Alderson (2005); Grabe (1991) and Eskey and Grabe (1986), who found the satisfactory role of extensive reading in language proficiency. Therefore, the results suggested that both texts (simplified and authentic) in extensive reading treatment is beneficial to the learners, possibly due to the fact that they received two kinds of useful input reading texts (Ellis, 1994).

The two main findings of this study was that the participants in both experimental groups (simplified and authentic) showed a significant increase in their language proficiency due to the extensive reading program implemented in their course at the university.. Such an increase was not observed in the control group. This finding was measured by a PET-test that aimed at reading comprehension knowledge only. Based on the results reported in Table 4.7, it is concluded that the participants' performance in the two experimental groups (simplified and authentic) improved more than the participants' performance in the control group.

V. CONCLUSION

This study investigated the effectiveness of extensive reading texts on language learning of one hundred six university EFL learners at the intermediate level. Similar to findings of previous research carried out in the field (Hitosugi and Day, 2004; Day and Bamford, 2002), the results indicated that both reading texts (simplified and authentic) are useful in language learning of EFL learners. Some different patterns of use between simplified and authentic reading texts were identified, which seem to result from design features of two types of reading texts. Both texts are perceived as with different advantages and disadvantages for the learners. Possibly, the simple vocabulary and grammar of the simplified texts can help learners to improve their language proficiency step by step and the real contexts of authentic texts can expose learners to the real nature of second language.

It was also found that there are no significant differences between simplified and authentic reading texts in language learning of EFL learners. As a result, it proved to be a beneficial learning tool, since these texts (simplified and authentic) enhances language learning in general. This study also confirms that exposure to extensive reading texts, as a language learning method, which supports the power of reading in improving the language proficiency, can enhance specially reading comprehension. Therefore, the study provides evidence for integrating the extensive reading texts in the curriculum of language learning and teaching.

Implications and Applications of the Study

By and large, at the practical level, the results of this study have some pedagogical implications for teachers

and students. Besides, some important implications should receive the attention of decision makers.

There is no doubt that teachers play an important role in integrating reading texts into their classes. However, implementing extensive reading texts are challenging for the teachers when these texts are not in the main curriculum course of the students. Teachers should consult with the Department of Curriculum and Instruction Development, and explain the effectiveness of extensive reading texts on language proficiency of the students, so that they can use various forms of extensive readings more and more in education inside and outside the classroom to facilitate language proficiency. Teachers could assign the task of reading specific texts in extensive readings. These would be reading texts that teachers, on the basis of their experience, know are useful for their students.

Moreover, offering constant extensive reading texts to the students is very crucial in that they should adapt themselves to the ways of effective language learning. Furthermore, the increasing importance of developing language proficiency, requires that teachers rethink about their way of teaching and try new approaches to meet the challenges posed by implementing extensive reading texts in to the supplementary curriculum of the students.

As for the implications of the study for students, it is suggested that students should be trained on how to use and enjoy different types and levels of extensive reading texts. Learners should also be encouraged to access different kinds of information found in extensive reading texts. They frequently read the assigned reading texts by teachers, without implementing more reading texts in their daily reading schedules. Moreover, the assignments given to the students should involve more extensive reading texts so that literacy gaps can be bridged.

Decision makers and educational authorities, i.e., curriculum planners and syllabus designers, should change the curriculum and reading style of the students. They should include more extensive reading texts in the language planning, and more budgets should be allocated to schools to provide the teachers and students with desperately needed extensive reading texts. The authorities should know that, by adding more reading texts to the present curriculum of the learners, they can guarantee the language proficiency of the EFL language learners. If extensive reading texts are not used inside or outside the classes, it might not be due to the teachers' fault, but it might originate from the negligence on the part of administrators and school or government authorities. So authorities should provide training courses, seminars, workshops and discussion groups for the teachers to get familiar with theoretical and practical foundations of extensive reading, and consequently they can develop their teaching pedagogy.

This study opens avenues for further research. For example, the present research did not distinguish between the reading strategies of participants. The rich literature on Individual Learner Differences (ILDs) suggests, "There is a particularly wide variation among language learners in terms of their ultimate success in mastering an L2" (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 6). Therefore, there is a need to carry out the same study taking into account the participants' reading strategies. Some learners might be understand the texts by answering questions; while others, understand better nr summarizing (Ellis, 1994). The present study investigated intermediate Iranian EFL students reading comprehension. It could be valuable if another study subsequent study could examine the reading comprehension of students with elementary or advanced levels of proficiency through the same procedure.

This study examined reading 10 short stories (simplified and authentic) in a ten weeks treatment. Aside from the fact that ten short stories in ten weeks are relatively small to provide us with airtight proof, a similar study is needed to conduct longer period of treatment along with more short stories. Experimental study can potentially provide more versatile tool for portraying qualities in improving second language learning. This study also did not control for gender. A similar study could investigate the effect of gender variable on extensive reading.

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Chinese Students' Awareness of Functions in Their Learning of Spoken English

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Abstract—In the past decade, language functions have attracted increasing attention of Chinese secondary school English teachers. However, students seem not to have explicit knowledge in this aspect. This study investigated Chinese students' awareness of functions and explored the causes of the status quo. Based on the results achieved through a questionnaire survey, textbooks analyses and teaching analyses, suggestions are put forward for the building of students' awareness of functions in the teaching of speaking.

Index Terms—function, awareness, appropriacy, structure, spoken English, explicit teaching

I. INTRODUCTION

It is well recognized that the goal of learning a second or foreign language is the ability to use it in communication. Today, language students are considered successful if they can communicate effectively in their second or foreign language, whereas before the 1970s the accuracy of the language produced would most likely be the major criterion contributing to the judgment of a student's success or lack of success (Riggenback & Lazaraton, 1991). Since the emergence of the communicative language teaching theory, the focus of foreign or second language teaching has shifted from the accuracy of language form to the fluency and appropriacy of expression. According to the communicative approach, the content of a language course will include semantic notions and social functions, not just linguistic structures (Celce-Murcia, 1991). The knowledge of functions contributes to the appropriacy of language use.

In China, the Ministry of Education issued *The English Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education and Senior High schools (Experimental Edition)* in 2001 which states that the goal of the English course is overall language ability. The development of this ability is based on language skills, language knowledge, cross-cultural awareness, affect, and learning strategies. Each of the five areas includes several components. In terms of language knowledge, there are five components: phonetics, vocabulary, grammar, function, and topic. Function is viewed as an important part of English learning because the knowledge of it will be beneficial to the appropriate use of language. In the past decade, functions have drawn increasing attention of teachers in the teaching of spoken English at secondary schools. However, it seems that students hardly know the concept of function and its role in language use and consequently they lack an awareness of appropriacy. Based on this hypothesis, this study intended to explore the awareness of functions in Chinese English learners, find out the causes of the status quo, and suggest ways of building students' awareness of functions.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Definition of Function

Function is also called language function (Harmer, 1983), speech function (Stern, 1999), and communicative function (Widdowson, 1999). According to Harmer (1983, p22) the idea of a language function is that it describes what is done with the language. He also gives a much clearer definition: a language function is a purpose you wish to achieve when you say or write something (Harmer, 2000, p48). For example, when we say "Would you like to come to the cinema?" we are performing the function of inviting. Ur (2000, p92) defines function as some kind of communicative act: it is the use of language to achieve a purpose, usually involving interaction between at least two people. He distinguishes functions into two types: binary functions and unitary functions. He points out that very often functions are binary: the performance of one implies a certain response or set of responses which take the form of another. Examples are suggestions which are followed by acceptance or rejection and greeting by acknowledgement or further greeting. Unitary functions may occur without a necessary response.

B. Functions, Communicative Competence and Communicative Efficiency

Function is closely related with communicative competence. The concept of communicative competence was put forward in 1972 by Hymes, who was concerned with the social and cultural knowledge which speakers need in order to understand and use linguistic forms (Hedge, 2002). This idea has had great influence in the field of language teaching. Language educators and researchers increasingly realize that grammatical accuracy alone cannot lead to effective language use and that communicative competence is what learners need to acquire. Riggenback and Lazaraton (1991) state that communicative competence entails not solely grammatical accuracy but also a knowledge of sociocultural

rules of appropriateness, discourse norms, and strategies for ensuring that a communication is understood. Hedge (2002) employs the term *communicative ability* in stead of communicative competence and defines it as comprising five components: linguistic competence, pragmatic competence, discourse competence, strategic competence, and fluency. Linguistic competence is the ability to produce grammatically accurate sentences. Discourse competence is the ability to create coherent discourse. Strategic competence refers to the ability to make oneself understood when lacking the resources for production in communication. Fluency is the ability to link units of speech together without strain or inappropriate slowness, or undue hesitation. As for pragmatic competence, Hedge (ibid, p49) gives the following explanation:

...one element of pragmatic competence is knowing how to perform a particular function or express an intention clearly. In order for communication to be successful, however, spoken or written messages must also be appropriate to the social context in which they are produced. Learners need to know the appropriate social conventions.

From the quotation we can see that communicative competence is based on knowledge of functions.

Important as communicative competence is, is it the goal we want our EFL students to achieve? Harmer (1983) gives the answer by putting forward a term “communicative efficiency”. He argues that a native speaker knows about the grammar of that language and knows which form is appropriate in certain situations. However, not all native speakers have this competence. For foreign language learners who do not live in the target language environment, communicative competence may be not only an impossible goal, but also an unnecessary one in the classroom, because the classroom may be far from the target language community and it is doubtful whether we can give this knowledge. A realistic goal may be communicative efficiency: students are able to express what it is they want to say. We can teach them how to convey their thoughts and purposes efficiently. Here Harmer means that we cannot expect our students to achieve communicative competence, but we can teach them how to perform functions efficiently.

Every language develops a set of patterned, routinized utterances that speakers use regularly to perform a variety of functions (Olshtain & Cohen, 1991). If speakers translate a function from their mother tongue into another language, the result might be an inappropriate utterance. Olshtain and Cohen (ibid) have illustrated this by giving an example of a European stewardess misusing the request *Coffee, please!* as an offer to the passengers, thus breaking the sociolinguistic rule of appropriateness. Widdowson (1999, p60) points out that to understand language as use, we have to recognize the communicative function of the sentences we hear, we have to recognize what acts of communication they realize. Therefore, foreign language learners need to learn communicative functions of the target language if they want to become successful users of that language.

C. Functions and Language Forms

Traditionally, foreign language teaching focuses on language forms, and the goal of language learning is grammatical accuracy. Typical of traditional teaching is the grammar-translation approach which usually results in an inability on the part of the student to use language for communication (Celce-Murcia, 1991). Different from it is the communicative approach, according to which the goal of language teaching is learner ability to communicate in the target language (ibid). In order to achieve that goal, a language course should include not only language structures but also social functions. Form and function are interrelated in communication.

One language form can express a variety of functions, the converse is also true. A function can often be expressed in a variety of ways (Hedge, 2002, p49). What function a language form expresses depends on the context in which it is used. The statement *It's freezing outside*, for example, can be giving information about the whether, and it might also be an expression of unwillingness to run an errand. In the same way, for the function of apologizing there are various forms: *I'm really sorry about that, I need to apologize to you, Excuse me for interrupting you, etc.* For a specific function, which form to choose also depends on the context or situation.

To learn functions learners must learn grammar. In the same way, to learn grammar learners need to learn functions. When emphasizing the importance of grammar, Harmer (1983, p23) points out: functions are expressed through the use of grammatically based language: without some understanding of grammar students would not be able to do anything more than utter separate items of language for separate functions. The expression of functional language is only possible through the use of the grammar of the language. He suggests that both grammatical items and functional realizations should be taught side by side.

III. METHODOLOGY

Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were taken in this study.

A. Objectives of the Study

This study aimed at finding out the degree of students' awareness of functions and its influence on their learning of spoken English, hoping to make suggestions for teaching. The degree of students' awareness of functions is closely related with the textbooks and classroom teaching, so textbooks analyses and teaching analyses were part of the study.

Research questions:

1. How is the content of functions presented in the textbooks for secondary school students?
2. How have teachers taught functions in secondary school classrooms in recent years?

3. Do the newly enrolled university students have an awareness of functions? How did they learn spoken English in secondary schools?

B. Subjects

Thirteen teachers were observed in the video recordings of their teaching at the 8th National Forum of Middle School English Teaching Observation in April 2010. They were the winners at the National Teaching Competition, which is held once every two years. The winners' teaching is usually viewed as models, which can reflect the trend of English teaching in China. As a matter of fact, there were altogether 16 teachers delivering lessons at the forum. Three of them gave reading lessons. The other 13 teachers had different focuses in their teaching, but all involving speaking and structures. So they were selected as subjects for analysis.

A class of 44 newly enrolled students in the English Department of Shandong Normal University was investigated for the information of their awareness of functions and ways of learning spoken English. They are from 23 cities of different parts of China and can be seen as typical of Chinese English learners. They were studying in secondary schools from August 2010 to June 2015.

C. Instruments for Data Collection

Three textbook series were analyzed to find out how the content of functions is presented in them.

Videoed lessons of 13 teachers with accompanying lesson plans (published by Xueyuan Audio-Video Publishing House in 2010) were analyzed for the information of their dealing with language functions in terms of teaching objectives and classroom activities.

A questionnaire was employed to investigate the students' awareness of functions and ways of learning spoken English.

D. Research Procedure

The first step was to analyze the textbooks to see how the content of functions is presented. I selected three series of textbooks which have been widely used in secondary schools. They are *Go for it!* published by People's Education Press, *New Standard English* by Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, and *Interchange Third Edition* by Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press and Cambridge University Press. I examined the contents of each series and then the parts related with functions to determine whether functions are presented implicitly or explicitly.

The next step was to watch the video recordings of the 13 teachers' lessons and analyze their teaching plans to find out how many of them saw function as one of their teaching aims and how they taught functions.

Finally a questionnaire survey was conducted in September, 2015, on the first day the newly enrolled students started their university study. This was to see the effects of secondary school English teaching in terms of students' awareness of functions.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Results of Textbooks Analyses and Discussion

All three series of textbooks regard function as an integral part of the English course. *New Standard English*, in particular, claims in its preface that the writing of the series followed the principle of "topic-function-structure-task". In all the three series, although the items of content in each unit or module are different, they all include function. The items on the contents page in the three series are presented in TABLE I.

TABLE I.
CONTENTS IN THE TEXTBOOKS

Textbook	Contents
<i>New Standard English</i>	Topic and task, Grammar/Functions, Skill, Culture/Learning to learn, Vocabulary/Everyday English, Workbook
<i>Go for it!</i>	Topics, Functions, Structures, Target Language, Vocabulary, Recycling
<i>Interchange</i>	Titles/Topics, Speaking, Grammar, Pronunciation/Listening, Writing/Reading, Interchange Activities

Interchange does not have an item named function, but the item of speaking actually aims at functions. For example, the contents in the speaking item are functional sentences such as *asking about and describing people's appearance; identifying people*.

New Standard English groups grammar and function together, which indicates the close relationship between the two. The implication is that learning a grammatical structure needs to learn its function. *Interchange* lists functional sentences under the item of speaking, which suggests the connection between speaking and functions. It implies that learners need to know the appropriate form for effective oral communication.

Language functions are realized through grammatical structures. The relationship between function and grammar is presented both directly and indirectly in the textbooks. Whenever possible, the textbooks do it in a direct way. An example is the grammar focus of unit 12 in book one of *Interchange*. In presenting modal verbs, the textbook gives such instructions: *Modal verbs* can, could, may for requests; suggestions.

Textbooks usually reflect certain teaching methods. In terms of teaching communication, Stern (1999) makes a distinction between two approaches: analytic and non-analytic approaches. The former handles communication through the study of speech acts, discourse rules, and sociolinguistics, while the latter encourages the spontaneous use of language without drawing the student's attention to any particular aspect of language structure or function (ibid, p155). He also calls the analytic approach "functional analysis" and the non-analytic approach "experiential approach". Both of the two approaches are reflected in the textbooks. TEXTBOOK EXTRACT I is taken from *Go for it!* It is in *Unit 5 Do you have a soccer ball* of book 1 for grade 7.

TEXTBOOK EXTRACT I

3b PAIRWORK 结对活动
Make conversations with your partner. Talk about the pictures below. 与你的同伴做对话。谈论下面的图画。

A: Let's play soccer.
 B: I don't have a soccer ball.
 A: Well, let's play volleyball.
 B: That sounds good.

The language goals of the unit are "talk about ownership; make suggestions". The activity above actually aims at practicing the structures *Let's play soccer.* for suggestion and *I don't have a soccer ball.* for ownership. However, there is no mention of this in the directions. Instead, it just asks students to make conversations and talk about the pictures. While doing the activity, students are experiencing the use of language. The activity reflects the feature of non-analytic approach.

TEXTBOOK EXTRACT II is from *New Standard English*. It is in Module 3 of Book 1 for high schools. Before presenting the conversation, the textbook gives the subheading "Function: Being polite" to draw students' attention to the function they are going to learn next.

TEXTBOOK EXTRACT II

FUNCTION Being polite

① Read the conversation between a ticket inspector and a passenger on a train. Say what the ticket inspector wants.

Ticket inspector: Tickets.
 Passenger: Pardon?
 Ticket inspector: Tickets!
 Passenger: I'm sorry, I don't understand.
 Ticket inspector: I want to see your ticket.
 Passenger: Oh. Here you are.
 Ticket inspector: This is an old ticket.
 Passenger: Pardon?
 Ticket inspector: It's out of date. It's a month old.
 Passenger: Oh, sorry, that's the ticket I used last week.
 Ticket inspector: Where's your ticket?
 Passenger: Here it is.
 Ticket inspector: Right.

In the second activity (shown in TEXTBOOK EXTRACT III), students' attention is directed to the expression used by the ticket inspector: *I want to see your ticket.* This is to make them realize that different language forms have different effects in communication.

TEXTBOOK EXTRACT III

2 Discuss these questions.

- 1 What do you think of the ticket inspector's attitude?
- 2 What expressions could you use to change it?

3 Read the polite expressions. Use them in the conversation between the ticket inspector and the passenger.

Excuse me ...
 Could I (see your ticket)?
 Could I possibly (see your ticket)?
 Would you mind (showing me your ticket)?
 Would you mind (if I saw your ticket)?
 I'm very sorry but (this is an old ticket).
 The fact is that (it's out of date).

Now work in pairs. Practise the conversation.

Finally in the third activity, a range of polite expressions are listed, and students are required to practice using them in conversations. This sequence of activities is helpful to the building of students' awareness of functions and to the development of their ability to use language appropriately.

B. Results of Teaching Analyses and Discussion

The video recordings of 13 teachers' teaching and their lesson plans were analyzed to see how the teachers dealt with functions. In setting up teaching objectives, ten of them (76.9%) connected structures with functions. They were clear about the relationship between structure and function. Here are some examples:

Language focus: students will be able to use proper structures in the situation of arguing and compromising, especially the following ones from the video clip: "It's...for...to...", "...is/are...than...", "...could..."

Students can talk about their own plans and arrangement, and ask about others' plans and arrangement with the structure "be going to".

Students can correctly use modal verbs should and could to make suggestions.

Those statements of teaching objectives show that most teachers had a strong awareness of functions and were clear that functions are realized through grammatical structures. But how did they achieve those teaching objectives? The videos of their teaching were analyzed, with special attention to the teaching of structures and speaking.

All the thirteen teachers employed situations to teach new structures and functions. They presented new structures in situations and guided students to practice in situations. Five of them (38%) took the analytic approach. They made it clear to students that a certain structure is used to express a specific function. They directed students' attention to the function and structure either before or after presenting the structure. Some sentences they used are:

When we make suggestions, what sentence patterns do we use?

We use "You should..." or "You could..." to make suggestions.

We use "be going to do" to talk about our future plans.

Eight teachers (62%) took the non-analytic experiential approach. In stead of telling students explicitly the function of a specific structure, they gave examples of using it in situations and then had students practice the structure in other similar situations.

The effects of the two approaches were observed as such: under the analytic approach students could express functions more fluently. Students under the experiential approach sometimes were not very sure what structure to use to express their intention.

C. Results of the Questionnaire Survey and Discussion

The aim of the questionnaire survey was to know if the students had an awareness of functions and how they learned spoken English. Forty-four students participated in the survey. There were 16 questions altogether, nine concerning awareness of functions and seven concerning ways of learning spoken English. Questions 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15 belong to the former, questions 1, 2, 9, 10, 11, 12, 16 the latter. The results of students' awareness of functions are to be discussed first.

Question 3: What are your criteria for judging one's spoken English?

Answers: intonation, tone, pronunciation, fluency, appropriateness of words, intelligibility, use of advanced vocabulary and structures, gesture, facial expression, confidence, cohesion, emotion, content, accuracy and completeness of sentences, pause, speed, variety of vocabulary. Among them the most frequent answers are presented in TABLE II.

TABLE II.
STUDENTS' CRITERIA FOR JUDGING SPOKEN ENGLISH

Criterion	Fluency	Pronunciation	Intelligibility	Use of advanced vocabulary and structures	Confidence	Accuracy and completeness of sentences	Variety of vocabulary	Intonation
Frequency of answers	31	24	8	6	6	6	6	5
Percentage	70%	55%	18%	14%	14%	14%	14%	11%

It can be seen from TABLE II that fluency and pronunciation were viewed as major criteria for judging one's spoken English. Among the various answers by the 44 students, fluency was mentioned 31 times (which means that 70 percent of the students regarded it as a criterion) and pronunciation 24 times (55%). Appropriateness does not have an important position in their views. As a matter of fact, only two of them (4.5%) regarded appropriateness as one of the criteria for judging one's spoken English.

Question 4: Do you agree with the statement "In conversation, if you can express your ideas with correct grammar, you will achieve the communicative goal effectively.?" If not, why?

Thirty-two (73%) disagreed, twelve (27%) agreed.

Those who disagreed believed that effective communication included other elements. They were: emotion, elegant expression, appropriate choice of words in context, intelligibility, concise expression, intonation, body language, and tone. The most frequently mentioned elements are shown in TABLE III.

TABLE III.
STUDENTS' VIEWS ON EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION ELEMENTS

Element	Emotion	Elegant expression	Appropriate choice of words in context
Frequency of answers	9	7	5
Percentage	20%	16%	11%

TABLE III shows that 11 percent of students were aware of appropriateness in communication. But this awareness was just at the vocabulary level. They lacked an awareness of appropriateness of structures in communication.

Question 5: Do you know the concept of language function?

Answers to this question were 44 *Nos*. The students did not know this concept at all.

Question 6: What is the role of functional knowledge in language use?

Answers to this question revealed that none of the 44 students knew the role of functional knowledge in language use.

Question 7: Did you ever note the table of contents in your English textbooks?

To this question, 23 students (52%) answered *No*, and 21 (48%) *Yes*. Two students gave their reasons for doing that: to make a study plan, to study in an organized way.

Question 8: Do you remember the items on the contents pages of your English textbooks in secondary school?

Answers: title, grammar, vocabulary, page number, goals, exercises, text, introduction to the unit, listening exercises, listening and speaking, listening and writing, module, phonetic transcription, important points, topic. The most frequently mentioned items are presented in TABLE IV.

TABLE IV.
CONTENTS ITEMS REMEMBERED BY STUDENTS

Item	Title	Vocabulary	Grammar	Page number	Listening exercises
Frequency of answers	17	12	8	6	5
Percentage	39%	27%	18%	14%	11%

What drew more of students' attention were title, vocabulary and grammar, but no one mentioned function. This indicates that students never noticed function as an important area of English learning.

Question 13: Do you agree with the statement "In learning grammar, as long as you know the form of a grammatical item, you will be able to use it.?" If not, why?

Forty-one students (93%) disagreed with the statement. One (2%) agreed. Two students (4.5%) said they had no idea. Those who disagreed gave various reasons. The most frequent answers are as follows:

Nine students (20%) thought: *Learners need to learn to use grammar in sentences.*

Six students (14%) thought: *Learners need to learn to use grammar naturally.*

Four students (9%) thought: *Practice is necessary.*

The data indicate that some students knew that learning grammar needs to practice using it, but no one knew that to learn a grammatical item also needs to know in what circumstance it is used.

In questions 14 and 15, two structures were presented to check the students' knowledge of functions.

Question 14: Note the sentence:

Why don't you buy a computer?

Is it used to express query, suggestion or blame?

The result of answers is presented in TABLE V.

TABLE V.
STUDENTS' UNDERSTANDING OF "WHY DON'T YOU BUY A COMPUTER?"

Judgment of function	Suggestion	All possible, depending on context	Blame	Query	Not sure
Frequency of answers	31	6	4	2	1
Percentage	70%	14%	9%	5%	2%

From the table we can see that 70 percent of the students were clear about the function of the structure "Why don't you buy a computer?" Fourteen percent students had an awareness of context.

Question 15: The following is a dialogue between two people:

A: *It looks like rain, doesn't it?*

B: *Yes, it does. And I forgot my umbrella.*

Why does A use a tag question at the beginning?

Answers: to seek agreement, intend to start conversation, to add force, to express query, to comment on the fact, to relax, to ask for B's opinion, to make a guess, feel helpless. The most frequent answers are presented in TABLE VI.

TABLE VI.
STUDENTS' UNDERSTANDING OF THE USE OF TAG QUESTION

Judgment of reason	Intend to start conversation	Add force	Seek agreement	Express query	Ask for B's opinion
Frequency of answers	12	9	5	5	4
Percentage	27%	20%	11%	11%	9%

Only 27 percent of the students knew the function of the tag question in this context. The results of questions 14 and 15 indicate that some students knew structures are used to express certain intentions although they did not know the concept of function. In addition, most students were clear about the function of the more frequently used structure "Why don't you buy a computer?" but only a small number of students knew the function of tag question. We can see that the students knew the more frequently used structure better than the less frequently used one.

The above are the results of questions concerning students' awareness of functions. The following data will reveal how the students learned spoken English.

Questions 1: Do you learn texts of all types in the same way?

Twenty eight students (64%) answered *Yes*, sixteen students (36%) answered *No*. The purpose of this question was to see if students realized that different types of texts need to be learned for different purposes and in different ways. For example, learning a text of conversation should aim for the ability of oral communication and needs appropriate practice. The result shows that not all students had clear purposes for learning different types of text. This implies that some students did not have specific purposes in learning texts of conversation.

Question 2: How do you learn a text of conversation?

Answers: read aloud, underline words and phrases, talk with others, association, learn conversation in context, translate, read to understand, underline important sentences, recite important sentences, role play, listen, imitate, learn grammar, analyze the characters, recite the text, read aloud in roles. Some students employed more than one of these strategies. The most frequently applied strategies are presented in TABLE VII.

TABLE VII.
STUDENTS' STRATEGIES FOR LEARNING TEXTS OF CONVERSATION

Strategy	Underline words and phrases	Read aloud	Learn conversation in context	Find out important sentences	Recite important sentences	Listen
Frequency of answers	23	17	6	6	6	5
Percentage	52%	39%	14%	14%	14%	11%

From TABLE VII we can see that in learning the text of conversation, what most students focused on was isolated vocabulary and sentences. Only a small number (14%) knew the importance of context. Overlooking context suggests overlooking appropriate use of language. This can explain why only a small number of students (11%) (See TABLE III) regarded appropriate choice of words in context as an effective communicative element.

Question 9: What do you expect to learn from the text of conversation?

Answers: tones of talking in conversation, ways of expressing feelings, accuracy, intonation and rhythm, pronunciation, grammar, words and phrases, native-like communicative structures, culture, style, linking words, collocations, etiquette, way of thinking, common oral expressions, conversation skills. The most frequent answers are presented in TABLE VIII.

TABLE VIII.
STUDENTS' EXPECTED LEARNING ASPECTS FROM TEXTS OF CONVERSATION

Aspect	Words and phrases	Native-like communicative patterns	Structures	Tones of talking in conversation	Conversation skills	pronunciation	Intonation and rhythm
Frequency of answers	21	18	16	12	9	6	5
Percentage	48%	41%	36%	27%	20%	14%	11%

Words and phrases, native-like communicative patterns, and structures rank top in the table, which shows again that lexical items and structures were considered by the students as the most important aspects of language learning. Forty-one percent of them expected to learn native-like communicative patterns, which shows that they learned structures in the text of conversation for the sake of communication rather than language form alone. TABLE VIII also indicates that some students expected to learn the formal aspects of speaking: tones, pronunciation, intonation and rhythm. Twenty percent of them wanted to learn communication skills. From the data we can see that the students expected to learn the aspects from texts of conversation for both accuracy and appropriateness, with more focus on accuracy.

Question 10: What is your aim of learning the texts of conversation?

Answers: to learn vocabulary, to get familiar with various contexts, to develop communicative ability, to learn appropriate expressions, to learn grammar, to learn the form of dialogue, to learn culture, to improve writing ability, for exams, to learn native English speakers' way of thinking, to widen horizon, to enrich knowledge, to improve oral expression ability, to develop the ability of using English in daily life, to learn concise and accurate expressions, to learn the tones of speaking English, to learn the intonation of English, to improve English, to practice oral English. One student said no idea. The most frequent answers are presented in TABLE IX.

TABLE IX.
STUDENTS' AIMS OF LEARNING TEXTS OF CONVERSATION

Aim	Communicative ability	Oral expression ability	Vocabulary	Grammar	English use ability in daily life
Frequency of answers	16	9	6	5	5
Percentage	36%	20%	14%	11%	11%

Among the various aims of learning texts of conversation, apart from vocabulary and grammar, the most frequent answers were the abilities of oral communication. However, the proportions of such answers were not high, with 36 percent at top and 5 percent at bottom.

Question 11: How do you practice spoken English?

Answers: read the text aloud, follow the recording, listen to the recording of the text, see English movies, listen and read aloud, listen to English songs, imitate native speakers, practice with APP, read, recite the text, self-talk. Six students (14%) said they seldom practiced spoken English. The most frequent strategies are presented in TABLE X.

TABLE X.
STUDENTS' STRATEGIES FOR PRACTICING SPOKEN ENGLISH

Strategy	Listen and read aloud	Listen to recording	Read the text	Watch movies	Follow the recording	Imitate native speakers	Practice speaking with APP	Listen to songs
Frequency of answers	16	14	14	13	7	6	6	5
Percentage	36%	32%	32%	30%	20%	14%	14%	11%

The results of Question 11 show that the students employed various strategies to practice spoken English. Most of them, however, were controlled practice focusing on language form. They were not practicing speaking actually. Speaking should be practiced in situations. Among the students' strategies, watching movies was the only one helpful to learning speaking because they could observe how English is used in situations.

Question 12: What do you think of the role of situations in learning conversation?

Answers: consolidating memorization, helpful to understanding the conversation, helpful to natural use of language, helpful to learning language, helpful to determining the meanings of sentences in context, getting students into situations, helpful to expressing feelings, improving students' ability of adaption. The most frequent answers are presented in TABLE XI.

TABLE XI.
STUDENTS' VIEWS ON SITUATIONS IN LEARNING CONVERSATION

View	Helpful to understanding conversation	Getting students into situations	Helpful to determining the meanings of sentences in context	Helpful to natural use of language
Frequency of answers	13	7	5	5
Percentage	30%	16%	11%	11%

The data of question 12 show that generally the students had appropriate understanding of the role of situations in learning conversation. However, when we compare the data with those of question 11 we can find that in practice the students rarely employed situations to improve their spoken English. There was a distance between understanding and doing.

Question 16: Do you conscientiously learn polite expressions in English?

To this question 34 students (77%) answered *Yes*, seven students (16%) answered *No*, and three students (7%) said they did but not really conscientiously. Politeness is universally valued in all cultures. It was reasonable that most students learned polite expressions conscientiously. A small portion of students, however, did not have this awareness when learning another language. This suggests their lack of awareness of appropriacy in learning spoken English.

D. Findings

In response to the research questions, findings are achieved based on the results and discussion above.

The textbooks of secondary school English all regard functions as an integral part of the English course and present it explicitly either with structures or speaking. Textbooks reflect certain teaching methods. In the designing of speaking activities, the textbooks take both analytic and experiential approaches. The former directly turns students' attention to the function of a specific structure. The latter involves students in activities of using specific structures to express their intentions.

Through analyzing the model lessons presented at the 2010 National Forum of Middle School English Teaching Observation, we can assume that in recent years, teachers have formed a strong awareness of functions. They set functions as one of the teaching aims in teaching speaking and grammar. In the teaching process, most teachers relate structures with functions in an implicit way. They design communicative activities for students to practice using target structures. Some teachers relate structures with functions explicitly. They tell students how to express a certain intention with a specific structure. It is common practice of teachers to create situations for students to practice speaking. However, the concept of function is not introduced to students.

The results of the questionnaire survey indicate that newly enrolled university students generally have a weak awareness of language functions. They do not know the concept of function. In some circumstances, however, they know what structures are for what intentions. This indicates that they have some implicit knowledge of functions. The lack of explicit knowledge of functions has resulted in their lack of awareness of appropriateness in learning spoken English. In learning texts of conversation, most students primarily focused on vocabulary and grammar. Only a small portion of students noted the appropriate expressions in different contexts. The effect of teaching on learning is seen here: the general implicit teaching of functions has resulted in the implicit knowledge of functions on the part of students.

V. SUGGESTIONS

Generally, the students have a weak awareness of functions, whereas their awareness of structures is very strong. This is because for decades, grammar has been taught explicitly in the English classrooms in China. If we expect our students to develop an ability of using language not only accurately but also appropriately, we should take measures to build their awareness of functions. Teaching functions explicitly would be an alternative approach. Here are some suggestions.

Introducing the knowledge of functions

Teachers can introduce the concept of function and relevant knowledge. Students need to know that in different social contexts we should use different structures to express our intentions. Expressing our intention in the right form will sound appropriate and make communication effective. One structure can express a range of functions, and one function can be realized by a variety of structures. The choice of structure for a specific function depends on the context in which it is used.

Introducing basic knowledge of conversation

In real communication, the interlocutors use language in social contexts. In foreign language programs, textbooks usually present social contexts via texts of conversation. Therefore, it is a good way to build students' awareness of functions in the process of teaching speaking. Richards (2002) has classified the approaches to the teaching of conversation in second language programs into two types: indirect approach and direct approach. The indirect approach sees conversational competence as the product of engaging learners in conversational interaction. In practical terms, this leads to the pair-work and group-work activities that require learner-to-learner interaction and negotiation (p78). The direct approach focuses explicitly on the processes and strategies involved in casual conversation. The teaching of conversation addresses such aspects as strategies for turn-taking, topic control, and repair; conversational routines; fluency; pronunciation; and differences between formal and casual conversational styles (p79). In secondary school English classrooms, teachers take the indirect approach to texts of conversation. Although it is important to take the direct approach to the teaching of conversation at tertiary level, especially to English majors, it is not necessary to teach conversation explicitly to secondary school students. An eclectic approach would be realistic, that is, apart from designing speaking tasks, teachers can introduce some basic knowledge of conversation, such as openings, turn taking, and closings. Keller and Warner (1988, cited in Hedge, 2002, p272) in their book *Conversation Gambits* point out that a

speaker who does not use gambits can appear rude, over-direct, or abrupt. The knowledge of turn taking is also important because conversation is interactive communication between interlocutors. Silence or long pauses are considered awkward and embarrassing (Richards, 2002, p68). In dealing with texts of conversation, teachers could provide some activities of conversation analysis: situation, relationship between interlocutors, functions of important sentences, etc. This might contribute to the students' understanding of some conversation rules in social contexts. Another strategy is to encourage students to use fixed expressions in speaking. Fixed expressions or "routines" often have specific functions in conversation (ibid, p74). Using some conversational routines will sound more native-like and help reduce pragmatic failure in communication.

Adopting teaching strategies according to the intention of the material

What and how to teach is based on the analyses of materials and students. If the textbook contains the content of introducing the knowledge of functions, the teacher had better make good use of such resources. It is important to analyze the intention of the material, take account of class time and students' present English level before making decisions on instruction. For example, in *New Standard English* there is a section called Everyday English and Function, the purpose of which is claimed as such: "The focus is on understanding everyday English rather than on inviting the learners to use it in their own speech." In dealing with this part, the teacher must make sure the students understand the functions of those everyday English sentences. The follow-up activities can be getting students to make their own conversation using the target sentences. The aim here is to consolidate their understanding. Students are not necessarily required to use them in their own conversation as fluently as native speakers.

Consolidating experiential learning through drama

Drama is a popular activity in language programs. We can use drama to involve students in the use of English in simulated social contexts. Role-plays are like drama and are common activities in learning speaking. There are controlled and uncontrolled role-plays. In controlled role-plays the texts of conversation are used as scripts. In uncontrolled role-plays, the teacher introduces the situation, hands out role cards, and provides language support. Students themselves conceive the play and act it out. Whether in controlled or uncontrolled role-plays, the teacher can guide students to analyze the roles, their relations, their feelings, tones of talking, facial expressions, and gestures. The teacher can also encourage students to watch TV and films and observe native speakers' verbal and non-verbal expressions. All this would help improve the appropriacy of students' spoken English. It is necessary to let students know that role-play is not reciting texts. Saying "Nice to meet you" with a severe face without looking at the other interlocutor is reciting the text, while saying so and looking at the person with a smile is communication. The use of drama can help students experience the use of language rather than just recite the text.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study aimed at investigating Chinese students' awareness of functions and the ways they learn spoken English, with an attempt to find out the causes through textbooks analyses and teaching analyses. The subjects were 44 students from different parts of the country and 13 teachers from 13 provinces, so they can be viewed to some extent as typical of secondary school students and teachers of China. The findings have revealed that current Chinese students generally have a weak awareness of functions. In learning speaking, most students focus on accuracy rather than appropriacy. This is closely related with the textbooks and classroom teaching. Although textbooks regard functions as an integral part of the English course and present them explicitly in sections, the speaking activities sometimes relate to functions in an implicit way. Although teachers have a very strong awareness of functions, most of them teach functions implicitly. As a result, students understand the intentions expressed by some frequently used structures, but their knowledge of functions is implicit. Consequently they lack an awareness of appropriateness in their learning of spoken English. If we introduce the concept of function directly and teach functions more explicitly like we do with grammar, our students will have a better understanding of functions and improve their ability of speaking appropriately. Although they cannot behave verbally like native English speakers, at least they can better understand native speakers in social contexts.

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A Comparative Study on the Effect of Pre-instruction and While-instruction Alphabet Teaching in EFL Context

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Abstract—The present study was designed to specifically compare two methods of presenting the alphabet in Iranian guidance schools (an equivalent for middle school in other countries), namely pre-instruction and while-instruction to see if any of them is more successful in learners' alphabet learning. To this end, a quasi-experimental research design with two experimental groups including a pre-test and a post-test was set. The existing four intact classes were randomly assigned as two groups of pre-instruction (N=47) and while-instruction (N=43) experimental groups. Both groups followed alphabet learning process for six months. One of the researchers was the teacher of the two groups and taught the alphabet through pre-instruction presentation to the first experimental group, and through while-instruction to the second experimental group. By accomplishing the treatment, the post-test was given to both groups. The results of independent-samples t-test indicated that while-instruction method for teaching alphabet was much more beneficial than pre-instruction. Language teachers can benefit from this finding in their elementary classes.

Index Terms—while instruction, pre-instruction, alphabet teaching, grammar translation method, whole language approach

I. INTRODUCTION

Learning the alphabet of the language is necessary for acquiring the reading and writing ability in the language. According to Bradley and Stahl (2001) alphabet recognition or alphabet knowledge has is the capability to distinguish letter shapes, names, and sounds and also the ability to quickly recall and name each letter (Bradley & Stahl, 2001). For language instruction in order to be more useful, learners must first (Torgesen, 1998). Therefore, learners should acquire the mastery of phonemic awareness and alphabet recognition skills.

By the time children understand the concept that words are divided into individual phonemes and these phonemes can be joined to each other to make words, they get the knowledge of letter-sound relationships to read and build words (Adams, 1990; Chard & Dickson, 1999). This ability shows students' understanding of the alphabets and word structuring system in the language and results in self-tutoring of the young learners since they themselves can read and write words and sentences and improve their independency in learning language.

Although we didn't learn our first language by letter recognition, it is essential to learn it in academic context since academic context requires more than speaking and listening and it contains learning to read and write. Reading and writing contains the words that are formed by letters. Therefore learning the alphabet is fundamental for learning to read and write. Moreover, letter-name knowledge is prior to formal reading instruction because it is one of the strongest predictors of children's reading ability. Without firm knowledge of letters, children will have difficulty with all other aspects of early literacy.

When discussing the vital role of children's possessing knowledge of alphabetic letters, many different skills are usually discussed. These skills range from recognizing and naming the letters of the alphabet to writing the letter and recognizing the related sound in the word. Some will include how-to-write skills, while still some others will cover matching sounds to letters as a component of letter knowledge.

Both letter and phonic instructions are needed to understand the alphabetic principle, namely the concept that a series of symbols (alphabet) present the sounds of our language in some known patterns. Lack of these skills causes to difficulty in acquiring the alphabetic principle which can limit the ability to use letter-sound correspondence and ultimately to decode words.

It can be easily understand that an important purpose of teaching phonics is to make the learners understand a systematic relationship between letters and their matching sounds. Beginner readers try to understand these letter-sound correspondences. Moreover phonics instruction shows how phonics can be used to decode words that have not been previously encountered.

Although phonemic awareness is a quite crucial component of literacy acquisition, but we should always note that it is not sufficient in itself. Another essential component is alphabet recognition, which involves letter shape recognition, letter-name knowledge, letter-sound knowledge and rapid-letter naming.

Alphabet recognition, particularly letter naming, has traditionally been used as an indicator of future reading achievement. Child's knowledge of alphabet letters and the ability to recognize and name the upper- and lower- case letters of the alphabet leads to their early success in reading. First-year reading achievement is reported to be based on the child's knowledge of alphabet and the ability to recognize and name the letters of the alphabet (Adams, 1990; Honig, 1996; Riley, 1996).

There are different ways to convey this knowledge to the learners; however, these ways can fall into two broad categories of teaching alphabet letters separately or in context. McGee and Morrow reported that students learn better when they learn alphabet with other letters and in the context of meaningful activities (McGee & Morrow, 2005). In this respect, Fischer (1996) discusses a new approach to teaching letters of the alphabet, one which focuses on studying letters and sounds in authentic contexts. Also Fischer (1996) emphasizes that children's interests, rather than a teacher's desire to pass through the letters of the alphabet in direct sequence, should direct curriculum. Alphabet learning can be integrated into other classroom activities (Wagstaff, 1998).

Due to the fact that alphabet teaching is one of the important factors in early language learning, the method of its teaching becomes a problematic choice for the teachers. The teachers of guidance schools in Iran have been faced with this issue. By changing the textbooks in guidance schools in Iran, the new book series moved toward CLT and the books considered learning letters in the context of other skills provided in the same unit. Students learn the whole English alphabet letters integrated with all skills by the end of annual program. Based on their traditional views and year of teaching alphabet at the beginning of the course, some teachers see pre-instruction of alphabet teaching as a success point for later instruction. Hence, they teach letters before any reading or writing materials.

Some other teachers, on the other hand, believe in the success of teaching alphabet while instructing all skills in the book. The prior group considers alphabet teaching as a preliminary stage of learning language while the latter group views language as a whole system and a continuum in which students' self-cognitions function to seek and learn letters in every unit.

This dilemma for teachers may result in choosing a less useful teaching approach in the class and later outcomes in less productivity of the learners. However since this is a new phenomenon in Iranian context the problems and outcomes of the two methods of presenting the alphabets needs experimental study to define the more useful method and to provide teachers with documents and valid reports in order to select a more useful method.

While new textbooks followed CLT and they demand for Whole Language Approach in presenting the alphabets, a tradition of teaching alphabets prior to instruction of other skills was not abolished and it has its own disadvantages and problems. This problem can be due to the lack of knowledge about a theoretical background of the method and technique for presenting the subject according to that method in the class, weak justification of the new textbooks by curriculum developers and planners, sticking to the traditional methods of presenting subject disregarding the aims of new method and textbooks, and lack of experimental reports about the effects of these two methods of alphabet presenting on the learning. So, this study tries to conduct an empirical study to identify the effects of these two methods of presenting alphabets in Iranian context.

This study was, therefore, planned to explore the probable difference if there is any between these two methods to provide a report based on an experimental study to put the teachers out of the dilemma mentioned before. Thus the study compared two methods of alphabet teaching which are pre-instruction and while instruction alphabet teaching to see which one is more effective than the other in learning alphabetic letters. In line with the purpose of the research, the following research question was put forward:

"Is there a significant difference between pre-instruction and while-instruction teaching of English alphabets in alphabet to Iranian first grade guidance school EFL learners?"

II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In teaching alphabet, there has been a controversy among teaching letter sound versus letter name. Although for ability to read and write, knowledge of letter sounds is more important still strong relations with later literacy skills have been found for knowledge of letter names as well as letter sounds (Scarborough, 1998; Schatschneider et al., 2004). Letter naming abilities could lead to emergent and later reading skills if letter sound knowledge is controlled (Burgess & Lonigan, 1998; Lonigan, Burgess, Anthony, & Barker, 1998; Schatschneider et al., 2004). Most of the instructional programs focus on naming the letter as a beginning skill in language learning. The same focus also exists in second language learning. There are some reports that letter name knowledge can assist learning letter sound knowledge (Evans, Bell, Shaw, Moretti, & Page, 2006; Justice et al., 2006; Piasta, 2006; Share, 2004).

The positive effects of letter name knowledge on acquiring the letter sound knowledge is dependent on the letter name structure effect (e.g., Evans et al., 2006; Justice et al., 2006; McBride-Chang, 1999; Piasta, 2006). In other words letters like M and K include cues to their sounds /m/ and /k/ which exist in their names. But there are some letters that they do not present any cues to their corresponding sounds. Considering letters like Y and H, no cues are possible in their name to their corresponding sounds.

Some studies (Bradley & Jones, 2007; Shaw, 2011; Chen et al, 2012) explored the factors that can affect alphabet learning. In a study Bradley and Jones (2007) tried to see the effects of reading aloud on learning alphabet. The researchers noticed that while reading the books, the teachers focused on letter name rather than letter sound. In this exploratory study the researchers reported the different effects of alphabet books on learning alphabet. Therefore it can be concluded that the book type and the instructors' preference of letter name or letter sound can have effect on learning alphabet.

Shaw (2011) studied the effect of two handwriting approaches. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effect of two handwriting approaches, D'Nealian and Sunform, on kindergartners' letter formations. 41 participants received D'Nealian handwriting instruction as the control group; 133 kindergartners were instructed in Sunform as the experimental approach. Pre-post tests at the beginning and end of school year asked kindergarten students to write the letters of the alphabet from memory. The letter formations were scored on a four-point rubric for directionality and integration. The results showed the Sunform group had significantly higher scores on all but three letters of the alphabet. The D'Nealian students had considerably lower scores on missing or extra strokes, distortions and open letters. The findings of this study support the value of using an integrated, meaningful curriculum that appeals to young children and that supports motor development by requiring students to cross the midline to form counter-clockwise circles and diagonal lines (As cited in Shaw, 2011).

Chen et al (2012) investigated the effects of parental factor on the learners' alphabet and word learning. This study tried to find out the relationship between parents' demographic/socioeconomic backgrounds and their self-reported frequencies of engaging in early childhood education activities. The results indicated that White parents are more likely than Black and Hispanic parents to report reading to their children frequently, while Black parents are more likely than White parents to report teaching the alphabet and pointing out words to children.

Hall et al (2014) investigated interactive writing as an effective practice for increasing students' alphabet knowledge skills. The treatment group was given a 10-15 minutes (3 or 4 times a week) treatment of interactive writing lesson each day in through the small groups setting their classroom. However the young students in the control group were given conventional literacy instruction in small groups. For the purpose of the study the researchers collected the outcome data on upper case, lower case, and letter sound identification. The data were collected before and after the treatment phase. Comparing the data gathered from the pre-test and post-test of both groups indicated the positive effects of interactive writing strategy in instructing alphabets. The learners in the interactive writing group were found to have more knowledge of lower case and upper case letters after the treatment phase.

Piasta, Purpura, and Wagner, (2010) studied how to foster alphabet knowledge development. Alphabet instruction was done through two treatments of letter name combination with sound instruction or letter sound only. Therefore one of the groups of study was given letter sound instruction for teaching alphabet while the group was given letter sound instruction plus letter name instruction. In pre-test and post-test the aim was to measure the participants' on alphabet, phonological awareness, letter-word identification, emergent reading, and developmental spelling measures. Analyzing the data gathered from post-test and comparing the results indicated that when there is combination of letter sound and letter name instruction, children's letter sound acquisition is improved.

Jones and Reutzel (2012) studied the effects of enhanced alphabet knowledge instruction exploring a change of frequency, focus, and distributed cycles of review. The researchers conducted a two-year exploratory research study of alphabet knowledge instruction in 13 kindergarten classrooms in four at-risk urban schools. Based on insights for teaching from five evidence-based advantages that influence acquisition of letter names and sounds, instruction of letter names and sounds was enhanced to increase students' exposure to and practice with letters and to provide greater instructional focus on difficult-to-learn letters through brief lessons taught through distributed cycles of review. Results of this study show that students experienced increased success in acquiring alphabet knowledge, through Enhanced Alphabet Knowledge instruction (As cited in Jones & Reutzel, 2012).

From the provided review of the literature, it can be inferred that parental factors, the method of teaching, the context, and enhancement are among important factors affecting the alphabet teaching and learning.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

Since one of the researchers was a teacher in a male guidance school and he had four first grade classes in educational year 2014-15, the four classes without any modification in the number and arrangement of the students and their classes were considered as the sample. These intact groups were randomly assigned as two experimental groups of pre-instruction and while-instruction.

The total number of students in the two groups was 110, but the ones with prior English alphabet knowledge (N=20) were not considered in the study however all the students in the classes followed the treatment. Therefore the sample for the study was 90 students. The pre-instruction and while-instruction groups included 47, 43 participants respectively.

B. Instruments

The data required for this study were participants' scores in pretest and post test. The alphabet recognition test was used for both pre-test and post-test. Students' pre-test examined whether they had any prior knowledge of the alphabet or not. These tests included two parts of recognizing alphabets' names and sounds.

Alphabet recognition test included a sheet with random order of the alphabet in a square with both capital and small letters. Each correct answer scored 1 and each incorrect answer scored 0. The order of the alphabet was different in pre-test and post-test for every student. Therefore, the examiner recorded the serial number of the sheet for each student not to repeat that one in post-test. The sum of the test score was 52 which included 26 for alphabet recognition and 26 for sound recognition.

C. Data Collection Procedure

The entire sample was given alphabet recognition test to recognize students with prior alphabet knowledge. In the recognition test, students who had background knowledge about alphabets in English were recognized. Data from pretest exam identifies the homogeneity of the participants selected for the study. After finishing the treatment period post test exam gathered the participants' scores for their alphabet learning during the term.

A sheet containing all 26 capital and small letters in random order was delivered to the students, and they were asked to point to the correct letter as the examiner gave its name or sound. Responses for both tasks were scored as correct or incorrect. Composite scores (summed number of correct responses, ranging from 0 to 52) for the production tasks simply represented the number of letters or sounds correctly produced by the students.

In pre-test, the students whose scores were over 20 were considered to be familiar with alphabet and their performance was ignored in post-test. The number of the students who knew the alphabet was 20 in all and other 90 participants had no or limited knowledge about English alphabetic letters.

After identifying control and experimental groups, all participants were given pre-test to recognize participants with prior alphabet knowledge and ignore those participants' scores in pre-test and post-test. However they participated in the classes.

By accomplishing the treatment given to both groups, the needed data for analyzing and comparing the results of the study were gathered through the post-test given to all participants in the study. Post-test was similar to the pre-test which included alphabet recognition test.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The group means in pre-test and post-test were compared with each other to see the differences between the groups. SPSS data analysis software was used to apply independent samples' t-test to compare the mean scores of the pre- and post-test in the two experimental groups. Comparing the mean scores of the post-test shows the differences between pre-instruction and while-instruction groups. Table 1 shows the pre-test and post-test mean scores for both.

TABLE 1:
PARTICIPANTS' MEAN SCORES IN TWO GROUPS

Group	Variable	Frequency	Pre Test	Post Test
		N	M±SD	M±SD
Pre-instruction		47	23.46±11.24	86.91±17.29
While-instruction		43	21.11±11.45	94.81±18.10

As shown in Table 1 above, the pretest mean score and standard deviation were $M = 21.11$, $SD = 11.45$ for the while-instruction group while they were $M = 94.81$, $SD = 18.10$ for the post-test of the same group. The difference seemed to be high almost 73.7. The pretest mean score and standard deviation for the control group were $M = 23.46$, $SD = 11.24$ while their posttest mean score and standard deviation were $M = 86.91$, $SD = 17.29$. Again the mean difference was considered as high with almost 63.45 points increased. These results are shown in figure 3.1.

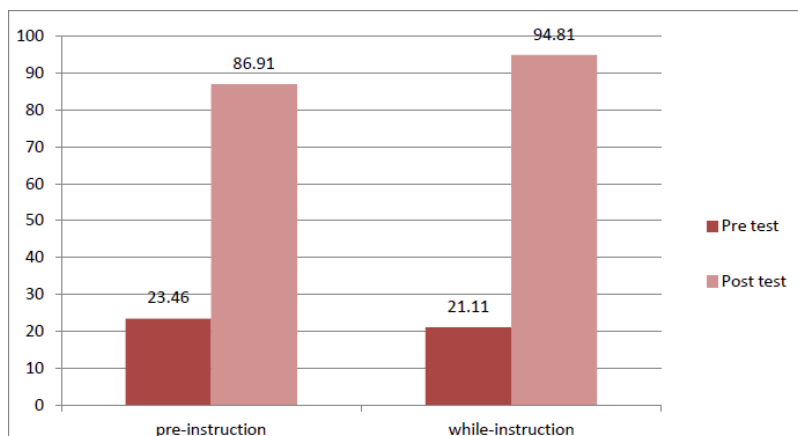


Figure 3.1: Research Groups, Means in the Pre-test and Post-test

On the whole, based on the descriptive statistics reported earlier, it could be said that both methods were effective and it seems that teaching alphabet at while-instruction method had more positive effect than teaching English at pre-instruction method. However, it is necessary for the data to be further examined through inferential statistics to ensure that the result is statistically significant.

The assumption of normal distribution of the pretest and posttest scores was first checked before conducting the inferential statistics. The normality of the score distributions was determined by One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test.

TABLE 2:
ONE-SAMPLE KOLMOGOROV-SMIRNOV

N		90
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	22.3444
	Std. Deviation	11.34164
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.204
	Positive	.103
	Negative	-.204
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1.932
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.541

a. Test Distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from Data

Table 2 shows the results of One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test. Analyzing the results of this test it can be seen that both groups are over .05 significant level. This proves that distribution of the data in both groups is normal.

To have a sound basis for comparing the two methods, participants of the two groups required to have almost equal knowledge of English alphabet. An independent samples t-test was consequently used to check for this equality, the results of which are presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3:
INDEPENDENT SAMPLE T-TEST FOR PRE-TEST

Group	Mean	Mean Difference	df	t	P
Pre-instruction	23.46	2.23	88	0.982	0.56
While-instruction	21.11				

As presented in Table 3, based on the results of the independent-samples *t*-test for participants' pre-test, the equality of alphabet knowledge between the while-instruction ($N=43$) and pre-instruction ($N=47$) groups was statistically determined. No statistically significant difference was observed in the participants' alphabet knowledge pre-test scores of the while-instruction group ($M = 21.11$, $SD=11.45$) and the pre-instruction group ($M = 23.46$, $SD=11.24$); $t(28) = 0.982$, $p < 0.05$. So, they were almost equal and ready for the treatment.

To have a comparison of the effect of two instruction methods, another independent samples t-test was used for the post-test scores of the two experimental groups. The results are shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4:
INDEPENDENT SAMPLE T-TEST FOR POST-TEST

Group	Mean	Mean Difference	df	t	P
Pre-instruction	86.92	7.89	42	2.11	0.037*
While-instruction	94.81				

As Table 4 indicates, there was a statistically significant difference in the alphabet recognition post-test scores of the while-instruction group ($M = 94.81$, $SD = 18.10$) as compared with those in the pre-instruction group ($M = 86.91$, $SD = \pm 17.29$), $t = 2.11$, $p < 0.05$. The results also showed that while-instruction experimental group outperformed the pre-instruction experimental group. Thus, it can be said that teaching English alphabet with while-instruction method has more positive effect than teaching English alphabet with the pre-instruction method.

According to the findings of this study it can be concluded that while-instruction method for teaching alphabet is more effective than pre-instruction of alphabet. The results of this study are in line with the findings of Wuori (1999) and Wagstaff (1998).

Both Wuori (1999) and Wagstaff (1998) highlight the importance of context in learning and the findings of this study support this idea because in while-instruction of alphabet the use of context (the companionship of other parts of book) helps the learners to use whatever they have learned in reading and writing works and they become curious about the letters they haven't learned yet. However, the number of supporting or contradicting findings is very limited, because there is not much research in this area. Therefore, more studies about the difference of these two methods of presenting alphabet to the learners can be done and stronger claims can be put forward for the findings.

The results of this research can be used as a useful way of teaching alphabet among beginners of English language learners. So, our findings can be useful for syllabus designers, curriculum developers, language teachers, and language teacher educators, especially with major change in TEFL approaches in Iranian educational system and emergence of the newly developed books based on Whole Language Approach.

V. CONCLUSION

With a major change in approaches to the language teaching, the Iranian guidance school EFL text books were also modified which would result in a change in teaching method of the teachers. However, in practice not all teachers changed their method of presenting alphabet to the new while-instruction method and some, based on their traditional views toward language teaching and the habit of years of teaching all the alphabet letter and sounds at the beginning of the course stuck to their pre-instruction teaching method. The present study, therefore, was conducted to make a comparison between the effects of these two methods on alphabet learning of teenager EFL learners. The results of the data analysis revealed that while-instruction method resulted in higher knowledge of the alphabet and was more beneficial for the learners. This finding can have pedagogical implications not only for language teachers but also for material developers and language trainers as well.

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“The Effect of Test Taking Strategies on EFL Learners’ Listening Proficiency Gains”

by
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The Importance of Culture Factor in Foreign Language Teaching

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Abstract—In this essay, the relationship between the language and culture is explained in certain ways. In English teaching, the importance of culture permeating is put forward, and in another way how this method is carried out. Only the target culture and national culture are combined together, can the corresponding policy be employed in teaching. In order to achieve the purpose of communication in teaching process, learning is more important.

Index Terms—English teaching, culture difference, material and permeating

I. INTRODUCTION

Foreign language studying does not only mean learning the language, but the most important is that one should know well the foreign culture, conventions, the living style, history and culture background. The cross-culture communication is developing and being used more and more in language studying. Strengthening culture contents has become the important way in foreign teaching reform. Learning the foreign culture is not only widening our perspective but helpful in our knowing more about the meaning of the language. The anthropologist E.B.Tylor in England said: The culture is a complicated globality. It involves knowledge, belief, art, law, customs and habits of the people as a social member to gain all the abilities. It is defined as: what is it -the society's doing and thinking. As the development of the social linguistics, culture linguistics, pragmatics and the subject of cross-culture, foreign language teaching is not only the language teaching but it should include culture teaching. Learning the different culture does not mean you must accept the culture and not mean you have the responsibility to conduct your behavior according to the culture model. On the part of the relationship between culture and language, both of them close together on the one hand, but differ on the other hand. Culture factor permeates into all the aspects of the language, and the language itself accumulates numerous culture sediments in the history. Language is a part of culture and its carrier. So the linguist and the teacher advocate the idea that the culture background is permeated into the language teaching. Knowing further about the culture contents expressed by language is the necessary part in changing language knowledge into sociable ability. The culture background knowledge plays an important role in the students communicating with each other in foreign language. Because of the different national history, culture tradition, social system, living surroundings and conditions, the different culture background appears, and as a result the different turn of expression comes out. In order to learn English well, the students must study the national culture background and the difference from that in China.

II. CULTURE VARIATIONS

A. Title and Greeting

The expert in studying language has been debating the old problem about the functions of the language and which function is the most important. One point is acknowledged that the language works as the role to transmit information and exchange the feeling. Yet, the two different functions are opposite, for one way, the Western culture stresses on the information transmission and in another way the Eastern culture pays more attention to the relation's auspicious. For the simple example, when the Chinese meet each other, they have the habit to greet "Where are you going?" This means you two have the close relationship and you care about him. Some specialists guess a lot about the special greeting and study it a lot. In Western, if you greet the other by the place, he will be very angry and will be curious about the question. We can arrive at the conclusion that in different culture backgrounds, people have the different life-styles and different customs. In cross-culture communication, because of the talker's different culture backgrounds, they are used to talking in their own way and accordingly take in the words from the foreign people. The talker will consume that the other person is contrary to this criterion on purpose and consequently figure out the meaning according to their own culture background. Therefore, they will draw the wrong conclusion that may result in the conflict or obstacle in communication. So we should compare the different culture backgrounds in language activity by the way of language formation, in order to improve the students' context consciousness. The students are supposed to know how to use the language in certain event such as age, sex, social status, occasions and intimacy. When the students communicate with the others, they should master the social policy in order to overcome the problems which appear in our daily life. We dare not to forget that in China or in English, communication has double directions. Cross-culture communication is not only limited to the understanding of the object but also it involves the sharing of culture and effect of the culture.

Therefore, in English teaching, we should learn the culture knowledge and culture background, in another way, also the construction of the two different cultures.

B. *Thanks and Praise*

“Demean oneself and respect the others” is traditional phenomenon in Chinese culture in order to show our politeness, in such way, when we hear the other thinks well of us, we would demean ourselves. For the English people, they have no such habit, faced with the praising, they used to say “thank you!” Consequently, the second language learner is easily influenced by his affection in studying process. The affection is an attitude toward the objective thing which is up to one’s demanding. The psychology studies show that: the affection is an important factor that can influence the teaching quality, and also a set of complicated psychological factors. Besides, in communication with English-speaking people, we also pay attention to the intonation which is difficult for the second-language learner. Many native English speakers find that it is difficult for them to understand the Chinese speaking English, and the important reason is intonation. The function of intonation, in English –teaching, is usually referring to the telling from the structure of sentence, showing the hiding meaning or showing your feeling. In teaching, we also need to find the deep meaning of the sentence which means the code of the language sign and reasoning of the meaning of the dialog, the former is “explicit expression” and the latter is “recessive expression”. If we refer the intonation which reflects the thinking as the important object exactly to logical intonation, on this ground, we call the intonation which possesses the keen feeling as emotional intonation. If the students can know this very well, they can judge the real meaning of the person whose native language is English.

C. *Nice Nelly and Privacy*

It is the common phenomenon in using the nice Nelly in English and Chinese, but it shows in different ways. For example, in Chinese when a woman is going to have a baby, she would say: “I have” in euphemism, but in Western countries, it is viewed as a piece of news which is open. Also, in some occasions, we use euphemism: “pass water” is a euphemism for urinate; “pass away” is a euphemism for death. It is clearly to show that difference of culture in English and Chinese. Besides this rule, “privacy” has the different definition in different cultures, and has the different values. For the English people, the definition of privacy is extensive, however, in Chinese culture, some behaviors which are acknowledged as politeness are viewed as invading the person’s privacy. For example, Chinese people greet to ask: the name, the age, the paying and the members of the family, but in English culture, such problems are banned. When Chinese people meet with each other on the way, they would greet: Where are you going? Or what are you going to do? In the foreign culture, it is not mentioned because they think such questions are involved the so called privacy, so it violates the communicative rules. In teaching, all the rules are theoretical; the students are asked to catch them in practice. The college English is a kind of practical one, and the important part is the students who are supposed to learn the characteristic, purpose, action cycle, measure and matters of practice. The learner is the specific practitioner, so he himself is demanded to try and nobody else can take the place of him, in turn, he can not take the place of the other. No matter how much the teacher possesses the knowledge, if the learner is not willing to study independently, the knowledge can not transmit from the brain of the teacher to the brain of the students. The key factor of success is the teacher’s method in teaching, and the students must know the importance of studying independently. Besides, the college English is a subject of language—language and culture. The students would consume that English studying is only master the phonetics, vocabulary and grammar, and so if they know such knowledge they can understand English very well. In most cases, it is not wise to learn the ostensible meaning; when we think the students are not good at English, not only because of their lacking the English systemic knowledge, but because of their not knowing well about the using English in certain social surroundings. The students will be satisfied with the need only if they understand the English using in different communicative activities.

D. *Personal Right Autonomy*

Personal right autonomy is referred to the personal freedom of action, right and independence. For the English nation it is thought polite to respect the personal behavior in social occasions, but on the other hand, for the Chinese nation, because of the influence by the feudal thought, it is difficult for them to catch the personal value in western culture. For example, the Chinese will not view such behaviors “offering certain gifts, service, and invitation” as the interning with the personal right, but as the caring and sincerity. So in teaching the teacher should design the structure of class in order to cultivate the students’ culture awareness. When we study English, in one way we pay more attention to the content and the purse, besides the language skill, knowledge, attitude and strategy, we also pay attention to the language awareness. Because the language and the culture connect with each other intimately, culture is the surroundings of language which is important for us to understand the given language. For the students, they must learn more information about the language which they are studying, so the teachers are asked to have higher artistic appreciation. The teaching purse is designed that the English teaching is converted from cultivating the skill to stressing on the students overall quality. It involves that the students not only know the language very well but also know its culture, history, people and life-style, and in certain ways when we know the language itself, in turn, we must know how to use it in practice rightly. This needs us firstly to learn about the difference between the two languages in certain occasions, such as in theory and in practice. Language teaching is to teach the students how to use the right language form to accomplish some tasks. It means that we should follow the personal language ability developing process, and offer them

some natural surroundings in order to make them form the language ability and language habit.

E. *Color and Number*

The different nations show different interests in color, so there exist the different expressions. For instance, in Chinese “青衣” is black dress, not blue dress in English; “青玉” is gray jade not blue jade. Another example is: Paul was in a blue mood, so in Chinese and in English different expressions appear. The same color in different brains can cause different connection and carry different national culture information, such as in China, because the people like the color “red”, they use the color to express good luck and honor roll, but in Western countries, they don't like the red color as much as the Chinese. In English, the word ‘red’ is used to refer to deficit, shed blood, violence and fire, which is seldom expressed by Chinese people. For example, the Chinese people translate literally the drama “The Red Lantern”, but for the Western people who know Chinese little, they can associate “the red light districts”. Another example is the Chinese famous works “A Dream of Red Mansions”, however, David Hawkes translated it into “The Story of the Stone”, in which he avoided the color red. In China, another typical color is yellow which is referred to as the imperiality, so the emperor's statement is called as imperial edict, and the emperor's dress is called as the imperial robe. Yet, in English culture, the color purple is compared to throne and kingship, for example, “raise someone to the purple”, “to be born in the purple”. Therefore, from such examples we can conclude that if we master the difference in color, it is helpful for us to understand the English national culture value. The second-language learners are easily influenced by personal affection and native culture in studying process. It is pointed that studying the other's culture does not mean that you must accept the culture in teaching, not mean that you guide your behavior according to the culture model. At present, the college students in our country have such habit as celebrating the western-festivals which is not blamed, but some foreign festivals don't agree with the Chinese culture tradition. So if you don't choose to celebrate the festivals only to follow the fashion, you will get into trouble or dispute. To take April Fool's Day as an example, it is a typical western-festival, in the day you can make phone of your friends. If you succeed in cheating your friend, you become the winner and your friend becomes an April Fool. So the teacher must warn the students not to introduce the foreign festivals at random, not conduct the behavior according to the target culture in studying English.

There exists the difference of number in two cultures. If the Chinese people translate the number literally, maybe it can cause misunderstanding, and vice versa. For example, the translating “one center, two basic points” in English is difficult to understand for Chinese people. Another example is that these days because of the influence of economic development, many Chinese people like the number- eight- which stands for “make a fortune”. If you translate this literally, many English people will feel confused. So in teaching, we can take some methods to make the students know more about the culture awareness. Besides the book, the teacher should teach certain relevant content about culture information, practice and also pay attention to its epochal character. In addition, the students must read the works about the target culture such as the literature, the history and the religion.

F. *Values*

Because of the elements of society and culture, the values of different nations can play a role in the cross-culture communication. Different nations possess different values, which is difficult for us to understand the special things such as the dog in England and dragon in China. We translate “lackey” into “running dog”, which causes confusion for English people. Another example is that in China, mouse is used to express timid, but in English the same word is used to expressed poor (as poor as a church mouse). If the Chinese people want to say someone is poor, they can express “as poor as being washed away”. In English, timid is also pictured to animals “as timid as a rabbit” or “chicken-hearted” and “pigeon-hearted”. In order to cultivate the ability of comprehension in English, we should pay more attention to the difference of value in the different nations. Recent years, as the rapid pace of the reform and the fluent communication with other countries, the cross-culture is referred to even at home because of the improvement of the social information and the internet. According to the demand and change of the time, many teachers show more and more interest in studying the culture difference of cross-culture which is important in English teaching. This is because in teaching the teacher not only teaches the students knowledge but also cultivates the students' communicative and cross-culture communicative ability. Mastering English pronunciation, grammar rules, certain sum of vocabulary, doesn't mean you learn English well. In English teaching, it is very important to employ the method of permeating.

III. TEACHING METHOD OF PERMEATING

A. *Participants*

The English teachers should combine the language knowledge with the vocabulary, sentence structures, so as to teach the nation's lexeme and its usage. Teaching combining with the culture background means that we should know well the significance of the culture and its terms in using. Moreover, the teacher can compare the culture of vocabulary in both languages, emphasizing on the difference and its specific usage. The students are asked to make up dialogs, short plays, sketch and cross-talk about request, inquiring, advice, apology, appointment and to say good-bye so as to train their communicative ability. Meanwhile, the students are conducted to observe their role identity, precise of words and communicative trait in order to succeed in social intercourse. This demands that the teacher must improve the teaching method, joining the language teaching with the culture teaching. Up to such scratch, the students can understand the

foreign culture via television, video and film. Of course the students are supposed to attain such purpose gradually by reading some books about the program which leads them to accumulate certain knowledge on the culture background, social convention and relations. Then the students can watch the program together and afterwards the students can play the role or discuss the contents with precise culture. Besides, the foreign teacher can play an important role in certain lectures to permeate the culture. The students are assembled to watch the given film or listen to the lectures in order to understand the foreign culture. In another way, the students can make conversation with the foreign teacher face to face to learn the knowledge which they have no idea in class. From the foreign teacher himself, an obstacle in cross-culture communication, the students in one way rich their knowledge and in another way rich their studying means to communicate smoothly. Take the idioms for an example. People from different countries speak different language, keep different value systems, and have different ways of looking on things, which generates culture differences. However, due to the lack of knowledge culture differences, many people fail to understand each other during the actual communication activities. Idioms have an inseparable relationship with a nation's geographical environment, religious beliefs, historical background, traditional customs, and so on. Therefore, there are definitely some differences between English idioms and Chinese idioms. Studying the culture differences between east and west can decrease or avoid unnecessary conflicts when we do idiom translation.

Culture differences should be handled properly in line with the principles of mutual respect, seeking common ground. Another effective way in teaching is body language which is non-language communicative way. In teaching the teacher should pay more attention to the different body language because of the different cultures, so as to avoid the failure in communication. Studying the body-language carefully is helpful for us to succeed in cross-culture communication, in another way to reveal the difference and the conflict between the two different cultures.

B. To Motivate the Students' Interest

The students have studied English for many years, but the result is not satisfactory. The reason is that the teacher may not use the proper teaching method because of the present examination system. So in the university, we should find the way to change the condition, on the one hand, to change the past teaching method. Firstly, the teacher should cultivate the students' motivation of studying—the factors that influence the person's desire to do something. In second language studying, motivation can be fallen into two parts: one is instrumental motivation which is welcomed because it is helpful for the students to find jobs, read foreign newspapers and pass examination. Another motivation is integrative motivation—which is useful for the students to communicate with the people who have the different culture background. It is found that the students who have the integrative motivation learn the second language better because the motivation was developed earlier and it is not easily to be changed. In class, the students are put into two parts: one is those who are active to take part in the activities, however, another part is those who are negative on the English activities. So the teacher must find the better methods which are effective for both parts of the students. Higher education students are on the brim of finding job. Most of the job offering companies looks for communication skills in English as the most important criteria for the candidate. The global economic system has caused an increasing degree of communication among the cultures. Among the cultures communication is problematic since these systems of symbolic meanings are known to one group but unknown to other groups. It is very much important to improve the students' ability to make communication across cultures and it is very important to know these differences. The students, situated in a particular life status and equipped with certain innate mental and physical capacities, obtain in their interaction with the natural and social-cultural surroundings, including various events that they have experienced, knowledge that they have acquired, feelings and emotions that they have gone through, cognitive abilities that they have developed, and whatever that makes them differ from that they were and that will contribute to later processes of their experience acquisition. Verbal communication begins with the speaker's intention, which is brought about by his thoughts, assumptions, ideas, information, feelings, emotions, and the like, which he wants to share with the listener. For convenience, we use communicative notion to refer to what the speaker intends to employ language to express or convey to the listener. For many years, languages were taught using the grammar-translation method. Students were subjected to traditional grammar lectures on the correct formation of the pluperfect passive subjunctive, as well as written exercises requiring students to conjugate verbs to the point of absurdity. When the students want to express themselves, they often speak out the words in English but they think in Chinese. English is now wildly used as international language, it is the means of communication between speakers of different countries in different social context such as doing business, conducting scientific study or having a daily small talk. A variety of specific social factors in a speech community can affect second language acquisition such as age, gender, social class, and ethnic identity.

IV. CONCLUSION

As a result, second language learning is a process for the students to realize the certain national social culture system by large sum of listening, speaking, reading and writing to receive, produce and pass the language symbol. Vocabulary is the most central element in the social system of communication. Without an extensive vocabulary and strategies for acquiring new vocabulary, learners often achieve less than their potential and may be discouraged from making use of language learning opportunities around them. The purpose of studying language is communication, but our traditional teaching method is far away from it. Hudson put it this way—language is studied with mind which is because language

and culture are an entirety that can not be broken up. The students not only study language and culture but also study language in culture and culture in language. Among the cultures communication is problematic since these systems of symbolic meanings are known to one culture but unknown to other cultures. It is very important to improve the students' ability to make communication across cultures and it is important to know these differences. In the traditional system of studying progress little need for international experience was required. But now because of the globalization of language, in language teaching, the teacher must pay more attention to the culture teaching in order to improve the students' communicative abilities, therefore, to reduce the influence of the students' mother tongue. Different learning purposes decide different learning methods and no one specific method is suitable for a specific learner. So teacher training is another big problem in the countries where real information exchanges and authentic communication situation is insufficient. The lack of communication in a real situation with foreigners causes problems for both teachers and students. The idealist teacher should be fully competent in language competence, and a good command of the knowledge of linguistics and teaching methodologies. In our teaching, we can adopt the method which is popular in foreign country-Audio-Lingual Method and Communicative Approach that stresses on the language communicative property and culture property. If we do according to such methods, we are able to be successful in learning the second language. With the globalization of economy and science, the teachers and students communicate more and more with the foreigners, which requires the teachers and students not only learn more about the different cultures in different countries but also know how to express the different cultures in communication. For the Chinese students, the main task is to transmit the country's traditional culture, but not to imitate the other's culture blindly.

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Preparing for a Postmethod Pedagogy: A Transformative Approach to Curriculum Development

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Abstract—The three parameters of postmethod pedagogy proposed by Kumaravadivelu (2001), particularly a pedagogy of possibility, are in line with and drew on the works of such critical pedagogists as Giroux (1988) whose idea of transformative intellectuals viewed it rightful for every individual teacher and learner to actively participate in the process of learning with their entire social, economic and political experiences; and even make reformations to the direction of pedagogy based on their understanding. However, curriculum development, as an integral part of pedagogy, may inhibit this transformative and dynamic learning by restricting teachers to set and prefabricated materials and guidelines. Nonetheless, teachers play a pivotal role in the realization of this transformative process since they are the executive recipients of curricula. This paper is an attempt to shed light on a transformative approach to curriculum development and holds, a transformative approach to curriculum development requires teachers to have a hand in curriculum development when they are invited by the curriculum to act so; and adapt or transform the curriculum when they are constrained by it.

Index Terms—curriculum, possibility, postmethod pedagogy, transformative intellectuals

I. LITERATURE REVIEW

Giroux (1988) raised the issue of transformative intellectuals in reaction to the long-lived perception of teachers as high-level technicians who were trained only to transmit the information they were dictated by experts far removed from the realities of classroom context. In fact, Giroux criticized a top-down attitude toward pedagogy which regarded teachers as merely a means of transmitting the prefabricated and pre-sequenced materials developed by professionals (Zeichner, 1983). This conformist approach towards education had propagated a widespread passivity among teachers and students alike. That is, teachers were trained to be passive and not to question the fundamental principles of what they were required to teach (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). Kumaravadivelu (2001) addressed this top-down perspective which had led to a gap between practice and theory (Elliott, 1991) by elaborating on a pedagogy of practicality. A pedagogy of practicality maintains teachers, as the producers of context-sensitive pedagogic knowledge, should be encouraged to extract theory from what they practice and practice what they hypothesize. In other words, a theory of practice will remain at the theory level and prove impractical unless it is produced as a result of practice. Therefore, a pedagogy of practicality seeks a theory of practice which is produced by teachers rather than a professional theory tailored by experts (Kumaravadivelu, 2001).

Moreover, the curriculum of a top-down pedagogy was designed and developed accordingly in order to avoid possible disobedience on the part of teachers. Teachers received “teacher-proof packages” from “professional experts” and transmitted them to their students (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). On the other hand, teachers can hardly think of any possibility of change if they are either overloaded with a lot of lessons to teach and a deadline to meet, or simply when they are not invited by the lesson to participate. Obviously, this trait of submissiveness passed down from teachers to students who were influenced by the superior. In such circumstances, even the evaluation system could be influenced, consequently declaring only satisfying results for the dictated education. Schick’s division (1971 as cited in Kiely & Rea-Dickins, 2005) sheds light on this issue. He divides the evaluation system of his time into five groups: 1. Eyewash evaluation: to make a program look good. 2. Whitewash evaluation: to cover over the failure of a favored programmer. 3. Submarine evaluation: to sink an unpopular programmer. 4. Posture evaluation: to satisfy a condition of funding and 5. Postponement evaluation: to put off the need to act (p. 947). Therefore, it can be concluded that such educational systems, in their entirety (pedagogy a term used by Kumaravadivelu, 2001) leave little room, if any, for teachers’ active participation.

Apart from a dictating curriculum, the concept of method played a crucial role in the actualization of a conformist education. While Ommagio (1986) criticized methods as “...a ‘prepackaged’ set of procedures to which everyone is expected to slavishly subscribe” (p.44), Pennycook (1989) went a step further to chide the broader scope of harm that

the concept of method brought about. He elaborated how the concept of method accredited the “interested knowledge” of one particular group and became the source of sociocultural and political inequities. Consequently, the promulgated conformity leads to an uncritical and unproductive society that only consumes “the interested knowledge” it is fed by a group of so-called professionals. In such a community stagnation rules the time and transformation is only regarded as unprofessional since it may disturb the order reached by approved frameworks and standards. In short, the concept of method as Wolin (1969) argues “avoids fundamental criticism and fundamental commitment” (p. 1068). This means since a method-based approach gives no space to teachers to question the validity of methods, therefore, they will not, or cannot conform to its principles and procedures, considering the complexities surrounding and affecting teaching and learning. Accordingly, Prabhu (1990) and Larsen-Freeman (2011) consider the idea of a best method very implausible.

As a result of rising dissatisfaction with methods, teachers began to resort to an eclectic method which allowed them to exploit the best part of every method and subsequently apply it in the classroom according to the context they were situated in. However, as Kumaravadivelu (2003) pinpoints eclectic method did not alter the nature of method, but only searched for an “alternative method”. What Kumaravadivelu (2003), however, proposed as a solution, and one of the three attributes of postmethod pedagogy, was for teachers to seek an “alternative to method”. In other terms, this means that practitioners should be empowered to free themselves from the shackles of a method-based ideology and formulate their own theories of practice congruent with their context.

II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TEACHER’S ROLE

Teachers are the center of the educational universe. Every pedagogical, curricular, and administrative effort in this realm revolves around teachers. As a matter of fact, one could argue that the whole destiny of education falls into the hands of teachers. Elliott (1994) contends the quality of the education that learners receive is determined by the quality of the teachers presenting it. Teachers can either turn a neglecting eye to all the days and nights of educational work, or, conversely, land these academic contributions on the goal spot and lead the universe of education to, as Giroux contends, a transformative destination wherein the participants are constantly reforming and promoting intellectually. It is very ironic that teachers can be both as noble and mighty as the rulers of the entire educational land, or as undignified and powerless as crowned heads of nowhere, desperately acting as imitators and transmitters of knowledge.

Despite the significance of teachers’ role, a teacher’s performance in a classroom is observable only shortly before they close the classroom door. However, afterwards, no one can conjecture what occurs within the four walls, considering the fact that the monitoring system is still not systematic enough to have this under control, and that the teachers can simply evade the regularities they dislike by acting as law-abiding teachers in monitoring sessions. Throughout our educational years of experience, we have all seen teachers who consciously neglect the goals of the curriculum they are committed to follow. Freeman (1996) summarizes research on teachers’ planning and observes, “[Teachers] did not naturally think about planning in the organized formats which they had been taught to use in their professional training. Further, when they did plan lessons according to these formats, they often did not teach them according to plan” (p. 97). Also Richards (2001) highlights “Many things can be done to create a context for good teaching, but it is teachers themselves who ultimately determine the success of a program” (p. 209). Hence, the significance of a teacher’s role decentralizes all the other educational roles such as the role of curriculum, the role of textbooks and instructional materials. However, as Giroux, a leading figure in critical pedagogy, argues these decentralized roles are wrongfully playing central roles in education.

III. TRANSFORMATIVE INTELLECTUALS

Giroux (1988) contends teachers are generally perceived as “high-level technicians carrying out dictates and objectives decided by experts far removed from the everyday realities of classroom life” (p.121). Zeichner (1983), too, agrees that teachers have become “the passive recipients of professional knowledge.” Apart from educational factors, there are also non-educational influences which have taken over. Dewey (1916), who was able to subtly recognize “institutional idealistic philosophies” of the nineteenth century, in his book titled *Democracy and Education* pinpoints the absolute power of state officials and authorities over the educational system to train students, from the elementary grades to university degrees, as patriotic citizens and soldiers who would later defend the political and industrial boundaries of the country. Later, in 1930, Dewey stresses the dominant influence of global market on education and states “The business mind, having its own conversation and language, its own interests, its own intimate groupings...determine the tone of society at large...” (p. 41, as cited in Giroux, 2009, p.1). One can conclude from these statements that, in such an educational system both teachers and students are treated as passive inferiors in a hierarchy of intellectuals whose self-identity are seen as unnecessary or at times dangerous. In one instance in the UK, the government attempted to interpret the role of teachers as a “conspiracy against society” (Elliott, 1994). Still, after about a century from Dewey’s discussion, Giroux (2009) argues that these oppressing forces have continued to exist in the form of a market-based rationality which looks down on democracy and “publicly engaged teaching and scholarship” (p. 2). He continues that authoritarianism has found new forms to control public life. For instance, citizenship has been reduced to consumerism as a result of rapid growth of global markets. (Giroux, 2005)

In response to this conformist attitude towards education, Dewey (1916) proposes a progressive ideology in which the “very idea of education is [seen] as freeing of individual capacity in a progressive growth directed to social aims.” (p. 103). Later Aronowitz and Giroux (1991) speak of the appearance of a new approach to education in the 1960s, postmodern education, which initially built on progressive ideas, but that later constructed its own principles. Both progressivism and postmodern education sought relevance between theoretical knowledge and practice (Kumaravadivelu named this relationship a pedagogy of practicality, 2001). However, as Aronowitz and Giroux (1991) argue “For progressives, practice was the test of truth, and was understood as a vital pedagogical tool, but they largely ignored its transformative role” (p. 15). Giroux (1988) describes transformative intellectuals as people who “critically examine the world and its processes, including the political and educational institutions that maintain social inequalities, and subsequently, transform it” (p. 121). Meanwhile, in this transformative approach “students must engage knowledge as border-crossers, as people moving in and out of borders constructed around coordinates of difference and power” (Giroux, 2005, p. 22). In this sense, students will become “critical, active citizens.” (Giroux, 1988). Kumaravadivelu (2001) describes this aspect of postmethod pedagogy as the “parameter of possibility” which is derived principally from “the works of critical pedagogists of Freirean persuasion” (p. 542). He elaborates that critical pedagogists believe the philosophy behind the implementation of any type of pedagogy is to bring about and then maintain “social inequalities.” Therefore, they struggle for the realization of “teachers’ and learners’ subject positions.” (p.542)

Aronowitz and Giroux (1991) continue that from a postmodern view, curriculum can best boost learning provided that school knowledge develops from the tacit knowledge based on the cultural resources which students already have in their possession. As opposed to practices that teach such unrelated disciplines as math, literature, geography, and history without a critical viewpoint during a school day, a postmodern teacher strives to combine these knowledges into a number of projects decided cooperatively with students (p.15). Consequently, one could argue that pedagogy cannot be influenced unless we have a holistic approach to it, attempting to understand and consider all the particular situations that may affect it in some way (Elliott, 1993 as cited in Kumaravadivelu, 2001).

IV. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

In 2006, Richards acknowledges “Educational publication is, after all, a business,” and materials writers are faced with the challenge to both provide materials in accordance with “educational objectives and standards” and at the same time satisfy the needs of market (p.23). During their service in institutions or schools, teachers are constantly provided with materials designed by materials writers who should consider the interests of the government and the market they are writing for. Additionally, training courses and sessions usually aim to train teachers in a way to persuade them to follow the recipe of the curriculum. Consequently, this negligence of democratic difference among individuals will lead to teachers, and as a result, students who think uncritically and become passive citizens. However, the once popular idea that a teacher’s role is to transfer materials from the curriculum to the students has been substituted by the realization that teachers possess “complex mental lives” that influence “what and how teachers teach” (Nation & Macalister, 2010, p. 176). These complex mental lives are called teacher cognition (Freeman: 2001).

One such realization which led to a more active approach to curriculum development than that of a transmission model, encouraged teachers to adhere to the principles of postmethod pedagogy as elaborated by Kumaravadivelu (1994). Post-method teaching does not follow the prescriptions of any methods or any fixed syllabi, but that which depends on every teacher’s own understanding of language, language learning and teaching, the practical knowledge and skills teachers gain as a result of their training and experience, the teacher’s awareness of the learners’ needs, enthusiasm and learning styles, “as well as the teacher’s understanding of the teaching context” (Richards, 2013, p. 18). An Example of this post-method approach to curriculum development can be found in the Central Design of curriculum development proposed by Richards in 2013. He contends research on teachers’ performances shows that teachers frequently adopt a central design approach when planning their lessons by “first considering the activities and teaching procedures they will use” (p. 14). This type of curriculum development, Richards contends should commence with determining “the processes of inquiry and deliberation” that impact on teaching and learning—such processes as “investigation, decision-making reflection, discussion, interpretation, critical thinking, making choices, co-operating with others and so on.” Content is selected depending on whether it helps advance the application of these processes, and the results need not be defined in any degree of detail (p. 15). Education, in this sense, Richards (2013) maintains is “successful to the extent that it makes the behavioural outcomes of the students unpredictable” (p. 15). This means learner’s individual needs are respected and the teacher’s role is to provide for the flourishing of their unique ideas through critical thinking.

In one sense, the entire curriculum design process, “that is environmental analysis, needs analysis, setting principles and goals, content and sequencing, format and presentation, monitoring and assessment, and evaluation, can be applied to something as small as an activity in a lesson” (Nation & Macalister, 2010, p. 176). That is, teachers need to make choices regarding curriculum design in every lesson (Nation & Macalister, 2010). Of course, the authors do not propose that teachers necessarily have to become the agents that should produce materials for their own classes, but that they should both practice doing so every now and then to remain critical and autonomous, and apart from that, have a transformative approach to the received materials and curriculum. In other words, “As teachers use materials they [should] adapt and transform them to suit the needs of particular groups of learners and their own teaching styles”

(Richards, 2001). These processes of transformation are at the heart of teaching and enable good teachers to create effective lessons out of the resources they make use of. Nonetheless, there is certainly difference between novice and experienced teachers in terms of teaching knowledge, awareness and skills. However, as Richards (2001) contends such prerequisites for teaching can be obtained by passing an initial training course such as TESOL, CELTA or other developing opportunities such as observation of experienced teachers, observation of training videos, working under the supervision of experienced teachers and so on.

In a broader and a more professional approach to curriculum development, Handler (2010) states contemporary teacher education programs ought to be adapted to acquaint preservice teachers with essential knowledge of curriculum theory and “critical pedagogy such that these teachers may understand curriculum at the deeper level necessary to make decisions beyond the classroom level” (p. 38).

V. DISCUSSION

To sum up, the discussions above can provide a convincing argument to believe that teachers can play a vital role in the success of a curriculum. In support of this idea, Widdowson (1990) states “what learners do is not directly determined by the syllabus but is a consequence of how the syllabus is methodologically mediated by the teacher in the pursuit of his own course of instruction” (p. 129). In this view, Widdowson (1990) concludes that changes in syllabus will have little effect on learning. For instance, he argues that a notional/functional syllabus is “of itself no more communicative than is a structural one” (p. 129). Therefore, it is because of the importance of the teacher’s role that, as White (1988) elaborates on the problem-solving model of innovation proposed by Havelock (1971 as cited in White, 1988), all teachers should accept some responsibility for researching their classroom work as an important part of teacher’s professionalism. According to White (1988) a problem solving approach is based on action research, the aim of which is to draw on research in adapting and enhancing curriculum practice, consequently having a “direct relationship to innovation and reform” (p. 123). White continues that the focus of action research, which is a manifestation of the goals of problem solving approach, is on spotting the problems by “teachers themselves rather than on those defined by an outside consultant or change agent” (p. 124). Therefore, the authors propose action research is an integral part of a transformative approach to curriculum development requiring teachers to actively participate in the processes of creation and transformation.

Finally, by a transformative approach to curriculum development the authors argue not for teachers to necessarily participate in curriculum development, but for their mentality to be exercised so that they can become autonomous and critical as transformative intellectuals, and therefore train critical and independent learners. As Kumaravadivelu (2006) maintains teacher autonomy can be seen at the heart of postmethod pedagogy. Autonomous teachers “know not only how to teach but also know how to act autonomously within the academic and administrative constraints imposed by institutions, curricula, and textbooks (p. 178). In other words, “no curriculum development without teacher development” (Stenhouse, 1975, p. 68) is practical. Therefore, the authors argue teacher education is a prerequisite for a transformative approach to curriculum development. In other words, only postmethod teachers, who have formed an understanding of action research and the parameters of particularity, practicality and possibility can lead the path of postmethod pedagogy. In addition, the authors maintain postmethod teachers should take a transformative approach to curriculum development. That is, they should actively participate in curriculum development when they are invited by the curriculum to act so, and adapt or transform the curriculum when they are constrained by it. This means since contexts, cultures and possibilities differ from class to class, teachers should never be enslaved by curricula but manage, adjust or transform them accordingly.

VI. CONCLUSION

Based on the arguments presented in this article, and from a post-method perspective, the authors can conclude that questions such as ‘What is the best method?’ ‘What is the best syllabus design?’, or ‘Who is the best teacher?’ are enlightening only on the surface, however, in deeper layers of such questions lie the ideologies of a conformist educational system which seeks to hinder critical thinking, and sacrifice individualization for the sake of its own political and industrial interests. Nonetheless, as Trim (1976 as cited in McDonough and Shaw, 2003), one of the advisors for the Council of Europe, has shown it is possible to pursue individualization even within a hugely authoritarian framework. What is more, “individualization does not necessarily mean that the students will be working on their own. In some cases, individualization can take place in small groups or pairs where students work on a similar task. At other times the learner may work with a teacher or in a solitary mode” (McDonough, Shaw & Masuhara, 2013, p. 251).

This is, however, possible only when teachers become transformative intellectuals who foster border crossing, respect individualized needs, learning styles and strategies; teachers who promote critical thinking and learner autonomy. In short, teachers who follow the lines of postmethod pedagogy, and as Giroux (1988) states lead students to the readiness of becoming change agents who can reform both the educational system and the society. Giroux’s (1988) idea of transformative intellectuals is in line with the parameters of a postmethod pedagogy (particularity, practicality and possibility) described by Kumaravadivelu (2001), since it provides the participants with the opportunity to draw on

their cultural and social knowledge and dynamically interact with the materials they are presented with, and even make alterations to the content based on their understanding and the particular situations they live in. Accordingly, as Kelly (2004) concludes, a curriculum is appropriate to the extent that it allows teachers to foster individualization through their own judgment as professionals.

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Enhancing Listening Fluency through Well-beaten Path Approach

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Abstract—It is axiomatic that listening skill is the primary channel to the process of language acquisition. To foster this skill, a wide array of approaches and methods has been offered, one of which is the often-neglected well-beaten approach. The current study is an attempt to provide glimpse into the possible effect of employing well-beaten path approach on developing learners' listening fluency. To achieve such intent, 60 EFL learners were randomly selected and assigned to two groups. Before assigning them, they sat for a pre-test to ensure their homogeneity. For one group the well-beaten path approach was applied in that the same listening test was repeated three times and for the other group the test was run only once. The findings signified that using a well-beaten approach noticeably leads learners to outperform their listening fluency. The study results might significantly contribute to the more optimal teaching of listening skill.

Index Terms—well-beaten path approach, listening fluency, EFL learners

I. INTRODUCTION

It goes without saying that listening skill is among the most fundamental skills in the process of language acquisition. It is not only a skill, like those of speaking, reading, and writing, which should be developed, but it might also be treated as a tool for developing other aspects of language (Rost, 1990; Zareian & Hashemi, 2015). Therefore, developing listening skill, as the backbone of language learning, is expected to receive decent attention especially by teachers and material developers. In recent years, however, there has been an increased focus on L2 listening ability because of its perceived importance in the process of language acquisition (Hayati, 2000). In a similar vein, enhancing the listening fluency of learners is also a focal point to be taken into account as well. By listening fluency, as Cheng and Millet (2013) define, it means individuals' ability to automatically process audio input and reach an acceptable extent of comprehension of it. Accordingly, a set of approaches have been offered to help learners optimally improve their listening fluency. One of these orientations is the well-beaten approach in which repetition plays the core role. The approach is founded upon the premise that repeating the same listening input to learners might remarkably enrich their listening fluency. The present study makes attempt to put this premise into realistic practice.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Mastering listening skill to an acceptable extent is a laborious task for both learners and teachers (Field, 2008; Buck, 2001). From another perspective, Sigel (2013) justifies this difficulty by maintaining that because we learn our first language listening skill almost unconsciously and effortlessly, learning a L2 listening skill as opposed to the way we acquired L1, appears burdensome, due to the distressingly complex underlying processing mechanisms. These mechanisms include listeners' phonological, semantic, syntactic and pragmatic processing of the incoming information along with the use of conscious- based and generated inferences as well as the cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies. Researchers also attribute some other reasons for this complexity. By way of example, they confirm the bitter fact that arguments directed at understanding the real nature of listening skill is far from being over (Moore, 2011; Buck, 2001). Such complexities cause mainstream theorists as well as the material developers and teachers not to be able to design and develop apposite textbooks, approaches, and other instruments to help learners boost their listening fluency efficiently. Furthermore, as another probable reason, lack of enough familiarity with and background knowledge about the intended language may also make the story more complicated to learners, especially if their L1 shares minimum commonalities with the L2. Learners may even feel frustrated that they cannot sort out even a single word of an audio input. Nemtechinaval (2013) likewise, contends that most of L2 learners encounter a shocking cognitive load developing their listening fluency.

Despite these obstacles, a set of approaches have been proposed by respective experts to facilitate learners' mission of mastering L2 listening fluency. Bottom-up approach (Field, 2008), standard listening tests (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005), meta-cognitive listening cycle (Vandergiftand & Goh, 2012), and teacher modeling along with situational models (Goh, 2008) are among these approaches. One approach that has been paid indecent attention is the *well-beaten*

path approach. The approach contends that in order to effectively motivate learners to broaden their listening fluency, repetition is a quintessential factor to be taken into account. Roughly speaking, the more the authors surfed through the web, the less they could find a well-documented literature on well-beaten path approach and its impact on listening skill. In essence, not adequate studies have ever been conducted as far as this approach is concerned (which in turn highlights the significance of the present study).

Nevertheless, with respect to the substantive factor of repetition, some details need to be taken into account. Moore (2011) maintains that repetition is a prominent factor in both development of linguistic competence and the transformation of language practices. It also fundamentally contributes to a more vivid understanding of communicative competence and also its development across contexts. In a similar vein, Brown (2001) argues that repetition is a rudimentary prerequisite for learning, in the sense that it provides the possibility of bringing together related experience and committed memory. In listening fluency practice, in the light of well-beaten path approach, repetition helps learners gradually become more familiar with the highly diversified strands of audio input such as accent of speaker(s), context, topic, etc. Additionally, repetition also succors learners relieve their negative feelings like stress and anxiety in that they know that the audio is to be repeated more than once. Furthermore, given the highly-quoted saying “*practice makes perfect*”, constantly repeating audio input is also a sort of practice that might finally arouse better performance of individuals.

III. STUDY DESIGN

The study, as it was already explicated, intends to shed light on this research question that whether making use of a well-beaten path approach, whose key concept is repetition, bears positive effective impact on learners’ listening fluency. To test this research question, 60 male and female lower-intermediate EFL learners were randomly selected and assigned into two groups. One group that functioned as the control group embodied 30 learners on which no well-beaten approach was applied. And for another group (30 learners) which was the experimental group the under-studied approach was run. They were all sat for a pre-test to make sure they were in almost the same level of proficiency as far as their foreign language is concerned.

The two groups received the same audio input and related questions. However the way the audio input was presented to them was different. Put it another way, for the control group the listening clip was played only once. But for the experimental group, the same listening clip was played three times. During these four times, they were given the questions so that they could simultaneously listen and take the items. The audio and listening items were related to the course book they were passing in their institutes (*Top Notch series*). The audio duration was about 28 minutes and the test consisted of 20 items from two formats of true-false and multiple-choice. The test was extracted from the test pamphlet designed by Saslow and Asher. Finally, to analyze the collected data, Statistical Passage for Social Sciences (SPSS) in general and descriptive statistics and independent t-tests in particular were run.

With regard to ethical issues, not only they were briefly explained about the objectives of the experiment (by briefly the author tried to prevent negative qualities such as Hawthorn effect), but from all them the author received passive consent to take part in the research.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to begin the study and to make sure that the two groups were homogeneous enough in English language performance prior to the study; a pre-test was administered to both control and experimental groups. The descriptive statistics of this test appears in Table 1. As the table reports, the mean of the experimental group ($M=12.04$) in the listening pre-test is a bit higher than the mean of the control group ($M=11.71$) but the difference is very trivial.

TABLE 1.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE PRE-TEST

	Codes	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	Cont.	30	11.71	2.08	.37
	Exp.	30	12.04	2.17	.38

An independent t-test was then run to see if the two groups performed significantly different on the listening pre-test or not. Table 2 displaying the results obtained from this statistical analysis reveals that the two groups did not differ significantly in their performance. ($t = -.59, p > 0.05$).

TABLE 2.
INDEPENDENT SAMPLE TEST OF THE PRE-TEST

	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
pre-test	-.591	58	.56	-.32	.56	-1.44	.78

After running the core phase of the study, again, in order to see if the two groups performed statistically different on the two tests, the raw scores obtained from the administration of the listening post-test were subjected to an independent t-test. Table 3 below shows the descriptive statistics of it. According to this table, the mean of the experimental group ($M=26.13$) is higher than that of the control group ($M=13.17$).

TABLE 3.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE POST-TEST

	code	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post-test	Cont.	30	13.17	2.37	.45
	Exp.	30	26.13	3.79	.67

In addition, Table 4 shows that the difference between the control and experimental group performance on the listening post-test is significant ($t= -16.88$, $p < 0.01$). Therefore, it can be stated that the under-studied listening approach in the class enhanced students' listening performance.

TABLE 4.
INDEPENDENT SAMPLE TEST OF THE POST-TEST

	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
post-test	-16.88	58	.000	-13.64	.81	-16.23	-12.19

The obtained results signified that utilizing a well-beaten path approach will meaningfully augment the students' listening fluency. Therefore, it might be claimed that repeating an audio listening clip could help students become more fluent compared with when the same audio input is exposed only once. As it was already hypothesized in the beginning sections of the study, this improvement impact can be attributed to a set of reasons. For example, as far as affective factors are concerned, since students know that they will be exposed to the input several times, negative feelings including anxiety, stress, and panic drastically decrease in them which in turn could lead to outperformance on the test. Or as another justification, because as a result of repeating the same listening input for several times, the students are more likely to become familiar with the accent of speakers, the overall topic of the input, and other contextual factors which lead them to master the content. Moreover, this repetition provides learners with sufficient time that in case they are not able to make sense of the audio input refer to compensatory skills (Buck, 2001) such as their background knowledge, visual information, or even common sense.

The study also stipulates that teachers should take into account this approach of listening fluency in their classrooms. It could be advantageous for both teachers and students to enhance their comprehension ability in their second language. In contrast, teachers should bear in their mind the often-said proverb of "*A well-beaten path does not always make the correct way*" meaning that although well-beaten approach is basically revolves upon the repetition of the intended input, it does not signify that they should play the listening input as many times as they wish. To put other way, too much repeating of an input not only does not have any beneficial impact, but it might negatively affect students learning in that it can bore students and de-motivate them. Due to lack of any specific study dealing with the nature, number, and sort of repetition in this approach, it seems that teachers should decide on this central issue subjectively based on their local contextual factors especially the proficiency level of students. They might repeat the input more if their students are beginners and lower intermediate learners and less repetition for higher levels of proficiency learners.

The last but not the least point is that this approach is not deprived of criticism. For instance, we know that at the heart of well-beaten approach lies the concept of repetition. But what does it exactly mean by repetition? Does it simply mean playing back an input several times or it should involve some kinds of modifications, explanations, or the like before repeating? Furthermore, how many times should the audio be repeated? Can we set a certain number of repetitions (two? Three? Four?) or it should be decided upon based on teachers' intuitions? Moreover, does this approach work for all students from different language proficiencies? Is it logical, practical, and authentic to repeat the same listening input several times until it is understood? Does such a process happen in reality? These questions might in effect be treated as recommendations for further research in the same area so that more cogent findings could be obtained.

V. CONCLUSION

As it was maintained at the beginning section of the study, listening skill is one of the most paramount skills in any language. Its significance even doubles in foreign or second languages in that their process of acquisition is drastically different from that of first language. Consequently, implementing studies on this domain and shedding light on various approaches and strategies which might facilitate L2 listening fluency is necessary. The present study as one of the studies in achieving the same purpose investigated the effect of well-beaten approach on improving the listening fluency of students. The study revealed that this approach can meaningfully and significantly help students to enhance

their ability of listening comprehension. The approach is also a great help for teachers to reduce the impact of negative feelings like stress and anxiety which consequently leads to the better acquisition of the skill.

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A Semiotic Approach to Dimensions of Meaning in Translation*

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Abstract—This paper attempts to follow the thoughts of Saussure and Peirce, and take their thoughts as beacons to analyze the different dimensions of meaning. Signs exist for representing the objects either in reality or in imagery, and during the signifying process, two dimensions of meaning come into being, signification and significance. Signification internalized in the structure could be understood from the perspective of structuralism. In Contrast, significance is the effect of what is referred to in a synchronical dimension as meaning potential related to the outside systems, which may be further classified into three aspects: metaphorical meaning, implicature and associative meaning. Moreover, the relationship of signification and significance is dynamic, not static characterized by hierarchy, convertibility and coexistence. Moreover, this paper also discusses how to achieve equivalence based on the dimensions of meaning in an optimal way in real translation practice, which includes signification equivalence, significance equivalence and signification\significance equivalence which is an intersection sandwiched between signification and significance. Signification equivalence and significance equivalence highlight the ability of indicating and creation of signs whereas signification\significance equivalence, accompanied by the developing signifying process focuses on the pragmatic fuzziness brought by the speakers or writers on special occasion on purpose

Index Terms—meaning, signification, significance

I. INTRODUCTION

With the trend of post-modernism, deconstruction gradually proliferates into translation and rises to prominence, which poses a threat to determinacy of meaning by introducing unconsciousness and irrational thinking. Quine (1960) puts forward the notions of occasion sentence and standing sentence definable in terms of the notion of prompted assent and dissent so as to break down the traditional notions about meaning. Kristeva (1966/1986) proposes the concept of intertextuality from the perspective of semiotics, which refers to the signifying activity always dependent on the pre-existed texts in a given text. Obviously intertextuality provides an ideal experimental field for Derrida. Derrida (1978, 1981) points out that since every sign contains the “trace” of other signs, meaning could be understood as a process of referral of signifier ad infinitum with the oblivion of signified. Therefore the signifying process enters into an endless centrifugal movement, spreading from one single sign to every other one in the language system. To determine meaning, thus, becomes impossible.

There is no denying that meaning’ is the essence of translation. Without meaning, translation is nothing. The correct understanding of the meaning is the key to translation. Therefore this paper attempts to elaborate the different dimensions of meaning and guide the translation practices in an attempt to answer the basic question under the framework of semiotics: “what a sign means in essence?”, considering the essential relationship between semiotics and translation.

Semiotics, as its name implies, is the study on signs. From the standpoints of semiotics, all language is a system, consisting of coherent signs. Consequently, all texts can be described and analyzed semiotically. Such being the same case, translation, based on language, is considered as compatible with semiotics in that both are concerned with “the use, interpretation and exchange of messages or texts, --that is of signs” (Gorlée, 1994, p. 11). Translation thereby could be reduced into semiotics involving the elements of language, culture, customs and even the texts in which the original and the translation comprise of a sequence of interpretative signs, as Peirce (1991) says, “Translation is the same as sign interpretation, and sign interpretation is translation” (p.153).

II. THOUGHTS OF SEMIOTICS

As the founder of structuralism, Saussure begins his semiotics in favor of considering language as an abstract system of signs. He denies the idea that there is a transcendental presence existing before signs and puts that “Thought remains vague and chaotic by nature. There are no pre-existing concepts before the introduction of language” (Saussure, 2001, p. 111). To put it simply, no signs no meaning. According to Saussure, a sign could be defined as a two-sided psychological entity, comprising of two parts, signifier (sound pattern) and signified (meaning). The relationship

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between signifier and signified is compared to a sheet of paper, making it impossible to separate sound from meaning. Moreover, what signifier and signified construct is a form, not a substance. On the basis of the formal feature, his most prominent nature of signs, difference, is introduced, which means that language as signifying depends not upon the particular positive properties of what is uttered but upon the difference between what is uttered and what is not uttered. In the meantime a binary opposition comes into being in virtue of the paired difference. Even if the signifier changes, a sign is still capable of being endowed with meaning so long as there is difference.

Though Saussure's theory is helpful in understanding the dialectical relationship between sign and meaning in the structure of semantic field, he fails to appreciate the signs in relation to the empirical world. In view of this, it is natural to introduce Peirce's empirical semiotics. Peirce gives his definition of signs as follows,

A sign, or representamen, is something which stands for something in some respect or capacity. It addresses somebody, that is, creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign. The sign which it creates I call the interpretant of the first sign. The sign stand for something, its object. It stands for that object, not in all respects, but in reference to a sort of idea, which I have sometimes called the ground of the representamen. (Peirce, 1991, p. 227)

According to Peirce, everything in the world is a sign. "There is nothing but signs" (Gorlée, 1994, p. 50). Signs exist for standing for objects either in reality or in imagery, so without representation we have no signs. But that is not enough. Without the subjective consciousness participating, a sign does not exist. It is the interpretant, as a key element, that links objects and signs together. In other words, signs act upon interpretant which serves as the end of the transaction. Therefore the necessary and sufficient condition for a sign to act as a sign is to establish a relation to the outside world and produce a mental entity in mind at the same time. This interpretative process is called a triadic sign-action in which a sign-object-interpretant chain comes into being. Therefore the fundamental characteristic of Peirce's semiotics is not signs, but the sign-action.

In summary, essential to Saussure, the application of linguistic structure, as a system of expressing ideas, which is closed off the external elements, is favored. Nevertheless, the sign theory of Saussure fails to grasp the full meaning of signs, with the elimination of referential notion of signs. By contrast, Peirce's concept of signs is wholly an affair of externality, existing in the relation of standing for others in reality. Moreover, the theory of the unlimitedness, put forward by Peirce, emphasizes that a sign signifies another indefinitely with attention on evolving and dynamic signifying process.

III. DIMENSIONS OF MEANING

Rooted in the thoughts of Saussure and Peirce, we turn to the toughest question, i.e. what a sign means in essence. In Peirce's opinion, meaning of signs in the empirical world derives from the interpretive processes during which a thing is acted as a sign if and only if it meets two requirements: It serves as a representation of the outside world; and then it can only signify if it is construed and/or interpreted. And during the signifying process, two dimensions of meaning come into being, signification and significance. First signs are employed to designate the outside world by the subjective interpreters, resulting in semantic contents. Then what is signified gradually becomes entrenched to be a fixed interpretant which was called signification through the process of ontogenesis and phylogenesis. Since the signifying process is recursive in general, with the signs operating backward, the signification being the first plane is supposed to produce a new interpretant, named significance.

A. Signification

Actually the analysis of aforementioned discussion presents us with a scientific approach to signs. Signification internalized in the structure always remains clear-cut and perspicuous. It operates in a computational manner in that a sign is always what it is by virtue of what it is not. This demonstrates that signification essentially is a formal concept. Take a simple case for example. Someone asks what it is when pointing to a yellow *beizi* on the table. The answer is definitely *beizi*. Now the question is why the listener does not answer "this is yellow", "this is a column", or "this is beautiful" in terms of the color, shape and quality of the object. In a more clearly explicable sense, signification is an abstracted formal concept. The word "abstraction" implies that to understand signification means grasping the essence of meaning in the structure.

Even though signification may be analyzed from the perspective of structuralism, it does not mean it derives from structure. Rather it is simply determined by structure made up of two relations, syntagmatic and paradigmatic. First of all signs are arranged one after another in a sequential order in which the latter sign is able to gain its own value in contrast with what precedes. Then they act upon each other and form a combination. In the meanwhile signs, on the vertical axis, are probable to be associated. This vertical dimension is the domain of paradigms, determined by the grammatical rules. Only the same classes of speech are able to be put into the same grammatical plot. It should be noticed that the relations constructed by structure, only determine how signs function, independent of meaning.

B. Significance

In contrast to signification, significance is the effect of what is referred to in a synchronical dimension as meaning potential related to the outside systems, like social, economic and cultural systems. It is primarily concerned with

breaking up and dislocating familiar sign-structures and relationship between signs, and more importantly cover all possible meanings of signs in the light of these new systems. According to function of signs, we may further classify significance into three aspects: metaphorical meaning, in which the motivation of a sign is activated to produce a certain interpretant; and implicature, referring to the communicative intention in certain contexts; associative meaning which means the different mental images and emotive responses a sign stimulated or evoked accordingly in the cognitive mind.

- | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| (1) 赴汤蹈火 | go through water and fire | (signification) |
| | take all risks | (metaphorical meaning) |
| (2) Say Cheese* | 说奶酪 (Shuo nai lao) | (signification) |
| | 笑一笑 (smile) | (implicature) |

The signs of “water” and “fire” act as the motivation to produce metaphorical meaning, “take all risks”. When someone shouts “say cheese”, his real intention is to remind the people who are taking photos to smile rather than say cheese. If the signification (Shuo nai lao) is chosen, the readers will fail to capture the real communicative purpose of speakers. It should be pointed out that metaphorical meaning and implicature based on signification could be fixed relatively within a certain context. On the contrary, associative meaning is de-contextualized, which possibly has something to do with the social and cultural environment. Take the sign *dog* as an example. In the foreign country, on mention of dog, people are likely to associate it with “loyalty”, while in China some phrases with dog may denote the derogatory associations, like “狗仗人势”(Be bully under the protection of a powerful person), “狗眼看人低”(Judge people by wealth and power), “狗急跳墙”(a desperate dog tries to jump over the wall) and so on. Thus associative meaning may vary according to different people, time and place.

C. *The Relationship between Signification and Significance*

1. Hierarchy

First of all, what signification and significance establish is a hierarchical continuity. The former is the basis or pre-requisite, out of which significance develops. In other words, significance places on a higher level than signification. Next we attempt to expound signification and significance more specifically with the following examples.

- (3) It is a fox.
 (4) He is a fox.
 (5) She will fox him. (Nida and Taber, 1969, p. 57)

In sentence (3) the sign it is used to signify an object, a kind of animal in reality, thus producing signification. The subject is replaced by pronoun he in sentence (4). However it is unable to establish a correspondence between a fox and a person in terms of signification. Therefore, we have to resort to a higher level of meaning. The signifier and signification on the first level combine to produce a new lexeme (signifier\significance), in which signifier plays a role as a mediator. Though the signifier of signification and the signifier of significance share the same morphological form, they are heterogeneous in essence. The most significant attribute of fox, cunning, is activated as motivation to generate significance on a higher level to express the real intention of the speaker.

Nevertheless this does not mean the end of signs interpretation. For Peirce, signs are equipped with an unfailing habit, during which signs realize dramatically increasing growth. No matter how many interpretants have been produced, there is always another interpretant to translate the previous one. Developing out of the second level, the signifier of fox combines significance together to refer to an action or event to deceive or fool sb. Thus we can see that any sign could be translated into other signs in which sign is more fully developed. In the case (5) the developed sign tends to be interpreted to fit a particular situation.

2. Convertibility

However, it does not mean that the hierarchical relationship of signification and significance always remains stable and fixed. Under certain circumstances, they are susceptible to convert to each other. Once significance is conventionalized in a synchronical system, it would be degraded into signification. For instance, in example (4), with the time going, this significance “cunning” is gradually entrenched to be a fixed interpretant in view of social conventions and cultural customs. In this way, significance is degraded into signification, just as bees stands for hard-working and pig for foolish.

3. Coexistence

In addition, signification and significance always coexist to show the continuity and coherence of signs. Both co-exist in one sign in a relationship of foreground and background. Given certain context significance, the “more developed” sign, is likely to be foregrounded with signification temporarily treated as a background. This is the same the other way round. Signification is also supposed to be the focus against the background significance. Plus, a special case indeed exists with attention on the intersection of signification and significance and pun is a good example in which neither signification nor significance is construed as default value while instead both “stand out” in this context. In this case, signification establishes an optimal conceptual blending relevant to significance.

IV. MEANING EQUIVALENCE IN TRANSLATION

Based on what has been discussed above, this chapter attempts to explore the equivalence in model of the semiotics. It should be pointed out that there is no absolute equivalence strictly speaking, in view of distinct culture factors and language idiosyncrasies. As Jakobson (1959) points out “there is ordinarily no full equivalence between code units” (p. 114), “equivalence” in essence is a relative concept, bearing a functional relationship between the original and the translation. “Functional” means what translation needs to realize is equivalence in terms of value or function, in terms of communicative validity and effects. Translation, like semiotics, is processed by the same principle of communication, just as Nida and Taber (1969) put forwards the famous conception of “dynamic equivalence”. As far as Nida is concerned, the first and foremost task for translation is to achieve similar communicative effects as the original does. Therefore what translation is supposed to achieve is the tension between inequivalence and equivalence.

Even though signification and significance cannot be separated from each other, the focus may change a little to some degree. In view of different focuses of the dimensions of meaning, equivalence in translation is further classified into three layers, consisting of signification equivalence, significance equivalence and signification/significance equivalence. Signification equivalence embodies the characteristics of indexical signs, putting the original and the translation in contact. Moreover it involves two-sided experiences of linguistic polarity in which the signs cross over the boundaries to interact and conflict, change and resistance to change. In contrast to the former, significance equivalence is neither concerned about the sign itself, nor the object represented. Instead it highlights the ability of creation of signs on the abstract level—that is standing more than one fashion for something else. Since every sign faces many possibilities to be interpreted, the interaction between sign and interpreters is likely to generate thousands of interpretations with the dynamic motion of signifying process, as Peirce argues (1991) “The idea of a general involves the idea of possible variations which no multitude of existent things could exhaust” (p.159).

A. *Signification Equivalence*

On this level, signification is acquired because a sign establishes a real existential connection with its object by the indexical function of signs. Therefore signification equivalence is made between the original and the translation in terms of the standing-for relation. Here the relationship between sign and signification should be understood from the following three aspects.

To begin with, a sign and its signification keep a one-to-one correspondence. Cross-systemic transfer takes place, but always one substitution. For example, Mary(玛丽), Australia(澳大利亚), September(九月), radar(雷达) and so on. However, we certainly cannot expect a perfect match between languages in that translation does not happen in a vacuum. In different languages, the semantic area of signs is usually not identical. What it is represented in one language may be defaulted in another language, in view of language idiosyncrasy and cultural difference. A good example is the translation of signification of “sister” in English. Actually no one word may cover its full meaning, including both “姐姐” and “妹妹” in Chinese. Therefore the signification of a sign in SL may not have direct correspondence in TL in view of lexical gap. However, signification could be made more explicit by use of “classifiers” plus signs such as “the little” or “the elder”.

Secondly, one sign in the source language may correspond with many significations in target language. For example, the sign “门” could be represented by “door”, “gate” or “entrance” at the same time, which establishes a one-to-many relationship. In this case, the choice of signification should resort to the specific context rather than mechanical equivalence on the sentential or textual level. Actually this reflects the essential function of index, as Peirce holds index is a hard fact, “an occurrence...something that actually takes place” (Gorlée, 1994, p. 41). This can be illustrated by following example.

(6) 望 月

自君之出矣，不富理残机。

思君如满月，夜夜减清辉。

Since you sir, went away,

I have not returned to tend my fading loom;

For thinking of you, I am like the moon at the full,

That nightly wanes and loses its bright splendor.

Robert Kotewell & Norman Smith (Chu Zhida, 2003, p. 44)

The version cited is considered as an unsatisfactory one in that the sign “残” is still translated into “fading” word-for-word. However, what “fading” refers to has quietly deviated from its original. To some degree, “残” under the newly-contextualized appearance means, unfinished not broken. As we can see, the literal rendering of a sign is likely to result in the misunderstanding of the receptors. As regards to the applicable version, it is suggested that “残” should be interpreted into “weaving loom” because “weave” means making cloth and present participle implies the action is not finished yet. Therefore great importance should be attached to the relationship between sign and signification especially when it is pertinent to a special context during the translating activity.

Last but not the least, the function of referring has ascended to a general principle in our model, namely indicating principle. In the sign-object relation, indexical sign is caused or influenced by the object. So does translation. The original is always the active element determining the translation, and translation is the passive element. Therefore

signification equivalence requires translation to converge to the original in every aspect of relativity as much as possible.

B. Significance Equivalence

However it does not mean translation comes to an end, because even if signification equivalence is achieved, once signs are set into motion, they direct towards the creation of equivalence, leaving a great room of liberty and freedom. Significance equivalence is made possible by the conventional signs but never static. It is primarily concerned with breaking up and dislocating familiar sign-structures and relationship between signs, and more importantly cover all possible meanings of signs in the light of the new system.

During the never-ending signifying process, new interpretant based on signification is constantly put forth, which could be called significance including metaphorical meaning, implicature and associative meaning. It has pointed out that influenced by cultural and language differences, sign and signification cannot keep a one-to-one correspondence. If sign equivalence is achieved only for signification's sake, it will result in "fake equivalence". In this case, signification and formal meaning are temporarily treated as a default value and a great prominence will be given to significance, which is manifested by the "more developed" signs.

Whereas the iconic sign and the object represented share some similarities in certain aspects, the characteristic of the object acts as the motivation to stimulate metaphorical meaning. For example, "烟花" in a poetic sentence of "古人西辞黄鹤楼，烟花三月下扬州" written by famous Chinese poet Li Bai does not mean "fireworks" any more. Instead it is compared to the state of catkin flying in the wind and actually refers to the enchanting spring. Hence Thus the signs "烟花" is activated to denote the metaphorical meaning hidden beneath. (Chu Zhida, 2003, p. 30) From the perspective of semiotics, the primary sign has been interpreted into a higher level. In other words, signs have realized their growth or development. Suppose translation still limits to signification equivalence mechanically, which will result in invalidity of translation and misunderstanding of the readers. The following is an example of translating implicature of signs.

(7) Let's strengthen three P's: perception, persistence and power in language and working efficiency. (Hou Guojin, 2004, p. 71)

Under such circumstances, a translator should convey the real communicative purpose of speakers, so as to ensure the similar communicative function of signs in the target text, if necessary, at the sacrifice of signification. The instance is suggested to be translated into "让我们在语言和工作效率上加强三个力:眼力、韧力以及权力" in order to keep the characteristics of alliteration in the original.

In contrast to metaphorical meaning and implicature, associative meaning possibly has something to do with the aesthetic value of signs. Take the translation of the names of a film like "Waterloo Bridge" for example. As we all know, this bridge was built in Thames in honor of the victory of Waterloo War over Napoleon. Though the signification of Waterloo Bridge refers to "滑铁卢桥", such version cannot be justified insomuch as it will probably mislead receptors to associate this film with a war movie happened in Waterloo or a documentary about Waterloo War. And there is no aesthetic feeling at all. However, those who have watched this movie must know that actually this movie depicts a touching love story in which a beautiful actress gets to know a young military officer in Waterloo Bridge and at last dies for love there.

Correspondingly, there are many similar fairy tales in Chinese history such as "鹊桥相会" between cowboy and Vega and "蓝桥相会" in Lan Tian, Shan'xi. In order to let the readers in Chinese respond to the original sign in the similar manner as the receptors in English, the version is changed into "蓝桥遗梦" so as to express associative meaning faithful to the original. In this way, misunderstandings brought by cultural differences and historical backgrounds can be avoided and aesthetic effects associated with the name of the film can be created.

From the examples illustrated above, it should be seen that significance equivalence involves increased information. A sign interprets the previous sign and new interpretant including metaphorical meaning, implicature or associative meaning logically follows. Therefore the growth of knowledge is accompanied by the unlimited signifying process, and the ultimate goal of translation is to achieve total knowledge of the meaning of signs.

C. Signification\Significance Equivalence

In addition to signification equivalence and significance equivalence, we attempt to introduce signification\significance equivalence to show the continuity and coherence of signs, focusing on the intersection of signification and significance.



Figure1



Figure2



Figure3



Figure4

As these figures show, the relationship between signification and significance may be divided into four kinds: if

significance contains signification in figure 1, the usual practice is to convey significance at the sacrifice of signification. Compared with this, the translator should make a choice between signification and significance when both are totally severed in figure 2; However the situation is quite different in figure 3 and 4 in which the two circles have a tangent or intersect each other, producing a common point or conceptual blending. Therefore both signification and significance should be taken into consideration. The general principle is that the more the optimal conceptual blending, the better the translation is.

As a matter of fact, figure 1 and 2 just elaborate the awkward strategies used in the process of puns translation, which is far from satisfaction. Figure 1 is “compensation”, in which some footnotes and annotation would be added on the basis of conveyance of signification. Take the following example for instance.

(8) 鸳鸯笑道：“鲍二家的，老祖宗又拉上赵二家的。”贾母也笑道：“可是，我哪记得什么抱着背着的……”

杨译本：Amid general laughter Yuan-yang put in, “Pao Erh’s wife, not Chao Erh’s wife, Old Ancestress.” “That’s right.” The old lady smiled. “How do you expect me to remember their names, whether they mean ‘carried in the arms or on the back’? *...”

*The surname bao(鲍) has the same pronunciation as bao(抱) meaning “to carry in the arms,” which is contrasted with bei(背)—“to carry on the back...””(Xia Tingde, 2004, p.135-154)

It can be seen that in this case Yang’s version gives up the figure of speech in the original and turns to explain the similarity of them in phonetics in the footnotes. Figure 2 called “paraphrase” emphasizes the expression of significance in neglect of signification. Take *The Dream of Red Mansion* for example, most of people’s names are meaningful, embodying some implicit information such as the characters’ status, personality, fate and so on. For example, “霍启” suggests that the disasters of Zeng family should be followed one by one. And the name of a salve-girl of “娇杏” imitates the sound of “侥幸”. David Hawks takes advantage of way of paraphrase and translates them into *Calamity* and *Luck* respectively.

As far as author is concerned, both strategies cannot be justified. The former is unable to produce the similar aesthetic effect as the original text does while the latter fails to deliver signification. But the basic problem of translation is what the translator should do when he cannot possibly preserve the same features of the original. As a matter of fact, translation is not equal to its original in all aspects. A good translation cannot represent all the same characteristics of the original. No translation can. However the general principle of translation is supposed to represent and re-present characteristics of the original, with as little damage as possible. If signs in SL do not necessarily have one correspondence in TL on the same level, it is necessary to resort to other levels, such as phonetic and content level, creating an analogous pun. Translation can and may be as what the original is in this regard. The following example is a best case to justify this.

(9) (宝玉)：“小耗现形笑道：‘我说你们没见世面，只认得这果子是香芋，却不知盐课林老爷的小姐才是真正的香芋呢。’”

杨译本：“‘You ignorant lot!’ retorted the little mouse, resuming her original form. ‘You only know what sweet taros are, but don’t know that the daughter of Salt Commissioner Lin is sweeter than any taro.’”*

*This is an untranslatable pun. The yu in Tai-yu’s name has the same sound as yu meaning “Taro”.

Hawks 译本：“The little mouse resumed his own shape and smiled at them pityingly. “You have seen too little of the world to understand. The daughter of our respected Salt Commissioner Lin is also a sweet potato. She is the sweetest sweet potato of them all.” (Wei Fang, 2004, p.107-121)

This paragraph is concerned about how to translate a phonetic pun. Obviously Bao Yu here takes advantages of the partial tone between “香芋” and “香玉” to play jokes on Dai Yu. We may sense that the main character Bao Yu is portrayed in a vivid and lovely way in which the pun plays an indispensable part. Bearing in mind the intranslatability of puns, Yang thereby only translates signification of “芋” and appends a footnote to explain that Yu shares the same sound as “Taro”. Without doubt the readers in TL will fail to appreciate the humorous and lovely characteristics of Bao Yu.

Compared with the version of Yang, Hawks adopts a cleverer tactic to avoid the trouble brought by the phonetic pun in pursuit of signification/significance equivalence. In English “potato” is compared to person and “sweet” describes the beautiful and pretty character of the person. As a result, signification (芋) establishes an optimal conceptual blending relevant to significance (玉). Therefore the version “sweetest sweet potato” aims at acquiring an optimal conceptual blending of signification and significance. Though the formal meaning in TL is not the exactly same as in SL, but the imbalance caused by the veto of phonetics is supposed to be compensated by means of content of signs, so as to make the original text keep equilibrium within. A text is thus checked and balanced.

V. CONCLUSION

Generally speaking, Saussure’s and Peirce’s semiotics provide us with a theoretical approach to understanding of meaning in a dialectical way. In translation in order to achieve equivalence, the different dimensions are taken into account, including signification equivalence, significance equivalence and signification/significance equivalence. Signification equivalence and significance equivalence highlight the ability of indicating and creation of signs.

Moreover, the introduction of signification\significance equivalence makes the translation into a dynamic event, accompanied by the developing signifying process. All in all, translation is considered as a dynamic and dialectical process in which value or function of signs in the source language are transferred, represented and transformed into the target language, approximate to the original as much as possible.

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The Effectiveness of Strategy-based Vocabulary Instruction on Iranian EFL Learners' Recall

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Abstract—This study investigated the preferred vocabulary strategies, used by Iranian intermediate EFL learners and also the effect of strategy-based vocabulary instruction on students' recall once immediately after the instruction period and once after a time interval (two weeks). In order to determine the learners' level of proficiency, NET (Nelson English Test) was administered to the intended population. Those students, whose score fell within the range of 28-33 were labeled as intermediate. To identify the learners' preferred vocabulary learning strategies, a questionnaire known as VOLSI (Vocabulary Learning Strategies Inventory) was given to them. The results indicated that there was not any significant difference between the mean scores of the participants in the control group and the participants in the experimental group (0.46). In simple words, the two groups were homogenous in terms of lexical knowledge at the beginning of the course. With regard to the obtained results for the two post-test phases, it was found that the post-treatment means of the two groups were significantly different in terms of recalling vocabulary. Taken together, the findings of this study support the foreign language research literature on vocabulary strategy training.

Index Terms—vocabulary knowledge, language learning strategies, vocabulary learning strategies

I. INTRODUCTION

During the last few decades, an enthusiastic interest has aroused among researchers to explore the role of vocabulary in foreign language classes. This motivated interest is said to have its roots in the fact that one part of learning a language depends on students' comprehension of what they read and hear. When students' vocabulary knowledge is limited, and they do not understand a considerable number of words, the processing of texts might become a challenging task for them. In other words, the more extensive vocabulary treasure students have, the better they can deal with reading comprehension texts. A large vocabulary opens students up to a wider range of reading materials. A rich vocabulary also improves students' ability to communicate through speaking, listening, and writing. Many researchers believe that vocabulary deficiencies are a primary cause of academic failure. They, in fact, consider the size of a person's vocabulary knowledge as a good predictor of his performance on different comprehension tasks. These researchers profess that direct and explicit instruction of a set number of vocabulary may lead to the improvement of academic success in all content areas. With regard to the fact that the role of vocabulary is not underestimated in language classroom anymore, and its status has started to undergone remarkable shifts, the present research was conducted. This study, in fact, was carried out to see whether it would lend support to the claim that teaching vocabulary through strategies facilitates storing and recalling new vocabulary items. Simply put, this study is an attempt to find out the most preferred strategies, employed by Iranian EFL students as well as the effect of teaching some of these strategies on recalling vocabulary items.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the process of investigating and classifying LLS (Language Learning Strategies), there are some studies, which have specifically explored the effects of different strategies on vocabulary acquisition and recall. Kok and Canbay (2011), for example, investigated the effects of vocabulary consolidation strategies training on vocabulary learning. In their research, 34 participants took Vocabulary Level Test and Vocabulary Consolidation Strategy Inventory. The findings of their study revealed that the students who received vocabulary consolidation strategies training achieved higher scores at the Vocabulary Level Tests. At the end of their research, the authors concluded that their study lend support to the retention of vocabulary through the explicit strategy training. Barani, Mazandarani, and Seyyed Rezai (2010) also worked on the effect of applying audio-visual aids on 60 Iranian learners' vocabulary achievement. The results of their analyses indicated a significant difference between the mean scores of pre-test and post-test of the participants of the experimental group. Semantic mapping strategy and its effects on students' vocabulary learning was the topic of a paper written by Dilek and Yuruk (2012), who aimed to explore the effects of semantic mapping technique in comparison with traditional techniques in vocabulary learning. The findings were suggestive of the fact

that semantic mapping technique is much more effective than the traditional technique. Following the same line of inquiry, Zahedi and Abdi (2012) also worked on the strategy of semantic mapping and found that students' performance on vocabulary learning tests was significantly different from each other across experimental and control groups. Helping students to focus on etymology of words is another strategy which has been suggested for increasing students' vocabulary knowledge. Hashemi and Aziznezhad (2011, p.102) firmly believe that:

"This method is considered as one of the most systematic, enjoyable and effective ways of enhancing word power, which increases students' ability to figure out unknown and difficult words with ease and without continual reference to unabridged sources."

The effect of using digital games on Iranian children's vocabulary retention has been worked on by Aghlara and Hadidi Tamjid (2011). The researchers used a digital game named SHAIE in their experimental group consisting of 20 six- to seven-year old girls, and the usual traditional methods in their control group equally consisting of 20 girls. The experimental group members were provided with 45-day instruction period and were taught particular vocabulary items including names of animals, family members, colors, and numbers. The results of this study indicated that experimental group outperformed the control group. The findings, in fact, proved the positive effect of digital games on vocabulary learning. Alternatively, Marzban and Azizi Amoli (2012) conducted a research and explored the effect of mnemonic strategies on the immediate and delayed retrieval of vocabulary learning in EFL elementary learners. The results of the post-test which the participants took after two weeks period of instruction proved the superiority of experimental group to the control group. The impact of imagery strategy on EFL learners' vocabulary learning has also been investigated by Zahedi and Abdi (2012). 40 EGP lower-intermediate language learners participated in this study and were divided into two groups of experimental and control. The former group was provided with treatment of imagery instruction and the latter was provided with nothing. As expected, the experimental group outperformed the control group.

To bridge the gap related to the small number of works on the effectiveness of using a particular set of vocabulary learning strategies on students' recall specially in Iranian educational settings, the purpose of the research was to provide a more comprehensive picture of the role of explicit strategy-based vocabulary instruction on students' learning and recall.

III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research serves mainly to shed light on the most frequently used vocabulary learning strategies by Iranian EFL students as well as the effectiveness of these strategies on their recall. More specifically this study strives to answer the following research questions:

1. Which vocabulary learning strategies are most preferably used by Iranian EFL learners?
2. Does strategy-based vocabulary instruction significantly affect Iranian EFL learners' immediate and long-term recall of new vocabulary items?

The present research sets out to follow a study conducted by Khatib, Hasanzadeh and Rezaei (2011). The analytical framework of this study was the taxonomy of strategies presented by Stoffer (1995), who designed a questionnaire called VOLSIS (Vocabulary Learning Strategies Inventory), consisting of 53 likert-type strategies defined in terms of the nine strategy categories. The strategy subcategories are concerned with authentic language use, self-motivation, organizing words, creating mental linkages, memory, creative activities, physical actions, overcoming anxiety, and auditory processing.

IV. METHOD

A. Participants

After administering NELT (Nelson English Language Test) to the intended pool (100 students), 70 of them were considered as intermediate language learners and were chosen as the final participants. The age of these students ranged from 17-22. The scores were between \pm one standard deviation from the mean score based on the normal distribution of scores. After taking the proficiency test, the participants were divided into one experimental (consisting of 35 students) and one control group (35 students) randomly. The experimental group received strategic-based instruction, in which a particular set of vocabulary learning strategies based on Stoffer's (1995) model were taught to them by the teacher. In comparison, the control group was provided with the same vocabulary but with the traditional method of teaching vocabulary.

B. Instruments

1. Nelson English Language Test

In order to ensure about the homogeneity of the participants, Nelson English Language Test was used. This test consists of 40 separate tests. Each test consists of 50 items. The reliability estimate of the test was calculated through KR-21 formula in the pilot study, and it turned out to be 0.83. The validity of the test was also confirmed by three professional language instructors.

2. Pre-test

In order to assess the learners' original knowledge of vocabulary, a 30 multiple-choice item for pre-test was developed by the researcher and was administered to both the experimental and control group participants before the treatment when its reliability (0.79) was checked.

3. VOLSI (Vocabulary Learning Strategies Inventory)

This questionnaire which is a 53-item Likert scale ranging from one (never) to five (always) was administered to the participants in order to find about their preferred vocabulary learning strategies.

4. Post-test

In order to check students' degree of recall, a 30 multiple-choice vocabulary test was designed again based on what was taught during the instruction period. The participants of both groups took the test twice, once immediately after the instruction period and once on the delayed post-test after two weeks. The reliability of the test was also calculated before administration.

C. Procedure

Before starting the main part of the research, the Nelson English Test was administered to the intended population. Out of 100 students who took the test, those who gained the scores between 28 to 33 (± 1 standard deviation from the mean) were considered as intermediate learners and were chosen as the participants of the study. This test helped the researcher to ensure that all the participants were at the same level of language proficiency, and they were therefore homogenous.

Then the Vocabulary Learning Strategies Inventory was administered to the participants in order to find about their preferred vocabulary learning strategies. The students, in fact, were asked how frequently they use the strategies cited in the questionnaire. Completing this questionnaire did not take more than 20 minutes.

After administering Nelson English Test and VOLSI, the participants were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. After this random sampling, a pre-test was administered. This pre-test, which included 30 multiple-choice vocabulary questions was developed by the researcher firstly to gain an understanding of the participants' vocabulary knowledge before the treatment and also to see whether there were any significant differences between the two groups' performance on the test. This test was piloted and given to a sample similar to the main population. Through the pilot study, the test was reviewed by some skillful teachers to remove the probable ambiguities and item characteristics such as item facility and item discrimination were checked. The goal of this pre-test, secondly, was to identify the unknown words by the participants of two groups. After administering the vocabulary test, some words that were already known by the participants were excluded. The criterion-related validity index and the reliability of the test were checked. The reliability estimate of the test which was calculated through KR-21 formula was found to be 0.79.

After the pre-test, the treatment began. In both groups, the same set of vocabularies was taught by the researcher. The experimental group received particular instruction on vocabulary learning strategies whereas the control group received traditional methods. Throughout the instruction of the experimental group, similar to the study conducted by Zahedi and Abdi (2012), the researcher tried to provide the learners with an appropriate definition of each vocabulary learning strategy first and then with an exemplification of it. The researcher, in fact, explained about the characteristics, usefulness, and applications of each strategy explicitly. The learners were then given the opportunity to practice what they have learned in applying the intended strategy in order to guarantee the participants' understanding of it. In control group, on the other hand, the researcher presented the same vocabulary items as the experimental group by writing them on the board in isolation, making students familiar with the pronunciation of vocabularies, explaining their parts of speech and finally translating them into Persian. The course consisted of 11 sessions (two ninety minute sessions per week). When the treatment finished, a post-test similar to the pre-test (consisting of 30 questions) was designed and administered twice once immediately after the program and once after a specific time interval. The reliability of this test was also checked and was found satisfactory. Through these two post-tests, the researcher aimed to find whether the treatment had been effective or not because they could reveal the degree of vocabulary recall in both experimental and control groups. The test included all the vocabulary items, which students learned during the instructional program. All students took the test once immediately after the end of the treatment and later after two weeks. The scores of the students in the two phases of post-tests in both groups were compared and submitted in to statistical analysis to draw the final conclusions.

D. Design

The present research was done based on a randomized pretest posttest experimental and control group design, therefore, it is experimental. The members of the experimental group were taught some vocabulary learning strategies, which are considered as independent variables and the control group received no special treatment. The participants' vocabulary scores were considered as the dependent variable of this study.

E. Data Analysis

The collected data were entered into 18.00th version of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). In order to answer the research questions, the students' performances in both the experimental and control groups were measured on the pre-test and post-test, so independent T-tests were needed to compare students' performances on pre-tests and post-tests to check the impact of strategy instruction.

V. RESULTS

A. Results Related to the First Research Question

To answer the first research question, the questionnaire mentioned in the instrument part (Vocabulary Learning Strategies Inventory) was used to see what strategies were preferred among the participants. The following figure illustrates the preferred strategies in terms of the number of the participants who chose them.

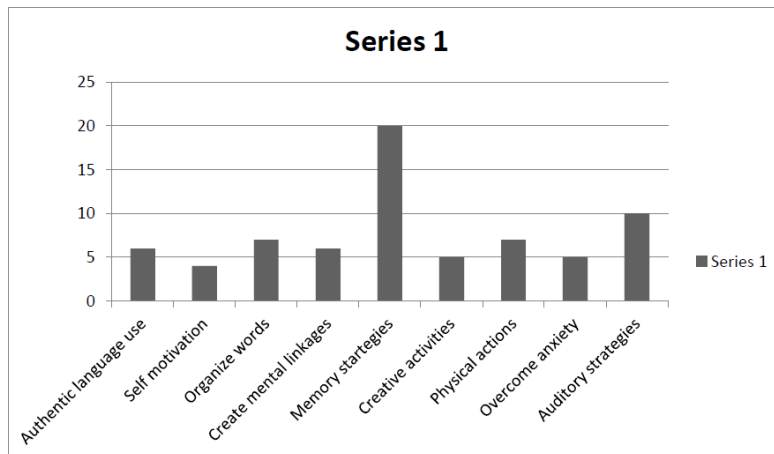


Figure 1. The preferred strategies by the participants

The result showed that 20 among 70 participants preferred memory strategies to other types of strategies.

B. The Results Related to the Two Groups' Performance on the Recall Test Immediately after the Treatment

To compare the post-treatment scores of two groups of experimental and control in respect of recalling vocabulary, an independent T-Test was run. Table 4.1 indicates the descriptive statistics of the two groups in relation to recalling vocabulary after the administration of treatment.

The findings in Table 1 indicate that there is a difference in the participants' performance on vocabulary learning. Whereas the mean score for the experimental group is 21.02, the mean score for the control group is 18.74.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND INDEPENDENT T-TEST FOR POST TEST SCORES

	Group	Mean	S. D.	T	Sig.
Vocabulary(post-test)	Experimental	21.02	2.96	3.513	0.001
	Control	18.74	2.45		

According to Table 4.1, vocabulary strategy instruction did result in the participants' vocabulary learning. As can be seen, p-value equals 0.001, which is lower than the significant level of 0.05. As a result, the post-treatment means of two groups in terms of recalling vocabulary are significantly different at the confidence level of 0.95. Figure 2 illustrates the mean scores of the experimental and control groups after the treatment.

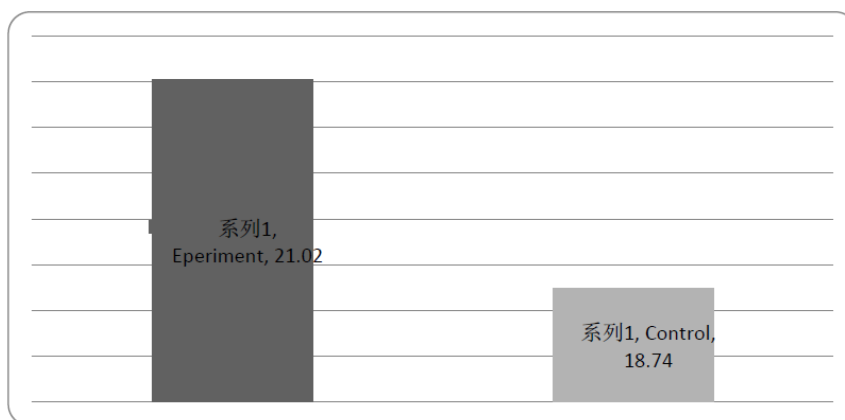


Figure 2. The mean scores of the two groups immediately after the treatment

C. The Results Related to the Two Groups' Performance on the Recall Test Two Weeks after the Treatment

To address another concern of the study which was the possible long term effect of strategy based instruction on vocabulary recall, another post-test was administered to the participants of the experimental group fifteen days after the

treatment. To find out any significant difference in the mean of the scores obtained from the pre-test and the delayed post-test, a paired T-test was run. The rationale here is that, if the mean of participants' scores on the delayed post-test is significantly higher than the mean of the participants' scores on the pre-test, then it could be concluded that the treatment i.e. strategy-based instruction has had a long term effect on vocabulary recall.

Table 2 illustrates the descriptive statistics of the paired T-test comparing the mean of the scores of the pre-test and delayed post-test of vocabulary belonging to the experimental group. As it could be noticed the p-value is 0.003, which is lower than the significant level of 0.05, and therefore it could be inferred that the strategy-based instruction has a significant impact on the long term vocabulary recall of the participants.

TABLE 2
THE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS COMPARING PRE TEST AND DELAYED POST TEST SCORES

Experimental	N	Mean	StDev
Pre-test	35	17.65	2.08
Delayed post-test	35	20.48	3.65

T-test Difference P-Value=0.003

Based on the forgoing results, it is concluded that strategy based instruction has a significant effect both on the immediate and long term recall of vocabulary.

VI. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

As was mentioned before, vocabulary is an active part of a language the mastery of which not only takes place in the classroom or at school, but also over lifetime. Regarding the fact that the mastery of all the vocabulary in a language is not really practical for anyone, what can be done is to obtain certain strategies to speed up the acquisition of new words. So the study of vocabulary learning strategies is crucially demanded as an important step in SLA. Compared with the changes of grammar and pronunciation, the number of vocabulary is keeping on changing and enlarging, so teachers should help students to adopt effective ways to learn vocabularies more efficiently. In this study, attempts were made to check whether students' degree of recall is influenced by teaching particular vocabulary learning strategies both immediately after the instruction and after a time interval.

This study sought to investigate the impact of strategy-based vocabulary instruction on the immediate and long-term vocabulary recall of Iranian EFL learners. Moreover, the current study was an effort to probe the most preferred vocabulary learning strategies, used by the participants. The first research question of this study attempted to unravel which vocabulary learning strategies are mostly preferred by Iranian intermediate EFL learners. Out of nine strategy types, memory strategies were found as the most frequently used strategies among the participants. One of the reasons could possibly be found based on "Depth of Processing Hypothesis". This hypothesis was proposed by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) and Oxford (1990). Based on Depth of Processing Hypothesis, the more cognitive energy a person has in manipulating and thinking about a word, the more likely they can recall and use it later (Craik & Lockhart, 1972; Craik & Tulving, 1975). Thus, here it could be inferred that, most probably learners are in favor of this type of strategy since it helps them recall the vocabulary items better.

Another possible explanation regarding the popularity of this type of strategy could be found in Oxford's remarks. Oxford (1990) believes that memory strategies, sometimes called mnemonics, have been used by people for years. Based on what she asserts it could be inferred that because memory strategies have been with us for such a long time perhaps learners are more accustomed to employing them since they know how it works quite well.

In Iranian settings, in fact, what matters to the students most is the memorization of vocabulary since they think becoming successful in the language learning process itself and also in different types of tests is crucially dependent on the number of words one has previously memorized. Oxford (1990) also believed that memory strategies are crucial in that they can help learners' develop their autonomy and can lead to a longer retention of vocabularies and their meanings. Apparently the majority of participants chose memory strategies as their preferred type of strategy because they think this type of strategy facilitates the storing and recalling of vocabularies more in comparison with other strategy types mentioned in the administered questionnaire.

In the present study, the findings related to the second research question indicated that the experimental group outperformed the control group both in short-term (immediate post-test) and in long-term (after two weeks) recall tests. This means that teaching through using strategies was an effective way of learning and remembering the vocabulary items for the experimental group participants.

The results of this study are in line with some studies which have been done before. In a study conducted by Asgair and Mustapha (2011) on vocabulary learning strategies, for example, some strategies such as learning a word through reading a text, the application of monolingual dictionary, the application of various English-language media, and applying new English words in daily speech are related to memory strategies. Determination and meta-cognitive strategies were most frequent strategies among the learners, and the learners were keen in using them. The results of this study also have things in common with other studies carried out on the effect of using vocabulary strategy instruction on recalling vocabulary (Hashemi & Azizinezhad, 2011; Kok, & Canbay, 2011). They all showed that using vocabulary instruction had positive effect on recalling vocabulary. The findings of the present study are also congruent with Zahedi

and Abdi's (2012) study in which the researchers found that learners' vocabulary learning is affected and hence improved through a particular type of memory strategy namely semantic mapping significantly. Following the same line of research, Dilek and Yuruk (2013) also taught particular target vocabulary items through Semantic Mapping technique. According to the results, semantic mapping technique was found to be more effective than the traditional technique in vocabulary learning. The findings of the present research are also consistent with Nemati's (2013) study. The results revealed that strategy training could significantly boost long-term retention of vocabulary items. The experimental group students, in fact, outperformed the control group within the same period of instruction, which means that teaching through direct strategies was an influential factor for remembering vocabulary items.

The results of the present research similarly corroborates with another study conducted by Kok and Canbay (2011), in which statistically significant differences were found between the experimental group members who were provided with explicit vocabulary strategy training and control groups in favor of the experimental group at the vocabulary levels.

Taken together, the findings of this study support the foreign language research literature on vocabulary strategy training. The results of the present study, in other words, confirm the idea that recall degree of vocabulary increases through explicit vocabulary strategy instruction. Through this research, the importance of vocabulary learning is once again emphasized and pedagogical awareness of vocabulary strategies in the field of second language teaching is increased.

The issue of language learning strategies can be further investigated from different perspectives. Researchers are encouraged to focus on the following suggestions:

1- The subjects of this study were males and females aging between 19-22. It can be replicated with young learners and with other age groups. 2- The subjects of this study were all intermediate students. A similar research can be carried out with the subject of other proficiency levels. 3- A similar study may be done with more sessions on a longer time span to investigate the long lasting effect of using vocabulary instruction. 4- A study may be done combining two or more variables i.e. vocabulary instruction and other types of vocabulary strategies to investigate the effect of a combination of variables on learners' recalling vocabulary.

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An Analysis of ‘Closure’ and ‘Equilibrium’ in Mathew Quick’s *The Silver Linings Playbook* in the Light of Gestalt Psychology

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Abstract—The present paper moves in the line of cognitive literary studies. Its project is to interpret Mathew Quick’s *The Silver Linings Playbook* in the light of the theories of Gestalt psychology. Quick portrays a pair of mentally unbalanced protagonists suffering from the loss of their partners. Analyzing the psychological aftermaths which befall these figures afterwards, this paper attempts to highlight some facts through Gestalt therapy. As such, this paper tries to show the role of ‘Closure’ in the psychological imbalance of Quick’s characters, arguing that in their search for ‘Equilibrium’ they pass through a phase of neurotic problems. Deciphering part of the novel’s message as such, this paper elaborates upon the life of some mentally damaged guys who come to help each other in order to pass normal and healthy lives.

Index Terms—Gestalt psychology, closure, equilibrium, *The Silver Linings Playbook*, Mathew Quick

I. INTRODUCTION

The Berlin School of Experimental Psychology was founded at the University of Berlin in the early 1890s. The attempt was to analyze the behaviors of psychic patients through a set of psychological theories. However, in the early 1920s this school was replaced by the Gestalt School of Psychology. The new school was founded by Max Wertheimer, Kurt Koffka, and Wolfgang Köhler, who were the students of the founder of the Berlin School. These new founders named their school “Gestalt” which stands for ‘form’ or ‘shape’ in English and has something to do with the totality of psychological entities.

Sdorow (1993) highlights a well-known aspect of Gestalt psychology, that “the whole is different from the sum of its parts” (p. 13). Thus, the founders of Gestalt psychology insisted that in examining the functions of the mind, structuralist psychologists have gone a wrong way, because through a study of the elements of an entity we cannot identify the whole of that entity as it really is. Accordingly, the emphasis which structuralist psychologists put on the study of the constitutional elements of a structure is, for Gestalt psychologists, a naivety, a flaw.

Structuralist psychologists primarily attempted theoretically to describe the fundamental capacities of the mind like sensing, imagining, and excitement. To discover how man feels cold or warm, for example, structuralists often try to perform a series of objective and introversive experiments, while they pay no attention to the role of the subjective associations of the performer. But the holism of Gestalt psychology puts it in a polar position with the atomism of structuralist psychology, which means that Gestalt psychology is interested in the investigation into the “component parts” of psychic entities. Arnheim notes that,

the primary impulse of Wertheimer’s psychology was a respect for nature, human as well as organic and inanimate. From this respect derived the protest against the ‘atomistic’ method, that is, the dissection of integrated entities and against the pretension of rebuilding a whole by the summation of its elements. (1969-1970, p. 97-103)

That is because in examining the functioning of man’s psyche as systematic and organizational, structuralists attempt to realize, among other things, how the mind breaks its conceptions into ‘atoms’ or constitutional elements, how it creates connections among those elements, and how it renders those inter-connected compartments of conception into hierarchical, unified, and goal-oriented structures.

Gestalt psychology seemingly opposes behaviorist psychology; for determining an individual’s behaviors in different situations, behaviorists focus on the influential power of the environmental stimuli on his/her thought and decisions. Accordingly, they find the human mind not more than a passive recipient of those stimuli, while Gestalt psychology is “in keeping with Immanuel Kant’s notion of the mind as a manipulator of environmental input” (Sdorow, 1993, p. 14). However, parallel with the work of Gestalt theoreticians, Fritz and Laura Perls founded Gestalt Therapy. Although these two notions are not essentially identical, both of them inherit the main essence of the Berlin school.

Attempting to analyze Mathew Quick’s *The Silver Linings Playbook* (2008) in the light of the theories of Gestalt psychology, the present paper focuses on the ‘Law of Closure’ within the novel. In its simplest case, Closure befalls us

when we observe a set of shapes or images some parts of which have been omitted. In such a case of psychological production, and for the sake of better perceptions, the human mind fills the visual gaps with its own created perceptions and then makes an inference about the shape or the image. As a result of this process, the mind works like a machine which constantly mixes forms and reshapes them into unified, complete, and perceivable images.

But apart from these theoretical implications, there is a subtle relationship between closure and psychological balance. Psychological balance may incorporate the mental balance of the reader of a story. So the Gestalt principle of closure can be taken “as a modification of structure that makes stasis, or the absence of further continuation, the most probable succeeding event It creates in the reader the expectation of nothing” (Smith, 1968, p. 34). Accordingly, the present study bases its analytical approach to Quick’s novel on the relationship between closure and psychological balance.

The Silver Linings Playbook retells a part of Patrick People’s life story. Patrick, a neurotic school teacher, has been recently released from a neural health clinic where he was trying to figure out how he could reach a state of psychological stability. In the middle of the story, his friendship with Tiffany Maxwell, the female protagonist of the story, provides a closure for him. This is where the reader can witness a perfect ‘Equilibrium’ in a fictional character, although for Quick’s character it happens at the end of the story.

The novel is among the best sellers. However, there has been little academic research on it, especially psychoanalytic ones. A significance of the present project is that it is the first that attempts to apply the theories of Gestalt psychology to Quick’s novel. As such, a key objective of this paper is to examine the notion of ‘Closure’ in Quick’s novel, not only as a general cultural belief but as a ‘Law’. To achieve this objective, and as a solution to the psychological problem of ‘Disequilibrium’, the paper tries to investigate into the story by analyzing its atmosphere and dialogues.

II. DISCUSSION

A. *On Delaware Memorial Bridge*

Bit by bit, Patrick Peoples’ course of life appears out of horizon. For four years, he has been locked up in a neural health facility in Baltimore. Settling up a deal in the court, his mother has finally got the permission to take him out of there. And now he is coming back home. As they drive through Maryland and Delaware, they reach Delaware Memorial Bridge which is a twin suspension bridge connecting Delaware to New Jersey. The bridge is so named to memorize both those US soldiers and the veterans who died in World War II. Like Patrick himself, Quick grew up in Collingswood, New Jersey, which points to the fact that he understands how this memorial bridge stands for ‘Change’ and ‘Progress’. Passing the Memorial Bridge, which objectively signifies a transfer from modernity to postmodernity, a unilateral declaration of cross-state multiculturalism and a symbol of socio-cultural and political conglomeration, Quick gives the reader an impression of the aims of his story through the eyes of Patrick’s mother and her hope for the well-being of his son. Apparently, Quick’s story could have started in Baltimore, but it starts romantically as their car is passing through the iconic bridge:

On the Delaware Memorial Bridge, she looks over at me and asks if I want to get better, saying ‘you do want to get better, Pat right?’ I nod. I say I do. . . . As we drive down Haddon Avenue into the heart of Collingswood-my hometown-I see that the main drag looks different. . . I wonder if this is really my hometown at all. I start to feel anxious, breathing heavily like I sometimes do. (Quick, 2008, p. 6)

Patrick and his mother have a moment of promise, a moment which is comparable to a scene in *Casablanca* the movie (1942) when Rick Blaine decides to sacrifice his love for the sake of change and a better world. At the end of many stories such turning points may often happen. But Quick is able to surprise his readers by starting the story *in medias res*, in the middle of an important event in the life of his protagonist. So, Quick juxtaposes the spirit of change in the city with the seeds of hope flourishing in the heart of Patrick’s mother. His aim is to show the reader how much the change is eminent for Patrick. Taking a look at Collingswood City official website, we can develop a historiographic sense about the notion of ‘Change’ and ‘Progression’ in the city, especially when Quick talks about Haddon Avenue which symbolizes development:

Collingswood shared in the growth. Haddon Avenue and its West Collingswood counterpart, Richey Avenue, welcomed new business establishments every year. Earl Lippincott and other builders developed new neighborhoods out of what had once been forests, ball fields, and open spaces. The Delaware River Bridge (now the Ben Franklin) opened and made possible more commercial intercourse between Collingswood and its big Pennsylvania neighbor. (<http://www.collingswood.com/living/a-brief-history-of-collingswood>)

Accordingly, this moment between Patrick and his mother represents the main subject of the novel and Patrick’s fate. Just like the progress of his home town, the time has come for Patrick to change; and dramatic shifts are taking place in his life. From now on, his days will be like a movie which is fast forwarded. However, the problem is that he does not yet have a clear view about it. Because there is a gap between Patrick’s power of ‘Perception’ and his ‘Mental Cognition’, he seems unnaturally slow in coping with the social changes and not capable enough to control the cruel forces running his private life.

Gestalt psychology benefits from a multimodal scientific approach toward the human behavior. It assumes that on the one hand humans are constantly under the influence of environmental stimuli, while on the other hand they also affect their environment in one way or another. This school of practical psychology focuses on the effects and theoretical bases of neurosis problems. It also elaborates enough upon the scope of experimental psychology. The main similarity

between Gestalt therapy and Gestalt psychology is that the former stresses “the need to achieve wholeness of the personality”, which means that “one’s emotions, language, and actions should be congruent with one another” (Sdorow, 1993, p. 609). To achieve congruence in its patients, Gestalt therapy diagnoses them in a way that they take the responsibility of what they do in their lives. Patrick’s case is no exception. He lacks the ability to link the images which he sees, the forms or ‘Gestalts’ which he perceives, and the ideas and concepts which he should bear in mind.

Gestaltian laws, on the other hand, stress the relation between seeing, knowing, and deciding. Patrick’s problem is more or less evident in his first few dialogues. When his mother asks him if he wants to get better, he answers in the affirmative, but his childish act resembles his un-decidability toward his own fate. Thus, his differentiation between good and bad and his ability to make reasonable decisions depend on the firmness of his stance. As long as he is undecided, he is vulnerable, and his position is unstable and problematic. Delaware Memorial Bridge, which is an emblem of change in the American social habits, stands also for the economic diversity between the west of Delaware River and Philadelphia in the east. These locations represent two separate segments in Patrick’s life. His passage on the bridge stands for leaving his problems behind, for passing from the neurosis of an alienated life condition to the comfort and security of a family life, for passing from the Baltimorean style of rationality to the Pennsylvanian love and liberty. In a way or another, this story has an ambiance of following the dream about the ‘pursuit of happiness’. To Patrick, unfortunately, all the symbolic changes of the appearance of both his home town and his countrymen seem vague enough to push him to a loop of denial, mainly because he has been away from the society for several years and he is not aware of his environment yet. In this regard, Gestalt personality theory highlights the significance of the individual’s awareness of oneself and one’s surroundings “in terms of the senses, bodily sensations, and emotional feelings.” Paying attention to one’s contact with oneself as well as others and the being aware of oneself and others are issues that happen “in the present rather than the past or future” (Sharf, 2012, p. 245). But Patrick’s past is full of ‘Disequilibrium’ and the inability to create an objective and healthy life style. Nonetheless, his future is revolving around ‘Equilibrium’ and balance. At the end of the plot, we witness that he faces ‘Closure’ to wrap up his problems. This ‘Closure’ links his perception with moments of unbiased cognition.

A key factor about Patrick’s ex-wife’s infidelity is his past exaggerating behaviors. According to Gestalt psychology, the human mind has a dual relationship with the world, so his behavior affects the environment and is also affected by it. Thus, when the boundary between the patient and his environment becomes obscure, or when it is lost or impermeable, mental and emotional disturbances result. So we are bound to believe that Patrick and Nikki have been censured for their marriage.

But because Quick focuses more closely on Patrick’s part in this regard, a critical evaluation of his past behavior is more useful in this research. In a visit to Dr. Patel who is his therapist, Patrick makes up a false story of his life. But listening to this false story is narratively worthwhile, for it creates an illusion of reality in which the reader’s disbelief gets suspended. Patrick’s perversion of reality looks like the Baudrillardian ‘Simulacrum’ of the third phase which tries hard to mask and pervert the reality, although the reader can see the real and actual past behind it. Patrick says, “A few months ago I agreed to give Nikki some space, and she agreed to come back to me when she felt like she had worked out her own issues enough so we could be together again. So we are sort of separated, but only temporarily” (Quick, 2008, p. 9). Patrick’s denial masks the real. He is hiding the truth about his cognition because he indifferently and deliberately undermines the factuality of his memories. His earlier life is clearly not a triumph. But if or not it embarrasses him, before gaining the ability to move on to a different stage, he needs to accept it. By giving his wife an opportunity to breathe in a new condition, he unknowingly admits that his neurosis has made her feel suffocated. Elsewhere in the novel, his neurosis comes to be more devastating, as he tries to convince the reader that he himself has been the reason behind his separation from Nikki. However, the story does not give us much direct information about her. On the other hand, by the use of the first person narration, the author creates such sincere atmosphere for Patrick to take us through his role in his marriage.

According to Gestalt psychology, a bipolar disorder has a significant role in pushing a love partner to the edge and forcing the other party to commit infidelities. Nonetheless, this pretext is not solid enough in justifying Nikki’s actions, which will be discussed later. Quick narrates Patrick’s story from the day he is released from Baltimore health institutions. But he only illustrates the aftermath as well as the cure of his problematic behaviors.

Before the beginning of the story Patrick was a mentally equilibrated husband. Even his ideas about his best friends often originated from Nikki’s talks, who was both his beloved wife and a part of his problematic mentality. Thus, as we read the novel, a master key for opening the secret of his delusional past is her role in the formation of his life. Anyway, the storyteller is watchful enough not to talk directly about Nikki. Yet, the present researchers want to find out more about her inevitable part in the creation of such a personality out of Patrick. As mentioned before, almost throughout the story he is closely influenced by Nikki. When the novel introduces Ronnie, we see him only from Nikki’s point of view as well. “Nikki told me that Ronnie would never visit me in Baltimore, and she was right,” as Patrick says (Quick, 2008, p. 14). This technique of indirection is an evidence for Patrick’s un-decidability and ignorance toward his own intuition. His ignorance, which is related to his lack of self-confidence, is known as ‘Disequilibrium’ in the Gestalt school. But when Patrick starts to feel interested in Tiffany, it appears in him in a full-scale. However, although he now likes Tiffany, he resists his intuitions and insists that he should remain married to Nikki. “Look, I enjoyed spending time with you, and I think you’re really pretty, but I’m married’, I say, and lift up my wedding ring as proof” (p. 23).

B. 'Closure' and 'Equilibrium'

From the outset, we see Patrick mentally unbalanced due to which he is diagnosed to have a bipolar disorder. Because he attempts to kill his wife's lover, he is kept in a mental hospital in Baltimore about four years. The second problem which the novel deals with is Patrick's divorce from his wife, which is in turn due to the fact that the court has decided he should stay away from her. But what really happens in Baltimore is almost unknown to the reader. In the hospital, Patrick's therapists practice some drugs on him to help him forget about his problematic days and keep him away from emotional attacks. He cannot go or at least does not want to go out of such synthetic memory deletion. A side of his problem shows itself when he disregards the concept of time. Here for example Patrick is not aware that he has been locked up in Baltimore for four years, so he refers to Dr. Patel's warnings that his medication may make him hallucinate, because he doesn't believe that his favorite stadium was demolished two years ago:

"I think I just saw Veterans Stadium demolished on Jake's computer."

[...] "It was demolished over two years ago."

"What year is it?"

[...] "Two thousand and six."

That would make me thirty-four. Apart time would have been in progress for four years. Impossible, I think." (p. 16)

Due to time negligence, it seems that Patrick's mind cannot cope with the current realities. For example, it is a time that Nikki has left him and has got married to another man, but he does not want to see its reality. When he is denied the advantages of her love, he cannot bear the problems of the "apart time". Thus, he keeps hoping for a silver lining to happen so that she would join him again. Lying down on his bed and picking up Nikki's picture, Patrick says, "I can't wait for apart time to end so Nikki and I can share raisin bran at some diner and walk through the cool early September air" (p. 31). Patrick's illusions continue until his old friend Ronnie invites him to dinner where he meets Tiffany, a recently widowed young woman who is handicapped with a severe depression because of which she behaves strangely. However, at their first meeting she talks mean to him by persisting that she is tired and wants to get home (p. 23).

In the course of the story, one finds in Patrick's neurosis an illustration of the Gestalt psychological notion of 'Disequilibrium'. Mortola argues that if a man is constantly able to change his mental position from equilibrium to un-equilibrium and then again from un-equilibrium back to equilibrium, in the view of Gestalt therapy, he is healthy (1999, p. 311). But what bothers Patrick the most is that he is unable to perform this cycle of replacements. Stuck in the past, he cannot improve his mentality and put an end to his false perceptions about his ex-wife. His inability to create a dynamic psychological balance exemplifies what is often called 'Disequilibrium'. From the beginning of the novel, the reader witnesses Patrick's concerns; he finds it hard to come to terms with his society and return to it. According to Arnheim, "Gestalt theory demanded of the individual citizen that he derive his rights and duties from the objectively ascertained functions and needs of society" (1969-1970, p. 99). But Patrick is unable to fulfill a normal commitment to his society. For example, when he visits his therapist, he loses his control only by hearing a piece of music (Quick, 2008, p. 8). These radical reactions reveal the depth of his psychic 'Disequilibrium', a problem which is not limited to him as the text shows that Tiffany is disabled with it as well. Like that of Patrick, her problem is that she is far from a stable 'Equilibrium'. Each morning, when Patrick runs 10 miles around his home town, she follows him "without saying anything" (p. 32).

According to Mortola, the human being is constantly trying to pass over unbalanced emotions and to reach a desired 'Equilibrium' which is "the concept of a central, three-part, or 'triadic' process involving a movement through equilibrium, disequilibrium, and modified equilibrium." In Gestalt theory, this movement is essential to "the ongoing process of Gestalt formation and closure" (1999, p. 310). Thus, in order for Gestalt therapists to define a passing from 'Disequilibrium' to 'Equilibrium', the patient simultaneously needs to get to a 'Closure'.

However, before discussing the concept of 'Closure', it's noteworthy to mention that although Tiffany and Patrick try hard to reach a psychological balance, they do not recognize their true objectives. The latter tries to control his anger by practicing bodybuilding for long hours every day, and the former regularly visits a therapist and participates in a festival called "Dance Away Depression". Later in the novel, when she sends him a letter and invites him to participate in dance competitions, she explains the objective of her program:

I want to win this year's Dance Away Depression competition, and I need a strong man to do it. [...] it is an annual competition organized by the Philadelphia Psychiatric Association that allows women diagnosed with clinical depression to transform their despair into movement. The sole focus is supposed to be diminishing depression through use of the body. (Quick, 2008, p. 80-81)

Ironically, they both try hard to release themselves from mental concerns, but so far they are unable to achieve anything by themselves. Both of them wish to receive a final 'Closure', but their problem is that they see only one side of their situation. They do whatever they can to free themselves psychologically, but entangled in the pitfall of their past experiences they are not determined to stop thinking about themselves and move on toward the future. Each morning, Patrick comes up from his basement, and as he looks to the horizon and the silver linings, he feels a magical hope that Nikki would come back home soon (p. 11).

Apparently Patrick does anything his therapist prescribes to alleviate his anxiety, but he cannot reach a 'Closure'. Instead, he dives into imaginary facts or phantoms in the space of which he gets involved in a sequence of denials regarding his past. As a result, he cannot reach 'Equilibrium', because he considers an imaginary reunion with Nikki as

his 'Closure', which is only a fake solution to his problems. If Patrick could think about a correct symbol or concept as his aim in life, he might be able to overcome his problems. Some researchers have provided different analyses on this notion in Gestalt psychology. For example, in her influential *Closure: the Rush to End Grief and what it Costs us*, Berns argues that, in 1923, Max Wertheimer made use of the concept of closure in explaining "how our brains group objects together as a whole rather than as individual part." The "mind fills in missing information to complete an image." Closure also highlights the fact that people remind better those events or tasks which have remained "unfinished or not closed" (2011, p. 7-8).

One can suggest that to the practitioners of Gestalt psychology 'Closure' is a key concept. According to Koffka (1935), a principle of Gestalt psychology is 'Closure'. However, it can be reached only on the ground of an established balance and 'Equilibrium'. According to Perls, "Just as balance and discovering are not on all levels of existence, so are frustration, satisfaction and closure" (1969, p. 86-87). In this way, for Quick's protagonists to end their grief over losing their partners, they need to reach a state of 'Equilibrium'. In this regard, their friendships as well as their trust in each other play major roles in healing their emotional injuries. For instance, after Patrick punches an arrogant man in the face in defense of his own brother, he becomes ashamed of his deed and feels the need to talk to someone other than Tiffany, but nobody realizes his true feelings. "I'm starting to think Tiffany is the only one who might understand," says Patrick, "since she seems to have a similar problem" (Quick, 2008, p. 51).

The next item entangling Quick's characters in disequilibrium is a sense of 'Self-Realization'. Karen Horney defines 'Self-Realization' as an attempt to solve inner conflicts (1936, p. 221-230) which is similar to 'Equilibrium'. However in *Karen Horney: Gentle Rebel of Psychoanalysis* (1978), Rubins holds that "Self-Realization is the innate tendency of the individual to grow in a healthy direction" (p. 316). The problem of self-realization is more evident in the novel when Patrick first understands that his brother Jake has been happily married for two years (Quick, 2008, p. 67). The sequence of mental problems is extended almost in the whole story. In a final episode, Tiffany decides to provide Patrick with a 'Closure'. Berns claims that "'Closure' is not some naturally occurring emotion that we can simply 'find' with the right advice. Rather, closure is a made-up concept: a frame used to explain how we should respond to loss" (2011, p. 4). So Patrick needs someone to help him with closure and Tiffany is that someone. Firstly, she tries to share with him her experience about Tommy's death who was her husband. She tells him that Tommy, killed in duty, was a socially responsible cop. After revealing the depth of her depression to Patrick, Tiffany designs a plan. She tells him that she could act as a liaison between him and Nikki. So each time he sends a letter through Tiffany to his ex-wife, Tiffany sends him a letter which she pretends is a reply from her. But this pretension is just a scheme, because it is Tiffany, not Nikki, who has written the replies. In the whole of this scheme, Tiffany has been disguising herself as Nikki and has been suggesting that he has to forget everything about Nikki. Some chapters afterwards, when Patrick finds out about Tiffany's scheme, he turns away from her. However, Tiffany, who is now committed to help him get out of his catch, writes him a letter to explain the purpose of her "liaison scheme". It has been to provide him a 'Closure':

I wrote those letters hoping to provide you with the closure ... Please know I began the liaison scheme only after I was certain that Nikki would never agree to talk to you again under any circumstance. Maybe you will never be able to forgive me, but I wanted you to know I had the best intentions—and I still love you...I miss you, Pat. I really do. Can we at least be friends? (Quick, 2008, p. 120)

Tiffany's direct talks about 'Closure' help one to believe that the aim of the processes of 'Equilibrium' and 'Self-Realization' throughout the story is to afford Patrick with a realizable 'Closure'. In this regard, in her 2011 socio-cultural research, Berns argues that 'closure' has also advantaged from a culture within which people's grief is of central importance but largely limited by "patience and expectations", so that the individual will solve his/her problems within a brief course of time, without much meditation over of the pains, and through "a relatively quick resolution" that "bystanders can assume that the person is moving on" (p. 11). But reaching 'Closure' in a special case of divorce is even harder. In chapter 3 of her research Berns adds that "the lack of closure is emphasized in many descriptions of why divorce is hard." Some believe that divorce is even worse than death, since there is no closure (p. 41). So with the help of Tiffany, Patrick can provide himself a route to a real 'Closure'. About the end of the novel, when Patrick's brother is taking him to his old house, from afar he sees Nikki happily playing in the snow with Phillip and her two children; he understands that she is happily married, and decides no longer to think about her. A few days later, he visits Tiffany and retells her about his 'Official' and final 'Closure':

[...] I guess I just want Nikki to be happy, even if her happy life doesn't include me, because I had my chance and I wasn't a very good husband. (Quick, 2008, p. 122)

Patrick's proper understanding of the facts of his life shows that he has reached 'maturity' in a Gestaltian sense. But what is maturity? Karen Horney suggests "two ingredients" of it. One is "the ability to see the stark reality of persons or situations outside ourselves and to base our judgments and observations on the factors actually operating", while the other one is "the ability to assume responsibility for ourselves" (1947, p. 85). Patrick starts to assume 'responsibility' when he accepts the fact that Nikki is happier without him.

C. Rise of Patrick's Problems

Aside from attempting to provide a psychotherapeutic analysis of Patrick's behavior, the present paper will attempt to answer a question about the nature of his mental problem. It is observed that Quick initiated Patrick's journal of daily events in 2006. But still a remarkable rupture, about 4 years before that, bothers the curious reader who should wait

until the final episodes of the story when Patrick finds his ex-wife at home with her lover whom he attempts to kill. Nevertheless, the author does not go further backward, and Patrick's life in the past remains a mystery. The reader may guess that before his wife's infidelity Patrick lives with her for at least five years. The way the narrator registers the events of the day when Patrick gets crazy because of his wife's infidelity, along with how he describes Phillip's conformity with his beloved Nikki, encourages the reader to take Patrick for an outsider in her life. The following example is perhaps more suggestive how the author accomplishes his aim.

He's so small, I can hold him up against the tiles with one hand. I cock my elbow back, squeeze a tight, teeth shattering fist, and take aim. His nose explodes like a packet of ketchup. His eyes are rolling into the back of his head; his hands have fallen away from mine. (Quick, 2008, p. 116)

Here it is clear that the author really attempts to judge his characters and to blame Patrick for his ex-wife's infidelity.

It is ironic that as the victim of the cheating reactions of his wife a husband should get convicted to pass many years of isolation in an asylum, and soon after, the cheater's adulterous lover should win her consent to marry her. It is also ironic that Quick, as the creator and observer of this situation, should take the side of the cheater and consider the cheater's ex-husband both as the victim and the culpable, as the 'oppressor' and the 'oppressed'.

This 'mad' Patrick can be taken as a token of the cruelty of the modern 'Woman'; instead of an asylum where he is sent to as a culprit to pass a big part of his life silently in a 'marginalized' situation, he should have been sent to a hospital for receiving medical treatments.

In spite of this cruelty, Patrick is kind-hearted enough to remember the good side of his wife when he says, "Nikki—likes—a—man—with—a—developed—upper—body" (p. 4-5). He is really influenced by Nikki's disapproval of him, and he tries to better his physique in order to get her consent, while remembering that Nikki is a part of his daily life. But as the above example shows, these biased descriptions are little helpful to the reader if he wants to know Nikki better. We can admit that Nikki and Patrick started their married life happily, due to a handful of examples in the novel such as when he remembers their wedding day and Nikki talking to the camera, as if talking to him, saying "I love you, Pat Peoples" (24). In addition to the knowledge about their happy marriage, it is crucial to know what happens during their married life, a process which pushes Patrick toward madness. It is ironic that in the novel an attempt is traceable to avoid solving this structure-making mystery. For instance, it's not clear to what degree Nikki is responsible for the fate of their marriage. In what follows, an investigation into Patrick's memories can provide us with interesting keys for opening the secret.

D. Under the Impact of (Rejected) Love

Nikki's lover is Phillip, who is Quick's absent antagonist. He is the man who ruins Patrick's love, life, and mind. In an episode, Patrick talks about the circle of Nikki's friends, all English teachers, who occasionally visit her for a "tea conversation". Because of his illiteracy, Patrick has to remain silent every time. Phillip is a member of the circle whom Patrick teases "about being such a tiny man", while Philip mostly teases him by making fun of him or calling him names such as "an illiterate buffoon" (p. 7).

It may seem normal for the couples to call one another funny names, and Nikki calls her husband as such even after this incident. It might even reveal the dynamism of their relations. But as to Patrick's current mental situation, it can raise doubts about our initial judgment. Take the example below.

Here's another surprise: I'm going to read all the novels on her American literature class syllabus, just to make her proud, to let her know that I am really interested in what she loves and I am making a real effort to salvage our marriage, especially since I will now be able to converse with her swanky literary friends. (p. 7)

At this particular scene, Patrick — as a recovering neurotic — tells us how much he longs to read Nikki's entire syllabus in order to gain self-confidence, because he does not want to be ashamed in front of her friends any more. This shows how much he is damaged by Nikki's embarrassing behavior and how much he longs for her approval. Gestalt psychology holds that if a mental patient is overtly anxious or if he has some hallucinations, it may signify that he has lost his memories or is enmeshed by old and devastating ones. Looking at Patrick's sensitivity to Kenny G. makes this Gestaltian notion clear that our cognitions are rooted in our relevant perceptions, while each of our reactions is bound to our power of reasoning. Take as an example when Patrick describes the events of his cursed day.

But when I enter my house, I hear a soprano sax moaning, and it's strange to hear Kenny G's smooth jazz coming from my bathroom at a time like this. [...] I open the bathroom door; I feel the steam lick my skin, and I wonder why Nikki is listening to our wedding song in the shower. Kenny G's solo has reached a climax once more. [...] Sexy synthesizer chords, faint high-hat taps. "You ...!" I scream as I rip the shower curtain off the rod, exposing so much awful, soapy flesh. (p. 116)

Thereafter, each time Patrick listens to the song he loses his control, because the song has been a favorite to him and they have played it on the occasion of their wedding ceremony. Patrick has always been a caring and attached lover to Nikki, and both have been in love with the song, which they used to play in special occasions. But the reader suddenly finds out that Nikki deliberately plays it aloud when she is in the shower with Philip. Is not this event an openly warning message to a loving husband who just returns home from work? And is not this occasion the trap which Nikki has provided for Patrick to excite him to react madly, because of which she can make a case against him in the court and arrange for him to be sent to an asylum as a mental patient, thus eliminating him from her life through an easy divorce

and then making for herself to marry Philip? The song played on Patrick's cursed day is in fact, in the hands of the novelist, a significant technique that empowers the subtle plot of his work.

Although Patrick is currently mentally ill, his personality is the product of a damaged marriage in which the role of Nikki as the wife is inevitable. In this process, she initially breaks his self-confidence. Then she starts to embarrass him repeatedly, to make him believe that he is incompatible and guilty. Meantime, she commits adultery with a man whom she selects from among their mutual friends. The whole of this process is more than enough to push Patrick toward self-destruction and madness, which the reader then identifies as his "bipolar disorder" in the light of Gestalt psychology. As it was discussed earlier, in this problematic situation Patrick receives a closure to the blessing of which he can commence a married life with another woman, Tiffany.

Patrick is likely to continue living in our mind, because he embodies the totalitarian and psychic lover with whom we often come across in the nooks and corners of our lives. We often pass by them without recognizing them. Also, we often see Nikki living in Patrick's old house but with her new lover.

III. CONCLUSION

Mathew Quick's *The Silver Linings Playbook* puts the reader in the life of a pair of mentally damaged characters, which he can critically analyze in the light of the theories of Gestalt psychology. Each character in this novel believes in a series of ideas which are well established in his/her mind. In Gestalt psychology, such ideas are called 'dogma'. People use such dogmas to express the reality of their worlds, while it is one of their psychological capabilities. But their mind is armed with another capability too, which is 'hypothesis' making (or structure making) about which they are nonetheless often skeptical. Relying on such assertions, comparing 'dogma' with 'hypothesis', one realizes that keeping such dualities in their mind could be frustrating or even devastating. However, psychologically they are inclined to contrive a coherent combination of these notions to reach 'Equilibrium' between them. Relying on the aforementioned criteria for developing psychological balance, the present research has come to recognize Patrick as a mental patient trapped in 'Disequilibrium', yet as a patient whose friendship with Tiffany helps him to reach a Gestaltian notion of 'Equilibrium' through 'Self-Realization', 'Maturity', and 'Closure'. The findings of the paper additionally suggest that in the background of Gestaltian 'Closure' Quick's protagonists are able to create a healthy environment in which to develop a better life for themselves.

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Grammar Learning Strategies Applied to ESP Teaching

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Abstract—There are difficulties in learning ESP because of the characteristics of ESP and learners' low grammatical competence. Grammar knowledge plays important roles in cultivating grammar competence, especially for ESP learning. There is the connection between grammar and learning strategies. Cognitive approach (deductive and inductive learning), communicative approach, and drills are beneficial to grammar learning. ESP grammar learning strategies can be classified into cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies for learning grammar, and social strategies for learning grammar. Teachers can apply some strategies to ESP teaching.

Index Terms—ESP, grammar, learning strategies

I. INTRODUCTION

English for specific purposes (ESP) is a branch of applied linguistics and it refers to the teaching and learning of English as a second or foreign language where the goal of the learners is to use English in a particular domain. A key feature of an ESP course is that the content and aims of the course are oriented to the specific needs of the learners. ESP courses, then, focus on the language, skills, and genres appropriate to the specific activities the learners need to carry out in English (Brian Paltridge & Sue Starfield, 2013, p. 2). One of absolute characteristics of ESP is that ESP is centered on the language appropriate to these activities in terms of grammar, lexis, register, study skills, discourse and genre (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998, p. 4-5). The study of ESP teaching is in the mature phase, with classroom micro-teaching being the research emphasis. ESP language characteristics, such as technical terms, nominalization, hedges, syntactic complexity, contribute to the ambiguity tolerance and anxiety of ESP learning.

Grammar is concerned with the structure of a language and contributes to producing sentences. The ability to perform the grammar knowledge in the language skills, such as reading, speaking, listening and writing, is necessary in ESP teaching. Therefore, it is necessary that grammar learning should be attached importance to ESP teaching. The goal of grammar learning is not only applied to English for general purposes (EGP), but also to ESP learning. Grammar learning strategies should be emphasized in ESP learning, which is usually paid little attention by ESP teachers and learners. This study is expected to give ESP teachers and learners some useful implications.

II. THE IMPORTANCE OF GRAMMAR IN ESP LEARNING

Grammar usually takes into account the meanings and functions sentences have in ESP Learning. However important the components of language may be in themselves, they are connected to each other through grammar (Cook, 2000, p. 14).

It is certain that grammar has important roles in some aspects of ESP learning. Rod Ellis (2005) provides ten general principles for successful instructed learning, among which the first principle is that instruction needs to ensure that learners develop both a rich repertoire of formulaic expressions and a rule-based competence. In terms of Rod Ellis (2005), proficiency in ESP requires that learners acquire both a rich repertoire of formulaic expressions, which caters to fluency in ESP communication, and a rule-based competence consisting of knowledge of specific grammatical rules, which caters to complexity and accuracy in ESP communication.

In general, grammar can basically play two parts in ESP learning: one is to enhance comprehensible input and the other is to monitor effective output. To enhance comprehensible input means that learners use grammar knowledge they have learnt to solve some puzzles in their ESP reading comprehension. When learners cannot understand the meaning of a complicated sentence, they need to analyze the sentence structure, the functions and interrelation of sentence components in order to comprehend the sentence. To monitor effective output means monitoring the oral or written expressions. Many learners have learnt ESP for several years, but they would make some mistakes in the oral or written expressions. It shows that they have not made the best of their mastered grammar knowledge to monitor and adjust the ESP learning output. Therefore, by means of grammar learning, ESP learners' grammar competence is cultivated through learning procedural knowledge and declarative knowledge.

To sum up, in learning ESP, grammar can not only help ESP learners construct more accurate sentences but also help learners use various structures to express thoughts in ESP communication occasions.

III. GRAMMAR AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

Since Second Language Acquisition (SLA) researchers base their SLA research on cognitive psychology and information-processing approach, they have seen the learner as an active organizer of incoming information and seen SLA as the acquisition of complex, cognitive skill in which the learning of grammar plays an important role and learning strategies (McLaughlin, Rossman, & McLeod, 1983).

The automatized strategic component helps to automatize the grammatical component, and consequently to increase language proficiency. Thus, strategies directly affect language acquisition (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990, p. 196), and consequently grammar acquisition; and on the other hand, the lack of grammatical knowledge may affect the effectiveness of a strategy (Cohen, 1998: 12) and consequently language acquisition (Vicenta, 2002). Cohen's (1998: 123, 221) study shows the connection between grammar and learning strategies by stating that it is likely that the use of strategies contributes to more grammatically accurate speech, and by claiming that determining what grammatical features are needed is one of the steps followed by learners when talking. Learning strategies can facilitate grammatical items to be learnt by helping learners to explicitly notice them, structure them into working and automatize them through practice so that they can be available for spontaneous use (Vicenta, 2002).

Learners pay attention to grammar rules and turn them into declarative knowledge; later it will be thanks to a great deal of practice and feedback that these grammar rules will be restructured and automatized; the grammatical knowledge will be turned into procedural knowledge, and consequently attention will be free to attend to other second language components. Learning strategies are also seen as complex skills whose automatization will help learners to learn grammar. Learning strategies will have to be applied in order to carry out all these steps and consequently, learn grammar and a second language (Vicenta, 2002).

Learning is a cognitive process within learners, and teaching is just a way of facilitating learning; teachers should know how learning takes place in order to help learners to control the central aspects of learning (Brown, 1987, p. 2). Therefore, some recent research on grammar teaching can show implications for grammar learning strategies.

A. *Cognitive Approach to Grammar Learning*

In general, there are two kinds of approaches to learning and teaching grammar. One is deductive learning. It is an approach to language teaching in which learners are taught rules and given specific information about a language. They then apply these rules when they use language; language teaching methods that emphasize the study of the grammatical rules of a language (for example the Grammar Translation Method) make use of the principle of deductive learning (Richards et al, 2000, p. 123).

The other is inductive learning. It is an approach to language teaching in which learners are not taught grammatical or other types of rules directly but are left to discover or induce rules from their experience of using the language; language teaching methods that emphasize the use of the language rather than presentation of information about the language (for example the Direct Method, Communicative Approach, and Counseling Learning) make use of the principle of inductive learning (Richards et al, 2000, p. 123).

The former is explicit teaching of grammar while the latter is implicit. Formed-focused exercises should progress to meaningful activities which should ultimately give ways to tasks where the emphasis is on successful communication.

The role of grammar should arouse our attention; the necessary trend for the development of grammar instruction is the integration of both implicit and explicit grammar instruction. In addition, another kind of approach to learning and teaching grammar is explicit inductive approach suggested by Vicenta (2002) who thinks that grammar explanations are provided to learners for consultation throughout the instructional activities once they have opportunities to discover the rule. Explicit knowledge may contribute to the development of implicit knowledge by helping learners to process input and intake (Ellis, 2005, p. 57).

B. *Communicative Approach to Grammar Learning*

Grauberg (1997, p. 36) emphasizes the importance of grammar learning for being able to communicate by stating that not appreciating the effect of changes in the form or positions of words can distort the meaning of the message since it is the ability to generate utterances through internalized grammatical knowledge which will enable effective communication and interaction to take place (Grauberg, 1997, p. 72).

Grammar and communication influence each other, so they are complimentary. As the result of interlanguage, there may be some errors that may cause miscommunication. However, proficiency and accuracy should be not enemies but allies.

C. *Successful Learners' Grammar Learning*

O'Malley and Chamot (1990, p. 128, 206) discuss the connection between grammar and strategies by enumerating the strategies that successful learners would use to learn grammar such as deduction, induction, translation, and transfer. Thus, they point out that more associating strategy use with learning grammar need to be conducted.

Ellis (1994) pointed out that successful learners (1) attend to language form, (2) also concern meaning or communication, (3) are actively involved in language learning, (4) are aware of the learning process, and (5) are more flexible to use strategies in accordance with task requirements. Most of the researchers agree to these five differences.

To sum up, explicit deduction, implicit induction, consciousness-raising, communication, proficiency and accuracy can be used as English grammar learning strategies. Besides, the traditional grammar-translation method left such an ineradicable memory for many English learners that learning grammar for grammar's sake still occurs in language learning; it is claimed that grammar learning should be linked with context and function because grammar is basically used to enhance comprehensible input and to monitor effective output; only when the link is established between context and text, function and form, can meaningful grammar learning take place. Learners' learning grammatical knowledge may benefit from the effective use of a strategy. Learning strategies may assist students in mastering the forms and functions required for comprehension and production. However, there are very few studies that apply learning strategy research to the learning of grammar.

IV. ESP GRAMMAR LEARNING STRATEGIES CLASSIFICATION

Vicenta (2002) has made a study on grammar learning through the macro-grammar strategy training for secondary school students. The macro-grammar strategy consists of metacognitive and cognitive strategies which students apply when carrying out the designed activities: matching, reading and answering questions, including a rule, filling in the blanks with the right tenses, correcting mistakes, translating, rewriting, and writing. In the metacognitive strategies, selective attention, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation are selected; in the cognitive strategies, elaboration, inference, deduction, repetition, translation, and transfer are selected. Her general conclusion is that students, specially fair and poor learners, following the grammar strategy instruction, can learn grammatical structures better and become a little more autonomous than the students who do not follow the instruction.

In this study, ESP grammar learning strategies (EGLS) refer to all kinds of strategies that make ESP grammar learning more effective, which include not only micro-strategies that learners use to finish learning some specific ESP grammar items to the better degree, but also macro-strategies that learners take to plan, regulate, evaluate, etc. the aims, processes and results of ESP grammar learning, and even learners' knowledge of ESP grammar learning.

ESP grammar learning strategies can be classified into cognitive strategies for learning grammar (CSLG), metacognitive strategies for learning grammar (MSLG), affective strategies for learning grammar (ASLG), and social strategies for learning grammar (SSLG). Every subcategory is embodied with the relevant specific items.

CSLG are those strategies learners use to be more efficient to identify, understand, retain and extract grammar knowledge, with details in Table1.

TABLE 1
CSLG SPECIFIC ITEMS

Items	Description	
CSLG	Preparation	Being ready beforehand for learning grammar
	Attention to form	Focusing consciousness on specific aspects of grammar knowledge
	Thinking	Reasoning about or reflecting on grammar
	Key word	Remembering grammar by generating easily recalled images of some relationship with the new grammar knowledge
	Understanding	Organizing grammar materials in long-term memory, restructuring and grasping the meaning of them
	Induction and deduction	Generalizing grammar rules and consciously using rules to produce or understand English
	Correction	Correcting grammatical errors and learn from errors
	Translation	Using the mother tongue as a base for understanding or producing grammar rules
	Imagery	Relating new information to visual concepts in memory via familiar easily retrievable visualization
	Resourcing	Expanding grammar knowledge through use of grammar reference materials
	Repetition	Imitating or reciting grammar smartly including overt practice and silent rehearsal
	Transfer	Using previously acquired grammar knowledge to facilitate a new language learning task
	Inference	Inferring and analyzing grammar rules from a text
	Elaboration	Integrating new information to existing grammar knowledge
	Contextualization	Placing grammar rules in a meaningful language sequence
Note-taking	Writing down the main ideas, important points, outline, or summary	

MSLG help learners to confirm and regulate the learning aims, select learning approaches and techniques, and evaluate and feedback the learning results, with details in Table2.

TABLE 2
MSLG SPECIFIC ITEMS

Items	Description	
MSLG	Directed attention	Giving decision in advance to a learning task and ignoring irrelevant distracters
	Advance preparation	Making plans for grammatical knowledge for the language task
	Self-regulating	Knowing about the conditions that help learn language knowledge
	Self-evaluating	Checking the outcomes of learning grammar or examining the results of productions and deciding which elements can be improved.

ASLG are those strategies learners use to foster, adjust and control emotions in the process of learning grammar, with details in Table3.

TABLE3
ASLG SPECIFIC ITEMS

Items	Description	
ASLG	Cultivating interest	Having or showing curiosity, fascination, or concern on grammar learning
	Positive attitude	Having an active state of mind or a feeling in grammar learning
	Confidence	Having a feeling of assurance in grammar learning
	Lowering anxiety	Weakening the state of uneasiness and apprehension in grammar learning
	Encouraging others	Inspiring other learners with hope, courage, or confidence in grammar learning
	Care of others' emotions	Concerning other learners' feelings in grammar learning
	Regulating own emotions	Self-controlling own feelings in grammar learning
Being helpful	Providing assistance for other learners in grammar learning	

SSLG are those strategies learners use to apply the gained grammar knowledge to intercommunication, with details in Table4.

TABLE4
SSLG SPECIFIC ITEMS

Items	Description	
SSLG	Communication	Applying learnt rules to language expressions for the exchange of thoughts, messages, or information
	Clarification	Asking teachers or other learners for the explanation of language knowledge
	Cooperation	Exchanging feedback or information in a language activities
	Fluency	Tending to express oneself readily and effortlessly with little attention to grammatical regulation
	Accuracy	Monitoring expressions for grammatical regulation

V. PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR ESP

First of all, teachers should be aware and emphasize that they could provide strategies-based instruction of grammar to ESP learners and find what kinds of strategies are useful and effective for ESP learners to learn grammar. Thus, as facilitators of learning, teachers can help ESP learners select and become proficient in the use of effective grammar learning strategies, and as Jones et al. (1987, p. 56) have indicated, teachers try to change ESP learners' attitudes about their own abilities by teaching them that their failures can be attributed to the lack of effective strategies rather than to the lack of ability or to laziness. Therefore, ESP grammar learning strategy training can not only be beneficial to reaching the final goal of grammar learning, which is to cultivate grammar competence through learning grammar knowledge or procedural knowledge through learning declarative knowledge, but also to develop ESP learners' learning ability that is vital for ESP learners' learning at school and even lifelong learning.

Secondly, cognitive approaches are suggested applying to teaching ESP grammar. One is the deductive approach or explicitly teaching grammar; teachers should teach ESP learners rules and give them specific information about ESP, then have them then apply these rules when they use ESP. The other is the inductive approach or implicitly teaching grammar; teachers leave ESP learners discovering grammatical rules from their experience of using ESP.

Thirdly, fluency and accuracy are allies not enemies, and grammar and communication are complimentary since they shape and influence each other, and internalized grammatical knowledge will enable effective communication and interaction to take place. Hence, communicative approach can be used to teach English grammar; teachers help ESP learners to notice and structure by focusing on specific forms and meanings, and guide ESP learners' own attention to grammar and design grammar learning tasks that help to teach them skills of ESP, such as reading, speaking, listening or writing, in order for them to utilize grammar for their own communication.

In addition, it is true that an overuse of the mother language can be a drawback, and students may miss chances of using ESP, so the mother language is only used in the ESP classroom when needed, since the mother language is an essential factor to turn input into intake and it helps learners to differentiate important structural differences between the mother tongue and ESP.

Finally, teachers guide ESP learners to have proper and positive attitudes towards learning grammar, and instruct them to learn ESP grammar not only autonomously, but also cooperatively with the aim that learning grammar is better to facilitate their skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, and accordingly, helps to improve ESP proficiency on the whole.

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Iranian Instructors' Practices and Criteria for Teaching English Translation

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Abstract—Concerning the significant role of translation as a significant field which contributes to intercultural communication, assigning valid criteria for teaching translation is necessary to make sure that the best practices are employed by instructors' to teach translation skills. This, in return, would help translation students be equipped with better translation skills. However, little research has been conducted to see what training practices translation instructors employ in their translation training classrooms. More significantly, it has been little research to determine the criteria that are behind the practices instructors employ in their translation training classroom. The purpose of the current research was to determine what practices instructors follow in their English translation classrooms and what criteria are behind these practices. To serve this purpose, the classrooms of ten English translation instructors were observed in an Iranian academic context using an observation checklist. Subsequently, the instructors were asked to write about the criteria behind their teaching practices in an open-ended questionnaire. The results of the study showed that the instructors' practices were consistent with some of the principles made in the literature an inconstant with others. The instructors referred to the criteria behind the translation teaching practices they employed in their classrooms. Implications that these findings have for the field of translation are presented and some suggestions for further research in this area are given.

Index Terms—teaching translation, translation instructor, teaching criteria, teaching practice

I. INTRODUCTION

Conceptualization and further development of theoretical and practical background for translation training is an area that has attracted much attention in the field of translation studies (e.g., Hatim, 2014; Heping, 2008; Kiraly, 2000; Li, 2000a, 2000b; Pym, 2006; Wilss, 1989, 1994). The aim of this trend of research has been to determine what criteria provide the best platform for designing teaching practices that would result in the most satisfactory outcomes for translation training. Translation researchers have begun to look at real translation training situations, investigating what makes certain training translations more successful than others and incorporating their findings (Kiraly, 2000; Kelly, 2005). Teaching translation is considered as a significant phenomenon in the realm of Translation Studies. In addition, it should be noted that although academic contexts show interest toward teaching translation in different degrees and preparing trainers for future job, little attention has been paid to the translation training practices in the real world pedagogy (Kelly, 2005).

Consequently, it is necessary to conduct various pieces of research in order to improve this practice. It is noteworthy that few pieces of research have been done on teaching translation. According to Hatim (2001), translation teaching is a varied activity that subsumes the training translators, either within institutionalized settings (e.g. Universities) or outside (e.g. Self-learning), and the use of translation is a mode of achieving other goals (e.g. in language teaching).

Given the importance of teaching translation, a coherent approach to translator education would be necessary in order to achieve the best outcomes in the process of translation training. However, the field of translation teaching lacks a systematic pedagogical framework (Albir, 1999). Similarly, Snell-Hornby (1984) refers to the gap that exists between theories of translation training and real-world pedagogy.

[t]he teaching of translation has been seriously impeded by what can only be described as a great gulf between translation theory and practice. On the one hand, students express frustration at being burdened with theoretical considerations (both translation theory and general linguistics) which they feel have nothing to do with the activity of translating. On the other hand, "scholars talk scathingly of translators who are unwilling to investigate the theoretical basis of their work, thus reducing it to a mere practical skip" (p. 105).

Most of translation instructors have serious problems with a coherent curriculum design in teaching translation at universities. Some instructors are professional enough in teaching and testing, but may not be in the field of translation. While instructors are usually aware of the theories of translation, they might not have proper criteria in teaching translation.

II. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The teaching of translation skills can take many forms and, in fact, the undertaking is pursued in different ways all over the world (see, for example, Klaudy, 2003; Lesznyák, 2003; Li, 2000a, 2000b). On the other hand, there has been a steady growth in research on translator training. The most useful contributions perhaps indicate that the current training is failing. Therefore, the need for setting specific criteria in teaching translation is nowadays more indispensable and significant than ever before since it is believed that most of translation instructors have serious problems with a coherent curriculum design in teaching translation at universities. Some instructors are professional enough in teaching and testing, but may not be in the field of translation. While instructors are usually aware of the theories of translation, they might not have proper criteria in teaching translation. Translation Studies researchers should consider teaching translation as a crucial issue in particular within the situation of teaching in universities.

Teaching translation at Iranian universities is no exception to this lingering trend. A glance at the existing methodology used to teach translation courses in Iranian universities indicates that objectives of these courses have been either misunderstood or hard to achieve. As suggested by Razmjou (2002), it is imperative that translation classes shift from teacher centeredness to student centeredness so that students can have more cooperation rather than competition. She also highlights the need for change in the methodology used by instructors of translation teaching courses.

There are long-term training programmes in Iran for teaching translation offered by institutions of various kinds, increasingly by universities at BA or MA levels. Every translation program must have a syllabus which clearly defines the teaching method and its theory of translation if applicable. Therefore, the idea of different teaching theories is not an issue here; the lack of well-trained instructors is. This should also be reflected in the training process because as Wilss (1992, p.395) points out, a closer cooperation between translation teaching on the one side and translational practitioners on the other is imperative in an attempt to combine the systematic features of formal translation teaching with the practical advantages of collecting translational experience by on-the-job training, on the basis of translator-trainee-tailored apprenticeships of one sort or another. Qualified instructors can be well assisted by a comprehensive course design in which the teaching methodology, the course objectives and assessment procedures are clearly set out.

Basically, the purpose of translation teaching/ learning process is to prepare or train the students in order to be a professional translator (Hatim, 2014; Heping, 2008; Wilss, 1989, 1994). Teaching translation has been one of the major topics of translation studies. So, it is important to define the common criteria used by instructors to train translators. The tendencies in the translation teaching are an important element to be taken into account in establishing the general guidelines to follow. So, this study is purported first to consider the teaching practices that are applied by instructors, while teaching translation, and, then, to explore the criteria that are behind these practices through close observation and administration of a questionnaire to translation instructors at Islamic Azad University South Tehran Branch.

The present study focused on investigating applied techniques for teaching translation at Islamic Azad University-South Tehran Branch, which could be used by translation instructors to provide the translation students with appropriate methodology of teaching. On the other hand, the selection of teaching practices in pedagogical contexts does not happen in void and is usually guided by theoretical dispositions and principles. So, a second objective of this study was to explore the criteria that were behind the teaching practices translation instructors employed in their own classrooms.

Therefore, the present study was meant to answer the following two research questions posed on the issue of translation teaching:

RQ1. What teaching practices are used by the instructors in teaching translation at Islamic Azad University-South Tehran Branch?

RQ1. What criteria are there behind the teaching practices used by the instructors in teaching translation?

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The participants of the present study were ten male and female Translation instructors from Islamic Azad University South Tehran Branch. The main reason for choosing them was that they professionally dealt with teaching and testing Translation with two to thirty year experience.

B. Instrumentation

To fulfill the aims of the study, a classroom-observation and a questionnaire was used as the instruments of this quantitative-qualitative research, based seven criteria for teaching translation chosen on the basis of a comprehensive review of literature on teaching translation. These seven criteria were selected as points of reference for the current investigation because they are believed to be the issues most significant for the process of teaching translation (e.g., Hatim, 2014; Heping, 2008; Kiraly, 2000; Li, 2000a, 2000b; Pym, 2006; Wilss, 1989, 1994).

The observations were carried out using an observation checklist which was prepared based on the principles for developing observation checklist tools (e.g., Day, 1990; McDonough & McDonough, 2014). For each of the targeted criterion categories, two observation items were included in the checklist so that the observation of the category could be deeper and as reliable as possible (e.g., for the category of **Translation Competence**, the two observation items

were “*The class material covers models of translation competence*” and “*The teaching method covers models of translation competence*”). Each observation item was rated on a five-point likert scale which extended from 1 (i. observed so little) to 5 (i.e., observed so much), with 2 (observed a little), 3 (observed so/so), and 4 (observed much) in between.

In addition, a questionnaire with fourteen open-ended items was administered to the sampled instructors in order to figure out which criteria and principles they were following in their teaching. This written open-ended questionnaire was directly derived from the observation checklist so that the instructors provide explanations for each of the observations made in their classrooms. In order to standardize the observation checklist and the questionnaire employed, they were submitted to some English translation instructors to judge their face and content validity (see Schäffner, 2004). The instructors were 8 experts in language studies who had academic degrees and teaching experiences in either linguistics, testing, Teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL), or translation studies. The experts were submitted the questionnaire and the observation checklist and were asked give their suggestions regarding both the clarity of language and appropriateness of content of the instruments. They read the questionnaire and the observation checklist at several stages and revised and edited them when necessary. The final drafts of the instruments were therefore tuned up as the result of their kindly efforts.

C. *The Targeted Categories*

Based on a rather comprehensive review of the literature on teaching translation (e.g., Hatim, 2014; Heping, 2008; Kiraly, 2000; Li, 2000a, 2000b; Pym, 2006; Wilss, 1989, 1994), seven areas which have appealed most to researchers in the area were targeted for investigation in the present study. That is, these seven categories were used as the points of reference for discussion of the criteria and practices used by Iranian translation instructors. These seven targeted categories were employed in the current study for designing a checklist for observing translation instructors’ classrooms to see what teaching practices they would employ in their instruction. The categories were also as the basis for designing a written questionnaire to determine what criteria the instructors would mention as driving their decisions on teaching practices. In below, these seven targeted categories have been listed.

- **Models of Translation Competence**
- **The job market for translators.**
- **Source language use in translation classrooms**
- **Language teaching and learning as a part of translation training**
- **Written Translation versus Oral Interpretation**
- **Technology use in translation**
- **Use of translation theories and principles in translation classrooms**

D. *Design of the Study*

This study aimed to investigate the instructors' practices for teaching translation in Iran. The researchers intended to determine the most prevalent criteria adopted by the instructors at Islamic Azad University South Tehran Branch. For data collection, a questionnaire and an observation checklist were developed based on a rather comprehensive review of the literature on teaching translation in classrooms. The design of the study is of a triangulation type in that both quantitative and qualitative data were collected to find answers to the research questions posed.

E. *Procedure*

As the first step, the researcher observed the instructors' translation classes for hundred hours, i.e. four hours for each of them. As the next step, the chosen translation instructors were submitted the questionnaire. The questionnaire consisting of 14 open-ended questions was answered by the ten chosen translation instructors at Islamic Azad University South Tehran Branch. In the following step, data gathered from class observation and the two types of questionnaire that were to be filled out by the instructors and students were read line by line twice and in some cases more than twice, to extract all criteria considered by them. Finally, the present researcher transcribed all criteria considered by instructors in the written questionnaire for teaching translation. It means that, the present researcher made the collected data ready for the next phase of the research.

IV. RESULTS

In the present study, it was intended to determine the most prevalent practices adopted by instructors for teaching English translation at the undergraduate level at Islamic Azad University South Tehran Branch. Based on instruments used in this research, the method of collecting and analyzing data in the present study is a triangulation of qualitative, and quantitative methods.

In other words, the number of each practice for teaching translation was counted in the observation checklist. Further, the observed instructors were requested to fill out an open-ended, written questionnaire. The aim of this written questionnaire was to see what criteria the instructors followed in using the practices they employed in their classrooms. to provide explanations and discussions on the practices observed in the instructors’ classrooms.

Following Dancey and Reidy's (2007) for interpreting descriptive data, the rating scale was divided into three mean score classes; a mean score between 1 to 2.33 shows that the teaching practice has been little observed in the classrooms, a mean score between 2.34 to 3.67 shows that the teaching practice has been moderately used in the classrooms, and a mean score between 3.68 to 5 shows that the teaching practice has been prevalently used in the classrooms. A summary of these mean scores and their interpretations has been shown in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1.
MEAN SCORES AND THEIR INTERPRETATIONS

Mean score range*	Interpretation
1 to 2.33	Little use
2.34 to 3.67	Moderate use
3.68 to 5	Prevalent use

*Total mean = 5

Table 1 below indicates the statistics of the observations made in the instructors' translation classrooms. The table shows how much (from 1 to 5) a particular teaching practice has been observed in each classroom. The table also included the mean score (X) for each category of observation. For ease of reference, the two checklist items measuring the same targeted category have been presented next to each other in the table. The table also includes information on how many of the observed instructors have been rated according to the rating scale. For example for the first item of the targeted category "Translation Competence" (i.e., *The class material covers models of translation competence*), the information in the table shows that, of the ten instructors observed, two of the instructors were rated 3, five of them were rated 4, and three of them were rated 5 on the observation item. As you can see from the table, the mean score is 4.1 (i.e., $X = 4.1$) for this observation item.

TABLE 2.
THE RESULTS OF THE OBSERVATIONS MADE IN THE INSTRUCTORS' CLASSROOMS

Targeted Category	Observation Description	1	2	3	4	5	X
<i>Translation Competence</i>	The class material covers models of translation competence.	0	0	2	5	3	4.1
	The teaching method covers models of translation.	0	1	2	4	3	3.9
<i>Market Needs</i>	The material taught in the class was in harmony with market needs.	3	4	2	1	0	2.2
	The teaching methods satisfy market needs.	2	1	4	2	1	2.9
<i>Source Language Use</i>	The English language communication skills are presented.	2	3	4	1	0	2.4
	Trainer works using only the English language in the class.	3	2	3	2	0	2.6
<i>Language Teaching and Learning Processes</i>	Second language learning was considered as a part of the training process.	4	3	3	0	0	1.9
	Second language Teaching is a part of the training process.	5	4	1	0	0	1.4
<i>Written Translation vs. Oral Interpretation</i>	The trainer makes students do written tasks more than oral interpretation	0	1	2	5	2	3.8
	The curriculum makes students do writing assignment more than oral interpretation.	0	2	1	4	3	3.8
<i>Use of Technology</i>	Technology has been integrated into the teaching.	4	5	1	0	0	1.7
	Technology helps the trainer.	5	2	3	0	0	1.8
<i>Translation Theories and Principles</i>	Translation principles are taught explicitly.	1	2	2	4	1	3.2
	Theories help the trainees.	0	1	3	4	2	3.7

A. Observation 1 (Models of Translation Competence)

The results of the two observation items under this category indicated that the materials and the instructors' teaching methods appropriately covered models of translation competence. As Table 1 shows, the instructors' mean scores on the first item and the second item under this category were 4.1 and 3.9, respectively. Both of these mean scores belong to the third mean score class set earlier (3.68 to 5). Therefore, these mean scores show that models of translation competence were prevalently used both in the materials covered and the teaching methods used in the classrooms.

B. Observation 2 (Market Needs)

The results of the two observation items under this category indicated that the materials observed did not satisfy the market needs, but the teaching methods for translation training were moderately in harmony with such needs. As Table 1 shows, the instructors' mean scores on the first item and the second item under this category were 2.2 and 2.9, respectively. The former mean score belongs to the first mean score class (1 to 2.33) whereas the latter mean score belongs to the second mean score class (2.34 to 3.67). These results show that the training materials used did not satisfy the market needs while the teaching methods for translation training were moderately in harmony with such needs.

C. Observation 3 (Source Language Use)

The results of the two observation items under this category indicated that the instructors made moderate use of the source language in their training. As Table 1 shows, the instructors' mean scores on the first item and the second item under this category were 2.4 and 2.6, respectively. Both of these mean scores belong to the second mean score class (2.34 to 3.67). Therefore, these mean scores show that the instructors' language use was moderately divided between the source language and the target language.

D. Observation 4 (Language Teaching/Learning Processes)

The results of the two observation items under this category indicated the instructors did not consider second language teaching and learning processes as a part of their training program. As Table 1 shows, the instructors' mean scores on the first item and the second item under this category were 1.9 and 1.4, respectively. Both of these mean scores belong to the first mean score class (1 to 2.33) which shows that the instructors consider translation training and second language teaching/learning as two separate processes. In other words, in the instructors' opinions, the classroom was the place where translation skills and principles, and not the second language, should be taught and learned.

E. Observation 5 (Written Translation vs. Oral Interpretation)

The results of the two observation items under this category indicated that the instructors paid more attention to teaching translation than oral interpretation in their classrooms. As Table 1 shows, the instructors' mean scores on the both items under this category were 3.8. Both of these mean scores belong to the third mean score class (3.68 to 5), showing that the instructors focus on more written translation materials than on oral interpretation materials.

F. Observation 6 (Use of Technology)

The results of the two observation items under this category indicated that the instructors made little use of technological advancements in their classrooms for teaching English translation. As Table 1 shows, the instructors' mean scores on the first item and the second item under this category were 1.7 and 1.8, respectively. Both of these mean scores belong to the first mean score class (1 to 2.33) which shows that the instructors made little use of technology and technological advancements in their classrooms.

G. Observation 7 (Translation Theories and Principles)

The results of the two observation items under this category indicated that the instructors observed made ample use of translation theories and theoretical translation principles in their training. Table 1 shows that the instructors' mean scores on the first item and the second item under this category were 3.2 and 3.7, respectively. The former mean score belongs to the second mean score class (2.34 to 3.67), showing that the instructors made moderate use of translation theories and principles, while the latter mean score belong to the third mean score class (3.68 to 5), showing that the instructors made prevalent use of translation theories and principles in their training.

V. DISCUSSION

As you remember, seven categories were identified, based on a rather comprehensive literature review, for observation of English translation classrooms. In the following paragraphs, the results of the data presented are discussed, with each category subheaded consecutively. Extract from the instructors' answers to the written questionnaire are presented to show what criteria were behind the teaching practices observed in the instructors' translation classrooms.

In this section, these in-depth explanations for the seven target categories would be discussed to make firm conclusions. Extracts from the instructors' answers to the questions in the written questionnaire are provided to support the conclusions made based on the observations of the classrooms. Then, implications of the study's findings for teaching English translation are argued. Finally, suggestions for further research on teaching English translation in the Iranian context conclude the section.

A. Use of Models of Translation Competence

As the results showed, the instructors put much emphasis on the models of translation competence in their training. One basic element of the majority of translation competence models is that translation is not an individual activity; rather, it should be seen as a continuous interaction between different partners (e.g., translator and reader, translator and editor, translator and translator, etc.) (Göpferich, 2009). Specifically, the instructors observed made use of cooperative translation activities, interactive translation assignments, team-work translation, etc. Another "basic element of translation competence is the ability to analyze a variety of translation situations" (Vienne, 2000, p. 92). The observation demonstrated that the instructors asked their students to translate a wide variety of texts with different topics, discourses, difficulty, etc.

Similarly, most of the instructors contended that implementing and covering models of translation competence, through both materials and teaching methods, should be part of any translation training program. Two of the instructors, for instance, stated that

providing novice translators with whatever materials & tools needed for helping gaining translation competence should be a basic part of teaching students the translation abilities and techniques. (Instructor 7)

translation materials should be organized in a way that they equip the learners with abilities to translate different types of English texts. Competent translators are able to cover and translate different text types. (Instructor 4).

The instructors, however, seemed to disagree with each other on the definition of communicative competence. Some of them gave reference to Bachman's (1990) model of communicative competence which is not, in fact, a model of translation competence at all.

By translation competence we mean pragmatic competence in Bachman's words. (Instructor 4)

Translation competence consists of communicative competence, transfer competence, instrumental competence/ psycho-physiological competence, and strategic competence. (Instructor 2)

Definitions like the above should not surprise us since some of the instructors observed had academic backgrounds in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) and, thus, their definitions of translation competence had been blurred by their previous academic backgrounds in TEFL. Fortunately, some of the instructors presented definitions more appropriate to the concept. One example is the following extract:

Translation competence consists of the set of abilities a translator should acquire to be able to cope with translation challenges. So, a competent translator is one who uses suitable translation strategies, is proficient in both languages, is experienced, and is familiar with the content of the text to be translated. (Instructor 1).

To sum up, the instructors made use of particular teaching techniques to boost their students' translation competence. Also, even though they offered different definitions of the concept of translation competence, they emphasized that translation competence should be the objective of training translation programs.

B. Satisfying Market Needs

In recent years, there has been much discussion that there should be a consistency between translation theory in academic contexts and translation practice in the real world (e.g., Anderman & Rogers, 2000; Li, 2000a, 2000b; Szczyrbak, 2008). In other words, prospective translators should become ready for translation challenges they will face in their future careers.

Market needs are various and translators may be requested to handle various translation assignments. So, training programs should address these market needs as it helps the students get better jobs or have better opportunities. (Instructor 2)

However, according to Anderman and Rogers (2000), translators are increasingly facing challenges for which they have not been prepared before. Unfortunately, the observations of the classrooms showed that the materials used to teach English translation were not so much in harmony with such needs. The instructors themselves were aware of this shortcoming.

The students are not trained for the required market. Most of the graduate students find a job other than what they expect (Instructor 9).

Training programs should help the students to cope with different types of texts and in different contexts. I am not sure if the materials used to instruct translation can help the students acquire this ability or not (Instructor 4).

The bright side of the picture is that the instructors made use of appropriate methods and techniques for teaching English translation as observed in their translation training classrooms. Though the instructors themselves did not mention about the appropriateness of their teaching methods and techniques, the appropriateness can be attributed to the long years of experience the instructors had in teaching English translation in academic settings (and, maybe, non-academic settings as well). These findings show us that, although sometimes the available materials for teaching English translation remain outdated and irrelevant to market needs, the Iranian instructors teach their students translation techniques and strategies that are appropriate for such needs.

C. Source and Target Language Use

As the results of the study demonstrated, the instructors' language use was moderately divided between the source language and the target language. These results are consistent with suggestions in the literature on translation teaching that both the source language and the target language should be amply used in the classroom (Hatim, 2014; Hatim & Mason, 1990; Kiraly, 2000; Pym, 2006). One of the instructors' stated that:

translation is neither about the source language nor the target language. Essential to translation is the transfer of ideas expressed in the source language to the target language. Learners should have the ability to get the idea from the source language and transform it into the target language. Both languages should be used in the classroom. (Instructor 5)

Yet, some of the instructors expressed that the relative importance of the source and target languages in translation classrooms cannot be determined in advance; rather, it depends on the objectives on the program.

When oral interpretation is taught, it is the source language that should be given more attention to. In this situation, students can easily handle their own mother tongue. When written translation is taught, both languages become important equally. (Instructor 9)

Source language and target language are used in translation classroom according to our needs. (Instructor 3)

Given that the previous translation literature contended that language use should be moderately distributed between the source language and the target language, it therefore seems that the instructors observed have operated based on firm theoretical grounds.

D. Integration of Language Teaching/Learning and Translation Training

Most researchers contend that translation classrooms are not second language learning classrooms as the two have been set up for different objectives (e.g., Hatim, 2014; Jettmarová, 2004; Zdanys, 1987). As a matter of fact, they stress

that translation students be already proficient in the source language so that the classroom time don't be wasted on source language learning (Zdanys, 1987).

As the results of the study showed, the instructors observed in this study kept source/second language learning and teaching out of their translation training classrooms; i.e., they stuck to the idea that translation teaching and language teaching are two separate processes (Hatim, 2014).

My duty as a teacher is to teach my students how to be good translators. Before entering my classroom, the students should have a good command of the second language as it helps a lot to begin with students who can use the second language efficiently. Teaching translation is not teaching language. (Instructor 5)

Translation students should proceed their language learning outside of the translation classrooms. Of course, students can learn some English language in the classroom, but they have come to the classroom to lean translation, not language. (Instructor 3)

The above extracts clearly show that the instructors believed that translation training and language learning are separate. The results showed that they acted according to this belief when teaching their students.

E. Written Translation and Oral Interpretation

The instructors devoted more of the classroom time to written translation assignments. The instructors' teaching practice in this category can be partially attributed to the practicality of teaching written translation and oral interpretation. Fraser (2004) states that teaching oral interpretation in crowded pedagogic classrooms is highly impractical and cannot bear fruitful results. In a similar vein, the instructors told that

teaching oral interpretation needs particular requirements, including voice recorders, computers, language labs and so on. Teaching written translation is more suitable when these requirements cannot be met. (Instructor 2)

Written translation is easier to teach than oral translation in Iran's classrooms. It takes much more time to teach oral translation and the end results are not usually satisfactory. (Instructor 8)

Further, one instructor referred that written translation is more suitable for the Iranian context as the market for oral translation is limited.

People who are able in English written translation will find a job. Finding a job as an English oral interpreter is more difficult and job opportunities are small in number for oral interpreters. (Instructor 6)

F. Use of Technology

The results of the study demonstrated that the instructors observed made little use of technology and technological advancements in their translation classrooms. This is disappointing because, nowadays, technology plays a significant role in professional translation and translation instruction all over the world (Olohan, 2011). However, the instructors themselves cannot be blamed for the under-use of technological advancements in their own classrooms. As a matter of fact, the under-use of technology in translation classrooms can be attributed to some reasons as mentioned by the instructors. Though contending that technology can be of much help for translation training, nearly all of the instructors referred to the fact that access to technology is limited in their translation classrooms.

Yes, technology can be a part of translator training program, as computers become more feasible, but the university should equip the classrooms with computers. (Instructor 1)

Definitely advanced technologies can facilitate such trainings. However, these technologies are usually expensive and cost a lot of money. I hope that the universities provide the classroom with technologies which facilitate the teaching of translation (Instructor 6)

On the other hand, some of the instructors were skeptical of the use of technology in language translation classrooms. The skeptical instructors referred to the idea that technology cannot cover all the aspects of the translation process.

Technology helps trainees but it does not make perfect translators as there are a lot of other things to be a good translator. (Instructor 8)

Technology can only play a side role in training learners in translation. (Instructor 3)

These skeptical aside, most of the instructors believed that technology can be used for good in translation classrooms but there are some limitations which are mostly practical in nature.

G. Translation Theories and Principles

This was one area that the results of the study were clear as the observation of the classrooms indicated that all of the translation instructors paid ample attention to the presentation of translation theories and principles in their classrooms. This teaching strategy has been already suggested by researchers in the field (e.g., Gerding-Salas, 2000; Göpferich, 2009). Moreover, the finding was to be expected. As the present investigation was carried out in an academic context (Islamic Azad University-South), it was not surprising that the instructors practiced and reported the use of translation theories and principles in the teaching of English translation, especially when we consider the fact that the instructors were university professors who had long years of experience in teaching translation theories.

Translation theories are very helpful to clarify the mind of translator and become them familiar with the new ideas and developments in the field of translation (Instructor 1)

Theories are not separate from actual translation. Theories can teach students improve their translation output. (Instructor 7)

Some other instructors stated more radical beliefs, contending that getting familiar with translation theories and theoretical principles is basic to becoming a good translator. For example, one instructor wrote that

I put emphasis on translation theories in my own classrooms. Knowledge of different theories of English translation is the first step for learners to take in order that they learn translation techniques and strategies more deeply. Translation theories have much to offer to translation practitioners. (Instructor 4)

VI. CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

First, from the findings of the study, it is clear that there are some shortcomings in the teaching of English translation techniques and principles in the Iranian context. Especially, even though the instructors expressed positive attitudes towards the use of technology in teaching translation, they did not seem to make enough use of technological advancements in their classrooms. So, it is necessary that institutions are responsible for the teaching of translation techniques and principles provide the trainers and trainees with technological equipments. Moreover, the trainers and trainees should be prepared to work with these equipments (Pym, Perekrstenko, & Starink, 2006). Second, both the instructors emphasized the importance of translation competence models, and other translation theories and principles, and, therefore, translation instructors should try to become familiar with the modern and the most recent translation models. Third, there seemed to be some inconsistencies between the instructors' criteria and their real-world practices for teaching translation skills. According to some researchers, such inconsistencies between theory and practice are not surprising, given the fact that practical and institutional limitations constrain a bridge between translation theory and practice (e.g., Robinson, 2004; Bassnett & Trivedi, 2012).

A single study like this one cannot provide us with conclusive answers to the research questions posed and therefore more investigations need to be conducted to be able to draw more dependable conclusions. Thus, it is recommended that this line of research be followed in several directions by other researchers. First, the translation instructors were sampled from only one translation-teaching context (i.e., Islamic Azad University-South, Tehran) and so it is not possible to generalize the findings of the study so far. So, it is necessary to carry out more studies of the same type to see whether the findings obtained can be applicable to other contexts in which translation is taught as an academic major. Second, it is recommended that the study be replicated in non-academic contexts as well, considering the fact that teaching English translation is flourishing in Iranian non-academic contexts. In recent years in Iran, there has been an interest in translation theories and techniques among individuals who are not following English translation as an academic major. Third, the current study had a descriptive nature in that it only investigated what techniques and criteria instructors used to train their students in translation. However, the question of whether the techniques used by the instructors had any positive effects on the students' translation abilities and skills remains unanswered. So, it is suggested that the future study include a follow-up interventional phase the aim of which is to determine whether the techniques and criteria used to teach English translation would have any positive effects on prospective translators' skills.

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Proposing a Conceptual Model for Teacher Expertise in ELT

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Abstract—Interest in expertise studies has been shown from the beginning of 21st century so far in quite many fields including art, music, chess, medical sciences, etc. Just recently, applied linguistics has joint this new wave of research and this was an inspiration for conducting the present research. Since the early twenty-first century, expertise studies have been undertaken in a large number of domains. Applied linguistics is relatively a newcomer to the list which makes any study aiming to cast light on some aspect of expertise in this domain worth considering. In the present study, a model is proposed for the construct of teaching expertise in ELT comprised of 8 interrelated factors. Based on a perusal of previous research on expertise in education and the thought patterns and behavior of exemplary teachers of English language these factors were extracted. The direct or indirect effect of each factor on the latent variable, teaching expertise, is indicated in the model. For further content validation, 20 specialists of the field were interviewed. These specialists included university professors of applied linguistics, teacher educators, teacher trainers at the private sector, mentor teachers and experienced teachers. The 8 factors which were extracted from prior research and interviewees' remarks include: teacher's language proficiency, pedagogical content knowledge, social recognition, cognitive skills, experience, professional development, contextual knowledge, and learner-centered teaching. These are perceived to be the key constituents of teaching expertise in ELT. This model is aimed to be later used as a basis for developing an instrument for operationalizing the construct of teacher expertise in ELT.

Index Terms—expertise, teaching expertise, ELT, expert teacher

I. INTRODUCTION

The domain where expertise was studied first was playing chess. Early work in this domain was done by de Groot in the first half of the twentieth century. Further studies in this field suggested that expertise involved knowing how to deploy that knowledge in a focused way, for example to solve specific problems at particular points in a chess game. Therefore, it was not just what was known, but knowing when and how to use what was known that was important in expertise (Tsui, 2005).

Efforts targeted at differentiating experts from novices among teachers were not as easy as in the other domains such as music, sports or nursing. As described by Tsui (2003), setting objective criteria for teacher expertise in ELT, despite being a difficult task, is worth of attempting. Expert teachers are supposedly to act as models for other teachers to follow and then the question arises: Who is an expert teacher of English? Can we simply rely on insufficient criteria such as the length of experience or other-evaluation, or are we in need of a well-grounded basis of judgment? In the case of novices, as described by Tsui (2003), the task of identification seems to be easier. In the body of previous research, novice teachers are characterized by having inadequate (little or almost none) teaching experience. In other words. These people have subject matter knowledge but lack the practical and behavioral aspects and they have had no formal pedagogical training. In the case of expert teachers, however, studies with that aim so far have used one or more of the following subjective along with objective criteria each of which has its own drawbacks. These criteria have been enlisted in Tsui (2003), Tsui (2005) and Goodwyn (2011) as: Length of experience, Rewards and recommendations from school, and Learners' achievement.

There have been a number of models of expertise in education which have been proposed so far including: Dryfus Brothers' model proposed in 1986, Glaser and Chi's introduced in 1988, and finally Bereiter and Scardamalia's model in 1993. These models will be reviewed in the second section of this article along with their deficiencies.

What currently exists in the literature concerning the nature of expertise suffers from certain inadequacies. Among them are: lack of consistency and agreement on many features, core basis in static nature of expertise, no clarification of the interaction of features, main basis in comparing novice and experienced teachers and less interest in cognitive features related to expertise.

The present study first seeks to present a framework of teaching expertise in ELT that is to define the informational and behavioral features of expertise in this domain; then it seeks to take one step further and explore the interrelationship between and among these features and how they directly or indirectly contribute to the latent variable, expertise.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

We will briefly introduce the pre-existing models of expertise in education. What distinguishes our model from these models is that:

- They simply point out a number of limited and in some cases just intuition-based characteristics of expert teachers. Some of these characteristics have been criticized and even totally refuted in subsequent models.
- These models are in fact only frameworks since they merely pinpoint several static features without delving into their mutual interaction and interrelated effects.
- These models have addressed teaching in general and have focused neither on language teaching nor EFL teaching.
- These models have been based mainly on a comparison of novices and experts. However, this comparison cannot always be reliable. It does not reveal all the truly existing characteristics of expert teachers. It tells us nothing about how an expert teacher becomes an expert. In our suggested model, however the links among the underlying factors show how an expert becomes what s/he is.

A. *Dreyfus Brothers' Model (1986)*

These scholars considered that human beings' capacity to learn especially from experience made them infinitely adaptable and capable of improvement. Their five-stage model included: novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficient and expert. This model identifies the necessity of going through stages in order to reach expertise in teaching. The expert is very automatic and goes with intuition at such a speed that even makes recalling decisions very difficult. In this model, deliberate thought will slow down any process of decision making and therefore hampers the quality of problem-solving. In domains such as teaching there are certain significant criticisms which have been made of this automaticity and thoughtless performance (Goodwyn, 2011).

First of all, this model refers to 'conscious deliberation' and 'analytical thinking' in decision making and problem-solving as something that rarely occurs except when there are deviations from the normal patterns.

Secondly, according to this framework, gaining knowing-how by means of experience gives experts an ability to continue to work 'non-reflectively'. However, it is undeniable that there are quite many experienced teachers described as such who have never become experts. It does not seem fair at all to undermine the value of reflection in the live and dynamic context of a class.

B. *Glaser & Chi (1988)*

These scholars assume a mental psychological view and perceive expertise closely linked to the mental mechanism of our mind. Characteristics this model attributes to experts are long hours of experience, superior perceptual ability, speed in performance and problem-solving, skilled memory, initial understanding of the problem, strong self-monitoring and meta-cognitive skills.

Contrary to the view adopted in Dreyfus Brothers' model, in this model, experts do not just rely on their intuitions. They engage in monitoring and self-regulation. They are also perceived as being able to engage in reflective practice contrary to the other model's characterization of expert performance as automatic and non-reflective. There are questions in this model which yet remain to be answered. Such questions include: How far can the knowledge that experts develop be separated from their expert performance? And, what is the place of conscious deliberation in their performance and development of their expertise?

C. *Bereiter and Scardamalia (1993)*

In the previous models, researchers were invited to compare the performance of the novice and the expert. What this model proposes is to make comparisons between the experts and the experienced non-expert. Moreover, unlike the preceding models which viewed the performance of experts as automatic, fluid and effortless, these scholars believe that such characterization does not fit all the experts.

Bereiter and Scardamalia point out that the critical difference between expert and non-expert problem-solving is by no means in the quality and ability of solving problems. Instead, it lies in the types of problems they solve. Experts challenge problems which promote their expertise. On the other hand, non-experts deal with problems at a less complicated level. They do not get entangled and extend themselves. In other words, experts approach a task in a way that maximizes their opportunities for growth whereas non-experts approach it in a way that minimizes these opportunities. In fact, experts 'problematize' what seem to be routine practices, while the experienced non-experts

merely carry out practiced routines. 'Reinvestment' and 'progressive problem solving' are perceived as two main characteristic tasks of the experts.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study is in fact part of a more extensive research which aims to both theoretically define and operationalize the construct of teaching expertise in ELT. Since any operational definition needs to be grounded in a theoretical framework, we were supposed to first think of a sound model. This study is, therefore, the pre-requisite for the operationalization of the above-mentioned construct. The data were collected both through a review of literature and interviews which were then analyzed qualitatively.

A. Participants

20 participants were interviewed. They were either teacher educators, university professors of applied linguistics, mentor teachers or supervisors of well-known private language institutes as well highly recognized and experienced EFL teachers. Their demographic information is presented below:

TABLE I.
DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF INTERVIEWEES

Feature number	AGE		SEX		EDUCATION		EXPERINECE	
	30-40	>40	MALE	FEMALE	B.A.	M.A./Ph.D.	6-10 ys.	>10
n.	12	8	17	3	10	10	8	12

B. Instrumentation

Interviews were made based on an interview outline consisting of open-ended questions. Three groups of questions were asked:

- Information about interviewees' own background
- Their general view of an expert teacher of English language
- Guided questions on some aspects of expertise in teaching English language

The rest of the data were gathered through perusal of related literature.

C. Procedures

The data gathering was done primarily in two steps. Initially, we reviewed prior research concerning all (accessible) studies in ELT which investigated some aspect of expertise in teaching. We perused the existent literature on different aspects of language teaching of novice versus experienced teachers. A variety of terms with a common core were used to characterize what we here call 'expert' teacher including 'outstanding', 'exemplary', 'model', 'mentor' or 'experienced' teacher. All the observed characteristics of outstanding teachers and how they affected teaching expertise were derived.

We then interviewed 20 individuals who were either teacher educators, university professors of applied linguistics, mentor teachers or supervisors of well-known private language institutes as well highly recognized and experienced EFL teachers. Their selection was based on acquaintance, revelation of personal interest and adequate experience in the field. They basically taught in Khorasan and Tehran provinces. Interviews were conducted in spring and summer 2014. All questions were asked in Persian. Yes/No questions were mostly avoided. The interviewer attempted just to provided prompts and let the interviewee pose his/her remarks and elaborate on them.

Each interview was conducted after pre-arrangement and on a date and time best preferred by the interviewee. Interviewees were visited face to face. A brief introduction was offered to them about what they were supposed to do. They had already been told about the goal of interview upon making the arrangements. Three groups of questions were asked:

- Information about interviewees' own background
- Their general view of an expert teacher of English language
- Guided questions on some aspects of expertise in teaching English language

At the end, they were asked to add any further quality they thought it was necessary to mention. Interviews were audio-recorded and they took between 15 to 20 minutes to conduct. They were later transcribed. The comments made by the interviewees were reviewed to look for recurrent themes which were later integrated within the first draft of the model.

IV. RESULTS

The content analysis of our research resources ended up in a pool of over a hundred features ascribed to expert teachers of English. They required a sound, logical and literature-supporting grouping. The primary framework was eventually introduced which included 8 factors coded as below:

TABLE II.
8 TEACHING EXPERTISE FACTORS IN ELT

Factor	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8
Descriptor	Language proficiency	Pedagogical content knowledge	Social recognition	Cognitive skills	Experience	Professional development	Contextual knowledge	Learner-centered teaching

The full model which shows the interrelationship of all factors which was derived from research, specialists' accounts and direct observations is indicated in figure 1:

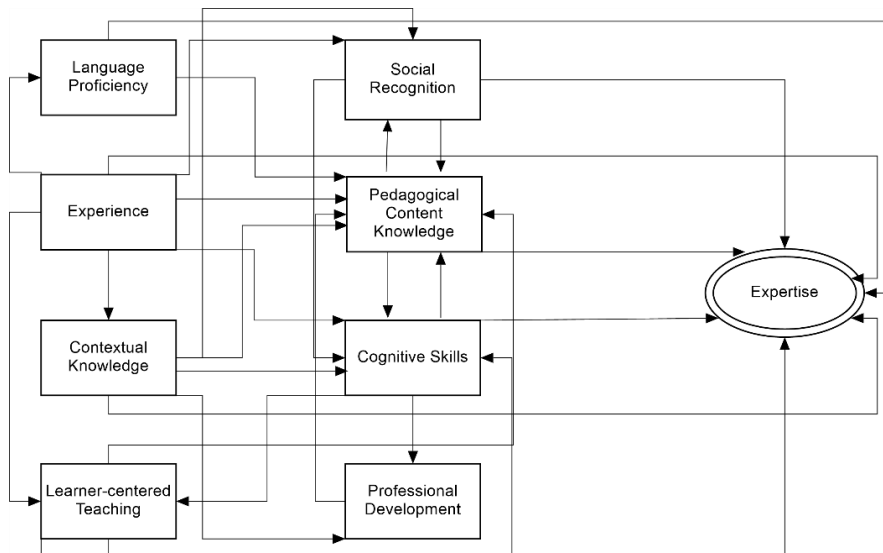


Figure 1. Schematic model of teaching expertise in ELT

As it can be observed, each factor is either directly or indirectly (through mediating factors within the model) affects the latent variable, expertise. This model is not yet statistically tested and is currently only a hypothetical model. Since the full model, presented above, might be perceptually hard to follow, we will re-present it separately for each factor in the following.

Factor 1: An Expert Teacher's Language Proficiency

The language-specific competencies an English language teacher requires to teach as effectively as possible include an ability of: understanding texts correctly, setting a proper TL example in class, keep a consistent use of TL (English) in class, use English language fluently in speech, provide explanations and instructions in fluent and correct English language, give effective examples of vocabulary and grammatical points, use proper classroom language comprehensible to all students, monitor one's speaking and writing for accuracy, provide correct feedback for students, and have level-adaptation for all instructional input (Richards, 2011).

Getting to know how to fulfill these dimensions (speaking, writing, etc.) accurately and completely in the target language is an important aspect in teacher training for teachers whose first language is other than English. There exists a minimum proficiency that a teacher requires so as to be able to teach efficiently in English. If someone does not attain this level yet, s/he would depend more on teaching resources. Such a teacher is less likely capable of acting out improvisational teaching (Medgyes, 2001, as cited in Richards, 2011).

According to the model, the following relations can be conceived of for this factor:

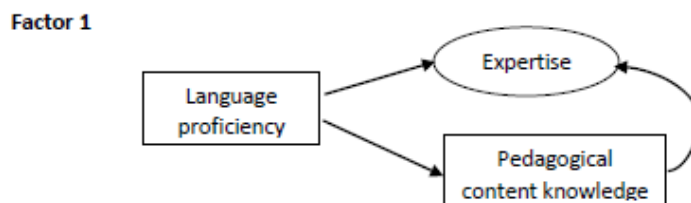


Figure 2. Theoretical relations of language proficiency and expertise in ELT

One hypothesis is that an expert teacher of English is necessarily, but not sufficiently proficient in the language itself, though the opposite is not always true. That is, a highly proficient language user is not necessarily an expert teacher, not even a good one. With this regard, a number of comments made by the interviewees are:

“What all students and colleagues expect you to have is to be a flawless, highly proficient model in class. I don't want to say this is so realistic. But this should always matter to us. The most well-known English language institutes in

this country, in their teacher assessment process and class observation checklists take a great care of teacher's proficiency in class". (a supervisor)

"You are to be a model in class. Students learn from you even more than the books and tapes. We can never do without proficiency of the language we teach. It has always been a key feature. When we remember our best teachers we unconsciously find ourselves appreciating their fluent speech or high level of vocabulary". (a mentor teacher)

It was previously mentioned that not all proficient teachers are necessarily good ones. It appears that language proficiency should go hand in hand with teacher's practical skills, termed as 'pedagogical content knowledge' which is further explained in factor 2. Pedagogical content knowledge plays a key role as a mediating variable in the model presented in figure 1. That is, many other variables constituting teacher expertise in ELT influence the latent variable indirectly through this variable. Here in factor 1, this relation can be interpreted as this: teacher's language proficiency, when accompanied by practical skills in teaching can lead to expertise.

Factor 2: An Expert Teacher's Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK)

Pedagogical content knowledge acts as the foundation of language instruction. It refers to the knowledge derived from the study of language teaching and language learning, which can be used in many forms practically in teaching a language. PCK can encompass course-related issues for example curriculum design, evaluation, reflection in instruction, class discipline management, teaching the key skills, etc. (Richards, 2011).

As Tsui (2003) also adds, PCK is elaborating on a topic using comparisons, proving examples, using pictures, explanations, etc. so as to make it clear, easy and understandable to students. So as to do this effectively, teachers are required to know students well and also predict certain differences or easy parts in the forthcoming lesson.

Based on the model, the following relations can be conceived of for this factor:

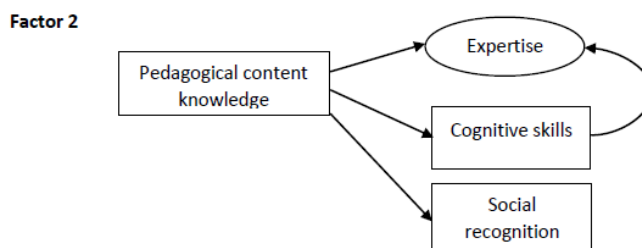


Figure 3. Theoretical relations of pedagogical content knowledge and expertise in ELT

As it can be observed, besides a direct effect of the second factor on expertise, an indirect relation is also conceived. That is to say, teacher's pedagogical content knowledge can affect teacher's cognitive skills and then the latent variable expertise. Or in other words, what a teacher actually does in class affects the way s/he perceives the class and his/her performance. This relation is actually two-way as far as the full model shows. You can see part of the full model below which indicates this relationship:

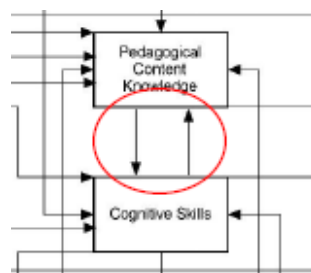


Figure 4. Two-way relation of an expert teacher's pedagogical content knowledge and cognitive skills

Put it simply, it is assumed that an expert teacher's practice influences and is influenced by the way s/he thinks about oneself, class and other related issues. With this concern here is part of an interviewee's account:

"Practical skills an expert teacher shows in class helps him tackle with many problems in real. Sometimes it's a trial and error matter. Anyway, he learns from them and that affects the way he sees the whole class and what happens there. It affects how he sees problematic situations. Sometimes it even helps the teacher predicts what's going to happen and how to prevent it". (a teacher trainer)

Factor 3: An Expert Teacher's Social Recognition (SR)

As Agnew, Ford and Hayes (2007) point out, human expertise is in part a social attribution. Teacher expertise is not an exception. A common manifestation of experts' SR is their membership in a group that is certified, awarded or professionally well-reputed as having expertise (Palmer, 2005). Nomination by school administrator, other teachers, and university personnel, students, and parents is a sign of expertise. Being recognized as an experienced teacher, working as a mentor teacher who helps and guides novices are among the others (Palmer, Stough, Burdinsky & Gonzales, 2005).

As Moallem (1998) puts it, experts attempt at team teaching and peer coaching. And they concern about parent satisfaction. If we return to our model, the effects of this factor on the notion of expertise are perceived as:

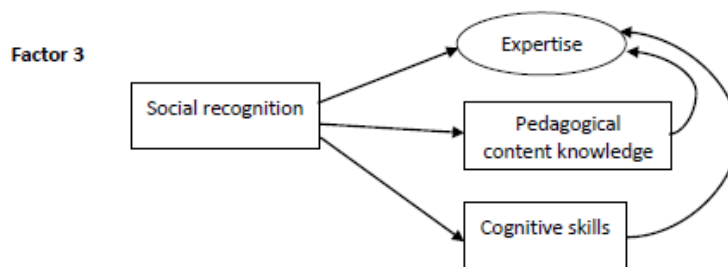


Figure 5. Theoretical relations of social recognition and expertise in ELT

As it can be observed, two mediators can exist between the independent variable social recognition and the latent variable expertise. These two are teacher's pedagogical content knowledge and cognitive skills. In other words, it is predicted that teacher's social recognition in the community of practice, which itself is affected by other factors as can be seen in the full model, affects both practical skills in teaching and also teacher's perceptual and cognitive skills. With this concern, here is a part of interviewees' comments:

"Experienced teachers are well-known in their school. They are often considered experts in their job and are known and admired by colleagues. It is very motivating for them and changes their outlook towards their job, teaching and their classes. It, therefore, affects their practice too. I mean how they teach in class and do everything needed. But the other way round is more probable. It seems more logical. I mean one reason why they become famous among colleagues is their great performance in class". (a supervisor)

The last point pinpointed by this EFL specialist reminds us of a reciprocal relationship between the two factors 3 and 2. This is quite visible in the full model an extract of which is shown below:

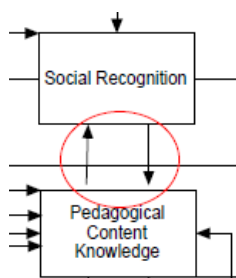


Figure 5. Two-way relation of an expert teacher's social recognition and pedagogical content knowledge

Factor 4: An Expert Teacher's Cognitive Skills

From among the literature on expert teachers' cognition, we managed to derive 10 main themes:

- Fast recognition of patterns and meaningful interpretation of them (Borko & Livingstone, 1989; Gruber, 2001; Berliner, 2004; Tsui, 2003; Tsui, 2009; Hattie, 2003; Opre, Calbaza-Ormenisan & Opre, 2011)
- Selective attention to class events (Shanteau, 1992; Tsui, 2003; Tsui, 2009)
- A holistic perception of class events (Hogan & Rabinowitz, 2003; Hattie, 2003; Cellier, Eyrolle & Marine, 1997)
- Superior long-term and short-term memory (Hogan & Rabinowitz, 2003; Glaser & Chi, 1988)
- Fast encoding of new information (Cellier, Eyrolle & Marine, 1997)
- High anticipation power of decisions made and students' reactions (Cellier, Eyrolle & Marine, 1997; Lewis & Sugai, 1999)
- Perception of one's role as a professional and a facilitator of learning (Moallem, 1998)
- Awareness of the situation-specificity and context-dependence of class events (Hattie, 2003; NBPTS, 2012; Hardre & Chen, 2005)
- Awareness of what they know and what they do not know (Moallem, 1998; Glaser & Chi, 1988)
- Forming connections between prior and new knowledge (Rich, 1993; Shulman, 1987; Hogan & Rabinowitz, 2003)
- Language (both as students' input and output) management in class (Gatbonton, 2000; Karimi, 2011; Akbari & Davvand, 2014)

Its effects on the latent variable expertise in ELT is schematically presented as:

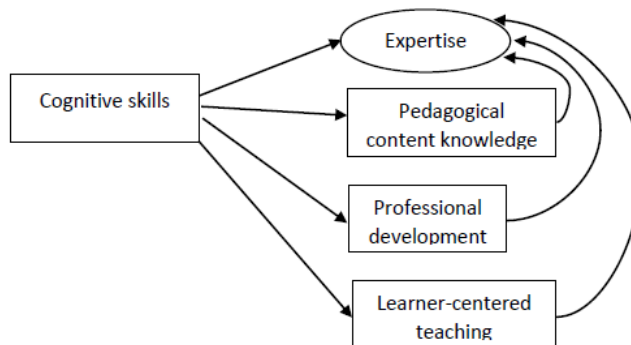


Figure 6. Theoretical relations of teacher's cognitive skills and expertise in ELT

As it can be observed, three mediating factors can be conceived of in directing the effect of cognitive skills on expertise. Firstly, the way a teacher thinks about and views one's role, one's students and class events affects whatever s/he does in class: need analysis, problem detection and solution, lesson-planning, task design, class management, etc. Secondly, we expect that teacher's cognitive power affects one's professional development which consists of reflection, teaching assessment, goal setting and so on. Finally, the model presumes an effect of cognitive skills on learner-centered teaching which is characterized by high student involvement, instruction linked to their personal lives, interests and motivation, etc. We can now see the following extracts of interviews:

"After so many years of work, now I know which things are worth noticing and which are not in class. Certain students' behaviors have become like patterns. They are familiar to me. They affect how I treat them. In fact it has made my class management easier". (a highly experienced teacher and mentor teacher)

"The way a teacher sees his role is very important. The best teachers I have ever had in this institute have felt so committed to their job; very motivated and interested in what they do in class. They take their role so serious that are not easily satisfied with what they are like. They ask other colleagues to observe their class and mentor them. They themselves volunteer to observe and guide other colleagues. They try to find ways to reflect on what they do and assess their teaching. They try to improve their way as far as possible and seem to enjoy it". (a supervisor)

Factor 5: An Expert Teacher's Experience

Meyer (2003) points out that expertise and experience are not identical at all. The relation between the two is a crucial one. Experience has always been a component of expertise, but on its own it does not guarantee expertise. In other words, experience is the necessary but not sufficient component of expertise.

According to Palmer et al. (2005), the most agreed-upon requirement for an expert teaching of English is 5 to 10 years of practice. In Berliner's (2004) study, experts were identified to have had at least 5 to 7 years of teaching experience. In the body of literature, often 5 or 7 have been treated as the cut-off point, or in other words the minimum requirement of teaching expertise.

Now how this factor fits into the model of expertise presented earlier is illustrated below:

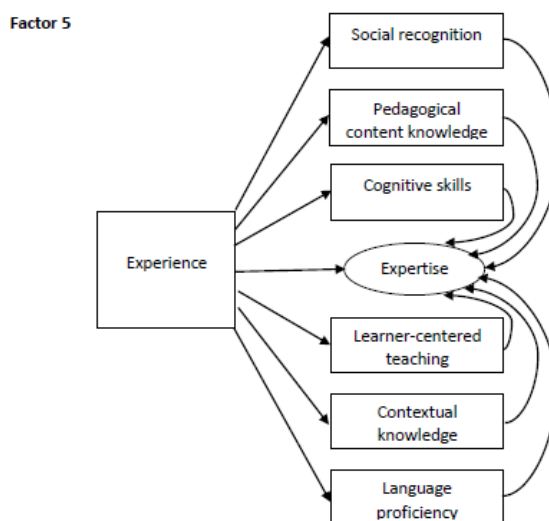


Figure 7. Theoretical relations of teacher's experience and expertise in ELT

Experience seems to affect the latent variable expertise through affecting six mediating factors. Experience can bring with itself social recognition in the community of practice, excellent performance in class, highly developed cognitive skills, high student involvement, deep contextual awareness and high language proficiency. All these affect the latent variable expertise on their own terms. With regard to this 7th factor, here are some extracts of interviewees' comments:

“Of course there are many things that cannot be gained unless through years of experience. More experienced teachers are much more effective in class management, feedback provision or lesson planning and yet many other issues. They use every moment of their class in the best way possible because they have learnt the ropes” (a class observer)

“Not all experienced teachers turn out to be very popular or efficient. But I can say that almost all the experts I have worked with have been experienced in their job. They have learnt many things that are not learnable from books or even training courses. Each have devised their own personal theory of teaching and apply it in class. They seem to have learnt a lot of strategies they choose to apply in different situations and when one does not work, they try another”. (a teacher trainer)

“When they work for some years in a school or institute they become familiar with the rules and regulations over there, with the expectations and students. This knowledge adds to their expertise further”. (a school manager)

Factor 6: An Expert Teacher’s Professional Development

According to Liu and Xu (2011) one variable that affects teacher’s professional development is the workplace communities of practice and this issue is of a great significance in teacher education programs.

There are many ways for professional development that may help all (proficiency) teachers according to their preferences as well as available time. As put forth by Davidson, Dunlop, Soriano, Kennedy and Phillips (2012), key types of activities include adopting a reflective view of one’s job (teaching), extending and promoting one’s knowledge and practice with the help of new sources, benefiting from group-learning and colleague cooperative work, and benefiting from conferences, webinars and workshops.

These four main areas further include: taking part in ELT conferences, networking with other teachers, reading TEFL journals, trying out new materials in class, membership of professional language teaching associations, mentoring, class observations, conducting action research, reflection and attending workshops (ibid.).

How this factor fits into the model of expertise in ELT we proposed can be viewed as:

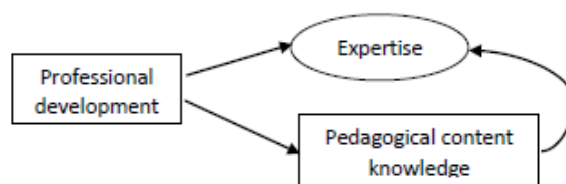


Figure 8. Theoretical relations of teacher’s professional development and expertise in ELT

The mediating factor which can stand between professional development (here as an independent factor) and expertise (as the dependent variable) is pedagogical content knowledge. The premise is that teacher’s activities aimed at assessing one’s quality of teaching and enhancing it further do affect their performance-based skills including class management, discipline control, lesson-planning, task design, learning assessment, and so on. Concerning this, here is part of the remarks made by the interviewees:

“We recommend our trainees to attend workshops we regularly hold for teachers especially novices. I want them to go to these workshops and see that our expert teachers are all there too. They learn many new things over there that can later be used in their classes to change the whole environment of class”. (a teacher trainee)

“Our institute has a credible journal. All the authors are English language teachers in Iran. They share their search results which have been obtained through their real experience. We recommend our teachers to read their colleagues research and they themselves do similar research so that they can publish their findings and share them with other colleagues. The ultimate goal is to enhance the quality of teaching in class” (a teacher educator and institute supervisor)

Factor 7: An Expert Teacher’s Contextual Knowledge

Sociocultural standpoints on learning point out that learning is situated, or occurs in particular environments which form learning. EFL/ESL teachers work in diverse settings. In order to function in those contexts they need to have appropriate contextual knowledge (Richards, 2011).

According to Miller (2009), familiarity with school as one’s workplace, the facilities available e.g. space of classes, cultural and socio-economic background of learners, school curriculum, rules or regulations, the supervisor – these are all critical issues that influence the efficiency and quality of teaching (As cited in Richards, 2011).

Teaching in a school or an institute involves entrance into a community of practice which is a term used by Lave and Wenger (1991) for a kind of learning that occurs within an organizational context which is socially constructed and is accompanied by interaction with mentor teachers, supervisors, class observers and expert teachers of the field.

Figure 9 indicates how teacher’s contextual knowledge affects expertise:

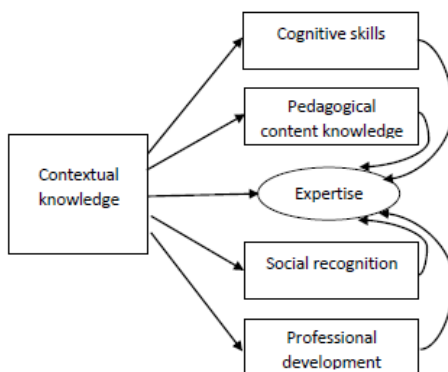


Figure 9. Theoretical relations of teacher's contextual knowledge and expertise in ELT

As it can be observed, teacher's contextual knowledge affects one's self-awareness, decision making, schemata formation and other related cognitive skills. Moreover, it affects teacher's practical pedagogical skills as well as becoming well-known in the community of teachers. It also helps the teacher to reflect more and better on his/her teaching and improve it as far as possible. With this regard, some comments made by our interviewees are:

"They should learn to know who they are working for or with very well. Its affects many things: how to interpret different behavior in class showed by your students, or in school showed by your colleagues or boss. When you get to know them well, you know how to react to whom, when and how exactly". (a teacher educator)

"A colleague of mine whom I really admire and think can be called an expert gets along with all colleagues very well as well as the students. She is experienced too. Her knowledge of all that happens around us helps her to be very well known among colleagues. It has motivated her too. She seeks for every chance to further her expert performance too". (a mentor teacher)

Factor 8: An Expert Teacher's Learner-Centered Teaching

Since the aim of teaching is to facilitate student learning, a learner-focused teaching seems to be an essential feature of a successful class. Borg (2006) reviewed the manifestation of learner-centeredness in expert teachers' classes as in their familiarity with learners' common behaviors, making predictions of class events based on their awareness of students' background, focusing their instructions on students' problems, and keeping learners active all

As Noddings (2006) put it, keeping students highly active shows that teacher cares about them. Such care can have positively affect their motivation, interest in learning and active cooperation.

Hogan and Rabinowitz (2009) pointed out that an expert teacher uses different strategies to communicate with students including questioning, probing, and exchanging ideas and thoughts. The effect of this factor on the latent variable expertise is presented in the following figure:

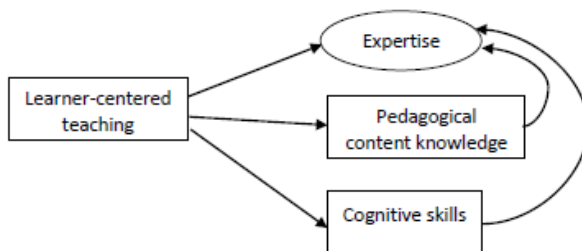


Figure 10. Theoretical relations of learner-centered teaching and expertise in ELT

As it can be observed, learner-centered teaching has a direct influence on such aspects of pedagogical knowledge as class management, need analysis, class discipline, etc. It also affects teacher's cognitive skills such as decision-making, selective attention and recognition of patterns. Concerning these issues, here are parts of the comments made by our interviewees:

"One way I get the control of class even in the harshest situations is through involving students more than ever before. When some particular students are hard to manage and I am hopeless at taming them, I involve them more in class discussions and try to use their willingness to talk and attract the attention of others in a positive and fruitful way". (a highly experienced teacher)

"When the teacher motivates students to be active in class and clearly expose their ideas, he can get the feedback from them and assess their learning. It can help an implicit needs analysis too as well as motivating students to learn more enthusiastically". (a class observer)

It needs to be reminded that these 8 factors, despite being discussed separately, are constituents of a single model of teaching expertise in ELT. This model with its all complexities, as illustrated in Figure 1, is a conceptual realization of

what criteria make up an expert teacher of English language. The mutual effects of these factors have been schematically presented and discussed as well.

V. CONCLUSION

Interest in the notion of expertise in many domains has arisen in recent decades. Applied linguistics, though a newcomer, has not been an exception. In this paper, we aimed to search for the common characteristics of expert teachers of English language. The pre-existing criteria or models of expertise in teaching, as reviewed, have had major drawbacks and insufficiencies. They mostly relied on the comparison of novices and experienced teachers. However, they were later criticized since first of all experience does not equal expertise and secondly experts can be studied on their own and without reference to novices, too. A more severe inadequacy of older models is that they simply pointed out a number of characteristics for expert teachers without conceiving of the mutual relationship among and contribution of those features to the latent variable teaching expertise in ELT.

The model we presented here was formed based on two main sources. One included all accessible literature on teaching expertise in ELT, and the other was the remarks pinpointed by the field specialists who dealt directly with English language teachers, trained them or observed their performance; communicated with them; witnessed their professional development; and found out the nuances of their outstanding performance. The final result has been an 8-factor model of teaching expertise in ELT which reveals the conceptual or theoretical paths of the interactive effects of these factors. Provision of this model is a prerequisite of an operational definition of teaching expertise in ELT. Once an instrument is formed based on this model and sufficient data, in size, are collected from English language teachers, through a proper statistical analysis, the strength of each path in the original model can be assessed and reported. The revised model will act a highly useful apparatus in teacher education, evaluation, selection and promotion programs in ELT.

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Study on Campus Slang from the Perspective of Semiotics

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Abstract—In recent years, campus slang has gradually gained the concerns of the scholars. Campus slang, as one language form on campus, has always been the subject of semantics, pragmatics and systemic-functional linguistics. The domestic and foreign scholars mostly focused on the description and explanation of the characteristics, development tendency and pragmatic effects of campus slang, but few has been done in the field of its characteristics from the perspective of semiotics. Considering the shortage of the previous studies on campus slang, attempts are made to use specific examples of campus slang as samples to complete the research system of campus slang by giving a broader view and re-interpreting the phenomenon of campus slang from the perspective of semiotics.

Index Terms—semiotics, campus slang, signifier and signified, characteristics, psychological causes

I. INTRODUCTION

With the fast development of economy and society all over the world, a great number of campus slang has emerged and the phenomenon has also aroused increasing attention of scholars at home and abroad. In order to study how campus slang is generated and transmitted, an attempt is made to study campus slang from the perspective of semiotics.

Many countries, such as America, Japan, and China have begun to collect campus slang and give a study on campus slang from different perspectives of semantics, pragmatics and systemic-functional linguistics. The domestic and foreign scholars mostly focused on the description and explanation of the characteristics, development tendency and pragmatic effects of campus slang, but few has been done in the field of its characteristics from the perspective of semiotics.

II. DEFINITION OF CAMPUS SLANG

In Chinese, popular words are called “*Liuxingyu*”(流行语), which can also be called vogue-words, catchwords, fashionable words, buzzwords, and popular phrases in English. Thus, there are many different concepts of popular words.

According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's English-Chinese Dictionary* (2002), catchword is defined to words or phrases that are placed where it will be popular with someone and be attractive. Yang Wenquan(2003) claims that campus slang are words generally used in a certain period of time and a certain area, which are usually spoken language with features of dialect and which are mutual products of politics, economy, culture, context and mental activities in a given period of time. With the help of the mass media, they are prevailing in all kinds of forms, such as words, phrases, and sentence patterns.

Though there are various concepts of campus slang, yet some common features of campus slang can still be summed up. The most important feature of the campus slang is popularity. That is, campus slang are closely related to the society and used frequently in a certain period of time and a certain area.

1. Relevant Studies on Campus Slang

In the modern western linguistics system, campus slang is also described. According to the classification in Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics* (2001), the diachronic developments of linguistics are the external drive of campus popular expression, that is, campus popular expression will change with the development of the society, and at the same time the changes reflect the society's development. Alimi and Arua (2008) define slang from the social function perspective. They say that slang is the informal and highly expressive product of students' creativity, which is used to describe their cultural, academic and social lives.

After the mid-twentieth century, Some research on campus slang has been conducted in China. Campus popular language arouses the strong interest of domestic scholars of pragmatics, systemic-functional linguistics. For example, all the subjects reveal the characteristics and nature of campus slang from different perspectives. In recent years, Yang Wenquan and Xu Yanhui (2003) and Shao Juan (2009) did a lot of studies on campus slang. They studied characteristics, sources or causes of campus slang.

Nowadays, scholars both in western counties and in China have paid more attention to the studies on semiotics. The theory of semiotics also probes into several different fields, such as sociology, psychology, philosophy, pedagogy, linguistics and so on. Some research on campus slang has been conducted in China. Yang Jianguo (2004) argues that

popular words are those that succeed in competing with other words and have the ability of self-transmission and self-replication. So to some extent, popular words can be regarded as a type of strong words. Han Ximing (2004) analyzed campus slang in the article *The Observation and Thinking on Campus Fashion Words*, and analyzed the effect of campus slang on students and their development. The active interventions may need to be carried out, Wu Xibin (2010) analyzed campus slang in his article on the types and the characteristics and studied their causes.

Campus slang is attractive, productive, simple and authoritative. Some popular words are chosen by some news headlines to attract people's attention and enter their mind. The news with campus slang as headlines has more chances to be spread and transmitted than the common vocabulary. In short, the theory of semiotics provides new ideas not only for studies on language but also for campus slang study.

III. CONCEPTS OF SIGNIFIER AND SIGNIFIED

Contemporary sign research comes from two sources: one is Swiss linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) who is regarded as the origin of semiological trend, and the other one is an American philosopher, Charles S. Peirce (1839-1914) who is regarded as the origin of the semiotic trend. Different people like using different terms in that they want to show respect to the one who they admire most. Peirce's and Saussure's conditions for thinking are different, in spite of their difference, both of them play an important part in modern sciences.

Saussure (2001) pointed out that language is a symbolic system of the concept, each symbol has its two properties: signifier and signified. Here signifier refers to the symbol itself, the sound image of language sign; signified refers to the concept of symbols or connotation, namely the symbol content. According to Saussure, the connection between signifier and signified of language symbols is arbitrary. The greatest contribution of Saussure is the dichotomy of the language symbols, that is signifier and signified, but he found the two principles of linguistics: arbitrariness and convention. The establishment of arbitrariness by Saussure is the first principle of language sign, the so-called arbitrariness is to point out there is no natural and necessary connection by the combination of signifier and signified, in particular, the sound of the word is not a clear object to its image.

Saussure pointed out in the *Course in General Linguistics* (2001):

A linguistic sign is not a link between a thing and a name, but between a concept and a sound pattern. The sound pattern is not actually a sound; for a sound is something physical. A sound pattern is the hearer's psychological impression of a sound, as given to him by the evidence of his sense. This sound pattern may thus be distinguished from the other element associated with it in a linguistic sign. This other element is generally of a more abstract kind: the concept (Saussure, 2001, p.66).

For Saussure, the linguistic sign is an indissoluble pair or couple composed of a concept and acoustic image or later called signifier and signified.

Culler, J. (1976) said Ferdinand de Saussure who is the founder of the Continental School in Europe gave the definition of the linguistic sign as "a two-sided psychological entity" (Saussure, 2001, p.66). Saussure said that a linguistic sign is not a link between a thing and a name, but between a concept and a sound pattern. He employed sign in representing the object and used signifier and signified to substitute for the concept and sound. What he held was very important because it gave the meaning of semiotics. The meaning of sign (signified/signifier) implies all the conception produced in sign-function. Definitions of sign made by Saussure have made a revolution in ideological history (Peirce, C., 1966). All in all, his definitions on sign have separated from the traditional epistemology conflicts, which have supplied a more proper and practical way for the research of meaning. For Saussure, the linguistic sign is an indissoluble pair composed of a concept and acoustic image or later called signifier and signified.

IV. CHARACTERISTICS OF CAMPUS SLANG FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF SEMIOTICS

Linguist Saussure pointed out, symbol consists of two components: signifier and signified. Symbol is referred to the whole connection of signifier and signified. Saussure thought, symbol consists of two elements, signifier refers to the physical form that we can feel, signified refers to the concept of objects in the heart.

The campus slang is the process when symbol users create the connection between the signifier and the signified of symbols. Whatever a symbol is, once it enters the process to be transmitted or the course of the exchange, it will inevitably generate meanings, that is, there will always be connotation between the signifier and the signified.

As a special language form and special phenomenon, campus slang is closely related to the society and culture. Though campus slang is so different from common words in many ways, most of the campus slang still has the following common characteristics of popular words: high-frequency, dynamic, creative and productive. From the perspective of semiotics, the characteristics of campus slang can be summarized by the following: innovation, economy, vividness and humor.

A. Innovation

Significant revolution of using campus slang is innovation. From the perspective of semiotics, two aspects can be concluded to the following: one is to create new symbolic form (signifier), and give new content (signified), the other is borrowing from the old symbolic form (signifier), and create with new contents (signified). Symbolic form (signifier)

and symbolic content (signified) have been enriched greatly by campus slang.

College students have the ability to choose a certain amount of stylistic elements of words, so it can provide them with more space for the imagination and creativity. They want to highlight themselves and create new words out of the old meaning or create new words. For example, the new meanings of old words “天才”(genius) : here refers to a born fool; “偶像”(idol): here refers to the object of vomiting, new word “校草”refers to the most handsome boy in the university or college; “晒月亮”means fall in love in the moonlight.

As we can see, according to semiotic theories, the referential meanings of the popular words have been changed. Take “偶像”(idol) for example, the referential meaning of idol is an image worshipped as a god or someone or something admired or loved too much. While the pragmatic meaning of “偶像” is “呕吐的对象”(someone disgusting)

B. Economy

Seeing from the characteristics of symbols, without invariance, language will not follow regular rules, and may not develop; without variability, language does not have the life force, and is impossible to exist forever. In terms of economy, campus slang, for example, “十动然拒”(be deeply moved, but still rejects him), “城会玩”(You townsfolk truly know how to live it up.) “菜”(means weak, poor), “爽”(means cool enjoyable, aggressive) and “火”(refers to popularity), still try to break through the limitations of the original written symbols, change certain words form, and create a new conventional combination of sound, shape and meaning, such as, some letter words, digital words, and graphic symbols, the richness of which is far more than that of traditional words, because it not only creates new symbolic form, but also bring new contents, and conveys the rich connotation of thoughts and feelings from these simple symbols, of which, three common forms are:

(1) English letters: for example, IC (I see. Full spelling is I see); TKS (Thanks); GF(girl friend); MM (Mei Mei, initials of Chinese pinyin).

(2) digitals: which is a cluster of digital harmonics or digital password, for instance, “9494” means I agree with you ; “886” means bye-bye; “5201314” means I love you for the whole life.

(3) Mixture of English letters and digitals: V5 which means powerful, mighty

(4) Emoji or some graphic symbols: for example, “:-)” means smiling face; “^_^” means smiling; “Zzzzz” ... means sleeping, or falling asleep.

The economy characteristic meets the psychological requirements of the college students, because on campus they seek for simplicity and convenience, the reason why they use the campus slang in this way is to save a lot of time.

C. Vividness

Xijie,W(2000) claims that words have the characteristics of the dynamic balance, words are created to be used, and then... more than that, limited symbols and the infinite objective world are apparent contradictions, and the main way to solve this contradiction is to search the potential ability of words, ... The potential ability of words, to a large extent, is depending on its rhetorical function. The overall properties of word symbols can refer to the linear and nonlinear relationship. For the combination form of words and sound, word symbols are linear, not involving the relationship between signifier and signified. But for the polymerization relations, word symbols are nonlinear, it involves the relationship between signifier and signified.

Campus slang uses much figure of speech. First, the use of metaphor, for example, “孔雀开屏”(the peacock shows its tail) here refers to some self-sentimental people; “恐龙”(dinosaur): here refers to an ugly girl, and second, the use of paronomasia, for example, “大虾” and “大侠”(which means the skilled netizens); “特困生”: students who love sleeping especially in class, but not the student who has a poor family (Honglian, C:2010).

D. Humor

Humor is another characteristic of campus slang which is more attractive to be used and spread. Saussure (2001) said that the linguistic sign is a two-sided entity, a dyad. In fact, all the messages, the meanings, the representatives of the concept and stimulated relationship of the symbols exist only in both hearts of the ones who use the symbols in the communication. Young students, in order to adjust to the boring life on campus, and to add some lubricants to human interaction with other students, help campus life bring out more funny things. When they are bored, they will painstakingly conceive of many interesting and rebellious campus words which are against the mainstream, building an easy reading atmosphere.

For example, “野人”(savage) represents “a student who studies very diligently, a meritorious student”, such as, He is a savage, and incredibly got 91 points in English test. Another example, “半夜鸡叫”(chicken sang at the midnight) refers to “the mobile phone rang at night” (Zhang Xuehui, 2008). Take this one for example, the Chinese character “鸡”and “机” have the same pronunciation, the students just use the similarity to make it humorous.

V. PSYCHOLOGICAL FOUNDATION OF CAMPUS SLANG

Campus is a special small society. Speaking popular words is the effective way by which the young students living in the campus seek for self-release. The youth on campus are in the process of identifying their roles, they will gradually

alienate the authority of the parents, seek more social independence, and hope to get away with imprisoned personality from constraints in the adult society, longing for the holy land belonging to their own (Yang Jianguo, 2004). Only in various kinds of information communication among peers can they freely release themselves.

In addition, Campus slang is the same vocabulary on expression exchange, which gives young students some kind of identification and belonging from psychology, thus helping these student groups increase tacit understanding.

From the point of view of cognitive psychology, symbols record experience and reality, involving the icon, brain and the world. Semantic layer of campus slang is the connection of the continuous external world and the continuous word symbols, and the connection is realized through the people's cognitive process of psychology. That is to say, this kind of connection is closely linked to the subjective dynamic role of the brain.

Language is like a mirror and is a reflection of social life, likewise, campus slang reflect the campus life. Campus is a special small society, there is a group of extremely youthful young people in it, three-one-life living style makes them desire to show their uniqueness in order to make individual characters public. With constant interaction between the outside world and the campus environment, they form their own specific campus life style. They create and use their own unique words, that is, campus slang.

This symbolic phenomenon is one of the most representatives which can manifest the life state and psychological features of the students. Behind this phenomenon there are profound cognition and psychological reasons (Yang Wenquan and Xu Yanhui, 2003). And we found that these reasons can mainly be summarized as four:

A. *Self-defense*

As to the reasons of creation of new campus slang, on the one hand, now the students' learning burden is heavier, from the psychological analysis, when a person is in a great pressure, it is easy to come up with all kinds of way-outs, campus slang is actually such a kind of self protection; according to the theory of psychoanalysis, this is a psychological self-defense which can take this opportunity to make the psychological tense easy and relaxed. Such as, instead of saying “逃课” (drop class) but “翘课” (skip class); instead of saying “反应慢” (slow) but say “大脑短路” (the brain is short circuit, the brain anoxia); instead of saying “说句不好听的话” (words are not pleasant to hear), but say “乌鸦嘴” (crow mouth) (Wang Yong and Zhao Xiaoguang, 2010).

The college students on campus have a clear understanding that some of their classmates are sensitive, they should not hurt others and should not be hurt, so when they talk or chat with other students, they just manage not to hurt others or let others feel embarrassed. Otherwise, one unsuitable word or sentence will weaken the friendship between classmates, which is not what they want to see (Wang Yan, 2010). A good relationship will enhance the cooperation and communication with others, most of all, they themselves will feel good and ease when they stay on campus. Using some campus slang will help them have a harmonious atmosphere.

B. *Gregariousness*

Though the young people are full of confidence to the future, the materialistic and competitive society makes them both narcissistic and humble, and they still feel there is no future. (Chen Yuan, 2000). This ambivalence and the future role that they could not locate make them not only want to remain his unique individual character, but also hope to get people's attention. So using these words in his own particular group, they feel the tacit understanding of each other, such as “裸考” (refers to take exams without preparation and cheat sheet), “来电” (refers to boy students and girl students have good impressions at the first sight), “灌水” (nonsense in the BBS) and “FT” (abbreviation of English word faint, meaning dizzy, shocked, discontent, and incredible emotion). The college students almost stay in the dormitory on campus and seldom go outside, so they expect to be loved and liked by other students. The personal character of gregariousness depend on the good interpersonal relationship between students, so if the college students want to communicate with others, cooperate with others, he has to talk to others and discuss with others, so the first important thing is to speak one common language, that is, campus slang. Take “裸考” for example, some students don't prepare for the exams until the exams are coming. So these students have the great pressure before the exams, they use this word to relax themselves and also want to have the echo from other students.

C. *Novelty*

Gregariousness is a common psychological state of the college students, which helps popular words spread in the community, this is the social trend, but hunting for novelty is the reflection of curious psychological personality.

For the college students who are full of modern consciousness and in pursuit of novelty, they can give full play to their own unique creative genius and show unique personal charming in the language world. Such as the boring mood or when they feel extremely bored, college students don't say “很烦, 很无聊” (very vexed, boring), but say “郁闷” (depressed); When someone is opposed to the others' opinions or wants to express strongly against something he dislikes, dissatisfied, “我吐” (I vomit) will be used. This innovation makes the campus slang give a person a kind of new feeling, and also constantly enriches our new vocabulary (Zhang Xuehui, 2008).

The college students want to show their difference, special characters, in addition to the hairstyle and fancy dresses, they manage to speak some popular words to have others' attention. Some of the referential meanings of the campus slang have been changed so as to show their novelty.

D. Imitation

Although they pursue individual and extraordinary characters, college students would not yet be conscious to produce a representative of psychology in front of the various popular wind in society, which is especially reflected by the movie, TV and web, and the newspaper. For example, “花痴”(spoony) everywhere, campus is filled with “帅呆了”(extremely handsome), “酷毙了”(cool), “靠”(one vulgar word), “伤自尊了”(hurt in self-esteem), “恶心”(aweful), “狂; 巨”, “有没有搞错”(Are you sure it's ok); “像我这样的人已经不多了”(There are few people as good as me) (Jin Zhiru, 2009). At a time, these words are becoming high frequency “focus discourse”, some even became the campus slang.

During the process of the semiotic analysis of campus slang, recognition among signifier and signified was found in this thesis, in order to realize the meaning of symbolic and psychological representatives, people need to activate the brain about Chinese characters, and cultural knowledge of psychological imprint. As pragmatic meaning is generated by the relation between signs and the users of signs, it is capable of revealing information about the sign users, such as age, social status, geographical location, education background, attitude and personality, etc. Pragmatic meaning can betray the speaker's real intention regardless of the linguistic form of text (Yong, W. & Z. Xiaoguang: 2010).

VI. CONCLUSION

To study campus slang from the perspective of semiotics can help understand how to achieve the aim of communication with signs, and understand what makes it a kind of unique media. An increasing number of campus slang has been created and spread in articles, newspapers and daily life. To some extent, the development of society and language can be tracked from campus slang.

Campus slang has its own characteristics from the perspective of semiotics, as is discussed, innovation, economy, vividness and humor. Many complicated factors influence the formation of campus slang, including internal factors and external ones. Factors which can influence the formation of campus slang are from three aspects: psychological factors, social factors, and linguistic factors. As a symbol itself, campus slang also has their own features which include innovation, economy, vividness and humor. People especially the students on campus are attracted because campus slang is novel, vivid, humor and special in their forms or meanings. Not only does campus slang contain the information to be conveyed but also reflects the psychological states of students.

With the great development of science, technology and the faster increase of international communication, more new ideas and new thoughts will be exchanged in many different areas, counties and cultures. The sources and formations of campus slang will be more diverse.

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