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English Language Learning in the Margins: Toward a Movement to Help Service-industry Workers in Thailand

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Abstract—This paper examined the largely unexplored effects of exposure to foreign customers' language (e.g., English) as informal learning for service-industry workers, a pattern common in developing countries where resources to learn English were not widely accessible to lower-status workers in the labor market. It also pointed out the paucity of research on service-industry workers' language development in applied and sociolinguistic literature. This pilot study adopted two analytical tools, the magnet of trend's model and the concept of "quadrant," to highlight the English learning opportunities provided for the service-industry workers in a developing country, and explored how the development of their language abilities enabled them to expand and navigate more quadrants. Field visits and qualitative interviews were undertaken to gather data from the sample, consisted of 200 participants. Broad content analysis conventions were deployed to interpret interview data and field notes derived from observations, aimed at combining both emic and etic (interactional) data. The paper reported the role of English-speaking customers as informal tutors to facilitate these workers' English language development. This paper turned to different case studies of exemplar workers who reported following the English-for-customer (EFC) pattern, because they illustrated two themes common across the sample studied. The results revealed that, among these workers, (1) educational background and (2) exposure to English-speaking customers in an informal educational setting may contribute to fostering the learning of English.

Index Terms—service industry, Thailand, English as an additional language for work, English for customer

I. INTRODUCTION

The lack of previous research on the effects of English-speaking foreign customers on service-industry workers in developing countries is surprising, because more than half of developing countries have shown the benefits of this form of informal learning. English-speaking customers play a vital role in providing exposure to the English language for Thai service-industry workers in the labor market. The aim of this study is to examine the strategies Thai service-industry workers utilize to support the learning and the development of the English language in Thailand whereby the pattern of their language-learning-and-language-use (henceforth LLLU) is known as English-for-customer (EFC) and/or English-as-an-additional-language-for-work (EALW).

Sociolinguists have utilized the concept of "trends" to describe the association between everyday LLLU and globalization, regionalization and so forth. This article thus reconceptualizes the notion of "trends" by extending the notion of "magnets" (figure 1) and their implications to LLLU. Using this method, "magnets of trends [model]" (figure 1) along with the concept of "quadrant" (figure 2), this paper provides an analysis of the service-industry workers in Bangkok, helping understand how they approach the task of the learning of English.

Conventional research frameworks in language studies, and policies and practices in the language-education sector, have given little regard to language learning in the margins characterized as the dominant-language-speaking minority (henceforward DM) (for a similar line of study for the DM, of relevance to the concern herein, see Blommaert, 2010; Draper, 2010; Gal, 1978; Lee, 2013, 2014b; Smith-Hefner, 2009, to name just a few). Traditionally, scholars (researchers and language educators) and practitioners (language teachers) in their research and practices tend to emphasize global-, prestigious-, standard-, foreign- and second language learning experiences of classroom students, indigenous and immigrant communities. The present paper attempts to contribute to scholarly conversations around one of the silences in the aforementioned research paradigm by reporting an alternative (theoretical and methodological) framework for a development plan that has been termed 'equalizing language learning or 'equity in language learning (henceforth ELL, as abbreviated throughout the paper) targeting learners labeled as ethnic and socio-economic minorities in developing countries.

Three pro-ELLers involved into the research team undertaking the present pilot survey and challenged traditional policies and practices in the foreign/second language education sector that widen the gap between mainstream foreign/second language learners including classroom students and their DM counterparts in non-educational settings. Pro-ELLers also point out one problem in the academic discourses that deal with applied- and educational- linguistic issues, which is that it has become increasingly non-dialectal with DM individuals and groups. They encourage a stance

whereby teaching global-, prestigious-, standard-, foreign- and second languages to DM is central to the research, policies and practices.

A defining characteristic of this paper is about broadening language repertoires for minorities as part of a movement termed ‘equalizing language learning’ or ‘equity in language learning’ (ELL) – what it is in the context of Thailand and how to do it with development strategy’s implementation by means of formal and informal (language) learning. This study commences with the premise that an equal access and more opportunities to global-, prestigious-, standard-, foreign- and second languages should be created not only for typical marginalized populations (e.g., aborigines and immigrants), but also for less typical ones (e.g., DM). By making such a claim, the paper examines informal (language) learning phenomena of the DM labeled as marginal (with particular reference to Standard Thai dominant speakers in the service industry including barbers, bargirls, bus fare collectors, massage therapists, restaurant waiters and waitress, street vendors, taxi drivers and street child/teen labors, among others) in Thailand. Meanwhile, it also reviews a vital issue of marginality and language learning neglected by mainstream language studies academia and classic language-learning literature by arguing that most scholars, either explicitly or implicitly, neglect the range of marginalized dominant-language speakers and of their issues in global-, prestigious-, standard-, foreign- and second language learning.

II. SOCIAL CAMPAIGN (ELL DEVELOPMENT PLAN): A BOURDIEUSIAN FRAMEWORK

Inequalities and Equalizing Language Learning

This study approaches the term inequality as the resources, power and wealth held by the elites and the rich, thereby unevenly distributed. ‘Equalizing’ or ‘equity’ is a general term that describes specific actions of making “the quality of being fair and impartial” (Oxford Dictionaries).

It is truism that the capitalist globalization has widened the economic inequalities within the civil society, and in local- and international levels (Hobsbawm, 2007; also cited in Blommaert, 2010, p.153). “Inequality between the rich and the poor has reached its highest point in the past thirty years” (“inequality,” 2014 by OECD, as cited by ChannelNewsAsia and BBC World Service on December 9, 2014). Put directly, major population in a modern nation-state have little or no access to resources that provide opportunities for upper social and economic mobility, while the elites have such access for the pursuit of power (Hobsbawm, 2007; also cited in Blommaert, 2010, p.3). For instance, language learning across numerous modern nation-states and civil societies has been characterized by both the enduring discrepancies between the higher success of learners from wealthier families and the consistent under-achievement of learners from lower-income families both in mainstream schooling settings and non-educational settings (own fieldwork, 2007-2015). In other words, there is an issue of uneven distribution of language resources.

The study described herein was drawn from a social campaign vis-à-vis the author’s research network which begins with the slogan: Collaboration for equity in language learning in Asia Pacific. In line with the ‘equalizing language learning’ or ‘equity in language learning’ (ELL) movement, the campaign and the strategy move toward a comprehensive planning that addresses current foreign/second language learning opportunities and challenges marginalized populations are facing. As ELL stems from a Bourdieu’s tradition (1991), it inaugurates with a capacity analysis of language learning resources accessible to marginalized populations in individual and societal levels, and creating ‘symbolic capitals and powers’ for them by offering opportunities to learn more ‘capital’ languages, particularly English. ELL refers to the processes of activities and social premises involved in the facilitation of foreign/second language learning and implementation of intervention to individual and group language learners characterized as marginal. The paper is in an attempt to realize ELL research methodology and ELL strategic intervention as an alternative framework and paradigm from which pro-ELLers purport to improve foreign/second language learning outcomes for the marginalized populations. To do this, pro-ELLers enact as the research team and survey the pilot areas by examining DM’s access to prestige varieties of languages and prestige forms of multilingualism (e.g., international Standard English and Chinese) during the phase of capacity analysis.

Understanding ELL development plan begins with issues in language learning dominant-language-speaking minorities (DM) are facing. Many of the world’s minorities have little or almost zero access to learn global-, prestigious-, standard-, foreign- and second languages. Although it is well-known that language learning affects one’s level of economic development, the association between them, and successful and unsuccessful stories of DM’s LLLU, have been largely neglected by scholars. It is not surprising that scholarly work on minority and language learning has been focused on typical minorities. It is likely that global-, prestigious-, standard-, foreign- and second language learning experiences of 1). aborigines, 2). immigrants and 3). classroom students are key issues in the mainstream academic and policy-making fields, informed by applied-, educational- and sociolinguistic literature, among others. Less typical minorities –dominant-language-speaking minority (DM) populations– are often neglected. ELL development planning aims to better understand the current opportunities and challenges the DM language users face in the context of Thailand.

The research team, consisted of pro-ELLers, has not reached a consensus concerning the specific steps to realize ELL. However, there is an agreement of fundamental principles and basic steps in ELL. ELL is consisted of three-stage development plan: (i) (present) capacity analysis is an approach beginning with identification of existing capacity –

evaluation of multiple factors that affect current practices of LLLU (tools adopted for capacity analysis are, for instance, standardized English proficiency tests and informal assessment based on English-medium interview) – determining the maximum language learning outcomes, (ii) capacity planning and predictive (future) capacity analytics are process of determining the maximum capacity of language leaning outcome needed to meet the demand to compete in the job market, and (iii) implementation of capacity development).

It is unfortunate but true that pro-ELLers in the wake of ELL campaign are unable to ask for equal distribution of language resources among the rich and the poor in a society. However, pro-ELLers increase language resources minorities gain access to, particularly in respect to basic vocabularies and phrases needed to understand and/or for effective communication in global-, prestigious-, standard-, foreign- and second languages.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Applied-, educational- and sociolinguistics on minority have been active disciplines and have drawn attentions for the previous decades around the world. The paper has been informed by the work of scholarship in language studies, primarily drawing on the disciplines of applied-, educational- and sociolinguistics, with particular reference to language education/learning, ‘development linguistics,’ or ‘language and minority [studies]’ (For lack of a better term, this is what the researcher of the present study might call). Over the past 50 years, scholars concerned with applied-, educational- and sociolinguistics in regards to global-, prestigious-, standard-, foreign- and second language learning have shown growing interests in three particular researched groups, namely 1). classroom students, 2). aborigines and 3). immigrants. Thus, considerable pieces of fabric of studies consist in efforts to develop a body of work within the mainstream applied linguistics (e.g., Wei and Cook, 2009), educational linguistics (e.g., Hornberger, 1989, 2003, 2004) and sociolinguistics (e.g., Blommaert, 2010; Fishman, 1991, 2001).

Yet, linguistic communications and issues in foreign/second language education of the aforementioned three groups have been explored by the dominant intellectual tradition in a variety of (theoretical, experimental and empirical) settings across the globe. Most prominent researchers stemming from these old (established) and new (emerging) traditions, to a more or lesser degree, emphasize the interplay between a country’s state language and indigenous languages (Coronel-Molina & Rodríguez-Mondónedo, 2012; Fishman, 1991, 2001; Hornberger, 1989, 2003, 2004; Romaine, 2009; Sallabank, 2013). Some explore the interplay between a country’s state language and immigrant languages (Blommaert, 2010; Cohen, 1987; Fishman, 1991, 2001; Hornberger, 1989, 2003, 2004; Lee, 2010, 2014a; Manosuthikit, 2013; Morita, 2007; Mukherjee and David, 2011). Others have been concentrated on the interplay between a country’s classroom students and their foreign/second languages (Abhakorn, 2013; Draper, 2012; Saksit, 2012, 2013; Wei and Cook, 2009). There is by now sufficient knowledge (generated by scholars currently informing the analysis in language learning studies) to understand the extent to which indigenous- and diasporic communities, and classroom students, cope with challenges in foreign/second language learning.

However, despite all this, less attention has been paid to address the inequalities for the dominant-language-speaking minority or DM to learn global-, prestigious-, standard-, foreign- and second languages. The lack of scholarly interest is that most DM, who are not labeled as aborigines, immigrants and students, have lived in linguistically homogenous communities and operated in the quadrant of localization (figure 2). As a result, there is no growing demand for the vast majority of them to acquire global-, prestigious-, standard-, foreign- and second languages. However, some DM language users who work in the service industry are highly expected to encounter effects of globalization and regionalization (figure 1), because they are often in direct contact with foreigners in the workplace.

Against the academic backdrop described above and in the sections that follow, the paper attempts to bridge this gap. To this end, the paper formulates two interrelated and correspondent theoretical–activity (integrated) models (termed the magnet of trend’s model and the LANGUAGES quadrant) of ‘development linguistics’ or ‘language and minority [studies]’ that are markedly utilitarian to understand the extent of issues in foreign/second language learning among marginal populations labeled as the DM language users.

IV. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

In parallel fashion, the two correspondent theoretical frames, of the magnet of trend’s model and the LANGUAGES quadrant were regarded as infrastructures for the ELL campaign. There was little fundamentally and principally wrong with the utilization of these two theorized models to help realize ELL. One would wish to argue that, for instance, Hornberger’s (1989, 2002, 2003) landmark continuum of biliteracy model (or other established models) were utilitarian to help the ELL movement. However, one would also find it difficult to argue that the two interrelated models, proposed in the paper, were not utilitarian given that they provide visual perspective, emphasize the local conditions of language phenomena, and they are self-explanatory and accessible to participants. More importantly, what pro-ELLers had of the two conceptual-activity models was a product of studies on a broad variety of contexts (e.g., globalization, nationalism, and urbanization) and informed by robust theories.

A. *The Magnet of Trend’s Model*

In the early 2010s, a conceptual framework termed ‘the magnet of trend’s model’ (For a detailed review, see Lee, 2015) was proposed and implemented in my fieldwork and classroom teaching, originally conceptualized to account for

the experiences minorities encounter in language contact situations and language use (practice). This model was accompanied by the LANGUAGES quadrant in the present paper. It should be acknowledged that both the magnet of trend's model and the LANGUAGES quadrant were not another attempt of formulating alternative framework to account for the existent traditions of scholarships in language studies but complementary to theoretical conceptions stemming from the emerging tradition ('sociolinguistics of globalization') started, in part, by Blommaert (2010), among others.

To be sure, the two interrelated and correspondent models (the magnet of trend's model and the LANGUAGES quadrant) that underpinned the study, as introduced below, can be seen as both conceptual frame (for analysis) and activity model (for implementation of planning, strategy and intervention) that were theoretically grounded and empirically derived model of scientific inquiry. They could be adopted as a thinking frame to help scholars develop more informed views of language contact, opportunities and challenges in language learning, and be used to intervene and build capacity of foreign/second language learning for individual and group minority learners.

Magnets, in this model, were utilized metaphorically as forces to create invisible magnetic fields that pull on language users from their first-language (L1) speech communities. In this model, globalization refers to economic, financial, geographic, political and societal drive for the global circulation, flow and mobility of capital, goods, human resources and knowledge (Lee, 2015). Global centers (e.g., developed economies and global cities) are magnets to attract capitals and foreign talents from global peripheries. In this model, globalization requires the increasing role of English as *Lingua Franca* within and across the three economies (e.g., English is utilized when Thailand exports canned fruits to USA).

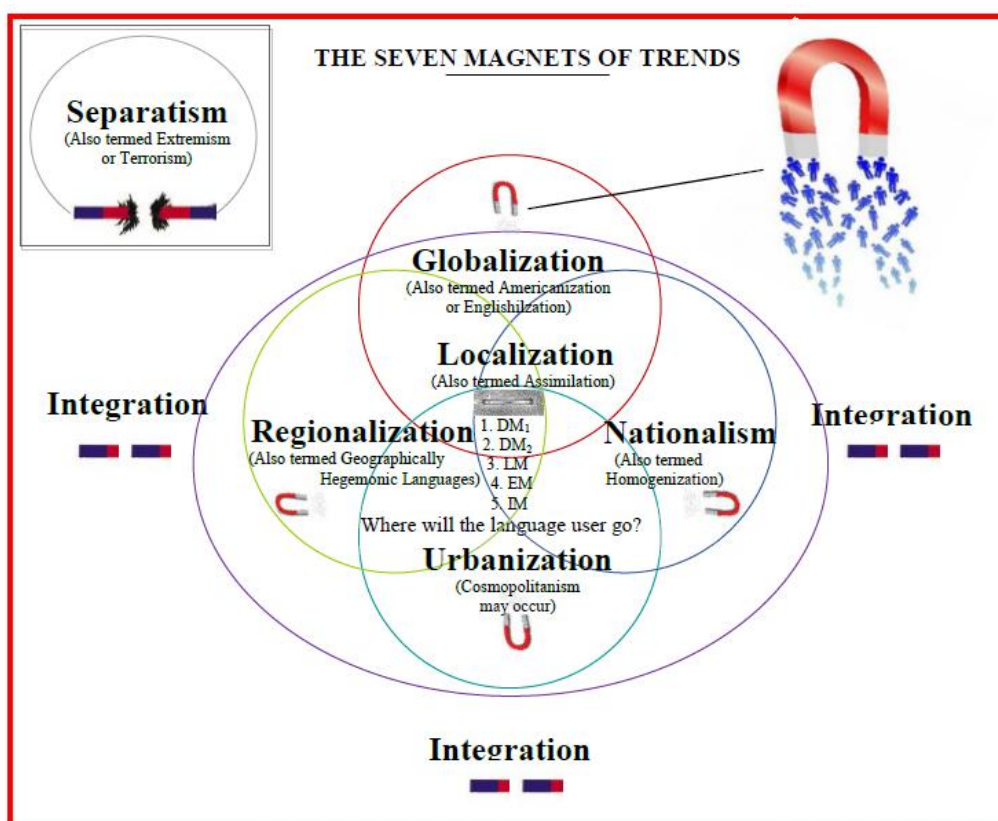


Figure 1. The magnet of trend

Sources: Expanded from Kosonen, 2008, informed by Kaku, 2012; p. 171; Fishman, 1998/1999; modified from Lee, 2015

Regionalization, in this model and in Thailand's context, refers to the increasing role of hegemonic languages from developed and developing economies in South-east Asia and/or Asia-pacific region, notably Chinese-Mandarin, Japanese and Korean. Regional centers (regionally strong economies and cities) are magnets to attract exports and foreign talents from neighboring countries.

Nationalism, in this model and in Thailand, refers to the increased use of the state language, Standard Thai. Urbanization, in this model and in the context of Thailand, refers to the increased use of urban languages. Urban centers are magnets to attract populations from semi-urban and non-urban areas. Localization, in this model, refers to people who are either not attracted by magnets such as global centers, national centers and urban centers or those who are attracted by these centers but fail to survive in these centers. Integration, in this model and in Thailand's context, refers to a regional economic integration, known as ASEAN Economic Community. Separatism, in this model and in the

context of Thailand, refers to community-based language users who intentionally separate themselves from magnetic fields created by these forces introduced above.

Minority

It is imperative to define what we mean by minority itself in Figure 1 and in the present study. This sub-section provides operational definitions of ‘minority’ (with a focus on ‘the politics of not belonging,’ ‘marginalization,’ ‘social exclusion,’ and ‘deficit thinking’) in the present research context. The word ‘minority’ or ‘minoritized’ has been defined in numerous ways throughout the decades. In its general sense, the term minoritized is most commonly deployed as shorthand to describe an unequal access to resources (causes) and consequences of growing social and economic inequalities in individual and societal levels.

The following literature refers to the power disparity and focuses on whether in the numerical (population size) majority or minority, many of these individuals and groups become subordinate and are subjected to oppression [and discrimination] by ideologies and activities derived from the dominant discourse, in that they continue to be socially excluded and pushed to margins in their respective state and civil society. In the utilization of the term minoritized, the paper applies the same understandings as Pickering (2001), Winlow and Hall (2013), and Shields, Bishop and Mazawi (2005).

Pickering (2001) employed the words to describe “the politics of not belonging” (“involves constructing and keeping in public view its negative counterpart of not belonging,” p. 107). From this view, the term ‘minority’ or ‘minoritized’ or ‘marginalized’ is defined by the social majority and the differentiation is based on some noticeable appearances and characteristics, e.g., ethnicity (ethnic looking), wealth, among others. Put it more directly, the term minority refers to those who have a sense of not being members of the dominant ethnic group within a nation state. It should be noted that Kammuang (Northern Thai) and Lao/Isaan (Northeastern Thai) language users are regarded as type I minority in the present study.

Further, Winlow and Hall (2013) adopted the term for social and economic marginality (“inability of the ‘socially excluded’ to access ostensibly ‘normal’ and routine services and aspects of our shared cultural life,” p. 20). Departure from this view, the term ‘minority’ or ‘minoritized’ or ‘marginalized’ is referred to collective rights or civil rights that are not equally accessible to some impoverished, discriminated and disenfranchised members in a society. It should be acknowledged that lower-status workers in the service industry and labor market are viewed as type II minority in the present study.

Aligned with the above, Shields, Bishop and Mazawi (2005) utilized the term in formal educational settings (“how minority children are prevented from achieving their full potentials in schools when their lives and cultures are labeled as marginal”). In their writing, Shields *et al.* argue that deficit thinking is the ideology and the discursive practice of holding lower expectations of academic achievements for students with demographics that do not match the traditional school system (e.g., low-income, culturally and linguistically diverse students). In Thailand, out-of-school street child/teen labors are seen as type III minority in the present paper.

The tradition of scholarship in language studies has been focused on typical minorities such as aboriginal communities, underprivileged diasporas (migrants) in contemporary urban metropolis, and students in formal schooling settings whereby targeted occurrences are richly accessible to researchers.

TABLE I.
DEFINITIONS OF MINORITY

<i>Meanings of ‘minority’</i>	
Minority1: (aspects of ethnicity and race)	The politics of not belonging (one who has a sense of not being a member of the dominant ethnic group within a nation state) – ‘involves constructing and keeping in public view its negative counterpart of not belonging,’ defined by the social majority and the differentiation is based on some noticeable appearances and characteristics, e.g., ethnicity (ethnic looking), wealth, among others.
Minority2: (social and economic levels)	Social and economic marginality (‘inability’ of the ‘socially excluded’ to access ostensibly ‘normal’ and routine services and aspects of our shared cultural life) -- collective rights or civil rights that are not equally accessible to some impoverished and disenfranchised members in a society.
Minority3: (formal educational settings)	The extent to which minority children and teens are prevented from achieving their full potentials in schools or being forced to be out of schools when their lives and cultures are labeled as marginal in formal educational settings -- deficit thinking is the ideology and the discursive practice of holding lower expectations of academic achievements for students with demographics that do not match the traditional school system (e.g., low-income, culturally and linguistically diverse students, and out-of-school street children and teens).
Minority4: (value attribution of languages)	Marginalized in language learning -- inequality in a ‘symbolic’ linguistic ‘market,’ linguistic hierarchy and ‘linguistic imperialism,’ difficulty in foreign/second language learning, and language education (of prestige standard varieties) only accessible for elites.

Sources: Bourdieu, 1991; Pickering, 2001; Shields, Bishop and Mazawi, 2005; Winlow and Hall, 2013

Marginalized in Language Learning

Language learning’ is referred as a more general learning phenomena of global languages (e.g., international standard English spoken in US and UK), or prestigious standard languages (e.g., Beijing-accented Chinese), or geographically and regionally hegemonic languages (e.g., Arabic, Chinese and Spanish). Language education/teaching can be seen as an unequally distributed resource which, simultaneously and subsequently, produces, re-produces and sustains both old and new inequalities, inherently connected to dominant ideologies, political structures and power relations (own

fieldwork, 2007-2015). One cannot deny the fact that global-, prestigious-, standard-, foreign- and second language learning is in relation to one's upper social mobility (Gal, 1978; Lee, 2012, 2014a; Smith-Hefner, 2009). At any given time, native speakers of the world's 600 + local languages learn a small number of global-, prestigious-, standard- and regionally hegemonic languages. The reason why one is marginalized in his or her foreign/second language learning process is in relation to a multitude of political, economic and sociological factors and the paper shall select three prominent ones (i.e., hierarchy and linguistic imperialism, difficulty in foreign/second language learning, and language education only for elites and mainstream/majority).

First, there is an issue of inequality in a 'symbolic' linguistic 'market,' language politics and 'linguistic imperialism' (Bourdieu, 1991; Pennycook, 1994; Phillipson, 1992) -- hierarchy among languages -- in that one may not speak a prestige language as his or her native language and sees a need to learn globally or regionally powerful languages. Likewise, in a similar vein, Bourdieu (1991) developed his business metaphor to view linguistic-and-communicative market whereby languages are seen as symbolic capitals and powers. In such a symbolic marketplace metaphor, some languages and their native speakers have more capitals than others to gain profits, whereas other speakers are aware of their speech as inferior, thereby the native speakers of low 'capital' languages are marginalized. Thus, one is marginalized during the process to learn a more prestigious standard language which is not his or her native language (L1).

Second, there are difficulties (phonological-, vocabulary- and grammatical difficulties) facing learners in any foreign/second language learning, from a theoretical point of view of contrastive linguistics (see Aarts, 1982; Di Petro, 1978; James, 1992 for fuller accounts) and second language acquisition (see Ellis, 1997). That is to say, errors that have been made in L2 by L2 learners are often resulted from distinctly different structures of L1 and L2.

Third, the equal access to learn global-, prestigious-, standard- and regionally hegemonic languages is limited to elites and the mainstream, but is unfortunately not always accessible to the marginalized individuals and groups (own fieldwork, 2010-2015; Thumawongsa, 2011).

To tackle the aforementioned issues in language learning the minority is facing, the ELL campaign and field of study have evolved into its present form by pro-ELLers taking their leadership role and commitment in supporting the mission of ELL in Thailand and elsewhere.

Marginalized Language Users

Marginalized language users are the case in point. Among marginalized population around the world, some are first language speakers of local and regional (aboriginal) minority languages (henceforth LM or RM languages). Moreover, this paper refers to these non-national languages (stemming from abroad, some of which enjoy national state language status in foreign countries) as immigrant minority languages (henceforth IM languages). The term of IM is borrowed from Extra and Yagmur (2011, p. 1173). In addition to all of this, the study refers to marginalized socio-economic minorities who speak dominant language variants as their first language as dominant-language-speaking minorities (DM).

TABLE II.
CLASSIFICATION OF LANGUAGE USERS

<i>Five sub-groups</i>	<i>'Language user' individuals and groups</i>
DM1	Dominant-Language-Speaking Majority
DM2	Dominant-Language-Speaking Minority
LM/RM	Local/Indigenous (or Regional) Minority
EM	(Century-old Immigrant) Ethnic Minority
IM	(New/Recent) Immigrant Minority

Sources: Cook (2009); Extra and Yagmur (2011)

B. The Languages Quadrant

LANGUAGES or the LANGUAGES model (exemplified as a mnemonic) or the LANGUAGES quadrant is not a different set of conceptual and methodological toolkit, but a conceptual companion to the magnet of trend's model (figure 1). It is another attempt by pro-ELLers to articulate what it is meant to broaden one's repertoires by operating among and across numerous quadrants. In this model, a language user achieves more economic and social benefits in s/he is operating (learning and using languages) out of more number of quadrants. This framework is what pro-ELLers opt for a conceptual model, as well as an activity model for the LANGUAGES quadrant, constructed in the present study. It is also a device to facilitate the recognition and labeling of macro-level forces and ideologies that govern and operate language contact, language choice and language use (practice), among others. The acronym, L-A-N-G-U-A-G-E-S, is developed with letters in each quadrant to represent (L for) localization [and indigenization], (A1 for) Americanization, (N for) nationalism [and standardization], (G1 for) globalization, (U for) urbanization [and cosmopolitanism], (A2 for) assimilation, (G2 for) geographically hegemonic (or powerful) languages, (E for) Englishization, (S for) separatism [insurgency or terrorism]) under which language users are categorized within nine quadrants.

Different Quadrants, Different LLLU Groups

Sociolinguistically, one may operate out of one or more quadrants simultaneously or sequentially. Rather than discussing every quadrant in great details, I instantiate the L-quadrant and A2-quadrant speakers in the following:

L-Quadrant and A1-Quadrant Speakers

A speaker who is under the influence of localization (see figure 1) and operates linguistic communications in the L (localization) quadrant and the A2 (assimilation/integration) (see figure 2) is tied to a relatively stable and resident speech community, in which they live relatively autonomous, un-mobilized and un-globalized lives. Despite the fact that they are the most, if not fully, assimilated and integrated language users defined by the host population and their local L1 speech communities, they have little or no access to global-, prestigious-, standard-, foreign- and second language languages to the pursuit of upper social mobility. A language user operating out of the L (localization) quadrant and the A2 (assimilation/integration) might be little aware of that s/he speaks some indigenized varieties of global languages by incorporating code-switch/mix and truncated words (Blommaert, 2010) in a relatively monolingual speech, emphasizing that these un-local words are subjected to local speech styles and pragmatic norms. There is another notion of localization of language: “Localization is a self-expression and, at the same time, a response to the macro-level sociopolitical forces” such as globalization and nationalism (Lee, 2015).

A common theoretical and methodological approach to localization (see L quadrant in figure 2) of language and linguistic assimilation (see A2 in figure 2) highlight geographical variations (local variants and local practices) and consider language spread as a flow of unified linguistic-and-communicative systems and styles adapting to a new neighborhood in spatial and temporal levels. Some related interest in regards to L-quadrant and A2-quadrant speakers, as defined in the present research, are works of Pennycook’s (2010) *Language as a Local Practice – language as a situated social act* (see Pennycook and Makoni, 2006) and sociolinguists who principally deal with stratified language contact (Labov, 1972), static variation, local distributions of varieties, creoles and pidgins. The paper favors the view proposed by Pennycook (2010) that language is seen as a situated social act, but contests against the view that languages are simultaneously operated in both macro (global) and micro (local) level. The paper argues the view in favor of focus on language use (practice), at times, in micro (local) levels (local codes and rules prevail) without an involvement in macro (global) levels. In this view, languages, in spite of being ‘mobile resources’ (Blommaert, 2010), are likely distributed and spread in a micro (local) level within bounded speech communities where speakers enjoy higher degrees of autonomy. Let me instantiate a particular case in a rural village of Thailand where two central-Thai speaking interlocutors deploy local code, genre, register, and speech style, in the discussion of ‘how to get a papaya out of a papaya tree by means of a locally invented tool’ without a sense of operating out of the G1-quadrant (globalization of the English language) and U-quadrant (urbanization of city language) (own fieldwork, 2013).

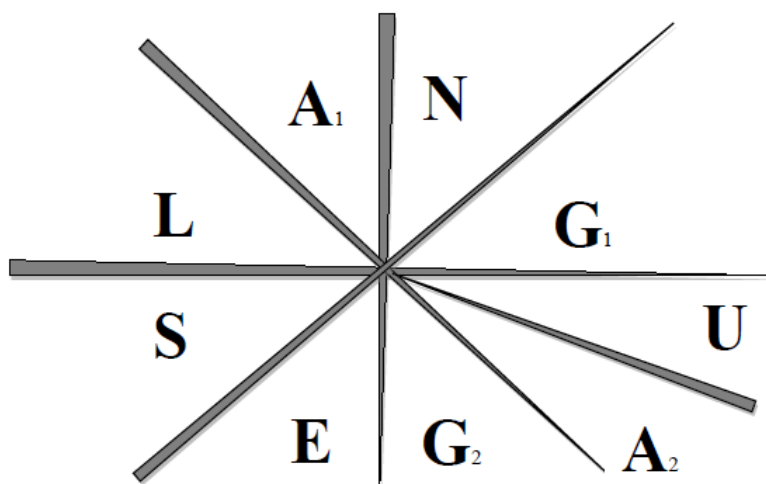


Figure 2. The LANGUAGES quadrant (L-A-N-G-U-A-G-E-S Mnemonic)

C. Informal (Language) Learning

Besides sketching the two parallel models (figure 1 and 2) in the preceding sub-section and in what follows, the paper shall highlight another prominent (albeit often neglected) view of education/learning – informal (language) learning. The ELL campaign invites individual language learners to broaden their language repertoires from their situated quadrant (figure 2) to occupy more quadrants by creating target language exposure and learning resources. I intend to take my observations (of informal language learning where service-industry workers learned English from foreign customers in their workplace) further to account for possibilities of increasing the number of quadrants, illustrated in The LANGUAGES Quadrant (figure 2). The point of view in question is articulated below by Blommaert (Blommaert and Velghe, 2012, p.1, also cited in Velghe and Blommaert, 2014, p. 89):

Learning processes of languages develop in a variety of learning environments and through a variety of learning modes, ranging from regimented and uniform learning modes charactering schools and other formal learning environments, to fleeting and ephemeral encounters with language in informal learning environments.

As stated earlier at the outset of formulating the two correspondent theoretical frameworks (figure 1 and 2) that individuals' linguistic communication, language learning, language use (practice) and language contact revolve around one or more macro-level forces (figure 1), as well as operate out of one or more quadrants (figure 2), where their flows and movements do not occur in an arbitrary manner but are processed and organized metaphorically by magnets (figure 1) and quadrants (figure 2). One of the major contributions of informal (language) learning is to expand individuals' language repertoire by creating availability and accessibility for minorities who have little or no access to receive formal language education.

V. METHODOLOGY

Qualitative methods were chosen for this study as a suitable method given a smaller number of individual case studies (not all 200 participants provided rich data) and the need for detailed descriptions from case studies.

A. Research Questions

Aligned with the ELL movement, there was a great temptation to search for answers to the research questions as I chose to position myself in the step 1 (capacity analysis) of the ELL steps.

RQ1: What approaches to language-learning-and-language-use (LLLU) were deployed by dominant-language-speaking minority (DM) language users to contribute to their foreign/second language learning, thus boarding their language repertoires (operating out of more quadrants)?

RQ2: What learning resources and learning process of global-, prestigious-, standard-, foreign- and second languages participants were engaged in formal or informal learning environments?

It should be noted that the second research question asked participants to reflect on the utilization of varied resources (on line or off line; receptive linguistic input or productive linguistic out; structured or unstructured learning activities) to foster language learning (both in- and out-of-class).

B. The Site and the Sample

The paper considered how to achieve comparable language data and decides that participants recruited should not be excessively discrepant among themselves to ensure comparability with regard to their first and dominant language, and foreign/second language learning. With the comparability in mind, the study confirmed that all multiple sites under study were located within the Bangkok City and all participants were defined as the DM language users and they shared fairly similar language repertoires (Standard Thai is their first/L1 and dominant language), except for the majority of bargirls who were native of Northeastern Thailand (type I minority) and a number of massage therapists who were native of Northern Thailand (type I minority).

The Bangkok City, home to more than 10 million DM language users, provided a case study on the ELL. A number of journeys to Bangkok's four districts, one market, two monuments and three roads were made to locate, recruit and connect with participants. It should be noted that these sites were selected mainly because they were accessible to me as I regularly visited them in daily routines. Two different data-sets were created. The 65 participants (first data-set) of barbers, bargirls, hair salon stylists, massage therapists, street child/teen labors and street prostitutes were chosen on the basis of my personal networks. Second data-set were gathered from the rest of 135 participants (e.g., taxi drivers).

TABLE III.
THE FIELD AND PARTICIPANTS

<i>Multiple Sites (Within Bangkok)</i>	<i>Sample</i>	<i>Number of Participants (N=200 from two different data-sets)</i>
Asoke District	Barbers (Minority 2 & 4)	(n=10)
Bangkabi District	Hair Salon Stylists	(n=10)
Huamak District	(Minority 2 & 4)	
Phayathai District	(Issan) Bargirls	(n=20)
Khaosan Road	(Minority1 & 2 & 4)	
Ladprao Road	Bus Fare Collectors	(n=20)
Rachawa Road	(Minority 2 & 4)	
Tewet Market	Massage Therapists	(n=20)
Democracy Monument	(Minority1 & 2 & 4)	
Victory Monument	Restaurant Waiters and Waitress	(n=20)
	(Minority 2 & 4)	
	Taxi Drivers (Minority 2 & 4)	(n=28)
	Three-wheel Motorcycle	(n=5)
	Drivers (Minority 2 & 4)	
	Maids and Cleaners	(n=2)
	(Minority 2 & 4)	
	Motorcycle Taxi Drivers	(n=20)
	Street Vendors (Minority 2 & 4)	(n=20)
	Street Child/Teen Labors	(n=5)
	(Minority2 & 3 & 4)	
	Street (Adult) Prostitutes	(n=20)
	(Minority 2 & 4)	

Note. Please see Table 1 for references of types of minority, defined in the present study context.

C. Data Collection and Analysis

Informed by the two parallel theoretical frames (figure 1 and 2), the study also adopted an approach to data which combined and coordinated field methods and perspectives derived from traditions of ethnography of communication, linguistic anthropology, sociolinguistics (Blommaert, 2010; Schilling, 2013), educational linguistics (Hornberger, 1989, 2002, 2003, 2004), language education/learning. More specifically, this research adopted the qualitative approach in data gathering and data analysis (Merriam, 2009), due to the fact that the study did not obtain a large sample size and it will not be statistically representative and the results will not be generalizable to the target population of millions of Thai working class in the service industry and in the labor market as a whole. Empirical data on language and linguistic communication in its social context were at the core of the study. Thus, interviews and observations of authentic conversations were documented and transcribed. The data were collected with the assistance of a field-site translator, a native speaker of Standard Thai and a fluent speaker of English (certified as an advanced English speaker by the Intensive English Program, Indiana University, in August 2005).

The primary data for this study was taken from in-depth and face-to-face interviews, complemented by field observations, with an emphasis on methods in spoken language research (not multimodal and literate research). Interview is by far one of the most common types of qualitative research method and it is most likely the primary measuring instrument for the present study. The study included face-to-face semi-structured interviews with about 200 participants. The participants interviewed were aged between 15 to 65 years old. Interviews were held in their respective workplaces and residences, and lasts between 20 minutes to 1 hour. Furthermore, the data for the pilot study had been collected during a number of ongoing fieldwork periods in multi-sited communities and districts (inaugurating in August 2014). Instead of asking participants to provide concise information on particular language-use (practice) and language learning questions, interview questions were kept brief, and interviewees (participants) were encouraged to talk at length about topics of interest to them (Schilling, 2013, p. 7).

Field observations were made for participants conversing in a foreign or second language (e.g., Chinese or English) with one or more interlocutors. Besides the collection of interview data and notes from field visits (observations), important bodies of applied-, educational- and sociolinguistic literature (with a focus on language education/learning) (Blommaert and Velghe, 2012; Velghe and Blommaert, 2014) were also consulted.

There were multiple ways to measure the vocabulary knowledge, oral language proficiency, grammar awareness and reading comprehension/skills in English of participants. They were the informal oral test administered by me (author has lived in the US for in-and-out 10 years), interactions with me that required them to produce English (e.g., send a text message to my mobile phone in English) and their self-report on English language proficiency.

Analyzing LLLU patterns of the DM language users in Thailand was a challenge, due to paucity of reliable data drawn upon representative samples by previous studies. As far as the data analysis was concerned, the interview questions elicited the following data to provide answers for the research questions: (a) demographic information (secondary interview question), (b) the first/L1 and dominant language of the participants (secondary interview question), and (c) what learning resources and learning process of global-, prestigious-, standard-, foreign- and second languages participants were engaged in formal or informal learning environments (primary interview question that aimed to elicit the desired data to answer the research questions).

Broad content analysis conventions were deployed to interpret interview data and field notes derived from observations, aimed at combining both emic and etic (interactional) data. Triangulation (of interview data, field-notes derived from observations and literature), member-checks with participants and peer (referee) review by colleagues were measures adopted to ensure the validity of the study.

VI. FINDINGS

A. Overview of Results

The first research question investigated what approaches deployed by the DM language users that contributed to their learning of English (and other foreign/second languages). The results revealed that the globalization of English and the regionalization of East-Asian languages motivated participants to learn English and/or Chinese and/or Japanese. Moreover, formal classroom language instruction and informal interactions with English-speaking customers were two language resources utilized by the DM language users to develop their language abilities. As for what approaches deployed by the DM language users to foster their language learning, some participants reported that their physical attractiveness (e.g., the makeup they put on their face and/or the costume and dress they were wearing) determined their opportunities for interactions with English-speaking foreign customers. They also actively greeted customers by speaking simple English words and/or phrases, aimed to increase the interactions with them. As for what strategies were adopted when communicating with English-speaking foreign customers, some reported that they spoke some keywords in English sentences during their conversations. However, some relied heavily on senior Thai workers to translate from English to Thai and from Thai to English when needed for the effective communication with customers.

The second research question investigated what learning resources and process were utilized when engaged in formal or informal language learning environments. The data revealed that language learning was more effective in informal learning environments whereby the English-speaking (and foreign/second language-speaking) customers played the role

as informal tutors. On the one hand, informal tutors functioned as linguistic input providers – the DM language users received exposure to English and/or Chinese and/or Japanese. On the other hand, it was commonplace for the DM language users to repeat what their customers said and memorized the utterances of English and/or Chinese and/or Japanese from their customers.

B. Globalization of English

Not surprisingly, a recent movement in the acquisition, learning and development of the English language among participants (service-industry workers) studied had been to shift away from learning English in favor of an interest in how to best speak, read and write it toward an interest in how to utilize it as a mere additional language for workplace only. For most participants studied and defined as type IV minority (table 1), the utilization of English as the language to operate out of the G-quadrant (Thailand's globalized tourism industry has been largely overlapping with its service industry) was a major obstacle. Thai bargirls and massage therapists were not alone in having informal tutoring from their foreign customers to improve their English oral proficiency. Likewise, taxi drivers, catered for FDIs, expatriates and tourists, as well as restaurant waiters and waitress working in restaurants catered for foreign customers, were jumping on the same band wagon.

I shall return to this salient finding in the proceeding section. And yet, I distinguished among three DM groups with respect to vocabulary knowledge, grammar awareness, oral proficiency and reading comprehension in English: (1) limited bilinguals (predominantly Thai with little English), (2) fluent bilinguals (despite speak Thai dominantly, English was fluent to function) and (3) Thai-dominant groups (predominantly Thai with nearly zero English). However, only fluent bilinguals among Thai service-industry workers contributed to fostering the acquisition, learning and development of English, gaining more economic and social benefits than their counterparts. In other words, limited bilinguals and Thai-dominant DM language users were not operating out of the G-quadrant (see figure 2 for globalization of English quadrant), but were operating out of the L- (localization of vernaculars such as Isaan (Northeastern Thai) and Kammuan (Northern Thai)), N- (nationalism of state language such as Standard Thai) and A2- (assimilation in L1 speech community) quadrants simultaneously.

C. Localization of Dialects, Nationalism of State Language, Urbanization of City Language

In this paper, the term first language (L1) was adopted to refer to the language DM language users were exposed to from birth and was used continuously at home. They were viewed as to be successful in the L quadrant (localization of dialects and vernaculars) as master of local language. For participants who were trans- regional migrants from provincial Thailand to the Bangkok City, their L1 was their regional vernacular. However, the majority of these trans-regional DM migrants experienced simultaneous acquisition and learning of L1 (regional vernaculars) and L2 (standard Thai) before learning the L3 (mostly, English). Thus, they achieved success in the A2- (assimilation in L1 speech community), L- (localization) and N- (nationalism of state language – Standard Thai) quadrants. By contrast, participants who have their origin in the Bangkok City or Central Thailand reported that they were monolingual Standard Thai speakers before learning English at schools and their second language (L2) was referred to English.

D. Regionalization of East-Asian Languages

A number of bargirls showed their growing interest to learn Japanese, because there was a growing number of Japanese business men and Japanese tourists to visit their bars. It was also because of that Japanese was a geopolitically powerful language (see regionalization in figure 1 for explanations) and Japan was the home country for a large number of FDIs in Thailand. Some bargirls and transgender bargirls also reported to learn Chinese as they worked in Hong Kong and/or Singapore and/or Taiwan. However, Korean language was least favored by these DM language users compared to Chinese and Japanese.

E. Two Themes

Although there were differences in LLLU practices, two main categories of approaches were identified across 200 participants. We looked at three different case studies of informal (English) learning to illustrate the two themes.

Theme 1- formal educational experiences

Fang's case – the massage therapist

In the first case study of the massage therapist Fang (pseudonym), a type I (Northern Thai native) and type II (lower socio-economic status) minority (see table 1), we saw how educational background provided a good basis for her acquisition, learning and development of the English language in informal educational settings. Fang, a middle-age Northern Thai woman from Chiang Rai who spoke Kammuan as her L1 and Standard Thai as her L2, although she simultaneously acquired and learned both L1 and L2 at home and in school. English has become her L3 as a consequence of her formal education (she did well in her English subject at school and undergraduate program) and informal learning with foreign customers. Besides learning English in her formal educational settings, Fang also loved to practice English with foreign customers. She was considered a fluent bilingual (Thai-dominant with English to function). However, tens of thousands of Thai massage therapists were facing obstacles in their L2 and L3 learning as type IV minority defined in the present study (table 1). Fluent English-speaking Thai massage therapists, like Fang, were very rare.

Fang worked at a Bangkok massage parlor where female massage therapists sit behind a glass partition to allow male customers to look at them before a selection was made. Fang's massage parlor was catered primarily for Thai-speaking male customers. Thus, she did not need to learn a L3 in her full-time workplace. However, her English-speaking ability enabled her to take part-time jobs as a freelancer to provide massage service in hotels for a number of foreign nationals including Japanese, Hong Kong, Taiwanese and Singaporean men.

Kaew's case – the waitress and bargirl in a bar restaurant

In a contrast, Kaew (pseudonym), a 24-year-old Issan L1 (type I minority as a Northeastern native) and Standard Thai L2-speaking bargirl of Bangkok (type II minority as in lower socio-economic status), was seen as a limited bilingual (Thai-dominant with little or no English speaking ability, but had become English-literate as a result of formal education), hereby she was also regarded as a type IV minority (facing obstacles in L2 and L3 learning). During her years of formal schooling (she was an undergraduate student who studied in a special weekend program at a community university), she had acquired English vocabulary knowledge and English reading comprehension (she was able to send a text message in English to my (author's) mobile phone), while her English speaking ability was surprisingly limited as a university student. According to Kaew, she learned how to read and write English from her schools, but cannot function in English oral communication. As a limited bilingual, she cannot access to the higher-end English-speaking service sector. Although she was English-literate (she was evidently being able to send a text message in acceptable English as well as non-standard English), Kaew only utilized her Thai L1 to work in a predominantly Thai-speaking bar, catered for Thai-speaking customers.

Also, when comparing Fang's case with Kaew's case, it was not difficult to see that fluent bilingual (Thai-dominant with good English oral proficiency to function) led to success to across from L and N quadrants (localization of vernacular and nationalism of state language) to G quadrant (globalization of English). However, reading comprehension in English made almost no difference in what quadrants (figure 2) these participants operated.

When comparing the quantity and quality of English instructions provided in Fang's and Kaew's undergraduate programs, Fang's relatively higher socio-economic status determined her access to more opportunities and resources than Kaew's. In other words, Fang's relatively higher financial standing was the underlying reason for her success in English. As a financially stable undergraduate student, Fang completed her studies within four years without interruption, during which she accessed to educational resources to learn English. Although they both were considered in lower social standing, Kaew's relatively lower income placed her in a disadvantaged position as she cannot continue to study from time to time. For instance, Kaew dropped out from her undergraduate program years ago and worked in Cambodia as a waitress in a casino before she took on the job as a waitress in the bar restaurant. Kaew was in need to work in the bar restaurant during weekdays, in order to pay for her undergraduate program in the weekend. As a result, Kaew did not concentrate on the learning of English because she focused on earning income.

Liang's case – the street teen labor and sex worker

Liang, a L1 speaker of the Standard Thai and did not speak any regional vernaculars, was defined as a type II minority (lower socio-economic status) and type III minority (out-of-school teen) in the present study (see table 1). Although she was also seen as a type IV minority, her inability to function in English was not seemed to be a major obstacle for her work as she claimed. I interviewed Liang (pseudonym) on the street where she worked as a street teen prostitute (she had changed her national identification cards (ID) multiple times and even the Thai police cannot verify if the information about her age in her ID was valid). When Liang wanted to speak English to foreign customers and did not know how to say English vocabulary, she claimed that it was because of the fact that she was never being able to complete any degrees in formal educational settings. She told me that she never completed her primary school and I doubt if she attended any classes at school. More than one occasion, Liang told me that she equated her failure in speaking English to her never-completed formal education. According to Liang, her prior schooling experiences were inseparable from her lower confidence to say a few words in English.

Liang also made a special case study. Although her operation was only out of A2-, L- and N- quadrants (assimilation in her L1 speech community, localization and nationalism of state language), she might have more interactions with foreign customers than other two aforementioned cases in the G quadrant (globalization of English). She explained that the overwhelming majority of her foreign customers were not sex tourists, but long-term FDI residents and they acquired the Thai language, hereby they spoke Thai to her.

Theme 2- the pattern of English-for-customer (EFC) and/or English-as-an-additional-language-for-work (EALW)

In the meantime, a large majority of participants revealed that their English-speaking interlocutors (customers and/or tourists) were functioned as their informal tutors (teachers). Although these English-speaking customers expected service provided by Thai service-industry workers (instead of teaching English), their speaking of English provided the needed linguistic inputs for these workers. As the study suggested that of all the components involved in one's learning of foreign/second languages, teachers played a crucial role on learner's success or failure. Data also demonstrated that informal tutors' qualification exerted a powerful influence on participants' learning of English and foreign/second languages. It should not be surprised that much data thus far have shown that informal (language) learning environments (e.g., streets and workplaces including bars and massage parlors) were more effective (to acquire spoken fluency) than (language) learning in formal educational settings, claimed by participants in the present study.

As observed from the current practices in Thailand, one of the most important features of the LLLU practices among Thailand's service industry workers was that English was seen as an additional language, termed English-as-an-additional-language-for-work (EALW). That is to say, English was primarily adopted in the workplace. The utilization of English did not go across a number of language domains such as family, government and public places. In other words, oral language proficiency in English was only required at the level of transmitting information by Thai service-industry workers to communicate with their foreign customers. This phenomenon was termed English-for-customer (EFC) in the present study. Nonetheless, it was also true that English as a foreign and second language learners generally saw a need to master more than 800 English vocabulary, in order to function in everyday conversation. This was not viewed as a serious problem facing participants in the present study, because they claimed that they rarely talked to foreign customers more than their job-related affairs. For instance, it was commonplace that Thai taxi drivers, catered for foreign tourists, needed to have knowledge of basic English vocabulary related to places their foreign passengers planned to go (e.g., hotels, department stores and sky train stations) and being able to say numbers in English (the underlying assumption was that these Thai taxi drivers were able to negotiate the price of the transportation fares).

Across 200 participants researched (regardless of their service sectors catered for Thais or foreigners or both), the majority of them was viewed as limited bilinguals (Thai-dominant speakers with little vocabulary knowledge, grammar awareness and oral proficiency in English, but some had reached a good level of reading comprehension) and Thai-dominant (with nearly no English proficiency) groups as type IV minority (facing major obstacles in L2 and L3 learning). They were successful in the L and N quadrants (see figure 2), operating out of localization of vernacular and nationalism of the state language (Standard Thai). Only a few number of Thai bargirls were seen as fluent bilinguals (who can function in English lexical and syntactic levels although they demonstrated worse grammar awareness of Standard English). Many Thai bargirls were operating out of the A2-, L- and N-quadrants (see figure 2) because their bars were catered for Thai men. However, some Thai bargirls had changed their quadrants from A2, L and N to G (globalization of English) working in bars catered for foreign customers (see figure 2), because changing quadrants were a big boost of their income.

VII. CONCLUSION

The data gathered for this pilot study provided insights into the fact that, on the one hand, individuals' educational background provided a basis for him or her to further development in his or her L3 (English) as evidenced in the case of Fang. On the other hand, the optimistic perspective of the realization of the ELL movement was challenged by the pessimistic case such as Liang's story. That is, a failure in prior formal education also resulted in less confidence to learn a L2 or L3 (English) as seen in Liang's case.

As mentioned earlier, informal tutoring by interlocutors (foreign customers) in informal educational settings resulted in expansion of language repertoires and the increase of the number of quadrants (figure 2) among the DM language users. Educational implications of these results were discussed herein. As noted above, we had seen evidence from participants that the English-speaking foreign customers were instrumental in their acquisition, learning and development of English as L3. Thus far I have not seen other studies that have questioned the advantageous effects of customers functioned as informal English tutors for service-industry workers in a developing country.

The informal learning from exposures to English-speaking foreign customers should not be the only available resource for English among Thai workers in the service industry. In the long term, formal educational experiences also played a key role for further development of English among a few number of fluent bilingual participants studied. Thus, better resources and possibilities were needed to fostering acquisition, learning and development of the English language for type I (those who were not seen as ethnic majority), type II (lower socio-economic status), type III (out-of-school street child/teen workers) and type IV (those who faced major obstacles in L2 and L3 learning) minorities (see table 1) in Thailand and other developing countries.

Our research team, enacting as pro-ELLers, concluded this paper with implications and suggestions for educational policy, planning and programing, corporate training courses for service industry employees and development agency. With regard to recommendations for the improvement of vocabulary knowledge, oral proficiency and literacy/reading comprehension in English among service-industry workers in the developing countries (where English is not the first language), the pro-ELLers of this paper proposed that a combined effort of educational background and EFC/EALW should be at the core of development planning and implementation. Specially, this paper considered formal educational experiences to have a long-term impact on service-industry workers' vocabulary knowledge, oral language proficiency and literacy/reading comprehension in English, by which they were enabled to operate out of more quadrants (figure 2) as a means to gain more economic and social benefits. Although many challenges were inherent, the educational sector and service-industry sector should envision and implement educational programs and corporate training courses with an emphasis on basic vocabulary knowledge, some levels of grammar awareness and oral proficiency in English needed to function as EFC and EALW for service-industry workers who spoke Thai as L1/dominant language. These educational policies, programming and corporate trainings, many of which aimed to realize ELL (particularly, equity in English language learning) for service-industry workers defined as type I and type II minority (table 1), opened up new possibility for them to operate out of more quadrants (figure 2) as a means of expanding language repertoires.

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Motivational Strategies and EFL Teachers' Perceptions: A Saudi Survey

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Abstract—The present study is only the second one of this kind in the Saudi context. As a first stage of the study, 117 EFL teachers with varying demographic characteristics (age, qualifications, teaching experience and the like) rated 55 motivational micro strategies on 5-point scales, which were then grouped into 10 macro strategies in accordance with previous research. Since the present study is a modified replication of previous studies, the expectation that the ranking of strategies in the Saudi context will match to a degree the rankings found by researchers elsewhere in the world was borne out - four of the macro strategies that came out in the top five scales in this study were ranked in the top five scales in three other studies conducted by Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) in Hungary, Cheng and Dörnyei (2007) in Taiwan, and Alrabai (2010) in Saudi Arabia. The order in which the macro strategies were ranked in the present research differed from the ranking order found previously, including Alrabai's (2010) in the Saudi context. Unlike in any previous research, however, when inferential statistical analyses were applied on the collected data, statistically significant differences in the ranking order of the macro strategies emerged as a function of the respondents' qualifications and length of teaching experience. The results may have implications for teacher training and the research design of future investigations into the effects of the motivational strategies deployed by teachers on student motivation and FL achievement.

Index Terms—motivation, motivational strategies, macro strategies, micro strategies, EFL teachers

I. INTRODUCTION

In Second-language acquisition (SLA) research, motivation has been found to be a key factor in learning a foreign/second language (L2), and motivation theories have been fine-tuned and tested for the last 60 years. L2 motivation is needed to help learners apply themselves and persist in their efforts during the learning process, which may extend over a long period of time. In the past 20 years, numerous studies have proposed different strategies to generate, sustain, and promote learner motivation in language classes (e.g. Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998; Dörnyei, 2001; Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007; Alrabai, 2010). It is believed that without sufficient motivation even the cleverest learners are unlikely to persist long enough to attain any really useful language proficiency, while most learners with strong motivation can achieve a working knowledge of the L2, regardless of their language aptitude or any undesirable learning conditions (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007). This study mainly concerned with the Saudi EFL teachers' perceptions of how important using the motivational strategies in the classroom.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the last 50 years or so, a quite considerable research effort has gone into investigating the role of motivation in L2 learning by exploring the nature of this complex construct and how it affects the L2 learning process. SLA researchers attempt to conceptualize the term motivation. Ellis (1994, p. 509) claims that 'L2 motivation refers to the effort that learners put into learning the L2 as a result of their need or desire to learn it.' The linguists who first considered the role of motivation in language learning were Gardner and his associates. Their inspiration to the field of L2 motivation resulted in one of the leading theories in the field: the Social-Psychological Theory. Dörnyei (2005) explains that according to Gardner and Lambert (1972), second languages played a role as 'mediating factors between different ethno-linguistic communities and thus regarded the motivation to learn the language of the other community as a primary force responsible for enhancing or hindering intercultural communication and affiliation' (p. 67). The Social-Psychological Theory is based on the principle that learners' attitudes have a great influence on students in whether they will be successful or not in learning the target language. Among Gardner's theory influentially contributed to the field of L2 motivation is through many features such as the nature of motivation, what integrative motivation consists of, and the integrative-instrumental motivation dichotomy, however there are a number of aspects of motivation which the socio-educational model does not have the capacity to explain, such as the nature of the task, the connections of motivation to language-learning processes, and language pedagogy.

In the 1990s, the study of L2 motivation shifted to a cognitive-situated view and started taking a lot more interest in the role of situation-specific factors, for instance, factors specific to classroom learning (e.g. Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Dörnyei, 1990, 1994; Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Tremblay & Gardner, 1995; Williams & Burden, 1997). The new approach successfully extended the L2 motivation model by examining cognitive aspects of motivation, especially those

related to the learner's "self" (e.g. self-confidence/efficacy, self-determination), extrinsic and intrinsic motivations, the need for achievement, and expectancy of success, etc.

Motivational Strategies

Many previous studies focused on constructing a theoretical framework for motivation and concentrated on establishing the effectiveness of motivation on the EFL/ESL learning/teaching second and foreign language contexts, rather than try to show how to motivate learners in the classroom. Motivational strategies did not receive enough attention until the early 1990s, and there has not been a significant amount of empirical work on them. Dörnyei (2001b, p. 28) defined motivational strategies as 'the motivational influences that are consciously exerted to achieve some systematic and enduring positive effect.' Many L2 scholars (e.g. Alison & Halliwell, 2002; Brown, 2001; Dörnyei, 2001b; Chambers, 1999; Williams & Burden, 1997) designed and summarised motivational techniques for classroom application. However, as Gardner and Tremblay (1994) argued, the obvious intuitive appeal of motivational strategies is not enough to justify strong claims in favour of their use in the classroom without empirical evidence. The validity of Gardner and Tremblay's point notwithstanding, the actual number of empirical studies which have tried to examine the effectiveness of motivational strategies is still quite small, which may be a reflection of the rather labour-intensive nature of experimental research (Guilloteaux & Dörnyei, 2008). Only three studies to date have been empirically conducted on the effectiveness of motivational strategies. These studies were Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) in Hungary, Cheng and Dörnyei (2007) in Taiwan, and Alrabai (2010) in Saudi Arabia.

Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) asked 200 Hungarian teachers of English how important they considered a list of 51 motivational strategies and how frequently they used them in their teaching practice. The researchers came up with a set of the major motivational strategies and called them *The Ten Commandments for Motivating Language Learners*. The value of this investigation lies in the fact that it reflected practising teachers' beliefs and perceptions in genuine classroom-relevant settings, and Dörnyei and Csizér also identified the underutilisation of certain strategies (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007).

The second empirical study was conducted by Cheng and Dörnyei (2007) in a different EFL context – Taiwan. The study was a modified replication of Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) exploring the range of strategies that 387 teachers of English used to motivate their learners in Taiwan. The findings of the two studies revealed that some of the motivational strategies were perceived to be similar and effective in both contexts, indicating that some motivational strategies are transferable across diverse cultural and ethnolinguistic contexts (Cheng & Dörnyei, 2007).

Alrabai (2010) conducted an empirical investigation in Saudi Arabia, examining the importance of using some selected motivational strategies by EFL Saudi teachers and came up with the 10 strategies that the teachers rated as the most important to be used in the Saudi EFL classes to promote learners' motivation. The researcher asked 119 Saudi teachers to consider a list of 55 motivational strategies in terms of how important they considered these strategies to be used in motivating learners in the language classroom.

The current study is a modified replication of the previous three studies to explore the range of motivational strategies that teachers can use to motivate their learners in the Saudi context. These three studies used an instrument that was based on Dörnyei's (1994) first summary of motivational strategies.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

117 male and female EFL teachers were recruited through email and on the recommendation of those in charge of these institutions, representing a variety of age groups, EFL teaching/learning experience, and schooling level, social and regional backgrounds. The main goal at this stage was to recruit as many participants as possible. For this reason, the researcher decided to use snowball sampling. According to Dörnyei (2012), snowball sampling involves a 'chain reaction', whereby the researcher identifies a few people who meet the criteria of a particular study and then asks these participants to identify appropriate further members of the population. The male participants ($n = 91$, 77.8%) outnumbered the female participants ($n = 22$, 22.2%). The teachers' age ranged between 23 and 54 ($M = 35.21$, $SD = 7.74$). The participating teachers held different qualifications; 66 participants (56.4%) had a BA degree, 37 participants (31.6%) had a Master degree, and 14 participants (12%) had a PhD degree. The teaching experience of the participants ranged between 1 and 40 years ($M = 10.21$, $SD = 7.0$).

B. Instruments

The study aimed at exploring the motivational strategies employed by Saudi English teachers with the focus on how important the participating teachers perceived certain motivational strategies. Initially, the questionnaire consisted of 58 items. The questionnaire was translated into Arabic and piloted on 13 participants. The participants in the pilot study provided valuable recommendations and suggestions. Most of the items in the survey were adopted from the studies of Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) in Hungary, Dörnyei (2001a), Dörnyei (2001b), Cheng and Dörnyei (2007) in Taiwan, and Alrabai (2010) in Saudi Arabia. Most of the amendments proposed by the 13 teachers that piloted the questionnaire included the rewording of some items and the omission of certain specific strategies. The final version of the questionnaires was made up of 53 motivational strategies (for the list of all the items, see Table 1). The questionnaire items/strategies were scaled on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 'Very important' to 'Not important' in relation to

how important they consider the use of each strategy for the purpose of enhancing their students' motivation to learn English as a foreign language. Because all the participants were Saudi teachers, Arabic version of the questionnaire was administered to eliminate any potential language-based interference.

TABLE 1
FINAL RANK ORDER AND DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE MACRO STRATEGIES AND THEIR CONSTITUENT MICRO STRATEGIES

<i>1. Proper teacher behaviour</i>	$\alpha = 0.582$	Mean 3.68	SD .323
(3) Show students that you care about their progress.		3.91	.337
(5) Show students that you accept them and care about them.		3.83	.400
(6) Pay attention to your students and listen to each of them.		3.82	.485
(2) Show students that you value English language as a meaningful experience.		3.67	.602
(48) Try to have natural, informal conversation with the students in class.		3.50	.715
(1) Share with your students your own personal interest in the English language.		3.41	.745
<i>2. Familiarise learners with L2 culture and L2 related values</i>	$\alpha = 0.740$	Mean 3.65	SD .375
(21) Remind students of the benefits of mastering English language.		3.86	.345
(22) Increase the amount of English language you use in the class.		3.80	.459
(23) Encourage students to use English language outside the classroom.		3.74	.532
(19) Promote students to contact with English language speakers and cultural products.		3.57	.735
(46) Familiarise students with the cultural background of the target language.		3.56	.608
(18) Encourage students to explore the English language community through the internet.		3.49	.677
<i>3. Promote learners' self-confidence</i>	$\alpha = 0.684$	Mean 3.61	SD .395
(36) Give students positive feedback and appraisal.		3.84	.454
(50) Encourage students to attribute their failure experience when learning English to the lack of sufficient effort or bad luck rather than to their low ability.		3.80	.459
(4) Show students that you have high expectations for what they can achieve.		3.65	.620
(38) Teach various learning strategies and help students to design their learning strategies.		3.62	.679
(47) Design tasks that are within the limits of students' ability.		3.56	.608
(20) Encourage students to apply their English language proficiency in real-life situations.		3.39	.840
(49) Promote cooperation between students instead of competition.		3.35	.913
<i>4. Increase learners' satisfaction</i>	$\alpha = 0.648$	Mean 3.60	SD .485
(40) Recognise students' effort and achievement.		3.82	.448
(41) Monitor students' progress and celebrate their success.		3.70	.633
(43) Make sure that grades reflect students' effort and hard work.		3.65	.647
(42) Give students other rewards besides grades.		3.23	.959
<i>5. Increase learners' expectancy of success</i>	$\alpha = 0.765$	Mean 3.55	SD .456
(32) Provide the students with clear instruction about how to do the task.		3.74	.458
(25) Make sure students know exactly what success in the task involves.		3.62	.614
(27) Provide appropriate strategies to carry out the task.		3.60	.657
(24) Make sure students receive sufficient preparation before the lesson and assistance during the lesson.		3.56	.636
(26) Explain the goal of each learning task.		3.50	.805
(54) Raise the students' expectations of the task outcomes.		3.32	.806
<i>6. Promote learners' autonomy</i>	$\alpha = 0.728$	Mean 3.54	SD .492
(44) Encourage students to adopt, develop, and apply self-motivating strategies.		3.62	.628
(39) Adopt the role of a facilitator whose responsibility is to provide students with input and opportunities to communicate in the foreign language rather than a controller whose job is to decide what students can and cannot do in the classroom.		3.57	.674
(55) Encourage students' contribution and peer teaching.		3.51	.727
(45) Allow students to assess themselves.		3.47	.624
<i>7. Make the learning tasks stimulating</i>	$\alpha = 0.795$	Mean 3.43	SD .600
(17) Highlight and demonstrate aspects of English language learning that your students are likely to enjoy.		3.60	.631
(31) Break the routine of the classroom by varying the presentation format and learning tasks.		3.53	.783
(34) Select tasks which require involvement from each student.		3.47	.794
(35) Make tasks challenging to involve the students.		3.40	.821
(33) Make the learning tasks more attractive by including novel, humorous, and fantasy elements.		3.20	.985

8. Create a pleasant classroom atmosphere	$\alpha = 0.640$	Mean 3.42	SD .437
(37) Explain to students that mistakes are a natural part of learning.		3.84	.473
(29) Personalise learning tasks.		3.74	.458
(7) Create a supportive classroom climate that promotes risk-taking and mistakes accepted as a natural part of learning.		3.70	.620
(10) Avoid social comparison between students such as comparing the performance of two students or the public announcement of grades.		3.64	.814
(11) Use an interesting activity to start the class.		3.51	.727
(8) Bring in and encourage humour.		3.38	.653
(9) Encourage learners to personalise the classroom environment according to their taste.		2.79	1.103
9. Increase learners' learners' positive goals, realistic beliefs, and needs.	$\alpha = 0.798$	Mean 3.38	SD .617
(28) Relate the subject matter to the everyday experiences and background of the students.		3.68	.554
(30) Help students develop realistic beliefs about English learning.		3.50	.690
(52) Encourage students to set clear, short-term, and realistic learning goals for themselves.		3.46	.826
(51) Find out students' needs and build them into lessons.		3.45	.876
(53) Display the class goal on a wall chart and review it regularly.		2.83	1.101
10. Promote group cohesiveness and set group norms.	$\alpha = 0.700$	Mean 3.36	SD .528
(12) Encourage students to interact, cooperate and share their personal information and thoughts.		3.63	.624
(15) Explain to the students the importance of the class rules and the consequences for violating them.		3.56	.688
(14) Include activities that lead to the successful completion of whole group tasks.		3.46	.749
(13) Divide students into small groups and ask them to work toward a shared goal.		3.41	.779
(16) Let students suggest other class rules.		2.76	1.023

Note: M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, α = Cronbach alpha coefficient.

C. Procedures

As said earlier, the researcher used a 'snowball' sampling strategy to reach as many Saudi teachers of English as possible, and most of the actual questionnaire was administered by e-mail.

D. Data Analysis

The collected data were subjected to preliminary statistical analyses, such as the internal consistency Cronbach's alpha in order to group into 10 macro strategies based on their content similarities. The internal consistency of these scales was tested by means of a reliability analysis to determine whether the theoretical grouping was substantiated in practice. A strategy was added to a macro strategy only if this increased the scale's Cronbach Alpha internal consistency reliability coefficient. Following this, descriptive statistics were computed to summarise the results and prepare a rank order of the 10 macro strategies.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The dataset produced several interesting findings. The researcher started by analysing the results of the rank order of the macro strategies according to its importance. In all these analyses the Saudi results will be evaluated against the previous three studies. Second, analyse the results of the differences in macro strategy rankings as a function of demographics.

A. Rank Order of the Macro Strategies

The previous studies that examined this issue were conducted in Hungary, Taiwan, and Saudi Arabia. The ranking of the strategies was based on the means and standard deviations so that the strategy with the highest mean and lowest standard deviation topped the list. The same approach was adopted here. For answering the above question, the mean and the standard deviation analyses were conducted on the data from the teachers' questionnaire so as to obtain the final rank order of the 10 macro strategies. Table 1 above shows the final rank order and the descriptive statistics of the 10 macro strategies and the constituent micro strategies of each.

The low Cronbach alpha coefficients of Scale 1 can be attributed to the nature of the items used in the survey. Dörnyei and Cheng (2007) have pointed out that unlike attitude surveys, this type of survey was designed to explore the teaching practices of the participating teachers and, therefore, the items were behavioural items that tend to be more heterogeneous, even within one domain than attitude scales.

The mean values of the individual macro strategies scales ranged between 3.36 out of 4 as a minimum value, and 3.69 as a maximum value, on a scale from 0 to 4. The overall mean value of the whole scale was 3.52. These results revealed that the participating teachers assigned a substantial importance to most of the items of each strategy. Macro strategies ranking were identified based on the degree of importance that was assigned by the participants.

Proper teacher behaviour

Proper teacher behaviours were classified as the most important motivational macro strategy by the participants. This ranking is in agreement with the findings of most previous studies like that of Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) in Hungary, Cheng and Dörnyei (2007) in Taiwan, and Alrabai (2010) in Saudi Arabia. It is clear that, from the teachers' viewpoint,

presenting a personal role model is perhaps the most powerful and effective tool in motivating their students. Dörnyei (2001b, p. 120) claimed that '[a]lmost everything a teacher does in the classroom has a motivational influence on students, which makes teacher behaviour the most powerful motivational tool.' The findings show that EFL Saudi teachers were aware of their commitment towards their students' progress, their development of a positive relationship with students, and also confirm the importance of the teachers' display of enthusiasm.

Participating teachers discerned the commitment towards their students' progress (Strategy 3) as the most important motivational distinctive behaviour of the teacher. Developing a positive relationship with students (Strategies 5, 6, and 48) was considered the second important dimension of the teacher behaviour. The importance of the teachers' prediction of enthusiasm held the third position of the teachers' behaviour dimensions. Showing students that they value the English language as a meaningful experience (Strategy 2), and sharing with their students their own personal interest in the English language (Strategy 1) were considered as the best strategies for representing such enthusiasm in the classroom by the teachers.

Familiarise learners with L2 culture and L2-related values

The second position of this macro strategy is certainly in stark contrast with the results of previous studies like that of Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) in Hungary, Cheng and Dörnyei (2007) in Taiwan, and Alrabai (2010) in Saudi Arabia. In their studies, this strategy was ranked 10, 8, and 6, respectively. In the present study, teachers' responses ranked this macro strategy as the second most important macro strategy. The high ranking that this strategy received in the current study should be expected since it is in line with previous theorising (Gardner, 1985; Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998). From a learner-centred perspective, Gardner (1985) maintains that language learners' attitudes towards the target culture and its people have a significant influence on their learning motivation and, indirectly, through motivation on foreign/second language (L2) achievement. The teachers may have felt that they needed to promote some degree of integrative motivation in their students. From a teacher-centred perspective, Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) suggest that there is a need to make the L2 "real" by introducing learners to its cultural background, using authentic materials, and promoting contact with native speakers of L2.

In terms of values associated with L2 learning, the respondents recognised the importance of three values. Participants perceived the utilitarian value of foreign language competence as the most important aspect with which learners should be familiarised in order to enhance their L2 motivation. They considered that reminding students of the benefits of mastering the English language, such as passing exams, getting a career, pursuing future studies, and improving one's social position (Strategy 21) is the most promising technique that can be employed to enable their students to recognise such values. Respondents also believed that encouraging students to use English outside the classroom in order to apply what they have learned in class in their daily life is another strategy to familiarise them with the instrumental benefits of the foreign language learning (Strategy 17). The importance that Saudi teachers attached to these two strategies suggests that the English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers are aware of the fact that Saudi students are mostly instrumentally motivated, as acknowledged by many previous studies (e.g. Al-Shammari, 1984; Al-Amr, 1998; Al-Otaibi, 2004; Alrabai, 2007).

Micro Strategy 22 represented the importance of intrinsic values in enhancing learners' L2 motivation. The respondents considered that increasing the amount of English the teacher uses in the language classroom is the most important strategy that can be employed to enable their students to recognise such values. They believed that the increased exposure to the target language enhances students' motivation to learn and use the language, which in turn indicates that the extensive use of the learners' Arabic mother tongue during English classes in Saudi Arabia (see Alrabai, 2010) should be eliminated or at least substantially reduced as it is the fastest way to weaken the value of the foreign language in their students' view.

Participants considered L2 integrative values as the least important in enhancing learners' L2 motivation. They considered that promoting students to contact with English language speakers and cultural products (Strategy 19), familiarising students with the cultural background of the target language (Strategy 46), and encouraging students to explore the English language community through the internet (Strategy 18) as of less importance for familiarising learners with the L2 values. Alrabai (2010) suggested that *absence of contact* can be reasonably considered a rationale for why participants in this study perceived the individual strategies relating to integrative values as the least important ones for familiarising students with the foreign language values and subsequently promoting their L2 motivation. More generally, this finding lends strong support to the view that integrative motives play a much less significant role in foreign language contexts in which, like Saudi Arabia, learners do not have direct contact with the target language community.

Promote learners' self-confidence

It was not surprising to see this macro strategy coming in the third position. Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) stressed that self-confidence is not directly related to one's actual ability or competence, but rather to subjective ability/competence; it is not necessarily what someone knows or can do which will determine their L2 use, but rather what they think they know or can do. In addition, some learners might be afraid of making mistakes and also feel anxious about their performance in front of the class. The seven micro strategies represented in this scale highlight the importance of three aspects of learners' self-confidence that are very essential motives (Alrabai, 2010). These aspects were reducing learners' anxiety, promoting motivational attributions, and providing positive motivational feedback.

Participants endorsed the view that the best way to reduce students' anxiety is by designing tasks that are within the limits of students' ability (Strategy 47) and by promoting cooperation between students instead of competition (Strategy 49).

Participants seemed to be well conscious of the importance of promoting students' motivational attributions to help in reducing their L2 anxiety and fostering their self-confidence at the same time. This can be achieved by encouraging students to attribute their failure experience when learning English to the lack of sufficient effort or bad luck, rather than to their low ability (Strategy 50).

Participants also believed that it is important that teachers provide students with the amount of support they need for successful learning in order to promote their self-confidence. They considered that teaching various learning strategies and helping students to design their learning strategies is an important technique to build their self-confidence (Strategy 38). In addition, participants recognised the importance of the teacher's positive feedback as an important factor in fostering his/her students' self-confidence (Strategy 36).

Increase learners' satisfaction

Increasing learners' satisfaction was ranked as the fourth most important macro strategy by the participants. This is a reflection of the understanding that the feeling of satisfaction is a major component of learners' motivation (see e.g. Burden, 2000; Dörnyei, 2001a). Participants in our study perceived the importance of intrinsically satisfaction-promoting outcomes. They placed high importance on recognising students' effort and achievement (Strategy 40) as well as on monitoring students' progress and celebrating their success (Strategy 41).

For extrinsically-motivating outcomes, respondents acknowledged making sure that grades reflect students' effort and hard work (Strategy 43) and giving students other rewards besides grades (Strategy 42) as important values that support students' satisfaction with learning.

Increase learners' expectancy of success

This macro strategy was ranked as fifth by the participants. It contained some micro strategies that emphasise the expectancy of success of learners through the learning process. Participating teachers seemed to be fully conscious of the importance of providing the students with clear instruction about how to do the task, in a sense that enables them to understand and easily follow the teacher to perform learning tasks successfully (Strategy 32).

Respondents also considered making sure students know exactly what success in the task involves (Strategy 25) as an important strategy for increasing their expectancy of success. Furthermore, they regarded providing appropriate strategies to carry out the task as an important strategy (Strategy 27) which could increase their expectancy of success in that task and then their motivation. Making sure students receive sufficient preparation before the lesson and assistance during the lesson (Strategy 24) was ranked as an important strategy in order to generate their expectancy of successful performance of the learning tasks.

Based on the responses from the questionnaire, EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia do not seem to believe that explaining the goal of each learning task (Strategy 26, ranked second-last) has a great capacity to promote students' expectancy of success. Even more so, in obvious disagreement with what others have claimed (see Brophy, 2004; Urdan & Schoenfelder, 2006), raising students' expectations in the outcomes of any learning task is not regarded as an important strategy. According to Alrabai (2010), EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia considered this strategy as too vague and general, comprising too many details that could not be easily accomplished in the Saudi EFL context. It is worth mentioning that this strategy also came last in Alrabai's (2010) ranking.

Promote learners' autonomy

This macro strategy was ranked sixth by our participants, in terms of its capacity to enhance students' motivation. The micro strategies that this macro strategy includes are those in relation to encouraging students to adopt, develop, and apply self-motivating strategies (Strategy 44), such as: adopting the role of a facilitator whose responsibility is to provide students with input and opportunities to communicate in the foreign language, rather than a controller whose job is to decide what students can and cannot do in the classroom (Strategy 39); encouraging students' contribution and peer teaching (Strategy 55); and, allowing students to assess themselves (Strategy 45).

The importance of promoting learners' autonomy to increase their motivation has become of considerable interest since 2000 (see Deci & Ryan, 2000; Brophy, 2004). Dörnyei (2001b) summarised that the freedom to choose or to have choices, rather than being forced or coerced to behave according to someone else's desire, is a requirement to motivation. Although this macro strategy is ranked just outside the top five, its mean ($M = 3.54$, $SD = .492$) is almost equal to the mean of the strategy that was ranked fifth ($M = 3.55$, $SD = .456$). The close ranking shows that EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia favour the use of this macro strategy and think that it is an important motivational technique in the classroom for enhancing learners' motivation. The findings in relation to promoting learners' autonomy differ only marginally from those in Alrabai (2010), where promoting learners' autonomy was ranked seventh.

Make the learning tasks stimulating

This macro strategy was ranked by the respondents as the seventh. The importance of this macro strategy is well-emphasised in many different fields, like psychology and education (see Raffini, 1993; 1996; Dörnyei, 2001b). Furthermore, the concept of "interest" has been considered as one of the noticeable motivational components across a number of L2 motivation-related models (e.g. Pintrich & Schunk, 1996).

The micro strategies that this macro strategy comprises are those related to highlighting and demonstrating aspects of English language learning that students are likely to enjoy (Strategy 17), breaking the routine of the classroom by varying the presentation format and learning tasks (Strategy 31), selecting tasks which require involvement from each student (Strategy 34), making tasks challenging to involve the students (Strategy 35), and making the learning tasks more attractive by including novel, humorous, and fantasy elements (Strategy 33).

The main reason for the positioning of this strategy in the lower half of the rankings is that most EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia are required to cover the prescribed learning contents in the official curriculum because of restricted teaching hours. Additionally, Al-Subahi (1991) has maintained that EFL curriculum designers in Saudi Arabia usually design the curriculum based on their personal subjective expectations, rather than on students' actual needs and goals. Teachers also have to assist their students to get better grades in exams, which in turns makes it hard for the teachers, in a grade-driven education system, to make the learning task stimulating. It is worth mentioning that this low ranking is in disagreement with Alrabai's (2010) empirical study, in which this strategy was ranked in the top half.

Create a pleasant classroom atmosphere

This macro strategy was ranked as eighth by the EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia. Creating a secure learning environment is important for the teachers. As Young (1999) has pointed out, it has been well documented that language learning anxiety created by a tense classroom climate is a powerful negative factor that obstructs students' learning motivation and achievement. A comfortable classroom atmosphere has positive effects on students' motivation, such as fostering their self-confidence, developing a good rapport between students and their teachers and between students themselves, as well as making learning stimulating and enjoyable to students (see Good & Brophy, 1994; Dörnyei, 2001a).

The micro strategies that this macro strategy encompasses are those relating to explaining to students that mistakes are a natural part of learning (Strategy 37), such as: personalising learning tasks (Strategy 29); creating a supportive classroom climate that promotes risk-taking and mistakes accepted as a natural part of learning (Strategy 7); avoiding social comparison between students, such as comparing the performance of two students or the public announcement of grades (Strategy 10); using an interesting activity to start the class (Strategy 11); bringing in and encouraging humour (Strategy 8); and, encouraging learners to personalise the classroom environment according to their taste.

The findings of our study shows that the mean score ($m = 3.42$) of this macro strategy is higher than the one in Alrabai's (2010) empirical study ($m = 3.00$), which was ranked at the bottom. As stated in Cheng and Dörnyei's (2007) study in Taiwan, teachers are becoming more sensitive to this issue and more accepting that it is their responsibility to promote a secure learning environment, where risk-taking is advocated and social comparison discouraged.

Increase learners' positive goals, realistic beliefs, and needs

As we can see from the Table 1 above (p. 5), this was among the lowest-ranked macro strategies. Respondents classified the micro strategies of relating the subject matter to the everyday experiences and background of the students (Strategy 28), and helping students develop realistic beliefs about English learning, as slightly more important than the micro strategies related to helping students set clear, realistic goals.

It is worth mentioning that this strategy also received a similar ranking in the previous studies of Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) in Hungary, Cheng and Dörnyei (2007) in Taiwan, and Alrabai (2010) in Saudi Arabia. Cheng and Dörnyei (2007) suggested that English teachers are either not entirely sure about the value of setting learner goals or, have difficulty in putting this strategy into practice in their teaching contexts. They also indicated that language teachers often believe that the official curricula outline a set of institutional objectives that are readily servable, and this may explain the lack of recognition of the utility of goal setting.

Promote group cohesiveness and set group norms

Saudi EFL teachers seem to treat this macro strategy as the least important one. Participants regarded dividing students into small groups and asking them to work toward a shared goal (Strategy 13) as of little importance in enhancing learners' group cohesiveness. The low importance attached to this strategy might also be attributed to the nature of EFL classes in Saudi Arabia, where large class sizes make the utilisation of this strategy difficult (Alrabai, 2010).

Dörnyei and Murphey (2003), as cited in Alrabai's (2010) study, argue that group cohesiveness by itself will not work in the best way to motivate students unless associated with a 'rules of conduct' protocol that governs the group members' behaviours in the classroom, and makes it possible for its cohesiveness to grow. Respondents recognised two micro strategies in relation to group norms. They considered that explaining to the students the importance of the class rules and the consequences for violating them (Strategy 15), and letting students suggest other class rules (Strategy 16) are the best way to increase students' awareness of these rules.

B. Motivational Strategy Rankings – A Comparison across Studies

One significant conclusion that comes out from the ranking of macro strategies in our study was that these strategies were distributed almost equally on the four dimensions of the systematic theoretical framework of motivational strategies presented by Dörnyei (2001b) as follows:

1. Macro strategies 1, 8, and 10 represented the dimension of creating the basic motivational conditions.
2. Macro strategies 2, 5, and 9 represented generating initial motivation dimension.
3. Macro strategies 3, 6, and 7 represented maintaining and protecting motivation dimension.

4. Macro strategy 4 represented encouraging positive self-evaluation dimension.

A second important and interesting conclusion about the final rank order achieved for the motivational macro strategies in our study, is that it was mostly similar to that of the three previous experimental studies conducted on motivational strategies in Hungary (1998), in Taiwan (2007), and in Saudi Arabia (2010) - four of the top five strategies were the same as the ones in the other studies.

It is important to note that there were some differences with the analytical design between these four studies. First, in Hungary, the initial 51 macro strategies were logically grouped under 18 scales, and the top 10 of these clusters were categorised as ‘The Ten Commandments for Motivating Language Learners.’ In the second study, in Taiwan, all the 48 single motivational strategies were also logically grouped into 10 macro strategies. In the third study, in Saudi Arabia, the 53 single strategy items were initially grouped under 12 clusters. The final 48 reliable strategies loaded on 10 scales based on factor analysis findings and were finally grouped under 10 macro strategies. In our study, the 58 single strategy items that were initially grouped under 11 macro strategies. The final 55 reliable strategies loaded on 10 scales based on factor analysis findings.

Table 24 contains a comparison of the rank order of the macro strategies obtained in this study and in the study of Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) in Hungary, Cheng and Dörnyei (2007) in Taiwan, and Alrabai (2010) in Saudi Arabia. The purpose of the comparison is to identify the possible existence of similar patterns regarding motivational strategies used in different cultural contexts.

TABLE 2
COMPARISON OF THE FINAL RANK ORDER OF THE MACRO STRATEGIES/SCALES OBTAINED IN THIS STUDY
AND IN HUNGARY (1998), TAIWAN (2007), AND IN SAUDI ARABIA (2010)

No.	Macro strategy	Hungary study (1998)	Taiwan study (2007)	Alrabai Saudi Arabia (2010)	This study
1	<i>Proper teacher behaviour</i>	1	1	1	1
2	<i>Familiarise learners with L2 culture and L2 related values.</i>	10	8	6	2
3	<i>Promote learners' self-confidence</i>	5	3	5	3
4	<i>Increase learners' satisfaction.</i>	----	2	2	4
5	<i>Increase learners' expectancy of success.</i>	3	5	4	5
6	<i>Promote learners' autonomy.</i>	7	10	7	6
7	<i>Create a pleasant classroom atmosphere</i>	2	4	10	8
8	<i>Make the learning tasks stimulating</i>	6	7	3	7
9	<i>Increase learners' positive goals, realistic beliefs, and needs.</i>	9	6	9	9
10	<i>Promote group cohesiveness and set group norms.</i>	---	9	8	10

The comparison reveals a considerable degree of similarity in the ranking of the different motivational macro strategies among the four studies that were conducted in three different EFL contexts (one each in Hungary and Taiwan, and two in Saudi Arabia). Other conclusions drawn from this comparison are as follows:

A. Macro strategy 1: ‘Proper teacher behaviour’ was ranked at the top of the 10 strategies in all four studies as the most important motivational macro strategy.

B. Our study and the study of Cheng and Dörnyei (2007) in Taiwan were identical in ranking ‘promote learners’ self-confidence’ third and ‘increase learners’ expectancy of success’ fifth among the 10 macro strategies.

C. The macro strategy ‘increase learners’ positive goals, realistic beliefs, and needs’ got the same ranking - ninth - as in Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) in Hungary, and Alrabai (2010) in Saudi Arabia.

D. Except for the identical positions of macro strategies 1 and 9, the ranking order in the present study differed from the ranking order found in Alrabai’s (2010) in the Saudi context, by one or two places. The greatest difference emerged in the ranking of macro strategy ‘familiarise learners with L2 culture and L2-related values’, which was ranked sixth in Alrabai’s study, while in our study it was ranked as the second most important macro strategy.

E. Another important aspect of the comparative taxonomy above is that three of the macro strategies that came out in the top five macro strategies in our study were ranked in the top five macro strategies in the other three studies. These macro strategies were 1: ‘proper teacher behaviour’; 3: ‘promote learners’ self-confidence’; and, 5: ‘increase learners’ expectancy of success’. Cheng and Dörnyei (2007) asserted that these macro strategies embody fundamentally important beliefs in teaching pedagogy and thus can be universally treated as central tenets of any sound teaching practice. This similarity, moreover, is a confirmation that these strategies can be seen as very powerful factors for generating, maintaining, and promoting students’ L2 motivation in different EFL contexts.

C. Differences in Macro Strategy Rankings as a Function of Demographics

The present study extends the scope of previous investigations of the perceived importance of different motivational strategies by taking into consideration the participants’ demographic characteristics. In order to determine whether the macro strategies were ranked differently as of a function of the teachers’ demographic background, *one-way ANOVA* and *Independent samples t-test* were conducted on each of the 10 macro strategies by gender, age, qualifications, teaching experience, region of teaching, and level of teaching. Of these, only qualifications and length of teaching

experience were found to have a statistically significant effect on the perceived importance of some of the motivational macro strategies.

Table 3 summarises the results of a one-way ANOVA conducted on each macro strategy by groups of qualifications (BA, Master, and PhD).

TABLE 3
DIFFERENCES IN THE PERCEIVED IMPORTANCE OF THE MACRO STRATEGIES BETWEEN TEACHERS BY GROUPS BY QUALIFICATIONS: BA, MASTER, PHD (ONE-WAY BETWEEN-SUBJECTS ANOVA)

Macro Strategies	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F(2, 115)	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
MAC1	.478	.239	2.342	.101	.039
MAC2	1.211	.605	4.545	.013*	.074
MAC3	1.289	.645	4.357	.015*	.071
MAC4	.948	.474	2.045	.134	.035
MAC5	1.936	.968	4.965	.009*	.080
MAC6	3.310	1.655	7.592	.001*	.118
MAC7	2.822	1.411	4.121	.019*	.067
MAC8	.611	.306	1.613	.204	.028
MAC9	3.647	1.823	5.129	.007*	.083
MAC10	2.221	1.110	4.188	.018*	.068

MAC = macro strategy, (*) < .05

As Table 3 shows, significant differences among the BA-, Master-, and PhD-qualified respondents existed on the perceived importance of seven of the ten macro strategies. These results were followed up with Scheffe post-hoc tests, which revealed that the group differences remained significant on five of the initially-identified seven macro strategies.

TABLE 4
IMPORTANCE OF MACRO STRATEGY RATED BY TEACHERS IN GROUPS BY QUALIFICATIONS

Macro strategy	Qualifications		
	BA	Master	PhD
2. Familiarise learners with L2 culture and L2-related values	3.56 _a	3.75 _b	3.80 _{ab}
5. Increase learners' expectancy of success	3.44 _a	3.64 _a	3.89 _{bc}
6. Promote learners' autonomy	3.40 _a	3.64 _b	3.89 _{bc}
7. Create a pleasant classroom atmosphere	3.31 _a	3.55 _b	3.74 _{bc}
9. Positive goals, realistic beliefs, and needs	3.24 _a	3.49 _b	3.85 _{bc}

Note: Importance of a strategy was measured on 5-point scale (0 = uncertain, 4 = very important). Means in the same row that do not share subscripts differ at $p < .05$ in the Scheffe method of pair-wise multiple comparisons

As shown in Table 4, the BA-qualified teachers consistently rated four of the strategies significantly lower than their PhD-qualified counterparts, and lower than their Master-qualified colleagues on Strategies 2 and 6. None of the differences between the Master- and PhD-qualified teachers was statistically significant. This pattern of results suggests that the more qualified the teachers are, the greater their appreciation is of strategies that promote the aspects of learners' motivation.

Table 5 shows the final ranked of the macro strategies in terms of the qualifications of the Saudi EFL teachers.

TABLE 5
THE FINAL RANK OF THE MACRO STRATEGIES OBTAINED FROM THE SAUDI TEACHERS' QUALIFICATIONS BY MEAN

No.	Macro Strategy	Qualifications					
		BA		Master		PhD	
		Rank	mean	rank	mean	rank	mean
1	Proper teacher behaviour	1	3.68	2	3.73	4	3.80
2	Familiarise learners with L2 culture and L2 related values.	2	3.56	1	3.75	3	3.80
3	Promote learners' self-confidence	4	3.51	3	3.69	6	3.78
4	Increase learners' satisfaction.	3	3.55	6	3.59	2	3.83
5	Increase learners' expectancy of success.	5	3.44	4	3.64	5	3.80
6	Promote learners' autonomy.	6	3.40	5	3.64	1	3.89
7	Create a pleasant classroom atmosphere	8	3.31	7	3.55	8	3.74
8	Make the learning tasks stimulating	7	3.35	9	3.47	10	3.55
9	Increase learners' positive goals, realistic beliefs, and needs.	10	3.24	8	3.49	7	3.75
10	Promote group cohesiveness and set group norms.	9	3.24	10	2.49	9	3.58

Note: BA = Bachelor qualification, PhD = Doctor of Philosophy qualification

Besides qualifications, the other demographic variable that was found to have an effect on the motivational macro strategy ranking was length of teaching experience. Table 6 summarises the results of a one-way ANOVA conducted on each macro strategy by groups by Length of Teaching Experience (Below eight years, 9 to 20 years, and over 21 years).

TABLE 6
DIFFERENCES IN THE PERCEIVED IMPORTANCE OF THE MACRO STRATEGIES BETWEEN TEACHERS BY GROUPS BY LENGTH OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE:
BELOW EIGHT YEARS, 9 TO 20 YEARS, OVER 21 YEARS (ONE-WAY BETWEEN-SUBJECTS ANOVA)

Macro Strategies	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F(2, 115)	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
MAC1	.623	.311	3.091	.049*	.051
MAC2	1.274	.637	4.801	.010*	.078
MAC3	1.464	.732	4.999	.008*	.081
MAC4	1.113	.557	2.415	.094	0.41
MAC5	1.551	.775	3.910	.023*	.064
MAC6	1.629	.814	3.499	.034*	.058
MAC7	2.212	1.106	3.180	.045*	.053
MAC8	1.020	.510	2.744	.069	.046
MAC9	3.314	1.657	4.624	.012*	.075
MAC10	2.030	1.015	3.805	.025*	.063

MAC = macro strategy, (*) < .05

As Table 6 shows, significant differences among the 'below eight years', '9 to 20 years', and 'over 21 years' length of teaching experience respondents existed on the perceived importance of eight of the 10 macro strategies. These results were followed up with Scheffe post-hoc tests, which revealed that the group differences remained significant on five of the initially-identified eight macro strategies.

TABLE 7
IMPORTANCE OF MACRO STRATEGY RATED BY TEACHERS IN GROUPS BY THE LENGTH OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Macro strategy	the length of teaching experience		
	Below 8 years	9 to 20 years	Over 20 years
2. Familiarise learners with L2 culture and L2 related values	3.61 _a	3.76 _a	3.56 _{ab}
3. Promote learners' self-confidence	3.54 _a	3.70 _a	3.30 _{ab}
6. Promote learners' autonomy	3.50 _a	3.64 _a	3.18 _{ab}
9. Positive goals, realistic beliefs, and needs	3.32 _a	3.55 _a	3.19 _{ab}
10. Promote group cohesiveness and set group norms.	3.33 _a	3.45 _a	2.92 _{ab}

Note: Importance of a strategy was measured on 5-point scale (0 = uncertain, 4 = very important). Means in the same row that do not share subscripts differ at $p < .05$ in the Scheffe method of pair-wise multiple comparisons

As shown in Table 7, the 'over 21 years' experienced teachers consistently rated five of the strategies significantly lower than their '9 to 20 years' experienced counterparts. Furthermore, there were no statistically significant differences between the 'below eight years' experienced teachers and the other two groups ('9 to 20 years' and 'over 21 years'). This pattern of results suggests that the more experienced the teachers are (over 21 years), the less their appreciation is of the above five strategies.

Table 8 shows the final ranked of the macro strategies in terms of the length of experiences of the Saudi EFL teachers.

TABLE 8
THE FINAL RANK OF THE MACRO STRATEGIES OBTAINED FROM THE SAUDI TEACHERS' LENGTH OF EXPERIENCES BY MEAN

No.	Macro Strategy	The length of experience					
		Below 8 years		9 to 20 years		Above 21 years	
		rank	mean	rank	mean	rank	mean
1	Proper teacher behaviour	1	3.63	1	3.76	1	3.56
2	Familiarise learners with L2 culture and L2 related values.	2	3.61	2	3.73	3	3.33
3	Promote learners' self-confidence	3	3.54	3	3.70	4	3.30
4	Increase learners' satisfaction.	4	3.51	4	3.70	2	3.50
5	Increase learners' expectancy of success.	6	3.48	5	3.66	5	3.29
6	Promote learners' autonomy.	5	3.50	6	3.64	7	3.18
7	Create a pleasant classroom atmosphere	8	3.35	7	3.57	8	3.12
8	Make the learning tasks stimulating	7	3.36	9	3.51	6	3.19
9	Increase learners' positive goals, realistic beliefs, and needs.	10	3.32	8	3.52	10	2.87
10	Promote group cohesiveness and set group norms.	9	3.33	10	3.45	9	2.92

V. CONCLUSION

A range of interesting findings have emerged via the experimental investigation of this study. The first significant finding is that participating teachers consider most of the motivational strategies as being important for promoting Saudi EFL motivation in the classroom. The participants consider the strategies *demonstrating proper teacher behaviour*, *familiarise learners with L2 culture and L2-related values*, *promote learners' self-confidence*, *increase learners' satisfaction*, *increase learners' expectancy of success*, and *promote learners' autonomy* to be the most important macro strategies for this purpose. On the other hand, they consider the strategies *create a pleasant classroom atmosphere*,

make the learning tasks stimulating, increase learners' positive goals, realistic beliefs, and needs, and promote group cohesiveness and set group norms to be the least important for the promotion of students' motivation.

Another significant finding is that the ranking revealed in the current study is quite similar to the rankings reported in the studies of Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) in Hungary, Cheng and Dörnyei (2007) in Taiwan, and Alrabai (2010) in Saudi Arabia on motivational strategies. Like the current study, all three rated the macro strategy *demonstrating proper teacher behaviour* as the most important motivational strategy for promoting students' motivation. In the current study, however, the strategy *familiarise learners with L2 culture and L2-related values* received a much higher ranking, compared with the other three studies.

A third major finding is that three of the top five macro strategies, as revealed in our study, are ranked in the top five macro strategies in the other three studies. These macro strategies are: 1. 'proper teacher behaviour'; 4. 'increase the learners' expectancy of success'; and, 5. 'promote learners' self-confidence'.

Our study also revealed some statistically significant differences in the ranking of macro strategies in terms of the respondents' qualifications and the lengths of teaching experiences in the Saudi context.

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The Impact of Arabic on Wolof Language

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Abstract—This research aims to study Wolof people in terms of their origin, background, and language. It will also discuss the factors that led Arabic to spread among the members of this tribe, such as the religious factor after the spreading of Islam in the West of Africa (i.e. Mauritania, Senegal, and Gambia), where Wolof people reside. The commercial factor also affected the spreading of Arabic language in the aforementioned areas. In addition to that, the emigration factor of some Arab tribes from Egypt and the Arab peninsula that resided in the far west of Africa for economic and political reasons had an impact on the spreading. Finally, the study will show the impact of Arabic Language on Wolof Language as the following: 1) the Arabic phonetics and their alternatives in this language; 2) the borrowed vocabulary in Wolof language from Arabic; and 3) Conduct a contrastive analysis in verb conjugation, masculinity and femininity, and definiteness and indefiniteness between the two languages to know how far Arabic Language has impacted Wolof Language.

Index Terms—Wolof, Arabic, contrastive study

I. INTRODUCTION

Arabic is the religious language for millions of African Muslims, as they use Arabic to recite Quran and to perform the rituals of Islam such as prayers, pilgrimage and others. Arabic has spread in the west of Africa since the tenth century due to the spread of Islam. Therefore, Arabic became the language of communication in the markets and the public places (Hilal, 1980, p.69). It became an instrument of education because it was affected by the language of the Noble Quran. Many of Arabic, Islamic and commercial words were introduced into the languages of the tribes of West Africa. The Senegal Muslims depend on Arabic letters in writing what they want in their spoken language; some of them used Arabic letters to write books in their spoken language such as the tribes of Muslim Wolof (Nias, 1969, p.174).

Regions of Wolof Tribes

The people of these tribes are about 3,500 million people in Senegal, they form 43% of the population of the state, which is about 10 million people. Their language is the most common one, as it is the official language. Some of them migrated to Mauritania that is isolated from Senegal by Senegal river; some of them migrated to Mali in the East and others to Guinea in the South. Gambia Muslims and Guinea Bisawa also speak this language. The people of these tribes reside in various cities in Senegal such as: Andar, Lug, Sakal, Kimbir, Tuwa'un, Gies, Tuba and Goriel.

The majority of them are working in agriculture, commerce and industry; their social classes are divided into three main classes: liberals (Jamber) who are the nobles, religious men and farmers; the Artisans class (Aljeij) and the slaves class (Aljam), it consists of male and female slaves of wars captives (Sā'ab, 1978, p.14).

The majority of Wolof tribes are Muslims, and the others are Christian. Therefore, they speak Arabic. Some of them translate Al-Baqara and Al-Fatiha Surahs into their language using Arabic letters. However, the colonial powers worked on tightening control over Islam in Africa after the 19th century to erase its relationship with Arabic culture. The colonials tried to substitute Latin letters instead of Arabic ones in this language, and to establish alternative economic relations with the areas in the west of Africa. Also, the colonials revived the ancient African culture and empowered it by regionalism that leads to spark extremism and they paved the way for consignments missionary to supervise the education, to limit the spread of Islam and the Arab culture and to spread colonials' culture (Shaker, 1995, p. 276).

II. METHODOLOGY

This study depended on both the contrastive and the descriptive approach. The first is used to collect the data pertaining the Arabic and the Wolof phonetics, conjugation, femininity and masculinity, and definiteness and indefiniteness. Meanwhile, the second approach is used to contrast between the phonological and morphological features in both languages, in order to find the similarities and differences between them, and identify the impact of Arabic on Wolof.

III. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

A. The Impact Factors of Arabic on Wolof Language

The impact of Arabic on Wolof language began because of the commercial ties between the Arab traders and the people of these tribes. As a result of mixing with each other, the signs of influence emerged. These signs included some of the areas of Wolof language such as religion and culture. Beside their business activities, which dated back to several

centuries before Islam, Arab traders spread Islam. After the spread of Islam, the traders stayed for a long time among the members of these tribes to teach them the rituals of Islam (Sayed Ahmed Iraqi, 1984, p. 231). In addition, they had close relationships with scholars and students who worked in Trade. By virtue of this relationship, they had a significant role in spreading Islam and the Arabic language, as trade requires writing down commercial words, idioms and numbers. Therefore, Wolof language borrowed many Arabic words.

The religious factor has a very significant role in acquiring the Islamic religious words from Arabic. The spread of Islam played a pivotal role in the diffusion of Arabic in the far west of Africa. Therefore, its tribes transferred to Arabists, and Arabic became the means of communication among its members in all areas of life. In addition, Arabic was so close to their hearts as it is the language of Islam; Islam played a significant role in developing their language, as Wolof people are one of the inveterate people, and most of them participated in the Arab-Islamic culture (Alnahawi, 1992, pp. 11-12).

In addition to the religious factor, the migration factor contributed in highlighting the role of the Arabic language among the members of these tribes. Some Arab tribes emigrated from Egypt and Arab peninsula to the far west of Africa before Islam for economic and political reasons. These migrations paved the way in spreading Islam, Islamic culture and Arabic language, the language of the Noble Quran. After that, Arab immigrations increased to Senegal, Gambia, Mali, Mauritania and Guinea Bisawa. This accelerated the impact of Arabic on spoken languages in these areas i.e. Wolof language. This also led to the mixing of many Arabic vocabulary and expressions in the vocabulary of this language. Based on information achieved from the inspectors of developing Senegal in 1960, Vincent Monti pointed that Wolof people wrote their language using Arabic letters (S□afab, 1978, p. 31).

B. The Aspects of Arabic Impacts on Wolof Language

Arabic sounds and their dialectal variations in Wolof Language

Consonants:

The following consonants are found in Wolof language and Arabic as well:

/a/, /b/, /d/, /f/, /dʒ/, /k/, /l/, /m/, /n/, /q/, /r/, /s/, /t/, /w/, /x/, and /j/.

In Wolof language, there are consonants that are not found in Classical Arabic, such as /g/ which is pronounced as /g/ in Egyptian Arabic i.e. the verb *ga:tʃ* [ʁaʃʃa] (cheat), and the /p/ sound as in *pixi* [fax] (trap/trick). Another example is the compound sounds that consist of two sounds and pronounced as one-unit sound such as /tʃ/ which is pronounced as /ch/ in English i.e. church. This sound consists of two different sounds /t/ plosive sound, and /ʃ/, Palato-alveolar such as in the word *tʃib* [ʔiʔaruz] (rice).

The /ñ/, a nasal sound in Spanish too, is pronounced as /n/ followed by /j/. Sameer Istatieh calls it a diphthong, because it consists of two continuing sounds (Istaytyah, 2003, pp. 150-151) This sound can be heard clearly when pronouncing the pronoun *ninj* [naħnu] (we); some sounds are written as two sounds but they are read as one sound such as *nug* is pronounced as one sound, like in the English word *song*, and *ma:nug* [ʔana ʔaku:nu] (I am). The two sounds /m/ and /b/ are pronounced as *mb* such as *dʒamba* : r [dʒabba : r] (powerful/courageous)

The following 12 Arabic sounds are not found in Wolof language:

/θ/, /h/, /ð/, /z/, /ʒ/, /sʰ/, /dʰ/, /tʰ/, /ðʰ/, /ʁ/, /ʁʰ/, /h/ (Anjai, 1971, p. 156).

Wolof speakers substitute these sounds by alternative dialectal sounds. For example, when they pronounce the labiodental sounds (Istaytyih, 2005, p. 24), such as /θ/, /ð/ and /ðʰ/, they pronounce it as /s/, so they get rid of these sounds by transferring them to the back of the teeth in order to reduce the muscular effort required to pronounce these sounds, they say *wirs* [wirθ] (inherited), *tiskar* [tiðka:r] (memorial) and *salim* [ðʰ a:lim] (tyrannous).

The /dʰ/ sounds becomes /l/ when it occurs in the middle of the spoken word, they drop the bilabial /dʰ/ by transferring it besides the teeth to soften the muscular effort when pronouncing it. Its place of articulation is near to the articulations of /l/, at the tip of the tongue. This indicates that /l/ and /dʰ/ have nearly the same place of articulation; the difference between them is that /dʰ/ is a stop emphatic sound while /l/ is a plain sound (Aser, 1994, p. 18). This sound can be clearly heard when they pronounce the word *ʔla* : li : n (ʔldʰ dʰ a:li:n) in the Noble Quran. However, this letter is pronounced as /dal/ in the beginning and the end of a word. /dal/ is the plain equivalent for emphatic /dʰ/. This relates to their tendency to drop /dʰ/ sound due to the difficulty of its pronunciation (Mousa, 2001, p. 121), such the pronunciation of the word *daëm* [dʰ ai:m] (Peace Corps the Gambia, 1995, p. 29)

With regard to other emphatic sounds such as /sʰ/ and /tʰ/, their pronunciation can be problematic for Wolof people. Therefore, they substitute emphatic /sʰ/ with plain /s/, this can be heard when pronouncing the word *sadq* [sʰ adaqa] (charity). /tʰ/ is stop emphatic sound, it is a dento-alveolar; the speaker should makes effort when s/he pronounces it comparing to other plain sounds (Anis, 1981, p. 29) such as /t/ when pronouncing the word *ta:r* (tʰ a:hir) (Peace Corps the Gambia, 1995).

The resonance /z/ is transferred to /s/, while the voiceless palate-alveolar /ʒ/ (Ramadan, 1979, p. 114) is pronounced as voiceless /s/ for ease of articulation, such as pronouncing the word say *saita:n* (ʃ ai:tʰ a:n) (Peace Corps the Gambia, 1995).

Glottal sounds are problematic for Wolof people, for example, /ʁ/ is pronounced as the glottal sound /ʔ/ at the end of the word because it is existed in their language. It is known that /ʔ/ and /ʁ/ have nearly the same place of articulation, as /ʔ/ is a pharyngeal sound while /ʁ/ is a glottal (Anis, 1999, p. 77). Ibn Alsakeet (1978) mentions that some words are

pronounced in /ʔ/ in old Arabic dialects such as an old Arab saying *ʔsta ʔdaitu ʔl ʔami:r ʔala ʔula:n* in the meaning of [ʔstaʔdaitahu] (I antagonize the prince on someone) (p. 84).

Wolof people pronounce /ʕ/ as /ʔ/ at the beginning of the word such as the pronunciation of the proper noun *ʔaisa* instead of [ʕa: ʔ ʔah], while /ʔ/ in the middle of the sentence is heard as a long vowel, such as *ʔala:ʔia* instead of [ʔalʕa:fi:ah], *Ka:ba* instead of [Kaʕbah], or they may drop it from the word such as *ʔalarb* instead of saying [ʔalʔarbiʕa:ʔ]. /ʕ/ is pronounced as Cairene /g/, between the /q/ and /ʕ/; this sound is not used in standard Arabic (Al Saran, n.d., p. 156) They say *góm* [ʕammad¹ a] (to close his eyes) and *luga* [luxah] (language); /h/ is substituted by /ʔ/ when it is pronounced at the beginning of the word; it is heard when they pronounce the word *ʔaḥ*, they drop it in the middle and at the end of the word i.e. *ʔʔa:ḥ* (ʔlha:ḥ) and *ʔa:lu:* [ʔallu:h]. Also, /h/ sound is substituted by long hamza/ʔ/ such *ʔa:ru:n* instead of [Ha:ru:n], and it is dropped in the middle of the sentence such as the word *madi* [mahdi] (Anjai, 1971, p. 156).

There are some sounds that are not pronounced in the middle and at the end of the word such as stop Hamza. Arabic learners tend to the ease of articulations of these letters, such as *ʔa:xa* (ʔixa:ʔ), *ʔalarb* instead of [ʔlʔarbiʕa:ʔ] (Wednesday), while it is pronounced as /a/ at the beginning of the word *ʔbli :s* (Satan). The /q/ sound is substituted by hamza /ʔ/ at the beginning of the word *ʔa:ti* instead of [qa:d¹ i:] (*judge*), or /k/ as in *kula* instead of [qullah]; it is pronounced as /k/ in the middle of the word such as *takki:* instead of [tanaqul].

Vowels

Wolof language has 15 vowel sounds, short and long vowels; some of them are existed in Arabic such as the two front vowels short /i/ and long /i:/. The short one in Wolof is plain, it is a narrow and unrounded (Kholi, 1990, p. 98) for example, the pronunciation of the word *ʔaḥ*, they do not have the emphatic /i/ in their language. In Arabic, the emphatic /i/ comes with the emphatic sounds (/s¹ /, /d¹ /, /t¹ /, and /ð¹ /). As mentioned earlier, they substitute these letters by another letters for ease of articulation (Bsher, 2000, p. 230). Long /I/ is clearly heard in the pronunciation of the word *ʔbli:s* (Satan).

There are two main central vowels: short /a/ such as *ʔdʒan* (ʔldʒannah); it is equivalent to fatha, which goes above the end of a word and is pronounced as a short /a/, as they the emphatic fatha is not existed in their language because of its adjacent emphatic sounds, while long fatha /a:/ is clearly heard in the pronunciation of the noun *ʔala:dʒ* [alha:dʒ]. The two languages have the same back vowels: (d¹ amma), it resembles a tiny *waw*, goes above the end of a word, and is pronounced as a short /u/, such as the pronunciation of *dug* [da:dʒ] (walk in Arabic) and long d¹ amma /u:/ as in the word *tu:bi:n* [ta:ʔib] (repentant). Another similarity with Arabic vowels is that vowels in Wolof do not occur at the beginning of the word, but they occur in the middle and at the end of a word.

The vowel /ɛ/ in Wolof language is an equivalent to minor tilt in Arabic; this can be clearly heard when pronouncing *ʔalid* (ʔalʔahad). /aʊ/ is a compound vowel followed by gliding; it is clearly heard when pronouncing the last syllable of the word *ʔandandaʊ* [ʔanda:d] (Omenzoa, 1999, p. 57).

Some vowels in Wolof are not found in Arabic. However, they use them to pronounce the Arabic words existed in their language such as /o/, back round vowel, when pronouncing *dʒoma:n* (zama:n). The central vowel /ó/ can be heard when pronouncing the verb *góm* (closing eyes); the vowel /é/ in pronouncing the adjective *wét* [wa:hi:d], and the vowel /ë/ in pronouncing *daëm* [d¹ ai:m]. There are some diphthongs in Wolof such as /ee/, it is heard when pronouncing the word *kees* (bag) and the diphthong /éé/ in the verb *ʔéédʒa*, the diphthong /óó/ in pronouncing the word *ʔóóti* (washing clothes).

Apparently, there are shared vowels between the two languages; some of them are found in Wolof language only, but they employ them in pronouncing the borrowed Arab words in their language.

In conclusion, the sounds of Wolof language are affected by the Arabic sounds. The members of these tribes learned Arabic, the language of the Noble Quran; some of them pronounce the Arabic sounds accurately when reciting the Noble Quran. However, some of them have an accent when they pronouncing the Arabic sounds especially when pronouncing Arabic letters that are not found in their language. Thus they keep the phonological aspects of their language (Nias, 1969, p. 174). This often occurs when a word is borrowed in a certain language. The spread of Arabic among the Wolof tribes because of Islamic expansions and economical migrations affects the phonological sounds of these tribes. Therefore, Arabic overwhelmingly affected their phonological sounds.

C. Vocabulary Borrowed from Arabic

Wolof language borrowed many words from Arabic in different fields such as the religious field, as Arabic is the language of Islam for millions of the Wolof people, they recite the Noble Quran and perform their religious rituals i.e. prayer, Almsgiving, Pilgrimage by Arabic.

The following words are dedicated to serve this field:

ʔalamdulla [ʔlhamdulilah] (Praise to Allah), *ʔami : n* [ʔa:mi : n], *ʔalma:m* [ʔlʔima:m], *fart* [fard¹] (ritual), *ʔinsa:la:x* [ʔinʕa:ʔallah] (God willing), *dʒama:* [dʒa:miʕ] (mosque), *ka:ba* (Kaʕbah), *dʒul* [s¹ ala:h] (prayer), *ja:la:* [ja:l¹ :la:h] (Oh, God), *ka:mi:l* (Quran), *Kabbar* (Say Allah is the greatest), *ma:li:kum sala:m* [ʔalsala:mu ʕali:kum] (Peace be upon you), *sa:r* [su:ra fiʔlqurʔa:n] (a verse in the Noble Quran)

The majority of religious vocabulary has not been changed, as they use them with their equivalent pronunciations. Based on the abovementioned vocabulary, we can see that there is a limited phonological change in some sounds. However, few words were changed such as the word *Ka:mi:l* (The noble Quran). Malik Anjai (1971) states that the use

of the abandoned Wolof words in order to use Arabic ones instead are still kept in the memories of the Arab scholars due to their teaching methods in explaining the meaning of every word with its synonyms in Wolof. During times, their language became abandoned and the Wolof people transferred it from generation to another (Anjai, 155).

While the proper nouns and the vocabulary used in their social life and commercial transactions are accommodated into their own language patterns; they apply their linguistics rules on them such as deletion, addition or substitution to make the new vocabulary appropriate. They use the new vocabulary rather than its equivalent in their language. For example, in their social life, there are many Arabic vocabularies such as in customs, medical vocabulary and other social settings such as the following:

TABLE I.
BORROWED VOCABULARY FROM ARABIC IN SOCIAL SETTINGS

Wolof	Arabic	Translation
Sidiq	s ^ʿ adaqa	(charity)
?a:x	?ixa:ʔ	(brotherhood)
?al?afia	?alʕa:fi:ah	(health)
la:b	?al?ab	(father)
ta:r	t ^ʿ a:hir	(pure)
?andandaw	?anda:d	(peers)
?ani:u:n	?ana:ni:	(selfish)
dʒina:b	dʒuna:bah	(junaabah)
sia:r	zjjarah	(a visit)
dʒalab	dʒilba:b	(jilbab)
Fitan	fitnah	(turbulence)
tandʒur	tannawr	(oven)
Pixi	fax	(trick)
Wirad	Mari:d ^ʿ	(patient)
tu:bi:n	ta:ʔibi:n	(repentant)
ru:s	raʕ	(spray)
ja?irma:nd	Rahi:m	(beneficent)
li:ka	?al?akl	(food)
Nat	Na:s	(people)
kai:l	Qullah	(a jar for water)

(Peace Corps the Gambia, 1995)

In the commercial field, there were mutual relations between Arabs and Wolof people. These relations based on business transactions at first. As a result, the Wolof people relayed on Arabic commercial vocabulary in the transactions of buying and selling such as the following:

TABLE II.
BORROWED VOCABULARY FROM ARABIC IN COMMERCE

Wolof	Arabic	Translation
Kasa:rah	xasa:rah	(a loss)
Qabul	qubu:l	(acceptance)
ga:tʃ	ʕaʕfa	(cheating)
Fad	fud ^ʿ d ^ʿ ah	(silver)
Riba:	riba:	(usury)
gafara:n	zaʕfara:n	(Safron)
Sugl	ʕuxul	(work)
dʒib	dʒi:b	(pocket)
Tadʒur	Ta:dʒir	(trader)
daram	dirham	(Dirham)

Importantly, what happens to the form and the meaning of the Arabic word, as the Arabic word loses some of its letters by the phonological deletion or substitution of the Arabic sounds which are not found in Wolof. The deletion or the addition that occurs to the borrowing Arab vocabulary may lead to deteriorate the Arabic word such as the abbreviation of the proper noun Ibrahim to *ʔib*, they delete five letters: R, *madah* (elongation), H, Y, and M. This deteriorates this name as they keep only two letters of this name. In addition, they delete the beginning of the noun such as deleting the /ʕ/ from the word *qil* instead of *ʕaqil* and the /r/ in *sax* instead of *rasax* (suppuration) (Sissi, 1976, p.74).

They sometimes substitute short vowels by long ones in some Arabic vocabulary. In addition, they reduce the stress in the same vocabulary, as it transfers from a verb into a subject. This can be clearly seen in the Arabic verb *t^ʿ abba* (*fall*), in Wolof language, it becomes *ta:b*, the /t^ʿ/ sound is substituted by /t/, and the short *fatha* by Alaf (a), then they /b/ sound is unstressed.

Wolof language borrowed many vocabularies from Arabic, and it gives these vocabulary new semantic meaning such as the verb *safar* (to travel) in Arabic mean *sacred water* in Wolof language. The word *fearful* in Arabic means *hungry*, in Wolof; the word *sa:n* means insane and *insa:n* in Arabic means human. In Wolof and the verb *go to bed* in Arabic means to *wake up* in Wolof.

D. Conjugations

Arabic is a derivative language, as it focuses on the root of the word and changes it, the verb becomes in the present by adding the present mark to the beginning of the root such as *baʔa:* (in the past tense) becomes in the present tense by adding /j/ *jabʔi:*. If we add one of the future letters to this verb, it will be in the future tense *sajabʔi:*. In the first case, it is an adverb while in the second it is future tense (Ghalayini, 1981, p. 194). If the action continues at the time of speaking, the tense will be in the present, such as "*jabʔi ʔali: duxu:l ʔqaʔah ʔala:n*" (I ought to enter the classroom now), but the sentence "*jabghʔi ʔali: duxu:l ʔqaʔah ʔadan*" (I ought to enter the classroom tomorrow), the word *ʔadan* gives an indication to the future.

On the other hand, Wolof verbs are not derivative. However, some suffixes are added to the time of the verb to make it past or present; the verb can be in the future too. For example, if we want to know the tense of the verb *bugi* (want), we should look at the tense attached to it i.e. using the time reference *ma:ng* indicates that the tense of the verb is in the present, while the time reference *dina:* refers to the future tense, and the reference *damaj* is a possessive pronoun and it is used to confirm the action of the verb, see the following verbs:

TABLE III.
CONJUGATION IN ARABIC AND WOLOF

Wolof	Arabic	Translation
Ma:ng bugga ʔi:dikt	ʔana: ʔabʔi: ʔið ^ʔ ah	I need an advice (continuous)
Dina: bugga ʔi:dikt	ʔana: ʔabʔi: ʔið ^ʔ ah	I will need an advice (future)
Dami bugi ʔi:dikt	ʔana: ʔabʔi: ʔið ^ʔ ah	I need an advice(emphasis)
Bugu:n na ʔi:dikt	ʔana: bavi:tu ʔið ^ʔ ah	(I needed an advice)

The suffix (oon) is attached to the verb to emphasize its occurrence in the past.

There is a similarity between Arabic and Wolof pronouns, for example the pronoun *ma:ngi*. If we delete the /m/ and /g/, it will be like the singular first person pronoun [ʔana:] in Arabic. The plural pronoun *nundʔi:* in Wolof is similar to the plural first person pronoun *nahnu* (we), if we delete the /dʒ / and the /h/ which is already not found in Wolof.

If we drop /d/ from the first person singular pronoun [dina:], it indicates the future time, we will have (na:) which is near to the first person singular pronoun [ana:] in Arabic; if drop of /d/ from the plural first person pronoun [danu], it becomes [nu], which is near to the Arabic pronoun [nahnu]. These are some evidence that Arabic affects the conjugations of pronouns and verbs.

With regard to Arabic present tense verbs which mixed in their spoken and written language, they changed some letter and added the prefix /y/ to indicate the present tense such as the following examples:

jarʔim	jarhām
jangil	janqul
ji:u:	jaʔwi

E. Masculinity and Femininity

Wolof language does not have definite pronouns for gender, they sometimes use the prefix /j/ to distinguish the feminine, and they neglect it when they refer to masculine. However, they distinguish between masculine and feminine when they use Arabic words such as:

Dafa ʔani:u:n	hwa ʔana:ni:	He's selfish
Daf ʔani:ua:ni:	hi:a ʔana:ni:ah	She's selfish

When referring to feminine, they use the diphthong /ee/ for the adjective, it is pronounced as /ay/, it is a semi-vowel in Arabic; it is clearly heard when pronouncing the word *bayt* [b+y]. In addition, when they pronounce the feminine Arabic words, they pronounce it with a minor tilt, such as in the Lebanese dialect, and using *Kasrah* with a light elongation i.e. *dʒana:zi:* (*dʒana:za*), or they drop the /t/ sound and pronounce it as *fatha* /a/, i.e. *ka:ba* (*kaʔbah*).

F. Definite and Indefinite Articles

Wolof language has different definite articles such as [s,j,w,m,l,y]. These articles should fit the noun that it describes, as some of them refer to singular nouns, and the others to the plural; it is used as a suffix. If we trace the Arabic nouns used in Wolof, we find that they pronounce and write them using Arabic definite article [al], see the following words:

ʔla:g	ʔalha:dʒ	ʔalid	ʔalʔahad
ʔldʒan	ʔldʒannah	ʔallafi	ʔalʔa:fi:ah
ʔalamdulla	ʔalhamdullah	ʔalrab	ʔlʔarbiʔa:ʔ
ʔlimam	ʔalʔima:m	li:k	ʔalʔakl

They do not add the definite article [ʔal] to the Arabic indefinite nouns:

daem	d ^f ai:m
ʔin	ʔa:n
dʒa:d	dʒa:dd
dʒo ma:n	zama:n

IV. RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

- Wolof is the official language in Senegal, and it is used in other countries such as Mauritania, Gambia, Mali, Guinea, and Guinea Bissau.
- This language belongs to the Roman Niger-Congo; Arabic affects this language and enriches it with many vocabulary and expressions in different fields such as: religious, commercial, social and cultural.
- Arabic language has been the best instrument that portrayed the Islamic for many centuries. The effect of Arabic language is still significant in the religious vocabulary written Arabic font and still used in their language.
- The Arabists members of Wolof tribes, who are affected by the Islamic culture, prefer to transfer the Arabic vocabulary and terminologies into their native language.
- Some Arabic words were deteriorated when they are used in Wolof language, as Wolof people reproduce these words in ways that fit their phonological system.
- Wolof language borrowed many Arabic words, and these new vocabularies acquire different meanings.
- They use the Arabic conjugations of verbs.
- Arabic language introduced religious, moral and intellectual values that affected the behaviors of these tribes by learning new Islamic expressions read or written in Arabic fonts.
- Wolof language borrowed some aspects of the Arabic syntax such as the pronouns, conjugations, feminine and masculine, definite and indefinite articles.

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Thai University Academics' Challenges of Writing for Publication in English

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Abstract—This study examines challenges faced by Thai university lecturers with regards to publishing their academic works in English. 18 academics from two university settings in Thailand were involved in this investigation. The interviews were used to understand the lecturers' perceptions of the issues in writing for scholarly publication in the English language. Particularly, the aim of the research sought to discover what hindrances Thai university academics experienced and how they handled them. In addition, their needs for successful publishing were explored. The findings revealed three salient emerging themes, including (1) the need for publication in English; (2) difficulties in writing in English; and (3) the need for strenuous research support. The study suggests that university lecturers need more encouragement and support to publishing their academic works as a means of securing professional development, enhancing research culture and maintaining and increasing the national and international reputation of the university along with quality assurance.

Index Terms—Thai University Academics, challenges, writing for publication

I. INTRODUCTION

Academic publications are usually perceived as highly related to being 'scholastic' or 'expert' of the researcher or university lecturer in the field concerned. Currently, the concept of 'publish or perish', which denotes the value of writing for publication, has greatly influenced academia all over including Thailand (Belcher, 2007). As a consequence, Thai university lecturers and researchers are under enormous pressure to publish in standard national or international journals or proceedings. As one of the main requirements of quality assurance, lecturers' academic work publication or dissemination accounts for important assessment outcomes for the research component (OHEC, 2014). The outcomes as such would then be used to evaluate the quality of Thai universities with regard to research capabilities and potential and given this it seems that the more academic publication there is, the more social prestige universities obtain. Moreover, in some university settings, publications have been found to be one of the criteria used for university lecturers' or researchers' yearly performance appraisal and salary adjustments (Belcher, *ibid.*)

Having an academic or research paper published is an intricate process for educators in all disciplines in general including Thai teachers of English who are both experienced and inexperienced (Cheung, 2010). In fact, writing for publication requires some fundamentals of English writing skills to make the outcome academically sound enough for possible inclusion in well-established journals (Moldovan, 2011). Therefore, a number of university lecturers regardless of their areas of specialty would encounter difficulties when writing their articles in English. Coates et al. (2002) add that the researcher's insufficient linguistic skills normally result in paper denial. Instead, it is to be noted that the English language witnessed remarkable changes and spread outside its inner circle (Kachru, 2005) to have new varieties of importance.

In addition to lacking required academic writing proficiency together with the hegemony of English, other issues such as the problems of defining research performance outcomes and the dilemma of publishing in local versus international journals, particularly when the priority is on mainstream international journals, should be given consideration as well. As English has become the major language for academic publishing in international journals, university lecturers and researchers have no exception but to publish in English in order to have wide representation and recognition.

This research pursues to investigate a delicate and critically overlooked research area in the Thai university context and to answer issues pertinent to the way university lecturers view writing for publication in English, factors that make writing for publication in English arduous, their perceptions of the importance of writing for publication in English and their needs for successful publishing.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the academic world, adeptness in writing in English is increasingly regarded as an important component to prominence and more explicitly to getting research published in national and international journals and proceedings. The defiance faced by university researchers in writing for submission to English language journals is well documented and considered weighty. Not only is it just about writing academically acceptable, but it is also about keeping pace with the literature, conducting research in one language and writing up the results in another, choosing the right journal,

understanding meticulous journal and manuscript procedures, collaborating with editors, and interpreting reviewers' feedback, and possibly resubmitting the edited paper to the editor for final approval and finally getting official confirmation for the paper to be published.

English as a language for international communication

It is commonly held that as an international language, English, can support networking and exchange of ideas, as well as expertise among academics and professionals (Duszak & Lewkowicz, 2008). Thus, in various institutes worldwide, publications in English have come to have higher status and establish a major criterion for promotion and for supporting scholars to apply for research grants (Canagarajah, 1996; Flowerdew, 1999; Yakhontova, 1997). Even though "publish or perish" is an adage in academic environments in spite of the language of publication (Salager-Meyer, 2013), writing for publication in English is noteworthy nowadays. It is considered necessary to progress of the profession (Driscoll & Driscoll, 2002). English has come to fore as the chief language of international scholarship and research and the central language of information and technology. To add to this, Huang (2010) indicates that the need for publication in English to gain acknowledgment in the international community is of great importance for scholars and that English-medium publications serve a platform for polyglot researchers to publicize their research broadly. In line with this, refereed journals published in English are often considered a requirement for rewards, tenure and promotion in universities in Asia (Cheung, 2010).

Difficulty in writing for publication in English

Evidently, English is the leading medium of international academic journals and publication and achievement in universities. However, academic writing in English is fundamentally demanding and challenging (Biber & Gary, 2010). Thus, many challenges are created for scholars in peripheral countries to write articles that can be published (Huang, 2010). These challenges can be categorized into two main types: discursive (language-related) and non-discursive (non-language-related) (Ferguson, 2011).

Discursive Challenges

For non-native English speakers, lack of English competence can make them fail to meet reviewers and editors' expectations (Curry & Lillis, 2010). In fact, some researchers identified several problems which make writing for publication in English difficult. Flowerdew (1999) observed that problems include lack of capability of expression; difficulty in ensuing from a discourse community, and longer time to write in English. Other challenges encompass lack of rich vocabulary, difficulty in making claims or structuring their arguments, L1 influence on the process of composition, problems in writing unified and well-structured paragraphs, synthesizing, and creating scholarly introductions and discussions, and ability in writing quantitatively rather than qualitatively (Okamura, 2006; Fahy, 2008).

Furthermore, there are some other complications reported in the literature such as use of citations; making reference to the available literature, use of hedges, intervention of different cultural views in connection with the nature of academic processes, low value of research, and absence of methodological thoroughness (Duszak and Lewkowicz, 2008; Mauranen, 1993).

In the Asian context, Al Fadda (2012) reported that the most frequently indicated difficulties in writing for publication in English by non-native speakers of English in China are procedural difficulties with English such as rhetorical patterning and genres, textual organization, innovative and different thinking, developing own voice, writers' block, and reporting the literature.

Non-discursive Challenges

In understanding the restrictions placed upon publishing in English, challenges of publishing which are not related to language need to be discussed. These, mainly elusive factors, can include plagiarism, emotional and psychological factors, motivation, grasping the culture of the reader for which an article is going to address, creating academic voice, the feelings of self-worth and aptitude attached to academic writing, lack of awareness and funding issues.

Other non-discursive challenges include lack of availability of resources, undependable communication means, deficiency of equipment and Internet access, lack of budget for specialized editorial staff, absence of training, lack of research and secretarial assistance, difficulties in dealing with editorial staff and assessors, dearth of financial sources, unreliable mailing services, and help from colleagues and supervisors (Canagarajah, 2002; Salager-Meyer, 2008).

Other challenges

Belcher (2007) argued that from the concept of 'peer reviews', off-network or peripheral non-native English speaking academics are likely to disregard the spectrum of constructive criticism owing to their foreignness with and exclusion from the English language publishing network. This can be seen in a form of "silencing" (Kramsch and Lam, 1999) causing publication attempting academics to keep quiet and feel reluctant to pursue the intent of publishing especially after receiving feedback from peer reviewing. This can then lead to the feelings of prejudice and publication opposition.

In the Thai context, studies to find out challenges of writing for publication in English faced by Thai university academics in EFL contexts are thus needed to shed light on the issues. Findings could then shed light on some guidance to help Thai researchers and practitioners to withstand the difficulties that they face in writing for publication in English.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

In view of the background and contextual description provided, this study sought to answer the following research questions:

- What are the university lecturers' perceptions of publishing in English?
- What are their problems with publishing in English?
- What are their needs for successful publishing?

Participants in the study consisted of 18 university lecturers (15 female; 3 male) from two universities in Thailand. Ten of the participants worked at a private university while 8 others served at a public-run university. All participants have been university lecturers for more than 5 years and 4 of them have had experience publishing their papers in academic journals over the past 3 years. The interviews were designed to understand university lecturers' perceptions of the issues in writing for academic publication in English in Thailand. Specifically, the purpose of the interviews was to investigate what complications university lecturers in Thailand faced and how they handled such problems. In addition, the needs deemed necessary to publish their work successfully were investigated.

The participants were selected using the non-purposive sampling technique where the participants were investigated based on the judgment of the researcher. This enabled the researcher to target the participants according to the purpose of this study and knowledge of the population. Because of certain characteristics as teaching in higher education and having had to deal with academic publication in their career, the participants could be representative of the Thai university lecturers in Thailand. The two groups of participants working in private and public universities were also purposively divided so as to compare and contrast these two groups of lecturers' perceptions related to writing for publication in English.

As the researcher had a framework of themes to be explored, semi-structured interviews were used. The researcher first prepared an interview guide containing open-ended questions (See Appendix). During the interviews, the researcher tape-recorded the interviews and later transcribed the tapes for content analysis. This method was adopted to allow discussions to diverge from the interview guide and new ideas could be brought up during the interviews.

It was found that the use of semi-structured interviews made it possible for the researcher to prepare questions ahead of time. It also allowed the researcher to be prepared and appear competent during the interviews. At the same time, the participants had freedom to express their views in their own terms.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings pertaining to three salient themes include:

The need for publication in English

All of the participants agreed that publication in English can help convey ideas to international readers as English is now a language for international communication. Several also pointed out that from 2015 onwards English will be used as the official language for business for AEC (ASEAN Economic Community), raising the importance of English throughout Asia. Specifically, those from the public university added that they are facing pressure from government authorities requiring them to have publication in English while the private university lecturers pointed out they are required by their university to publish in English for quality assurance purposes. Finding a job and/or getting promoted are the other reasons that some of the participants referred to.

These responses support the idea that Thai university lecturers recognize the importance of learning English as a language of global communication. In fact, some research has pointed to the prominence of English as an international language for research. For example, Duszak and Lewkowicz (2008) have identified that the use of English could enable scholarly communication among university researchers and on top support their professional development. It is a relevant fact that the hegemony of English as a lingua franca has significant consequences for research and academic writing by university faculties in both expanding and outer circles (Kachru and Nelson, 2006).

Difficulties in writing in English

Discursive Analysis

The analysis from the interview showed that most respondents have indicated grammar, research-related discussion, lack of technical vocabulary, sentence formation and writing styles as linguistic challenges for writing intellectually in English. This finding is in line with the previous research in the field (Al Fadda, 2012; Flowerdew, 1999) which reported the linguistic challenges that non-native English teachers face when writing for publication in English. Insufficiency of proficiency in Standard English as well as mastery of research-related protocol can be considered as a key obstacle for Thai university lecturers wishing to publish in English. However, a few participants with academic background in the field of EFL and Linguistics reported no discursive complication in their attempt to publish work in English.

Non-Discursive Analysis

The non-discursive feature includes concerns over non-linguistic areas in writing for publication in English. The areas identified by most respondents as non-language related issues in publication writing included poor critical and analytical skills, inadequate sources, restricted access to dependable sources, bias toward non-native English authors, managerial duties, lack of university support, lack of suitable laboratories, and unsatisfactory research skills. Also, the participants specified heavy teaching load, non-existence of research communities and interest group, dearth of research funds, difficulty in accessing proper publishers, some reviewers' unfavorable feedback as well as difficulty in choosing

publishable research topics as non-language related impediments to writing in English. By and large, most respondents' responses to non-discursive challenges were quite similar, enabling the possibility of generalizing the results among the participants to some extent. Interestingly, it appears that the lecturers' research involvement was influenced by a dynamic interaction between internal and external factors. The lecturers each valued research differently. Time constraints and limited research funding and support were major factors affecting their research involvement. Thus, it could be said that the lecturers' research culture was not well-developed and that might explain the lecturers' low research outcomes in terms of quantity and quality. The study also revealed that the status of the Thai lecturers' research culture was negatively impacted by priorities in the wider global research context. According to Canagarajah (2002), non-discursive conventions and requirements of academic publishing can serve specific functions which discard Third World scholars from the academic publication process.

The need for research support

Most respondents addressed an important role of Thai higher education institutions in encouraging Thai university lecturers to be more involved in research domains and activities. More than half of the respondents believed that Thai universities can contribute in supporting research oriented functions by conducting training and workshops by expert researchers as well as an English writing center or lab for language editing support. Several respondents indicated that receiving appropriate individual guidance in writing and attending relevant writing workshops would be beneficial while a few suggested that receiving support in searching for appropriate research topics that work within the context of Thailand could be an initial step to minimize difficulties they experience when writing in English. It was added that a reduction of teaching load, research grants, incentives and rewards for university lecturers should be provided systematically and substantially with the linking of performance appraisal with research. Martin (2000) stated that the governments and universities' initiatives on research funding and support are relatively insignificant within the wider context of potential means of allocating funds. Administrative decision remains a prevailing force, amplified by peer review and institution-level performance-based allocation. Thus, in the Thai context, it would seem that Thai universities need to take serious steps to ensure that research is placed as a top urgency in their strategic plans and personnel professional development programs.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The dominance of English in international research is a linguistic occurrence which has notable insinuation for teachers and researchers aspiring to publish in standard journals in English. This has made writing scholarly articles for publication in English become increasingly necessary. In particular, the current situation presents a formidable challenge for the Thai university lecturers trying to publish in English.

The accounts of language-related and non-language related challenges reported by the participants in study who are Thai university lecturers reveal how hard it is to tackle the current condition and maintain a balance between and doing research work and teaching. For the language related barriers, it appears to be common problems for non-native speakers of English as writing challenges include vocabulary, grammar, discourse organization and tone. As for the non-linguistic barriers, time constraints and limited research funding and support are main purported reasons deterring their research participation and interest.

To increase the chances of academic publications in certified and accredited journals, Thai university lecturers may adopt some strategic plans with university support. Universities can establish academic writing programs for lecturers to promote their professional development, including fostering the understanding of research writing conventions, informing lecturers of clear standards for academic publication in English, and developing plans for lecturers based on their specific needs in writing.

University support for research is thus imperative. To assure quality in research, Thai universities should also focus on creating forums which could be in the form of conferences, workshops, and seminars where faculty members can appropriately discuss, share, and inquire about ideas with other associated researchers. Besides, university lecturers, universities, the Thai government, and policymakers concerned need to take more responsibility in developing an effective research culture due to its significance in the global economy.

At a personal level, Thai university lecturers on the whole dissimilarly perceive the importance of research and writing for publication. However, the bottom line is that they need to have own inspiration to conduct research of their interest. Otherwise, publishing academic works would always be seen as a burden, not a boon per se. What they should have first and foremost is the desire to step beyond the known and enter into the world of participants, to see the world from their standpoints, and make discoveries that will contribute to the development of empirical knowledge.

APPENDIX. SAMPLE OF THE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Would you please tell me about your background as a university lecturer?
2. Do you teach at a private or public university?
3. What are the differences between public and private universities in Thailand?
4. What do you like most and least about your job?
5. What are the main requirements of your job?

6. Do you require to do research on the job?
7. What kind of research support do you get?
8. Do you publish regularly in journals or proceedings? What language do/will you use for publication?
9. What do you think about publishing your work in English? How hard is it?
10. What problems do you have when trying to publish your work in English? How do you deal with them?
11. What kind of support do you need from your university to publish successfully?
12. Overall, what does it take for you to write for publication in English?

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The Effect of Cooperative Strategies versus Concept Visualization on Reading Comprehension Ability of Intermediate EFL Learners

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Abstract—Reading in foreign language learning has an important place. While the advances in L1 reading comprehension have led us to gain a more comprehensive picture of the nature of reading, the similar studies in L2 context have not had the same impact. Furthermore, the fact that the majority of Iranian second language (L2) learners have been taught by traditional methods has compounded the problem. To unravel the aforementioned dilemma, this study was conducted to find out the effect of cooperative strategies versus visualization on Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) students' reading comprehension. In order to carry out the study, 45 female EFL learners, with the age range of 17 to 18 were chosen and after administering the pretest, they were assigned to two experimental groups (visualization and cooperative strategies) and one control group. A predominantly quantitative approach coupled with quasi-experimental design was used. After the treatment, a posttest was given to all groups. The meticulous analysis of data using paired *t* test and One-Way ANCOVA indicated that the participants in cooperative group outperformed the students in visualization group on reading comprehension test. It also revealed that conventional teaching approach did not have any significant effect on students' performance in control group. This study offered some implications for teachers and course developers.

Index Terms— cooperative strategy, concept visualization, reading comprehension, EFL

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading in English as foreign language has a central role in academic learning. This can be attributed to the host of reasons. First, foreign language learners have little direct access and exposure to the target language outside of classroom context and hence most of their interactions come through reading (Boss, 2002, as cited in Altamimi, 2006). Second, foreign language students themselves consider reading as a special priority and they want “to be able to read for information and pleasure, for their career, and for study purposes” (Richards & Renandya, 2002, p. 273). In other words, the ability to read in a target language has been at the heart of many teaching methods (Grabe, 2009).

Having enjoyed abundant body of research in the last decade (see for example Anderson, 2000), reading comprehension study has now turned to become a hot topic in language teaching methodology. Interminable enquires have been made in reading comprehension that attempt to shed a light on this complex issue. Acquisition of literary skill is not an over-night endeavor. A successful reader learns to implement various strategies to handle reading comprehension obstacles. Grabe (2009) was very clear in emphasizing the importance of reading comprehension strategies: "Acquisition of better reading strategies is apparently needed to crack the illusion of comprehension in readers who are settling for low standards of comprehension. They need to acquire and implement strategies to facilitate deeper levels of comprehension" (p. 449).

From the host of reading strategies recommended for boosting reading comprehension, the role of visualization has been unclear. Generally speaking, lexical items leave us with pictures, echoes and feeling when they enter our mind through reading a text. The ability to create and see these pictures in mind, which is commonly known as *visualization* in literature, has been hypothesized to be one of the fundamental features in reading process (Ghazanfari, 2009). However, while it is generally believed that those second language learners who are able to produce image in their minds during reading process have far greater comprehension and recall than those who do not. Research findings show that L2 learners fail to transfer this capability to second language context (Tomlinson, 1997).

From the myriad of strategies recommended to bolster learner's reading comprehension, the role of visualization has been enigmatic (Tomlinson, 1997). McNamara (2007) categorizes visualization as a metacognitive reading strategy which leads in improvement in comprehension. Pressley (2000) considers visualization as the fifth strategy along with prediction, questioning, clarification, and summarization. In a similar vein, Johnson-Laird (1983) states that ultimate

goal of reader is construction of mental model. So as we can see research in this realm has a long and rich history (McNamara, 2007). Kordjuazi (2014) explored the effect of visual mnemonic practice on students' reading comprehension. The participants of this study were 55 Iranian psychologist seniors chosen out of 71 students based on their PET language proficiency test scores. They were divided into homogenous groups of experimental and control. The experimental group utilized the variety of visual mnemonic devices, including picture and visualization. To test reading comprehension, open-ended questioning was used. Results of independent *t* test clearly showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group. Erfani, Iranmehr, and Davari (2011) investigated the role of visualization on ESP reading comprehension ability of Iranian students. To this end, two homogeneous groups of students were considered as experimental and control groups. Before treatment, a pretest was also conducted to capture the initial differences. The students in experimental group were taught based on experimental method and the control group was taught based on traditional, conventional method common in Iranian ESP setting. After 24 sessions of two hours, a test of 30-item multiple choice was given to the both groups. The findings of the study revealed that students in experimental group experienced "significant advantage" in using visualization in promoting ESP reading comprehension.

Another highly valued issue is the role of cooperative strategies in language learning. Cooperative learning can be defined as "a set of instructional methods in which students work together in small, mixed ability learning groups" (Chen, 2000, p. 70). Cooperative learning aims at establishing a learner-centered teaching atmosphere where learners control their learning pace (Brown, 2001). Law (2011) studied the effect of cooperative learning strategies on fifth-grade students on achievement, motivation and reading proficiency. The research sample consisted of 279 students. They were assigned to three intact groups: 1) direct-instruction with jigsaw; 2) direct-instruction with drama activity, and; 3) direct-instruction with whole class-teacher-led activities. ANCOVA results indicated that there were significant differences between group performances on reading comprehension scores. Using jigsaw with teacher support improves reading comprehension.

A. Statement of the Problem

Since the 1980s, a number of grand breaking advances have been made in research on reading. While the advances in L1 context have led us to gain a more comprehensive picture of the nature of reading, the similar studies in L2 context have not had the same impact (Richards & Renandya, 2002). Furthermore, although extensive research studies have been conducted in the fledgling, yet rich realm of second language reading in the last decades, we have witnessed the dearth of research on reading strategies and their roles in L2 reading comprehension. Considering the problems stated above and the importance of reading comprehension in L2 context, it is vital to investigate whether visualization and cooperative learning strategies have any effect on the improvement of reading comprehension in L2 context.

B. Research Questions

Research questions of the present study are as follows:

Q1: Does visualization have any significant effect on reading comprehension ability of intermediate EFL learners?

Q2: Does cooperative learning strategies have any significant effect on reading comprehension ability of intermediate EFL learners?

Q3: Is there any significant difference between the effects of visualization and cooperative strategies on reading comprehension ability of intermediate EFL learners?

C. Research Hypotheses

The null hypotheses are:

H01: Visualization has no significant effect on reading comprehension ability of intermediate EFL learners.

H02: Cooperative strategies have no significant effect on reading comprehension ability of intermediate EFL learners.

H03: There is not a significant difference between the effects of visualization and cooperative strategies on reading comprehension ability of intermediate EFL learners.

II. METHOD

A. Participants

In order to conduct this study, 45 out of 60 EFL female learners, within the age range of 17 to 18 were chosen. They all came from Tehran Oxford Institute. To secure the representativeness of the sample, all of the learners were purposively selected. They were selected on the basis of the institute evaluation. Through Nelson test, 45 students whose scores were between one standard deviation above and below the mean score were selected for intermediate level and other participants were considered as outliers.

B. Instruments

In this study, three different tests were administered at three different points: one proficiency test for determining the level of participants; two reading tests which were used as pretest and posttest. Three instruments used in this study were as follows:

a) Nelson test (series 400A) as proficiency test (PT): Nelson English language proficiency test (Fowler & Coe, 1976) was administered to the participants prior to treatment so as to compare the means and make sure that the participants were homogeneous in terms of proficiency. Although, the participants were of the same level and grade, the researchers had to be sure of their equal level of proficiency. It consisted of 50 multiple-choice items made in four parts: grammar (two parts), vocabulary, and reading comprehension. The time allotted was 40 minutes. Nelson Test 400 (A) is usually used to identify whether our target participants are intermediate or not.

b) Pretest: Before the treatment, a pretest was administered to the participants in order to elicit the initial differences among the learners. The pretest consisted of 30 multiple choice reading items selected from TOEFL Actual Tests (August 2002) by Ebteda Publications.

c) Posttest: After the treatment, a posttest was given to all participants based on the materials or content covered during treatment or teaching phase. The posttest consisted of 30 multiple choice reading items selected from TOEFL Test Preparation Kit. The items were different from the pretest but they were selected based on the materials covered during the term.

C. Design of the Study

According to Dornyei (2007), since in educational contexts true experimental designs use random group assignments and it is not very practicable; therefore, quasi-experimental design is usually used. Quasi-experimental design can be simply illustrated as the following:

COG:	T1	X1	T2
VG:	T1	X2	T2
CG:	T1	T2

X1 stands for treatment given to cooperative group, X2 represents treatment for visualization group, COG represents cooperative group, VG stands for visualization group, CG represents control group, and T1/T2 for pre and post-tests. In this study, cooperative and visualization learning are the independent variables and the learners' reading comprehension is the dependent variable.

D. Procedure

First of all the Nelson general proficiency test (Nelson, series 400A) was administered to the participants before the treatment in order to compare their proficiencies and make sure that there was no significant difference between them. By administrating a Nelson test, 45 students whose scores were between one standard deviation above and below the mean were selected. Then the participants were purposively selected and were assigned randomly to three groups equally: cooperative group (COG) and visualization group (VG) and control group (CG). Then, a pre-test was given to students to capture the initial differences among the participants regarding their reading skill. Every session, one reading passage was given to students of all groups. Students in COG worked in small groups using Jigsaw technique, discussed the material together, shared their understanding, and helped each other when they were in trouble. The teacher then read aloud the passage, asked the follow up questions. If students had any problem, teacher would answer their questions.

Students in VG group were told before reading a text not to study it or translate it but to imagine pictures as they read it and then to change these pictures as they found further information in the text. They were also sometimes told to focus their images initially on what was familiar in the text and then to use these images to help them work out what was unfamiliar in the text. Another frequently given instruction was to picture a summary of each section of the text immediately after reading it and to attempt a pictorial summary immediately after finishing the text. "Sometimes visualization instructions were inserted into comprehension questions to help students to make connection" (Tomlinson, 2011, p. 369). It is worth mentioning that the instructions were given orally in English by the teacher in the classroom. Students in the control group were taught traditionally. They were taught the same material. However, no treatment was given to them. That is, the passage was read by the teacher aloud, it was translated, some English synonyms or antonyms might be given and then students preceded answering follow-up questions. The teaching period lasted for 8 sixty-minute sessions. After covering the course, a posttest was administered to all groups, in order to determine the effect of training on students.

III. RESULTS

A. Data Analysis

The distribution of scores for dependent variable should be normal for each value of the independent variable. To check this assumption, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was utilized. Table 1 shows the results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test.

TABLE 1.
THE KOLMOGOROV-SMIRNOV TEST TO SHOW NORMALITY OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE DATA

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a		
	Statistic	N	Sig.
Pre test	.830	60	.497*
Post test	.738	60	.647*

Given the statistics of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test is not significant, Table 1 shows that the assumption of normality of variables has been observed ($P > .01$).

In order to understand the average performance of the participants and distribution of their scores on each of the variables, it was attempted to present the descriptive statistics parameters (Mean, Standard deviation, Minimum score, and Maximum score) in Table 2.

TABLE 2.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

		N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Control	Pretest	20	76	98	85.75	5.437
	posttest	20	77	97	85.95	5.336
visualization group	Pretest	20	76	98	85.50	7.178
	posttest	20	77	99	86.5	7.104
cooperative group	Pretest	20	76	98	85.70	7.116
	posttest	20	77	99	88.90	6.719

With regard to first research hypothesis, visualization has no significant effect on reading comprehension ability of intermediate EFL learners, the descriptive statistics showed that there is a difference between pretest and posttest in visualization group in reading comprehension ability. In order to inspect whether this difference is significant, the paired-samples *t* test was utilized. The results of this analysis have been presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3.
PAIRED SAMPLES TEST

Paired Differences	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference						t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
				Lower	Upper				
Post Test - pretest	-.550	1.276	.285	-1.147	.047	-1.927	19	.069	

Based on the results presented in the Table 3, it can be concluded that With the 95% confidence that there is not a significant difference in the mean scores of the subjects between the pretest ($M=85.50$, $SD=7.178$) and posttest ($M=85.5$, $SD=7.104$) in visualization group ($t= 1.927$, $P > 0.05$). Based on the results presented in Table 3, significant change has not been observed in posttest scores in comparison to pretest scores. Therefore, the first research hypothesis was not rejected.

With regard to second research hypothesis, cooperative strategies have no significant effect on reading comprehension ability of intermediate EFL learners, the descriptive statistics showed that there is a difference between pretest and posttest in cooperative group in comprehension ability. In order to inspect whether this difference is significant, the paired-samples *t* test was utilized. The results of the analysis have been presented in the Table 4.

TABLE 4.
PAIRED SAMPLES TEST

Paired Differences	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference						t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
				Lower	Upper				
ost-test - Pre-test	3.200	3.847	.860	5.000	1.400	3.720	19	.001	

Based on the results presented in the Table 4, it can be concluded that with 95% confidence, there is a significant difference in the mean scores of the subjects between the pretest ($M=85.70$, $SD=7.12$) and posttest ($M=88.90$, $SD=6.72$) in cooperative group ($t= 3.72$, $P < 0.05$). Based on the results presented in Table 4, significant change is observed in posttest scores in comparison to pretest scores. Therefore, the second research null hypothesis was rejected.

With regard to the third research hypothesis that stated there is no significant difference between visualization and cooperative strategies on reading comprehension ability of intermediate EFL learners, the descriptive statistics showed that there is a difference between control group, visualization group and cooperative group in comprehension ability. In

order to inspect whether this difference is significant, the ANCOVA analysis was utilized. The results of the analysis have been presented in Table 5.

TABLE 5.
TESTS OF BETWEEN-SUBJECTS EFFECTS

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Observed Power ^b
Corrected Model	2150.43a	3	716.81	125.64	.000	.87	1.00
Intercept	31.77	1	31.77	5.57	.022	.090	.64
Pretest	2038.20	1	2038.20	357.24	.000	.87	1.00
Group	108.02	2	54.01	9.47	.000	.25	.97
Error	319.51	56	5.71				
Total	456262	60					
Corrected Total	2469.93	59					

Based on the obtained results, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the three groups ($F=9.466$, $p<0.05$). In other words, it can be stated that the treatment had a significant impact on students' performance in cooperative group and they outperformed the others. Students in visualization group had better performance in comparison to control group but failed to excel cooperative group. Using Glass Size Method also supported this finding. The effect size is calculated by dividing the difference between two mean scores (in the pretest and posttest) of control group and cooperative group on the standard deviation of the control group.

The mean of cooperative group _ the mean of control group = 2.95

The standard deviation of the control group = 5.34

$$ES = \frac{2.95}{5.34} = .55$$

The effect size is 0.55. This shows the impact of treatment (cooperative group) on Iranian EFL learners' comprehension ability. Based on Cohen table, the variation range of scores is considered large.

IV. DISCUSSION

The purpose of the present study was to compare the effect of visualization versus cooperative learning strategies on intermediate EFL students' reading comprehension. The first research question inquired whether visualization has any significant effect on reading comprehension ability. Based on the results presented in Table 2, it was revealed that visualization did not have any *significant* effect on reading comprehension ($t= 1.927$, $P > 0.05$). Therefore, the first research hypothesis was not rejected. Using Glass Size Method also substantiated the aforementioned result.

Regarding the second research question which inquired whether cooperative reading strategies has any significant effect on reading comprehension ability, ANCOVA test indicated that the answer to this question is positive ($t= 3.72$, $P < 0.05$). Therefore, the second research hypothesis is rejected. Using glass size Method also confirmed this result with variation range of score is considered to be high ($ES= 0.55$).

The findings of this study revealed that cooperative learning strategies improved reading comprehension of participants in the cooperative group. Therefore, it can be claimed that cooperative learning strategies have positive effect on L2 learners' reading comprehension ability. Therefore, cooperative learning strategies can be used as effective pedagogical techniques in language classrooms to enhance students' reading comprehension ability.

The findings of the study, which showed that students in cooperative group had a significant improvement, are in line with the findings of the studies done by Ghaith (2003) and Sittler (1994). This can be interpreted in the light of the fact that in cooperative learning strategies group, students used a variety of learning activities in small teams to improve their understanding of the subject. Each member of the team was responsible for not only being taught, but also for helping teammates to learn (Johnson & Johnson, 1991).

In addition, the success of cooperative learning group in promoting can be attributed to cognitive processes of cooperative learning (Pan & Wu, 2013). Group discussion and sharing the information facilitate students' reading comprehension by fostering a supportive learning atmosphere, which provides more opportunities for explanation, logical inferences, and expand students' understanding of the material. Furthermore, it is devoid of threatening factors such as rivalry, inhibition, and anxiety.

Furthermore, as it can be resulted from the gathered data, students in visualization group improved slightly regarding their reading comprehension ability. This finding is in line with Ghazanfari (2009), Kordjazi (2014), and Tomlinson (1997) who have advocated the utilization of visualization in language classrooms. Visualization can be very effective and can make students motivated and more interesting classroom environment (Groeger, 1997). Motivation is hypothesized to be the major factor that influences the comprehension and recall of the information being read (Kordjazi, 2014). To keep learners motivated, language teachers should introduce reading comprehension techniques to make learners involved in the task. Visualization has proved to be of great advantage to keep learners motivated on the task and facilitate their reading comprehension.

Regarding the third research question which inquired whether there is any significant difference between visualization and reading comprehension ability of Intermediate EFL learners, the amassed results indicated that there is a significant difference ($F=9.466$, $p<0.05$) between the two experimental results. Using Glass Size Method confirmed that cooperative group is more effective than visualization group. Hence, the third research hypothesis was rejected.

The findings of the present study also revealed that students in cooperative group outperformed students in visualization group. This is by the virtue of the fact that students in cooperative reading class had more opportunities to actively learn by pre-reviewing the text, interacting with other group members, and helping each other during reading discussion. Thus, they scored high on reading test and outperformed the students in visualization and control groups.

Finally, using traditional techniques in reading class (control group) did not have any positive effect on reading comprehension ability of language learners. That is, resorting to tenants of Grammar-Translation Method, employing reading the text aloud, translation, and providing synonyms and antonyms if needed would not improve students' reading comprehension.

V. CONCLUSION

The results of the present study showed that cooperative learning strategies (e.g., Jigsaw, Student Team Learning) are effective on Iranian EFL learners' comprehension ability. The participants who received cooperative learning strategies performed significantly better than the participants who received visualization strategy. So, it can be concluded that the cooperative learning strategies are more effective than visualization in improving students' reading comprehension ability. Furthermore, students in visualization group improved slightly in terms of reading comprehension ability. However, the gain was not statistically significant. The results of similar studies (Ghazanfari, 2009; Tomlinson, 1997) indicated that the visualization had a significant impact on reading comprehension ability. However, the same was not observed in the present study.

It has been proved that cooperative learning strategies can have a positive impact on reading comprehension ability. Therefore, integration of healthy dose of cooperative reading strategies by teachers can foster students' comprehension ability in language classes. Teachers should consider that learning does not simply happen in vacuum and a variety of factors must be carefully taken into account. Therefore, they should abandon traditional teaching techniques (e.g., read aloud and translation to L1) which have proved to be counterproductive and instead they should employ a variety of cooperative learning strategies in language classes. Students should not only disregard translation as a means to improve their reading learning comprehension ability but also should accommodate their learning orientation with a variety of reading comprehension strategies which give them more opportunities to better comprehend the text. When students process a text by solely resorting to translation, they tend to fail to get the most out of the text. Therefore, information sharing, discussion, and teamwork cooperation must be considered.

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Exploring Cross-cultural Pragmatic Judgment of Two Groups of EFL Teachers on Formal Written Requests

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Abstract—This study examines the pragmatic judgments made on formal request letters written by adult L2 learners of English by two groups of EFL teachers at a university in Hong Kong. A pragmatic Judgment Questionnaire was completed by each of the sixteen teachers, comprising eight native Cantonese speakers (CSTs) and eight native English speakers (ESTs). Pragmatic judgment was examined by investigating four pragmatic variables -- i.e., *politeness*, *directness*, *formality* and *amount of information*. Main research findings suggest that there were no significant differences between the two groups of teachers in their pragmatic judgments except for their views on: a) what constituted “unnaturally polite” expressions, b) whether negative words would help achieve the purpose of a message, c) what supporting moves should be avoided, and d) what writing plans they preferred. Qualitative analysis revealed examples of “unnaturally polite” expressions (e.g., “forgive”) and supportive moves (e.g. compensating class teachers) considered appropriate by CSTs only.

Index Terms—inter-cultural pragmatics, written request, politeness strategies, directness, formality

I. INTRODUCTION

Since English constitutes one of the two major languages in use (Chinese and English) in Hong Kong, it is not unusual for L2 learners of English to encounter the need to use the English language to make formal written requests in their academic life and during their future working life. Despite request messages being written in the English language, the addressees of those requests in the Hong Kong setting could be either native speakers of English or native speakers of Cantonese. As has been shown in alternative studies (e.g., Bulut, 2008; Eslamirasekh, 1993; Kim, 1995; Suh, 1999), politeness expressions and supportive moves favored by NNSs of English were found to be different from those produced by NSs of English; given this, it would be reasonable to speculate that the perceptions of the addressees who speak various first languages concerning what constitutes a politeness message and/or other aspects of pragmatic competence could also be different.

The possible differences in the pragmatic judgments of addressees speaking different first languages lead to a pedagogical question: Should L2 learners be taught the English pragmatics considered appropriate by NSs of English or the English pragmatics considered appropriate by NNSs of English who co-exist in the same community with NSs of English? Recognizing the difference in pragmatic opinions across different language groups is especially important considering that, in the Hong Kong setting, many people who hold senior positions in organizations and who are responsible for responding to the requests made by their students or by their subordinates do not speak English as their first language. To the best of my knowledge, there has not been any research investigating the differences in the pragmatic judgments made by native speakers of Cantonese who hold senior positions (e.g., having the power to approve or reject a request) and by their counterparts who are NSs of English. This study attempts to fill this gap by investigating the pragmatic judgments made by native Cantonese-speaking EFL teachers (CSTs) and native English-speaking EFL teachers (ESTs) in the English Language Centre (ELC) at the City University of Hong Kong regarding what constitutes an effective formal request written in English.

The following research questions are formulated:

Quantitatively, will CSTs differ significantly from ESTs in their pragmatic judgment, examined by investigating four dependent variables (i.e., *politeness*, *directness*, *formality* and *amount of information*) of request letters?

Qualitatively, what characteristics of a written request do CSTs and ESTs consider appropriate?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The differences in pragmatic judgments between people who speak different first languages may originate from ethnolinguistic differences of two communities of language speakers, which in turn might result in the transfer of L1 pragmatics to L2 pragmatic situations. One way to minimize the influence of pragmatic transfer on English language learners might be to raise language learners’ awareness of intercultural communication through classroom or online learning activities (e.g., Chun, 2011; Hong, 2011; Jernigan, 2012; Louw, Derwing, & Abbott, 2010; Rafieyan, Sharafi-Nejad & Eng, 2014; Shively, 2010; Tian, 2014; Waugh, 2013). For example, Waugh (2013) designed a course to

improve both learners' pragmatics and intercultural communication skills based on the Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) developed by Bennett (1993). Liddicoat (2014) advocates "intercultural mediation", which involves "awareness of one's own cultural positioning and expectations in relation to the phenomenon being mediated as well as knowledge of the target culture behavior" (p. 275). Similarly, Bouchet (2010) stresses the need for a language learner to be aware of the paradoxical nature of intercultural communication – that is, regarding a stranger as being similar and being different at the same time. Louw, Derwing and Abbott (2010) arrive at a similar conclusion that, by comparing their answers with those of the NSs, NNSs would be able to enhance their pragmatic awareness. While developing L2 learners' awareness of the intercultural pragmatic differences constitutes the focus of some studies, the present study intends to investigate the pragmatic issue of communication across cultures from another perspective – that is, investigating the pragmatic judgments of native English-speaking and native Cantonese-speaking requestees who are teachers of the target language rather than learners. This paper argues that it is not sufficient for language learners to be aware of the pragmatic judgments of NSs of English; rather, the pragmatic judgments of NSs of Cantonese who will read letters of request written in English also constitutes an important source of information for language learners.

The pragmatic judgments of native Cantonese-speaking EFL teachers are worth investigating considering: a) the controversy over the rhetorical thought patterns of Chinese discourse; and b) the relationship between politeness and directness/indirectness for different languages with respect to the speech act of request. Based on his analysis of Chinese requests, Kirkpatrick (1996) concludes that Chinese requests follow a pattern progressing from providing reasons for a request to stating the request. Kirkpatrick argues that this rhetorical structure is opposed to the English pattern, in which a request is usually stated prior to the provision of reasons for the request. Kirkpatrick (1996)'s conclusion is support of Kaplan's notion of the circularity of the Chinese discourse patterns. By circularity, Kaplan (1966) refers to the indirect way of coming to a point of argument. Similarly, Tian (2014) observed that indirectness was employed in the informant's speech acts of refusal; Hong (2011) concludes that Chinese people's preference for indirectness is realized by offering explanations and apologies. On the other hand, Zhu (1997) observes that Chinese sale letters are direct and linear. She claims that it is the communicative purpose that largely determines the rhetorical structure. Given the inconclusive findings about the rhetorical pattern of Chinese writing, it would be interesting to explore further whether the NSs of Cantonese in the present study would prefer a direct or an indirect plan for making a request in English.

In addition to the investigation into the possible preference for circularity/linearity discourse patterns, another focus of this study is to examine the types of supportive moves that Cantonese-speaking EFL teachers would prefer in making a request, especially the use of apology as a politeness strategy. Kim (1995) found that the Korean speakers in her study differed from NSs of English in that the L2 learners overused the supportive move "apology". Clankie (1993) held the view that it was in the culture of Japanese to use expressions of regret to show their gratitude (p.16). Trosborg (1995) points out that both the native-speaker and the non-native-speaker groups do not use the strategy of asking for forgiveness as frequently as other strategies for making an apology. The findings of Farashaiyan and Amirkhiz's (2011) study also suggest that the strategy of requesting forgiveness might only be applied in situations involving serious offence. However, the strategy of asking for forgiveness was found to be commonly used as a politeness strategy among Farsi speakers (Bagherinejad & Jadidoleslam, 2015; Chamani & Zareipur, 2010).

Besides supportive moves, the present study also examines the language expressions used to introduce the head act of a request using the notion of directness/indirectness in the politeness theory elaborated by Brown and Levinson (1978), who state that the speech act of requesting is a face-threatening act, thus requiring an indirect approach in which face-saving strategies such as hedging or questioning are employed (p. 75). Degree of indirectness has also been found to link to degree of politeness as a linguistic universal for the seven European languages examined in Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper's (1989) study.

Some more recent researcher, however, have begun to question the research focus on the use of indirectness to show politeness. For example, Mills (2003) questions the concept of "indirectness" in relation to different cultures. She argues that research on politeness should not focus solely on the analysis of indirectness as an instance of polite behavior; rather, she suggests fundamental questions about whether all of the participants in the conversation consider particular utterances to be indirect and whether they consider indirectness to be indicative of politeness (p.14). Watts (2003) believes that linguistic means through which politeness is expressed "differ quite radically in terms of the structural types that realize politeness across a range of different languages" (p.12).

In some non-Western cultures, directness has been found even to receive high politeness ratings. Eslamirasekh (1993) found that Farsi speakers were considerably more direct in making requests as compared to American English speakers.¹ The Farsi data showed that 70% of requests were phrased as impositives (most direct), more than 25% were phrased as conventionally indirect, and only about 4% as hints (p.91). Similarly, de Kadt (1992) found that requests in Zulu were significantly more direct in formulation than requests in South African English, and that directness received high politeness ratings. Given the positive relationship between politeness and directness in some non-European languages, it would be interesting to investigate whether some direct English expressions in the letters of request written by native Cantonese-speaking learners of English in this present study (e.g., "I want you to proofread my application letter") would still be considered to be polite by native Cantonese-speaking EFL teachers for possible reasons such as

group solidarity (Scollon & Scollon, 1983).

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

A. Independent and Dependent Variables

The independent variable of this study is the first language of the raters. Dependent variables include four pragmatic variables (i.e., politeness, directness, formality, amount of information), adapted from the analysis frameworks of the following research studies: Hudson, Detmer and Brown (1995); Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper (1989) in the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Patterns (CCSARP) Project; Suh (1999) and Chen (1996).

- *Politeness* includes two dimensions: a) politeness expressions used to introduce head acts, and b) supportive moves used.

- *Directness* includes a) the position of the head act of the exact request designated by the writing topic, and b) the use of negative words.

- *Amount of information* refers to the quantity of information contained in a *request message*.

- *Formality* includes the language features that are compatible with the formal nature of the request.

1. Politeness

Politeness subsumes two categories: “mitigating politeness expressions introducing head acts” and “supportive moves”.

Mitigating politeness expressions introducing head acts

See Table 1 for examples:

TABLE 1:
MITIGATING POLITENESS EXPRESSIONS INTRODUCING HEAD ACTS

Categories	Examples
• Modals for polite request	<i>would, could, may</i>
• Past tense tone softeners	<i>I was wondering whether...</i>
• Politeness marker “please”	<i>Would you please proofread the job application form?</i>
• Expressions to mitigate the size of the request	<i>a bit, a little, somehow, possible, possibly</i>
• Expressions involving the addressee directly, bidding for cooperation	<i>Do you think you could...?</i>
• Miscellaneous words (nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs) showing goodwill and thankfulness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mind</i>” as in <i>Would you mind...</i> • <i>“Appreciate”</i> as in <i>I would appreciate...</i> • <i>“Grateful”</i> as in <i>I would be grateful if you could...</i>

Supportive moves

Supportive moves examined in this study subsume the following:

- Preparing the addressee for the coming request,
- Minimizing the force of imposition of the request,
- Acknowledging the imposition of the request,
- Showing the effort made,
- Complimenting the addressee,
- Showing gratitude,
- Pointing out the importance of the request,
- Apologizing,
- Offering compensation,
- Pointing out the negative consequences of refusal to the author,
- Pointing out the benefits the author would gain if the request were approved,
- Asking for forgiveness,
- Providing the addressee with options,
- Showing sincerity,
- Showing appreciation,
- Showing regret,
- Recognizing and responding to the greater authority of the addressee,
- Making a promise,
- Making a personal appeal.

2. Directness

Directness was examined using the following two measures:

- a) The position of the head act of the designated request, and
- b) The number of negative words used.

3. Amount of information

Amount of information was indicated by the overall length in number of words of a letter or an e-mail. Researchers find that L2 learners of English talk too much by adding a variety of supportive moves to requestive utterances (e.g.,

Blum-Kulka and Olshtain, 1986; House and Kasper, 1987; Rintell and Mitchell, 1989). Edmondson and House (1991) call the tendency of L2 learners to be more verbose than target language speakers as “waffling” (p.280).

4. Formality

Formality subsumes two categories:

- 1) Violations of formality,
- 2) Features of formality.

Violations of formality

- The use of lower case “i” for “I”; “u” for “you”;
- All contracted forms – “can’t”, “don’t”, etc.;
- Abbreviated forms, e.g., “Yr” for “your”;
- Informal words and phrases, especially words from slang or other informal registers;
- The use of the imperative structure: all commands addressed to the reader requiring actions (e.g., “Do not fail me”);
- Omission of sentence subject “I” in expressions like “I look forward to seeing you”;
- Problems with the opening salutation, such as use of first name only with or without the prefix “dear” or the title (e.g., “Dear Mary”, “Mary”), the use of the full name with or without the prefix “dear” or the title (e.g., “Dear Mary Brown”, “Mary Brown”), the use of the prefab “Dear Sir/Madam”;
- Problems involving the closing salutation including inappropriate choice of the closing salutation, inappropriate spelling and upper/lower case of “Yours sincerely”, and the use of one’s first name.

Features of Formality

- Use of modal verbs “would”, “could” and “may” to introduce a head act;
- Complexity of sentence structure, using Mean T-unit length (MTL) as a measure to determine length.

B. Control Variables

1. Gender of the Raters

Because gender might have an effect on the pragmatic judgments of raters, this variable was controlled by having the same numbers of male and female raters for both the groups of CTSs and ESTs. This present study does not intend to investigate the possible effect of gender on the pragmatic judgments of raters, although it is certainly possible that gender differences may be significant.

2. The variety of English that ESTs speak

All the raters chosen for this current study speak the same variety of English because it was necessary to consider the possible influence the variety of English a rater speaks on his/her pragmatic judgments. Only native speakers of British English were included in the present study because they constituted the majority of teachers in the ELC.

C. Instrumentation

1. Twelve letters of request written on three writing topics by four writers

To elicit pragmatic responses from sixteen raters – i.e., eight native Cantonese-speaking EFL teachers (CSTs) and eight native English-speaking EFL teachers (ESTs) – a total of twelve letters was prepared. The twelve letters were written by participants of different language proficiency levels in response to three writing topics (Appendix A) in the hope that the language and content of the twelve letters would be sufficiently diverse to generate informative comments from the raters.

Three letters were written by an American ESL teacher having 35 years of experience teaching at the tertiary level, and three were written by a Cantonese EFL teacher who had taught at the tertiary level for about ten years. Of the remaining six scripts, three were written by two Cantonese-speaking working adults who scored Grade B and Grade C in the Hong Kong A-level Examination in the subject “Use of English”.² Each of these two working adults wrote three letters, but only three letters from this group of six were selected based on the criterion that diversity in content and politeness expressions were preferred. The last three letters were written by two E-grade students who took the English Enhancement Course “Language Skills for Research Projects” offered by the ELC.

The twelve letters (four letters each for the three topics) were rated by each of the sixteen raters, who followed the fourteen questions in the Pragmatic Judgment Questionnaire.

To avoid ordering effects, the order of the twelve letters was randomized using a random numbers table, producing sixteen sequences of the twelve letters.

2. Pragmatic Judgment Questionnaire to be completed by 16 raters

A pragmatic questionnaire (Appendix B) constituted the second research instrument. After the briefing session, the raters started rating the twelve letters. After the completion of the questionnaires, an interview was arranged with each rater.

The profile of the teacher participants is shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2:
GENDER AND LINGUISTIC ORIENTATION OF THE RATERS

Gender	Number	Language
Female Cantonese-speaking	4	
Female English-speaking	4	
Male Cantonese--speaking	4	
Male English-speaking	4	

As indicated in their Personal Background Questionnaires, the age range of the eight Cantonese teachers is between 36 and 55, and they have taught in the tertiary institutions in Hong Kong for an average of 13 years. Five of them have lived overseas for an average of nine years. The age range of the eight British teachers is between 25 and 65, and they have taught in tertiary institutions in countries where English is spoken as a second/foreign language (including Hong Kong) for an average of 9 years.

IV. RESULTS

The findings are presented in Tables 3 to 5 according to the type of responses elicited. The first type of response required raters to choose from a five-point Likert Scale (Table 3); the second type of response required raters to choose between categories (Table 4); and the third type of response required raters to indicate their own pragmatic preferences if they were to write the letters themselves (Table 5).

TABLE 3:
DIFFERENCES IN THE MEAN SCORES REPORTED BY CSTs AND ESTs FOR THE "APPROPRIATENESS OF SUPPORTIVE MOVES", "APPROPRIATENESS OF REGISTER", "APPROPRIATENESS OF THE POSITION OF THE HEAD ACTS", "AMOUNT OF INFORMATION", AND "OVERALL POLITENESS OF THE LETTER", AS SHOWN BY T TESTS

*M=Mean; ^b SD=Standard Deviation; ^c Df=Degrees of Freedom; ^d n.s.=Not significant			M ^a	SD ^b	t-value	Df ^c	two-tailed p value
Q.3 Appropriateness of supportive moves	CSTs		3.13	1.207	-0.664	190	0.508 (n.s. ^d)
	ESTs		3.24	1.185			
Q.8 Appropriateness of the register	CSTs		3.2	1.253	0.527	189.759	0.599 (n.s.)
	ESTs		3.1	1.209			
Q.9 Appropriateness of the position of the head acts	CSTs		3.20	1.130	0.061	190	0.952 (n.s.)
	ESTs		3.19	1.242			
Q.13 Amount of information	CSTs		3.13	1.207	-0.058	190	0.954 (n.s.)
	ESTs		3.14	1.278			
Q.14 Overall appropriateness of letters	CSTs		3.03	1.252	-0.697	190	0.487 (n.s.)
	ESTs		3.16	1.234			

Table 3 shows that there were no significant differences between CSTs and ESTs in their judgments on the twelve letters in the following aspects:

- Appropriateness of supportive moves (Question 3);
- Appropriateness of the register (Question 8);
- Appropriateness of the position of the head acts (Question 9);
- Amount of information (Question 13);
- Overall appropriateness of letters (Question 14).

TABLE 4:
DIFFERENCES IN THE SUB-CATEGORIES CHOSEN BY CSTs AND ESTs CONCERNING "OVERALL POLITENESS OF LETTERS", "CLASSIFICATION OF REGISTER", AND "THE USEFULNESS OF 'NEGATIVE' EXPRESSIONS", AS SHOWN BY PROPORTIONAL T TESTS AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL (RESULTS ARE SHOWN AS A PERCENTAGE OF PARTICIPANTS)

		CSTs	ESTs	z-value
Q.4 Overall politeness of the letters	Unnaturally polite	6.3%	17.7%;	2.43 ($p < 0.05$)
	Very polite	21.9%	15.6%	1.12 (n.s.)
	Polite	35.4%	30.2%	0.77 (n.s.)
	Neither polite or impolite	19.8%	15.6%	0.76 (n.s.)
	Impolite	13.5%	17.7%	0.63 (n.s.)
	Very impolite	3.1%	3.1%	0.00 (n.s.)
Q.7 Classification of register	Formal	58.3%	53.1%	0.57 (n.s.)
	Informal	17.7%	18.8%	0.16 (n.s.)
Q.11 "usefulness of 'negative' expressions	Hard to categorize	24%	28.1%;	0.51 (n.s.)
	Counter-productive words	35.2%	47.6%	2.31 ($p < 0.05$)
	Useful	35.2	26.2%	1.79
	Neutral	29.8	26.2	0.73

Table 4 shows that there were no significant differences between CSTs and ESTs in their judgments on the twelve letters concerning Classification of Register (Question 7).

However, for Question 4 ("overall politeness of the letters"), the number of letters classified as "unnaturally polite" by ESTs was significantly greater than that by CSTs. It is worth noting that there were no significant differences in the

numbers of letters considered as “very impolite”, “impolite”, “neither polite nor impolite”, “polite” and “very polite” by CSTs and by ESTs, implying that some direct language expressions, which were generally considered not polite enough (e.g., “I want you to proofread my application letter”), were assigned similar unfavorable ratings of politeness by both CSTs and ESTs.

For Question 11 (“usefulness of ‘negative’ expressions”), the number of “negative” expressions classified as “counter-productive” by ESTs was significantly greater than that by CSTs.

TABLE 5:
DIFFERENCES IN THE SUB-CATEGORIES CHOSEN BY CSTs AND ESTs CONCERNING “SUPPORTIVE MOVE THAT DEFINITELY WOULD NOT BE USED”, AND “WRITING PLANS”, AS SHOWN BY PROPORTIONAL T TESTS AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL

		CSTs	ESTs	z-value
Q.6 Supportive move that definitely would not be used	SM 12 ^a	25%	100%	(z=3.10) (p<0.01)
	SM 9 ^b	75%	25%	2.00 (p<0.05)
Q.10 Writing plans	Plan2 ^c Topic 2	37.5%	100%	2.7 (p<0.01)
	Topic 3	37.5%	87.5%	2.07 (p<0.05)

^a Forgiveness (for Topic 1);

^b Compensation (for Topic 3);

^c Plan 2: *Preparing the requestee for the coming request (e.g. I would like to seek your help in a matter) → the exact request → background information about yourself*

(Results are shown as a percentage of participants; only the questions that showed significant differences across the two groups of raters were reported in the table).

As can be seen from Table 5, the SMs chosen by CSTs and ESTs as the SMs themselves would not use if they were to write on the three topics were not significantly different except for “forgiveness” for Topic 1 and “compensation” for Topic 3. For Topic 1, significantly more ESTs (100%) chose SM12 (“forgiveness”) as the SM they would definitely not use than did CSTs (25%), at the 99% confidence level ($z=3.10$). For Topic 3, SM 9 (“compensation”) was chosen by significantly more CSTs (75%) than was chosen by ESTs (25%), at 95% confidence level ($z=2.00$).

Table 4 also shows that, for Topics 2 and 3, significantly more ESTs chose Plan 2 than did CSTs (Topic 2: ESTs, 100%; CSTs, 37.5%, $p<0.01$; Topic 3: ESTs, 87.5%; CSTs, 37.5%, $p<0.05$).

Question 10

For each of the three topics, Plan 2 was chosen by the majority of ESTs (**Topic 1: 75%; Topic 2: 100%; Topic 3: 87.5%**). However, for each of the three writing topics, no pre-dominant pattern was found among the CSTs:³

- **Topic 1:** 12.5% for Plan 1, 37.5% for Plan 2, 12.5% for Plan 3, 37.5% for Plan 4;
- **Topic 2:** 25% for Plan 1, 37.5% for Plan 2, 12.5% for Plan 3, 25% for Plan 4;
- **Topic 3:** 37.5% for Plan 1, 37.5% for Plan 2, 0% for Plan 3, 25% for Plan 4.

V. DISCUSSION

The finding that there were no significant differences between CSTs and ESTs on eight of the twelve questions is in agreement with some previous findings to the effect that it is possible for L2 learners who are proficient in the target language and who have long-term exposure to the target culture to acquire native-like pragmatic competence to some extent (e.g., Clankie, 1993; Lee, 2010; Nakajima, 1997; Tanaka, 1988). Lee’s (2010) study reveals that the ability of Taiwanese EFL students to recognize pragmatic errors correlates significantly with their strategies for grammatical, discourse, and strategic competence. The subjects in this current study were EFL teachers, whose education qualifications (88% of them had a second degree in language teaching) and whose exposure to the L2 culture (for an average of ten years) in a working environment where English is used as the medium of communication among colleagues should have played an important role in their acquisition of English pragmatics in terms of judging the pragmatic performance in the twelve letters of requests. Among the various factors investigated in studies concerning the acquisition of L2 pragmatics by students or migrants living in a target-language environment (e.g., Schauer, 2006; Taguchi, 2011), Bardovi-Harlig and Bastos (2011) conclude that language proficiency and the actual experiences in a target-language environment like intensity of interaction are two of the relevant factors that determine the success of the acquisition of L2 pragmatics. Bardovi-Harlig (2013) believes that learners who have higher levels of language proficiency may be more able to take advantage of a target-language environment as far as the development of L2 pragmatic abilities is concerned.

That CSTs in this study differed from ESTs in four pragmatic aspects agrees with the finding of some previous studies to the effect that L2 learners often differed from NSs of English in their pragmatic choices (e.g., Beebe, Takahashi and Uliss-Welz, 1990; De Kadt, 1992; Harada, 1996; Liddicoat, 2014; Takahashi and Beebe, 1987).

The finding that CSTs preferred Writing Plan 2 is not in agreement with Kirkpatrick’s (1996) conclusion to some extent. Kirkpatrick concludes that Chinese requests follow a pattern progressing from providing reasons for a request towards stating a request. However, for the CSTs in this study, Plan 2 (a plan in which a writer first states a request and

then proceeds to provide supporting reasons) accounted for the highest percentage (37.5%) for all the three topics. This means that among the four writing plans, Plan 2 was the one preferred by most raters. Although it would be unconvincing to argue that a percentage as low as 37.5% constitutes a pre-dominant pattern among the CSTS, the finding nonetheless provides some clues to what most CSTS preferred as far as writing plans are concerned.

The findings that more ESTs regarded some politeness expressions as “unnaturally polite” concurs with one of the findings obtained by Harada (1996) that the advanced Japanese ESL learners in her study assigned a higher rating (9 points out of 10) to the expression “I’d appreciate it if you could get me the salt” than did the native speakers of English who were Americans (7 points out of 10). Some of the NSs in her study regarded that expression as being too polite for requesting salt and thus being somehow sarcastic.

It is possible to speculate about the reasons why ESTs and CSTs differed in their views of what constitutes “unnaturally polite” and “counter-productive” expressions:

1) The perceptions of the use of the speech act “forgiveness” could be different between CSTs and ESTs. Three ESTs who had commented on the usefulness of this expression associated the use of the term “forgive” with “sin” and “confession to a priest”, whereas the two CSTs who had commented on this word said that the use of the term “forgive” reflected that the student knew it was wrong to miss the lessons, thus making the use of the term “forgive” acceptable because the writer was interrupting the addressee. It is worth noting that the ESTs might relate forgiveness with Christianity, and the CSTs’ perception might be deeply embedded in Chinese culture, especially Confucian precepts; for example, in the domain of classrooms, in Chinese belief teachers are always perceived as seniors with great authority. The strategy of asking for forgiveness in messages of request has also been found in other studies. For example, Persian-speaking students used the expression “forgive me tremendously” frequently in making requests (Eslamirasekh, 1993); Farsi speakers ask for forgiveness extensively when making request (Chamani & Zareipur, 2010). Bagherinejad and Jadidoleslam (2015) conclude that request for forgiveness is one of criteria for being polite for both male and female Iranians, e.g., using “Excuse me” or what Iranian utter as “bebaxsid” (p.1273). In their study, the request for forgiveness accounted for 16% of all the “Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices”, while the expression of regret was the most frequent one (32%) (p.1272). Samarah (2015) points out that in Arabic apology is commonly used in asking for permission and making requests; for examples, the expressions [Jafwan mumkin tismah li...] “pardon me would you excuse...” and “please” may be used to begin a request (p.2012).

2) The perceptions of the effect of using words like “kindly” and “valuable” might be different between CSTs and ESTs. For example, five ESTs considered the expression “if you could kindly” as old-fashioned and too humble, but none of the CSTs regarded the use of this word as “unnaturally polite”.

The differences in the perceptions of the aforementioned “unnaturally polite” expressions lead to pedagogical questions. First, CSTs might prefer to maintain their own opinions despite their awareness of the views of ESTs. If this is the case, L2 learners of English should be made aware of the differences between CSTs and ESTs regarding politeness expressions to be used when writing to people who speak different first languages. Second, CSTs might not be aware of the views held by ESTs regarding “unnaturally polite” expressions. Learning a second language means acquiring a new culture rather than merely learning vocabulary and grammatical rules. Despite the validity of likely areas of greater difference between cultures, L2 teachers seem not to have considered the need to uncover teaching/learning devices to deal with cultural differences.

NSs of Cantonese seem to be repulsed by the idea of being paid by a student for doing an interview. CSTs might have perceived the acceptance of financial compensation from a student as a face-threatening act. According to Nash (1983), “the notion of face is prevalent and deeply rooted in Chinese culture; people take great offense in any loss of face, and efforts are regularly made to avoid face-risking situations” (Chen, 1996, p. 9).

The CSTs in this present study did not differ significantly from ESTs in their judgments of the degree of politeness of expressions introducing the head act of a request except for the category of “unnaturally polite expressions” (Table 4). This seems to indicate a paradoxical phenomenon concerning the pragmatic judgments of CSTs. On the one hand, they appeared to have been guided by their linguistic knowledge of the English language when judging the appropriateness of some less-than-polite expressions like “I want you to proofread my application letter”; the end result was that CSTs’ pragmatic judgments were found to be not significantly different from those of ESTs. On the other hand, the CSTs seemed to have been influenced, perhaps without their awareness, by their Chinese cultural backgrounds when judging some very polite expressions like “Please forgive me”; interestingly, the end result was that CSTs’s pragmatic judgment turned out to be significantly different from those of ESTs in the aspect of “unnaturally polite” expressions.

VI. LIMITATIONS

Supportive moves that appeared in Pragmatic Judgment Questionnaire were not randomized for the copies given to the sixteen teachers. However, the significant differences between CSTs and ESTs in the supportive moves teachers themselves would definitely not use (“forgiveness” and “compensation”) seemed to suggest that the ordering effect might not have been serious. If the ordering effect had been strong enough, there would not have been significant differences in these supportive moves between CSTs and ESTs.

Second, only sixteen teachers participated in this study. The lack of a pre-dominant pattern of CSTs’ preference for the writing plan might have been a result of the small sample size.

VII. CONCLUSION

All findings arrived at are based entirely on the data in this study, and therefore apply exclusively to them. It should also be borne in mind that these conclusions do not extend beyond these data except very tentatively.

Despite the uncertainty of “whose pragmatic system is to be taught” (Rose, 1994, p. 52) and the uncertainty of whether the writers would benefit from writing in accordance with the pragmatic preference of the addressee (i.e., having a greater chance of getting the request approved), L2 learners could at least be made aware that:

1) differences in the pragmatic preferences between NSs and NNSs of English exist; and 2) the possibility that L2 learners might need to use different request strategies to suit the pragmatic preference of the addressee, which might reflect “how culture impacts on pragmatic phenomenon in the varieties of English relevant to the particular... context” (McConachy, 2013, p. 102).

Future research might study the effectiveness of using a bi-directional approach, which aims at making NSs and NNSs of English aware of how the other group perceives social and situational/contextual variables in relation to the speech act of requesting and what linguistic strategies the other group uses to show politeness.

Notes:

¹ Although the pragmatic judgments of only NSs of British English were examined in the present study, alternative studies involving NSs of other varieties of English (e.g., American English) were also reviewed for providing referential information.

² The results of the HKALE are expressed in terms of six grades A – F, of which grade A is the highest and F the lowest. Results below grade F are designated as unclassified (UNCL).

³ A category in a group is considered to show a pre-dominant pattern if the first and the second highest percentages of teachers who chose that category show a significant difference at the 95% confidence level, as shown by Proportional t test.

APPENDIX A. THREE TOPICS USED IN THE WRITING TASK

Request 1

You have failed the attendance requirement of the English course (Spoken Language) you are taking. The minimum attendance requirement is 80%, which means that you can be absent for at most 7 hours only. You have been absent for 10 hours. You plan to write a letter to the department head (named Betty Black) to request that special consideration be given to let you pass the course.

Request 2

You need to find someone to proofread your job application letter. You are very interested in the job to be applied for, but you are very concerned about possible grammatical mistakes in the letter. You would like to ask the language adviser of the Self-access Centre of your department to do the proofreading for you. You plan to write a letter to her for your request.

Request 3

You are taking an English course, which requires you to interview a native speaker of English for a project. You have got a name list of all the tutors in the English Language Centre, and you plan to write a letter to one of them. The tutor you have chosen from the list is a female (named Mary Brown).

Background information for your reference

- You have not had any contact with your requestee before.
- She is about 40 years old, and she speaks English as her first language.
- The language advisor (named Susan Smith) does not have the responsibility to proofread your job application letters, so you are actually asking her to do you a favor.
- The success of such a request will obviously depend upon its being phrased as politely as possible

APPENDIX B. THE PRAGMATIC JUDGMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

The present researcher is interested in your opinion about the request letters written by the participants in this study in terms of the following four aspects of pragmatic competence: 1) politeness, 2) formality/informality, 3) directness/indirectness, and 4) amount of information.

There are altogether twelve letters and twelve rating sheets. Read the corresponding letter for each rating sheet and complete the rating sheet by following the instructions given. Please be aware that, for some of the questions, you need to write your ratings on the scripts, not on the rating sheets.

Letter No. _____	Questions/Tasks
Politeness	<p>1. Referring to the script, how polite do you think the expressions underlined in the letter are? ON THE SCRIPT, please write “1”, “2”, “3” or “4”, “5+”, or “5-” under EACH of the underlined expressions. “1” means “Very impolite” “2” means “Impolite” “3” means “Neither polite nor impolite” “4” means “Polite” “5+” means “Very polite” (“+” showing “approval”) “5-” means “Unnaturally polite” (“-” showing “disapproval”)</p> <p>2. Referring to the script, did you find any supportive moves* you did not approve of? ON THE SCRIPT, use a red pen to underline ALL the supportive moves you feel inappropriately used.</p> <p><i>* When rating the “supportive moves”, please note that your rating should be based on content only; the linguistic form of the expressions used should NOT be a factor for consideration when answering this question. Please also note that different people may have different views about how appropriate the supportive moves listed in Handout B are.</i></p> <p>Checklist: Please tick as appropriate.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I have underlined the inappropriate supportive moves on the script. <input type="checkbox"/> I did not find any inappropriate supportive moves in the letter.</p> <p>3. Referring to the script, overall, how appropriate do you think the supportive moves used by the writer are in terms of <u>quality</u>? Please refer to the notes in Question 2 about supportive moves, if needed.</p> <p>Very inappropriate 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Completely appropriate</p> <p>Reason(s) for your rating: _____</p> <p>4. Referring to the letter, overall, how polite do you think the letter is when considering <u>the phrases introducing the head acts</u> (those underlined in the text for you) and <u>the supportive moves used</u> by the writer? Circle your answer below.</p> <p>Very inappropriate 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Completely appropriate</p> <p>“1” means “Very impolite” “2” means “Impolite” “3” means “Neither polite nor impolite” “4” means “Polite” “5+” means “Very polite” (“+” showing “approval”) “5-” means “Unnaturally polite” (“-” showing “disapproval”)</p> <p>If your answer is 5, please tick as appropriate: <input type="checkbox"/> 5+ <input type="checkbox"/> 5-</p> <p>Reason(s) for your rating: _____</p> <p>5. If you were to write this letter, which of the following supportive moves do you think would be the most important? From the list below, choose the SIX most important moves and rank them in ascending order, where “1” indicates “the most important and “6” indicates “the least important”. Write your ratings in the boxes.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1) Preparing the requestee for the coming request (E.G., I would like to seek your help.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 2) Acknowledging imposition. (E.G., I understand this is an imposition.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3) Minimizing the imposition (E.G., it will take you only a few minutes to finish reading the letter.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4) Making the request reasonable by showing the effort put in by the letter writer (E.G., I have worked very hard and have mastered most of the substantive requirements.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 5) Complimenting the requestee (E.G., my classmates say that you are very helpful.)</p>

	<p><input type="checkbox"/> 6) Showing the benefits if the request is complied (E.G., your help will surely increase the chance of getting the job.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 7) Pointing out the importance of the request (E.G., I would like to seek your assistance in a matter that is of utmost importance to me.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 8) Showing negative consequences (E.G., I may lose the good job.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 9) Promise of compensation or mention of the intended compensation (E.G., I fear that I lack the resources to offer you compensation.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 10) Showing thankfulness (E.G., thank you for ...)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 11) Apologizing (E.G., I am terribly sorry that ...)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 12) Asking for forgiveness (E.G., please forgive me.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other strategies you would prefer to use: _____</p> <p>6. If you were to write this letter, are there any supportive moves listed above that you would definitely NOT use? Write the numbers indicating the categories on the lines below: _____</p>
Formality/informality	<p>7. Is the register of this request letter formal or informal?</p> <p>Please tick your answer.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Formal <input type="checkbox"/> Informal <input type="checkbox"/> Difficult to categorize this letter as either "formal" or "informal"</p> <p>Reason(s): _____</p> <p>8. How appropriate do you think the register adopted by the writer is?</p> <p>Very inappropriate 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Completely appropriate</p> <p>Reason(s) for your rating: _____</p>
Directness/indirectness	<p>9. Do you think the writer has put the head act* of the request asked in the writing topic in an appropriate position of the letter?</p> <p>Very inappropriate 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Completely appropriate</p> <p>Reason(s) for your rating: _____</p> <p>*<u>The head act has been capitalized in the letter for your easy reference.</u> Please refer to Handout B for the explanation of "Head act".</p> <p>10. If you were to write this request, which of the following writing plans would you use? Please tick the box.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Preparing the requestee for the coming request (e.g. I would like to seek your help in a matter) → background information about yourself → the exact request</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Preparing the requestee for the coming request (e.g. I would like to seek your help in a matter) → the exact request → background information about yourself</p>

	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Background information about yourself→ the exact request</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The exact request → background information about yourself</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____</p>
	<p>11. For a letter with some “negative elements” highlighted in bold print:</p> <p><i>Referring to the script, how useful do you think the “negative elements” are in increasing the chance of getting the request complied with? On the script and under EACH of the words in bold print, write “U”, “CP”, or “N”:</i></p> <p>“U” means “useful” “CP” means “counter-productive” “N” means “neither useful nor counter-productive”</p> <p><i>(If needed, you might refer to Handout C for what counts as “negative elements”).</i></p> <p>Checklist - Please tick the box:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I have written “U”, “CP” and/or “N” under the words in bold print.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> There is no word in bold print in this letter.</p> <p>12. If you were to write this letter, which of the following would be your decision regarding the use of “negative elements”?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I would try to use as many positive words as possible in the hope that a positive tone of the letter can help achieve the purpose of the letter because of the overall pleasant effect created</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I do not think it is necessary to use positive words to express ideas that can be said directly by using negative words.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____</p>
<p>Amount of information</p>	<p>13. Referring to the letter, how appropriate do you think the amount of information given is in terms of achieving the purpose of the letter? Circle your answer.</p> <p>Very inappropriate 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Completely appropriate</p> <p>Reason(s) for your rating: _____</p>
<p>Overall appropriateness of the letter</p>	<p>14. Referring to the letter, overall, how appropriate do you think the letter is in terms of achieving the purpose of the letter? Circle your answer.</p> <p>Very inappropriate 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 Completely appropriate</p> <p>Please tick the box(es) that show the MAIN factor(s) influencing your ratings.</p> <p>If you have ticked more than one box, please rank your choices in ascending order, where “1” indicates “the most important” and “4” indicates “the least important”. Put your ratings beside the</p>

	<p>boxes.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Level of politeness</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Expressions introducing a request</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Supportive moves</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Level of formality/informality</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Level of directness/indirectness</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Position of the head act of the request</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Use of negative elements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Amount of information</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): _____</p>
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Please go to the next script

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An Analysis of Pragmatic Competence in 2013 Presidential Election Candidates of Iran: A Comparison of Speech Acts with the Poll Outcomes

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Abstract—This study tried to investigate pragmatic competence in Iran's 2013 presidential election candidates. The data were collected from the recorded video of a live TV program at the Fararu news source by sampling the third debate. At first, the researchers employed Austin's (1962) and Searle's (1975) theory to extract types of speech act strategies used by the candidates. Then, the study used the Pearson chi-square formula to examine the frequency of speech acts types. Moreover, the present study compared types of locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary speech acts used by candidates with the poll outcomes issued by press media, in order to achieve the assumption that speech acts might have a great effect on election's outcomes. It found three kinds of locutionary acts: declarative, imperative and interrogative. Also, it found five kinds of illocutionary acts used by some candidates: declarative, representative, directive, expressive, and commissive. Consequently, the candidates were almost equally in using locutionary acts, but they were permanently different in illocutionary acts. Finally, in terms of perlocutionary acts, the candidates were mostly intended to get the hearers know by their assertion, explanation, clarification, argumentation, etc.

Index Terms—pragmatic competence, speech acts, presidential election of Iran

I. INTRODUCTION

One aspect of critical discourse analysis (CDA) is to identify key discourse differences that impact on election outcome. As Van-Dijk (1993) mentions, what is noticeable in CDA is that its' primarily intention is towards social issues, to become understandable, to spell out people's point of view, perspective, purposes and principles, both within their discipline and within society at large. Moreover, according to him, one crucial presupposition of adequate CDA is understanding the nature of social power and dominance. Power involves control, namely by members of one group over those of other groups. He adds that such control may pertain to action and cognition: that is, a powerful group may limit the freedom of action of others, but also influence their minds. He also states that CDA can only make a significant subscription to critical social or political analyses if it has ability to provide an account of the role of language, language use, discourse or communicative events in the production of dominance and inequality. (pp.252-253) According to him, there are some principles of CDA:

the explicit sociopolitical stance of discourse analysts, and a focus on dominance relations by elite groups and institutions as they are being enacted, legitimated or otherwise reproduced by text and talk. One of the crucial elements of this analysis of the relations between power and discourse is the patterns of access to public discourse for different social groups. Theoretically it is shown that in order to be able to relate power and discourse in an explicit way, we need the cognitive interface of models, knowledge, attitudes and ideologies and other social representations of the social mind, which also relate the individual and the social, and the micro- and the macro-levels of social structure. Finally, the argument is illustrated with an analysis of parliamentary debates about ethnic affairs. (p. 249)

What he adds is that the CDA aim is offering a different mode or perspective of theorizing, analysis, and application throughout the whole field. He defines it far from the direction, school, or specialization that exists next to the many other approaches in discourse studies. He believes in critical perspective in diverse areas as pragmatics, narrative analysis, conversation analysis, rhetoric, sociolinguistics, stylistics, ethnography, or media analysis.

The other aspect of the CDA is the notion of power. As Wodak (2002) mentions "the language is not powerful on its own and it gains power by the use powerful people make of it" (p. 10). Consequently, CDA critically analyzes the language use of those people in power or who have opportunity to improve conditions. As Bourdieu (1977) who primarily concerned with dynamic power in society states that the theory of knowledge is a dimension of political theory, because the symbolic power to impose the principles of the construction of reality specifically. Moreover, he

adds that social reality is a major dimension of political power particularly. Also, the CDA depends on context, because it has a principle of simultaneity. Moreover, it cannot be analyzed outside the time in which it is occurred. (Foucault, 1972) In addition, what this study analyzes is not far from the communicative intentions, what Grice (1957) characterizes as intentions that produce some response on the part of the addressee. This is what has been called illocutionary uptake. According to Searle (1969):

In the case of illocutionary acts we succeed in doing what we are trying to do by getting our audience to recognize what we are trying to do. But the effect on the hearer is not a belief or a response, it consists simply in the hearer understanding the utterance of the speaker. (p. 47)

For analyzing the discourse, the study is considered speech acts analysis. The speech acts will be analyzed by theories of a British philosopher of language, Austin (1962), and an American philosopher, Searle (1975) who suggest how these theories can act as a framework for eliciting the used speech acts of Iranian candidates. According to Austin (1962), there are some needs for analyzing the speech acts including:

Firstly, a locutionary act that is roughly equivalent to uttering a certain sentence with a certain sense and reference, and equivalent to meaning in the traditional sense. Secondly, he mentions that human beings also perform illocutionary acts such as informing, ordering, warning, and undertaking. Thirdly, he adds that human beings may also perform perlocutionary acts: what we bring about or achieve by saying something, such as convincing, persuading, deterring and even, say, surprising or misleading. (p. 108)

Moreover, Searle (1975) claims that four acts are characteristically performed in the utterance of a sentence: "a. Uttering words (morphemes, sentences) = performing utterance acts b. Referring and predicating = performing propositional acts c. Stating, questioning, commanding, promising, etc = performing illocutionary acts" (p. 24).

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Questions and Hypotheses

All the statistical analyses were conducted to investigate the following research questions.

Q1. What are the frequencies of speech act strategies used by Iran's 2013 presidential candidates?

Q2. What is the relationship between the use of speech acts types (locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts) and the poll outcomes issued by press media in Iran's 2013 presidential debate?

According to the questions mentioned and the purposes of the study, the following research hypotheses were predicted:

H1. There is not any significant difference between the frequencies of speech act strategies used by Iran's 2013 presidential candidates.

H2. There is a relationship between the use of speech acts types (locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts) and the poll outcomes issued by press media in Iran's 2013 presidential debate.

B. Participants

This study examined eight candidates of Iran's 2013 presidential election debate for analyzing their speech acts. The candidates' age range was from 49 to 73 years old. Some of the candidates belonged to a type of political parties like: Development and Justice Party, Moderation and Development Party, Islamic Coalition Party, and Conservative Majority Alliance. Also, some of them were independent candidates. They had been responsible in key positions, before presenting as presidential candidate, like: mayor of Tehran, minister of petroleum, secretary of the supreme national security council, secretary of the expediency discernment council, member of the Assembly of Experts, and minister of foreign affairs. They were native speakers of Persian and their speeches during the debates were translated to English by the researchers.

C. Materials and Instruments

This study considered the eight Iranian candidates of eleventh period of presidential election held in 2013, with a special focus on the third debate as the most controversial one. The third debate was held by presentation of all candidates during 90 minutes on 17 Khordad 1392 (7 June 2013). All the debates broadcasted from channel one of Iran's TV at 4 PM. The materials were collected from a recorded video of a live TV program at <http://fararu.com> (Fararu, 2013). to answer to the research questions of this study. In addition, the visual and script form of debates are available on line. Moreover, the poll outcomes were extracted from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iranian_presidential_election_debates,_2013 (Iranian presidential election debates, 2013) right after the third debate for comparisons of the candidates' used speech acts and the poll. The third debate session consisted of eight speeches of eight candidates. Each one of the candidates had 10 minutes to speak during the debate. They had to respond to the specific questions around essential matters of the country: foreign and domestic policies. At first, the candidates mounted the tribune one by one and responded not only to the determined questions, but also to the other candidates' questions. Then, each one of them tried to collect his speeches in two minutes. The range of used sentences by each candidate was from 10 to 20 sentences in each speech. Consequently, this study analyzed eight candidates' speech acts and politeness by considering at least 70 sentences of this debate that whole candidates involved in. (The third debate speeches, see Appendix)

D. Procedures

At the first step of this study, in analyzing the first research question, the study used speech act theory to explain how speakers use language to accomplish intended actions and how hearers infer intended meaning from what is said. Austin's (1962) and Searle's (1975) theory were used as a framework to analyze kinds of speech acts of each candidate in this study. This study analyzed the candidate's locution acts based on declarative, imperative, and interrogative speech acts of Austin's (1962). The illocution acts of candidates were analyzed based on Searle's (1975) five categories of speech acts: representatives, directives, expressive, commissives, and declaratives. According to Austin (1969, as cited in Sadock 1974), perlocutionary act is the effect of the word for the hearer which is a consequence or byproduct of speaking, whether intended or not. Moreover, according to Austin (1969, as cited in Brown & Yule, 1983), perlocutionary act can be described in terms of effect of illocutionary act, on the particular occasion of use, has on the hearer. In addition, perlocutionary acts would include such effects as persuading, embarrassing, intimidating, boring, irritating, and inspiring the hearer. At the second stage, the sentences of each candidate's speech were separated to analyze their types of locution, illocution, and perlocution. At the third stage, in order to explain the second research hypothesis, the study compared the first hypothesis' outcomes with the poll. The polls were held right after third debate in order to define the debate winner. Considerably, in the way of analysis of pragmatics' subfields in this debate, there were some cross-cultural differences that needed consideration based on Iran's culture.

E. Data Analysis

To examine the research hypotheses, qualitative descriptive and quantitative statistics were used to describe the data. The data were collected from eight candidates of Iran's 2013 presidential election third debate. To investigate the first research hypothesis, the study needed to clarify the frequency of speech acts used by each candidate. Then, the data were classified based on candidate's responses to the same question. This part considered speech act of each candidate based on Austin's (1962) and Searle's (1975) strategies to clarify the locutions, illocution, and perlocutions of speeches. Following this classification, there was quantitative statistic of the Pearson chi-square formula to analyse the frequency of each candidate's speech in order to use specific locution and illocution speech acts that had different effects on creating specific perlocution speech acts. The main function of this part was analyzing the frequencies of speech act strategies used by Iran's 2013 presidential candidates. To compare the candidates' speech acts in relation to election outcomes, in order to response to the second research hypothesis, the study compared the previous stage outcomes with the statistical analyses done by the news sources right after the debate (poll). Moreover, the study described the comparison outcomes descriptively. The main function of this stage was providing a relationship between speech act of candidates' speeches and the victorious of candidates in this competition.

III. RESULTS

To examine the first stated null hypothesis, at first, this part explains in Table 1 a detailed analysis of speech act strategies used by Iran's 2013 presidential candidates. It expounds speech act of each candidate based on Austin's (1962) and Searle's (1975) strategies. It consists of two main speech act classifications. The first classification, locutions, contains of declaratives (Dec₁), imperatives (Imp), and interrogatives (Int). The second classification, illocutions, contains of representatives (Rep), directives (Dir), expressive (Exp), commissives (Com), and declaratives (Dec₂).

TABLE 1
A DETAILED ANALYSIS OF USED SPEECH ACT STRATEGIES BY CANDIDATES

candidate	Speeches	locution	Illocutions				
			Rep	Dir	Exp	Com	Dec ₂
A	The party-based management is not responding anymore.	Dec ₁			*		
	Our administration should be looking for people's right.	Imp		*			
	A comprehensive government must be formed.	Imp		*			
	We should achieve a successful economic diplomacy.	Imp		*			
	My administration will end in political strife...	Dec ₁				*	
	The persons should be capable and efficient and accept the leader....	Imp		*			
	I believe that we should...	Dec ₁	*				
	I prevent elapsing time.	Dec ₁				*	

candidate	Speeches	locution	Illocutions				
			Rep	Dir	Exp	Com	Dec ₂
B	Our diplomacy organization should not work....	Imp		*			
	Our diplomacy system did not succeed in achieving our foreign policy goals.	Dec ₁			*		
	We need a change in our management approaches.	Dec ₁		*			
	I introduce five axes as foreign policy: 1.... 2.... 3.... 4. 5.....	Dec ₁	*				

candidate	Speeches	locution	Illocutions				
			Rep	Dir	Exp	Com	Dec ₂
C	The economic problem is important in policy of country.	Dec ₁	*				
	The economic problem is associated with sanctions.	Dec ₁	*				
	With better management, we could and can decrease its effects.	Dec ₁				*	
	A solution of sanction issue has priority in our foreign policy, but how? Somebody says that...	Dec ₁			*		
	The problem with Americans is the primary problem of the revolution because...	Dec ₁	*				
	We do not have a discussion with the ideals and goals.	Dec ₁	*				
	You said this problem do not solve with management.	Dec ₁	*				
	Ironically, I believe that our diplomacy area does not let us to take advantage with low cost in foreign policy...	Dec ₁			*		

candidate	Speeches	locution	Illocutions				
			Rep	Dir	Exp	Com	Dec ₂
D	In the field of domestic policy, the basis of domestic policy of government will be management and hope based on...	Dec ₁				*	
	It must be such thing that...	Imp				*	
	The second issue is freedom that...	Dec ₁				*	
	Another issue is the justice issue in all around the country and citizens' right that...	Dec ₁				*	
	For moving the country toward the unity and power we need....	Dec ₁		*			
	In the foreign policy we should keep our national interest and national security and...	Imp		*			
	It is better to refer to the recent book published by ElBaradei who says....	Dec ₁	*				
	Straw also said that	Dec ₁	*				
	We should not distort the reality of history.	Imp		*			
	Today, we should also keep the country's circumstances.	Imp		*			
However, in foreign and important policies, we have also the confirmation and guidance of the leader.	Dec ₁		*				

candidate	Speeches	locution	Illocutions				
			Rep	Dir	Exp	Com	Dec ₂
E	In the first debate we concluded that the country is faced with problems.	Dec ₁	*				
	Who are responsible for the current situation?	Dec ₁			*		
	The people should know...	Imp		*			
	the performance of 8 years ago indicate we cannot ...	Dec ₁			*		
	The performance of reform government began with politic watchword, but followed with an expanded work...	Dec ₁	*				
	We controlled the costs and...	Dec ₁	*				
	This is unacceptable to know...as responsible for this situation.	Dec ₁			*		
My priority is...I will form...	Dec ₁				*		
Illocutions							
candidate	Speeches	locution	Illocutions				
			Rep	Dir	Exp	Com	Dec ₂
F	Sometimes we have misunderstanding that is part of economic problems and ...	Dec ₁			*		
	Those should take responsibilities who...because we discussed after the war...	Dec ₁	*				
	Another part of problems...	Dec ₁			*		
	If I become president...	Dec ₁				*	
	The Iranian passport should not be...	Imp	*				
Illocutions							
candidate	Speeches	locution	Illocutions				
			Rep	Dir	Exp	Com	Dec ₂
G	If the domestic capacity increases, the foreign policy will be corrected.	Dec ₁			*		
	If people vote for me, my plan is...	Dec ₁				*	
	If you vote for me, I let people to choose...	Dec ₁				*	
Illocutions							
candidate	Speeches	locution	Illocutions				
			Rep	Dir	Exp	Com	Dec ₂
H	The area of foreign policy is the domain of thought,	Dec ₁			*		
	We should follow it based on pure Islam.	Imp		*			
	If we cannot do it, we will become weak.	Dec ₁			*		

This study analyzed the candidates' speeches by considering Austin's (1962) and Searle's (1975) classifications. Every classification consists of some sub-categories. According to Austin (1969, as cited in Langacker 1972), there are some example of locutionary speech acts. These examples are comparable with Table 1.

A) Declarative (Dec₁)

1) Pauline gave Tom digital watch for his birthday.

B) Imperative (Imp)

1) Give a digital watch for my birthday.

C) Interrogative (Int)

1) Did you buy the wallet, or did you steal it, or did you find it on the street?

It is worth to repeat the philosopher Searle's (1975, as cited in Richard & Schmidt, 2010) point of view about five-part classification of illocutionary speech acts by providing some examples. The examples are restricted to one type of each category. These examples are comparable with Table 1.

A) Representative (Rep)

- 1) This is a German car (assertion)
 B) Commissive (Com)
 1) I'll take you to the movies tomorrow (promise).
 C) Directive (Dir)
 1) Why don't you close the window?
 D) Expressive (Exp)
 1) The meal was delicious.
 E) Declarative (Dec₂)

1) During the wedding ceremony the act of marriage is performed when the phrase I now pronounce you man and wife is uttered.

Secondly, since hypothesis 1 predicated that there is not any significant difference between the frequencies of speech act strategies used by Iran's 2013 presidential candidates. Table 2 shows the frequency of used speech act strategies by them.

TABLE 2
THE FREQUENCY OF USED SPEECH ACT STRATEGIES BY CANDIDATES

Candidates	Locutions			Illocutions				
	Dec ₁	Imp	Int	Rep	Dir	Exp	Com	Dec ₂
A	2	4	0	1	4	1	2	0
B	3	1	0	1	2	1	0	0
C	8	0	0	5	0	2	1	0
D	7	4	0	2	5	0	4	0.
E	7	1	0	3	1	3	1	0
F	4	1	0	2	0	2	1	0
G	3	0	0	0	0	1	2	0
H	2	0	0	0	1	2	0	0

Thirdly, in order to test the hypothesis, this study analyzed the comparison and contrast of used speech act frequencies by candidates. Table 3 shows the relation between speech act strategies and the achieved frequencies by considering the Pearson chi-square formula.

TABLE 3
CHI-SQUARE TESTS OF USED SPEECH-ACT FREQUENCIES BY CANDIDATES

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	76.264	49	.008
Likelihood Ratio	76.541	49	.007
Linear-by-Linear Association	9.434	1	.002
N of Valid Cases	64		

According to Pearson Chi-Square statistic, to be significant, the Sig. value needs to be .05 or smaller. In this case the value of .008 is smaller than the alpha value of .05, so we can conclude that our result is significant. This means that there was a significant difference between the frequencies of speech act strategies used by Iran's 2013 presidential candidates. This suggests that the null hypothesis is rejected.

In order to show whether there is a relationship between the use of speech acts types (locutionary acts, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary acts) and the poll outcomes issued by press media in Iran's 2013 presidential debate, this part compared the used speech act strategies outcomes, that were analyzed in previous section, with the poll, that was held right after the third debate. Table 4 indicates that the forecasted votes have been assembled by some on-line news sources. The following polls were held right after the third debate of 2013' presidential election in order to predict the debate winner.

TABLE 4
THE POLL OUTCOMES ISSUED BY PRESS MEDIA IN IRAN'S 2013 PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE (7 JUNE 2013)

Poll source	Date updated	Total votes	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Entekhab	9 June 2013	67,973	6.45%	3.97%	1.01%	57.28%	17.35%	5.78%	2.19%	5.97%
Khabaronline	9 June 2013	41,000	8%	5%	1%	44%	21%	12%	3%	6%
Asriran	9 June 2013	101,220	9.86%	4.31%	1.23%	55.34%	15.41%	6.28%	3.29%	4.27%
Fararu	9 June 2013	50,666	5.95%	5.58%	1.1%	52.97%	19.38%	7%	2.96%	5.06%

Figure 1 displays the overall picture of candidates' locutionary speech-act strategies used for answering the same question. To compare three types of locutionary speech acts, the first column of this figure shows declarative locutionary speech act, the second one shows imperative one, and the third one shows interrogative one.

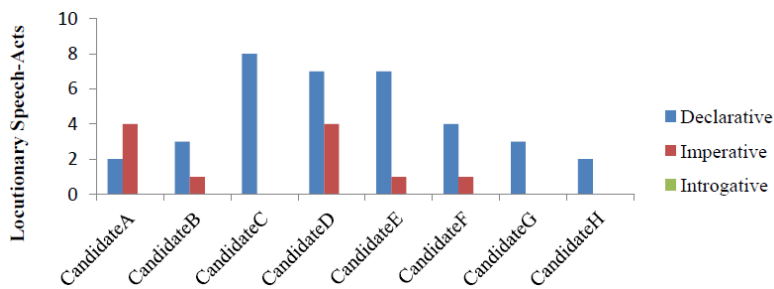


Figure 1 The Comparison of Locutionary Speech Acts Used by Candidates

Moreover, to compare the candidates' illocutionary speech-act strategies, the study consider each candidate' illocutionary speech act separately. Figure 2 displays representative illocutionary speech act used by candidates for answering the same question.

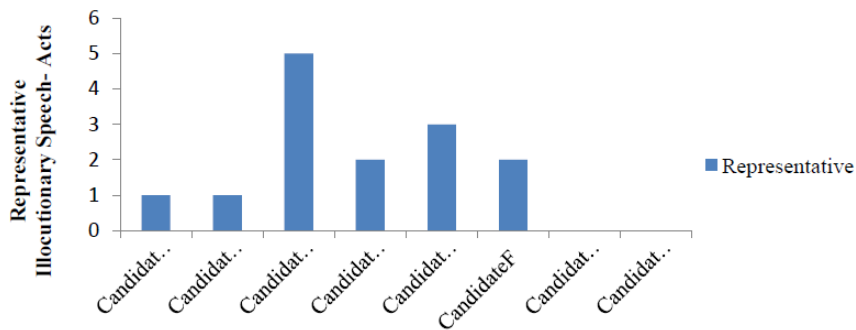


Figure 2 The Comparison of Representative Illocutionary Speech Acts Used by Candidates

Next, Figure 3 compares directive illocutionary speech act used by candidates for answering the same question.

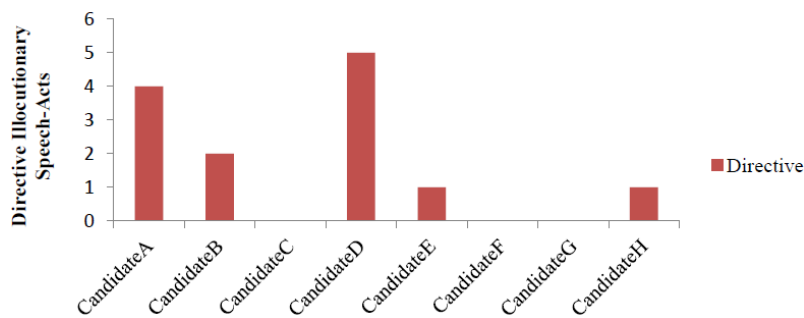


Figure 3 The Comparison of Directive Illocutionary Speech Acts Used by Candidates

In addition, Figure 4 compares expressive illocutionary speech act used by candidates for answering the same question.

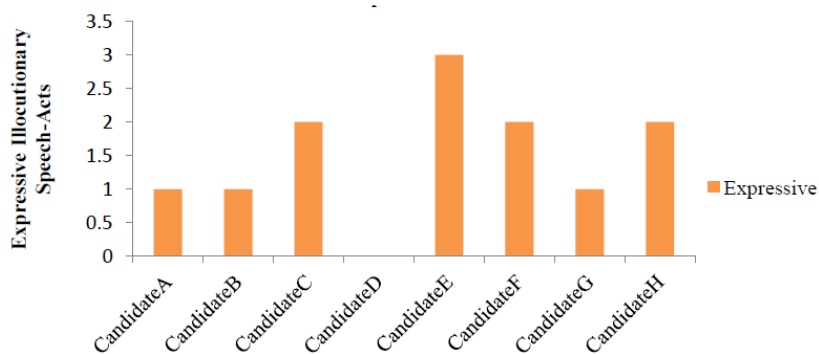


Figure 4 The Comparison of Expressive Illocutionary Speech Acts Used by Candidates

Finally, Figure 5 compares commissive illocutionary speech act used by candidates for answering the same question.

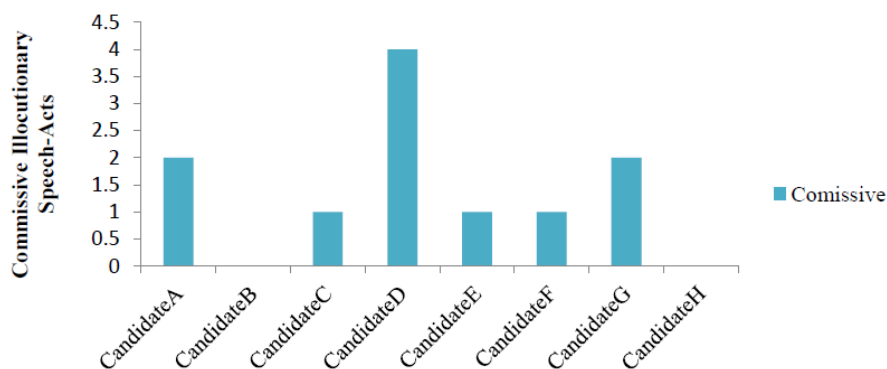


Figure 5 The Comparison of Commissive Illocutionary Speech Acts Used by Candidates

IV. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

The results of chi-square test indicated a statistically significant difference between the frequencies of speech act strategies used by Iran's 2013 presidential candidates. Since the candidates needed to attract people's attention, in terms of locutionary sentences, they had to use a lot of declarative and imperative sentences than interrogative ones. However, the most stated sentences were declarative ones to assert themselves and describe their status. In terms of illocutionary sentences, in order to motivate people to perform a function, here, people decision making, the candidates used more representative, directive, expressive, and commissive sentences than declarative ones. The purpose of candidates in performing representative sentences was to commit themselves to the belief that the propositional content of the utterances were true. Statements of fact, assertions, conclusions, and descriptions, are the examples of this type of speech acts. By use of directive sentences, the candidates tried to get the hearer to commit themselves to do something. These directive sentences expressed what the candidates wanted, commanded, ordered, requested, and suggested. Moreover, by use of expressive sentences, the candidates stated what they felt. They expressed psychological sentences and used statements of pleasure, pain, likes, dislikes, joy or sorrow. Also, they expressed their feelings (disapproval, unsatisfied, anger) as complainers of current issues through this speech act classification. The candidates used commissive sentences to show what they are going to do in the future. It was in the form of promises, threats, refusals, and pledges. By the use of this type of speech act classification, the most candidates indicated that they could perform some actions by alone, or as a member of a group.

Related qualitative data revealed that there was a strong relation between speech acts used by the candidates and the poll outcomes issued by press media. Significantly, a strong relation existed between the winner of this competition and the other candidates, in using types of speech acts strategies. Table 4 shows the prominence of candidate D in this competition. Orderly, candidates E, F, A, H, B, G, and C place in next ranks. The high differentiation of candidate D's and candidate E's votes indicated that candidate D might be winner in the final election. As Figure 1 shows, in terms of locution acts, candidates A and D used declarative sentences as much as imperative sentences. Candidates B, C, E, F, G, and H used the declarative sentences more than the imperative or the interrogative ones. Candidate D used lots of declarative and imperative locution sentences, and more directive and commissive illocution ones than representative and expressive ones. In detail, candidate D not only got the hearers to do something, but also got them to expect something in the future. The polls outcomes demonstrated that the least votes belonged to candidate C who used lots of representative speech act sentences that just got the hearers to know something.

According to Figure 2, in terms of representative illocutionary speech acts, candidate C answered the question by the most representative sentences and lots of claims. Orderly, candidates E, and F used more representative sentences than other types of illocutionary acts. Statements of fact, claims, reports, assertions, conclusions, and descriptions were the examples of this type of speech acts in this debate. In using representative sentences, the candidates committed themselves to the truth or falsity of somethings that being the case. Also, according to Figure 3, candidate D and A answered the question directivity. Directive sentences of these candidates expressed what they wanted; they consisted of commands, orders, requests, and suggestions. According to Figure 4 candidates E, C, and H used lots of expressive sentences. Candidates A, B, F, and G used expressive sentences equally. No types of expressive actions were observed in candidate D's speeches. Moreover, according to Figure 5, candidate D used more commissive sentences than the other candidates to show doing the actions in the future. They were in the form of promises, refusals, and pledges. In terms of perlocutionary acts that are the effect of illocutionary acts, the candidate A with more directive sentences got the hearers to do something. Candidates C, E, and F used more representative sentences and all of candidates except candidate D used expressive ones that the effect of these types of sentences is getting the hearers to know something. By comparison of types of sentences with candidates' votes in the poll's outcomes, the study concluded that majority of votes belonged to candidate D with lots of commissive sentences and lack of expressive ones. Also, minority of votes belonged to candidate C with lots of representative sentences and minimum commissive ones. Finally, there was one by one relation between the poll's outcomes and locution and illocution strategies used by the candidates.

APPENDIX

	Candidate
مدیریت جناحی دیگر جوابگو نیست. دولت ما باید به دنبال حق مردم باشد و باید دولت فراگیر تشکیل یابد. ما باید به یک دیپلماسی موفق اقتصادی دست یابیم. در دولت من منازعات سیاسی پایان خواهد یافت.	A
دستگاه دیپلماسی ما نباید خارج از برنامه های کلان کشور عمل کند. حوزه دیپلماسی ما نتوانسته در تحقق اهداف سیاست های خارجی ما موفق عمل کند. ما نیازمند یک تغییر در رویکردهای مدیریتی هستیم. B پنج محور را سیاست خارجی معرفی کرد: 1. تحقق در انسجام داخلی 2. دیپلماسی فعال منطقه گرایی 3. فعال کردن دیپلماسی اقتصادی 4. دیپلماسی عمومی 5. راهبرد مقاومت مقتدران	B
مشکل اقتصادی در سیاست کشور اهمیت دارد. مشکل اقتصادی با تحریم ارتباط دارد. با مدیریت بهتر می شد و می شود آثارش را کم کرد. در سیاست خارجی حل مسئله تحریم اولویت دارد ولی چگونه؟ بعضی می گویند که اگر دم کندها را ببینیم مشکل حل می شود. مشکل هسته ای بهانه است، مشکل با آمریکایی ها، مشکل اصل انقلاب است چون ما خواهان استقلال بوده ایم و پافشاری می کنیم با ما مخالفت می کنند. به نظر من پایه حل مشکل تحریم را باید از موضع عزت و اقتدار عمل کنیم. 40 سال آمریکا تلاش کرد چین را نادیده بگیرد و بالاخره آمریکا آمد و با چین تعامل کرد. ما بحثی با آرمان ها و اهداف ما نداریم. شما فرمودید با مدیریت این موضوع حل نمیشود از قضا معتقدم حوزه دیپلماسی ماست که نمیگذارد در سیاست خارجی با هزینه کم بیشترین نفع را ببریم. این موضوع کلیدی است	C
در زمینه سیاست داخلی، اساس سیاست داخلی دولت تدبیر و امید بر مبنای تامین امنیت و ایجاد آرامش برای همه مردم ایران در تمام ابعاد زندگی خواهد بود در اقتصاد و فرهنگ و شغل و حریم خصوصی و ... باید به گونه ای باشد که مردم شب و روز در خانه و خیابان و سفر احساس آرامش کنند. مساله دوم مساله آزادی است که در همه ابعاد زندگی آزادی مسئولانه را احساس کنند. یعنی جایی که باید نظرها را اعلام کنند و یا اینکه در یک انتخابات با آزادی تمام بیایند و حضور یابند که متأسفانه امروز در برخی موارد آزادی مردم برای حضور در عرصه انتخابات با سخت گیری هایی که نیازی نیست رویرو شده است. یکی دوتومونه را آقای عارف اعلام کردند. مساله دیگر مساله عدالت در سراسر کشور و بحث حقوق شهروندی است که همه مردم کشورمان از هر قبیله و نژاد و قومیتی، احساس کنند که شهروند یک کشور واحد هستند و از حقوق مساوی و عادلانه برخوردارند و زمینه برای مشارکت همه مردم فراهم کنیم تا مردم با اعتماد کامل مشارکت کنند و این تنها برای انتخابات و 22 بهمن نباشد. تا کشور به سمت انسجام و قدرت ملی حرکت کند. برای اینکار نیاز به عقلانیت و اعتدال و دوری از افراط و تفریط داریم. در سیاست خارجی هم باید منافع کشور و امنیت ملی را حفظ کرده و شرایطی فراهم کنیم که فرصت های لازم برای مردم ما وجود آید. اینکه اشاره شد در بحث ها در دولت سازندگی با اصلاحات سیاست خارجی ما ایراد داشته، تعجب میکنم که اشاره میکنند به حرفی که در گوشه سایتی آمده است. خوب است به کتابی که اخیراً البرادعی نوشته نگاه کنیم که میگوید جنگ پشت دروازه ایران بود و ایران جلوی آن را گرفت و 3 وزیر اروپایی را به ایران دعوت کرد و آنها را سیر قرار داد. استر او هم گفت جنگ حتمی بود و من اعلام کردم احمقانه است. نباید واقعیت های تاریخی را تحریف کنیم. امروز هم باید شرایط کشور را حفظ کنیم. البته در سیاست های خارجی و مهم همه جا تایید رهبری و هدایت های ایشان هم بوده	D
در مناظره اول جمع بندی این بود که کشور با مشکلاتی رو به روست. چه کسانی مسئول وضع موجود هستند. مردم حق دارند که بدانند چه کسانی این مشکل را بوجود آوردند. تمام قوا در اختیار اصولگرایان بود. در قوه مجریه همه افراد حذف شدند. عملکرد هشت سال گذشته نشان داد که ما نمی توانیم خودمان را به یک جناح خاص محدود کنیم. عملکرد دولت اصلاحات با شعار سیاسی آمد اما در عمل یک کار فراگیر را دنبال کرد. 173 میلیارد دلار نفت صادر شد در حالی که بیشتر از 630 میلیارد دلار در دوره اخیر درآمد داشت. گرانی را کنترل کردیم و ارز را تک نرخی کردیم. این که جریان موهوم انحرافی را مسئول وضع کشور بدانیم پذیرفتنی نیست. جریان اصولگرا مسئولیت خودش را بپذیرد. اولویت اول من فصل سوم قانون است، من معاونت اقوام را تشکیل خواهم داد.	E
گاه ممکن است برداشت نادرستی وجود داشته باشد، این برداشت از مشکلات حاد جامعه و روش دولت فعلی به این برداشت منجر شده است. بخشی از مشکلات اقتصادی در تحریم ها ریشه دارد. باید افرادی متصدی امور شوند که تجربه داشته باشند. چون در دوره بعد از جنگ مذاکره کردیم به طوری که حتی یک وجب از کشور ما دست دیگران نماند. هسته ای سخت تر از قرارداد 598 نیست. بخشی دیگر از مشکلات از سوء تدبیر پیش آمده است. به این معنی اگر کسی مثل ما نمی اندیشید او را نادیده بگیریم و خانه نشین کنیم. اگر من رئیس جمهور شوم تامل سازنده با دنیا فراهم خواهد کرد. رابطه با چند کشور محدود آفریقایی و آمریکایی خوب است اما فایده ای چندانی به همراه ندارد. گذرنامه مردم ایران طوری نباشد که در ورود مورد بی احترامی قرار نگیرد. متأسفانه اکنون برخورد با ایرانیان در خارج مناسب نیست و ما تلاش می کنیم که مطابق شان ملت وضعیت بهبود یابد.	F
اگر استعداد داخلی قزون شود سیاست خارجی درست می شود. اگر مردم به من رای بدهند برنامه ام انسجام داخلی خواهد بود. اگر به من رای دهید می گویم استاندار هر استان را مردم انتخاب کنند	G
حوزه سیاست خارجی حوزه اندیشه است. بر اساس اسلام ناب باید این گفتگو را دنبال کنیم با سازوکار قوی و مدیریت هوشمند که گفتنمان را باور داشته باشد. اگر ما اینکار را نتوانیم انجام دهیم دچار ضعف می شویم. این یک بحث اساسی است. سوال من را آقای F جواب نداد که چرا بعد از 7 سال گفتگویشان تحریم های داماتو صادر شد و برای رئیس جمهور وقت هم حکم جلب آوردند	H

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The Effects of Self- and Peer-assessment on Iranian EFL Learners' Argumentative Writing Performance

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Abstract—Alternative assessments have increasingly gained attention in L2 writing. One of the areas of research which has received much attention in the literature of ELT is the use of self- and peer-assessments and their effects on developing the writing ability of ESL/EFL learners. The purpose of this study was to find the effect of self- and peer-assessments on the argumentative writing performance of intermediate Iranian EFL learners. For this purpose, 36 intermediate EFL students were selected and homogenized based on the results of Oxford Quick Placement Test and an argumentative writing which served as the pre-test of this study. They were then randomly assigned into control and experimental groups to receive different treatments. The compositions of participants in the control group were assessed using traditional teacher-assessment while for the experimental group, self- and peer-assessments were used writing assessment. The results of post-test indicated that the use of self- and peer-assessments significantly affected the writing ability of the learners. Based on the obtained results, it was concluded that using alternative assessments for Iranian EFL students could be helpful in overcoming some of their argumentative writing difficulties. The results of this study have clear implications for both learners and teachers and other stakeholders of ELT. They can use these alternative assessments as a learning opportunity to lower the anxiety and improve the argumentative writing skill of the students.

Index Terms—argumentative writing, assessment, alternative assessment, self-assessment, peer-assessment

I. INTRODUCTION

Toulmin (2006) defines argumentation as the informal reasoning skillfulness that is included in claiming and supporting these claims. According to Toulmin (2006), unlike merely trying to persuade someone to accept something as true, argumentative writing involves making a claim supported by explanations or confirmation from numerous bases that attach to the claim. This structuralist or formalist observation of argumentative writing is successful in presenting patterns of writing for encouraging the argumentative schemas into learners' mentality (Reznitskaya & Anderson, 2002). Nevertheless, such a viewpoint, particularly when it eliminates other viewpoints, has its own constraints as well (Prior, 2005). Formalist notions of argumentation are necessary but insufficient for analyzing the complex argumentative social practices in specific literacy events, given the limited language capacity as well as the limited life experience of foreign language learners. Discussions of the complexity of argumentative writing must consider argumentation as social practices with a diversity of application (Prior, 2005).

In argumentative writing, the writer tries to persuade readers to be in agreement with the writer's facts and values, believe in the arguments and conclusions, and approve the writer's position. Moreover, the author not only provides facts but also offers an argument with supporting or opposing ideas of an argumentative issue. The writer should clearly state his/her viewpoint and must show that he/she is trying to persuade the reader to acknowledge the writer's attitudes or manners. According to Marandi (2002), even though no one disregards the value of writing skill in academic contexts, EFL learners mostly find writing a more challenging skill to master than oral skills. Thus, extensive teaching of writing is necessary and learners should practice different genres of writing, including, the argumentative writing.

In line with new developments in language teaching and assessment which try to increase learner autonomy, self-assessment and peer-assessment are gaining momentum and playing more significant role in language teaching. They are procedures which give the learners a chance to judge their own learning. Students need to know their own capabilities and how much improvement they are making and what they can do with the abilities they have achieved. As far as education is concerned, students' awareness of their own performance is really important. If they can do this precisely enough, they are not obliged to depend on the teachers' opinions. Furthermore, learners can inform teachers

about their own individual requirements. According to Heinelman (1990), learners themselves are completely aware of their own knowledge while any kind of tests can only assess a small portion of their knowledge. Based on this ground, use of self-report measures has been increasingly used in recent years.

Chen (2008, cited in Javaherbakhsh, 2010) stated that teachers have to provide their students with necessary support to construct knowledge through active engagement in assessing their proficiency level and enabling them to get control of their own learning. Therefore, teachers must provide chances for learners to evaluate themselves (Oskarson, 1989) and creating autonomy in the learners will not come close to reality unless the learners are given opportunities to assess and evaluate themselves (Hunt, J., Gow, L., & Bames, P., 1989).

In all its forms, peer-assessment has become increasingly popular in education. As a learning tool, assessing their peers can provide students with skills to form judgments about what constitutes high-quality work (Topping, 1998). By means of peer-assessment, teachers can have a more accurate picture of individual performance in group work (Cheng & Warren, 2000, cited in Zundert et al, 2010).

Self- and peer-assessment can prepare pupils for effectiveness and improvement in their lives. They are also connected to the purpose of life-long learning and integrated into different subjects and fields (Chen, 2008). Consequently, there is a vital need to make a simultaneous analysis of the impact of self and peer-assessment of writing performance of Iranian EFL students as there hasn't been any adequate and comprehensive research in this field in our country so far.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to Erwin (1991) assessment is termed as a continuous process of learning and development. Assessment is an approach which makes it possible to gather information and make inferences about the learners' potentials or the quality or success of teaching according to the different sources of the learners' performance. Assessment can be carried out in various forms such as, test, interview, questionnaire, observation, etc. for example it seems important to assess the comprehension ability of a learner to comprehend if the learner can follow a course of study in a school, or extra instruction is needed.

Many researchers have recognized this fact that alternative assessment techniques are efficient and dynamic means of assessing learners' educational development. Alternative assessment includes procedures and techniques which facilitate the process of instruction and are easily incorporated into daily activities of the students (Hamayan, 1995) It is specially efficient in ESL/EFL contexts in which students can demonstrate what they can produce rather than what they can remember and recall (Huerta-Macias, 1995). Alternative assessment is intended to gather information about how students are able to process and complete real-life tasks (Huerta, 1995). Self-assessment is a process through which students learn about themselves (Dikel, 2005). Put it another way, a good language learner controls his own speech and that of others, too. That is, they are paying attention to how well his words are being perceived and if his performance meets the standards he has already learned (Rubin, 1975).

Since the emergence of alternative assessment methods, many researchers have attempted to probe into the efficiency of implementing new methods of assessing language learning of different learners. Ross (1998) has studied the effect of using formative assessment on foreign language proficiency development through involving eight cohorts of foreign language learners in an eight-year longitudinal study. He found that formative assessment procedures proved very positive effects on language proficiency development. Cheng and Warren (2005) have attempted to study the advantages of peer-assessment in English language programs. In their research, undergraduate engineering students attending a university in Hong Kong were asked to assess the English language proficiency of their peers. They also attempted to compare peer and teacher assessments. The results of their studies yielded that the students had a negative perception of assessing their peers' language proficiency, but they could score their peers' language proficiency in a similar fashion based on the same assessment criteria. Implementing two techniques of self-assessment and conferencing, Firooz-Zareh (2006) investigated the relationship between alternative assessment techniques and Iranian learners' reading proficiency. The results of his research proved that alternative assessment techniques should be incorporated into instruction and assessment programs. Besharati (2004) did a similar research but focusing on the impact of alternative assessment on listening proficiency of Iranian EFL learners. His study produced similar outcomes which necessitates the implementation of peer and self-assessment techniques.

As for speaking ability, Ahangari, Rassekh-Alqol, and Ali Akbari (2013) examined the effect of peer assessment on oral presentation of Iranian EFL students. They obtained data through a Likert scale questionnaire of peer assessment. The results of their study specified a statistically significant difference among the groups. The findings of their study also suggested that peer-assessment can enhance the speaking ability of learners if they are given a valid criterion or framework.

Moreover, Ariafar and Fatemipour (2013) investigated the effect of self-assessment on the speaking skill of pre-intermediate Iranian EFL learners. The results of their study revealed that self-assessment practices helped the participants of the study to improve their speaking ability. Moreover, the authors found that the participants thought positively about the use of self-assessment and showed their willingness to continue using self-assessment.

As for general course achievement, Abolfazli Khonbi and Sadeghi (2012) investigated the effect of self-, peer-, and teacher-assessment techniques on Iranian EFL learners' general English proficiency. The results of their study indicated

differences in the effect of the three techniques in favor of peer-assessment. As for the effect of alternative assessments in writing skill, Javaherbakhsh (2010) investigated whether self-assessment impacts Iranian EFL learners' writing skill. The results of his study indicated that self-assessment significantly affected the writing ability of the students. Meihami and Varmaghani (2013) also investigated the use of self-assessment in EFL writing classroom. The results of their analysis showed that self-assessment significantly improved the writing proficiency of the participants. Their results confirmed that self-assessment is successful with EFL students.

The relationship between self-assessment and motivation was also examined in the context of Iran. Birjandi and Hadidi Tamjid (2010) examined the effect of self-assessment in promoting Iranian EFL learners' motivation. Journal writing was used as the self-assessment technique for the experimental group was. The results of their study revealed that a regular use of journal writing can promote the learners' motivation. Many studies have tried to find the effect of using alternative assessments in L1 and L2 instruction (see Mendonca & Johnson, 1994; Liang, 2006; Matsuno, 2009). However, the simultaneous effect of self and peer-assessment in EFL students' argumentative writing performance has not been explored in the context of Iran.

III. RESEARCH QUESTION AND METHODOLOGY

The present study was motivated by the following research questions:

- Do self- and peer-assessment techniques significantly affect Iranian intermediate EFL learners' argumentative writing performance?

A. Participants

To conduct the study, 54 EFL students were selected based on convenience sampling method from Hakim Jorjani Institute of Higher education, Gorgan, Iran. They were male and female students ranging from 18-25 years of age and Persian was their mother tongue. Among that sample, 45 intermediate participants were singled out based on the results of Oxford Quick Placement Test (2004). They were then homogenized in terms of their writing ability after administering a pre-test. Finally, 36 intermediate EFL students (in terms of proficiency and writing ability) were used as the participants of this study who were then randomly assigned to control and experimental groups.

B. Procedures

In order to answer the main research questions, the following procedures were conducted. First, the Oxford Quick Placement Test was administered to 70 EFL students to make sure that all the participants were at the same level of proficiency i.e., intermediate level. Then, those who got 30-40, were selected as the subjects of the study. Then, the subjects were given and asked to compose a five-paragraph argumentative essay on the topic (death penalty for people who kill other people, fair or unfair?), in about 30 minutes, to determine their argumentative writing proficiency level. In the next phase, the selected participants were randomly assigned to control and experimental groups.

In the treatment phase, in both groups, every three sessions, the subjects were given a topic to write an argumentative composition containing 150 words. In the control group, the traditional teacher-assessment method was used and for the experimental group, self-assessment and peer-assessment techniques were utilized. In other words, every learner's argumentative writings were assessed by the learner himself/herself or by the peer of the learner. After that, the teacher added some comments at the bottom of the checklists. But the control group did not receive any feedback during the treatment period. At the end, two composition topics were given to both control and experimental groups as the posttest. Finally, their writing performances were compared using the writing scoring checklist which includes five criteria based on which the writings of the students were scored. The criteria include organization (introduction, body, and conclusion), logical development (content), structure; mechanics; style and quality of expression. These features were also used by the students on a five-point Likert scale to assess their peers' writing performance. The teacher also provided them with feedback at the bottom of the checklist. The scoring was done based on ESL Composition Profile by Jacobs et al. (1981). It focuses on the writing components namely, content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics.

C. Data Analyses

After the assumptions of normality were met, independent-samples t-test was run for the post-test to find if there was any significant difference between the two groups after treatment. In order to see the progress of each group, a paired-samples t-test was also run. To do so, the mean score of each group before and after the treatment was compared.

IV. RESULTS

A. Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive results of participants' performance on pretest and posttest are shown in Table 1. As Table 1 shows, the scores of the participants range from 10 to 16 with a mean of 12.77 in pretest while the mean is slightly more for posttest (M = 13.88) and the scores range from 11 to 17.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR EACH TEST

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Variance
pretest	36	10.00	16.00	12.7778	1.65807	2.749
posttest	36	11.00	17.00	13.8889	1.63494	2.673

B. Categorizing the Participants into Control and Experimental

As mentioned above, the proficiency level of the participants was determined by means of Oxford Quick Placement Test (2004). A pretest was also administered to ensure the homogeneity of the students in terms of their argumentative writing performance. Afterwards, the participants were randomly assigned into control and experimental groups based on the results of pretest. An independent-samples t-test was run to ensure that there were not any significant differences between the scores of the participants in control and experimental groups on posttest.

TABLE 2
INDEPENDENT-SAMPLES DESCRIPTIVE RESULTS FOR PRETEST

	group	N	Mean	SD	SE
Pretest	control	18	13.1111	1.93691	.45653
	experimental	18	12.4444	1.29352	.30489

TABLE 3
INDEPENDENT-SAMPLES T-TEST RESULTS FOR PRETEST

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
pretest	Equal variances assumed	5.306	.027	1.214	34	.233
	Equal variances not assumed			1.214	29.648	.234

The descriptive results of independent-samples t-test, as shown in Table 2, indicated that there was a small difference between the means of the control and experimental groups in pretest. Since the Levene's Test for Equality of Variances shows that the variances of the two groups are not equal ($p < .05$), the second line of Table 3 is reported. Table 3 shows that the mean difference between the two groups was not statistically significant, $t(29.64) = 1.21$, $p > .05$. Consequently, the homogeneity of the two groups was ensured.

C. Inferential Statistics

To answer the research question of this study, two types of t-tests were run. An independent-samples t-test was run to find the difference between the performances of the two groups on posttest. Moreover, paired-samples t-tests were run to examine the development of each group from pretest to posttest.

Table 4 shows the descriptive results of independent-samples t-test for posttest. As shown in this table, there is a small difference between the means of the two groups ($M = 12.77$ & $M = 15$).

TABLE 4
INDEPENDENT-SAMPLES DESCRIPTIVE RESULTS FOR POSTTEST

	group	N	Mean	SD	SE
posttest	control	18	12.7778	1.39560	.32895
	experimental	18	15.0000	.97014	.22866

Since the Levene's Test for Equality of Variances shows that the variances of the two groups are not equal ($p < .05$), the second line of Table 5 is reported. The main table of independent-samples t-test indicates that the difference between the two groups was statistically significant, $t(30.31) = 5.547$, $p < .01$. This shows that using self- and peer-assessment techniques had a positive effect on the argumentative writing performance of Iranian intermediate EFL students.

TABLE 5
INDEPENDENT-SAMPLES T-TEST RESULTS FOR PRETEST

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
pretest	Equal variances assumed	6.641	.014	-5.547	34	.000
	Equal variances not assumed			-5.547	30.319	.000

To find the development of each group, paired-samples t-tests were also run. The first paired-samples t-test was run for the control group and the results of Table 6 indicated that the mean difference between the pretest and posttest was not remarkable ($M = 13.11$ & $M = 12.77$).

The results of Table 7 showed that the argumentative writing performance of participants in the control group did not differ from pretest to posttest and this difference was not statistically significant, $t(17) = .678$, $p > .05$.

TABLE 6
 PAIRED-SAMPLES DESCRIPTIVE RESULTS FOR CONTROL GROUP

		Mean	N	SD	SE
Control	pretest	13.1111	18	1.93691	.45653
	posttest	12.7778	18	1.39560	.32895

TABLE 7
 PAIRED-SAMPLES T-TEST RESULTS FOR CONTROL GROUP

		Mean	SD	SE	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Control	Pretest-posttest	.3333	2.0863	.4917	.678	17	.507

Another paired-samples t-test was run for the experimental group to compare the participants' argumentative writing performance before and after the treatment. The descriptive statistics showed that there was a remarkable mean difference between the argumentative writing performance of the students in the pretest and posttest ($M = 12.44$ & $M = 15$).

TABLE 8
 PAIRED-SAMPLES DESCRIPTIVE RESULTS FOR CONTROL GROUP

		Mean	N	SD	SE
Experimental	pretest	12.4444	18	1.2935	.3048
	posttest	15.0000	18	.9701	.2286

TABLE 9
 PAIRED-SAMPLES T-TEST RESULTS FOR CONTROL GROUP

		Mean	SD	SE	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Experimental	Pretest-posttest	-2.555	.9217	.2172	-11.762	17	.000

The main results of paired-samples t-test presented in Table 9 indicated that this difference was statistically significant, $t(17) = 11.762$, $p < .01$. The overall results of paired-samples t-test also confirmed the results of independent-samples t-test; using self- and peer-assessment techniques can significantly enhance the argumentative writing performance of intermediate Iranian EFL learners.

V. DISCUSSION

According to the results of this research, providing the opportunity for the students to use self- and peer-assessments was helpful and influential in improving their argumentative writing ability. By providing alternative assessment techniques, learners could write better compositions. The results of this study showed significant change in the experimental group; therefore, the findings can help EFL teachers who like to help students develop strategies for their own learning, to help them find their strengths and weaknesses, and to help them become more autonomous. Using self-assessment checklists also gives the teacher complete information about the students' progress and their failure in the process of learning.

The findings of this study are in line with the findings of other studies which found a positive effect for peer-evaluation on the improvement of students' writing performance (Hughes & Large, 1993; Freeman, 1995; Dyer, 1996; Brown, 2001). The findings are also in line with the study of Patri (2002) which found that when assessment criteria are set, peer-assessment can enable students to judge the writing of their peers in manner comparable to their teachers.

The self-assessment technique can play an influential role in checking the effectiveness of individual learning, enhancing their intrinsic motivation, and making them prepared for a life-long learning experience. Learners need to assess their progress and accomplishments to be able to plan for their future learning objectives. Self-assessment has proved to raise the students' self-awareness and motivation (Birjandi & HadidiTamjid, 2010). As the results of the study also revealed, self- assessment and peer-assessment techniques can be used as effective tools for enhancing learners' intrinsic motivation and improving their self-confidence. This is absolutely important in our Iranian EFL context which highly depends on the role of the teacher in teaching and evaluation. It is generally assumed that in teacher-centered classes, students are not self- confident enough. Alternative assessments, as shown in this study, can be used as effective tools in helping the learners be involved in the process of their own learning and evaluation.

However, because self-assessment is affected by complex cognitive processes and uncontrollable factors, the effectiveness of this method has been questioned (Birjandi & HadidiTamjid, 2010). Despite a number of difficulties in appropriately implementing self-assessment, resolving these problems can create effective techniques and procedures for language teaching, learning, and assessment. If such challenges are taken into account, language institutions and classroom teachers will consider the potential of self- and peer-assessments as both valid and reliable supplements to traditional assessment, and their effective roles in promoting self-directed learning.

The results of this study can be used for all stakeholders of the field. The findings suggest some implications for teacher, learners, materials writers, syllabus designers, and test developers. EFL teachers can use self-assessment techniques to make their learners more autonomous and responsible for their own learning experience. Self-assessment has been identified as a key learning strategy for autonomous language learning which enable language learners to

monitor their own learning progress. One of the most salient features of a balanced assessment is making the students involved in the evaluation process. When students become partners in the learning process, their self-image as an active decision maker improves. Alternative assessment techniques help students reflect on what and how they learn and give them the possibility to develop effective learning strategies. Materials writers are recommended to include such alternative assessment techniques in EFL textbooks to be used by teachers and learners. If such techniques are appropriately presented and planned in EFL materials and syllabi, they might not be ignored by teachers and learners. Moreover, test developers can shift from traditional test formats and move towards alternative assessments which are more compatible with learner-centered teaching methodologies. Teaching methodologies and progressive evaluation should be planned and designed based on self- and peer-assessment techniques to improve the writing performance of the students.

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Negative Feedback as a Facilitative Device for the Acquisition of English Questions by Chinese College Students: An Interactional Perspective

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Abstract—This research, based on Pienemann’s “Developmental Stage of English Question”, immerses English questions learning in negative feedback interaction and focuses on the effect of English questions development with different types of negative feedback. We conduct two experiments and attempt to re-evaluate the effectiveness of negative feedback and observe their different impacts. Our research concerns (1) Do learners who receive negative feedback in a communicative context prompt their performance to higher stages of question development than learners who do not receive? (2) Do learners who receive negative feedback progress to a higher level of question development than learners who do not?(3) Is it more effective to provide explicit negative feedback, recast, and modified output during English questions learning? After analyzing longitudinal data, we find that (1) feedback in interaction can assist students to move from lower stage to higher stage but cannot help them construct complicated questions; (2) explicit negative feedback proves to be more effective than other feedback types and we also analyze theoretically their underlying reasons. Our research supports, with empirical study, that “Focus on Form-Function” is effective in English questions learning.

Index Terms—English questions learning, negative feedback interaction, effective, focus on Form-Function

I. INTRODUCTION

A large number of researches investigating the significant relations between conversational interaction and second language (L2) admit that interaction in language teaching plays a facilitative role in second language acquisition (SLA) (Long, 1991; Ellis, 2006, Gass, 2003). On the one hand, based on the theoretical support of Hymes’ communicative competence and Hallidayan Functional Grammar, task-based language teaching becomes a pretty popular method at Universities in China today. On the other hand, the notion of “focus on form” (Long, 1998), which widely prevailed but soon was criticized in period of formal grammar, revives with modification, i.e. teaching form in an interactive context. Interaction encompasses Input process and the Output process. But for quite a long time, input was regarded as the motive to acquisition of language (Krashen, 1985) but Long(1981, 1983, 1996), in his researches, renewed the concept by putting forwards “Interactional Hypothesis” in which he views the engine for acquisition development lies in utterance interaction. For him, “input” only means supply of “form and structure” to L2 learners, but ideal acquisition process needs “interaction” which means input and output are both crucial for learners’ acquisition of “function of form and structure” in context. His theory attempts to emphasize that information and feedback given by teachers in communicative interaction makes learner selectively concentrate on particular language forms. Such noticing leads learners to focus on their formal errors and reformulate the modified output which is considered relevant to effective language acquisition. As a result, scholars are now attempting to re-evaluate teaching focusing on form with a different perspective, i.e. teaching language form with the help of feedback in contextual interaction between teacher and students.

The purpose of this study is to investigate feedback effects in a typical EFL class at a University in China. Our investigation chooses English Question Sentences as the research object and observe the effect of formal teaching in a communicative context with provision of interactional negative feedback. By collecting empirical data of college students’ formal construction performance of English Questions, we evaluate in detail how effective English Questions could be acquired in a communicative context.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies on Interaction Hypothesis

Krashen’s (1985) Comprehensible Input Hypothesis suggests that for language acquisition, input must be comprehensible to learners in order to be understood and processed. According to Krashen, the input available to learners must be beyond their existing level of proficiency so that it provides new L2 skills by surpassing learners’ current interlanguage and thus he formulates “ $i+1$ ” theory, in which he attaches more importance to input. However, Swain (1995) observed that input immersion failed to make L2 learners achieve native-like proficiency despite of

considerable exposure to comprehensible input. This observation led her to formulate “output hypothesis”. She (1993) later argued that a crucial component of the output hypothesis is “pushed output”, and she wrote learners “need to be pushed to make use of their resources; they need to have their linguistic abilities stretched to their fullest; they need to reflect on their output and consider ways of modifying it to enhance comprehensibility, appropriateness, and accuracy” (Swain, 1993, p158). She regarded that “focus on meaning” alone may be insufficient to facilitate L2 formal learning because students are still possible to successfully convey meaning despite of ungrammatical or pragmatically inappropriate forms. Then a large number of scholars support her view from different perspectives. VanPatten (2010) put forwards Interaction Hypothesis which claims that through interaction, learners may be required to notice things they wouldn’t notice otherwise. Students are able to notice their language form while interacting and noticing will affect L2 acquisition. It is quite evident that Output and Input are both considered important in Interaction Hypothesis.

Studies on Attention and Noticing

Noticing is defined as the detection and registration of stimuli in short-term memory. In some models of SLA researches, noticing is the condition under which input becomes intake (Gass, 2003). In other researches, noticing is a synonym to attention as VanPatten (2010) holds that attention is a cognitive process involving the ability to select and focus on particular stimuli from the environment while ignoring others. Attention, since it was put forwards, has been attracting the interest of EFL researchers, and they agree that attention plays a major role in some SLA hypotheses. The general principles of attention is that (1) learners must actively attend to linguistic stimuli in order to learn; and (2) attention may affect what learners can detect in the input at any given time. And what Swain empathized about “focus on form” is based on learners’ ability to “selectively attend” to stimuli while interacting. So if learners are encouraged to notice what they have produced while interacting, they will acquire more.

Studies on Negative Feedback

There is no denying that feedback could trigger learners’ more attention on language output and of course becomes an integral part of Interaction. Feedback is defined as the information in view to improving, modifying students’ language output. Feedback can be implicit and thus less intrusive in communicative process, but feedback can also be explicit with a conspicuous response to an error. Provision of implicit negative feedback within conversational interaction or rather interactional feedback may draw learners’ attention to language forms by making certain parts of language more salient during a communicative task. Long (1981) clarified the feedback as (a) clarification requests (*What? What did you say?*), (b) comprehension checks (*Did you understand?*), (c) confirmation checks (*Is this what you mean?*), and (d) *or*-choice questions in which a native speaker asks of a question, and immediately provides the non-natives with a range of possible alternatives (*What time is your class? At 3:00 or 4:00?*). Lyster (2002) classified the negative feedback into six types: recasts, explicit correctness, elicitation, clarification requests and metalinguage clues. These conversational devices are assumed to make it easier for L2 learners to comprehend the content of the conversation. Our research and experiment was carried out basing on Lyster’s classification.

Feedback can be positive and encouraging, but in more circumstances, it is negative and discomforting. Long (1996), Schachter (1984) proved that negative feedback contributes to L2 development by virtue of providing information for learners about the comprehensibility of their utterances and attracting their attention to language form. McDonough (2005) discovered negative feedback may draw learners’ focus on language forms they have produced and help them to re-detect what they have not acquired in their L2 knowledge system or to take notice of specific linguistic forms in the subsequent input.

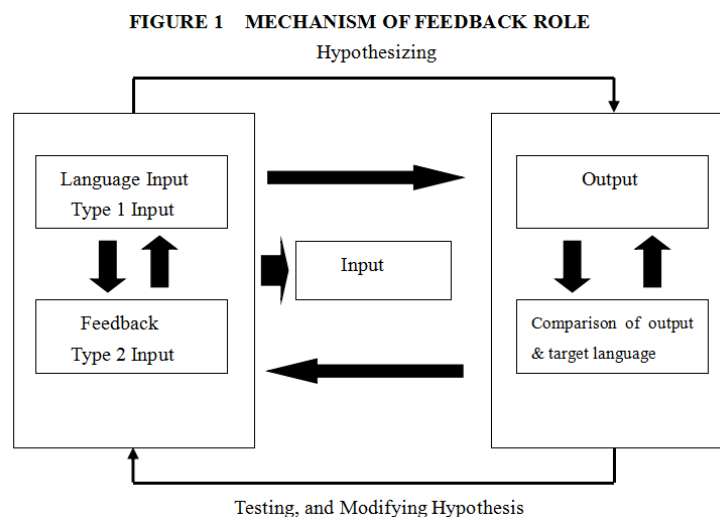
Negative feedback is used to trigger modified output in progress of interaction. A wealth of scholars devoting to the potential contribution of modified output to L2 development makes their findings insightful. Levelt’s (1989) model of speech production accounts for the generation of fluent speech by virtue of processing speech production in terms of three components: the message component, the grammatical component, and the phonological component. Izumi (2003) discovered when learners modify their output, they either generate a new message or reprocess their original message, both of which trigger additional grammatical encoding. Negative feedback is able to push learners to focus on form and improve learners’ speaking performance.

Studies on Interactional Feedback

With the fruitful studies and findings on Interaction and Feedback in SLA, studies on interactional feedback investigate the negotiated interaction between native and nonnative speakers or between two non-native speakers in the development of L2. Long & Robinson (1998) found that negotiation elicits feedback that may increase learners’ awareness of some linguistic forms. Leeman (2003) claimed interactional feedback offers the learner positive or negative evidence; positive evidence provides correct information about the original utterance, while negative feedback provides evidence to the learner that something in the utterance is ungrammatical or unacceptable. To push students to focus on form without diverting attention from the communicative content, teachers often provide implicit corrective feedback or interactional feedback during conversation. Lyster (2006) held that instructional activities and interactional feedback acting as a counterbalance to a classroom’s predominant communicative orientation are proved to be more effective than instructional activities. Long et al. (2006) in their research used coding as a way of categorizing the output produced by EFL learners between locutors in interaction of a discourse. Interactional feedback offers researchers a new horizon to study SLA.

Basic Principle of Feedback’s Facilitative Role in SLA

Annett (1969) regarded that feedback is equipped with three functions in terms of task-based language learning. (1) Stimulation: to stimulate learners' efforts of learning. (2) Enhancement: to enhance and reinforce learners' performance. (3) Information/Knowledge: facilitative to correct learners' mistakes. Carroll (1995) elaborated the role of feedback in SLA. He distinguished language input as TYPE 1 input and TYPE 2. The former means learners acquire input from their environment, and the latter refers to the negative input including both implicit and explicit ones. Explicit feedback will show errors in L2 and inform speakers of them. While implicit feedback refuses to provide obvious corrections and instead it elicits elaboration and clarification. Carroll's mechanism of feedback role is illustrated as FIGURE1.



Reviews on English Questions

A myriad of researches indicate that with the help of interaction in context learners are able to be motivated to modify their output of English question sentence, such as Long (1999), Long & Philip (1998), and McDonough, (2005). Pienemann et al, (1988) put forwards that English questions develop in 6 stages for learners. On the basis of Pienemann's (1988) classification of developmental stages, a great deal of scholars and researchers throw their light into English questions construction acquisition. To name only a few, in China, they are Gu Shanshan(2008), Ma Zhigang (2012).

Limitation of Previous Researches

Having studied the relevant researches on English questions, we found that most researches concerning feedback and interaction are more likely to choose one type of feedback and they lack a comprehensive consideration of all kinds of feedback and their respective effect, so they lack an overall picture of English questions acquisition. Therefore, more investigations need to be done.

Our research will also be based on Pienemann's classification and focus on the effect studies of English Questions in different developmental stages and different degrees of difficulty. And our experiment attempts to investigate three research questions:(1) Do learners who receive negative feedback in a communicative context prompt their performance to higher stages of question development than learners who do not receive ? (2) Do learners who receive negative feedback progress to a higher level of question development than learners who do not?(3) Is it more effective to provide explicit negative feedback, recast, and modified output during English questions learning?

III. METHODOLOGY

Hypothesis

Our empirical research on English Questions Acquisition is based on three hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1: Learners who receive interactional feedback would produce questions at a higher stage (Pienemann's Question Stage Classification) than learners who do not receive any feedback.

Hypothesis 2: Students with negative feedback perform better than students without any feedback.

Hypothesis 3: Learners who receive recast would not progress to a higher score of English question than learners who received explicit correction.

Participants

Eighty English learners, who were college students in northwestern China, participated in this study. They were intermediate level of English questions proficiency, defined by their College Entrance Examination grade. They were first-year college students, ranging from 19 to 22, with an average age of 20.3. All of them, except a girl, have never been abroad; there were 30 males and 50 females. They were subdivided into two groups, each of which was the subject for two different experiments.

Context

The research contained a comprehensive survey on students' English questions proficiency before we conducted the research. With a constant observation and careful record in Speaking and Listening class, we found students in general did not use and made English questions in a correct manner and with less knowledge of what their right forms should be. Participants would produce ill-formed English questions such as "Who Jason like?", "What you think?", "Why you think so?", "What you do?", "Why you say so?" Students failed to use complex English questions and used fewer correct English questions. Of 80 students, a preliminary English Question Elicitation Speaking Test indicated 30.5% of students constructed correct simple questions whereas only less than 9.5% of them were able to construct relatively complex English questions. More than half of the total students were unable to form either complex or simple English questions in spoken English.

Two experiments for different purposes are involved in the research. Experiment One is for figuring out "whether or not negative feedback develops English questions in an interactional context?" Experiment Two is designed for further clarification by answering "If negative feedback does make a difference in facilitating English question acquisition, what type of negative feedback makes the bigger contribution? And is negative feedback a panacea for the acquisition development for all types of English Questions?"

Materials

Material tasks and tests used in the research are based on Fujii (2009) and McDonough's (2005) tasks for reference but with modification and adjustment. Tasks in the present research are intended to give learners opportunities to practice their communicative skills. Two tasks as follows are for two experiments.

(1) **Elicitation Speaking Task. (Placement Test)**¹ Learners were given 10 optional tourist cities on speaking topic "Touring the World". Students were asked to start a casual conversation and discussed which the best place they should go to was. The task also provided the learners with several "survival expressions" for making suggestions ("Why don't we..."), expressing disagreement ("I see your point, but..."), coming to a consensus ("So, do we all agree?") and so on.

(2) **Treating Materials and Jotting down Learning Journal.**² The treatment materials were intended to elicit a variety of question types. Three sessions of treatment materials were created; each session consisted of two communicative activities for eliciting questions. During each treatment session, the learners were given a learning journal, a blank form with spaces for them to write any comments about what they were learning during the interaction. The learning journals were used as an indicator of reporting whether the learners attach their attention on question forms during treatment sessions.

(3) **Testing.** The testing materials were communicative tasks that the learners have to conduct individually in a language laboratory. Each test contained a warm-up activity question about the learners' recent travel and two other activities which elicited questions by such tasks as story completion, brainstorming and interviewing. The oral production tests were different from the treatment tasks.

Design

Participants were divided into two groups: Group A (n=40) and Group B (n=40). To make each of the two groups equal in their mean score and thus be more reliable, we referred to their final exams grades in a recent semester as a benchmark to group them.

On Experiment One

Group A (n=40) firstly was arranged to undertake Elicitation Task (Placement Test) without any disturbance, or modification and feedback from the teacher so as to have an overall knowledge of which stage each of the students was. Then we rearranged members of Group A by dividing them into Group 1 (n=10) where students made most of correct English questions in Stage 3³, Group 2 (n=10) in Stage 4, Group 3 (n=10) in Stage 5 and a control group (n=10) where most students were in Stage 3 and 4.

We conducted the Treatment Material and Jotting down Learning Journals when we had placed students in the subgroups of English Questions. And then we used all types of feedback in an interactional environment by keeping students talking and communicating with the teacher.

The Treatment Test organized in language laboratory took approximately 10 minutes. During the treatment process, the teacher provided implicit and explicit negative feedback of all kinds to learners when non-target-like questions errors occurred. Given that excessive feedback may lead to irritation, the teacher interlocutor did not provide feedback in response to every non-target question form. In addition, teacher interlocutor remained offering negative feedback if the learner who failed to or refused to modify their question forms. Finally, all learners completed the Learning Journals while carrying out the activities.

On Experiment Two

Group B (n=40) was arranged to take another relevant experiment which also took place in language laboratory. 40 students were divided into four groups: one control group and four experimental groups. In this experiment, members on four groups were given Testing Materials, but control group did not obtain any assistance and spoke by their own. The other three groups got help and feedback from the teacher. Group 1 (n=10) was given only implicit feedback, group

¹ Experiment One in this research needs a Placement Test. We used Placement Test for placing Ss, and only results of Elicitation Test were considered significant and were recognized by our research data analysis.

² Treating Material was based on Kim (2005), but we adapted it to Chinese EFL class with modifications.

³ English question developing stage in this research was based on Pienemann's Question Stage Classification (1988).

2 (n=10) only explicit and recast, and group 3(n=10) both explicit, implicit feedback, recast and asked of uttering modified output. During the 3-week experiments, we employed language laboratory and tape-recorded the utterances and interaction between teacher and students.

Procedure

On Experiment One

The audiotapes involved in the interaction during the Treatment Tasks were transcribed. What we care in interaction were the evidences of modified output, any simple repetition was not included, because they did not get reformulation involved. Each instance of modified output was classified according to Developmental Stage. What we counted as valid progress in Developmental Stages was modified output in the Treatment Task. Only in such circumstance did we admit speakers' proficiency had made progress from lower stage to higher stage. A record sample of interaction is illustrated as:

Theme: Picture different (information exchange)
 Time: 10.15
 Learner: *Why the rabbit run?* ----- Stage 3 question
 Teacher: (NS) *Why the rabbit? Why the...? Sure?*
 Learner: *why do rabbit run?*
 Teacher: *do?*
 Learner: *Why does the rabbit run?* ----- Stage 5 question

However, according to Kim's framework (2005), English questions outputs as follows were removed. Such as: (1) incomplete questions, such as *how about Phuket?* and *what time?* (2) echo questions; (3) multiple exemplars of the same question on the same task; and (4) formulaic chunks, such as *where do you come from?* and *do you like + object?*

TABLE 1 shows experimental schedule for the four groups.

TABLE 1 RESEARCH SCHEDULE & DESIGN

Week	Day	Group 2 (most Ss in Stage4)
1	1	Placement Test Elicitation Test
1	2	pretest What are they talking about? Picture difference.
2	1	Treatment What are they talking about? Picture difference.
2	5	Midtest What are they talking about? Picture difference.
3	1	Post-Test What are they talking about? Picture difference.

Note: "most Ss in Stage4" means most (more than 80%) of subject students (n=10) who had been distinguished into groups by Placement Test.

Before pretest was carried out, we placed each of the 40 students to his/her proper position by Placement Test. We used Elicitation Task next and then Treatment Tasks were carried out, because we attempted to avoid any distraction or any impression left in subject's mind and affect the reliability of the result of pretest. Usage of Placement Test was only for judging and calculating a student's developmental stage of English questions. We made the total number of English questions in 30 minutes (in sequence as they appear in tape recording) counted as we needed. We did not care about how individuals performed but care how groups did.

On Experiment Two

The experiment lasted for 3 weeks, and pretest was taken in week 1, midtest in week 2 after the treatment, post-test in the last week. All subgroups in Group B were exposed to the same materials but with different treatments. Each group only obtained one cluster of feedback: (1) implicit negative feedback, (2) explicit negative feedback and (3) recast. Similar to Experiment One, only modified output could be counted as the materials that we concerned. We collected the frequencies of their correct performance before, during and after the Treatment Tasks were conducted. Then we conducted a Pearson correlation coefficient analysis to test their mutual relation. We guaranteed the total number of question production for each group was almost the same.

IV. RESULTS

Result of Experiment One

The first research question was to investigate whether learners who received interactional feedback progressed to

higher stages of Question Development than students who did not receive interactional feedback. The research result is shown in TABLE 2.

TABLE 2
OVERALL STAGES OF CONTROL & TREATMENT GROUPS ON 3-TIME TEST

		Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5	Stage 6	Total	Mean Stage
Group 1	Pre-test	34 94%	2 6%	0 0%	0 0%	36	3.050
Group 1	Mid-test	1 3%	33 94%	1 3%	0 0%	35	4.000
Group 1	Post-test	1 3%	28 93%	1 3%	0 0%	30	4.000
Group 2	Pre-test	4 10%	35 90%	0 0%	0 0%	39	3.897
Group 2	Mid-test	4 11%	1 3%	30 86%	0 0%	35	4.743
Group 2	Post-test	0 0%	1 4%	27 96%	0 0%	28	4.964
Group 3	Pre-test	0 0%	2 5%	38 95%	0 0%	40	4.950
Group 3	Mid-test	0 0%	3 9%	29 88%	1 3%	33	4.939
Group 3	Post-test	0 0%	2 6%	34 94%	0 0%	36	4.944
Group 4	Pre-test	33 90%	5 8%	2 2%	0 0%	40	3.075
Group 4	Mid-test	33 94%	0 0%	2 6%	0 0%	35	3.343
Group 4	Post-test	29 85%	4 12%	1 3%	0 0%	34	3.271

Descriptive data analysis indicates that students' English questions output of higher stage differs from one group to another, but there are no substantial improvement in group 4 (no feedback) which proves that, to some extent, feedback does not work in facilitating English question development. Before the treatment was taken, students in Group 1 in pre-test constructed as many as 94% of the total output of English questions in stage 3 ; but after the teacher gave them implicit and explicit feedback, the number decreased to 3%, with an estimated 87% students reaching to stage 4 in the post-test. The same situation also happened to Group 2 with large numbers of students making their English question correct as the standard of stage 5, and the number of correct forms of stage 5 jumped from 0 to 27. Test of significance ($P < .05$) shows that feedback and modified output are the significant factor of EFL question development. In other words, increasing the production of modified output and providing negative feedback improve the development. All of these observations are consistent with what Kim McDonough conducted in 2005. However, there are still some differences: Even if feedback is offered, fewer students whose initial attainments are in Stage 5 could successfully reach to Stage 6.

Result of Experiment Two

The second research question was to investigate whether learners who received negative feedback performed better than those who only receive recast.

The first step of the data analysis is to compare the overall performance of the control group (Group 4, $n=10$) to the performances of the other three treatment groups ($n=30$). TABLE 3 displays the overall scores of questions produced by the control group (Group 4) and the treatment groups on the pre-test, mid-test and post-test tasks.

TABLE 3 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Group	Pre-test		Mid-test		Post-test	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	3.6000	1.71270	12.2000	2.19976	8.3000	1.41814
2	3.1000	2.02485	14.3000	2.05751	11.2000	1.81353
3	3.3000	1.76698	10.1000	2.92309	6.5000	1.66333
4	2.6000	1.50555	4.7000	1.63639	3.9000	3.11314

TABLE 3 shows that the control group produces a lower score (3.9000) on the post-test than the three treatment groups. Students in Group 2 (explicit feedback) perform the best in all the experimental groups with mean 14.3000 in mid-test, 11.2000 in post-test. Group 1 (implicit feedback) come next. Students in Group 1 has mean of mid-test 12.2000 and mean of post-test 8.3000. Both students in Group 1 and Group 2 improve a lot compared what they did in pretest with mean scores 3.6000, 3.1000, 3.3000, respectively. But as for control group (Group 4), mean score in pretest is 2.6000, 4.7000 in mid-test and 3.9000 in post-test. And a Chi-square test finds this differences in performance are significant ($P < .005$). This indicates that the students in the treatment groups perform significantly better than those in the

control groups in the mid-test and post-test.

We also conducted Paired Sample T-Test and found significant differences between pre-test and post-test for Pair 1, Pair 2 and Pair 3. Mean improvement between pre-test and post-test of Group 2 keeps the highest ($P=.000$) and Group 3 keeps a lower Mean ($P=.002$). ANOVA test between groups shows that these score differences are significant. ($F=35.694$, $P=0.000$), which means negative feedback facilitates the construction of well-formed English questions. In addition, Mean of Pair 3 is much lower than that of Pair 2 and Pair 1 ($P<.05$), which means recast exerts a less strong power than other explicit feedback in terms of English questions improvement. Group 2 has the highest Mean ($P<.05$) in the post-test. But Mean of Group 3 ($P<.05$) keeps much lower than that of Group 1 and 2. It indicates that recast has a weak influence on improving students' scores than other groups. And explicit negative feedback performs the best.

V. DISCUSSION

Negative Feedback and Developmental Stages of English Question

Experiment one was designed to support the hypothesis that learners who received interactional feedback would produce questions at a higher stage than learners who did not receive any feedback. Experiment one and its data justified and confirmed the hypothesis. Result of the data shows that learners in Group 1, 2, 3 (treatment groups) produced higher overall stages of questions than those in the Control Group on mid-test (mid-test) and post-test. More students with progress in stage of English questions are more found in treatment group than in the control group. Such findings are consistent with the research conducted by Long & Robinson (1998), and Bell (2005). However, our research discovers a special fact, that is, not all the students in treatment groups do the same good job on their stage improvement of English questions as expect. We find students whose initial stage of English questions at stage 3, and at stage 4, can make a substantial improvement in their post-test which have a development from stage 3 to 4, and stage 4 to 5. However, for those whose initial stage are at stage 5, fewer of them are pushed and helped to reach stage 6, the highest level of English question development. As a result, we might claim that negative feedback do not facilitate as well as what they do to stage 5 students at stage 5 to help them to move to stage 6.

This research provides supporting evidence that negative interactional feedback has positive effects on ESL question development but not for improving to all stages. The provision of negative feedback has a positive effect on participants' question development for reaching Stage 3, Stage 4 and Stage 5. But interactive feedback might have difficulties for students who receive regular negative feedback to improve themselves to stage 6. The result also indicates that students in interaction will be more likely to take a notice of the differences between their own output and that of the other speaker. This is supported and illustrated by the performance of the students because they produced more grammatically correct questions on the mid-test than they had on the pre-test. As Swain (1995, p371) noted, "If learners were not testing hypotheses, then changes in their output would not be expected following feedback". On the contrary, students in the Control Group who receive no feedback of any types have no opportunity and ability to motivate their current stage of English questions to a further higher stage. Research conducted by Ma Zhigang (2012) with insights from generative grammar might be helpful to explain why it is hard for the students who received negative feedback to reach the 6th stage. According to Ma's Long Distance Question⁴, we observe that question markers in 6th stage moves more than three positions in one sentence.

May I ask how you < may > use it?

"MAY" moved from its original position in declarative sentence by four positions.

Why didn't you tell me < why >?

"WHY" moved from its original position in declarative sentence by five positions.

He wants to divorce, did he?

There is no movement in this question, but tag question requires a subject and an auxiliary verb.

Compared to other simpler structures, all of these structural differences might make the 6th stage English question more difficult and complicated for students to reach. Data analyses shows that negative feedback is unable to facilitate students to reach the 6th stage English questions, and with reference to TG grammar, it might because that an interactional context with feedback will not enable students to realize the movement boundary between main clauses and subordinate clauses. Students, who have no idea of noticing inner grammatical differences movement process, will not distinguish when a complex clause requires adjustment for both main clause and subordinate clause or when it does not require any movement in the subordinate clause. As a result, interaction with feedback makes students notice the error they made, but it may not let students notice the structures which they are not familiar with and understand very well. Traditional language teaching methods in such circumstances may work well for solving such a tricky problem if it could be assisted with interaction and the complex structure had been taught to students.

Whatever feedback students are exposed to during the interaction, they are more likely to improve significantly in English questions. It seems that the more diversified types of feedback students get, the more likely the students will produce more correct modified output. Feedback such as clarification, attracting students' attention, confirmation, and

⁴ Ma's research (2012) put forwards two kinds of English Questions, foregrounding questions, and backgrounding questions, which treat subordinate clause as salient or background. Each of them has further three versions of variants such as long distance movement (LDM), short distance movement (SDM) and null distance movement (NDM).

requirement of modified output would affect students' performances after the treatment have been taken. Data analyses in Experiment Two displays an overall description of the different effects on modified output of English questions. The results are consistent with former researches conducted by Kim (2005) and Bell (2005), but students whose output is only reformulated as recast have lower scores than either explicit group or implicit group, which quite differs from Bell's (2005), Loewen's (2006) and Lochtman's (2002) findings in which recast was proved the most effective. Although we admit that feedback may exert larger influence on the students' improvement of English questions, we still need to accept the fact that offering feedback is only one dimension of expecting a pleasant English question, another dimension is modified output, which has been justified by Swain (1995) and McDonough (2005).

We have recorded some interaction clips between Student NO.9 (S.09) of Group 2 in Experiment Two and a teacher who offers explicit negative feedback:

Clip 1.

S.09: *What you see?*

T: *No, incorrect, what DID you see?* → Explicit negative feedback

Please say it again. → Ask for Modified Output

S. 09: *What did you see?* → Improvement obtained

Clip 2.

S.09: *Why do they so nice?* → Explicit negative feedback

T: *It is not right. Why are they so nice?* → Ask for Modified Output

See it? Are not do. Ok, say it again.

S.09: *Why are they so nice?* → Improvement obtained

Clip 3.

S. 09: *Why not happy?* → Explicit negative feedback

T: *Not exactly, why is he not happy?*

Pardon. → Ask for Modified Output

S.09: *Why is he not happy?* → Improvement obtained

Students exposed to negative feedback only have an awareness of their incorrectness, but it was not sufficient to help them come to the next stage, because there was no guarantee for students to take INPUT as INTAKE if no modified output is required. If teachers offers feedback and continues their conversation, students may superficially cater to teacher's instruction and fail to construct it by their own.

Recast and English Question Development

Researchers (Gu, 2008, Han, 2002 Bell, 2005) regard recast as implicit feedback. However, researchers find it very difficult to confirm that whether or not a sample of recast belongs to category of implicit feedback only with reference to its definition. Traditional definition for recast emphasizes correctness and implicitness, but we find in this research that it is time-consuming and too much subjective to judge implicit feedback as recast. As a result, we singled out recast and tested it in Group 3 where students were only provided with reformulations when they failed to express themselves, and gave implicit negative feedback to another group (Group 1) where students were offered implicit feedback, such as clarification request and elicitation. The following clips excerpted from interaction between students of recast group and students of implicit feedback group.

Student in Group 3 (Recast)

S.03: *What your name please?*

T: *What IS your name please?* → Reformulation

S.03: *Yes. What is your name please.*

S.03: *You like what picture?*

T: *Which picture do I like?* → Reformulation

S.03: *Yes, yes.*

Student in Group 1 (implicit feedback)

S. 06: *What your name please?*

T: *Is that right? Correct? What plus Be.* → Elicitation (implicit feedback)

S. 06: *What is your name please?*

T: *Great.*

Student in Group 1

S. 07: *You like what picture?*

T: *Say again. Remember structure tips!* → Repetition Elicitation (implicit feedback)

S.07: *Yes, you like which picture?*

T: *You like... Which... picture? Or which picture...* → Request of Clarification (implicit feedback)

S.07: *Yes, which picture do you like?*

Data analysis in Experiment Two shows a relative lower score in their post-test of English question acquisition but a higher score in explicit negative feedback. The possible explanation of such a situation happens in our research might be that recast, mainly in form of reformulation, is less able to attract our students' noticing to language form, and thus fails to cause modified output. Students provided with recast might rely on teachers' reformulation and are unable to

transform the input to part of their language competence.

“Focus on Form” in a Meaning-Constructing Context

Our research was organized in an interactional context. Learning of English Questions requires students “focus on form”, but in our research we put formal learning in a communicative context focusing meaning and meaning negotiation between speakers. The finding that students with no feedback acquire least English Questions and have no substantial improvement on their language developmental stage proves that “Focus on Form-Function” is effective in English questions. A form-function connection means the acquisition of language form can be facilitated by its meaning context. The correspondence between the formal properties of language and the meaning they encode is important for L2 learners. In an interactional context, English questions are acquired in context and thus learners are able to link formal learning to a context where a topic is shared and meaning is negotiated. This is because meaning negotiation provides such indirect negative evidence and clues to the learners as they did something wrong. Thus, interaction potentially provides useful feedback about vocabulary, syntax, and so on. Susan Gass (2003) claimed that negotiation of meaning is important for maximizing comprehension on the part of the learner, and negotiation helps to ensure comprehension. With better comprehension between speakers, there are increased chances for acquisition, because acquisition is a “by-product” of comprehension to a certain degree.

VI. CONCLUSION

This research answers two questions in relation to English questions acquisition. Firstly, feedback in interaction can assist students to move from lower stage to higher stage. However, feedback is very effective only in improvement of English question from stage 3 to 4, 4 to 5, but less effective in moving from stage 5 to stage 6, i.e. the highest stage. Feedback has some limitations in improving learners’ acquisition stage when complicated question structures are considered, such as questions in Stage 6.

Secondly, explicit negative feedback proves to be more effective than others to elicit correct English questions and implicit negative feedback (excluding recast) also performs well in making students construct more grammatical sentences. Modified output is a very crucial factor, because modified output could, to some extent, represent students’ real improvement and is a reflection of their language competence. Data analyses reveals that recast has no powerful effect, compared to other types of feedback in improving students’ performances of English Questions acquisition. In other words, not all types of feedback have the same effect in improving English Questions in interaction. Feedback could not help students to reach higher stage of English questions because inner structure of English questions has a determinable role in limiting the effect of negative feedback in interactional context.

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Applying Different Interventions to Teach Writing to Students with Disabilities: A Review Study

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Abstract—This review study explores four methods of teaching writing to students with disabilities. The goal of this review study, therefore, is to investigate writing interventions intended for students with more debilities than learning disabilities (LD) attempting to determine if students' writing developed during the intervention. About 13 studies use self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) instruction and two studies combine SRSD with other instructions. Moreover, this review attempts to determine the possibility of applying journal writing instruction, persuasive writing, and sentence-level skills. Diverse strategies and skills, such as integration of reading and writing, handwriting, sentence construction, and grammar or usage are to be explicated. The results show that handwriting is an effective means to improve writing. Moreover, students are able to change the simple sentences to complex sentences. In addition, limitations and suggestions for further research have been presented.

Index Terms—interventions, self-regulated strategy development, students with disabilities, teaching writing, writing skills

I. INTRODUCTION

Writing is a common mode of communicating and demonstrating knowledge. If disabled learners are not instructed how to cope with writing disability, their weaknesses will influence their academic performance. The difficulty of self-regulating comprises various processes such as monitoring, checking, and reviewing (Swanson, 1987). There are divergent kinds of disabilities: Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD); Speech or language impairment (SLI); Emotional or behavioral disorder (EBD); Asperger syndrome (AS); Autism spectrum disorder (ASD); Mild mental retardation (MMR). It should be noted that self-regulation and behavioral skills difficulty relate to (ADHD) and (EBD) individuals. Their problems include disability of successfully governing their own writing and interaction with other students in the workplace. Organizational skills, including planning and applying activities effectively, refer to (AS) and (ASD) individuals. Vocabulary writing difficulties refer to (SLI) and (ASD) students. Cognitive deficit of (MMR) students proscribe them to use strategies organizationally.

Poor writing skills can have a destructive effect on higher education and employment. In order to promote the quality of writing, more time is required to generate ideas, edit composition, and produce it with less error by practicing repeatedly. According to (Graham & Harris, 2003) to overcome writing difficulties, self-regulation and cognition are significant. Difficulty in self-regulated strategy comprises processes such as how to monitor, check, and revise (Swanson, 1987). In this review different ways of teaching writing to disabled students are considered. These students are taught how to organize, highlight, and underline main ideas and minor details; they are instructed as how to distinguish between minor and major notes in divergent kinds of composition such as report writing, essay writing, and note taking. Disabled students have problem with planning, organization and self-regulation, and some such students have difficulties with sentence level skills.

II. THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Three goals have been examined in the current review:

- 1- Describing the features of participants, and settings of instruction;
- 2- Examining different writing interventions; (3) Summarizing measures and outcome.

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III. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature reviewed four types of teaching writing to disable students:

- 1- Journaling;
- 2- Persuasive writing;
- 3- Learning to learn strategies;
- 4- Sentence-Level.

A. *Journaling*

Journaling as a tool for personal experiences increases information about various subjects, analyze it, and try to find a solution to obviate the problem encountering difficulties through writing. It is a sophisticated model to implement journaling through designing the plan, activating previous knowledge. Here the relationship between thinking and composing is involved in various activities tending to new ideas. Having involved in divergent activities, students encourage organizing their writing and making decision about the format of it (Armbruster, McCarthy, & Cummins, 2005).

In order to learn journal writing, six standard features should be considered like design, proper format of journal, connection between personal information and external perspectives [verbalization], specific content related to information [choices of words], articulateness, and formality (Spandel, 2005).

Teachers can assess how students understand the content of writing by relating the topics of journal to subject matter of other topic. First, students must determine the format of journal, and then comprehend the content by translating the information of them to their journal while they are writing. Moreover, they extend the topic, employ the visual aids to realize better, and make conclusion in terms of subject.

They are types of journals such as Personal journal refers to students describing their experiences and finding some issues that relates to them. Dialogue journal like personal journal, but teachers and peers can comment on it. Reading logs includes reading books, making charts, writing vocabulary, and recording. Learning logs: They write a section of science or social studies, take notes, and draw diagram. Double-entry journal involves classification of different information on two columns written prediction on the left and reaction on the right. In Stimulated journal, students consider a fictional character to describe and give their viewpoints. Graphic journal includes drawings, charts, and pictures.

B. *Persuasive Writing*

Persuasive writing, known as creative writing, is a piece of writing in which the writer uses words to convince the reader that the writer's opinion is correct with regard to an issue, on the other hand it support and offers opinions.

C. *Learning to Learn Strategies*

Learning to learn strategies mean that students can highlight, take notes, and organize their writing. Some significant strategies such as cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies are considered (Deshler, Ellis, & Lenz, 1996; B. Y. L. Wong, 1979; Wong & Wilson, 1984). Using background knowledge, guessing ideas, summarizing, asking question, visualizing and monitoring their performance (Chan, 1991; Deshler et al, 1996; Englert & Thomas, 1987; Gersten & Baker, 2001) and planning, choosing, applying proper strategies (Wong, 1979; Wong & Wilson, 1984) are respectively cognitive and met-cognitive strategies. In a study conducted by (Fahsl, McAndrews, & Stephanie 2012), they point out to a method designed by (Graham & Harris, 2003) providing disable students the self-regulated strategy to improve their writing. Self-regulated strategy contains specific features such as instructing writing strategies obviously, learning collaboratively, instructing them in terms of their needs, and providing relationship between sophisticated and decrepit strategies. Cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies have effect as said by (Deshler et al, 1996). According to various cognitive strategies, learners can use background knowledge to conjecture ideas, and summarize them (Chan, 1991). However, students with difficulty cannot use cognitive strategies to write and comprehend.

On the other hand, Meta-cognitive strategies enable learners to plan, choose, apply proper strategies, and to regulate their performance of composition themselves (Wong, 1979). Although students are able to integrate and write ideas explanatory, they are unable to comprehend ideas in their composition. In explanatory writing, the meanings can be constructed at both local and global levels. Learners must find main and relevant ideas to support them.

D. *Sentence Level Writing*

Sentence level consists of different skills such as improvement of handwriting, sentence construction, and grammar and usage. Moreover, they are able to transfer their skills to advance sentence writing. Hence, sentence level skills, letters, words, and sentences will promote. The way of writing expression explained by (Berninger et al., 1992) depends on three levels of writing improvement: (1) Neurodevelopment: The physical and neurological maturation for visual motor tasks of handwriting and spelling, (2) Linguistics: Sentence-level skills needed for producing letters, words, and sentences of proper syntax, and (3) Cognitive: The skill of writing that heightens text and strategies. For an instance, visual-motor difficulty restricts written expression to a low frequency and causes more trouble in learning handwriting and spelling. On the other hand, neurodevelopment constrains written expression to a high frequency tending to improvement in learning of handwriting.

IV. METHOD

A. Participants

The first study comprised of 30 students asked to participate in journal writing. This second study is a collection of 19 studies about learning disability that show SRSD is an effective way to progress. These interventions apply (Englert et al., 2009) specific instruction explicitly taught to students. The most wondering characteristic of instruction of writing strategies is consideration of students' need. This treatment is a combination of different interventions on disable students (Taft & Mason, 2011). They have problem with how to design, construct, and govern their own writing. To overcome writing difficulties, self-regulation and cognition are needed (Graham & Harris, 2003). In this study, participants comprised eight students with EBD, 12 with ADHD, Four with AS, two with ASD, five with MMR, and one with orthopedic impairment (OI). About 21 individuals have probability of being at risk for EBD. Their ages from 7 to 12 years old and some students are from 12 to 17 years in several studies by (Delano, 2007b; Guzel-Ozmen, 2006; Jacobson & Reid, 2010). They are 35 male and 22 female. About 11 studies include 2nd and 5th grade students in elementary school; about two studies (Delano, 2007a) include 7th and 8th in middle school, and one study includes 8th and 10th grade students. One single study contains 12 to 17 years old high-school students. Percentage of non-overlapping data (PND) was used to describe the results of single participant design study.

The third study investigated the learning to learn strategies by (Englert et al., 2009) comprising highlighting, note taking, planning, and organizing the composition. The assessments discover how students produce expository ideas and whether they can apply the strategies like cognitive ones to back up writing in social studies. Disable students encounter difficulties in applying learning to learn strategies. Moreover, the curriculum, based on the content area, criticized due to the two main reasons. First the large massive of unknown words cannot be understood readily (Jetton & Alexander, 2004). Second, the text structure changes more than story structure (Kamberelis, 1999)

B. Instruments

To evaluate performance of students, the proficiency and background knowledge should take into account. Since disable students are not able to change their verbal ideas to written form (McNamara, 2007), they should record their journals. They can use computer programs like Dragon Naturally Speaking. Using this program, students can not only to compose what they need to say without applying the cognitive tasks but also to utilize word- processed entries.

Three methods of instruction as intervention treatment consist of Self-regulated strategy development (SRSD); Self-regulated strategy development with video self-modeling; Cognitive strategy instruction writing (CSIW) with self-regulation. Self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) contains six educational stages: (1) Promotion of the background knowledge and pre-skills; (2) Discussion of the strategies; (3) Modeling the strategies; (4) Memorization of strategies; (5) Guidance of practices; (6) Practicing independently.

C. Procedure

Teachers outline the plan of lesson in terms of students' repertoire. First, teachers ask students to compose about their former experiences. Second, teachers concentrate on how to make the plan. On the other hand, how to write conferences is a chance for teachers and students to work collaboratively.

Self-regulation comprises four processes: How to determine the paraphrase; Self-monitoring; Instruction based on needs of students; Reinforcement. Strategies use to teach how to write story to EBD, ASD, AS, MMR, ADHD, and SLI students: (1) Picking my ideas, Organizing my notes, Write and say more + Who are the main characters, Where does the story take place (POW). (2) When does the story take place, What the main characters do, What happens next, How does the story end, How do the main characters feel (WWW). (3) To examine the effect of ADHD and EBD students' persuasive essay (Lienemann & Reid, 2008; Mason & Shriner, 2008), the persuasive writing strategy such as Topic sentence, Reasons, Ending, Examine (TREE+POW). (4) To teach one MMR student and three ADHD students (De La Paz & Graham, 1997), STOP (Suspend judgment, Take a side, Organize my idea, Plan more as you write) & DARE (Develop your topic sentence, Add supporting ideas, Reject possible arguments for the other side, End with a conclusion) are considered. (5) To teach essay writing to two SLI students and one ADHD students (De La Paz, 2001), PLAN (Pay attention to the prompt, List main ideas, Add supporting ideas, Number your ideas) + WRITE (Work from your plan, Remember your goals, Include transition words, Try to use different kinds of sentences, Exciting interesting words) are utilized to improve in expository essay writing. (6) To improve in informative essay writing in student with EBD and SLI (Mason, Snyder, Sukhram, & Kedem, 2006), reading comprehension plus writing strategy was used. (7) One intervention is investigated the effect of integrating SRSD with video self-modeling (Delano, 2007a). (8) To teach problem-solution summary writing to MMR students, CSIW instruction is integrated with SRSD.

In the third study, students must classify the ideas, and write them coherently to determine the relationship among detailed and main ideas, and meaning of structures (Englert & Mariage, 2003). At the global level, how local information is integrated, sequenced and related are considered (Meyer, 1975). To apply learning to learn strategies, students must think about texts. The assessment tool used here is a part of the Accelerating Expository Literacy (ACCEL) project. In this tool, through writing informational articles, learners summarize, accumulate and underline the ideas in text.

The fourth study (Datchuk & Kubina, 2013) examined a kind of difficulties in disabled students encountering problems in sentence-level skills such as handwriting, sentence construction, and grammar or usage. The three levels of improvement comprise: (1) The interaction surrounded by levels, (2) The conservative growth sustainment, and (3) The elimination of changes in composition. Elements of linguistics begin at the sentence level (Graham, 2006) comprising handwriting, sentence construction, and grammar/usage. Handwriting is in terms of transcribing the letters. Sentence construction is in terms of arranging words or phrases. Grammar is in terms of applying correct grammar, punctuation, and capitalization.

D. Data Collection

In the first lesson of journaling, diverse kinds of journaling, purposes of writing journal, and types of individuals using journal writing were explained. Besides, a mentor text selected to contribute students to comprehend more about type of journaling, language, syntax, graphics, and, authors' craft. The succeeding lesson concentrate on types of journaling, and students and teachers can practice writing cooperatively and independently, as they progress. Having written conferences, they read their own papers and teachers comments on notes of students. To improve in writing conferences, specific feedback based on design of papers, and their styles of writing is needed. Considered needs of students, strengths and weaknesses are determined.

In cognitive writing instruction (CSIW), four steps were followed (Englert & Mariage, 2003): First, teachers instruct text-specific writing strategies (e.g., for writing expository text). Second, the connection between writing actions and purposes is explained obviously. Third, specific acronyms as language tool are used. Finally, students move from dependency to independency. Elements of writing to analyze the effect of studies: in story writing, different elements were considered such as Character, Setting, Time, What character wants to do, what character wants to do next, how character feel, Story ending. In persuasive writing, factors such as a) Topic sentence, b) Supporting reasons, c) Explanation of reason, and d) Sentence ending were focused. In Expository and Informative writing, main ideas, supporting ideas, quality, number of words, and coherence were important.

In third study, 80% of students are disabled that 31% out of them are girls and rest of them are boys. There are two kinds of disabilities: 3% and 6% of them are respectively cognitively and emotionally. Moreover, rubrics use to determine the appropriateness and effectiveness of learning to learn strategies in process of writing assessment (Englert et al., 2009). For instance, learners highlight, take notes, and sum up the content to clarify the meaning and support the main ideas. This intervention conducted in two days to evaluate students' repertoire, how they apply strategies. The passage is composed of 740 words. First, the passage read aloud as students listen and underline the necessary points. Moreover, booklets were given to learners, and they are required to imagine that they live with tribes for six months, so they must transfer their experience about people, their lives, also their composition must have introduction, body, and conclusion.

V. DISCUSSION

Finally, process of writing is surveyed by teachers or students self-assessment. The students provide a file of their writing used to show how much progress they have been up to now. Distinguishing the weakness points leads to improvement of writing proficiency. Then both teachers and students put more effort to solve their disabilities.

The results of studies about students with EBD (Adkins, 2005; Lane, Harris, Graham, Weisenbach, & Murphy, 2008) demonstrate positive effect of elements of story, quality of story, and the numbers of written words.

A. Outcomes of ADHD Students

Stories of one ADHD student include 1 to 3 story elements throughout baseline, 5 to 6 story elements during post instruction, and 4 to 5 story constituent during maintenance (De La Paz, 2001; Jacobson & Reid, 2010; Lienemann & Reid, 2008). In the second study, baselines are changed as element scores change. After instruction, their writing processes are improved.

To improve in persuasive writing (Jacobson & Reid, 2010), SRSD is examined. Constituent scores change from 1 to 5 throughout baseline, 8 to 14 in after instruction, and 8 to 12 in maintenance. Second, their scores change. In two these studies the quality and the number of written words are developed.

B. Results of SLI Students

Having examined the effect of SRSD in expository essays (Delano, 2007a; Saddler, Moran, Graham, & Harris, 2004), mean scores change from 7.6 to 11.6 constituent throughout baseline and 23.7 to 35.3 elements in post instruction for two SLI students for story writing. Scores of one SLI student change from 2 to 3 elements throughout baseline, 4 to 7 constituents in post instruction, and 5 story constituents at maintenance. The quality and numbers of words are developed.

C. Outcomes of MMR Students

Having examined expository writing of scores of MMR students by (Guzel-Ozmen, 2006), essay constituents scores change from 1 to 4.3 throughout baseline, and post instruction's scores change from 10.6 to 15 constituents.

D. Results of AS and ASD Students

The effects of integration of persuasive writing instruction and video self-modeling on AS students are demonstrated. Students' writing baseline includes a mean of 2 to 3 functional essay constituents. During post-instruction, constituents change from 10 to 15. Throughout 12 weeks, writing baseline change from 6 to 14 functional essay constituents. Having Studied scores of story writing of ASD students and AS student, it is determined that Student performance range from 1 to 4 story factors throughout baseline, 6 to 7 factors during post instruction, and 5 to 7 factors during maintenance.

VI. RESULTS OF OI STUDENTS

The number of story factors throughout baseline change from 1 to 4 constituents (Lienemann, Graham, Leader-Janssen, & Reid, 2006). Both post instruction and maintenance writing comprise 7 factors. Quality and number of written words are considered.

The assessment of writing strategies in third study comprises two phases: the planning phase based on how to gather information and plan and the writing phase includes how to write a paper. The features of highlighting and note taking were important such as the organizational structure: learners' repertoire to underline, take notes, and arrange them, the extent of content coverage: Spread of topical coverage coincides to major points and the extent of explanation relates to details, and the reduction/selectivity to sum up, rephrase, and clarify main points. The persuasive writing characteristics involve Topic introduction, Main idea introduction, Extend of coverage of content, Explanation of details, Deduction, Organization of introduction, body, and conclusion. Report writing characteristics comprises Paper introduction, Topic sentence insertion, spread of classification of information, providing details, Results, Coherence. The data analysis, based on ANOVA, compares performance of seventh grade disable students with non-disable students. The results show that non-disable students use more details than disable. Although 52% of non-disable students are not so proficient in distinguishing major points, and 3% illustrate no ability in determining the major details. On the other hand, 90% of the impairment students are notable to underline the major and minor ideas, since they do not perform strategically and specifically and distinguish them in the proper and acceptable way. The outcomes demonstrate through MANOVA: The content coverage ($p < .001$), the reduction of content and paraphrase the sentences ($p < .001$), the rating of validity of notes ($p < .01$), and the structure of notes ($p < .01$). Both groups are not so proficient how to take notes, since their mean of performance falls near standard deviation. Highlighting main ideas is more facile than producing major ideas (Williams, 2003). Disable students have trouble to organize the notes, in spite of producing the essay format, they are not able to organize details, describe them, and demonstrate the relationship among explanatory ideas (DiCecco & Gleason, 2002). Finally, this study rejects the hypothesis that note taking applies as cognitive tool including how write to learn. The results demonstrate that learners with difficulties cannot produce information through mental macrostructure. The most prevalent strategy used by majority of students is copy the original passage. When the source of texts is not determined, they use relative information that they applied in their notes and plans. Moreover, this investigation shows importance of determining the conceptual connection among ideas. Generally, as suggestion, teachers must be responsible to provide explanations and graphical models that contribute students to connect the super-ordinate and subordinate concepts. Should graphical organizers apply, they promote students' expository comprehension and composition performance (Deshler et al, 1996). They instruct students to plan their own organizers as a basis for planning, comprehending, interpreting, and writing expository texts strategically and comprehensively.

The studies related sentence-level skill comprised of several researches reviewed below hierarchically.

Six studies contain students with low scores on alphabet and copy tasks (Berninger et al., 2006; Berninger et al., 1997; Jones & Christensen, 1999). In order to perform alphabet tasks, participants orderly write alphabet letters from memory. Copy tasks asked participants to copy the letters drawn from passages.

Handwriting is in terms of legible formation of alphabetic letters (Graham & Weintraub, 1996). Various processes backup handwriting (Berninger et al., 1992) such as Orthographic coding which writers must keep images of the alphabet and words in memory, Fine-motor leads to transcribing letters, and Visual-motor processes adapts motor movement according to optical materials (e.g., legibility and writing within scope)

An integration of memory retrieval and visual cues tends to the highest performance during time on an alphabet task ($ES = 1.71$) and copy task ($ES = 1.12$). Visual cues characterize numbers and arrows around each letter to develop correct letter formation and succession. Memory retrieval comprises investigating a fully formed letter. Participants compose the letter from memory.

Burns and colleagues (2009) applied cover-copy-compare (CCC) approach to letter formation, with one participant across three sets of discreet alphabetic letters. The participant utilized a model of correct letter formation, covered the model, copied it from memory, and compared it with the original model. If the copied letters compare appropriately with the model, the participants reproduce the letter five additional times.

Some studies examined letter formation and the related process of orthographic coding. To teach orthographic coding, participants use the alphabet and orally answer to sets of letters with the names of letters. At posttest, alphabet task scores contradict significantly from a control group that receive phonological awareness instruction ($ES = 1.17$).

Three studies examine the effect of motor-process component to handwriting process. The first study (Berninger et al., 2006) understand that participants receive instruction in letter formation show faster speed but less accuracy on an alphabet task contrast with a group that get several letter formation process, motor skills, and orthographic coding.

Motor process comprises activities designed to influence on hand strength, kinesthetic recognition in fingers and hands, expertise, and motor planning.

Two studies make a comparison with those who receives either motor intervention or letter formation. (Sudsawad, Trombly, Henderson, & Tickle-Degnen, 2002) ask participants complete activities designed to develop kinesthetic movement or the position and sensation of body parts without optical material.

For handwriting instruction, participants duplicate individual letters, words, and sentences, and get feedback on incorrect letter formation from the instructor. At posttest, the handwriting group improve to some extent on word legibility in contrast with the fine-motor group ($ES = 0.13$) but scored lower on letter legibility ($ES = -0.11$) by (Amundson, 1995). One study (Zwicker & Hadwin, 2009) makes a comparison with motor instruction to handwriting and orthographic coding. Participants pursue letters with an index finger on different surfaces, such as sand, cornmeal, or on letters composed in glue or glitter. Compared with a control group of no intervention, the handwriting with orthographic coding group ($ES = 0.50$) and motor intervention group ($ES = 0.39$) score higher at posttest (Amundson, 1995) although scores did not vary considerably from the control group.

Four studies investigated syntactic and sentence performance with model-lead-test formats (Archer & Hughes, 2011). Instructors model simple sentence construction with picture. Using the prompted words, participants vocally explain and describe pictures, and instructors give instant feedback related to error correction. Having corrected their errors, participants transcribed their answers. Sentence constructions gradually became more sophisticated, turned to compound and complex constructions, as instructors instructed irregular verb usage, subject-verb agreement, and appropriate capitalization and punctuation.

Three studies illustrated effects of grammar instruction (Campbell, Brady, & Linehan, 1991; Dowis & Schloss, 1992; Saddler, et al., 2004). Studies included 51 middle and primary school participants. The participants were between 9 to 12 years. One grammar study showed low performance on the Sentence-Integration (Hammill & Larsen, 1996). Two usage studies (Campbell, et al., 1991; Dowis & Schloss, 1992) illustrated low performance on using correct capitalization and possessive adjectives and pronouns.

Moreover, Instructors designed correct usage of possessive and contribute participants to perform independently. Only one study illustrated effects of grammar instruction (Saddler & Graham, 2005). Instructors designed several parts of speech: nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. When students received the parts of speech, they changed incomplete sentences to complete ones by putting a missing part of speech. Grammar comprised several parts of speech: nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Participants increased from pretest to posttest on the Sentence-Combining subtest from the ($ES = 1.9$).

Otherwise, one study (Jones & Christensen, 1999) found some new results in handwriting adapted with findings in compositional quality by rubric measured in four areas: ideas, spelling and grammar, syntax, and fluency. The participants heighten in means from 7.42 at baseline to 12.47 following intervention ($ES = 2.34$).

On the other hand, the rubric accommodated a compound measure of several areas: ideation, organization, grammar, sentence structure, word choice, and mechanics. Although they improved in quality, they only apply little amount of sentence integration in expanded writing. The findings compared with results of sentence combining and grammar, Saddler & Graham (2005) demonstrated that students who are instructed grammar instruction show no improvement in writing quality.

One study investigated various kinds of letter formation models (Graham & Weintraub 1996). They found that optical cues with memory retrieval perform better than other model types (Berninger et al., 1997). The process of letter formation and orthographic coding were verified to be useful and valuable, but motor-process does not produce significant results.

Various studies examined sentence level skills specifically handwriting and sentence construction, It was found that there is a relationship between handwriting (Graham, Berninger, Abbott, Abbott, & Whitaker, 1997) and sentence combining (Hillocks, 1986). Both sentence-combining studies do not demonstrate improvement in composition at sentence level skills. Moreover, they illustrate that progression in quality is not based on learning complicated sentence types.

VII. CONCLUSION

The four studies above reviewed the articles about different way of teaching to disable students at different levels such as sentence construction, grammar, vocabulary... Some problem occur that once disable students know the grammar, vocabulary, but they are not able to accumulate these discrete items together and build a complete sentence or to understand the meanings. It is concluded that teaching journaling promote both reading and writing procedures. Not only does student progress in English Language Arts but also in other content. Evaluation is a distinctive part of journal writing done by the teacher and student increase the promotion of composition. Writing instruction should be based on the needs of disable students. It comes to conclusion that SRSD can be applied to instruct a number of proficiency to students across the story, persuasive, and expository or informative writing genres. It should be noted that a great deal of elementary and middle school contexts make benefit from SRSD writing approach.

The results demonstrated that disable students were not able to build a mental macrostructure of information. It was obvious that once they are questioned to take notes, highlight, and composite explanatory ideas, they did not know how

to categorize, arrange, and schedule the information. They had difficulty determining the major ideas and explaining the relationship among ideas. The students reported to have mastered on the informational passages. The most strategy that they used in learning to learn task was to copy the passage again. Expanding this research to the content area classroom, the results illustrated that many junior high students did not have repertoires and strategies such as writing-to-learn and reading-to-learn strategies.

VIII. SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In the first study, various disabilities were not explained, and the findings were generalized to all groups of disable students. These two limitations tend to further research in these areas and obviate in the next reviews.

Overall, the mentioned study comprised some limitation that can be considered for further research. One of them is that the results cannot be generalized to a whole population. Because the various studies differed in demographic and functional depiction of participants (Wolery & Ezell, 1993), external validity of results were restricted. Although the grammar or usage studies presented just one positive aspect, different dependent variables, and variety of grammar skills are not taken into account. Further research is needed to specify more time to promote handwriting and survey different skills related to sentence-level skills.

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Relation between Socio-economic Status and Motivation of Learners in Learning English as a Foreign Language

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Abstract—The purpose of this article is to discuss Relation between Socio-Economic Status and Motivation of Learners in Learning English as a Foreign Language, in Iran. Motivation has played an important role in global language activity, and it has been as one of the real strategies used in foreign language setting in general and in English language as a foreign or second language in particular. We are, English language teacher have never neglected motivation and its relation with socio-economic status in teaching and learning English language in classrooms. In this work, investigators selected two hundred and thirty Iranian learners who studying in third grade high school in Boushehr city. In this article, both female and male students of ten high schools were participated in order to collect data. The one of instruments of this study is designed based on Garnder's AMTB (1985). The AMTB questionnaire utilized in the study consists of the sections: Integrative component; Motivation component; Orientation component. Another instrument of this paper is designed based on Bourdieu's (1986) in order to collect data from family socio-economic status of students. The finding of this paper indicated that most of the independent variables especially economical capital has apposite relation with motivation in EFL learning. In addition, the results of the study revealed noticeable evidence of the existence of a strong relationship between socio-economic status and motivation in language learning (English as a FL).

Index Terms—EFL learners, motivation, integrative motivation, socio-economic status

I. INTRODUCTION

It is interesting to watch the Iranian EFL learners learn English language through motivation. However, many theories have been put forward by many psychologists, language teachers and linguists to explain the process of learning language through motivation strategies. In fact, motivation has been used as an important research topic in target language since 1990s. Motivation and socio-economic status are the real factors in promoting the knowledge of language learners. They have a good relationship in EFL or ESL settings. Khansir (2012) argued that language is only used as a means of human communication. Today, English language is the most universal language over the world. Khansir (2013) mentioned that "English language is taught as a second or foreign language around the world to school children and learner's adults". In Iranian educational system, English language is used as a foreign language (Khansir and Gholami Dashti, 2014). In man life, man can always see the role of motivation in his life and thus, motivation is used in all the field of human being life in order to help him show his desire, emotion, and personality. We come back to the early 1990s, when the great social psychologists such as Robert Gardner as one of the pioneers of the theory of motivation along with his supporter completed "the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery" (AMTB) at the University of Western Ontario. According to Gardner (1985), motivation is defined as "the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favorable attitudes toward learning the language" (p.10). Gardner (1985), defined integrative motivation as the desire to achieve proficiency in a new language in order to know about the other culture and participate in the life of the community. Krashen (1987) mentioned that integrative motivation and instrumental motivation as two functions in learning second language acquisition. According to him, integrative motivation is defined as the desire to be like valued members of the community that speak the second language, is predicated to relate to proficiency in terms of the two functions. He added that the presence of integrative motivation should encourage the learners to interact with speakers of the second language out of sheer interest, and thereby obtain intake. He indicated that instrumental motivation is defined as the desire to achieve proficiency in a language for utilitarian, or practical reasons, may also related proficiency and thus; it will encourage performers to interact with second language speakers in order to achieve certain ends. Gardner (2007) mentioned the two factors such as

educational context and cultural context have vital role in the formation of motivation. Skehan (1989) made distinguishes among four main sources of motivation. According to his ideas, the four main sources of motivation divided into items: 1) Learning and teaching activities, which are related to the student's intrinsic motivation; 2) Learning outcomes, which are related the learners' successes or failures are the basis of what is termed resulted motivation; 3) Internal motivation, which is related to first point in that extrinsic motivation is present in both cases. 4) Finally, Extrinsic motivation which is related to highlights the influence of external incentives (such as rewards or punishment) on the learners' behavior. Weiner (1994) defined the concept of social motivation. According to him, social motivation used in order to involve the complex of motivational influences that stem from the sociocultural environment rather than from the individual.

In discussion of statement of problem, nowadays, the role of English language in Iranian society as an international language has positive attitude among Iranian families. This is one of the main reasons that Iranian families like to help their children learn English language in order to get the scientific knowledge and communicate with other people over the world. Motivation strategies has vital role to push the Iranian learners to achieve their goals in learning English language. According to this statement of problem, socio-economic status of the Iranian families is not the same. This study focused on relation between socio-economic status and motivation of Iranian learners in learning English language in EFL setting. However, this research work followed the following objectives: 1) the purpose of the study is to study the socio-economic background variables and EFL achievement of learners; 2) to study the amount of motivation in FL among learners; 3) to study the differential between social class and achievement motivation in EFL and finally, to examine the relationship between students' background variables and their attitudes toward learning English as a foreign language. In this paper, one research question along with one hypothesis considered as follows:

1- Is there relationship between family socio-economic status and learners' motivation in learning English?

1. There is no relationship between family socio-economic status and learners' motivation in learning English.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this area of this study, some definitions of the motivation along with many research works are considered as follows:

Many papers about learners' motivation and second or foreign language have been written by many research scholars in the area of language teaching and they explained the role of motivation as one of the most important strategies in learning and acquiring language has been positive. Gardner (1985 p. 10) mentioned that "a motivated learner is eager to learn the language, willing to expend effort on the learning activity, and willing to sustain the learning activity". Chikungam (2002) examined motivation in second language learning for Hong Kong students in Australia. He selected seventy one learners in Sydney and one hundred nine learners in Hong Kong. In this study, 16 items were used by the researcher from motivation of learning English as a second language for his participants. The learners were asked to complete two language tests at the same time to assess their proficiency in English and Chinese. The investigator chase the four beliefs such as general beliefs, norm beliefs, personal beliefs, and goal beliefs was worked by Kreidler and Kreidler in 1982 and thus, he also used four capitals such as demographic capital, economic capital, political capital, and cultural capita was written by Allard and Landry in 1994. In addition, this paper concentrated on the relative contribution of societal variables and psychological variables to the language performance of learners. This work showed that the role of motivation was positive in attitude toward language learning situation. Ushida (2005) examined motivation and attitudes in second language (L2) study within an online language course context (LOL). He selected thirty students who enrolled in the three on line language courses: Elementary French online (EF), elementary Spanish online (ES), and intermediate Spanish online (IS). In this paper, the course teachers and language assistants (LA) have been involved in order to obtain contextual information from different perspectives. The outcome of this article indicated motivation can give opportunity to students in order to perfect their language skills and reinforce the students' motivation and attitudes towards second language study. Pérez-Sabater and Montero-Fleta (2012) investigated motivation of a group of thirty two learners of English writing in English class in a degree of Library and Information Management in Spanish country. In this study, they selected both male and female students as participants in their project. The participants included of twenty four male and eight female learners from different backgrounds. The backgrounds of the participants were from Spanish, Erasmus, Ecuador and China. In addition, the range of language proficiency levels of the participants was wide. They had experience in the use of new technologies. The findings of data analysis of this paper showed that highly favourable reaction to the experience and related motivation with language achievement and behavioural outcomes such as classroom participation or persistence in learning, and thus, blogging as one of the new technologies can help the learners to overcome their problems involved in keeping motivation in the second language classroom. Csizér and Kormos (2008) studied the role of motivation in language learning of Hungarian learners who studying English and German. They chase 1777 Hungarian primary school children in the age range of thirteen to fourteen were studying English and German.

Results of this project showed that learners of English had a more positive attitude towards the native speakers of the language and thus, the students of English studied than learners of German, and the learners who were studying English had higher levels of linguistic self-confidence. The students who were studying English received more support from

their environment than learners of German. In addition, the findings of this research showed that the role of motivation in language learning of the learners was intensive than the language being studied.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

A total number of two hundred and thirty Iranian third grade high school students in Bushehr city were selected as participants in this research work. The population of this research work was chosen of ten high schools in Bushehr, Iran. In this research paper, one hundred and thirty male and one hundred male students were chosen for data collection. In addition, the participants of this research work had different family socio-economic status; this is why school context was chosen based on this different family socio-economic status. The following table distributes the sample of the study:

TABLE 1:
THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLE

participants	Male	Female	Total
100	130	230	230

B. Instruments

In this research paper, to investigate the role of motivation in Iranian EFL setting, one questionnaire was written in English and then translated into Persian language on the basis of Gardner's AMTB (1985). It consisted of 38 items which were quiet clear and they were rated based on a 4-point Likert scale (agree, strongly agree, disagree, strongly disagree). Many of the statements were used in the questionnaire had to be adapted to the context of EFL learning in Iran high schools. The AMTB questionnaire utilized in the present study consists of the following sections:

- 1- Integrative component measured by
 - a) Attitudes towards the target language (TL) group (items 1, 6, 21, 25, 28, 30) i.e. attitudes towards the qualities and habits of non-native Iranian speakers of English as a better socio economically positioned group;
 - b) Interest in FL (items 5, 9, 13, 16, 34, 37, 38) i.e. a general preference for learning language; and
 - c) Integrative orientation (items 3, 12, 24, 35, 39) i.e. a desire to strengthen or build ties with in- or out- group members;
- 2- Motivation component measured by
 - a) Motivational intensity (items 10, 15, 17, 22, 26, 33, 34) i.e. the amount of effort expended on learning EFL;
 - b) Attitudes towards the learning language (items 1, 11, 19, 20, 27, 32) i.e. the effective respond to learning English, and
 - c) Desire to learn TL (items 2, 4, 32, 36) i.e. the degree of commitment to learning; and
- 3- Orientation component measured by
 - a) Integrative orientation (1(c) above), and
 - b) Instrumental orientation (items 7, 8, 18, 29) i.e. the inclination to learn EFL for pragmatic reasons.

To collect data on family socio-economic status of students, a questionnaire was written in English on the basis of Bourdieu's (1986), tripartite conceptualization of capital borrowed from Lifrieri (2005). He used this questionnaire to measure the socio-economic status of people. It was translated into Persian language. It was divided into four sections: 1) Parents' occupation; 2) Parents' education; 3) Leisure time activities; and 4) Friends' activities. Part one and two contained eight questions, part three contained six questions and the last part contained five questions. The total number of questions included in this questionnaire was 27. Some of them were either Yes- No or multiple choice questions while others were open-ended. The questionnaire aimed at measuring Bourdieu's conceptualization of economic, cultural and social capital. They are considered as follows:

- 1) Economical capital (items a1a, c1b.2, c1b.4, c1b.7, c1c, c2b.1, d1d.1) measured as:
 - i. Parental employment status (i.e. employed or unemployed)
 - ii. Paid recreational activities (classified as activities that require money or not)
 - iii. Ownership of technology (i.e. computer or video game)
- 2) Cultural capital (items b1a, b1b, b2a, c1b.2, c2a) measured as:
 - i. Parents reading of newspaper (i.e. type and frequency)
 - ii. Cultural recreational activities (going to the movie) and
 - iii. Access to the internet (i.e. frequency of use);
- 3) Parents educational level (i.e. MA and above, BA, and etc.),
- 4) Father's past/present occupation and 5) Mother's past/present occupation, two other possible prediction of stratification, were included in the questionnaire in the form of two open-ended questions about parents' past/present jobs (items 1ab and a2b respectively).

C. Design of the Study

The design of this research work was design based on Pflieger and Kitchenham (2001). It is a comprehensive system for collecting information in order to describe, compare or explain knowledge, attitudes and behavior. Such an adoption

was due to the nature of the research which aimed at investigating relationship between socio-economic status and motivation of learners in learning a foreign language. To achieve the aim of this study, two questionnaires were designed and 230 third grade students were asked to fill the questionnaires.

D. Data Collection

In the process of the data collection of this study, the first of all, the researchers have completed the ethics procedure in order to do this research and collect data from the participants of the high schools. After that, the researchers visited ten selected schools with the purpose of being introduced to principals and language teachers. The investigators have cleared the aim and nature of the study. They have also obtained information about the characteristics of the school's population and classroom settings from the schools teachers and principals. In the case of this collection data, they have also cleared the participants about the aim of the questionnaires and then they started to collect data from the learners of the ten high schools. In addition, the questionnaires of this paper were filled by the participants for 25 minutes in their classrooms in during class time. However, in each school, one of the third grade classes was chosen by the language teachers to fill the questionnaires.

E. Data Analysis

In the process of the data analysis, the researchers used of SPSS database for statistical analysis of their data in this study. The questionnaires had code, and every questionnaire code included of 4 items, for example; number 4 used for 'completely agree', 3 for 'agree', 2 for 'disagree', and 1 for 'completely disagree'. However, in this project, two kinds of variables were used such as 1) an independent variable, which was the family socio-economic status of students; and (2) a dependent variable, which was the students' motivation in English as an EFL.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main aim of this study was to explore whether socio-economic status has any relationship with motivation in EFL. In the results and discussion process, the questionnaires will be discussed and the results will be cleared. First of all, reliability analysis is considered in the following table.

TABLE 2:
RELIABILITY OF MOTIVATION AND SES QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Motivation Questionnaire	.790	39
SES Questionnaire	.756	58

As shown in table 2, Cronbach alpha for this research project is high for questionnaires, .790 for motivation questionnaire and .756 for SES questionnaire. So it is concluded that the instruments are reliable.

TABLE 3:
DISTRIBUTION OF FATHERS' EMPLOYMENT

Occupational situation	N	percent
Employment	207	90
Unemployment	23	10
Total	230	100

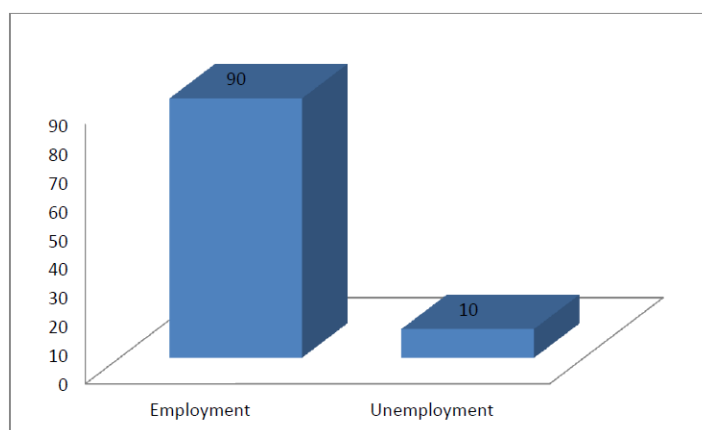


Figure 1: Distribution of Fathers' Employment

Table 3 and its figure indicated that more than 90 percent of fathers were employment and 10 percent of the fathers were unemployed. As table 4 and its figures showed that 10 percent of fathers are retired or unemployment, 9.1 percent had menial jobs, 37.4 percent were skilled workers, 12.2 percent were professional workers and 27.8 percent had clerical job.

TABLE 4:
DISTRIBUTION OF FATHERS' KIND OF PAST/PRESENT OCCUPATION

Kind of occupation	N	Percent
Retired and unemployment	23	10
Menial job	21	9.1
Skilled workers	86	37.4
Professional workers	28	12.2
clerical workers	64	27.8
Un-answer	8	3.3
Total	230	100

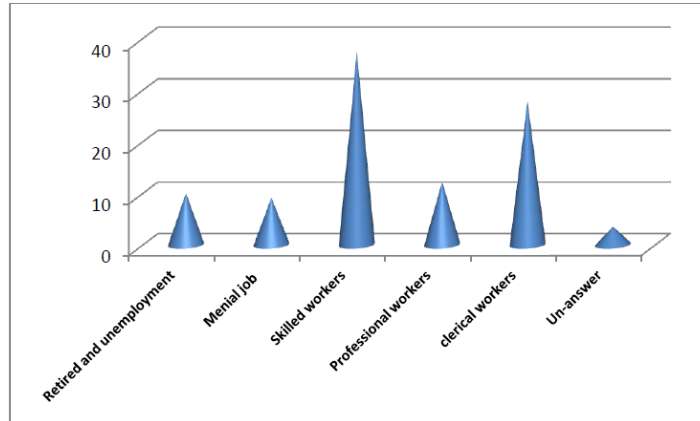


Figure 2: Distribution of Fathers' past/present Occupation

Table 5 and its figure indicated that most of the mothers (74.8) were households and only 25.2 of the mothers were employment.

TABLE 5:
DISTRIBUTION OF MOTHERS' PAST/PRESENT OCCUPATION

occupational	N	Percent
Un-employed	172	74.8
Employed	58	25.2
Total	230	100

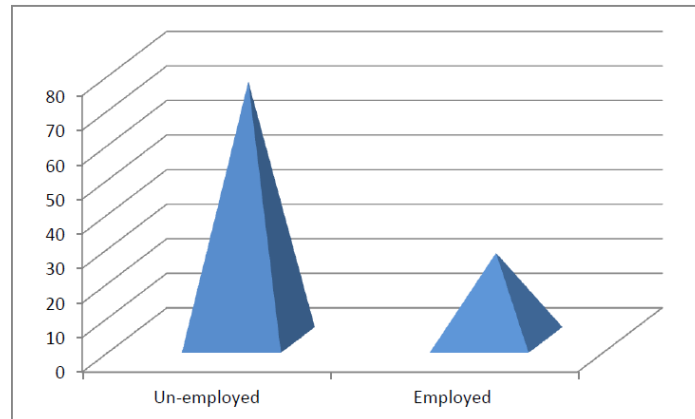


Figure3: Distribution of Mothers' Past/Present Occupation

Parental education level is presented in table 6. The analysis of this table showed that 43.9 percent of participants' father education level was diploma, 13 percent, 19.6 percent BA, and 23.5 percent MA and upper. Mothers' education levels were: 66.1 percent diploma, 11.3 percent, 11.3 percent BA, and 10.9 percent MA and upper MA.

TABLE 6:
DISTRIBUTION OF PARENTS' EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

Education level	Father		Mother	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
Diploma	102	43.9	152	66.1
	30	13.0	26	11.3
BA	45	19.6	26	11.3
MA and upper MA	54	23.5	25	10.9
Un-answer	0	0	1	.4
Total	230	100.0	230	100.0

Table 7 and its figure indicated that 55.7 percent of fathers and 25.7 percent of mothers read newspaper.

TABLE 7:
DISTRIBUTION ON NEWSPAPER READING OF PARENTS

Reading Newspaper	Father		Mother	
	Percent	N	N	Percent
Yes	55.7	128	59	25.7
No	44.3	102	168	73.0
Un-answer	0	0	3	1.3
Total	100.0	230	230	100.0

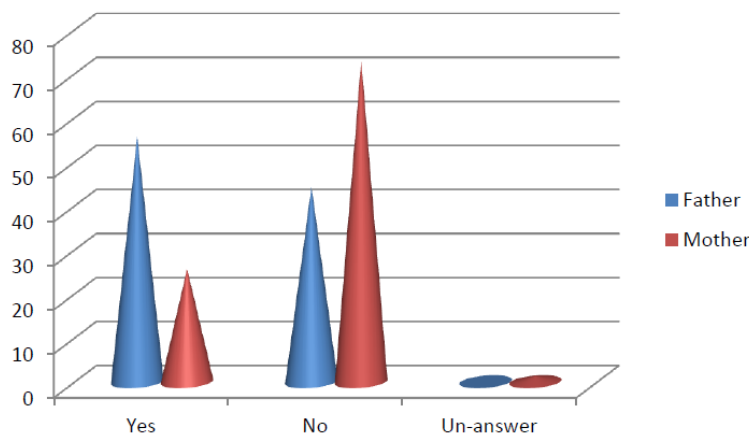


Figure 4: Distribution on Newspaper Reading of Parents

Table 8 and its figure showed that 11.3 percent of participants did not go out with their families, 29.1 percent of them went to the park with their families, 28.7 percent went to their relatives' house, and 16.1 percent of them went to the shopping mall.

TABLE 8:
DISTRIBUTION OF RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

	N	Percent
Park	67	29.1
Cinema	14	6.1
Theater	8	3.5
Amusement park	12	5.3
Shopping mall	37	16.1
Relative's	66	28.7
Don't go out	26	11.3
Total	230	100.0

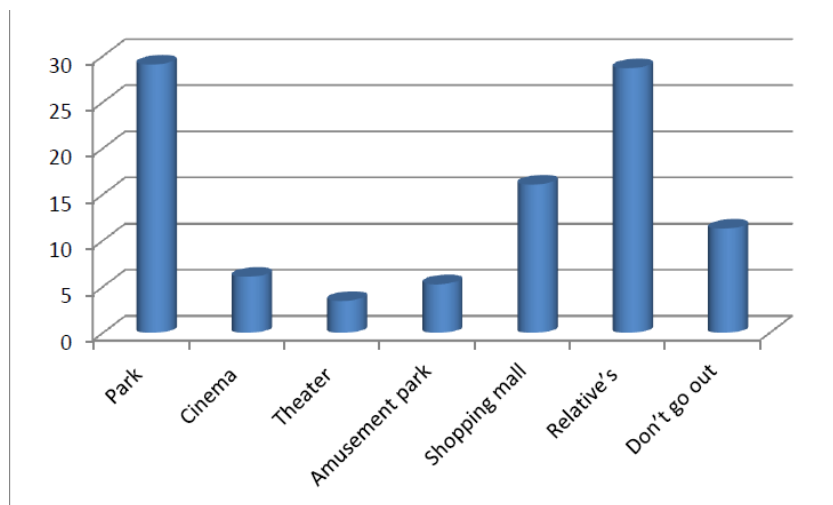


Figure 5: Distribution of Recreational Activities

Table 9 and its figure showed that 91.7 of participants accessed the internet. It showed that about 75.2 percent of participants used internet daily, 10.9 percent three or four times a week, and 2.6 percent of the participants used internet once or twice a week.

TABLE 9:
DISTRIBUTION OF INTERNET ACCESS

Internet Access	N	Percent
Yes	211	91.7
No	16	7
Un-answer	3	1.3
Total	230	100.0

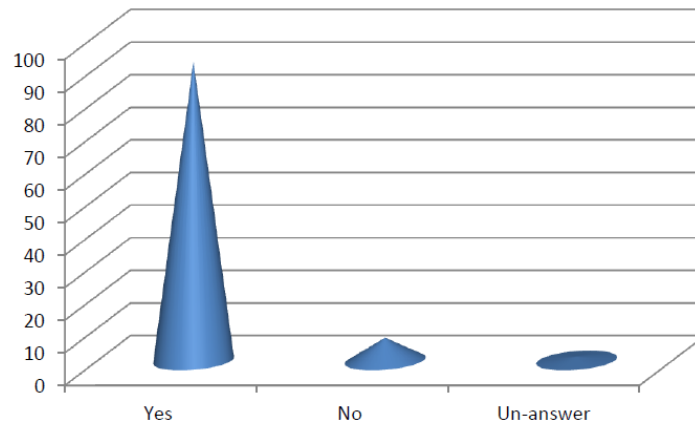


Figure 6: Distribution of Internet Access

Table 10 and its figure indicated that mean score of attitudes toward the TL was 2.7638, mean of interest in FL was 2.7845, mean of integrative orientation, mean score of motivation intensity was 2.4130, M=2.4355 for attitude toward learning language, M= 2.6815 for desire to learn, mean of instrumental orientation was 2.7163, and 2.6367 for total motivation.

TABLE 10:
PRESENTS STANDARD DEVIATION AND MEAN SCORES OF MOTIVATION VARIABLES.

Motivation Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation
Attitudes Toward the TL	2.7638	.48982
Interest in FL	2.7845	.67993
Integrative Orientation	2.5983	.55916
Motivational Intensity	2.4130	.64583
Attitude Toward Learning Language	2.4355	.51477
Desire to Learn TL	2.6815	.64615
Instrumental Orientation	2.7163	.66099
Total Motivation	2.6367	.46726

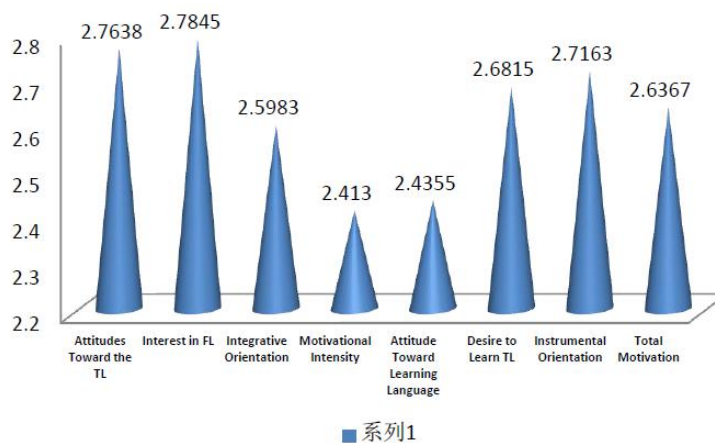


Figure 7: Presents Standard Deviation and Mean Scores of Motivation Variables

Table 11 showed that 23.9 percent of participants belonged to low class, 48.7 of them belonged to middle class and 27.4 belonged to high class of the society.

TABLE 11:
DISTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL CLASS

class	N	Percent
Low	55	23.9
Middle	112	48.7
High	63	27.4
Total	230	100

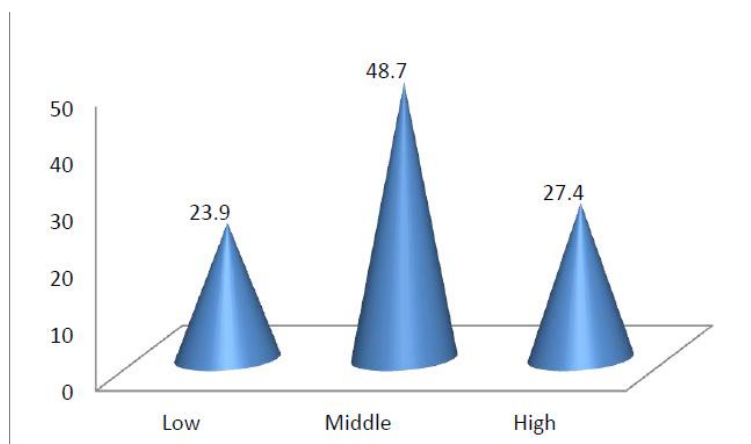


Figure 8: distribution of Social Class

V. CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to investigate the correlation between socioeconomic factors and motivation in language learning. The role of motivation in language learning enable the EFL learners to have easy access to modern knowledge in some subjects in their educational purposes and help them maintain communicate with foreign people in order to achieve their own purposes within their country and in the outside world. The result of this paper indicated that most of the independent variables especially economical capital has apposite relation with motivation in FL learning. When parents were at the high level of the economical, participants could have better situation in dealing with English learning. They could have more financial support to start and continuing learning English. However, this paper showed that there is a positive relation between social class and motivation. When the level of social class is increased, motivation in learning English is also increased. The hypothesis of this research paper is not accepted and according to the outcome of the data analysis is rejected. Thus, the previous researches many researchers such as Lifrieri (2005) supported this study and according to him, there is significant correlation between socioeconomic factors with motivation in language learning.

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Formative Assessment in Oral English Classroom and Alleviation of Speaking Apprehension

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Abstract—Researches on Language Anxiety have aroused public concern around the world, most of which suggest that language anxiety exerts a detrimental influence to language learners in their process of language learning. Chinese English learners usually do a good job in passing all kinds of English test while are poor at oral English referred as “dumb English”. It is safe to conclude that “dumb English” is the best manifestation of foreign language anxiety. Formative assessment characterized by being interactive among students themselves, peers, and teacher, highlights the immediate and effective feedback to learners, which is in accordance with the nature of student-centered approach. This study aims to explore the effectiveness of applying formative assessment in oral English class to alleviate students’ speaking apprehension. Two innate classes are chosen to be the controlled class and experimental class. Data in students’ English classroom speaking anxiety scale is collected and analyzed after pre-test and post-test together with an interview. It is revealed in this study that the implementation of formative assessment in oral English classroom is proved to be effective to alleviate students’ speaking anxiety in experimental class. In response to this finding, implications for practical practice of formative assessment in oral English classroom are discussed.

Index Terms—formative assessment, foreign language anxiety, oral English apprehension, feedback

I. INTRODUCTION

Foreign language anxiety refers to those negative feeling as tension, discomfort, self-doubt in language learning. Foreign language anxiety (FLA) is defined by some researchers as "a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986). It is widely considered detrimental to language learning. Substantial studies have confirmed that foreign language anxiety, as a kind of affective factor, exerts a negative influence on language learning and achievement ((Horwit 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner 1991; Young 1991). Arnold (1999) indicated that among those affective variables, anxiety is the greatest obstructive affective barrier to language learning. A research made by Sanchez Herroero and Sanchez (1992) implied students’ foreign language anxiety can account for 38% variance in English proficiency among middle school students in Spain. In addition to researches on the relationship between foreign language anxiety and language proficiency, many researches have associated foreign language anxiety with other factors, such as learning strategies, willingness to communicate, self-efficacy, producing results in a mixed way, but there is a consensus among researchers on the source of foreign language anxiety. Anxiety related to classroom activities is mainly reflected in one’s apprehension to express in foreign language publicly such as oral presentation, role play, oral quizzes. Much evidence has revealed that speaking in foreign language publicly is the most challenging and anxiety-evoking basic skill among four basic skills in foreign language classroom (Koch & Terrel, 1991). Woodrow (2006) pointed out oral English apprehension is the best manifestation of language learning anxiety. Aida (1994) mentioned that the essence of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), the chief instrument to measure foreign language anxiety, is designed primarily to measure learners’ speaking apprehension in the classroom setting. Chinese English learners are known to be capable of passing various kinds of English exam while poor at speaking in English, which is referred as a term “dumb English” in China characterized by unable and unwilling to speak, and even afraid to speak in public. It is safe to conclude that “dumb English” is the best manifestation of foreign language anxiety. Speaking apprehension is a "type of shyness characterized by fear of anxiety about communicating with people" (Horwitz et al, 1986). Speaking apprehension can be reflected in many ways, such as contorted sounds or with an edge to the sound, inappropriate pronunciation of the target language, avoidance of eye contact, unnatural facial expression, forgetting some simple words or expressions familiar to them, simply keeping silent when required to speak, even sweating or shivering while speaking in public, which are some typical symptoms and manifestations of oral English apprehension in language learning. A negative correlation between anxiety and oral English proficiency has been found by some researchers (Kitano 2001; Phillips 1992).

Anxiety as a kind of affective factor may impede foreign language learning and achievement. Summative assessment, a means to assess learning achievement, is by no means helpful to relieve students’ anxiety, especially for less proficient English learners while formative assessment, a means to monitor and regulate learning process, features prompt feedback. If students can receive continual positive feedback, which in turn will build up their confidence and relieve their anxiety. The primary concern for summative assessment on English speaking is to evaluate students’ ultimate

performance rather than to provide feedback so as to monitor students' dynamic learning process, which results in the neglect of direction for students' affective factors, language, and culture. Many studies highlight the importance of learning process which is in accordance to the essence of formative assessment. The concepts "formative" and "summative" were first put forward by an American philosopher Michael Scriven. Later, different definitions of formative assessment came into being. For example, Gipps have defined formative assessment as the process of evaluating, estimating or assessing students' work or performance and using this to regulate and improve students' performance (Bell & Cowie, 2001, p. 6). Formative assessment is characterized by being interactive, with teachers assessing the quantity and accuracy of student work as part of the assessment more than once in the middle of learning. Teachers' diagnostic skills are highlighted in the process of assessment. Black and William (1998) "provide strong evidence from an extensive literature review of 250 journal articles and book chapters to show that classroom formative evaluation, properly implemented, raises academic standards in learning." Therefore, in college speaking English teaching, teachers are expected to make use of the dynamic learning and assessing process in which teachers and students work together to monitor students' learning process, regulate their learning strategies to achieve their learning goals so as to arouse their learning motivation, relieve anxiety, and finally foster autonomous learning.

This paper attempts to see the influence of speaking apprehension in classroom oral English achievement and if the application of formative assessment in college oral English class has any effect on alleviating students' speaking apprehension level. Pedagogical implications to language instruction are discussed for oral English teachers so as to establish a low anxious environment with a comprehensible input. The research questions include the following one:

(1) Can the application of formative assessment in oral English class effectively alleviate college non-English majors' speaking anxiety?

II. PROCEDURES

A. Participants

A total of 115 students (103 females, 52males) first year non-English majors from law and history school at West China Normal University participated in the study. Class A1 consisting of students from history school with students 58 is called experimental class while Class A1 consisting of students from law school with students 57 is called controlled class. Subjects from the two classes have approximately equal English proficiency on the whole. All the subjects in both two classes are required to attend the pretest, post-test of English Classroom Speaking Anxiety Scale with similar contents, and interview.

B. Instruments

Two similar questionnaires are designed to be instruments of the study in order to investigate Chinese non-English majors' speaking apprehension. Referring to Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) by Horwitz E.K. (1991) and Chinese cultural background, the author designed the English Classroom Speaking Anxiety Scale (ECSAS) with 33 items according to a five-point Likert Scale. The specific terms "English", "speaking English" or "English class" is used to replace terms "foreign language" and "foreign language class" so as to enable the questionnaire to be feasible and appropriate to the present study. The ECSAS comprises three parts including communicative anxiety, oral English test anxiety, and negative assessment anxiety. Theoretically, total scores for the 33 items will range from 33 to the maximum 165, the higher the score is, the more anxious the student is. All the subjects are required to take part in the pre-test and post-test of ECSAS to see whether there is significant difference in all the subjects' anxiety level before and after the experiment.

Interview is also carried out to figure out the effect of the application of formative assessment on oral English class and subjects' change of their psychological activities especially anxiety. In terms of the degree of formality, semi-structured interview is adopted.

C. Preparation for the Study

The study was conducted for one academic year, from September, 2013 to June, 2014. Both the pretest questionnaire for speaking anxiety was carried out at the beginning of September, 2013 in a normal English class. SPSS18.0 is used to analyze data.

Traditional teaching methodology with summative assessment for oral English instruction is still adopted in the controlled class, Class A1 in Law department taught by the author while the Class A1 in History department are also taught by the author with the application of formative assessment in oral English class. At the beginning of the first month in the experiment, the author explained and demonstrated the basic principle and method of application of the formative assessment in oral English class to students in the experimental class, and negotiated with students together about the specific standard for self-assessment and peer-assessment, which may arouse students' interest and ensure smooth conduction of the experiment.

Formative assessment should be goal-oriented. Oral English teachers should identify students' oral English level at each period, and design corresponding oral activities for students to meet the learning goals set beforehand. Immediate and advancing assessment activities in classroom including self-assessment, peer-assessment and teacher assessment may help both teachers and students have a full awareness of students' own learning process toward the goals set

beforehand, which also helps teachers to integrate these evaluation information to guide their next curriculum design and instruction (Black & William, 1998). With regard to design of oral English activities, it varies in form and function. Some mechanical and indispensable oral activities serve basic atmosphere-activating function, such as duty report, group discussion, text recitation, which ensures whole participation of the general class. Some advanced and more functionally communicative oral activities also should be designed for students' communicative competence to develop, such as debate, role play, drama play, and story-retelling. In the practice period, students should be motivated to speak aloud without too much pressure and anxiety. Mistakes except some typical ones should not be corrected immediately in discussion process in front of the other students by peers or teacher but taken down in portfolio of each student to protect students' proper pride. Teachers are expected to monitor and regulate students' practice process to provide timely and effective feedback. The design of oral activities should be goal-oriented, interest-oriented, communication-oriented, and knowledge oriented. The formative assessment comprises three aspects, self-assessment taking up 15% in the whole assessment system, peer-assessment taking up 15% and teacher assessment taking up 30%. The final oral English test taking up 40%. Every week, students would be assigned with an oral task to fulfill after class, such as a drama play, students within groups are supposed to design and take down drama dialogues, review and finally practice together. The specific performance including progress made and problems confronted by group members as well as students' introspection on problem-solving, self-assessment and remarks from peers should be taken down in portfolio and deliver to teacher so that teacher can provide timely feedback when he observes the final performance.

D. Application of Formative Assessment in Oral English Class

Self-assessment refers to objective intrinsic introspection on one's learning. In the process of self-assessment, students were required to summarize progresses made and reflect on existing problems in a diary each week so as to identify future striving direction. After they fulfilled each oral task, their assessment of specific performance was recorded in their portfolio. Students were encouraged to spend more time listening and watching more original materials, such as VOA or BBC news, American TV series, for instance Friends, and imitate so as to correct and improve their own pronunciation and oral English proficiency.

Peer-assessment is conducted within groups organized by 4 students. Group members cooperated to perform oral activities, for instance, group discussion, situation dialogue, rehearsal of drama. Teacher was supposed to identify specific tasks assumed by respective student to ensure them not shifting duties onto others. After each presentation, they were asked to fill in the portfolio with regard to assessment for group members involved. Assessment was made from the perspective of speakers' speaking speed, intonation, cohesion and coherence of dialogues, the appropriate choice of words, the degree of flexibility in choosing some expressions to replace words or phrases difficult to express, sense of cooperation with partners and audiences, facial expression, and even body language. Both self-assessment and peer-assessment should be frequently and immediately made after oral activities were finished according to criteria set before, which builds up students' confidence and passion.

Teacher-assessment

Teacher-assessment, an indispensable tool of formative assessment, is an ongoing assessing process. Teachers are expected to set some examples for students about making assessment before experiment and in the ongoing process of experiment. Classroom observation, an effective teaching technique for teachers to record and assess students' participation and presentation performance in class, is aimed to identify problems encountered by students and help them conquer, to make clear the degree of their interest in classroom activities so as to improve teaching method accordingly, to make sure whether students have grasped certain learning strategies and achieved progress. When it comes to portfolio, it is teachers who should assume the responsibility to review students' portfolio to see exact problems encountered, self-introspection, decision-making, and progress made by students so as to provide immediate feedback to monitor and guide their learning direction.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 4.1 is Means and Independent-sample T-test to demonstrate the result of pre-test between the experimental class and controlled class in speaking Apprehension level.

TABLE 4.1
MEANS AND INDEPENDENT SAMPLE-T TEST IN PRE-TEST

	Class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	P
Speaking Apprehension	Experimental Class A1	58	96.34	14.35	0.292	0.771
	Controlled Class A1	57	95.60	13.08		

The mean difference between the controlled class A1 in history department and the experimental class A1 in law department in speaking anxiety is a little higher than 1.00, with Sig. Value being 0.771(>.05), which implies there is no significant difference in speaking apprehension level between the experimental class and controlled class.

Table 4.2 is the result of Means and Independent sample of post-test between the controlled class and the experimental class in speaking apprehension level.

TABLE 4.2
MEANS AND INDEPENDENT SAMPLE-T TEST IN POST-TEST

	Class	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	P
Speaking Apprehension	Experimental Class	58	88.50	14.61	-2.632	0.010*
	Controlled Class	57	95.11	12.17		

In order to examine the result of the application of formative assessment in oral English class to alleviate students' speaking apprehension, formative assessment is implemented in the experimental class, while traditional teaching methodology with summative assessment is also conducted as usual. The Sig. (2-tailed) value in speaking apprehension between the two class is 0.01(<0.05), which implies that significant difference exists between the controlled class and experimental class in their speaking apprehension. Students' speaking apprehension in the experimental class A1 of History department has been alleviated compared with that of the controlled class. Students' speaking apprehension in controlled class A1 of Law department has not alleviated their speaking apprehension with statistic difference.

Table 4.3 is the paired samples T-test of the pretest and post-test between the two groups in their speaking anxiety level.

TABLE 4.3
THE PAIRED SAMPLES T-TEST OF THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	P
Speaking Apprehension	Pre-test	58	96.34	14.35	18.933	0.000**
	Post-test	58	88.50	14.61		

As is illustrated in table 4.3, there is statistically significant difference in anxiety level of the students in experimental class A1 in History department with the Sig. Value being 0.000(>0.05). The anxiety level after experiment is much lower than that before experiment. With regard to the controlled class, although students also have made some progress, the mean score after the experiment is lower than that of experiment before the experiment by less than 1.00, it is not statistically significant. Their speaking apprehension level is still comparatively high in post-test.

IV. MAJOR FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

This paper aims to find out whether the implementation of formative assessment in oral English class can alleviate students' anxiety level and improve their oral English proficiency.

The implementation of formative assessment in oral English class is proved to be helpful for students to alleviate their speaking anxiety. In addition to assessment on oral English proficiency, formative assessment is also implemented to monitor and regulate students' command of learning strategies, sense of cooperation, motivation in an open and comforting atmosphere, and the grading way is not definite score but rough grade, which may relieve students' speaking anxiety. In the process of implementation of formative assessment in oral English class, students were first required to discuss with teacher and group members about the grading criteria, the learning objectives, and learning strategies, which endows students with opportunities to be self-directed in the learning process, and a non-threatening environment for students to study. It might be explained from the theoretical basis of formative assessment, constructivism featuring students-centered teaching methodology and students' learning initiative. In the process of formative assessment, students regulate and monitor their learning by making self-assessment and accepting feedback from their group members and teacher. Students are deeply motivated by the urgent need for their self-centered participation, which boosts their esteem and confidence. In other words, students' active participation in oral activities, positive feedback received from peers and teachers or even negative feedback prompting them to identify their problems so as to set up new learning objectives can contribute to strengthening of their confidence and relief of speaking anxiety. Students felt relieved when involved in group atmosphere with primary focus on group cooperation and interaction instead of individual performance. For instance, when preparing for drama play, student didn't fulfill task alone but cooperate and interact with group members, in doing so, they developed their potential to design actors' line, facial expression, body language, and plot. Each group member learned from others' strong points to offset their own weakness, and enjoyed happy moments in the process. Harmer (2007) stated that there were three advantages in drama play. Firstly, Drama play has advantages of being interesting which can boost students' motivation. Secondly, it prompts every student to be actively involved in activities, especially those shy and introverted students. Thirdly, students can enlarge their vocabularies and became more confident when drama play in classroom activities is shifted to real communication. Finally, their speaking anxiety is relieved. In comparison to formative assessment, summative assessment is more stressful. Students are graded in final exam. Little time is spent for students to build successive learning objective to achieve, to make clear their own problems, to introspect on learning process. Students, especially poorly performed oral English learners, might be dealt with a direct blow when getting simple final score without any hint about what problems to overcome, what direction to work ahead. They might get more anxious. It is a vicious circle.

In interview, a student A with good oral English proficiency said that in the experiment, he came to be well-informed of what to learn, how to practice, and what problems to correct, then he was no longer anxious about presenting himself

without any preparation beforehand, and whenever he read positive feedback recorded in portfolio, he was deeply inspired to work harder and practice more, do almost not worry about speaking aloud in public. Besides, a student B with poor oral English proficiency reported that at the beginning of oral activities practice, he was very nervous to speak aloud, but every one was inspired to participate in the group activities, gradually he became sort of relieved although he did not improve his oral English too much. He enjoyed happy moments of students' presentation in classroom such as drama play, film imitation, and did not feel so anxious about speaking English any more. Harlen (2003) indicated formative evaluation contributes to lower level learners' learning in that it enables lower-achieving students to make progresses step by step. Formative assessment not only works out in endowing equal learning opportunities to all parts of the community, but also diminishes special need placements. A student C said that students in other classes were jealous about the curriculum design of his class in which students have so many opportunities to participate in oral activities actively and improve oral English, and the primary focus for them to study English is to improve overall English competence especially listening and speaking proficiency. The student interviewed was so satisfied and proud of the experiment in his class. A student D said that several times later after participating in oral activities, he was not nervous as he had been before, and though he also made some mistakes in oral expression, he was also courageous enough and well-determined to practice further. Moreover, peers in the same group cooperate to practice oral activities, and the good language learners can point out weaknesses for poor language learners to correct and improve in a comforting atmosphere, and when it is presented to whole class, they are not so anxious on account of their full preparation. As for test anxiety, students reported that there was no such an absolute summative assessment for them to anxiously prepare for, therefore, their test anxiety is lowered.

V. PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

While other studies focus on speaking anxiety with other factors such as learning strategies, communicative language teaching, this paper is intended to deal with the effect of implementation of formative assessment in oral English class on alleviating speaking apprehension. Finding in this study indicates that students in experimental class in which formative assessment is implemented proved to be less anxious than students in controlled class. After implementation of formative assessment in oral English class, students with high speaking anxiety at the end of experiment displayed lower speaking anxiety level than before, which illustrated the effectiveness of implementation of formative assessment in oral English class to relieve students' speaking apprehension. Based on the study, a sequence of implications can be implied as follows:

Students should be well-educated that the key to perform well in class is the practice process in which students makes clear learning objectives, monitor and regulate learning process, spot their own weaknesses, make improvement accordingly, and make clear every step of their learning process so that they can improve their oral English and surely do a good job in the process of peer-assessment and teacher assessment. Moreover, more cooperative oral activities for practice instead of individual oral task should be designed, for students feel not so anxious when accompanied by their partners. In the preparation of group task, peers should make peer-assessment strictly and objectively by previously-established grading criteria.

Feedback is significant to students in that positive feedback motivates students to build confidence to take part in more oral activities actively, and negative feedback gives them opportunities to introspect on their learning process and find out problems so as to improve accordingly. Feedback should be given immediately and effectively with specific information after an oral activity is conducted so that students can know clearly what problems to overcome and what new objectives to establish. Moreover, more encouraging and inspiring feedback should be accorded to students so as to arouse their motivation for learning, build up confidence and gradually relieve speaking anxiety. Students' painful failure experience in speaking English may lead to strong fear of communication. Therefore, motivational and meaningful topics for discussion should be designed by teachers to arouse students' interest so as to make full preparation for the topic so that they can get positive feedback.

Teachers should have a full awareness that they first act as initiators who take the initiative to establish harmonious atmosphere for students and discuss together with students about the detailed implementation method of formative assessment, about the detailed grading criteria, and help them identify their practicing objectives. Students should be well-trained to understand the principle and primary operational approach of self-evaluation and peer-evaluation. Inharmonious relationship between teacher and students may suppress students' learning motivation especially in depressing classroom atmosphere. Besides, teachers are expected to recognize the differences of students and set up corresponding grading criteria, with higher requirements for well-performed students, relatively lower ones for poorly-performed students when they makes their teacher assessment. Every student, especially the poorly-behaved ones, has his potentials and advantages which can be developed to its full through proper teaching and assessing method. What's more, in the process of learning, they should act as mediators, mediating among single students, groups, curriculum design. They help students monitor their learning process, find out their own weakness, and adopt proper strategies to achieve news objectives. When teachers act as assessors to conduct teacher assessment, they should adopt the principle to praise more, especially to praise from the concrete perspective about the specific improvements made by students, which strengthens students' sense of achievement While summative assessment can only provide them a judging result which plays no role in for students to take command of their learning process.

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The Impact of Knowledge of Multiword Units on Pragmatic Knowledge of Iranian EFL Learners

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Abstract—This study investigated the impact of multiword knowledge of chunks on Iranian EFL learners' pragmatic perception of the illocutionary act of request. The research was triggered by the need for EFL learners to enhance their ability to use English effectively in different social interactions. Two research instruments: a Multiword Chunk Test and a Discourse Completion Test were employed to collect data for this systematic inquiry. Major findings derived from the study highlighted the fact that Iranian advanced EFL learners with higher repertoire of multiword lexical knowledge demonstrated higher pragmatic ability and outperformed in expressing the speech act of request. On the account of findings, it is inferred that knowledge of multiword lexical items is of paramount importance for interactions in different contexts in general and expressing the politeness strategies in particular. It can be argued that insufficient and limited knowledge of multiword units could be a major hindrance to effective learning and communication, resulting in pragmatic failures in many intercultural communication situations.

Index Terms—pragmatic competence, multi-word units, speech acts of request, politeness

I. INTRODUCTION

Although a perception of linguistic competence has been dominant in linguistic theory for several decades, there has been an increased interest recently in the nature and key role of pragmatic competence and its significance has become increasingly apparent in language teaching. Recently, the study of pragmatic competence in an L2 has attained remarkable attention by SLA researchers. Researchers into pragmatic competence of adult foreign and second language learners demonstrate that grammatical linguistic knowledge does not merely lead to development of pragmatic competence (Bardovi-Harling and Dornyei, 1998). Linguistic meaning is quite distinct from pragmatic meaning in the way that the latter requires the listener not only to comprehend the linguistic information like knowledge of words and syntax but also the contextual information, such as role and status of the interlocutor, the physical setting and the communicative acts which would probably take place in the context (Rost, 2002).

According to the pioneers and internationally widely recognized specialists in the field, Keneth Rose and Gabriel Kasper (2001) pragmatic competence is attributed to the ability of interpretation of utterances within the context particularly when a speaker's utterance is not identical to his intended meaning and it is the ability to perform communicative action efficiently and interact successfully within various context with different interlocutors.

At the present time, it is widely acknowledged that to run a successful communication in any language, one requires to acquire sociocultural knowledge about that language community. In the light of conducted research into the pragmatic competence of adult foreign and second language (L2) learners it is indicated that grammatical development is not tied to a parallel level of pragmatic development (Bardovi-Harlig & Dornyei, 1998).

There are a variety of definitions on the term pragmatics around presented by different scholars. According to David Crystal (1985) "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.240). Celce-Murcia, Dorney & Thurrell (1995) define pragmatic competence as the capability to put across the communicative intention by implementation and perception of speech acts and language functions. Furthermore, Thomas (1995) finds out that English language learners are required to infer pragmatics meaning in order to understand the intention of the speaker as well as to interpret his/her feelings and attitudes. In one model of pragmatic ability he emphasizes that pragmatic meaning is perceived through the comprehension and understanding of speech acts and conversational implicatures.

The concept of speech act theory as the basic underlying framework and cornerstone of pragmatics has gained importance in pragmatic research not only due to its impact in historical study of pragmatics, but also because of the social implications they carry (Ervin-Tripp, 1976). Pragmatic knowledge and ability as socially constructed phenomenon, contributes to the development of several sub-fields of pragmatics investigating various linguistic topics

from direct to indirect speech acts (Levinson, 1983; Searle, 1975) such as politeness theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Leech, 1983).

Pragmatic competence as Bialystoke (1993) probes consists of a variety of abilities at work and how they are used to interpret language in context for different multi-purposes from greeting to requesting, informing or demanding and so on, based on the speaker's stability to adopt and change language according to needs and expectation of the listener and the ability of the speaker to pursue accepted rules and maxims in conversations and narratives.

Concerning pragmatic aspect of formulaic language, many researchers have confirmed the links between formulaic language units and pragmatic competence. As Columas (1979) states that the formulaic language can be as the verbal cornerstone in particular conversational action whose meaning is conditioned by the behavioral patterns they are integrated with. Wood (2002) believes that formulaic language helps learners deal with the complexity of many social situations, and contributes to orderly structure as well as unambiguity in communication and provides a sense of group identity.

It is evident that multi-word units are ubiquitous and pervasive components in any language. It is believed that the language users who have achieved mastery of a vast quantity of such units can perform fluently in their communication. Playing a crucial role in language acquisition, vocabulary learning has a significant role especially for EFL learners to advance their English proficiency. In real communication, the primary purpose is the conveyance and understanding of messages and interlocutors need to make comprehensible utterances. Apparently, it is essential that learners reach the mastery of these key chunks like discourse markers and understand their functions to help maintain the flow of speech and conversation and interaction, and ensure that speakers and listeners understand each other (Nation and Webb, 2011).

Multiword chunks are critically significant in facilitating communicative competence and producing fluent speech. Widdowson (1989) views communicative competence consisting of two components: "grammatical competence" which can represent the knowledge and "pragmatic competence" which can refer to the ability of the learners. As a matter of fact the majority of native speakers' linguistic knowledge comes from "adaptable lexical chunks" rather than "analyzed grammatical rules" (Widdowson, 1989).

In another research, Ketko (2000) highlights that knowledge of multiword chunks and the way they are selected and manipulated in accordance to an appropriate context can depict a sign of communicative competence. As posited by Wood (2002) formulaic language units have great implication in classroom, particularly in language development and in facilitating fluent production.

According to McCarthy, M., O'Keeffe, A. and Walsh, S. (2010) some researchers claim that manipulation of multiword chunks assist learners to enhance their fluency. Another advantage attributed to the use of lexical chunks refers to the fact that they can be used for clarification of the intended meaning and generating other phrases with similar meanings.

Multi-word units seem to be important in learning a language and learning of word lists will be ineffective for achieving communicative competence, which should be noted as the final end of all language-learning and teaching encounters (Canale & Swain, 1980).

Paying due attention to the subtle role that mastery of multi-word chunks plays in communicative competence, teaching and learning them will gain immediate significance. Lewis (1997) for instance, argued that competence and proficiency in a language is a matter of acquiring fixed or semi-fixed prefabricated items.

Moudraia (2001) also contended that multi-word lexical units are kind of collocations which plays a role both in first language acquisition, and in learning any second or foreign language; this illuminates how seriously teaching and learning these multi-word expressions should be taken into consideration. It is, therefore, apparent that to gain competence either (linguistic or communicative), the learner will require to master semi-fixed and fixed expressions. Some of these co-occurrence patterns are so subtle that even advanced language users, including EFL teachers, may struggle with, and this leads to their inefficiency in handling communicative tasks.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

With the emergence of Communicative Language Teaching and the explicit recognition of the role of pragmatic competence in communicative ability more attention was paid to learners' engagement in the pragmatic, authentic and functional use of language for meaningful purposes (Brown, 2007). As an objection to Chomsky's (1965) linguistic competence Hymes (1972) proposed the concept of communicative competence. He as one of the pioneer proponents of communicative competence defined it as "what a speaker needs to know to communicate appropriately within a particular speech community" (Saville-Troike, 1996, p.362). There is no clear-cut and well-defined definition for pragmatics (Ellis, 2008). Evidently, concerning the pertinent literature, it is claimed that pragmatics is the study of language in daily communication, and the learner's full knowledge about the grammar of the target language does not guarantee his pragmatic competence (Bardovi-Harlig & Dörnyei, 1998; Kasper & Rose, 1999).

In Bachman's (1990) model of communicative competence language competence was divided discretely into two types, namely pragmatic competence and organization competence. Organization competence is composed of grammatical competence and textual competence, and pragmatic competence comprises into illocutionary competence and sociolinguist competence. The relationship between utterances and the functions that speakers intend to perform

through those utterances (illocutionary force) and the contextual features of language use that affect the appropriateness of utterances are the primary concern of Bachman's model.

L2 learners are strikingly different from that of L2 native speakers in their second language (L2) pragmatic system, in both production and comprehension (Kasper, 1997). It is manifested clearly in previous interlanguage pragmatics (ILP) research that despite of high proficiency competence, still advanced L2 learners suffer from their L2 pragmatic competence deficiencies (Kasper and Schmidt, 1996; Kasper and Rose, 1999). Interlanguage pragmatics as a controversial issue refers to the relationship between L2 proficiency and L1 transfer or the impact of learners' native language and culture on their performance and interpretation of L2 speech acts (Tsatagawa, 2013). The relationship between L2 proficiency and pragmatic transfer has been under investigation in some studies and the researchers such as Takahashi and Beebe (1987), and Blum-Kulka (1982) have unanimously hypothesized that L2 proficiency is positively correlated with pragmatic transfer. Takahashi (1996) assumed that learners with higher proficiency can adequately control over their L2 production to express their L1 native speakers' opinions at the pragmatic level.

In ILP studies, the majority of scholars have endeavored to make inquiries about cross-cultural distinctions in speech acts and how they are perceived and produced by English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners. Despite the fact that various speech acts (e.g., apologies, complaints, and compliments) have been under investigation in ILP research in the past three decades, according to Kasper (1997) and Hendriks (2008) requests remain as the core of the most frequently investigated speech acts. According to Brown and Levinson (1987) request, as the most important speech acts, is considered as a face-threatening act due to the fact that non-native speakers' inappropriate use of the request can make them sound rude and impolite.

As Bardovi-Halig (2008) articulates the concept of formulaic expressions as a feature of acquisition process can refer to components of speech act as well. The sociopragmatic usage of formulaic expressions and implication of instruction of such form-function expressions have several impacts on learners. Typically learners can overgeneralize, under generalize and or misuse them under limitation of their knowledge of proper use of context. Obviously, it can be inferred that lexis has gained its great importance and become excessively influential in language acquisition since learning lexical chunks can make it convenient to choose proper words according to the context. Based on Chomskyan theory since native speaker's utterances are limited, creation and usage of prefabricated items play an essential role in their language production.

The concept of lexical chunks has long been observed by linguists and language teachers. However, when it comes to the definition, the outcome is far from satisfactory, and it is due to various versions presented by different researchers from many perspectives. This diversification brings about various classifications of lexical chunks, some of which are made based on the functions of them. According to (Wray, 2002) more than 57 terms associated with lexis have been used in linguists' research among which the most frequently mentioned are collocation, lexical chunks, formulaic sequence, multiword units/strings, phraseology, prefabs, and units of meaning. Lewis (1993) calls them as lexical chunks and Moon (1997), addresses it multi-word items/ units; and formulaic sequences (Wray, 2000). The term used by the researcher in this paper is multi-word items due to its great publicity among researches.

Although all the mentioned scholars refer to this phenomenon differently, it is just Moon (1997, p. 43) who proposes a full definition. In the present study, a multi-word item is defined based on Moon's definition as a vocabulary item that is composed of a sequence of two or more words which can either semantically or syntactically form a meaningful and indivisible unit. In another definition presented by Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992, p. 37) multi-word items fall into two categories: collocations and lexical phrases. These prefabricated phrases are regarded as collocations "if they are chunked sets of lexical items with no particular pragmatic functions and they are considered as lexical phrases if they have such pragmatic function".

Newell (1990) describes a chunk as "a unit of memory organization, formed by bringing together a set of already formed chunks in memory and welding them together in a larger unit". According to him, chunking enables learners to build such structures repetitively and this psycholinguistic perspective of chunking leads to stratifying the memory which plays a prominent role in human cognition. Thus the lexical chunk in the actual speech act can generate particular semantic, pragmatic, cognitive and discursive structures, etc. in language.

Studies conducted by Ellis (2006) and Conklin and Schmitt (2008) signify that formulaic sequences, e.g. making requests, making apologies, responding to compliments, refusing, complaining, etc. are realized by conventionalized language, e.g. I'm (very) sorry to hear about _____, to express sympathy, or I'd be happy to _____ in response to a request (Nattinger and Decarrico, 1992). These formulaic sequences as ready-made chunks enable speakers to achieve the pertinent speech act in a quick, reliable manner.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Reviewing the previous literature reveals that although the relationship between formulaic language and fluency is well-constructed, the relationship between the use of multiword units and their effect on pragmatic ability is less dealt with. Concerning pragmatic aspect of formulaic language, many researchers have confirmed the links between formulaic language units and pragmatic competence. Functions of particular sets of formulas in communication have been under investigation in various studies. Bahns, J., Burmeiste, H. & Vogel, T. (1986) in a study of the use of formulas in child language acquisition have outlined 6 main pragmatic categories of formulas as: a) expressive, b)

directive, c) games or play, d) poly functions, e) question and f) pathic. In another study, Bygate (1988) concluded on the role of formulas in adult learner interaction. He also explored that a considerable range of syntactic and pragmatic uses of formulas in a wide range of conversational contexts for various pragmatic purposes.

Although research on multiword units has recently seen a growth of interest, there has been little/no work done on their impact on pragmatic knowledge. Indeed, no published research seems to be available with respect to the impact of knowledge of chunks on pragmatic ability of EFL learners. In fact the findings of a few studies on contrastive analysis of collocations between English and Persian seem to be available and it seems that collocations have received greater attention among some Iranian scholars. Nevertheless, to date, to the best of our knowledge, no study has pointed to the possible impact of knowledge of multiword chunks on pragmatic ability among Iranian EFL learners with regard to the perception of politeness. This study adds to this body of research by covering this gap. Reviewing the literature did provide a few insights into the relationship between learning multiword items and raising pragmatic ability. Apparently, it seems that very few studies have been done on the effect of knowledge of multi-word units on the learners' pragmatic ability particularly within Asian context. Consequently, the present study is an attempt to understand whether, a mastery of a large quantity of such units might lead to accuracies in the production of the target language regarding the pragmatic competence for high-proficient EFL learners and find out if this knowledge could differentiate among EFL learners' pragmatic abilities. Furthermore, to determine the extent to which Iranian EFL learners' knowledge of pragmatics in general and politeness in particular is affected by their knowledge of chunks. Therefore, in the light of multiword chunk knowledge, this study investigates the impact of mastery of multiword items on Iranian EFL learners in relation to their pragmatic ability.

Although majority of Iranian adult EFL learners relatively have the knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary, they somewhat struggle with the use of suitable word combinations in a relevant context. From the previous studies it can be concluded that nonnative speakers may fail to propose their intention in an appropriate manner due to the lack of familiarity with the norms and conventions of the second language and consequently their requests might sound rather impolite. So, there is a need for a more careful investigation of EFL learners' judgments of native speakers' speech act production to find the areas of difficulty and avoid future communication breakdowns.

Since English in Iran is mostly taught and learned at schools, universities and institutes, and due to less exposure to real authentic language, the researcher aims to scrutinize how the multiword units can speed up the development and growth of pragmatic ability of the EFL learners. The major objective of the current study is to find out the impact of EFL learners' knowledge of multiword chunks on their pragmatic ability, and to examine the extent to which this knowledge can boost their pragmatic performance in real situation when it comes to interaction in an EFL context. In the light of their multiword lexical knowledge, this study will aim at investigating Iranian EFL learners' interlanguage pragmatic competence of request.

This speech-act based study is tied up to the field of interlanguage pragmatics (ITP) and due to the fact that the lack of sociopragmatic knowledge may make different learners behave differently, hence, this study is assumed to be significant in the following ways: to find ways to promote and improve pragmatic ability of Iranian EFL learners especially to opt the appropriate politeness strategies in speech act performance using their lexical knowledge of chunks. In theories of language acquisition, pragmatics has mostly been deemphasized and unrecognized as a significant knowledge component in language learning especially in EFL learning context, therefore, the findings can be immensely useful as it can highlight the importance of learning multiword items in equipping EFL learners to use appropriate communicative patterns and pertinent utterances for being considered as a successful interactant. This study may also provide some guidelines for EFL learning and teaching for specific and explicit classroom instruction within the current teaching setting in Iranian EFL context. Advanced Iranian adult learners might also get benefited with respect to the fact that "even advanced learners of English exhibit noticeable gaps in L2 pragmatics", (Kasper, 1997) by providing the opportunities for explicit and systematic teaching of formulaic forms to compensate for their pragmatic incompetence. The results of the current study may shed light to the point that acquiring the knowledge of chunks may accelerate and foster the rate of pragmatic growth in EFL learners. Moreover, the activities and materials used in Iranian EFL context seem to be inadequate in respect to pragmatic input. On the evidence of poor performance of EFL learners even in advance levels with high proficiency in real situation interaction, the necessity for realization and inclusion of learning multiword items to facilitate fluency might seem important. The use of knowledge of chunked items might impact the development of language fluency and lead to automatic speech production and consequently may enhance and reinforce the pragmatic development and functions focusing on specific speech acts. This study is, therefore, intended to answer the following research question:

RQ: Does knowledge of lexical chunks have any significant impact on pragmatic ability of Iranian EFL learners?

IV. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The participants of this study were 107 male and female EFL students studying English at Navid English Institute in Shiraz, Iran. All participants, 74 female and 33 male EFL learners, were Iranian EFL Persian speakers, learning English as a foreign language. The participants received no information of being experimented on purpose, so the reliability of the experiment can be mostly guaranteed. As a widely accepted research method in social science, "purposive

sampling" technique (Dornyei, 2007) was used and some intact clusters were purposively selected. The researcher ensured participants that their personal information would be kept confidential. Choosing adult advance learners in C1(Advance High) and C2(Superior) levels which are considered as high proficient levels according to Common European Framework (CEFR) as participants of this study had several reasons. Rose and Kasper (2001) state that grammatically advanced learners do not necessarily display concurrent pragmatic competence.

B. Instruments

The main instruments were two tests, a Multiword Chunk Test (MCT) and a Discourse Completion Test (DCT).

B1. Discourse Completion Test (DCT)

Discourse Completion Test (DCT) and role-play are widely employed in cross-cultural pragmatics, and in interlanguage pragmatics study in particular. DCT and role play yield results which are not significantly distinct (Rintell & Mitchell, 1989; Sasaki, 1998), therefore, in this study, DCT was used since it provides a large amount of data in a short time and consumes less time and energy (Schauer, 2009). This study investigated the politeness strategies used by Iranian EFL learners through speech acts of request. Hence, to assess the learners' pragmatic competence a DCT was used. It consisted of 16 request scenarios which was developed by Schauer (2009) and was used by Khorshidi (2013) in his research. In each situation the respondents were provided with description of the context and the social status between the interlocutors. The respondents were allowed to choose their responses which could facilitate elicitation of the data. The Speech Act Measure Rating Criteria prepared by Cohen, Paige, Shively, Emert, & Hoff (2005) was used to evaluate the participants' responses in the DCTs. Their scoring method range from number 1(very inappropriate) to number 5(very appropriate). Two native like English language teachers helped the researcher by providing comments on the researcher's rating. The inter-coder reliability of the ratings was also assessed to ensure valid findings. Since the DCTs were scored based on the Speech Act Measure Rating Criteria prepared by Cohen *et al.* (2005), their scoring method ranged from number 1 to number 5, therefore, Cronbach Alpha was used to determine its reliability. The minimum and maximum scores as well as the mean and standard deviation were applied to assess the reliability of the present DCT. The reported reliability for the DCT by the use of Cronbach Alpha procedure was (.930).

B2. Multiword chunk test (MCT)

To evaluate the participants' knowledge of chunks, a multiple-choice chunk test was designed and administered. It contained 40 items which aimed at measuring different components like phrasal verbs, collocations, and idiomatic expressions which are frequently used. The testees were required to choose the answer that best completes the sentence in 30 minutes. The respondents were asked not to use dictionaries either. In order to categorize the participants as high, mid, and low proficient (1/2) standard deviation (SD) was added to and subtracted from the mean of the distribution. The participants whose scores were above (+1/2 SD) and below (-1/2SD) were considered as high and low groups respectively. The participants whose scores were between +1/2 SD and -1/2 SD were considered as mid group. To have three homogeneous groups 35.5% of the total of the participants or 38 participants were put into group one (high), 28.0% of them or 30 were assigned into group two (mid), and 36.4% of them or 39 participants were categorized as group low. In order to calculate the reliability of the MCT the responses to each multiple choice question were converted into numbers. Each correct answer was coded one and each incorrect response was coded as zero. Concerning this dichotomous numerical coding, the procedure used for calculating the reliability of the MCT was Guttman procedure. Therefore, the reported reliability of the present MCT, by the use of Guttman split-half reliability (L4) is (.846).

C. Data Analysis Procedure

The process of data analysis was to collect information that lies behind the raw quantitative data obtained from MCT and DCT tests. The obtained data from the tests mentioned were converted into numbers by the process of coding and then to analyze data statistically, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 20 was used. On the account of yielded reliability values the internal consistency of the two instruments were confirmed. To find the relationship between proficiency level of multiword items and of the participants' pragmatic ability on DCT, descriptive statistics and One Way ANOVA were employed.

V. RESULTS

As it was explained in the previous section, all 107 participants took part in the Multiword Chunk Test. On the account of the results, the respondents were divided into three groups of high, mid, and low based on the mean score and standard deviation. The scores higher than (Mean+1/2SD) were considered as high scores and the scores between +1/2 SD and -1/2 SD of the mean were identified as mid and the scores lower than (Mean-1/2SD) as low ones respectively. Table I depicts the mean and the number of participants within each group based on their scores on the MCT.

TABLE I
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF MULTIWORD CHUNK TEST SCORE OF PARTICIPANTS

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
High	38	28.00	37.00	32.1053	2.61792
Mid	30	21.00	27.00	23.1000	1.91815
Low	39	7.00	21.00	16.1538	3.45298
Valid N (listwise)	107				

In order to answer the research question, one way ANOVA was run through the SPSS program. The scores obtained from the administration of MCT were then compared with the scores the participants received in the DCT questionnaire to detect if there was a difference between the performances in different levels of pragmatics and their knowledge of multiword chunks. Table II. exhibits a multiple comparison among the three groups as follows:

TABLE II
ANOVA FOR MULTIWORD UNIT KNOWLEDGE AND PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE SCORES

(I) Level	(J) Level	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
High	Mid	.73191*	.15193	.000
Mid	Low	.76442*	.15107	.000
High	Low	1.49633*	.14180	.000

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

On the basis of their performances and the average rating for DCT, the participants in the high group outperformed the participants in the other two mid and low groups. Comparing the higher L2 group with the mid group, the mean difference was reported (0.73191), while that of the higher and lower L2 group was calculated (1.49633). The mean difference of mid learners comparing with the lower groups was reported (0.76442). The Pearson Correlation was applied to find any significant relationship between knowledge of multiword chunks and pragmatic competence. The results of the correlation revealed that there was significant positive relationship between the variables. Evidently the knowledge of chunks had an impact on the pragmatic ability of the participants. Conversely, in lower group L2 production, these lack of external and internal modification and multiword expressions interfered with appropriateness, and consequently led to lower mean appropriateness ratings. As it is evident from Table 3. multiword chunk knowledge had a significant impact on pragmatic ability and the correlation between multiword chunked knowledge of high proficient learners and their pragmatic competence was significant ($p=.000$) in each group. In other words the participants with higher knowledge of multiword chunks were more pragmatically competent. Therefore, based on the findings there was a significant correlation between knowledge of multiword items and pragmatic ability of the participants in high group. So, it was inferred that, in mid and low levels, the learners' mastery of multiword units was not as high as their counterparts in high group to help them use the language properly at pragmatic level.

VI. DISCUSSION

The research question focused on EFL learners' knowledge of multiword chunks and their pragmatic competence with respect to their perception of politeness strategies in expressing speech act of request in an EFL context. The statistical analysis applied to examine the data was one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA). The External and Internal Request Modification developed by House and Kasper (1987) was also used to analyze the data of the learners' pragmatic competence. On the basis of the results in Table II it is inferred that mid and low participants' knowledge of chunks is not high enough to help them express their pragmatic abilities similar to that of high group. Since all the participants in the present study were at C1 (Advance High) and C2 (Superior) levels, they had learned English for at least 6 to 10 years, they were all identified as advanced learners. Nevertheless, proficiency was not a distinctive feature to differentiate their performance in expressing politeness strategies. The findings of the current research must be in line with the model proposed by Bachman(1990) based on which language learners need to acquire both organizational competence and pragmatic competence to achieve language competence. Pragmatic competence is an indispensable component of overall language proficiency. According to (Kasper, 1997) L2 learners are strikingly different from that of L2 native speakers in their second language (L2) pragmatic system, in both production and comprehension. It is manifested clearly in previous ILP research that despite of high proficiency competence, still advanced L2 learners suffer from their L2 pragmatic competence deficiencies (Kasper and Schmidt, 1996; Kasper and Rose, 1999).

Furthermore, the findings of this study is in harmony with a study conducted by Jie, C. (2005) in that learners' proficiency had little effect on their performance to choose appropriate politeness strategies in social and contextual situations. According to his findings proficiency level was not the factor which could influence the participants' performance so effectively. Furthermore, there were not any significant differences in their overall use of politeness strategies containing levels of directness, internal modification and external modification. The findings of the present study also confirmed the obtained results from Arghamiri and Sadighi (2013) that proficiency level was not observed to be the determinant of the students' degree of pragmatic competence since there was no significant relationship between the students' proficiency level at different groups and their performance on the speech act of refusal.

Using the two instruments, the Multiword Chunk test (MCT) and Discourse Completion Test (DCT), the study also examined whether learners with high, mid and low level of multiword knowledge differed in their speech act production, and whether their choices of linguistic and lexical expressions differentiated the three groups' performances. The findings of the current study indicated that Iranian advanced EFL learners with higher knowledge and mastery of multiword items were able to properly use politeness strategies in expressing speech act of request in appropriate situations. It was revealed through these data that the participants also had a better grasp of the knowledge of how to use English appropriately. There was a significant difference in scores between the high, mid and low L2 groups with respect to appropriateness.

In terms of appropriateness ratings, it is indicated that knowledge of multiword chunks seems to affect the quality of speech act use. The results of the study then lend support to the previous literature that, as proficiency rises, the ability to produce appropriate speech acts improves (e.g., Roever 2005; Rose 2000;). What was found further in this study was that quality of speech acts elucidated in the higher L2 group, could be traced back to a combination of reasons. Implementation of more lexical chunks most likely could contribute to overall appropriateness of linguistic expressions, and more comprehensibility of the expressions.

To measure appropriateness in this study a holistic viewpoint was taken into account by the rater which was reflected in the rating descriptors based on Likert rating scale used for evaluating the responses. The pragmatic aspect including the degree of directness and politeness of expressions was perceived by the rater. To draw an analogy between average scores of higher group in the DCT questionnaires and their choices of multiword expressions subsumed in their responses, it was demonstrated that the responses were more pragmatic controlled by the use of more lexical bundles, like ready-made chunks, idiomatic expressions, and collocations. Therefore, implementation of multiword items could discriminate among the three L2 groups, particularly for expressing their requests politely. Therefore, it could be inferred that proficiency was not the component which determined the students' degree of pragmatic competence. Apparently, the participants' knowledge of chunked items could impact their language pragmatic awareness in a way that their mastery of multiword items could assist them to perform better with respect to the pragmatic features of politeness strategies.

On the basis of their pragmatic abilities and their performance according to the average rating for DCT, the participants in the high group outperformed the participants in the two mid and low groups. The mean difference was (0.73191) comparing the higher L2 group with the mid group, while that of the higher and lower L2 group were (1.49633). The mean difference of mid learners in comparison with the lower group was (0.76442). In lower L2 production, this lack of external and internal modification seriously interfered with appropriateness, and consequently led to lower mean appropriateness ratings.

These observations also corresponded to the analyses of lexical expressions. Frequency of used lexical items and basic formulaic sequences expressing speech act of request was more in responses of group of high in comparison with the other two groups. In high group, the frequency of the different types of request expressions, classified according to the House and Kasper framework (1987), were generally more than the other two L2 groups, suggesting that although participants in both mid and low groups were similar in the types of linguistic forms and request expressions used in some ways, even when they used same types of direct expressions, the higher L2 group received greater appropriateness ratings than the other mid and lower L2 groups due to the number of lexical sequences, idiomatic expressions they had used. Moreover, there were significant differences in their overall use of multiword strings with regard to politeness strategies including levels of directness, internal modification and external modification among three groups.

Findings signified that the L2 group differences in appropriateness ratings could not be attributed merely to the linguistic forms used to realize speech acts. Rather, the differences resulted from the number of lexical sequences that accompanied the responses. According to different scenarios of the DCT in the present study, the participants had different responses. For instance, in Scenario 1 the utterance "**Could you please** open the window?" was labeled as a preparatory question and considered proper in terms of its directness level. However, it was rated as two in comparison with "**Excuse me, would you please do me a favor** and open the window? **It is getting kind of stuffy in here.**", which was rated as five by the rater. In another example, in Scenario 2 the utterance "**would you please** tell me where the Trent Building is?" which was evaluated as an appropriate utterance in terms of politeness was rated three in comparison with "**Excuse me, Sir. I'm looking for** the Trent Building. **I really appreciate it if you could point me to the right direction?**" which was ranked five.

In scenario 4, for example the responses of three participants from three different groups are compared in terms of appropriateness. The first response is written by a participant from low-proficient group: "**Would you please bring in** some articles?" The second response is used by a participant from mid-proficient group to the same scenario. "**Would you do me a favor and bring** me some articles **in**? It's **really** urgent." The third response is stated by one of the participants from the high-proficient group to the same scenario. "**Dear professor! I know this is a last minute request,** but **I'm afraid I couldn't do anything on the paper. Would you mind giving me a hand to bring in** some articles? So I'll be able to **hand in** my essay **on its due date?**"

So, with mentioned justifications, as it is indicated through investigation of different responses, apparently more formulaic sequences or idiomatic expressions are subsumed in the responses of the participants of the group with higher mastery of knowledge of multiword items. In other words, the more mastery of these prefabricated language forms they

had, the more clearly and appropriately they could express their polite requests and it is in consistency with Blum-Kulka's (1987) findings that the pragmatic clarity of the message is an indispensable part of politeness. Furthermore, she defines politeness as an attempt to achieve an interactional balance between two needs: "The need for pragmatic clarity and the need to avoid coerciveness." Therefore, it can be inferred that for the sake of more clarity and lucidity, the participants in high group manipulated more of these ready-made chunks and idiomatic expressions.

In consequence, data from this study revealed that EFL learners might need an over-focused on multiword units to include this knowledge as a kind of ability in their English language acquisition process. The data also highlighted that due to a lack of mastery in multiword items, they failed to express and carry out the requests properly. Accordingly, based on the collected data it could be surmised that, the knowledge of chunks had an impact on the performances of the learners. It is worth mentioning that acquiring lexical chunk competence seems to be essential for language learners, to help them develop and boost further pragmatic ability since their mastery promotes and facilitates language use in different contexts and can help learners optimize the learning outcomes in an EFL context.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

The current study is connected with the field of interlanguage pragmatics (ITP), with a speech-act approach focusing on the perception of request by Iranian EFL learners. This aims at investigating any relation between the non-native speakers' lexical chunk knowledge and their pragmlinguistic knowledge. The purpose of the present study is to investigate Iranian EFL learners' manipulation of multiword chunk knowledge in the way they perceive given speech acts, with a view to shedding light on their pragmatic knowledge. Particularly related for the present study, this research focused on request performed by Iranian EFL learners. They were required to select the most appropriate request in the given speech act situations.

In so doing, 107 EFL participants at Navid English Institute in Shiraz took part in two sets of test. An MCT was administered to assess the participants' knowledge of multiword items and then based on their performances on the test, they were divided into three groups of high proficient, mid proficient and low proficient. In pursuance of that, a DCT was given to evaluate their pragmatic competence. The yielded quantitative data were converted into numbers to be used in SPSS program for further statistical analysis. To analyze the data, the descriptive statistic of one way ANOVA was used to find the effect of knowledge of multiword items on pragmatic competence. The significant differences between the performance of the three groups of high, mid, and low on Discourse Completion Test (DCT) revealed that pragmatic failure can occur in interaction between the interlocutors in the given situations due to lack of mastery of lexical knowledge of chunks. In other words, the participants in the high group outperformed in comparison with their counterparts where pragmatic comprehension was needed to express appropriate polite requests. To sum up, the researcher came to the following conclusion that participants with higher mastery over knowledge of chunks performed better on the DCT by analogy with the mid and low participants and this difference was significant. Moreover, EFL learners might need an over-focused on multiword units to include this knowledge as a kind of ability in their English language acquisition process to achieve optimal use of language.

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Improving the Quality of Second Language Writing by First Language Use

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Abstract—The role of the learners' first language (L1) in learning second language (L2) writing has recently become a focus in SLA research. There have been many studies focusing on different aspects of this phenomenon. The results of these studies have shown how L1 use may play facilitative roles in producing writing in the second language. Many variables, such as task type and language proficiency, have also been studied in this regard. Yet, there seems to be a paucity of research on whether L1 use can significantly improve the quality of written productions in L2. The present study was therefore designed to peruse this question and find what aspects of writing may improve with L1 use. To this end, the written productions of 36 Persian-speaking intermediate English learners writing an argumentative paragraph were analyzed. 6 of the 12 groups were asked to collaborate in their first language and the others were limited to using the second language in their collaborations. The results of statistical comparisons between the first language and second language groups revealed that L1 use can significantly improve the overall score gained by the L2 writers. It was also found that L1 use improves the quality of L2 written productions in terms of organization/unity, development, structure, and mechanics.

Index Terms—second language acquisition, collaborative writing, first language use

I. INTRODUCTION

Rigorous research on the nature of second language writing dates back to early 1980s. Early attempts in this regard dealt more with investigating the processes through which writers managed to do writing tasks (Raimes, 1985; Cumming, 1989). Through these attempts, researchers have become more interested in finding patterns of similarity between the processes involved in L2 writing and their counterparts in the first language (L1) writing. However, research in this regard has generally tended to overemphasize the similarities between writing in L1 and L2, overlooking the “salient and important differences” (Silva, 1993) between the two processes.

Despite all the possible similarities between writing in L1 and L2, the two processes can be quite different from each other by nature. This is so, not the least because of the fact that L2 writers have at least two distinct languages at their disposal which enables them to make use of both their L1 and L2 resources to deal with the cognitively demanding task of writing in a second language. Such differences have not received due attention from second language acquisition (SLA) researchers, “resulting in little understanding of the unique features of L2 writing and a lack of coherent, comprehensive L2 writing theory” (Wang and Wen, 2002, p. 226). This, of course, may not be surprising taking into account that language teaching methodologies have hardly ever been lenient enough with the use of L1 in L2 classes.

Despite the fact that language teaching methods such as the Direct Method and the Audio-lingual (Larsen-Freeman, 2000) did not tolerate L1 use in L2 teaching, L1 use is no more considered to be inherently detrimental in second language pedagogy. That is, recent research within a socio-cultural framework has come up with numerous facilitative roles for L1 use. The majority of these studies (Brooks and Donato, 1994; Villamil and de Guerrero, 1996; Anton and DiCamilla, 1999; Swain and Lapkin, 2000) have tried to identify functions of L1 use by L2 learners engaged in different collaborative tasks. Writing has also been the focus of some of these studies, and researchers have tried to understand what goes on in an L2 writing task, and how L2 writers make strategic uses of their L1s to approach an L2 writing task.

Great supports have been provided for the studies focusing on the functions of L1 in L2 writing tasks by the socio-cultural theory of learning (Villamil and de Guerrero, 1996), which has been a tenable theoretical framework for them. The theory, as proposed by Vygotsky (1978), justifies L1 use by providing “a powerful explanatory framework for

conceptualizing what is involved in language learning” (Wells, 1999, p. 249). Learning, in this theory, is believed to be mediated by cultural artifacts, one of the most significant of which is language. The theory also upholds a dialectical relation between the learner and the social world. The result of such a dialectical relation then seriously questions the view that learners are simply passive recipients of language input and teachers are nothing but providers of input. Rather, the learners, the teacher, and the socio-cultural context in which the discourse takes place cooperatively constitute what is being learned (Tsui, 2008). Therefore, as active agents in the process of learning, L2 learners and their huge background L1 knowledge are expected to play crucial roles in the learning process. L1, in this regard, has been reported to have numerous facilitative and mediating roles.

Such appreciation of L1 as a tool for mediation has motivated scholars to demonstrate the potential benefits of using L1 in L2 teaching and learning, the majority of which have focused on learners’ use of the first language in collaborative tasks (Brooks and Donato, 1994; Villamil and de Guerrero, 1996; Anton and DiCamilla, 1999; Swain and Lapkin, 2000; Storch and Wigglesworth, 2003; Scott and De la Fuente, 2008; Centeno-Cortes and Jimenez, 2004; Storch and Aldosari, 2010). However, since most of these studies have been concerned with functions of L1 use, there seems to be a need to further investigate whether L1 use in L2 writing leads to the production of texts with higher quality. The present study was hence designed to address this latter issue by investigating how L1 use affects the quality of L2 learners’ written productions.

Review of the Literature

Many of the studies dealing with the issue of L1 use in L2 writing seem to agree that L2 learners make use of their L1 in one way or another (Kobayashi and Rinnert, 1992; Cohen and Brooks-Carson, 2001). Studies in this regard have had many different designs and, as van Weijen et al. (2009) put, have been “carried out for a number of different reasons and with varying research goals” (p. 236). In the following, a brief review of some of these studies will be provided.

Some studies in this regard set out to compare L1 and L2 writing processes and tried to find how L1 writing strategies are transferred into L2 writing (Uzawa and Cumming, 1989; Whalen and Menard, 1995; Wolfersberger, 2003). L1 use, for these studies, meant the strategy of translating from the first language into the second during writing. A similar view was also shared by other studies focusing on the influence of learners’ characteristics namely writing expertise and L2 proficiency in L2 writing (Cumming, 1989; Sasaki, 2004).

A second trend of research into L2 writing comprised several studies considering L1 use as an independent variable by instructing participants to plan either in their L1 or their L2 before writing their L2 texts (Akyel, 1994; Lally, 2000) or by instructing participants to write a text in their L1 and then translate it into their L2 (Cohen & Brooks-Carson, 2001; Kobayashi & Rinnert, 1992). However, the results yielded by these studies have been complicated to a high degree due to the fact that participants in the direct writing condition reported using their L1 very often while writing in their L2, even though they were not supposed to (Cohen and Brooks-Carson, 2001; Kobayashi and Rinnert, 1992).

The third category includes studies investigating the effect of L2 proficiency on L1 use (e.g., Wang, 2003; Wang & Wen, 2002; Woodall, 2002). The main drawback of these studies was a lack of clear operational definition for L1 use. In other words, the results of these studies have been mixed largely because they did not have a unique definition for what L1 use is. Lay (1982), as a case in point, found more L1 use on certain topics than on others and reported that more L1 use improved the quality of the final draft of the written text. Yet, it remained unclear what “more L1 use” actually meant. In a similar attempt, Woodall (2002) investigated the relation between L2 proficiency, task difficulty, and L1 use. According to his ANOVA results, he concluded that “less proficient L2 learners switched to their L1s more frequently than more advanced learners, and that more difficult tasks increased the duration of L1 use in L2 writing” (p. 7). Nevertheless, Wang (2003), dealing with the same issue, came up with different results, and concluded that frequency of L1 use varied only slightly among different proficiency level learners.

Of course, there have been more precise studies too, making attempts to calculate the extent to which L1 was used during writing in L2, by reporting the overall percentage of L1 words in L2 think-aloud protocols (Wang and Wen, 2002), the mean number of language switches per task (Woodall, 2002; Wang, 2003), and the time length that L1 use occurred during L2 writing (Woodall, 2002).

Finally, the fourth group of studies, to which the present study is more directly linked, has focused specifically on the role that L1 use plays during L2 writing. In a seminal study, focusing on the use of L1 in the collaborative interaction of adult learners of Spanish engaged in writing three informative paragraphs, Anton and DiCamilla (1999) found that L1 serves a critical function in helping students achieve mutual understanding of various aspects of the task, that is to maintain intersubjectivity (mutual understanding of the task in hand), which in turn lets them provide each other with scaffolded help, and externalize their inner speech.

Brooks and Donato (1994), investigating the dialogue of eight learners of Spanish, observed that the L1 was used for three functions. The first function was meta-talk which was illustrated by learners using their L1 to comment on their L2 use. The authors argue that this enabled the participants to take control of the task discourse and thus initiate and sustain verbal interaction. The other two functions served by the L1 were to establish a joint understanding of the task and to formulate the learners’ goals.

In another study, focusing on the stories written in L2 by student pairs as the outcome of dictogloss or jigsaw tasks, Swain and Lapkin (2000) reported that the students used their L1 for three principal purposes: (1) moving the task along,

(2) focusing attention, and (3) interpersonal interaction. Within a socio-cultural framework, Storch and Wigglesworth's (2003) study of English learners, engaged in joint composition and reconstruction tasks, also revealed that students used their shared L1s for task management, testing clarification, determining meaning and vocabulary, and explaining grammar.

Having analyzed the discourse of Spanish-speaking university English learners engaged, this time, in peer revision of their L2 writing, Villamil and De Guerrero (1996) also came up with some functions of L1 use by learners doing writing tasks. Based on the data collected from the discourse of learners engaged in peer revision of their L2 writing, they concluded that L1 was an essential tool for making meaning of texts, retrieving language from memory, explaining and expanding content, guiding their action through the task, and maintaining dialogue. In a more recent attempt, Kibler (2010), also focused on the oral interaction of adult learners during an extended writing activity, and came up with the conclusion that "L1 offers strategic opportunities for interaction and blurs the boundaries between expert and novice writers" (p. 121).

As the literature reviewed above suggests, research results on the functions of L1 use in L2 writing have been varied to a high extent, but L1 functions such as planning, generating ideas or content and solving linguistic problems are among the most reported ones (Beare, 2000; Centeno-Cortes and Jimenez, 2004). The process of collaborative writing in L2 has also been recently studied by Ahmadian, Pouromid and Nickkhan (2015). They found that giving L1 a role and banning it in collaborative writing yield different results in terms of task processing. The results of comparisons between the groups which used L1 and those who did not indicated that while the former groups focused on task management, task clarification and grammar, the latter groups were more concerned with vocabulary and content.

In summary, the literature indicates that a good number of studies have dealt with functions of L1 use in collaborative tasks, and more specifically in collaborative writing. However, there seems to be room for further research in areas less investigated thus far. One such area is to investigate the quality of the learners' final written outputs to see what specific aspects of writing improve as a result of letting L1 a role in collaborative writing. The present research was thus designed to address this gap and answer the following questions:

1. Does L1 use in L2 writing improve the overall writing ability?
2. What aspects of L2 writing improve with L1 use?

Based on these two research questions, the following null hypotheses were generated:

1. L1 use in L2 writing does not improve overall writing ability.
2. None of the aspects of L2 writing improves with L1 use.

II. THE STUDY

A. Participants

The present study was conducted in a private language school in Iran. 36 intermediate learners of English learning English as a foreign language took part in the study whose ages ranged from 16 to 23 years old. They were selected to take part in the study based on the results of institute placement tests which proved them to possess intermediate language proficiency. After the preliminary screening to cater for language proficiency variable, the participants were divided into 12 same-sex groups of three. In fact, the data was finally collected from 8 male and 4 female groups.

B. Data Collection

The data collected for the purpose of this study comprised the final written outputs of the 12 groups which was produced as a result of collaborative interaction among each group members. Six of the groups (4 male and 2 female) were randomly asked to use only English (L2 groups) in their collaborations as well as while performing the writing task, while the other half (4 male and 2 female) were required to use their mother tongue, Farsi (L1 groups). Each group was given a written prompt to start the collaboration with, and then prepare an argumentative paragraph in response to it. The prompt was "What are the effects of modern technology on our lives?" which was the same for all groups. The writing task was not constrained by time limits. The final written drafts were gathered for further analyses, at the end of the session, and the whole data collection process was observed by the researchers who did not interfere with the writing process.

The 12 written productions were then rated by a detailed writing rating scale to see what aspects of writing might have improved as a result of using L1 in the L2 writing process. Paulus's (1999) rating scale was used because of its detailed analysis of many writing aspects. It in fact deals with rating the different aspects of organization/unity, development, cohesion/coherence, structure, vocabulary and mechanics. Besides these 6 aspects, a 7th one, named "overall," was also calculated to wrap all the scores given to the 6 aspects up. The rating process was done by two independent raters to ensure inter-rater reliability.

C. Data Analysis

The first step to analyze the collected data was to make sure of the inter-rater reliability of the two raters. In order to do so, Pearson's correlation test was run by the SPSS (version 22.0) software. After that the results of the ratings for the written productions of the L1 groups were compared with those of the ratings for L2 groups. These analyses were also done by the SPSS software both descriptively and also inferentially to prove whether or not the observed differences

between the two groups were statistically significant. Independent samples t-test was used to ensure the statistical significance of the findings.

III. RESULTS

Some differences were found between the task-completion times of the two groups with a basic descriptive analysis of the data collected. The following two tables describe how the two groups differed from each other in terms of the time they spent on completing the whole writing task.

TABLE 1.
TASK COMPLETION TIME FOR L1 GROUPS

	Task completion time
L1F1*	22':59"
L1F2	17':05"
L1M1**	20':02"
L1M2	22':59"
L1M3	28':07"
L1M4	5':20"
Total	116':02"

*L1F1-2: L1 Female groups

**L1M1-4: L1 Male groups

As is shown in Table 1, most of the L1 groups took from 17 to 28 minutes to complete the writing task. L1M4, however, seemed to have completed the task in less than six minutes. The overall time spent by the six L1 groups was also calculated to be 116 minutes and 2 seconds. Table 2 summarizes the counterparts of these findings for L2 groups.

TABLE 2.
TASK COMPLETION TIME FOR L2 GROUPS

	Task completion time
L2F1*	22':03"
L2F2	13':21"
L2M1**	19':58"
L2M2	33':27"
L2M3	14':23"
L2M4	21':35"
Total	125':26"

*L2F1-2: L1 Female groups

**L2M1-4: L1 Male groups

According to Table 2, L2 groups took between 13 to 33 minutes to complete the task. The overall figure calculated for task completion in L2 groups was also calculated to be 125 minutes and 26 seconds. A comparison of the figures in Table 1 and Table 2 also indicates that L2 groups took relatively more time to complete their writing tasks compared with L1 groups.

As explained earlier, before processing the results of the data collected from L1 and L2 groups, it was necessary to ensure the inter rater reliability of the ratings of the two raters. Therefore, Pearson's correlation test was run for the scores given to the writing samples by the two writers. Table 3 summarizes the results.

TABLE 3.
PEARSON CORRELATION TEST OF INTER RATER RELIABILITY

		Rater 1	Rater 2
Rater 1	Pearson Correlation	1	.853**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	12	12
Rater 2	Pearson Correlation	.853**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	12	12

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As the table shows, there was a significant correlation between the two raters in terms of scoring the 12 written production of L1 and L2 groups. The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. Therefore, it can be concluded that there exists an acceptable level of inter rater reliability and the data could be further processed.

The scores given to the writing samples of L1 and L2 groups by the two raters were then computed by SPSS to come up with the average scores. Table 4 shows the computed scores of the raters for each aspect of the written production of the 6 L1 groups based on Paulus's (1999) rating scale.

TABLE 4.
COMPUTED SCORES FOR L1 GROUPS

	Organization/ Unity (20)	Development (20)	cohesion/ coherence (20)	Structure (15)	Vocab. (15)	Mechanics (10)	Overall (100)
L1G1	14.00	16.00	16.00	13.50	10.50	7.00	77.00
L1G2	16.00	14.00	16.00	9.00	7.50	7.00	69.50
L1B1	18.00	14.00	14.00	13.50	6.00	8.00	72.00
L1B2	14.00	16.00	14.00	12.00	7.50	7.00	70.50
L1B3	16.00	14.00	16.00	13.50	7.50	8.00	75.00
L1B4	8.00	8.00	8.00	4.50	3.00	4.00	35.50
TOTAL	86/120	82/120	84/120	66/90	42/90	41/60	398/600

As the table indicates, the computed scores for *organization/unity* ranged from 8 to 16 for the different groups resulting in a total sum of 86 out of 120. As for *development*, the scores were between 8 and 16 and the total value was 82 out of 120. Similarly, for *cohesion/coherence* the scores were between 8 and 16 too, but with a total value of 84 out of 120. For the next aspect, that is *structure*, the scores were between 9 and 13.5 resulting in a total score of 66 out of 90. As with *vocabulary*, the scores ranged from 3 to 10.5 with a total of 42 out of 90, and for *mechanics* the scores were between 4 and 8 with a total of 41 out of 60. All in all, the aggregate scores for all L1 groups (6x100) with regard to all the six aspects equaled 389 out of 600. Table 5 summarizes the counterpart results for L2 groups.

TABLE 5.
COMPUTED SCORES FOR L2 GROUPS

	Organization/ Unity (20)	Development (20)	cohesion/ coherence (20)	Structure (15)	Vocab. (15)	Mechanics (10)	Overall (100)
L2G1	10.00	8.00	6.00	3.00	4.50	5.00	36.50
L2G2	8.00	8.00	6.00	6.00	4.50	4.00	36.50
L2B1	8.00	10.00	8.00	9.00	6.00	4.00	45.00
L2B2	6.00	8.00	6.00	6.00	7.50	5.00	38.50
L2B3	6.00	8.00	4.00	6.00	7.50	4.00	35.50
L2B4	4.00	10.00	4.00	3.00	4.50	2.00	27.50
TOTAL	42/120	52/120	34/120	33/90	33.5/90	24/60	219.5/600

As is shown in Table 5, the scores gained by the 6 L2 groups on *organization/unity* were between 4 and 10 with a total of 42 out of 120. For *development*, the scores gained ranged from 8 to 10 and the total value was 52 out of 120. As with *cohesion/coherence*, the scores were between 4 and 8 and the total value was as low as 34 out of 120. For *structure*, the scores gained were between 3 and 9 while the total score was 33 out of 90. As far as *vocabulary* is concerned, different groups gained values of 4 and 7.5 and the total score equaled 33.5 out of 90. In *mechanics*, the scores were between 2 and 5 and the total value was 24 out of 60. Finally, the overall score gained by the 6 L2 groups concerning all six aspects of writing was 219.5 out of 600.

A comparison of the figures in tables 4 and 5 indicates that the raters scored the writing outputs of L1 groups higher than L2 groups in all aspects of the rating scale. This means that, apparently, the L1 groups which were allowed to use their L1 in their collaboration and while writing outperformed the L2 groups which were not allowed to make use of their L1 knowledge at least explicitly and verbally. This, of course, is only based on the descriptive account of the scores gained by L1 and L2 groups. To draw any further conclusions about the results, inferential statistics was also required. Table 6 shows the results of independent samples t-test run to assess the statistical significance of the written productions of L1 and L2 groups.

TABLE 6.
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST FOR THE SCORES GAINED BY L1 AND L2 GROUPS

	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed) $P=0.05$	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Organization/unity	4.454	8.260	.002	7.33333	1.64655	3.55707	11.10959
Development	3.962	6.212	.007	5.00000	1.27366	1.90910	8.09090
Cohesion/coherence	5.926	7.236	.001	8.33333	1.40633	5.02978	11.63689
Structure	3.149	8.362	.013	5.50000	1.74642	1.50287	9.49713
Vocabulary	1.071	8.204	.315	1.25000	1.16726	-1.43011	3.93011
Mechanics	3.782	9.238	.004	2.83333	.74907	1.14545	4.52121
Overall	4.461	6.297	.004	30.00000	6.72537	12.73008	46.26992

As table 6 shows, the difference observed in the scores gained by L1 and L2 groups in Table 5, can be argued to be statistically significant in all aspects of writing except vocabulary at the level of $p=0.05$. In fact, according to the results the p value estimated by the t-test is .002 for *organization/unity*, .007 for *development*, .001 for *cohesion/coherence*, .013 for *structure*, .004 for *mechanics*, and .004 for *overall*, all of which are below the p value for significance. It was only *vocabulary* with a p equal to .315 that did not feature a significant difference between the performance of L1 and L2 groups.

IV. DISCUSSION

The majority of studies concerning the use of L1 in L2 writing, as reviewed in the literature, have been dealing with how L1 is used in L2 writing, and why learners switch to their L1s while writing in L2. Other studies have also investigated the role of language proficiency and also writing task type in the amount of L1 use by L2 writers. The present study, on the contrary, focused on the outcome of the writing process and was designed to investigate whether giving L1 a role in L2 writing process improves the quality of the written output. The results of the analyses have indicated that L1 use could significantly improve L2 writing in the aspects of *organization/unity*, *development*, *cohesion/coherence*, *structure* and *mechanics*. The difference caused by the use of L1, however, was not significant as far as *vocabulary* was concerned.

Though studies with a focus similar to the present research are not easy to find in the literature, the results of the present study could be argued to bear some resemblance to some previous research. Some researchers (Scott, 1996; Wang and Wen, 2002; Woodall, 2002; and Wang, 2003) have come to the conclusion that L1 is fundamentally beneficial to learners' L2 writing in generating ideas. As Scott (1996), for instance, says, generating ideas and organizing them in a coherent manner can be cognitively demanding and complex for L2 writers. Scott contends that the complexity becomes more severe if the topic given is culture orientated with L2 and is unfamiliar to the students, which, as a result, hampers their idea generation. Research findings also support Scott's views indicating that L2 writers switch to L1 to generate and organize ideas (Wen, 2002) especially when they face challenging tasks (Woodal, 2002). Therefore, Woodal strongly recommends the use of L1 to generate and organize ideas. The result of the present study also can be argued to support these studies, since the use of L1 seems to have significantly contributed to the production of quality texts in terms of organization, unity, and coherence.

Weijen et al (2009) also found that L1 has a facilitative role in L2 writing, especially in generating ideas, planning, and meta-comments (grammar and structure), solving linguistic problems such as vocabulary issues for backtracking, stylistic choices and as a means to prevent cognitive overload. Similar findings were also offered by Beare and Bourdages (2007) and Lally (2008). Although none of these studies directly corroborated the contribution of L1 use to text quality, on second thoughts, conclusions can be drawn about such an effect. In this regard, the findings of the present study are in line with them except for vocabulary. While these studies have shown that L1 is used in L2 writing to facilitate the use of vocabulary, the present study has indicated that L1 use does not lead to improvements in the use of vocabulary in L2 writing.

As far as the use of vocabulary is concerned, the results of the present research also contradict the findings offered by Murphy and de Larios (2010). In their study, it was suggested that letting learners use their mother tongue in different stages of writing process enables them to search for more L2 vocabularies and enhance their use of the words. They believed this is a strategic use of L1 which leads to improvements in vocabulary use. This was not the case with the results of the present study, however. In fact, although L1 use was found to cause significant improvements in many aspects of writing, there was no such improvement in vocabulary use.

Setting distinctions between different learner roles during L2 writing, Manchon, de Larios and Murphy (2009) put that L1 use occurs more efficiently when L2 writers are maintaining Controller roles rather than Writer roles. They believe that in contrast to the Writer role during which L2 writers focus more on the content of what they are saying, Controller role gives them the chance to attend to the formal aspects of the writing task. Making use of the L1, according to the authors, is more observable when the learners are maintaining this latter role. They also argue that L1 use during the controller role gives L2 writers an "extra cognitive capacity to be used for planning, revising and monitoring purposes" (p. 115). The findings of their research seems to have been corroborated by the results of this study too, since as a result of making use of the so called "extra cognitive capacity," L1 groups significantly outperformed L2 ones in *organization/unity and development*, which counterparts to Manchon, de Larios and Murphy's "planning" and also *structure* and *mechanics* which could be grouped within their "revising and monitoring purposes."

Focusing on the quality of L2 texts, Yigzaw (2012) also concluded that L1 use improves idea development and incorporating sufficient content in L2 writing. His findings are also only partly supported by the present research. Developing and organizing ideas are also found to be significantly better while using L1 in L2 writing, yet as far as content and the use of vocabulary is concerned; the findings of the two studies differ.

Ahmadian, Pouromid and Nickkhah (2015) also observed the collaborative interactions of L2 writers and compared L1 and L2 collaborations. They found that the use of L1 in collaborative writings significantly increases L2 writers' awareness of task management, task clarification and grammar, but does not affect attention to vocabulary selection and content. Their findings are in line with the results of the present study, since none of the two studies showed a significant attention to vocabulary as a result of L1 use in L2 writing.

V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Earlier on, it was believed that the separation of the learners' L1 from L2 in language teaching classes would yield more beneficial results. Recently, however, research in SLA has made it possible to look at the issue from a more critical aspect. The result has been a shift of attitudes towards an appreciation of potential L1 roles in SLA. Support for L1 use comes largely from the socio-cultural theory of learning. Research within this framework has shown how L1 use

can facilitate L2 learning. L1, in this regard, is argued to be a tool for mediation, especially in group and pair-work activities. Therefore, collaborative writing has also been investigated to show what roles L1 can play in joint writing tasks. Studies in this regard have been by and large dealing with the similarities of L1 and L2 writing processes. Many studies, as reviewed in the literature, have investigated the role of language proficiency and task variance in the learners' use of their L1 while doing an L2 writing task. However, whether or not L1 use can lead to obtaining better scores in writing has not been dealt with yet.

The present study therefore set out to investigate this latter point by comparing the written output of learners who used L1 in L2 writing and those who did not. The results indicated that L1 use in L2 writing significantly improves overall writing score. It was also shown that the five writing aspects of *organization/unity*, *development*, *cohesion/coherence*, *structure* and *mechanics* improve as a result of L1 use. *Vocabulary*, on the other hand, did not feature any significant improvement.

These findings can be better understood in the light of research within the framework of Cognitive Load Theory (CLT) which is an instructional theory based on human cognitive architecture addressing the limitations of working memory (Mayer, 2005). According to Sweller (2005) CLT addresses deals with the limitations of working memory capacity and the construction of schema automation in long-term memory. Before the incoming data is transferred to long-term memory, it needs to pass through working memory. It is at this point that overloading working memory with cognitively demanding tasks and activities may impede this transfer process. The conclusion derived from this for language pedagogy is therefore the fact that the reduction of workload on working memory may well boost language performance.

Cognitive load is the overall mental activity of the working memory at a certain point of time (Cooper, 1998). Sweller (2007) identifies two kinds of cognitive load. First, intrinsic cognitive load is caused by the incoming stimulus, and hence cannot be manipulated by instructional interventions. Second is extraneous cognitive load which is a function of instructional intervention. This latter type of cognitive load, therefore, can be manipulated by making change in the instructional setting or task type. With this in mind and back to the findings of the present study, it can be concluded that the use of L1 in collaborative writing can alter the task in a way that the second type cognitive load is reduced. As a result, once allowed to make use of their L1, learners score higher on a writing task.

The findings can also guide for teacher trainers and textbook developers as well as teachers themselves. If the use of L1 can enhance the quality of learner interactions, the awareness of the teachers and all other stakeholders of language teaching need to be raised. According to the results of the statistical analyses, using L1 leads to more organized writing and heightens the attention to form and structure. Learners using L1 write more coherently and develop their paragraphs far better. All these reasons are enough for language teachers to reconsider their policies towards L1 use. Further research is of course necessary to delineate the subtleties involved in using L1 in L2 writing. The present study only investigated the use of L1 in argumentative paragraphs, yet it might go without saying that paragraph mode may be a potential variable affecting the results. Similarly, an investigation of the beneficial roles of L1 in each of the three phases of writing, that is, planning, drafting, and revising, can yield more enlightening results.

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A Study on Whether the Adults' Second Language Acquisition Is Easy or Not—From the Perspective of Children's Native Language Acquisition

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Abstract—Children acquire their native language easily in the non teaching conditions with their excellent language skills, while adults are unable to do it. “Whether the adults’ second language acquisition is easy or not” is always debated. This essay is from the perspective of children’s native language acquisition, through the systematic review of relevant theories, to explore “whether the adults’ second language acquisition is easy or not”. And on this basis, the native language acquisition gives enlightenment to the adults’ second language acquisition.

Index Terms—adults’ second language acquisition, children’s native language acquisition, easy, difficult, enlightenment

I. INTRODUCTION

The language which is acquired during early childhood, starting before the age of about 3 years, is first language, which has different names such as, mother tongue, native language and primary language (Sinha, Banerjee, Sinha, & Shastri, 2009). Second language acquisition is needed for education, employment and other purposes, and it is typically an official or societal language (Ali Derakhshan, Elham Karimi, 2015). However, second language acquisition usually refers to any other language acquisition after that of a native language. As an independent discipline, research on second language acquisition really rose to prominence at the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s. It describes learners’ second language features and analyzes the internal and external factors which affect the second language acquisition. Compared with other social sciences, this kind of acquisition is a new area, mostly utilizing the methods of native language research and education research. On the study of adults’ second language acquisition, “whether this acquisition is easy or not” has always been argued. Some researchers believe that adults can acquire a second language easily because of their high cognitive level, clear logical analysis and strong self monitoring abilities, while others think adults’ second language acquisition is very difficult for many uncertain factors. Children are always considered to be the most successful example of language learning, they can easily acquire their native language in the natural environment, so it is very meaningful to analyze the adults’ second language acquisition from the perspective of children’s native language acquisition.

II. ADULTS’ SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION VS. CHILDREN’ NATIVE LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Adults’ second language acquisition (Table 1) is a very complicated process. The theories of adults’ second language acquisition mainly include the behaviorism theory, the cognitive theory and the interlanguage theory.

The behaviorism theory was divided into the early behaviorism theory (John Watson, 1970) and the new behaviorism theory (Skinner, B. F., 1938). The early period of behaviorism theory mainly refers to the period from 1913 to 1930. American psychologist John Watson founded S-R theory (Stimulus Response theory) on the basis of the classical conditioning theory. John Watson advocated to abandon subjective things, such as consciousness, imagery, etc. but chose to study the observed things in an objective way. Skinner, as the representative of the new period of the behaviorism theory, divided behavior into two kinds, the respondent behavior, behavior in response to a specific stimulus, and operational behavior. He also divided the conditioned reflex into respondent behavior and operational behavior. The operational behavior is the core of the new behaviorism theory. Skinner’s greatest contribution to language research is arguably his “stimulation-response-enhancement” theory for adults’ second language acquisition as well as foreign language teaching, which derived a new teaching method: the audio-lingual method. Later, the establishment of variety of speech room is based on this theory. The new behaviorism theory has a great influence on

adults' second language acquisition as well as foreign language acquisition.

Krashen, the representative of modern cognitive theory (Krashen, Stephen, 1982), thinks that adults' second language acquisition requires a conscious learning process. In the process of adults' second language acquisition, using a conscious method to find the error and correct the error is an important step. Krashen's input hypothesis believes that adults' second language acquisition should follow "I+1" theory model (I represents the current level, 1 represents the new input); this hypothesis is the most important concept in adults' second language acquisition, because it not only answers the question of how to acquire language, but also has a profound influence on adults' second language acquisition. In addition, Krashen also holds the view that emotional factors are essential in adults' second language acquisition. Compared with Krashen's input hypothesis, Swain's comprehensible output hypothesis is a supplement and improvement to Krashen's theory. Swain found that language input is very important in second language acquisition, but it cannot be the sufficient condition for this kind of acquisition (Swain, 1995). In order to achieve the level of using the target language accurately and fluently, learners not only need a lot of contact with comprehensible output, but also need to produce the comprehensible output themselves. Firstly, Swain thinks that language output can enable learners to notice the gap between their intended expressive language and their actual expressive language, thereby stimulating learners' intrinsic cognitive process. Second, he believes the process of language output is the internalization of language knowledge, that is, the language function of language output. Last but not least, he also holds the view that second language acquisition is a process of making assumptions about the target language constantly and then testing them.

Selinker created interlanguage, which means the transitional language in the acquisition process (Selinker, L, 1972). According to Selinker, adults' second language acquisition will be influenced by native language transfer, learning strategies, communication strategies and the overgeneralization of language materials. Tarone, another representative of interlanguage, his perspective is different from Selinker's. Tarone thinks that interlanguage is influenced by the language learning environment, which can be regarded as the capability continuum of formal language and actual language (Tarone, Swierzbins, 2009).

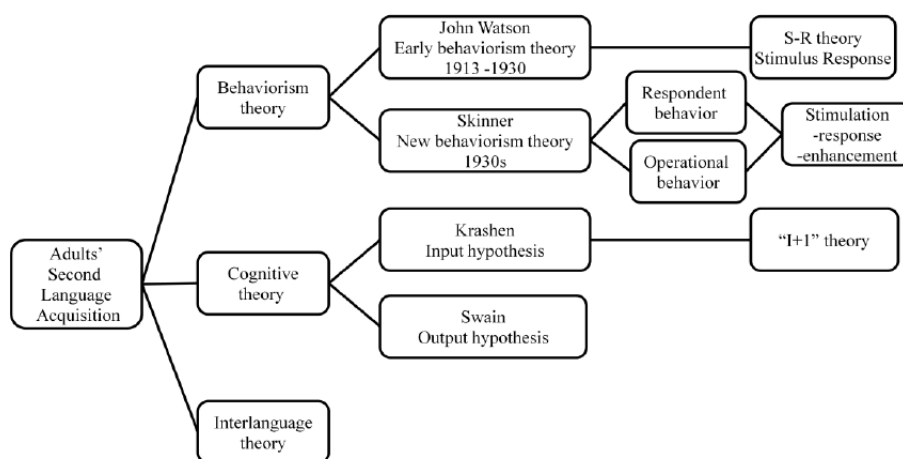


Table 1

Compared to adults' second language acquisition, the related theories of children's native language acquisition formed a number of different schools in the 1940s to 1950s. For example, the behaviorism theory, nativism, cognitive theory etc. Skinner, an American psychologist, and the representative of the behaviorism theory, stressed the effect of external response to specific stimuli, that is, the S-R theory. Krashen (1985) said that "Language, like other human behavior, is obtained by habit, rather than any other psychological behavior or points of view." Chomsky, the representative of nativism, emphasizes that the main task of psychological linguistics is to learn how to change the language skills into a specific surface structure by conversion rules; he also thinks human beings are born with universal grammar, which is regarded as the language instinct of humans. Piaget, the founder of the cognitive theory, believes children's development of a mother tongue is the result of the interaction between innate ability and objective experience. Halliday explored native language acquisition from the perspective of language communication, rather than the perspective of language structure (Halliday, 2004). He believes that children are able to learn the language because they think language can help them do things, and can help them to meet their own needs. The process of language acquisition is necessary to learn how to express meaning and master the language of the semantic system. In short, the common points of various children's language acquisition theories are: the influence of children's congenital constructional structure, external stimulus, the environment as well as conditioned behavior.

III. THE ARGUMENTS ABOUT "WHETHER THE ADULTS' SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION IS EASY OR NOT"

There are always some debates on "whether the adults' second language acquisition is easy or not". Some researchers

believe that adults' second language acquisition is easy. However, some researchers have proposed the opposite view, that the adults' second language acquisition is not as easy as the children's native language acquisition.

A. *Adults Acquire Second Language Easily*

The advantages of adults' second language acquisition exists objectively, adults' cognitive level, logical analysis and self-monitoring abilities are higher than those of children. Krashen indicated that if the acquisition time is same, adults can also acquire the second language easily, and adults always make progress faster than children (Krashen, Stephen, 1982). Ellis also believes that adults have advantages in second language acquisition (Ellis, 2013).

1. The Aspect of Cognitive Level

In the process of adults' second language acquisition, adults' cognitive ability has been improved, and their thinking structure has matured (Xiaohui Wang, 2009). Piaget, a famous psychologist, divided cognitive development into three stages (Jean Piaget, 1991): pre operational stage (2-7 years old), concrete operational stage (7-11 years old) and formal operational stage (11 years old to adulthood). Pre operational stage based on intuition and the perception of static, children's language has not yet obtained the significance of this as well as the lack of logical conversion. In the concrete operational stage, children's language level has been improved, and they can get rid of the shackles of the static perception. The formal operational stage is the final stage of Piaget's theory of cognitive development. At this point in development, thinking becomes much more complicated and advanced. Ausubel pointed out that the adults can benefit from some grammar explanations, but children cannot do this (D. P. Ausubel, 2000).

2. The Aspect of Logical Thinking

One of the main strengths of adults is that they have the ability for logical thought (Fenghua Yao, 2011). Adults' thinking mode has been improved and their language consciousness is very strong. The maturity of adults raises their cognitive ability, resulting in strong abilities to analyze and conclude, thus providing advantages in grammar rules and sentence expression; allowing them to easily handle complex problems. Moreover, most adults not only have a wealth of life experience, but also have comprehensive understanding of a multitude of things. All of this accumulative knowledge and ability is of great help with their second language acquisition.

3. The Aspect of Self Monitoring Ability

In the process of adults' second language acquisition, the self monitoring ability of adults is very strong (Jingjing Hong, 2014). Adults will analyze and correct the mistakes which they make in the learning process. Besides, according to their own characteristics in different periods, they can use different learning strategies to carry out autonomous learning. Adults have a strong initiative, especially in the form of classroom teaching. It can be argued that children mainly gain language passively, because they have a lack of autonomy. Adults do things that always have a strong purpose. They can acquire a second language according to their own needs and will encourage themselves to continue, to persist, to carry on with the psychological adjustment, but most children do not have these characteristics.

B. *Adults Acquire Second Language Difficultly*

The critical period hypothesis suggests that adults may have lost their natural language acquisition skills after a certain age, so adults cannot successfully acquire the second language with the same level of eventual fluency as children's native language acquisition. Some linguists believe that although adults spend a lot of energy and time in the second language acquisition, they still cannot totally acquire second language (Boping Yuan, 2003).

1. The Aspect of Age

Researchers have found the relationship between age and some aspects of the second language (Tohidian & Tohidian, 2009). Age is an important factor in building a second language. The critical period of native language acquisition is from about two years old to the onset of puberty. In this period, a learner is more likely to acquire language than at any other time (Lenneberg, Eric, 1967). According to Piaget's observation, children can acquire their native language at the age of 11. It is almost impossible to automatically acquire a new language after puberty, because they have missed the critical period of language acquisition. Taking notably children "Genie" for example, who was kept in a locked room by her father, and never had any exposure to language before the end of the critical period. Throughout her life, she has learned small snippets of language, but she has never gained fluency, and her language level often decreases, despite constant exposure and teaching. In addition, we cannot deny that certain characteristics, such as age, cognitive ability and emotions, will inevitably affect the second language acquisition. The plasticity of the brain allows children to acquire the language well before puberty, but after puberty, with the maturation of the brain as well as the formation of the partial side, adults may lose the physiological advantage in the second language acquisition, and therefore it is difficult to reach the level of the mother tongue. Adults' second language acquisition also needs to proceed in an orderly way and proceed step by step, following the natural order acquisition mode. Besides, the study shows that the second language level of an immigrant is not directly proportional to the length of his/her residence in the country, but it is instead, related to his/her age immigration. For example, some Chinese immigrants to other countries when they were forty or fifty years old, still cannot speak English even though they live in an entirely English environment. So, compared with the second language acquisition, children's native language acquisition is successful (Bley-Vroman, 2006). Moreover, after puberty, language acquisition is not likely to be naturally acquired only through conscious learning and working hard (Krashen, 1982).

2. The Aspect of Environment

There is a specific type of environmental stimuli in the second language acquisition (Schachter, 1996). Children are exposed to their mother tongue every day in daily life. Their native language acquisition is a natural acquisition, mainly focusing on the content of the language rather than the form (Krashen, 1982). That is to say the environment plays an important role in children's language acquisition. Their learning ability is inherent, but the language is not. According to comparison method theory, although children's cognitive ability is poor, they still can use the first language fluently. However, second language acquisition classrooms generally use the fictional or virtual dialogue, and focus on the form rather than the content. The natural native language environment is usually unconscious and enjoyable. Children often acquire the language from their nanny or mother, they do not have a teacher, and they need not enter the school, so their native language learning process is smooth and complete. Furthermore, in the actual communication environment, children can not only master the language, but also form their own language communicative competence. Nevertheless, most second language learners must rely on a hard way to complete their study.

3. The Aspect of Device

People are born with a language acquisition device, but for adults, this acquisition device has been weakened, they already have a native language grammar system in their brains (Chomsky, N, 1972). Children have the same native language acquisition device, which consists of a group of Universal Grammar (Bley-Vroman, 2006). As a result, the average child can master the native language at the same age in spite of the differences in intelligence, environment and language materials, but for the second language learners, they must rely on their own language concepts or system of language knowledge to complete the second language acquisition.

4. The Aspect of Mode

Bley-Vroman also thinks that adults' second language acquisition needs the combination of the native language and cognitive system (Bley-Vroman, 2006). In the process of language acquisition, these two features maximize mutual cooperation and complement each other. Children start learning language from imitation; they imitate the surrounding language, and then make a response to the environment and adult's language. In order to strengthen it, the adult will give praise or material encouragement if the reaction is correct, thus forming language habits. After that, children can automatically make some responses because they were once stimulated by this language. Take vocabulary acquisition as an example. Children's vocabulary acquisition begins with imitation, memory and phrases then forms the concept of things. In contrast, adults firstly combine their own native language's "code switching" and "meaningful notes" for speech analysis (Gao, Xia, 2002), then they can understand and grasp the target language vocabulary through the process of comprehensive analysis. The development of children's language ability is related to their physical, psychological and cognitive development as well as their knowledge, ideas and value development. However, adults' second language acquisition should be based on the native language ability they have formed. Native language knowledge may negatively transfer to the second language resulting in conflict with each other. When the native language is deeply ingrained, adults will extend their first language rules (Phonology, Syntax) into their second language acquisition, but children cannot do this. Therefore, compared with children's native language acquisition, adults' second language acquisition has a lower chance of success.

5. The Aspect of Motivation

Clear learning goals and motivations, as well as the target language and cultural interests, often bring some strong learning motivations to people (Dai, M, C, 2012). For children, the native language becomes a very important tool to help them communicate with other people. Native language acquisition is a kind of life need. In this acquisition process, children will not feel the burden, but they will instead feel the happiness. Mastering the native language is necessary to fulfill the need of communication, development and even survival; nevertheless, second language learners are often faced with some requirements of the language acquisition. Generally speaking, native language acquisition is a natural need for children, however, the motivations or purposes of adults' second language acquisition are much more complicated. Some people may have a comprehensive motivation or an inherent interest in the target language; some people may have an instrumental motivation, they treat the target language as a tool or a need, for instance, in order to further learning as well as upgrading (Gardener, D, 2002), etc. Children's native language acquisition process is in a natural and pleasant manner, but most adults need to do some careful design, long-term hard training, and even some compulsive execution in their second language acquisition. In addition, there is a difference between the acquisition mode and the final result. All in all, to a large extent, language learning depends on the acquisition target as well as the motivation of the learners; therefore, adults' acquisition process will eventually be conscious, or even painful.

IV. CONCLUSION

As mentioned above, because of the age, environment, device, mode and motivation, adults' second language acquisition becomes very complicated and extremely difficult. Therefore, the passive acquisition plays an important role in the process of their acquisition. On account of adults' stable psychology and character, the restrictions of adults are much more than that of children. Adults cannot avoid using the first language in their second language acquisition. At the same time, the negative transfer of native language also makes the effect of the second language acquisition greatly reduced. The characteristics of children's native language acquisition are different from adults' second language acquisition, and the processes differ greatly too. It is confirmed that the acquisition of native language is natural and easy, but the second language acquisition of adults is difficult and complicated.

The difficulties of adults' second language acquisition are worth thinking about. Maybe children's native language acquisition could have a great effect on the change of the adults' second language acquisition. The mode of native language acquisition can be used to assist the development of adults' second language acquisition. For example, adults could attempt to emulate the way that children imitate the language of their surroundings. Through repetition and practice, adults will come into contact with some language materials constantly and then they can creatively use the language to interact, in the same way as a child progresses in their native language learning process. In addition, adults' learning behavior is mostly dependent on the language environment, and the language environment is constituted by a variety of communicative activities. They can not only utilize their own initiative to create a second language acquisition environment, but also learn children's fearlessness, to attempt to eliminate the fear of making mistakes.

Adults' second language acquisition is a long, painful process, and it will encounter many setbacks. However, I believe that if adults can borrow some rules of children's native language acquisition and combine them with the actual situation as well, then the likelihood of success will increase exponentially.

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Investigating the Nature of Interaction at Elementary and Intermediate EFL Classes

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Abstract—Classroom research mainly concentrates on what happens in classrooms and tries to explore these events. One aspect that has been under investigation in this area is 'classroom interaction'. The current work was inspired by Kumaravadivelu's (2006) classification of interaction types: textual, interpersonal and ideational interaction. The main objective of the present study was to investigate the nature of interaction types proposed by Kumaravadivelu, the extent of their occurrence and their contribution to L2 development regarding two levels of Elementary and Intermediate. During data collection process, 20 sessions of EFL classes in a Language Institute were observed and the main events regarding the types of interaction under investigation were written in the form of field notes and audio-recorded for later reflection. The results were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. The quantitative data from the observation were analyzed through inferential statistics. Qualitative analysis of data was carried out through transcription of important events. The quantitative results indicated that the difference between means of time spent on three types of interaction regarding two levels was not significant. For the qualitative analysis, the nature of these three types of interaction was compared based on two levels and some similarities and differences were found.

Index Terms—interaction, interaction analysis, textual interaction, interpersonal interaction, ideational interaction

I. INTRODUCTION

Successful L2 learning and being able to communicate in target language both fluently and accurately have been one of the most significant parts of L2 learning for learners. The factors influencing this important goal of L2 learners have been under consideration for long and various areas have been under investigation. One of the main areas that has received much attention in recent years is 'Interaction analysis' in EFL classroom. The term 'interaction' according to Oxford Dictionary is defined as 'reciprocal action or influence'. Based on this definition, it can be concluded that, interaction is a two- way process. It happens when both sides of interaction are involved: The sender and the receiver. Although numerous factors are effective in efficient teaching and learning, it is claimed that real learning can occur to a great extent through the interaction that takes place between all participants in the classroom. However, Allwright & Bailey (2000, cited in Preston, 2010), claimed that classroom interaction can facilitate or hinder L2 development. According to this statement and as it was mentioned by Allwright and Bailey (1991), Management of interaction is considered as an important event due to its impact on management of learning. If it is managed tactfully in class context, it will lead to successful L2 outcome, while it will lead to an opposite result if it is not applied well. So, one of the fundamental problems in classroom interaction is that although EFL teachers may try to motivate learners to participate in classroom interaction and consequently provide a better opportunity for them through interaction to improve their target language, they sometimes fail to reach this goal and in many situations they are not able to foster learners who are competent in L2. It can be due to teachers' lack of knowledge toward the nature of different types of interaction that may occur in EFL classes, the extent of their contribution to L2 development, and the amount of time which is needed to be given to each type in different levels. Consequently, they may lack the ability to manage classroom interaction efficiently.

In this regard, the current research focused on the nature of EFL classroom interaction and its crucial role in L2 development. Although this investigation could be done through different perspectives, the current study has focused on Kumaravadivelu's (2006) point of view towards the nature of interaction. He suggested that in the context of classroom communication, we can speak of three types of interaction: textual interaction, interpersonal interaction, and ideational interaction. As he explained textual interaction is treated by most studies primarily as a textual activity in which learners and their interlocutors modify their speech phonologically, morphologically, lexically & syntactically in order to maximize chances of mutual understanding and minimize instances of communication breakdowns. So, textual activity

is preoccupied with linguistic aspects of interaction. Interpersonal interaction deals with interpersonal communication. It refers to the participants' potential to establish and maintain social relationships. Classroom community is considered as a mini society within a larger society. Interaction in this mini society is a social process with its own rules, regulations, & role relationships. Ideational interaction refers to an expression of one's self-identity based on one's experience of real and imaginary world in and outside the classroom. It focuses on ideas and emotions participants bring with them.

A. Literature Review

Allwright and Bailey (1991) defined classroom research as a, "research centered on the classroom, as distinct from research that concentrates on the inputs to the classroom or on the outputs from the classroom" (p. 2). Although this type of research does not deny the significance of inputs and outputs, it mainly focuses on what actually happens in the classroom and tries to explore these events. So, its main objective is to understand what really goes on in the classroom from different perspectives toward language learning and teaching. One aspect that has been under investigation in this area is 'classroom interaction'.

Interaction analysis was developed by the mid-1960s with the development of sociological investigations. Two factors were mentioned about the nature of this approach: first, an interest in the fact that learners' behaviors in EFL classrooms depend on the atmosphere and interaction with teachers. Second, the researchers in this approach have not concentrated on quantitative analysis although frequency measurement of behaviors can be implied as a quantitative one. They are more concerned with qualitative approaches such as the description of classroom behaviors with more subjective interpretations and focus on the process of EFL classrooms (Chaudron, 1988). This does not mean that researchers in this area ignore quantification but as Mackey and Gass (2005) asserted, although some researchers are not interested in quantification while conducting a qualitative research, others do not reject the use of numbers and statistics found in quantitative studies.

The nature of interaction in EFL classroom has been under investigation from different perspectives for long. Aubrey (2011) focused in his work on classroom conditions that enhances EFL students' willingness to communicate in English (WTC). He suggested that in order to facilitate classroom interaction, students with a high willingness to communicate who must be ready to interact with other students, have low anxiety while interaction, find the topic lesson personally relevant, etc. must be fostered. Related to the development of interaction in EFL classroom another study by Dagarin (2004) proposed that teachers can help students to develop their interaction skills and students themselves can apply various strategies to become effective communicators in a foreign language. He concluded that through different ways classroom interaction can be encouraged including taking a variety of roles by teachers, providing a variety of teacher and student talk in the classroom, using different activities for developing accuracy and fluency etc. Dukmak (2010) investigated the frequency, types of and reasons for both student-initiated and teacher-initiated interactions in relation to levels of students' academic achievement, their gender, special educational needs and disability. The results showed that in comparison with girls, boys initiated more interactions. Also high achieving students revealed more interaction than low achievers with different types of interaction. At the end he proposed that these differences are due to cultural factors and may vary in different studies. Another study in the area of interaction analysis was done by Jing and Yuhong (2013). They focused on the amount of teacher talk and interaction, the type of teacher questions and teacher feedbacks, the amount and forms of meaning negotiation and their contribution to L2 development. Their findings revealed that teacher talk does not facilitate interaction. They also found that there is not much negotiation of meaning initiated by the teacher. Finally they proposed that to promote language learning, EFL teachers should cut down the amount of teacher talk, should pay attention to whether the types of questions and feedbacks that they give to the students lead to more students' responses. There was also an investigation on interaction strategies. The results revealed that four types of interaction strategies such as control of interaction or interaction management, elicitation or questioning, speech modification or feedback, and repairing or error treatment were used by master teachers. It proved that these strategies were able to promote interactive learning. So they are important in EFL classroom (Akhyar et al., 2014). Patterns of interaction have also been under investigation from various points of view. Kharaghani (2013) focused on three types of interaction in EFL setting: Native speakers- Native speakers, Native speakers-Non-native speakers, Non-native speakers-Non-native speakers. The effectiveness of each type of interaction mentioned was under investigation. She claimed that although NNS-NNS interactions produce quantitative and qualitative input, output, and feedback, Ns-NNs types are more desirable. She suggested that teacher can use NNS-NNS group work. But they must avoid over reliance upon them. Another investigation into classroom interaction was done by concentrating on an EFL teacher's questioning behavior, the purpose of asking such questions and the kind of answers they provoked. It was concluded that coded/display and yes/no questions were used more than open/referential questions. And the answers were limited to just a single word or simple phrases. This result was claimed to be due to the proficiency level of students and inexperienced teachers in order to avoid circumstances under which they have to make complex structured sentences. Finally it was mentioned that although referential questions are more desirable, one cannot conclude that just referential questions are useful for language learning and display ones are not (Farahani, & Rezaee, 2012). Rahman (2014) conducted a research in the area of learning English through interaction in EFL classrooms. He limited it to two types of interaction called 'recast and repetition'. The results indicated that through interaction (repetition and recast),

learners could improve their English. Through recast, the learners could correct their mistakes and repetition helped them notice the errors, consequently develop their speaking skills.

B. Research Questions

Based on the mentioned theoretical framework the following research questions were investigated in this thesis:

1. Is there statistically significant difference between Elementary and Intermediate classes regarding the amount of time spent on textual interaction?
2. Is there statistically significant difference between Elementary and Intermediate classes regarding the amount of time spent on interpersonal interaction?
3. Is there statistically significant difference between Elementary and Intermediate classes regarding the amount of time spent on ideational interaction?
4. What is the nature of textual interaction in these classes?
5. What is the nature of interpersonal interaction in these classes?
6. What is the nature of ideational interaction in these classes?

C. Research Hypotheses

As the first three questions could be answered quantitatively, three hypotheses were mentioned here:

H01. There is no statistically significant difference between Elementary and Intermediate classes regarding textual interaction.

H02. There is no statistically significant difference between Elementary and Intermediate classes regarding interpersonal interaction.

H03. There is no statistically significant difference between Elementary and Intermediate classes regarding ideational interaction.

II. METHOD

A. Participant

Three hundred Iranian female students, ranging from 13 to 19 years old, based on two levels of Elementary and Intermediate from Rasht Kish Language Institute participated in this study. The proficiency level of students was determined in this institute based on provided criteria by Common European Framework (CEF) (2015) in order to reach homogeneity in each level.

B. Instrument

Observation

The main research tool used in the present study was 'observation'. According to Mackey and Gass (2005) researchers using observational techniques while gathering data, try to prepare a careful description of learners' behaviors. Observation technique was considered by them as a useful tool for collecting in-depth data on phenomena such as 'interaction' in EFL classes. Then, it was mentioned that various kinds of observations can be carried out regarding their degree of structure: a highly structured observation done by the help of a detailed checklist or a rating scale as well as a less structured observation through the use of field notes and transcriptions. The second type of observation mentioned by them was the one used in the current study as more flexibility was required for a work on the types of interaction under investigation here (textual interaction, interpersonal interaction, and ideational interaction). As the current work used both quantitative and qualitative methods to answer the research questions, during observation phase, particular data regarding the nature of three interaction types proposed by Kumaravadivelu (2006), related to qualitative part of the current work, were gathered. In addition, some data related to amount of time given to each type of interaction in both levels, related to quantitative part of this study, were collected.

Field Notes

Mackey and Gass (2005) defined field notes as notes, "which can involve detailed impressions of the researchers' intuitions, impressions, and even questions as they emerge" (p. 175). In this regard, during observation sessions, important events related to the three types of interaction under investigation in the current work (textual interaction, interpersonal interaction, and ideational interaction) were written in the form of field notes for later transcription of those events taken place in EFL classes under observation.

Checklist

During the phase of observation, a checklist consisted of different activities related to textual interaction, interpersonal interaction and ideational interaction was prepared to be applied for later qualitative as well as quantitative data analysis. Validity of this checklist was proved by some experts in the field of TEFL. The point to be considered about the mentioned checklist is that there is no hard and fast borderline between the three functions and there can be an overlap particularly between interpersonal and ideational interaction. For instance, an activity through which the learners were supposed to talk about their personal problems as an interpersonal interaction could be considered as a textual interaction if the focus was on the use of particular linguistic structure. Also, it could be accepted as an

ideational interaction if the learners tried to make suggestions and express their opinions toward the possible solutions for those problems (The checklist has been presented in appendix A).

Audio- Recording

According to Mackey and Gass (2005), it is common in EFL class observations to use not only field notes or observation schemes but also audio or video recordings for the matter of 'triangulation' which means "using multiple research techniques and multiple sources of data in order to explore the issues from all feasible perspectives"(p. 181). In this regard, all 20 sessions under observation were audio-recorded for later reflection, detailed transcription of what happened in each session of observation considering the types of interactions under investigation in the current work and determining the amount of time given to each type of interaction in two levels of Elementary and Intermediate.

Interview

In order to determine students' proficiency level as Elementary and Intermediate, they were interviewed orally by two interviewers in Kish Language Institute.

CEF (Common European Framework)

CEF (Common European Framework) (2015) provides the standard definition for English students' abilities required to be placed in a particular level. The main proficiency levels introduced by CEF are divided to three levels of Basic User, Independent user and Proficient User which corresponds to Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced levels used by English teaching books. These mentioned main levels are also subdivided into smaller units with more precise description which starts from A1 and continues as A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2. These subcategories are introduced by Kish Language Institute as starter, Elementary, Pre-Intermediate, Intermediate, Upper-Intermediate, and Advanced levels. The placement test in this institute was done orally with more focus on speaking skill and its subcategories, provided by CEF. In order to conduct this oral placement test, specific level descriptors were determined based on CEF by Kish Language Institute (n.d.) for the interviewers to follow. Two of them related to the current study can be considered in following paragraphs.

An interviewee is placed at Elementary level if he/ she:

- a. has a very basic repertoire of words and simple phrases related to personal details and particular concrete situations. (Range)
- b. shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns in a memorized repertoire. (Accuracy)
- c. can manage very short isolated utterances with much pausing to search for expressions, to articulate less familiar words and to repair communication.(Fluency)
- d. can ask and answer about personal details. He/she can interact in a simple way but communication is totally dependent on repetition, rephrasing, and repair. (Interaction)
- e. can link words or group of words with basic connectors like 'and' or 'then'. (Coherence)

An interviewee is placed at Intermediate level if he/she:

- a. has sufficient vocabulary to conduct routine, every day transactions involving familiar situations and topics, though he/she will generally have to compromise the message and search for words. (Range)
- b. can adapt rehearsed memorized simple phrases to particular situations with sufficient ease to handle short routine exchanges without undo effort, despite very noticeable hesitation and false starters. (Fluency)
- c. can initiate, maintain and close simple restricted face-face conversation, asking and answering questions on topics of interest and past activities. He/she can interact with reasonable ease in structured situations, given some help, but participation in open discussion is fairly restricted. (Interaction)
- d. can use the most frequently occurring connectors to link simple sentences in order to tell a story or describe something as a simple list of points. (Coherence)

C. Procedure

As it was mentioned previously, the proficiency level of students was determined in this institute based on provided criteria by Common European Framework (CEF) (2015) in order to reach homogeneity in each level. In this regard, all students were interviewed by two interviewers orally. The interviewers asked students some questions which were determined by this language institute based on criteria provided by CEF. The reliability of scores given by interviewers to each interviewee in order to place them in an appropriate level was determined through Inter-rater Reliability which indicated about 80% agreement of scores given by them. In order to collect the data, 20 sessions (10 elementary and 10 intermediate classes) of EFL classes in Kish Language Institute were observed. As it was a kind of open observation, no particular criteria in the form of checklist were determined in order to be completed while observation. In this regard, while the process of observation, the major events related to three types of interaction proposed by Kumaravadivelu (2006) mentioned previously, were only written in the form of field notes in order to investigate the nature of these types of interaction in two levels of Elementary and Intermediate. Also, the whole sessions were audio- recorded for later reflection on what happened, as providing a thick transcription of some important events (to answer the last three questions) as well as determining the time spent on each type of interaction in each level (to answer the first three questions) were needed. After the phase of observation, recordings were analyzed in details based on the types of interaction under investigation here, their nature, and the time given to each type in each session of two levels. Finally, based on these gathered data the analysis was done to answer the research questions and to come to conclusion.

D. Design of the Study

Mackey and Gass (2005) asserted that qualitative studies may be clearer as they are accompanied by some quantitative analysis. So, this study used both qualitative and quantitative methods as the combination of them can be considered as complementary means of investigating the complicated phenomena such as 'interaction analysis' in EFL classes.

III. RESULT

The results of this research were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. The current work compared elementary versus Intermediate EFL learners with respect to their types of textual, interpersonal and ideational interaction. The quantitative data from the observation was analyzed using SPSS to obtain inferential statistical results.

A. *Questions1: Is There Statistically Significant Difference between Elementary and Intermediate Classes Regarding the Amount of Time Spent on Textual Interaction?*

To address the first research question and to test the first null hypothesis, an Independent Sample T-test was applied to compare the mean ranks of the amount of time spent on textual interaction for two groups under investigation (elementary and Intermediate) based on the results of observation and audio- recordings. According to results shown in table 1 , it was indicated that there was no significant difference between Elementary and Intermediate classes regarding time spent on textual interaction (sig (2- tailed)= 0.107, $p > 0.05$, $0.107 > 0.05$). So, the first hypothesis was rejected and the first null hypothesis was accepted.

TABLE 1.
INDEPENDENT SAMPLE T-TEST

Textual:	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Equal variances Assumed	.157	.696	-1.697	18	.107
Equal variances Not Assumed			-1.697	17.973	.107

B. *Question 2: Is There Statistically Significant Difference between Elementary and Intermediate Classes Regarding the Amount of Time Spent on Interpersonal Interaction?*

To address the second research question and to test the second null hypothesis, an Independent Sample T-test was applied to compare the mean ranks of the amount of time spent on interpersonal interaction for two groups under investigation (elementary and Intermediate). According to results shown in table 2, it was indicated that there was no significant difference between Elementary and Intermediate classes regarding time spent on interpersonal interaction (sig (2- tailed)= 0.345, $p > 0.05$, $0.345 > 0.05$). So, the second hypothesis was rejected and the second null hypothesis was accepted.

TABLE 2.
INDEPENDENT SAMPLE T-TEST

Interpersonal:	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Equal variances Assumed	1.817	.194	.969	18	.345
Equal variances Not Assumed			.969	14.577	.348

C. *Question 3: Is There Statistically Significant Difference between Elementary and Intermediate Classes Regarding the Amount of Time Spent on Ideational Interaction?*

To address the third research question and to test the third null hypothesis, an Independent Sample T-test was applied to compare the mean ranks of the amount of time spent on ideational interaction for two groups under investigation (elementary and Intermediate). According to results shown in table 3, it was indicated that there was no significant difference between Elementary and Intermediate classes regarding time spent on ideational interaction (sig (2- tailed)= 0.523, $p > 0.05$, $0.523 > 0.05$). So, the third hypothesis was rejected and the third null hypothesis was accepted.

TABLE 3.
INDEPENDENT SAMPLE T-TEST

Ideational:	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Equal variances Assumed	5.426	.032	.651	18	.523
Equal variances Not Assumed			.651	14.180	.526

IV. DISCUSSION / CONCLUSION

A. *First Three Quantitative Research Questions*

Based on the results of Independent Sample T-test in result section, it was indicated that although there was a difference between Elementary and Intermediate classes regarding the amount of time spent on textual interactions, interpersonal interactions, and ideational interactions, it was not significant.

The presented results can be due to one of the main policies of the language institute under investigation in the current study which is to provide so friendly atmosphere for all learners from Elementary to advanced levels that they would be able to learn English through fun. In this regard, during teacher training courses, all teachers are requested to try to create such an opportunity in their classes which causes the learners to consider their teachers as a friend and not to feel the approximate distance that they mainly face at schools in Iran. So, the teachers usually try to foster the learners who are enthusiastic about sharing their personal experiences and ideas freely in classes from the beginning levels. In this regard, EFL teachers in the current institute should adopt a methodology that considers meaning-focused activities as a crucial factor in their classes (all levels including both Elementary and Intermediate levels). These more meaning-focused activities could be observed in pure type of interpersonal interactions that occurred in both levels although in different degrees.

On the other hand, during these teacher training courses, the teachers are asked not to ignore the real aim of EFL classes which is learning English (from the Elementary to advanced levels). So, form-focused activities should also be considered by teachers in their classes in this language institute. Such activities could be observed in pure type of textual interaction and sometimes in its combination with interpersonal and ideational types of interaction in both levels although in different degrees.

According to what has been discussed above, it can be claimed that the teachers' methodologies in this particular institute was mainly toward learner-centered method proposed by Kumaravadivelu (2006) as the second item in his classification of methods: Language-centered method, Learner-centered method, and Learning-centered method.

As Kumaravadivelu (2006) asserted, language-centered methods such as audiolingual method are those which basically concentrate on linguistic structures. Their first policy is to provide situation for L2 learners to practice some pre-determined linguistic forms through form-focused exercises only. They believe that focus on form is sufficient to make EFL learners ready to communicate in L2 outside the classroom.

Kumaravadivelu (2006) introduced learner-centered methods as the second type of methods. He claimed that the main goal of learner-centered method such as CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) is to foster language learners who are grammatically accurate and communicatively fluent. This method tries to provide a situation for learners to practice both preselected structures and communicative functions. It is believed that concentration on both form and function will result in development of target language in a way that fulfills learners' communicative needs out of classroom boundaries. In this regard, the mentioned method considers the learners' real life language use in social interaction as well as linguistic structures required in communicative contexts.

Finally, Kumaravadivelu (2006) presented the third type of methods as language-centered methods such as natural approach. He asserted that these methods are basically concerned with providing such opportunities for L2 learners that make them take part in open ended meaningful interactions. They believe that concentration on meaning-focused activities and communicative use will lead to successful acquisition of both linguistic and pragmatic systems of the target language. Generally, they believe in incidental learning.

Based on all mentioned above, it can be claimed that the teachers in this particular institute mainly took the second type of method proposed by Kumaravadivelu (2006) as they considered all three types of interaction under investigation in the current study in their classes and applied them in both levels of Elementary and Intermediate although in different degrees which means that they concentrated on both form and meaning to foster competent EFL learners. As it was mentioned previously, pure types of textual interaction were mainly form-focused, while pure types of interpersonal or ideational interaction were mainly meaning-focused. In addition, combination of textual interaction with two other types was due to concentration on both form and meaning. So, approximate similarities regarding the amount of time spent on textual, interpersonal and ideational interactions in two levels of Elementary and Intermediate can be somehow reasonable from these perspectives.

B. Last Three Qualitative Research Questions

The Nature of Textual Interaction

1. According to the observations, it was found that in the case of pure textual interaction (pure textual interaction was the case where the focus was mainly on language itself without use of interpersonal or ideational type of interaction) students in Intermediate levels mainly ignored their ability to communicate through the use of some complex sentences and even they sometimes limited their responses in interaction to just a short phrase or a word and it was mainly telegraphic the same as students in Elementary level. So, from this perspective the nature of textual interaction was somehow the same in two levels. The transcriptions below can confirm this claim. (T: Teacher, LLL: Whole class, LL: Unidentified subgroups of class, F1, 2...: Identified female learner, F: Unidentified female learner. More detailed transcription convention for classroom discourse extracted from Allwright and Bailey (1991) is presented in appendix B)

T: Look, look at this text, which one we use when we just see that for the first time in a sentence?

F1: a.

T: a/ an or the? Which one?

LLL: a.

T: Just a?

LLL: No, an

T: What about second time?

F2: The.

T: second time?

LLL: The. ...

The above example was extracted from an Elementary class which illustrates the case where the teacher wanted to teach English articles (a/an/the). As it was observed students interacted with their teacher mainly through the use of some words, phrases or a simple-structured sentence which was telegraphic to some extent.

The following transcription is extracted from one of the Intermediate classes:

T: so, in the first part of your question here, is Tony here?

LL: No.

T: Look at your questions. The first question.

LLL: No.

T: what about the next one? "Where have you been?" Ok. Now Tony has come back. Now he is here and I can ask him... So, where have you...

LLL: been?

T: All right, thank you. So, now I want... Tarane, go out, please. [The student went out.]

So, ask each other question about Tarane.

LLL: Where is Tarane?

T: where is Tarane? or...

LLL: Where has she go?

T: No....

The transcription above provided an example of a pure type of textual interaction from one of the Intermediate classes through which the teacher was supposed to teach the use of "been & gone" in present perfect. As it can be observed, students interacted with their teacher mainly through words, phrases or simple-structured sentences in the same way as Elementary students above. It was mainly telegraphic.

2. Considering the role of teacher in the pure textual interaction, it was observed that this type of interaction was mainly teacher initiated and the role of teachers was prominent in continuity of this type of interaction in both levels. Although there were cases in Intermediate level where students had significant roles, they were rare. (The transcriptions provided in the first section confirm this claim to some extent.)

3. It was also determined that mainly the objective of the particular lesson in specific session had a direct impact on the occurrence of both pure textual interaction and the combination of textual and interpersonal or ideational interaction. (The transcriptions provided in the first section confirm this claim to some extent.)

The Nature of Interpersonal Interaction

1. Based on investigation on the nature of interpersonal interaction here, it has been proved that the sequence of interpersonal interaction in Intermediate level was mainly longer than the sequence of the same type of interaction in Elementary level. Based on this observation, it can be claimed that both students and teachers in Intermediate levels were more eager to continue the interaction that focuses on interpersonal events. This claim can be more vivid through the following transcriptions:

T: So, good question, about the cake. Ok, the first thing coming to the mind is birthday party cake. Isn't it?

F1: No, dress.

T: Your dress?

LLL: Yes. Yes.

T: All of you, dress?

LLL: Yes.

T: But the first thing for me is cake.

F2: After that make up.

LLL: Yes, xxx.

T: Nail polish, xxx. At the end, cake. [Students are laughing]

LLL: Yes....

It was the example of a mainly interpersonal interaction extracted from one of the Elementary classes under observation which lasted about 1': 25".

The transcription below is extracted from an Intermediate class:

T: I can see you are still in uniform and still you are so tired. Why are you wearing school uniform?

F1: Because after school, I went to my grandmother's house and I was tired and didn't go to house to change my clothes.

F2: Teacher, I want to go to dentist.

T: Why?

LL: Toothache.

T: Why?

F2: Because of this my head is ... I have headache, too.

T: Ok, Did you take something or go to dentist?

F3: Teacher, today is so boring.

F2: Teacher, on Saturday, I'm going to the dentist.

LL: Oh, on Saturday? You will die. [Students are laughing]

T: Oh, Thursday, Friday...

F3: Teacher, today is boring.

LLL: Yes. Yes.

T: Why is it boring for you?

F3: I'm not ok. Xxx.

F6: Today is a good day. We have lots of dead and we did that dead.

F7: Teacher, last night I went to the doctor and he gave me two injections.

F7: And I feel very bad. Xxx.

F8: Teacher, in the morning I went to the doctor and I have glasses.

T: Did you get your glasses?

F8: Yes, Saturday...

F9: Teacher, tomorrow I have match and I must...

T: What match?

F9: Tennis and I must wake up at 7 o' clock...

T: One of the reasons that you are bored is the color of the clothes you are wearing. Do you agree? Just look at yourself, black... Why don't you wear colorful uniforms?

F: Because black makes you thinner. Think that I wear a pink T- shirt. It's so... It makes me like this [she pantomimes the shape of a circle]... a circle.

T: Why do you pay attention to what other people say? It's important that what you think of yourself.

F: It's not nice. But I love something I wear is nice from my idea and other idea, because it's really important, because I live with others.

The provided transcription was the example of a mainly interpersonal interaction extracted from one of the Intermediate classes observed which lasted for about 18':00. It indicates the students' enthusiasm to speak about some personal subjects in the classroom as they tried to continue the discussion.

2. Related to the first section, it was observed that in Intermediate level, in the case of interpersonal interaction students were mainly able to interact with each other or with their teacher through the use of more complex sentences using connectors while students in Elementary level were mostly able to communicate through simple-structured sentences and even through the use of phrases (incomplete sentences) which were mainly telegraphic. The transcriptions provided in the first section can confirm this claim to some extent.

3. Considering the role of teachers in interpersonal interaction, it was observed that although this type of interaction was mainly teacher-initiated in both levels, the role of teachers was more prominent in Elementary level than Intermediate level to maintain the process of interaction. It was considered that the teachers were mainly controller of interaction in Elementary level. But in Intermediate level students were able to control the discussion in class themselves and teachers used to just manage the events (particularly in the case of pure interpersonal). The transcriptions provided in the first section can confirm this claim to some extent.

4. It was determined that mainly the objective of the particular lesson in specific session had a direct impact on the type of pure interpersonal interaction or combined with textual interaction applied in that session. On the other hand, it was also considered that teachers' different methodologies were another important factor to create a situation for pure type of interpersonal interaction (pure type of interpersonal interaction here means the type of interpersonal interaction which happens mainly without specific focus on language itself). For example, some teachers considered establishing a friendly atmosphere in class as their priority and tried to initiate interaction with students based on their fields of interest through which they did not concentrate on a specific language or a lesson objective. So it mainly led to a kind of purely interpersonal interaction. The two situations discussed here happened in both levels but in different degrees which means that students in Intermediate level were mainly able to take part in deeper interaction than those in Elementary level as they could interact more easily than Elementary students who used to participate in class discussion in mainly telegraphic way as discussed in previous sections.

5. Interpersonal interactions in Elementary levels were mainly form-focused which means that they happened due to practicing a specific structure or language. However, in Intermediate level, although there were some cases in which interpersonal interaction happened due to focusing on specific form, mainly this type of interaction happened without a particular concentration on a specific form and even if the goal might be concentration on specific form, students were able to go beyond it and they mostly did not limit themselves to that specific purpose which means that the process of interaction was more natural, not mechanical. It can be clear through the following transcriptions:

T: Ok, one by one tell me your plans. Who wants to start?... Aida.

F1: Ok, I'm going to study in university on another country.

T: Which country?

F1: USA... Teacher, I'm going to see my best actor.

T: Thank you. Shaghaiegh...

F2: I'm going to play another sport.

T: What sport?

F2: I don't know.

F3: I'm going to study at university.

In the above example from an Elementary class, it can be observed that students limited themselves to that specific form practicing a particular language (be going to) and they did not go beyond that structure. However, the transcriptions provided in previous sections can make this point clear that interpersonal interactions in Intermediate classes were not mainly form focused.

The Nature of Ideational Interaction

1. It was observed that mainly the objective of the particular lesson in specific session had a direct impact on the use of ideational interaction applied in that session in both levels. In this regard, the case of ideational interaction happening on its own was not observed in any of the levels which means that students did not try to express their ideas freely about subjects happening in class or about whatever they liked and they expressed their thoughts and ideas whenever they were asked. So, the nature of ideational interaction from this perspective was somehow the same in two levels under investigation here. Transcriptions below can make this claim more comprehensible:

T: Who is a volunteer? Fateme, you start. What do you think about story A?

F1: I think story A is more impossible because I can't believe that a ghost...

T: Is it impossible? Ok.

F1: A ghost send a message.

T: Ok, you think that's impossible. Ok. Do you think... Which one is creepier?

F1: Story B.

T: Story B is creepier. Why?

F1: Because another girl... the ghost of another girl came to Sumitra's body.

T: That's creepy. Ok, which one is more fascinating?

F1: I think story B is more fascinating because a dead person become alive.

T: Yes, a person came from... from death. Ok, thank you very much.

The transcription above is extracted from an Elementary class through which students were supposed to express their ideas about two stories read in class to practice a kind of reasoning gap activity. So, the objective was to practice this structure: I think... because...

The following is an extract from an Intermediate class:

F1: If I was judge, I would send this rubber to the prison plus community service and for example work in the mine.

T: How long?

F2: What's mine?

F1: The hole in the mountain.

F3: I don't agree.

T: Why not?

F3: Because I think prison and community service is a lot.

T: Ok, what would you do?

F3: I would send him to prison for two years.

T: Two years? For bank robbery?

F3: Yes. Bank... a lot of money... People trust them.

F4: And the he becomes xx.

T: What do you mean?

F4: You know, when you don't punish, so they do that things for years.

T: All right, the other ideas? A good punishment?

F5: I think it's better for him to clean the bank.

T: Could you trust the bank robber in the bank?

LLL: No.

F5: We ask the court to check him.

T: So, you need a guard. That's expensive for the government to have a guard for only one prisoner.

F6: Maybe, the robber says, "I give you some money, I can run away."

T: Ok, so I haven't heard a good punishment for this.

F7: If I was the judge, I would send him to prison for 8 years.

T: Why? Because I think it's fair for the bank robber.

T: Others... What do you think?

F8: That's absolutely right.

Here, the objective was to use second conditional (If I were you... I would...) to express their ideas about an imaginary situation.

2. Ideational interactions mainly happened due to practicing a specific structure or a new language. In other words, they were mainly form-focused in both levels. However, in Intermediate level, although the goal might be concentration on specific form, students were able to go beyond it and they mostly did not limit themselves to that specific purpose which means that the process of interaction was more natural, not mechanical. This claim can be confirmed by looking closely at transcriptions in the previous section. In the first extract from the Elementary class, it can be observed that students tried to express their opinions about the story as they were asked through I think... because... structure and they mainly did not go beyond it.

However, in the extract from an Intermediate class which happened with the purpose of practicing second conditional (If I were... I would...) and it was mainly ideational interaction as the students tried to express their opinions, it can be observed that the complete 'second conditional' form happened only twice in the sequence of interaction and students went beyond this structure to express their ideas.

3. Considering the role of teacher in ideational interaction, it was observed that mostly this type of interaction was teacher initiated and mainly students were asked to express their opinions by the teacher in both levels. So, teachers had significant roles in continuity of this type of interaction. The above extracts can confirm this claim to some extent.

4. It was also observed that in Intermediate level, in the case of ideational interaction students were mostly able to explain their opinions in more than one sentence which means that when they took turn to speak they tried to use more sentences in the form of a discussion mostly through the use of some connectors while students in Elementary level only tried to express their opinions in one sentence or a simple-structured sentence. Also, in cases where they used a more complex sentence, it was the use of the form which was asked by the teacher to be used in their speaking and they did not go beyond that (for e.g. in some cases teacher wanted them to use I think... because...). The transcription from an Elementary level below can make this point more comprehensible:

T: You read all four texts. Which one was the most interesting for you? Which character was the most interesting?

F1: A

T: A? Parizad? Why A?

F1: Because I don't know, it's...

T: Exciting to kill a lot of people?

F1: Yes.

F2: Teacher, I think B is interesting, because he started first bank in Egypt.

As it can be observed students mainly did not express their opinions in more than one simple structured sentence and the case of more complex structured sentence happened just when they wanted to use the structure asked by the teacher to be applied in their speaking(I think... because...).

The following transcription is extracted from an Intermediate class:

F1: I think the main problem is air pollution.

T: Go on about that.

F1: I think air pollution is important because we...

T: Breathe

F1: the oxygen should be clean and if the oxygen don't be clean, when we smell it, our xx and it's not good. It will kill us.

F3: I think cutting down the trees is more important that air pollution. Because if we've got trees. The trees make oxygen. And trees make oxygen, if we...

T: cut down

F3: Yes, if we cut down the trees, we've got air pollution, as she said.

T: Avishan, what do you think about it?

F4: I think the water xx is the problem because...

T: Water pollution.

F4: Yes, because many fish are living in the water and when the water is polluted, many fish die and fish are polluted. And when the humans eat the fish, they are sick and they die. Many humans die and I think it's very bad.

In the above example, students were supposed to express their opinions about the most important problem in the world using the structure I think... because... as a kind of reasoning gap activity. It can be observed that students expressed their opinions in a way that their interaction became a kind of discussion to some extent as they tried to use more than one sentence in expressing their ideas.

Based on all discussed above, there can be an implication here for EFL teachers. As it was mentioned previously, the main objective of the current work was to investigate the nature of three types of interaction proposed by Kumaravadivelue in two levels of Elementary and Intermediate as well as their contribution to L2 development. The nature of interaction types regarding two levels was discussed to some extent in previous sections. For the matter of their contribution to L2 development, based on the observed data, it can be claimed that all three types of interaction under investigation are required to promote L2 learning in both levels. However, concentration on all three types of interaction in the same proportion should be taken into consideration. On one hand, as it was observed in those classes

where pure type of textual interaction was dominant, although students could speak accurately (specifically on the practiced language of that particular session such as the new grammar, new language, vocabulary and pronunciation...), they were not able to speak fluently enough (in both levels). Such classes mainly lead to a kind of mechanical L2 speakers. On the other hand, there were classes where students were allowed to take part in interpersonal and ideational interaction with approximate ignorance of textual interaction. In such classes, although students were encouraged directly or indirectly to speak freely without particular emphasis on specific structure or language and they were able to speak fluently to some degree, they usually lacked the ability to speak accurately enough, even on the new language or structure of that session. Sometimes, it is a good choice to combine interpersonal or ideational interaction with textual interaction and in other cases it is preferable to apply each type of interaction on its own. In this regard, EFL teachers should be cautious enough in their methodologies toward various types of interaction under investigation in the current study and try not to fall on extremes. They should keep balance in order to foster students who are able to speak both fluently and accurately (in both levels, although in different degrees). Consequently, the role of teachers, their class management and methodologies can have significant impact on L2 development from this perspective.

Finally, there is a suggestion for further researches. As the current work concentrated on Kumaravadivelue's classification of interaction types, it was observed that three types of interaction proposed by him (textual, interpersonal, & ideational) can occur in their pure form as well as their combination with each other. So, working on a new framework as a result expanding Kumaravadivelue's classification might be worthy of investigation. The new framework can consist of the following categories: A. pure textual interaction B. pure interpersonal interaction C. pure ideational interaction D. textual and interpersonal interaction E. textual and ideational interaction. Further researches can work on the mentioned categories to find out the extent of their occurrence in different classes and their contribution to L2 development in more details.

APPENDIX A

Types of activities considered as a textual interaction, interpersonal interaction & ideational interaction in the form of a checklist:

Activities as a textual interaction:	Activities as an interpersonal interaction:	Activities as an ideational interaction:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Comprehension checks *Confirmation checks *Clarification checks *Meaning clarification *Grammar teaching *Working on new languages *Pronunciation practice *Giving sentence repetition *Sentence-completion activities *Review of previous session language *Playing game to practice a new language *Summary telling *Correction *Pre-teaching vocabulary *Working on writing models *Picture description *Modeling for doing an exercise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Sharing personal experiences *Sharing general knowledge *Talking about likes & dislikes *Talking about favorites/interests *Talking about problems in the world *Talking about family members *Talking about personal life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Reasoning-gap activities *Making suggestions *Talking about imaginary situation (If I were you... I would...) *Giving advice *Expressing agreement & disagreement with reason *Expressing opinions about advantages & disadvantages/good points & bad points with reasons

Notice: There is no hard and fast borderline between these three functions and there can be overlap particularly between interpersonal and ideational interaction.

APPENDIX B

Transcription conventions for classroom discourse

General layout

- 1 Leave generous margins, at least at first, to permit legible annotations as transcription gets refined.
- 2 Double space everything, for the same reason.
- 3 Number every fifth line in the left-hand margin, *but* do so only in pencil until transcription is complete, unless you are using wordprocessing with automatic line numbering.
- 4 Identify transcripts at the top of each page with some economical reference number.
- 5 Number all pages in the top right corner.
- 6 Identify participants, date and location on a separate sheet (separate in case participants' identities need to be kept confidential).
- 7 Decide whether to supply pseudonyms for participants' names, or to substitute numbers.
- 8 Enter participants' pseudonyms, where used, with gender, classroom layout, etc., also on a separate sheet (especially if using computer, since computer analysis must not include this page as data).
- 9 If using numbers, enter real name and associated numbers (with gender information) on a separate sheet.
- 10 On transcript pages, justify identifying material to the right, justify text to the left, as below.

Symbols to identify who is speaking:

T	teacher
A	aide
M1	identified male learner, using numbers (M1, M2, etc.)
F1	identified female learner, using numbers (F1, F2, etc.)
Su	use such two-letter abbreviations for pseudonyms, where used (note: gender information may be lost by this method)
M	unidentified male learner
F	unidentified female learner
MV	male voice from, for example, an audio or videotape
FV	female voice, as above
LL	unidentified subgroup of class
lll	unidentified subgroup speaking in chorus
LLL	whole class
lll	whole class speaking in chorus

Symbols for relationships between lines of transcript

{ M3	use curly brackets to indicate simultaneous speech
{ F7	
[M	use to indicate same unidentified male speaker
[T	
[M	
[F	use to indicate same unidentified female speaker
[T	
[F	
-T	use hyphen to indicate continuation of a turn without a pause, where overlapping speech intervenes.

Symbols to use in text

I	I	use for commentary of any kind (e.g. to indicate point in discourse where T writes on blackboard)
[=]	use to introduce a gloss, or translation, of speech
/	/	use for phonemic transcription instead of standard orthography, where pronunciation deviant. Use with gloss if meaning also obscured.
()	use for uncertain transcription
(/	/)	use for uncertain phonemic transcription
()	use for uncertain gloss
X		incomprehensible item, probably one word only
XX		incomprehensible item of phrase length
XXX		incomprehensible item beyond phrase length
X—X		use optionally at early stages to indicate extent of incomprehensible item, as guide to future attempts to improve transcription
.		use dots to indicate pauses, giving length in seconds in extreme cases, if potentially relevant to aims
-	"	use to indicate anything read rather than spoken without direct text support

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The Efficacy of Novel Pre-activity Tasks on Macroskills: The Case of Group Discussion on Reading Comprehension

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Abstract—The main concern of most researchers in the field of second and foreign language teaching is lessening the problems and eliminating the hinders on the way of learning a language. The importance of reading skill in the process of teaching and learning different languages is undeniable for everyone. The main aim of this study was to examine the effects of group discussion strategy as a pre- activity task on reading ability. To this aim, 27 Iranian EFL learners, who were at the same level –intermediate- studying at Shokuh and Safir Institutes, Birjand, Iran were chosen. Two groups- one control and one experimental group- were studied. In control group the conventional method was used in teaching reading, while in experimental group, group discussion pre-activity task was administered. Both groups met the same level -Intermediate. At the end, the obtained data of the tests was analyzed by SPSS software. According to the obtained data, it can be strongly concluded that group discussion has no significant effect on reading comprehension. This study can help teachers and syllabus designers in choosing and applying an effective pre-activity task which really help the learners in reading classes.

Index Terms—reading comprehension, pre-activity task, group discussion, EFL learners

I. INTRODUCTION

The macro skill which is under analysis in this study is reading comprehension. In most of foreign language teaching environments, reading attracts more attention than other skills. Among the large number of definitions for reading comprehension, it is recorded that all of them combine reading and understanding with each other (Duke and Pearson, 2002; Grabe, 1995; Nuttall, 1996). In fact, it is believed that reading is the most important skill among other ones. First, reading is important as it eases the learning of other skills. In another words, if we learn reading and start reading texts in second language, writing will become easier for us too. Second, reading is essential as the fundamental aim of learners. Many learners try to learn second language to read texts and it's very disappointing if they do not understand what they are reading. Third, as Nunan (2006) indicated, unlike speaking, reading is not a task that everyone learns how to do. So learning this skill needs a huge amount of money, time, and efforts (Nunan, 2006). Reading comprehension is not something just to know the meaning of words; in fact, students should learn how to comprehend a text.

As it is believed that reading comprehension is the vital skill in ESL/EFL situations, different strategies are used in the processes of dealing with this skill.

Bölükbaş (2013) defines reading comprehension strategy as

Reading comprehension strategies are the cognitive strategies that the reader uses pre-reading, during reading and post-reading to understand the text better. There are some strategies that the reader uses consciously and unconsciously... the students use the skills that they acquire in normal conditions automatically and they apply strategies when they face a problem in the text (p.2148)

In addition, he believes that the principal purpose of using reading comprehension strategies is to ascertain that the text is understood accurately and easily (Bölükbaş, 2013). According to reviewed literature of this study, generally most researchers and theorists believe that strategies can be categorized as pre- reading strategies, while- reading strategies, and post- reading strategies (Bezci, 1998; Karatay, 2007 and 2009; Lau, 2006; Mihara, 2011; Özbay, 2009; Yang, 2006 cited in Bölükbaş, 2013).

As soon as these skills became eminent in educational situations, different approaches and methods were used to teach them in different eras. Each approach was a reaction to the shortcomings of the previous ones, because in all academic situations, the main goal of teachers and educators is to ease the learning for students. In other words, “Since the early 1980s, many scholars who study the teaching of English and language arts have been engaged in an extended exploration of the nature of effective instruction” (Applebee, Langer, Nystrand, & Gamoran, 2003, p. 685). As a result, teachers should perform some activities which help students to learn skills better. In another words, choosing helpful

activities is a challenging activity for teachers. At first, these activities were used randomly. Then, the activities categorized as pre, while, and post- activities to facilitate the use of them for teachers and educators.

In teaching skills, the importance of using pre- activity tasks cannot be denied. Due to their noticeable effectiveness, the need for becoming familiar with these pre-activities is necessary. Furthermore, as learning is a complex process, using novel pre- activity tasks will motivate them. One of the novel pre- activity tasks is using group discussion.

Using group discussion is a pre- activity task which is known as collaborative learning, cooperative learning, peer learning, group learning, formal learning groups, and study teams (Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 1991). Using group discussion as a pre-activity task means setting up some cooperative groups of students in class and asking them to discuss a specific topic with each other. Also Piaget (1928 and 1932) pointed out that collaborative learning has a vital role in constructive cognitive development. Group discussion is a student- student interaction, which is used to promote their learning as they have the same goal. Furthermore, "learning in a small group is one of the choices the teacher makes for increasing students' motivation" (Wichadee, 2013, p.107).

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. *Reading Comprehension*

As reading is the macro skill taught and assessed in this study, emphasizing on its process seems necessary to be clarified in the literature review. There are many theories and perceptions about teaching and learning reading skill. For instance, Rumelhart (1977) believes that reading in the most simplistic manner is the interaction between the text and the reader. He adds that this interaction is affected by different factors such as: the readers' own experience with their community, school and cultural experience and the extend these relate to the text, as well as their individual personality, the combination of these reader factors with textual features (structures, syntax, grammar and vocabulary), and the correspondence between the reader and the text. In this regard, Rosenblatt (1993) in her theory also describes reading as an interactive process used the terms aesthetic and efferent (nonaesthetic) reading to refer to reading for enjoyment and reading for knowledge in the content areas, such as science and social studies.

As a different perspective on reading skill, Burns, Roe, and Ross (1992) introduce the reading as a life skill that by combining nine aspects of the reading process – sensory, perceptual, sequential, experiential, thinking, learning, associational, affective, and constructive- the reading process becomes facilitated. Bouwer (2000) comments on the Burns, Roe, and Ross's interpretation and states that the sensory, perceptual, and sequential aspects depict the decoding process of reading and the six remaining aspects characterize the comprehension process of reading.

Besides the previous comments on different aspects of reading skill, another interpretation is expressed by Goodman (1996). He describes reading processing strategies by focus on the use of three Cueing Systems (Phonological and visual/orthographic information, Language structure, Meaning) and use of Self-Correction during figuring out a text's message.

Other important issues that are directly related to the notion of reading ability and should come into account in this part of this study are different theories on reading comprehension and reading strategies. Regarding reading strategies, Coiro (2003) as one of the figures in this area states that certain studies in second language contexts have indicated that the productive use of reading strategies results in reading comprehension. He also adds that poor readers peruse all types of texts in the same manner.

B. *Pre-reading Activities*

Bilokcuoğlu (2011) reports that

"the recent studies conducted on reading comprehension have revealed that pre-reading activities have helpful effects in stimulating readers' background knowledge which is required for a total reading comprehension. Those studies demonstrate that pre-reading activities not only prepare the reader for the following concept but also facilitate him/her to connect the new concept more meaningfully to the prior knowledge, which will lead to an easier and a more enjoyable reading task. Thus, pre-reading activities are well-meant to trigger suitable knowledge structures or to provide the ground for the necessary knowledge that readers lack." (p. 81)

C. *Group Discussion*

Cooperative learning is one strategy for group instruction which is under the learner-centered approach. Therefore, some of the definitions, perceptions, and studies done in this area are presented in this part as well. To begin, it is worth mentioning that many educators express different the definitions of cooperative learning. For example, Slavin (1995) defines cooperative learning as an imperative and directive plan in which learners organize in small groups to support each other in the process of learning. Brown (1994) says that in cooperative learning, students work with each other in groups and like a team work, they try to reach the main purpose. In addition, Kessler (1992) defines reading comprehension as working together in groups and learn new information with the asset of reciprocal learning

Cooperative learning is a teaching strategy in which small groups, which have members with different level, use a variety of learning activities to enhance their understanding of the lesson. Furthermore, Richards & Rodgers (2001) indicated that "a principal proposition of Cooperative Language Learning is that learners develop communicative competence in a language by having social interaction in structured situations" (p.194)

Some of the scholars and researchers suggest different techniques and guidelines for better performing of group-discussion activity. For instance, some of them (Emdin, 2010; Larson, 2000; Mitchell, 2010) believe that the teacher should explain in details the students' role in a cooperative classroom. Furthermore, the teacher should propose some discussions for students and give the students motivation to participate in groups. Teachers should organize the groups in a way that all students have the same participation.

Some others (Atwood, Turnball, & Carpendale, 2010; Larson, 2000; Mitchell, 2010) state that the teachers should provide a comfortable situation for students which enables them to participate with other members of the group. They also suggest a solution. They say that the best way to increase this level of confidence is to permit learners to speak in their own groups at first. Then, they will be prepared to speak properly for all students and share their ideas in classroom.

Considering all aforementioned definitions, views, and studies done on reading comprehension, pre-activity tasks, and group discussion, research questions, study method, results, conclusion, etc. are mentioned in the following parts.

D. Research Question and Hypothesis

RQ. Does group discussion strategy as a pre- activity task have a significant effect on reading comprehension ability of Iranian intermediate EFL learners?

H0. Group discussion strategy as a pre- activity task has no significant effect on reading comprehension ability of Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

III. METHOD

A. Participants

The participants of this study are 27 Iranian EFL learners, who are at the same level –intermediate- studying at Shokuh and Safir Institutes, Birjand, Iran. Their age range is among 16 to 25. Both male and female students were entered to this study. These participants were in two classes- 13 participants in the control group and 14 participants in the experimental group (group discussion group). The specifications of these 27 participants are given in table 1.

TABLE 1.
PARTICIPANTS' SPECIFICATIONS

		Number	Percent
Gender	Male	10	35%
	Female	17	65%
Age	16-20	16	58%
	20-25	11	42%

B. Instruments

In this part all instruments and materials which were used for conducting this research will be mentioned. The materials and instruments which used for carrying on this study are as follow.

TOEFL Tests: TOEFL test (Test of English as a Foreign Language) is one of the most acceptable and well-known tests all over world. Nowadays, most researchers use TOEFL tests to obtain their required data as there is no doubt about their validity and reliability. TOEFL tests are in two formats: PBT (Paper-based Test) and iBT (Internet-based Test). Although iBT innovated in late 2005, it could replace progressively PBT and CBT (Computer-based Test). By the way, PBT is still in use in some regions. TOEFL test integrates all four skills –reading, writing, speaking, and listening- to measure the overall skill of communicating in foreign language. In details, in a TOEFL test, the testee is subject to a reading test and has to read a text and answer a number of questions, a writing test and has to write properly about a certain topic, a listening test and has to listen to conversations and answer questions, and finally a speaking test and has to speak about a certain topic.

In this study, the researcher preferred to use a Paper-Based version of TOEFL taken from *Longman Preparation Course for the TOEFL Test (the Paper Based Test)* (Phillips, 2005). As only intermediate students are involve in this study, at first, the researcher administered a TOEFL proficiency test to all participants to ensure that all of them met the intermediate level. Then, one TOEFL reading comprehension test was used at the outset of the study as the pre-test in both groups. This pre-test was also used to check the homogeneity of the participants and to ensure that their reading comprehension ability was also at the same level. Additionally, one TOEFL reading test was administered in these two groups at the end of treatment as the post-test. The readability scale was used to make sure that the tests are at the same level.

SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Science) Software: SPSS software is worldwide software which is used for statistical analysis to a great degree. All essential statistical analysis of this study was done by use of 20th version of SPSS software. The data collected from TOEFL tests were analyzed by SPSS software.

C. Procedure

In this study, two groups- one control and one experimental group- were studied. In control group the conventional method was used, while in experimental group, group discussion pre-activity task was administered. Both groups met

the same level -Intermediate. In each session, reading comprehension was taught based on this specific pre- activity task. In the first session, before performing any treatment, one pre-test of reading comprehension was administered in each group. Then, the treatments were conducted in 16 sessions. The levels of all tests were checked by readability scale which revealed that all tests were at the same level of difficulty. A TOEFL proficiency test was used to check the homogeneity of the participants. After that, the process of teaching was started and this pre- activity task was applied in the experimental group. In the last session, a reading comprehension test was administered in each of those two groups. At the end, the obtained data of the tests was analyzed by SPSS software which are revealed in the next part.

IV. RESULTS

At the scratch, a TOEFL proficiency test was applied to all subjects of the study to assure their general language proficiency level as intermediate. The results showed that the mean and standard deviation of all subjects are 431.94 and 37.59 which categorized them as intermediate learners.

After the TOEFL proficiency test which confirmed the participants' general English proficiency level as intermediate, two pretests were administered to check the homogeneity of the students according to their ability of reading comprehension. Therefore, an independent sample t-test is presented for each of the aforementioned pretests and posttests related to the research questions and hypotheses.

The effect of group discussion as a pre-activity on reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners is investigated in this part. At the end of this section the research question which is "Does group discussion strategy as a pre- activity task have a significant effect on reading comprehension ability of Iranian intermediate EFL learners?" will be answered. At first the homogeneity of the control group and discussion group as the experimental group should be supported. For this end, the following data are analyzed in next tables.

TABLE 2.
GROUP STATISTICS

	Pretest	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
pretest reading scores	pretest discussion group	14	4.5714	1.28388	.34313
	pretest control group	13	4.7385	1.51632	.42055

This table illustrates that the mean score and standard deviation for discussion group is 4.5 and 1.2, respectively. On the other hand, mean score and standard deviation for control group is 4.7 and 1.5. So these data revealed that these two groups were the same at the scratch. In another words, experimental and control groups are homogeneous.

The next table tries to prove this reality by inferential statistics.

TABLE 3.
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower		Upper
Pretest reading scores	Equal variances assumed	.767	.389	-.310	25	.759	-.16703	.53934	-1.27782	.94375
	Equal variances not assumed			-.308	23.629	.761	-.16703	.54277	-1.28819	.95413

In table 3, $t = -.310$, $df = 25$, $p = .7$, as a result, it can be implied that there is no difference between control and discussion groups. So they are homogeneous.

The next table shows the differences between experimental and control groups after treatment.

TABLE 4.
GROUP STATISTICS

	Posttest	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
posttest reading scores	posttest discussion group	14	5.7214	1.36786	.36558
	posttest control group	13	4.9846	2.01571	.55906

As table 4 represented, mean score and standard deviation for discussion groups are 5.7 and 1.3. Mean score and standard deviation for control group are 4.9 and 2.01. So it can be said that although the mean score of discussion group is more than control group, this better performance is not significance as showed in next table. To investigate whether the group discussion effect is significant or not, an independent sample t-test was administered and the data are presented in the following table.

TABLE 5
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper	
Posttest reading scores	Equal variances assumed	2.120	.158	1.119	25	.274	.73681	.65853	-.61946	2.09309
	Equal variances not assumed			1.103	20.925	.283	.73681	.66797	-.65262	2.12625

In table 5, it is displayed that $t = 1.1$, $df = 25$, and $p = .27$. As significant value is $.27 > .05$, it can be concluded that the effect of group discussion as pre-activity has not significant. As a result this null hypothesis which was "group discussion as a pre-activity task has no significant effect of reading comprehension of Iranian intermediate EFL learners" is accepted.

V. DISCUSSION

Group discussion has no significant effect on reading comprehension, and this outcome may be followed in different factors. First, as the researcher cannot monitor all groups, and she has to supervise small groups of participants during each session so the subjects may discuss and talk about other topics. Second, all subjects in each group may not participate in discussions. Some ones are shy or introvert and they refuse to take part in discussions. Third, because of the lack of time the subjects do not have enough time to bring up all ideas. As McCafferty, Jacobs, and Iddings (2006) believe that despite the many benefits of group activities, difficulties also arise – difficulties that have led some educators to give up on applying group work. These difficulties include “members not participating, groups not getting along, or learners unable to do the task. Cooperative learning arose in mainstream education as an effort to address such difficulties and to generally expedite student-student interaction”. (p. 3)

VI. CONCLUSION

As discussed in the first parts of this study, the main concern of most researchers in the field of second and foreign language teaching is lessening the problems and eliminating the hinders on the way of learning a language. Consequently, many researchers have found out that using pre-activities in the process of teaching second/foreign languages is helpful. Therefore, the main aim of this study was to examine the effects of group discussion as a pre-activity task on reading comprehension. According to the obtained data of the previous sections, it can be strongly concluded that group discussion has no significant effect on reading comprehension. The reasons can be studied in another study. As one of those reasons, maybe learners do not carefully and correctly do their task and they talk about many other topics in their mother tongue. Therefore, as a kind of implication, this study can help teachers in choosing an effective pre-activity task. In other words, teachers and educators can use other pre-activity tasks like pre-question and visual aids in teaching reading except for group discussion. In the cases they think it is helpful and want to use this pre-activity task, they should reconsider the ways of implementing this task or carefully monitor their learners and their activities.

VII. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research which is directly or indirectly related to the theme of this study can be also done. This study focused on the effects of group discussion on reading ability. Other research can be done to examine the effects of other pre-activity tasks on reading skill.

Besides, this research emphasized on reading comprehension and ignored the effect of this pre- activity on writing, speaking and listening. Therefore, some other research can be employed to check the effects of pre- activity tasks on other skills.

The effect of group discussion novel pre- activity task has been examined on reading comprehension of intermediate level. Other studies can be designed and done to analyze the effects of pre-activity tasks on Iranian EFL learners with other levels of proficiency.

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APPENDIX A. (READING TESTS)

Reading Comprehension Test 1

Niagara Falls, one of the most famous North American natural wonders, has long been a popular tourist destination. Tourists today flock to see the two falls that actually constitute Niagara Falls: the 173-foot-high Horseshoe Falls on the Canadian side of the Niagara River in the Canadian province of Ontario and the 182-foot-high American Falls on the U.S. side of the river in the state of New York. Approximately 85 percent of the water that goes over the falls actually goes over Horseshoe Falls, with the rest going over American Falls.

Most visitors come between April and October, and it is quite a popular activity to take a steamer out onto the river and right up to the base of the falls for a close-up view. It is also possible to get a spectacular view of the falls from the strategic locations along the Niagara River, such as Prospect Point of Table Rock, or from one of the four observation towers which have heights up to 500 feet.

Tourists have been visiting Niagara Falls in large numbers since the 1800's; annual visitation now averages above 10 million visitors per year. Because of concern that all these tourists would inadvertently destroy the natural beauty of this scenic wonder, the State of New York in 1885 created Niagara Falls Park in order to protect the land surrounding American Falls. A year later Canada created Queen Victoria Park on the Canadian side of the Niagara, around Horseshoe Falls. With the area surrounding the falls under the jurisdiction of government agencies, appropriate steps could be taken to preserve the pristine beauty of the area.

1. What is the major point that the author is making in the passage?
 - A. Niagara Falls can be viewed from either the American side or Canadian side.
 - B. A trip to the United States isn't complete without a visit to Niagara Falls.
 - C. Niagara Falls has an interesting history.
 - D. It has been necessary to protect Niagara Falls from the many tourists who go there.
2. The word "flock" in line 2 can be best replaced by
 - A. come by plane
 - B. come in large numbers
 - C. come out of boredom
 - D. come without knowing what they will see
3. According to the passage, which of the following best describes Niagara Falls?
 - A. Niagara Falls consists of two rivers, one Canadian and the other American.
 - B. American Falls is considerably higher than Horseshoe Falls.
 - C. The Niagara River has two Falls, one in Canada and one in the United States.
 - D. Although the Niagara Rivers flows through the United States and Canada, the Falls are only in the United States.
4. A "steamer" in line 8 is probably
 - A. a bus
 - B. a boat
 - C. a walkway
 - D. a park
5. The expression "right up" in line 8 could best be replaced by
 - A. turn to the right
 - B. follow correct procedures
 - C. travel upstream
 - D. all the way up
6. The passage implies that tourists prefer to
 - A. visit Niagara Falls during warmer weather
 - B. see the Falls from a great distance
 - C. take a ride over the Falls
 - D. come to the Niagara Falls for a winter vacation
7. According to the passage, why was Niagara park created?
 - A. To encourage tourists to visit Niagara Falls
 - B. To show off the nature beauty of Niagara Falls
 - C. To protect the area around Niagara Falls
 - D. To force Canada to open Queen Victoria Park
8. The word "jurisdiction" in line 17 is closest meaning to
 - A. view
 - B. assistance
 - C. taxation
 - D. control
9. The word "pristine" in line 18 is closest in meaning to
 - A. pure and natural
 - B. highly developed

- C. well-regulated
 D. overused
10. The paragraph following the passage most probably discusses
- A. additional ways to observe the falls
 B. steps take by government agencies to protect the falls
 C. a detailed description of the division of the falls between the United States and Canada
 D. further problems that are destroying the area around the falls

APPENDIX B. (TOEFL PROFICIENCY TEST)

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COMPLETE TEST FIVE

SECTION 1

LISTENING COMPREHENSION

Time—approximately 35 minutes

(including the reading of the directions for each part)

In this section of the test, you will have an opportunity to demonstrate your ability to understand conversations and talks in English. There are three parts to this section, with special directions for each part. Answer all the questions on the basis of what is **stated** or **implied** by the speakers you hear. Do **not** take notes or write in your test book at any time. Do **not** turn the pages until you are told to do so.

Part A

Directions: In Part A you will hear short conversations between two people. After each conversation, you will hear a question about the conversation. The conversations and questions will not be repeated. After you hear a question, read the four possible answers in your test book and choose the best answer. Then, on your answer sheet, find the number of the question and fill in the space that corresponds to the letter of the answer you have chosen.

Listen to an example.

On the recording, you will hear:

- (man) That exam was just awful.
 (woman) Oh, it could have been worse.
 (narrator) What does the woman mean?

- In your test book, you will read:
- (A) The exam was really awful.
 (B) It was the worst exam she had ever seen.
 (C) It couldn't have been more difficult.
 (D) It wasn't that hard.

You learn from the conversation that the man thought the exam was very difficult and that the woman disagreed with the man. The best answer to the question, "What does the woman mean?" is (D), "It wasn't that hard." Therefore, the correct choice is (D).

Sample Answer

- (A)
 (B)
 (C)
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SECTION 2
STRUCTURE AND WRITTEN EXPRESSION

Time—25 minutes
(including the reading of the directions)
Now set your clock for 25 minutes.

This section is designed to measure your ability to recognize language that is appropriate for standard written English. There are two types of questions in this section, with special directions for each type.

Structure

Directions: These questions are incomplete sentences. Beneath each sentence you will see four words or phrases, marked (A), (B), (C), and (D). Choose the **one** word or phrase that best completes the sentence. Then, on your answer sheet, find the number of the question and fill in the space that corresponds to the letter of the answer you have chosen.

Look at the following examples.

Example I

The president _____ the election by a landslide.

- (A) won
- (B) he won
- (C) yesterday
- (D) fortunately

Sample Answer

-
- B
- C
- D

The sentence should read, "The president won the election by a landslide." Therefore, you should choose answer (A).

Example II

When _____ the conference?

- (A) the doctor attended
- (B) did the doctor attend
- (C) the doctor will attend
- (D) the doctor's attendance

Sample Answer

- A
-
- C
- D

The sentence should read, "When did the doctor attend the conference?" Therefore, you should choose answer (B).

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SECTION 3
READING COMPREHENSION
Time—55 minutes
(including the reading of the directions)
Now set your clock for 55 minutes.

This section is designed to measure your ability to read and understand short passages similar in topic and style to those that students are likely to encounter in North American universities and colleges. This section contains reading passages and questions about the passages.

Directions: In this section you will read several passages. Each one is followed by a number of questions about it. You are to choose the **one** best answer, (A), (B), (C), or (D), to each question. Then, on your answer sheet, find the number of the question and fill in the space that corresponds to the letter of the answer you have chosen.

Answer all questions about the information in a passage on the basis of what is **stated** or **implied** in that passage.

Read the following passage:

John Quincy Adams, who served as the sixth president of the United States from 1825 to 1829, is today recognized for his masterful statesmanship and diplomacy. He dedicated his life to public service, both in the presidency and in the various other political offices that he held. Throughout his political career he demonstrated his unswerving belief in freedom of
Line (5) speech, the antislavery cause, and the right of Americans to be free from European and Asian domination.

Example I

To what did John Quincy Adams devote his life?

- (A) Improving his personal life
- (B) Serving the public
- (C) Increasing his fortune
- (D) Working on his private business

Sample Answer

- (A)
- (B)
- (C)
- (D)

According to the passage, John Quincy Adams “dedicated his life to public service.” Therefore, you should choose answer (B).

Example II


In line 4, the word “unswerving” is closest in meaning to

- (A) moveable
- (B) insignificant
- (C) unchanging
- (D) diplomatic

Sample Answer

- (A)
- (B)
- (C)
- (D)

The passage states that John Quincy Adams demonstrated his unswerving belief “throughout his career.” This implies that the belief did not change. Therefore, you should choose answer (C).

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A Study of Catchwords from the Perspective of Speech Community

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Abstract—Catchwords are an important part of our language. As a kind of language as well as cultural phenomenon, it has much more linguistic and social-cultural values. Starting from the general review of literature, the paper here analyzes reasons of catchwords, explains its definition and several characteristics. It explores the formation of catchwords in both English and Chinese, highlighting that catchwords both in English and Chinese can be attributed to three sources. Finally, it points out that young people may be the mainstream of the use and renovation of catchwords.

Index Terms—speech community, catchwords, dynamic

I. INTRODUCTION

Great social changes always cause great changes in social cultures, in which, language is the most active and sensitive component. During recent years, China, as well as the western countries, has been going through considerable changes. These changes are reflected prominently in the use of words, the most dynamic part in language, among which catchwords show their salient features.

Catchwords exist all the time, especially thrive during the social and cultural reform periods. They always appear initially in some social group, and then spread to all walks of life. They appear in people's daily speeches, newspapers, and TV programs etc.

Catchwords are a kind of language phenomenon. Some changes and developments in the lexical can be discovered from the categorization of the words. Catchwords are a kind of popular culture phenomena as well. They convey notable characteristics of the time, reflecting modern social life and people's thoughts directly and subtly. Compared with the ordinary words, catchwords have much more linguistic and social-cultural values.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Ideas from foreign linguists

Speech community, as a core concept in empirical linguistics, is at the intersection of many principal problems in sociolinguistic theory and methodology (<http://www.users.york.ac.uk>). The study of speech communities has aroused the interest of numerous linguists for many years, at least since Leonard Bloomfield (1933) wrote a chapter on speech communities in his book *Language*. According to Bernard Spolsky (1998), for general linguistics, a speech community is all the people who speak a single language and so share notions of what is same or different in phonology or grammar. This would include any group of people, wherever they might be, and however remote might be the possibility of their ever wanting or being able to communicate with each other, all using the same language (ojs.academypublisher.com). Underlying it is the idea of a group of people who could, if they wanted, speak to each other (<http://www.uab.ro>).

Sociolinguists, however, find it generally more fruitful to focus on the language practices of a group of people who do in fact have the opportunity to interact and who, it often turns out, share not just a single language but a repertoire of languages or varieties. For the sociolinguist, the speech community is a complex interlocking network of communication whose members share knowledge about and attitudes towards the language use patterns of others as well as themselves. The idea that the members of a speech community share norms about the selection of varieties is important. Though they might not all know and use each of the varieties, they recognize the conditions under which other members of the community believe that it is appropriate to use each of them. A small social network forms a speech community, and so does a large metropolis or a country, a region, or a communication network (Gabriel, 2007). To be exact, there are typically four types of definitions.

1) The simplest definition is from John Lyons (1970) "Speech community: all the people who used a given language (or dialects)." This definition is not clear. According to this definition, "speech community may overlap (where there are bilingual individuals) and need not have any social or cultural unity" (Hudson, 2000). Lyons emphasizes "a given language" in his definition. That is to say, he values similar linguistic behavior, but ignores nonlinguistic elements.

2) The most influential definition puts the emphasis on shared attitudes and knowledge, rather than on shared linguistic behavior (<http://homepages.nyu.edu>). According to William Labov (1972), "speech community is not defined by any marked agreement in the use of language elements, so much as by participation in a set of shared norms; these norms may be observed in overt types evaluative behaviour, and by the uniformity of abstract patterns of variation

which are invariant in respect to particular levels of usage” (ucy.ac.cy). Labov holds the view that linguistic similarity is merely on the surface level, though the shared norms (the similar attitudes towards language and evaluation standards) are of great importance. It can be seen that this kind of definition puts emphasis on speech community as a group of people who feel themselves to be a community rather than a group, which only the linguists and outsiders can know about (<http://elkniga.info>).

3) The next definition shifts the emphasis from shared norms to interaction, which is offered by John Gumperz (1968), the founder of interactional sociolinguistics (<http://Ling.lancs.ac.uk>). In his opinion, “speech community: any human aggregate characterized by regular and frequent interaction means of a shared body of verbal signs and set off from similar aggregates by significant difference in language usage”(http://Ling.lancs.ac.uk). This definition is famous for “interaction” or “density of communication”. Gumperz thinks members of a speech community talk more to one another than they do to outsiders, then linguistic similarity appears gradually. As a result, the boundary of community will normally be in accordance with the pattern of communication. Gumperz agrees that the shared knowledge of purely linguistic norms is not enough; there are “a large number of shared values” (Hudson, 2000) among members of the same speech community. Besides Gumperz, Bloomfield (1933) offers similar definition.

4) Milroy’s approach emphasizes social network. Milroy (1980) believes that Labov’s definition is a very important innovation in research methodology, and it has great theoretical potential. Milroy’s research is based on social network, which is below speech community. The social network is the informal social relationship in an individuals’ communicative circle, such as relatives, neighbors and friends. She suggests that in a relatively closed society the social network is much more influential on the individual’s speech than social class emphasized by Labov, and individual’s sense of belonging is more direct in such a network.

2. Ideas from Chinese Linguists

Language is a semiotic system; language is the most important communication tool, a vehicle of thinking and culture (Dai weidong, 1998). The features determine that language is a social semiotic system.

According to Chen Yuan (1980), language and society are a pair of variables and they are changing accordingly. When changes, gradual or violent, take place, in social life, language will undoubtedly keep step with these changes. Language, as the most important communication tool, absolutely depends on society, and at the same time constantly changes and evolves with the development of society to meet the needs of communication. Therefore, any changes in society will be reflected in language.

Language plays a key role in human communication, and society is developing rapidly, so it is inevitable that language develops constantly. Whenever new things, new experiences and new ideas come into being, new terms are needed to express them. And some of them soon become popular among people. Among the three elements of language, vocabulary is most sensitive to changes of society. Since the very beginning of last century, great changes have taken place in all aspects of society. With the development of society, the vocabulary of both English and Chinese is developing at an unprecedented speed. A great many new catchwords have been spawned.

III. REASONS OF CATCHWORDS

As a semiotic system, language consists of form and meaning, and word is the combination of form and meaning, therefore the core of the semiotic system is vocabulary which has the function of naming objective things, phenomena and concepts, and at the same time provides materials for making sentences. As the embodiment of all the language elements, vocabulary is directly involved in communication. That means, vocabulary, on the one hand, is a system of physical signs; on the other hand, it plays a social function. The physical signs are a means to realize its social function. Whenever any change occurs in social life, it will be reflected in vocabulary. Words must correspond to things and ideas, or there is no need to exist. If there exist gaps in communication or information transmission when new things and new ideas appear, the creation of catchwords is required to fill in the gaps. The appearance of new things, new phenomena and new ideas force people to create new words and expressions, otherwise they have to explain these new things, new phenomena and new ideas in numerous words. The need to express new things and ideas is the main reason for catchwords.

Factors for the creation of new words fall into many respects, the most prominent of which are development of science and technology, changes in political and economic fields and people’s everyday life.

IV. DEFINITION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF CATCHWORDS

1. Various definitions

The term “catchword” has been defined from different perspectives. Several definitions from some well-established dictionaries are shown below:

---A catchy name or slogan. (<http://www.yourdictionary.com>)

---A favorite saying of a sect or political group. (<http://dictionary.reference.com>)

---A word or phrase that is often repeated by, or becomes connected with a particular organization, especially a political group. (<http://dictionary.cambridge.org>)

---A word or expression repeated until it becomes representative of a party, school, or point of view. (<http://>

encarta.msn.com)

—Popular word: a word or phrase that is so frequently used, often over a short period of time, that it comes to be identified with a particular feeling, quality, or idea. (<http://encarta.msn.com>)

Obviously, it is hard to define catchwords definitely, though many linguists at home and abroad offer their definitions. The slippery definition of catchwords has troubled all linguists working in the field. However, with the reference of many different definitions and some distinct features of catchwords shown from the description, we can conclude that catchwords refer to those words and phrases, which are fashionable and widely used on a large scale for a period of time in a given speech community, which, from a certain point of view, express people's values, ideas and state of mind and reflect social phenomena. They are used to achieve an air of informality and relaxation, so as to provide and reinforce social identity.

2. Features of Catchwords

In the eyes of Connie Eble(1996), catchword is an area of lexis in a permanent state of flux consisting of vivid and colorful words and phrases that characterize various social and professional groups, especially when these terms are used in a speech community (Connie Eble,1996). As a special language phenomenon, it has its own distinctive characteristics.

2.1 Dynamic

Catchwords are dynamic. Every word undergoes the same process: being produced, becoming popular, being ignored and becoming unpopular, being forgotten or assimilated as part of the common language. “There are but two ends for catchwords: disappearing, that is being eliminated in practical use; or being accepted into the daily vocabulary” (chenyuan, 1980).

The popular courses for catchwords are usually short. Their lives depend much on their “freshness”. Most catchwords show strong freshness, with lively time features. But after being repeated too much, they will become plain, even stereotyped. Then they will be discarded or be replaced by fresher ones. Most of them do not last very long, though the duration of their popularity usually ranges from about several years to several decades. For example, the word “bloomer”, which means “loose pant gathered at the knee, worn by women for cycling or swimming in the late 19th century”, used to be very popular in the early 1900s because that kind of pants were worn by nearly all American women. But now people seldom use this word

2.2 High-Frequency

Catchwords are popular during a certain period of time. Once introduced and spread, most people in a social group accept them and use them as frequently as possible. They become words of high frequency in people's daily communication. And they are also used a lot in mass media to lead the fashion and become eye-catching. They turn to be more and more popular. Of course, the high frequency is also relative. Different people use catchwords in different ways in accordance with their occupation, age, sex, education and way of talking. And the choices of these words also vary according to the contexts, situations and people with whom they are talking. So high frequency is just relative to those ordinary words with average frequency.

2.3 Derivable

Catchwords are derivational. When one word or sentence becomes popular, some similar words or sentences are usually derived from the original one. For example, ever since the word IQ (Intelligence Quotient) becomes popular, we have many more "Qs": EQ (Emotional Quotient), IQ (Love Quotient), SQ (Smile Quotient) and CQ(Charisma Quotient or Creation Quotient).

2.4 Enclosed

Some catchwords are only popular within a certain society or cultural group. Some are popular in many societies and cultural groups, but their meanings differ a lot. That makes catchwords comparatively enclosed in a specific cultural community, which brings about difficulties in cross-cultural communication. That is to say, these catchwords can't achieve the same intercourse effect in different cultural groups.

2.5 Slangy and Dialectical

Catchwords usually appear in a certain dialect. They are created by some particular social group, or some low-educated social classes. Then as more and more people are using them, their influences get extended. So catchwords have a lot of dialectical characteristics. Catchwords in different places always reflect different regional cultures. Since the creators and users of catchwords are mainly common citizens, catchwords are thought to mainly carry the notes of so called “lower” social culture. No matter how commendatory or derogatory they are, they reflect the interests and values of ordinary people. Besides, catchwords are much more used in spoken languages. They are colloquial and not elegant sometimes. And the contents are much limited in daily life. They are mostly concerned with the things and phenomena that people care about.

Catchwords are a mirror of social life. They reflect all its dimensions. We can learn the local culture and psychology of a certain place from these words. Compared with written language, which is serious, formal and strict, catchwords are usually more popular and common.

V. FORMATION OF CATCHWORDS IN ENGLISH AND CHINESE

According to Algeo (1991), there are six basic etymological sources for English new words: creating, borrowing,

combining, shortening, blending and shifting. Each of those six sources, however, has a number of important subtypes. In addition to the major six sources, there are some other types of incomplete etymology. Though Chinese and English belong to different language families, the sources for Chinese catchwords can be traced in the same way. For example, Chenyuan (1980) gives five different ways of creating new words in Chinese: combination (the novel concatenation of morpheme, often on analogy with existing words), abbreviation (shortened forms of preexisting words or phrases), borrowing (words whose sound or meaning is imported from another language), shifting (existing words used with a new meaning) and “creating numerical formulae”. Therefore, the catchwords both in English and Chinese can be attributed to three sources: by creating catchwords through word formation processes, by borrowing words from foreign languages, and by adding new meanings to the existing words, two of which will be discussed in the following in detail.

A. *Creating Catchwords through Word Formation*

Creating catchwords means creating words based on native word elements such as letters, sounds, morphemes, roots, affixes, bases, and words. Usually, native speakers can easily understand a new word. This ability derives in part from the fact that there is a lot of regularity in word formation of a language. In the following, some basic word formation processes will be explored by which catchwords are created in English and Chinese.

1. Compounding

In English compounding is the formation of new words by combining two or more bases. It has been a source of catchwords in English since the earliest times, and it is still a productive way to create catchwords in present-day English. In modern Chinese, it is the most important way of creating catchwords.

Catchwords formed in this way are called compounds. English compounds are written in three ways: being hyphenated, solid, or open. For instance, easy-listening, superhighway, emotional quotient are all compounds. Chinese compounds have no such morphological changes.

English compounds may be made up of more than two words such as electronic whiteboard, direct-to-consumer, golden handcuffs, stay-at-home, cold dark matter, back-to-the-basics.

Compounding is a traditional Chinese way to create catchwords. Nowadays, it is still the most important way. Chinese compounds are composed of two or more morphemes. The morphemes may be free ones. That means catchwords are the combination of words just like those in 热卖, 高聘, 网卡, 攀升, 朝阳产业, 白领, 下海. They may be bound ones. That means these components can not be used independently. In such words as 长项, 掌控, 揽储, 采信, some components are not words and they cannot be used as units in sentences. Most compounds are disyllabic for example, 晨练, 成教, 冲顶, 出镜, 出局, 出炉, but there are many compounds composed of three, four, or even more syllables, for example, 知情权, 电子战, 防火墙, 高新技术, 个人通信, 工薪阶层, 调制解调器.

2. Shortening

In English, shortening is the formation of catchwords by omitting part of an old word. The range of English shortening is flexible. In a narrow sense, it only refers to acronym. In a broad sense, it may include clipping, blending and even backformation.

2.1 Acronym

Acronym is a process of forming catchwords by joining the initial letters of different words. Words formed in this way are called initialisms or acronyms, depending on the pronunciation of the words (<http://www.qqcate.cn>).

Initialisms are words formed from the initial letters of words and pronounced letter by letter. In the case of C.O.D. the letters are separated by full stops, but in most cases, they have no full stops between the letters.

Letters may represent full words, for example, VOA (Voice of America), BBS (bulletin board system), CALL (computer-assisted language learning), PWA (person with AIDS), LQ (leadership quotient), NEW (nonexplosive warfare).

Acronyms are words formed from the initial letters of words and pronounced as words such as Dink (Double Income No Kids), CEPA (Closer Economic Partnership Agreement), SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome), DEWA (dual employed with kids).

Letters may represent all constituents in a compound or just parts of a word, for example, DVD (digital videodisc), HDTV (high-definition television), APEC (Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum), WMD (Weapons of Massive Destruction).

2.2 Clipping

Clipping is the simplest form of shortening by cutting a part of the original and using what remains instead. The clipped part may be the front, or the back, or both the front and back, or the middle part of a word. Front clipping examples are mobile (automobile), zine (magazine), net (internet), bot (robot), while app (application program), cell (cellphone), and expo (exposition) are back clipping examples. Front and back clipping examples are script (prescription), and shrink (headshrinker) (<http://www.tde.net.cn>).

In modern times, people tend to be economical in writing and speech to keep up with the fast tempo of the new life style. To save time one is likely to clip words that are frequently used (<http://www.tde.net.cn>). They are frequent in informal language, especially in spoken language, as in the campus use of gym, econ, trig and grad for gymnasium, economics, trigonometry and graduate respectively. Most of them preserve a colloquial flavor and are limited to the special vocabularies of occupational people, such as admin, app, demo, dev and droid, which are used for administrator,

application program, demonstration, developer and android and circulate among the young IT technicians in Silicon Valley.

2.3 Blending

Blending is a process in which clipping and combining occur simultaneously. A blend is a word made by joining two or more forms but omitting at least part of one, for example, cobot (cooperative robot), smist (smoke+mist), digiverse (digital+universe), videomatic (video+automatic) etc.

In the past, blends were regarded as crack jokes. With time passing, catchwords produced by blending got to be accepted in writing related to newspapers and magazines, and in most times lost their humour, e.g. interpol (international police), autoindustry (automobile industry), petrodollar (petroleum +dollar), infowar (information+war), Siliwood (Silicon+Hollywood), infobahn (information+bahn). Because blends are economic and simple in form, they are also used widely in science and technology, for example, biorhythm (biological + rhythm), copytron (copy+electron), lidar (light radar), pragmatic (program+automatic).

In Chinese, shortening means creating catchwords by taking some characters from a long word or phrase, for example, 福彩(福利彩票), 车展(汽车展览), 大本(大学本科), 自考(自学考试), 外教(外籍教师), 三讲(讲文明, 讲政治, 讲正气), 世博会(世界博览会).

B. Creating Catchwords by Borrowing Words from Foreign Languages

“Languages, like cultures, are rarely sufficient to themselves. Then necessities of interaction bring the speakers of one language into direct or indirect contact with those of neighboring or culturally dominant languages” (Bernard, 1998). Linguistic borrowing takes place in every level of language. Among the three elements of a language, vocabulary is the most susceptible to the outside disturbance. Lexical borrowing is one of the sources of catchwords. We cannot find even one language immune from heterogeneous linguistic elements, especially when the whole world is becoming a global village in the present information age (<http://congress.aks.ac.kr>).

Lexical borrowing is one important aspect of linguistic borrowing, the study of which is an interdisciplinary subject incorporating linguistics, sociology, anthropology and history. Numerous scholars have devoted countless pages to the study of it. The most authoritative theoretical study of the subject is still Haugen's *The Analysis of Linguistic Borrowing* in which he defines borrowing as “the attempted reproduction in one language of patterns previously found in another” (Haugen, 1950). Here, the language patterns involve the pronunciation, spelling, morphology and meaning. So lexical borrowing may happen in every aspect of a word (<http://www.lotpublications.nl>).

Haugen thinks that borrowing involves either or both of two processes: importation and substitution. The adoption of foreign words in any language may take place in different ways and result in various types of loans in the extent of nationalization. According to Haugen, loanwords in English include a number of types, such as foreign words, loanwords, semantic loans, hybrid compounds and loan translation.

Such a division applies to borrowing between languages with different writing systems like English and Chinese in most cases as well as to borrowing between languages with similar writing systems. In Chinese, borrowed words usually fall into the following groups: transliterations, which involve the phonetic transfer and belong to the above-mentioned loanwords, e.g. 托福, 迪斯科, 秀 which correspond respectively to *TOEFL*, *disco*, *show*; loanblends, which are phonetic loans with autochthonous elements and belong to the above-mentioned hybrid compound, e.g. 乌龙球, 呼啦圈 corresponding respectively to *own goal*, *hula hoop*; loan translations, which, like English loan translations, involves the substitutions of native morphemes for foreign ones motivated by the similarity of meaning, e.g. 软着陆, 金领, 年薪 which correspond respectively to *softland*, *gold collar*, *annual salary*; graphic loans, like semantic loans in English, only possible if the two languages share the same ideographic writing systems, like Chinese and Japanese do (partially), which are substitutions of foreign meanings for those native morphemes motivated by a similarity of writing forms, e.g. 写真, 新干线, 寿司, 料理 which cannot, as Japanese words created with Chinese characters, be inferred from their components, corresponding respectively to existing Chinese words 故事, 生鱼片, 饮食; foreign words, which are more and more common in Chinese, e.g. *DVD*, *DNA*, *GDP*, *WTO*, *Internet*, *Windows*, *Office*.

VI. CONCLUSION

A speech community is all the people who speak a single language and so share notions of what is same or different in phonology or grammar. The speech community, as well as our society, is in continuous change. The need to express new things and ideas is the main reason for catchwords (<http://ojs.academypublisher.com>).

Catchwords are an important part of language development, and they are indicators of the development and changes of society. As a kind of popular culture phenomena as well, they convey notable characteristics of the time, reflecting modern social life and people's thoughts directly and subtly. Of all social groups, the young may be the most prone to the use and renovation of catchwords. They exhibit great social dynamism and are adaptive to changes in clothes, appearance, style, and also in speech. They have little political power, but they may use catchwords as a countercultural tool, even as a weapon against established authority and conventions (Connie Eble, 1996). In our modern and cultivated societies, students constitute one large subgroup within the young that deserves special study, for they frequently develop a special kind of vocabulary (Connie Eble, 1996). As a teacher, getting familiar with catchwords is sure to be

helpful and valuable for his communication with his students.

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An Investigation of Iranian EFL Learners' Attitudes towards the Use of Critical Awareness Techniques in Reading English Academic Texts

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Abstract—The main purpose of this study was to investigate the Iranian EFL students' attitudes towards the use of critical awareness techniques in academic reading. To this end, 30 Iranian students who were studying English for several years were selected as the subjects of the study. The selected participants were given an introduction to the course. The participants went through a course in which ten reading comprehension passages were covered. In teaching reading comprehension passages to the language learners, a critical-based framework was selected and adopted based on the tenets of critical reading as well as Van Dijk's (2000) socio cognitive model. In effect, in teaching the reading passages the students' consciousness and awareness were raised to encourage the students to get a deeper understanding of the texts. The subjects discussed their experiences from going through a critical-based approach. In effect, the subjects argued about the advantages and disadvantages of the worked model in terms of the learning and retention of the materials. The results of the study indicated that the students had a positive perspective towards the critical awareness techniques utilized in the academic reading passages. The subjects emphasized that English language learners need to learn diverse strategies to improve their reading comprehension rate. Effectively, the results of the study indicated that the students prefer to be taught utilizing a critical-based approach to be able to improve their critical thinking towards the perspectives and ideologies behind the texts. They added that consciousness raising equips them to be able to get access to the profound meanings of the texts.

Index Terms—critical reading, perspectives, ideologies, reading comprehension, consciousness raising

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the main purposes follow by curriculum designers as well as course designers is preparing students to use English for studies, travelling and for social and professional international contacts. Reading comprehension, as one of the main skills is emphasized by different courses, which has caused severe difficulties for learners or instructors .

In effect, acquiring the reading abilities demands efforts on the part of both language instructors and learners. Apparently, discourse analysis (DA) suggests highly influential answers to the needs of the language learners. Contrary to the fact that DA is developed during 1950s; not much research has been conducted into the ways DA could pave the way for language courses or syllabuses. Guy Cook's (1989) Discourse was an initiator into the application of discourse analysis into language teaching, such as McCarthy (1991), McCarthy and Ronald (1994), Celce-Murcia as well as Celce-Murcia and Olshtain, (2000).

In spite of the broadness of discourse analysis, language teaching seems to adopt five areas, i.e. cohesion, coherence, information structure, turn-taking and critical discourse analysis (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000, p. 7).

Norman Fairclough (2003) distinguishes "textually-oriented discourse analysis" from "discourse analysis that is not concerned with the linguistic features of the text" (p. 3). Despite a vast variety of research on the domain of discourse analysis, DA was not considered as an instrument used by language teacher or language learners.

One of the striking areas which seem to be beneficial for language teaching is the awareness rising which CDA may provide in reading comprehension. Apparently, no investigation has tried to study the attitudes of the EFL learners regarding learning reading skill by resorting to the principles of critical discourse analysis. One of the chief techniques which may be utilized to investigate the attitude of learners regarding using of critical awareness techniques in academic reading is focused-group interview .

Considering the aforementioned issue, the present study resorting to focus group interview tries to investigate the attitudes of the Iranian EFL learners toward using critical awareness techniques in teaching academic reading passages.

Significance of the Study

Hence, by taking into attention the issue that teaching reading comprehension passages are so challenging; it is conceivable that the traditional approaches which are emphasizing on passive reading-based activities cannot be

responsive. Effectively, by considering the potentials critical discourse analysis present to improve reading comprehension skill of the student; conducting the present study seems to be crucial in order to pave the way for implementing these critical-based approaches into pedagogy.

In effect, the present study has binary purposes; first, it aims to investigate the efficiency of teaching academic reading using critical approaches and second investigating the attitudes of learners toward using critical awareness techniques in academic reading.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There are different definitions of “discourse” based on the context in which it may be applied. Van Dijk (1997) considering discourse as a form of spoken language (e.g. what is presented in lectures, the ideas of certain schools of thoughts like contemporary philosophies), argues that “discourse” is, in fact, a particular way of language using and of social interaction in communication that is a dimension of discourse analysis (e.g. interviews, conversations, meetings, letters, diaries, propaganda, discussions, laws, contracts, political discourses, songs, poetry, and news).

In fact, discourse is influencing and influenced by the complex social events in which language is used for communication and expressing feelings, ideas, or beliefs to others (Van Dijk, 1998). Hence, Van Dijk (1998) identifies three dimensions of language use, the communication of beliefs (cognition), and interaction in social situation for discourse (p. 2). In other words, Van Dijk (2006) taking a multidisciplinary orientation in discourse studies deals with socio-cognitive approach in which mental representations, and the processes language users go through are manifested through the relationships between the structures of discourse and interaction in communicative events in a social structure. Hence, discourse is recognizable by manifesting the connections among language use, beliefs, and social interactions (Van Dijk, 1998).

Widdowson (2000), as another famous researcher considers “discourse” as “the pragmatic process of meaning negotiation” (p.8). Fairclough and Wodak (1997) emphasize that discourse involves language use, meaning-making in the social process, and social action which are “socially constitutive” and “socially shaped” (p. 276). Fairclough (2001) preferring semiosis tries to deal with “discourse” in a different way. In fact, Fairclough (2001) observes semiosis as a distinguishing element in manipulating world action, interaction and identity construction resorting to “perspectives of different groups of social actors” (p. 164). Fairclough and Wodak (1997) argue that discourses “are partly realized in ways of using language, but partly in other ways”, for example visual semiosis (p. 261). Considering the fact that Van Dijk’s (2000) model is selected to be molded based on the principles of critical reading; it seems to be crucial to present a precise argument of the concept of discourse and the related issues.

A. *Discourse and Cognition*

One of the issues attended by Van Dijk in dealing with discourse is related to the way through which discourse and cognition are related. Van Dijk (1998) emphasizes that discourse and cognition are related through the cognitive representation people construct in their minds—using codes, features or meaning.

Hence, brain goes through a complex bundle of processes Van Dijk, (1998) through which personal experiences and knowledge are formed. Van Dijk (1998) exemplifies “long-term memory, searching for information, comparing structures that are available in working memory, and building structures by adding, deleting, rearranging, or connecting information” as a few among others (p. 293). Van Dijk emphasizes that these complex bundles of processes are executed in mili-seconds, mechanically, unconsciously.

In other words, Van Dijk (1998) stresses that discourse cannot be analyzed comprehensively without considering the cognitive framework. To this end, Van Dijk (1998) argues that general information along with the context-related issues need to be analyzed and interpreted, stored in memory, and classified in relation to both previous and new models of situations.

So, there is no doubt that the fragments of situation models and relevant information of communicative situations be fundamental for Van Dijk (1998). Furthermore, Van Dijk (1998) underlines socially shared knowledge and beliefs as influential issues for successful and efficient communication. In addition, Van Dijk has not ignored the role of culture and argues that the supposed meanings for an extract of discourse should be interpreted through what is possible in a particular culture. Hence, for Van Dijk (1998), cognitive processes mean social dimensions which are acquired, employed, or changed through verbal or non-verbal interaction.

B. *Discourse and Society*

Van Dijk (1998), in effect, stresses on the connections between language and society as a demanding features of any discourse. Van Dijk (1998) clarifies the point that language plays a significant role in society through which the identities, cultural group, or community through using language as a communicative medium are expressed.

In fact, discourse is crucial in representing and constructing the characteristics of the socio-cultural context. Van Dijk (1998) argues that discourse may shed light on the way through which language is used by a particular group, organization, culture or society. Hence, discourse may demystify the complicated arrangements and categorizations of interaction formed in a specific context, society and culture. Van Dijk (1998) attends to discourses a way to determine the ideological perspectives.

Considering the fact that any ideology demands shared knowledge, communal interests and individual practices; attending to discourse analysis means dealing with the perspective and ideologies of the members of any group or society involved in a discourse in terms of what they do and why they do in that way, their norms for goodness and badness as well as their social positions, etc. (Van Dijk, 1998).

For Van Dijk (1998), discourse means ideologies and social groups as a cycle, in which discourse is understood, shared, abstracted and generalized. Van Dijk (1998) points out that any social group having their own specific way in interpreting understanding, and categorizing different phenomena; argued that the culture—not independent from this issue—shares common senses, procedures, strategies, structures and processes.

C. Discourse and Power

The third dimension which is considered by Van Dijk in dealing with discourse analysis is related to the concept of Power which has influenced the social cognition. Power as a fundamental dimension of discourse affects the way through which language is used to represent the individual identities, social identities, classes, institutions and the relationships between the dominant and the less powerful members of any society (Van Dijk, 1998). For Van Dijk (1997, 1998, 2000, 2004), power means social power which highlights the relations which exist between and among groups. Van Dijk (1998) argues that power needs to be considered since it may reveal some fundamental dimensions of hegemony which in its turn uncovers the socio-economic, legal or political power, ascribed to the elites.

To this end, Van Dijk (1998) recognizes six ways through which the elites have grabbed the power, i.e. forced, persuasive, alleged hegemony, controlling the context, the access people have to certain discourse, and the characteristics of the structures used. Accordingly, discourse, for Van Dijk (1998), refers to an instrument for getting benefits through manipulating language to influence the intended people.

D. Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) a version of discourse analysis is especially utilized in dealing with social issues (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997) to manifest "the relations between discourse and power" (van Dijk, 2001, p. 363). Widdowson (2000) argues that CDA is a framework for revealing the implicit ideologies covered in the texts. Gee (2004) considers CDA

an approach to language analysis that considers texts as parts of specific social practices that have political implications about issues of status, solidarity, and of distribution of social goods and power (pp. 32-33).

Heros (2009), on the other hand, argues that

CDA examines how texts represent and construct reality within a specific ideological system through implicit messages based on what is said and left unsaid (p. 173).

Generally speaking, CDA is a perspective of discourse analysis in which the ideological performances are manifested through revealing the manipulations imposed on the discourse. Hence, CDA fights against the naturalized inequalities in which a side has privileges, power and access to goods and services in society and the other side is deprived of. In other words, CDA is a discipline which argues that the way language has direct association with why an ideological interpretation is considered as reality and convincing one and not the other way around.

Effectively, CDA has taken two directions of linguistic and texture (Rogers, Malancharuvil-Berkes, Mosley, Hui, and Garro Joseph, 2005). Rogers, et al. (2005) argue that Halliday's (1960) *Systemic Functional Linguistics* (SFL) is the foundation of CDA. Rogers, et al. (2005) add that any discourse is analyzed using CDA and resorting to the fundamentals of functional grammar in terms of three functions of ideational, textual and interpersonal.

E. Van Dijk's Model

Van Dijk's (1998) Socio-Cognitive model is similar to Fairclough's three-dimensional model in terms of a triangulation perspective; however, in Van Dijk's model, it is the cognition instead of member resources that mediates between discourse and society. Using Van Dijk's model, the linguistic features which exist in the texts (spoken or written) may provide some traces of the elements entangled in psychological model of memory as well as in the *frame* taken from cognitive science. Van Dijk's model especially is crucial in analyzing discourse in terms of stereotypes, ethnic prejudice, and power abuse by elites as well as resistance by dominated groups in the media.

Hence, Van Dijk (1995, 1998, 2000, and 2006) has presented a theoretical framework for analyzing discourse on the basis that ideology and discourse cannot be adequately studied unless considering cognition and society. Van Dijk (1998) argues that a socio-cognitive approach "is able to explain how ideologies monitor practices of social actors in the society" (p. 23). Van Dijk's (2001) considers cognition as a central element which relates discourse structures and social structures. He stresses that discourse and society are mediated through cognition.

In other words, social dimension tries to answer the question about "why people develop and use ideologies in the first place" (Van Dijk, 1998, p. 24). Finally, the last part of Van Dijk's triangular model is discourse which refers a communicative event, composes of

conversational interactions, written text, as well as associated gestures, face work, typographical layout, images and any other 'semiotic' or multimedia dimension of signification (Van Dijk, 1998, p. 98).

There are different versions of Van Dijk's Model (e.g. 1998, 2000, 2004. etc.) among which Van Dijk's (2000) model is composed of forty-two discursive strategies for analyzing discourse to demystify the ideology.

F. Focus Group: Theoretical Definition

Focus group which was originally called focused interview or group depth interview was developed after World War II for examining the responses of the audiences to the radio programs (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990). In effect, focus group may be considered as a useful instrument for understanding howness or whyness of people's beliefs regarding a topic or program. It is worth mentioning that focus group comprises a group of individuals with common interest or characteristics who are interacting with each other focusing on an issue (Webb & Kevern, 2001). Furthermore, Nyamathi and Schuler (1990, p.1283) clarifies that focus group is, in effect, "a qualitative method which bears similarities to ethnography, grounded theory, phenomenology and participant observation".

Hence, a focus group is recommended to be composed of 6-12 people (Asbury, 1995). In effect, the selected participants for a focus group should be selected based on the common characteristics relating to the aimed topic or issue. Furthermore, the researcher's duty is to create a context that encourages different perceptions to share their points of view, without any pressure on the participants to vote, plan or reach consensus (Krueger, 1988). It is worth mentioning that the focus group is needed to be conducted several times with similar types of participants in order to identify the attitudes and perceptions of the participants regarding the raised issues. In other words, the discussions need to be analyzed systematically by the researcher to have an accurate presentation of clues and insights regarding the points of view presented by the participants.

Hence, focus group, according to Barbour and Kitzinger (1999), may provide some information regarding the way the participants think or feel about a particular topic; the reasons for which are evaluating; planning and improving the old programs; and finally, developing strategies for outreach. However, focus group enjoys some certain advantages mentioned above, the focus group may suffer from validity of the information provided by the participants or the result of a focus group may not be generalizable to other groups of people (Goss, 1998). Hence, focus group method is not considered a valid way to find out how much progress an individual participant has made toward his or her own goals (Goss, 1998).

The main weakness of the focus group is related to the fact that a very small number of people are involved in any focus group; accordingly, the results regarding views and perceptions presented by the participants may not be generalizable since, the group is not a random sample (Kitzinger & Barbour, 1999).

Generally, focus group has its own advantages and disadvantages. One of the main advantages of any focus group is related to the natural interaction which happens among the participants which highlights the face validity along the flexibility it may provide for the researcher. However, less control over group; the information provided by the participants as well as the uncertainty regarding the provided information by the participants may be considered as the main disadvantages of a focus group.

Krueger (1988) argues about three phases for conducting a focus group, i.e. conceptualization, interview as well as analysis and reporting. In the conceptualization phase, the purpose, participants in terms of the characteristics, as well as plan and resources are determined. In the interview phase, the questions are developed (5-6 questions), logically arranged and systematically piloted. Analyzing and reporting phase, on the other hand, composed of analysis and reporting of the results.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participant Selection

The participants were 30 intermediate language learners from two language institutes in Khoy (Roshd-e-Bartar & Rezvan), with 15 students in each gender (15 females and 15 males). It is worth mentioning that the present study is conducted based on an empirical study and the attitudes of the learners regarding the used approach resorting to focus group and this issue highlights the unique feature of this study.

Hence, all the selected subjects were between 18-23 years old with the same native language, i.e. Turkish. All of them were similar in terms of the credit hours they have passed. Effectively, all the subjects were considered to be intermediate since all of them were the language learners of the same institute who were studying in the same level and whose score on the semester's exam showed that they are intermediate.

In effect, the classes were held for two two-hour session per week for a total of 20 hours over 5 weeks. The class schedule for the four groups was started at 10-12 am, the first group (males) on Mondays and Thursdays, and the second group (females) on Sundays and Thursdays.

B. Materials

The following presents the list of the covered reading passages in the course:

- ▶ Preventing Illness
- ▶ Marriage and Family
- ▶ The Study of Twins
- ▶ Gestural Communication
- ▶ The Nonverbal and Verbal: First Encounter
- ▶ Friendship Functions

C. The Model of Study

Figure 3.1 shows Van Dijk's (2000) socio-cognitive model utilized in the present study. In effect, the selected reading comprehension passages were taught to two groups of females and males using a critical-based approach selected and adopted based on Van Dijk's (2000) Socio-cognitive model. It is worth mentioning that the two groups went through a critical approach selected and adopted from the Van Dijk's (2000) model to meet the needs of the study in which the students' awareness and consciousness were raised—for example, they pay attention to the micro-strategies applied in presenting the texts (strategies like hyperbole, explanation, etc.). The following diagram illustrates the adopted method in conducting the present study:

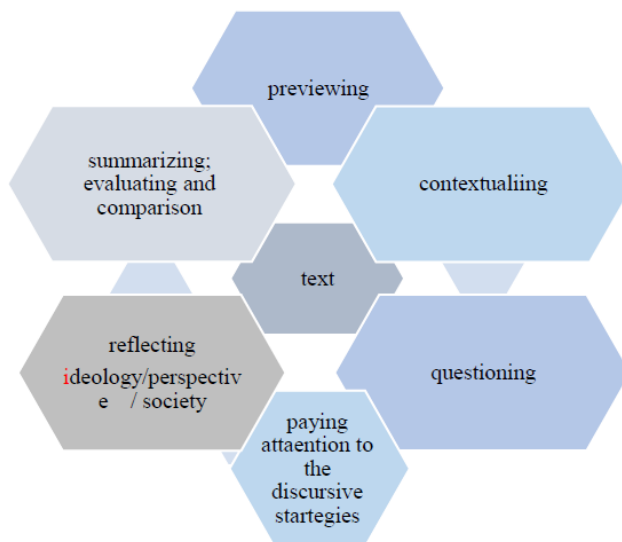


Figure 3.1: The Model of Analysis designed based on Van Dijk's (2000) Socio-cognitive model

D. Procedures (Data Collection)

In conducting the present study, in every two sessions, one reading comprehension passage was covered. In teaching reading comprehension passages to the language learners, a critical discourse analysis framework was selected and adopted. In effect, in teaching the reading passages, using Van Dijk's (2000) socio-cognitive model, the students' consciousness and awareness were raised to encourage the students to get a deeper understanding of the texts. At the end of the course, the groups went through a focus group to discuss their experiences from going through a critical-based approach. In effect, the subjects discussed the advantages and disadvantages of the worked model in terms of the learning and retention of the materials. The following sheds light on the questions which were posed to the participants in the focus group:

Q1: Did you get satisfaction from the utilized methodology in teaching reading comprehension? If so, why and how?

Q2: Did you get more understanding from the reading passage utilizing the critical-based model? If so, why and how?

Q3: Did you receive more interaction with the passages which were instructed? Support your responses?

Q4: Did you prefer a critical-based approach for learning? Why yes? Why not?

Effectively, 30 female and male students (15 males and 15 females) were instructed in terms of reading comprehension passages. In effect, they received instructions on reading comprehension of 6 selected passages from the *Academic Encounters*. Hence, the both groups of females and males went under instruction on ten reading comprehension passages selected randomly from the textbook. The participants' background knowledge was raised based on the topics of the selected reading comprehension passages. Furthermore, the participants were expected to access to deeper meaning of the passages, i.e. hidden perspective and ideology behind the texts. Finally, the participants took a test at the end of the course followed by a focus group to share their ideas regarding the course.

The first questions were asked from the participants was *whether the participants got satisfaction from the utilized methodology in teaching reading comprehension*. The next question which was posed to the subjects was *whether they got more understanding from the reading passage utilizing the critical-based model*. The third question which was posed was *whether they received more interaction with the passages instructed to them*. And finally *whether they prefer a critical-based approach for learning*. The mentioned four questions were stimulus-raising questions to elicit the attitudes of the learners regarding the course in which the learners had to provide some bases for saying yes or no.

The students took part in the focus group to share their ideas and attitudes regarding the course. It is worth mentioning that the participants attended in two focus groups—one for females and one for males. The students had to answer the questions firstly in a yes-no fashion. After that they had to support their ideas using their reasons and rationales.

IV. RESULTS

The subjects were firstly asked *whether the participants got satisfaction from the utilized methodology in teaching reading comprehension*.

The following table shows that perspectives of the learners ranging the first question. As the table shows 30% of the participants did not get satisfaction from the course; whereas, 70% had positive attitudes regarding the course. It is worth mentioning that the researcher coded, tabulated and numerated the provided the data based on which he determined the percentages.

TABLE 1:
THE ATTITUDES OF THE PARTICIPANTS REGARDING THE FIRST QUESTION

Category	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
no	9	30.0	30.0	30.0
yes	21	70.0	70.0	100.0
total	30	100.0	100.0	

The participants who had a negative attitude regarding the course argued that course was not administered based on their expectation. They mentioned that the course was much demanding and challenging for them since, they had to understand the reading text thoroughly. They added that they were accustomed to the reading courses in which they were supposed to answer the raised questions correctly; whereas, in this course, they had to analyze the utilized vocabularies and structures in order to elucidate the perspective and ideology covered in the text. Furthermore, they criticized the course based on the fact that they had to allocate so much time for preparing the lesson for the next session.

The participants who had a positive attitude regarding the course argued, on the other hand, that course was so interesting and challenging that they enjoy from learning. They mentioned that the course, however, was demanding and challenging; it gave them more understanding from the reading passage. They added that they understood the reasons for utilizing some particular vocabularies and structures in the academic texts and not in other types of genres.

In effect, the participants who had a positive attitude regarding the course mentioned that the analysis of vocabularies and structures to elucidate the perspective and ideology covered in the text was the most interesting parts of the course. Furthermore, they suggested that some similar courses should be administered for other skills to help them to improve their English proficiency.

The next question which was discussed between the participants was whether they got more understanding from the reading passage utilizing the critical-based model. However, in posing the first question some learners expressed understanding as a positive characteristic of the course; the students discussed their understating with reasons for this question.

As the table shows about 33% of the participants observed no difference between the course and the traditional one in terms of improving the understanding of the learners. Furthermore, about 66.7% had another view. They considered understanding as a positive characteristic of the course.

TABLE 2:
THE ATTITUDES OF THE PARTICIPANTS REGARDING THE SECOND QUESTION

Category	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
no	10	33.3	33.3	33.3
yes	20	66.7	66.7	100.0
total	30	100.0	100.0	

The participants who had a negative attitude regarding the course argued that course was time-consuming in which they had to pay attention to many items. They mentioned that the course, however, claimed to improve the understanding of the reading passages; it was not successful; since, they did not use their understanding in an authentic situation merging with other skills. They added that they expected that they read to find some particular information or to get a broad understanding of the reading passage; however, the reading courses demanded them to analyze the linguistic features of the texts for uncovering the perspective and ideology covered in the text which they could not understand the relation between linguistic items and ideology of the writer. Furthermore, they criticized the course that had focused on text analysis which is far from reading comprehension.

The participants who had positive attitudes regarding the course argued, on the other hand, that course was successful in raising consciousness which had a direct relation with reading comprehension. They emphasized that the course elucidated the connotative meaning of the words and the structures which innovatively attempted to teach the students the play of words and language manipulation through which a single phenomenon may be represented differently based on the attitudes of a writer. Furthermore, they pointed out that they learned that any genre demands a particular set of terminologies and structures as well as collocations.

The next question which was discussed between the participants was *whether they received more interaction with the passages instructed to them*. The students in the same vein had to answer in a yes-no fashion.

As the table shows about 33% of the participants considered no difference between the course and the traditional one in terms of improving the interactions of the learners with the texts. Furthermore, about 66.7% had another view. They

considered more interaction with the text as a positive characteristic of the course.

TABLE 3:
THE ATTITUDES OF THE PARTICIPANTS REGARDING THE THIRD QUESTION

Category	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
no	9	33.3	33.3	33.3
yes	21	66.7	66.7	100.0
total	30	100.0	100.0	

The participants who had a negative attitude regarding the more interaction with the texts using the course argued that the only things they had to do were analyzing the linguistic features of the texts. They mentioned that the course was demanding in such a way that they just did mechanical analysis without any situations to use the strategies in reading texts. They added that since they were accustomed to read for locating some particular information or getting a broad understanding of the reading passage; they became puzzled.

The participants who had positive attitudes regarding the more interaction of the course with the texts argued that the course was successful in which the learners had reasons for utilizing diverse micro- and macro-strategies. Hence, they mentioned that the course focusing on the perspectives and ideologies behind the texts try to elucidate the connotative meaning of the words and the structures.

The next question which was discussed among the participants was *whether they preferred a critical-based approach for learning*. They students in the same vein had to answer in a yes-no fashion.

As the table shows about 30% of the participants didn't prefer a critical-based course for learning reading skill. Furthermore, about 70% had another view. They preferred a critical-based approach.

TABLE 4:
THE ATTITUDES OF THE PARTICIPANTS REGARDING THE FOURTH QUESTION

Category	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
no	9	30.0	30.0	30.0
yes	21	70.0	70.0	100.0
total	30	100.0	100.0	

The participants who had a negative attitude towards using critical-based approaches argued that they were accustomed to accept anything they read as garbeted and it is challenging for them to question anything they encountered in the reading passages. Furthermore, they emphasized that mechanical analysis of the linguistic features is not a guarantee for a better understanding of the reading passage. They also pointed out that the information regarding the perspectives or ideologies of the texts was not directly included to the texts and it is so demanding to locate it.

The participants who preferred a critical-based approach argued that a critical-based approach teaches the learners that using any type of vocabularies or structures has a specific reason. Furthermore, they emphasized that English language learners need to learn diverse strategies to use in their reading tasks. Moreover, they stated that the critical-based courses focusing on the perspectives and ideologies behind the texts equipped the learners to get access to the profound meanings of the texts.

To measure the participants' attitudes towards the use of critical awareness techniques in academic reading, students were asked several direct questions. Whether the course was a successful and whether they preferred this course instead of the traditional ones which they were supposed to answer in a *yes* or *no* format. The ones who answered *yes* were asked to numerate the positive features of the course they went through and the ones who said *no* were asked to numerate the negative features of the course comparing the traditional ones. As the table shows most of the participants about 70% had positive attitudes regarding the course.

Four 90-minute focus groups and 10 two-hour instructional course were conducted with Iranian English language learners in 2014. A total of 30 Iranian intermediate English Learners participated in the study. The sample included both females and males with the age range between 18-23 from two English language Institutes in Khoy.

The subjects who were 15 females and 15 males underwent a twenty-hour instructional course in which ten reading passages which selected randomly from the *Academic Encounters* series were covered during five weeks. It is worth mentioning that the course was separately held for female and male participants because of the cultural constraints of our society. Following the instruction, the two groups of females and males took part in two 90-minute focus groups in which they discussed their attitudes regarding the course they went through in terms of the way they were instructed.

The responses of the participants were coded and descriptively were analyzed which showed that nearly 70 percent of the responses were of a positive opinion with respect to the critical-based instruction for reading comprehension. Effectively, nearly 70 percent of the participants argued about the critical-based method as being interesting, challenging, and successful in consciousness rising as well as improving understanding and finally being interactive-based.

V. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

The main objective of the study was to investigate the attitudes of the subjects towards the use of critical awareness techniques in the academic texts. Hence, the study utilizing awareness techniques in teaching reading comprehension

tried to investigate the attitudes of the learners. The participants who had positive attitudes regarding the critical awareness techniques argued that a better understanding and getting access to the deepest meaning of the text was the positive characteristics of the methodology used in teaching reading comprehension. Critical language awareness (CLA) rooted in language awareness (LA) refers to a mental and internal capacity emerged as a movement in the UK in the 1980s.

The study tried to teach reading comprehension utilizing innovative models based on the tenets of critical reading and critical discourse analysis. In effect, the study was conducted based on the principles of language awareness—a field of study which refers to the motivation and conscious attention to the language by individuals, especially the learners (Koupaei, Rahimi, & Shams, 2010).

It is worth mentioning that language awareness was developed as a reaction to mainstream trends of research in which Krashen's direct method was dominant. However, Krashen and his fellows considered language learning as unconscious processes; language awareness in general and critical language awareness paradigms view language learning as conscious processes. One of the main tenets which followed in the present study and considered by the learners as a positive characteristic of the course was the challenges the students went through to get access to the deeper meaning of the text. Hawkins (1984) argues that the main purpose of the language awareness is to challenge the students regarding the issues they have taken for granted.

Hence, in answering the only question of the study which was "what are the attitudes of readers of academic reading passages in using critical awareness techniques in their reading performance?" we should say that the results of the study indicated a positive attitude in which they argued that a critical-based approach teach the learners that using any type of vocabularies or structures has a specific reason. Furthermore, they emphasized that English language learners need to learn diverse strategies to use in their writing or speaking tasks. Moreover, they stated that the critical-based courses focusing on the perspectives and ideologies behind the texts equipped the learners to get access to the profound meanings of the texts.

Effectively, the results of the study supported the suggested hypothesis in which the readers of academic reading passages have a positive perspective in using critical awareness techniques in their reading performance. Hawkins (1984) argues about language across the curriculum as "a concept in this context where LA would strengthen coherence in the child's education by being considered both vertically and horizontally in the school program" (p. 26).

Hence, it is suggested that critical-based approaches should be considered as crucial in improving the reading comprehension of the learners.

Several studies were conducted in which cognitive and metacognitive strategies seemed to be beneficial for reading comprehension purposes (e.g. Gersten, et al. 2001; Pressley, 2000; Swanson, 1999); however so few studies, if any, tried to investigate the attitudes of the learners towards teaching the critical awareness techniques utilized in the academic reading passages. McLaughlin and Allen (2002) argue that the good readers are those who apply comprehension strategies for facilitating the process of reading comprehension, i.e. constructing meaning.

Pedagogical Implications of the study

This study is beneficial for language teachers, language learners as well as curriculum designers as follows.

The findings of this research suggest that a good language teacher needs to adopt a critical outlook towards the role played by the use of critical awareness techniques in academic reading comprehension.

Moreover, the findings of this study insist that teachers develop professional knowledge and expertise using critical-based approaches through which they raise the consciousness of learners in order to capable students to get access to a deeper meaning of the text.

The findings of this study may also be of interest for policy makers since the effects of teaching through a critical-based method on the reading proficiency of learners should be considered.

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The Effect of Van Dijk Discourse Strategies on Iranian EFL Learners' Writing Proficiency

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Abstract—This study tried to improve the writing proficiency of Iranian EFL students utilizing an innovative model through implementing and operationalizing the principles of critical discourse analysis which was introduced by Van Dijk's (2000) well-known socio-cognitive model. To this end, 57 intermediate language learners studying English in language institutes for several years were selected as the participants of the study using a version of TOEFL test as the selected proficiency test. The included participants were randomly divided into two groups of experimental and control—with 28 students in experimental group (16 females and 12 males) and 29 students in control group (17 females and 12 males). Both groups went through a three-stage model (pre-writing, during-writing and post-writing). The teaching procedure on writing had some differences between the instruction provided for the experimental group and the instruction presented to the control group in which the experimental group received some suitable discursive strategies, namely, comparison, example (illustration), explanation, repetition, reasonableness and context description. After instruction, two groups were asked to write on a topic and their compositions were scored using holistic scoring procedure in order to guarantee the high reliability. The results of the study showed the significant differences between the performances of the experimental and control groups which indicated to the efficiency of the CDA-oriented approach to teach writing skill. However, the result of the study showed non-significant differences between the performances of the two genders as well as the performances of females and males in each group.

Index Terms—critical discourse analysis, writing skill, ideology, micro-discursive strategies, macro-discursive strategies

I. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

Writing skill is not "a naturally acquired skill" (Myles, 2002, p.1), but "learned or culturally transmitted as a set of practices in formal instructional settings or other environments" (Myles, 2002, p.1). It means that writing skill is acquired by practice and experience. Myles (2002) argued that acquiring writing "involves composing" (p.1) which means getting the ability to present or represent pieces of narrative or descriptive information along with transforming information argumentatively.

Generally speaking, writing skill demands a continuum of activities from the more mechanical to the more specialized form of composing (Hadley & Reiken, 1993). Bereiter and Scardamalia, (1987) emphasized that writing means contributions of the writers in an "interaction between continuously developing knowledge and continuously developing text" (p. 12), through gathering diverse concepts to solve some problems. However, academic writing demands "conscious effort and practice in composing, developing, and analyzing ideas" (Myles, 2002, p.1).

The aforementioned issues denote the fact that writing is a central communication skill; however, it may not be included in the course objectives of learning English language. There is no doubt regarding the central role of writing in the processes of learning language. Nunan (1991) considered writing not only as the process the writer uses to put words together but also as the resulting product of that process. Hayes (1996) underlines that writing process demands bringing the knowledge of the process writing as well as strategies beneficial in composing.

Considering the fact writing proficiency has made many dilemma and challenges for different learners and even the advanced ones; it is conceivable that traditional teaching writing is ineffective. Accordingly, there is the demand for some investigations on some innovative methods to teach writing in order to promote the writing proficiency in the part of learners.

Considering the aforementioned issues, this study attempts to provide a new trend in teaching writing utilizing the principles of critical discourse analysis and raising consciousness and critical thinking in order to promote writing proficiency on the part of students. To this end, 60 intermediate homogenous EFL undergraduate students were selected

using a proficiency test, namely a version of TOEFL test. Effectively, the main purposes of the study were to answer the following questions:

- Q1. Is there any difference between the performance of the subjects in the experimental and the control groups?
- Q2. Is there any difference between the performances of males and females who receive instruction through CDA?
- Q3. Is there any difference between the performances of males and females who receive through the traditional model?

Based on the raised questions, the following hypotheses were suggested:

- H01. There is no difference between the performance of the subjects in the experimental and the control groups.
- H02. There is no difference between the performances of males and females who receive instruction through CDA.
- H03. There is no difference between the performances of males and females who receive through the traditional model.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This part of the study explicates the review of literature with the centrality of the notion of critical discourse analysis and its relation to teaching language.

A. *Critical Discourse Analysis*

Critical discourse analysis (CDA), according to Jørgensen and Phillips (2002), refers to the approaches explore “the relations between discourse and social and cultural developments in different social domains” (p. 60). Weiss and Wodak (2003) argue that critical discourse analysis has amalgamated a number of theories especially the social theories and linguistic theories. They concludes that the underlying theory of CDA is, in effect, “a shifting synthesis of other theories” by mediating “between the social and the linguistic” (Weiss & Wodak, 2003, p.6). Weiss and Wodak (2003) add that CDA is, in effect, a transdisciplinary framework of discourse analysis through operationalization based on various disciplines like sociology or linguistics. Hence, mediation is the fundamental part of critical discourse analysis which followed by different researchers variously.

Fairclough (1998, 2001a) considers member resources as mediation between discourse and society whereas Van Dijk (2000) considers cognitive structures as mediation. The mediation, according to Weiss and Wodak (2003), is the most challenging part of operationalizing critical discourse analysis.

The common features of different approaches to critical discourse analysis, according to Fairclough and Wodak (1997, p. 271-280), are:

1. CDA addresses social problems;
2. Power relations are discursive;
3. Discourse constitutes society and culture;
4. Discourse does ideological work;
5. Discourse is historical;
6. The link between text and society is mediated;
7. Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory;
8. Discourse is a form of social action (cited in Van Dijk, 2001, p. 353).

Weiss and Wodak (2003) argues that an integrated “theoretical framework” demands “reconciling different (sociological and linguistic) perspectives without reducing them to one another (and this is where we get to the heart of the problem of interdisciplinarity)” (p. 8). To this end, they consider three steps fundamental as follow:

1. Clarification of the basic theoretical assumptions regarding text, discourse, language, action, social structure, institution and society.
2. The development of conceptual tools capable of connecting the level of text or discourse analysis with sociological positions on institutions, actions and social structures.
3. After clarifying the theoretical assumptions and identifying the conceptual tools, the third basic step is the defining of categories, that is, of analytical concepts, to denote the content of specific phenomena Weiss & Wodak, 2003, pp. 8-10).

There are many approaches in operationalizing critical discourse analysis. The following section presents some main approaches to conducting CDA with the centrality of education.

B. *Fairclough's Three-dimensional Model*

Fairclough (1989 & 2001a) has introduced his well-known model called critical language studies (CLS) which has composed of three dimensions of description, interpretation and explanation. Fairclough (2001b) views CDA as “theoretical perspective on language” (p. 121). Fairclough (2001b) argues that CDA is “in a dialogical relationship with other social theories and methods, which should engage with them in a ‘transdisciplinary’ rather than just an interdisciplinary way” (p. 122).

Fairclough's (1989, 2001a) three-Dimensional Model is based on the semiosis perspective considered “as an irreducible part of material social processes” (p. 122). Semiosis, according to Fairclough (2001b) refers to “all forms of meaning making (including) visual images, body language, as well as language” (p. 122). Fairclough (2001b) adds that

every practices is, in effect, a network of productive activity, means of production, social relations, cultural values, consciousness and semiosis.

Hence, Fairclough (2001b) considers these elements not as different factors but as the factors which “are dialectically related (p. 123). CDA, in Fairclough’s (2001b), analyzes “the dialectical relationships between semiosis (including language) and other elements of social practices” (p. 123).

In operationalizing his model, Fairclough (2001b, p. 125) numerates the following steps:

1. Focus upon a social problem which has a semiotic aspect.
2. Identify obstacles to it being tackled, through analysis of
 - a) the network of practices it is located within
 - b) the relationship of semiosis to other elements within the particular practice(s) concerned
 - c) the discourse (the semiosis itself)
 - structural analysis: the order of discourse
 - interactional analysis
 - interdiscursive analysis
 - Linguistic and semiotic analysis.
3. Consider whether the social order (network of practices) in a sense needs the problem.
4. Identify possible ways past the obstacles.
5. Reflect critically on the analysis (1-4).

Generally, Fairclough (2001b) assumes five stages in operationalizing his approach. The stages include problem-based dimension, indirect way in recognizing the problem, the role of social order in dealing with the problem, an indirect way to tackling the problem; moving from negative to positive tackling; and finally, reflexivity.

Effectively, Fairclough’s (1989, 2001a) model to CDA has composed of three dimensions of description which deals with the text analysis, interpretation which considers member resources which are compatible with processing analysis, and explanation which analyzes social dimension. The following diagram which was adopted by the researcher sheds light on Fairclough’s (1989, 2001) three-dimensional model.

As the figure shows Fairclough’s (2001a, p. 29) three-dimensional model demands three interrelated dimensions of

- The object of analysis (including verbal, visual or verbal and visual texts);
- The processes by means of which the object is produced and received (writing/speaking/designing and reading/listening/viewing) by human subjects.
- The socio-historical conditions which govern these processes.

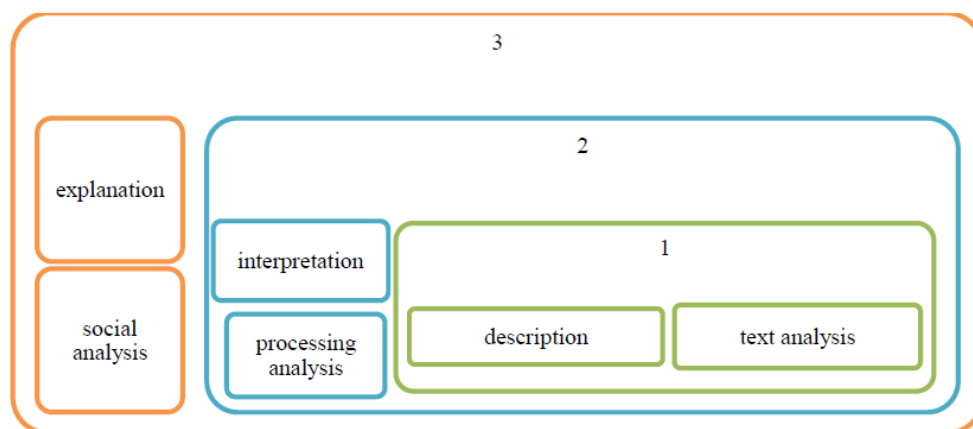


Diagram 1: Fairclough’s (2001a) three-dimensional model

C. Van Dijk’s (2000) Discourse-cognition-society Triangular Model

Following a multidisciplinary perspective, Van Dijk (2001) calls his model as socio-cognitive discourse analysis. Whereas, Fairclough (2001a) considers member resources as the mediating element in conducting critical discourse analysis; for Van Dijk (2001), it is cognition which plays the mediating role. Van Dijk (2000) has introduced forty cognitive micro-structures which shed light on two macro-cognitive structures.

D. CDA and Education

Rogers (2004) regards CDA as a new foundation for educational research. She argues that “CDA can describe, interpret, and explain the relationships among language and important educational issues” (Rogers, 2004, p. 1). Rogers (2004) adds that CDA is, in effect, an orientation for handling “the contradictions (which) emerge and demonstrate how they are enacted and transformed through linguistic practices in ways of interacting, representing, and being” (p. 1).

Burns and Morrell (2014) points out “CDA in literacy research has focused on the level of classroom interactions” (p. 4). They argue that CDA may be implemented in education in micro- or macro-levels. Burns and Morrell (2014), at the

macro-level of analysis, “the examination of archival documents and institutional histories” (p. 5). Hence, Burns and Morrell (2014) argue about the episteme of English education, namely, “the sets of discursive structures as a whole within which [the profession] thinks” (p. 5). Burns and Morrell (2014, p. 6) numerates the following insights in implementing critical discourse analysis in education

- elements of the archive established the privileged position of literature instruction in language arts curriculum;
- dominated by a conception of functional literacy (the decoding and encoding of printed texts);
- focus connected the development of English curriculum policy to a number of historical ideological positions;

E. Writing Skill: Theoretical Definitions

One of the crucial skill which seems to be demanding for any person especially the ones in the higher education is related to writing skill. Writing as a productive skill has defined by Lannon (1989) as “the process of transforming the material discovered by research inspiration, accident, trial or error, or whatever into a message with a definite meaning-writing is a process of deliberate decision” (p.9).

As far as the review of literature is concerned, writing skill is approached differently by different researchers based on their perspective regarding it. Hence, these approaches, according to Yi (2009), can be classified into three main approaches, namely, product/text-oriented, process/cognitive-oriented and reader/genre-oriented. However, Hedge (1998) considers two approaches to teaching of writing, namely, the product approach and the process approach.

Hyland (2002), in a similar vein, considers three approaches to writing teaching arguing that audience and social context are crucial in the process of teaching the writing skill.

Hence, writing skill is a complex and intertwined network of the interactive processes and not a linear activity. Al Souqi (2001) points out that writing skill demands producing and expressing ideas in a coherent way. The following sections clarifies three approaches to teaching writing skill, namely, product approach, process approach and genre approach.

The product approach to teaching writing skill demands that students produce compositions similar to a model essay which has been represented by the teacher (Pincas, 1982). Hence, product or text-oriented approach deals with writing as either "acontextually autonomous objects"(Hyland, 2002, p. 6) which underpins the surface structures of writing at the sentence level, or discourse which gives the crucial role to cohesion and the readability (YI, 2009). Effectively, product approach to writing follows two directions, namely, controlled (traditional) and discourse-based (Nunan, 1999).

Generally, this approach is fruitful in terms of terminology and was called differently by different researchers. In effect, it was called Product-based approach by Nunan (1999), Controlled composition approach by Silva (1993), Controlled-to-free approach by Raimes (1983) and Traditional text-based approach by Tribble (1996).

In a nutshell, product approach to teaching writing skill stresses on the mechanical and structural characteristics of the texts. Yi (2009) argues about four stages of product approach to teaching writing skill, namely, familiarization, controlled writing, guided writing and free writing.

Product approach to writing follows, in effect, the tenets of behaviorism in order to copy and transform models presented by textbooks and teachers (Nunan, 1999; Raimes, 1983; Silva, 1990; Tribble, 1996). Hence, writing, in this approach, refers to "the ability to adhere to style-guide prescriptions concerning grammar, arrangement and punctuation" (Nunan, 1999, p. 59). It is worth mentioning that this approach does not consider any role for the context, audience or processability (Hyland, 2002) which was criticized by the mainstream of discourse analysis.

In fact, the perspective of Texts-as-discourse (Hyland, 2002) was introduced on the ground that "there was more to writing than building grammatical sentences"(Silva, 1993, p. 13) which emphasizes on the ways based on which learners " use their knowledge of grammar in the construction of coherent texts" (Nunan, 1999, p. 290) with the crucial role considered for sentences and paragraphs in discourse. Accordingly, the written compositions were submitted to the teacher to be marked without any evaluation (Sarala, Salam, & Ismail, 2014).

Based on the criticism on product approach to teaching writing skill In the 1960s the process approach to writing was designed and developed (Silva, 1990). Process or cognitive approach was emerged which underscores the processes the writer go through in the process of writing (Johns, 1990; Nunan, 1999; Raimes, 1983; Silva, 1993; Tribble, 1996).

Process approach may be directed into three strands, namely, expressive, Cognitive and Social (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996; Hyland, 2002; Johns, 1990). Expressive strand, assuming writing as a creative task and discovery-oriented, emphasizes on a non-directive way of teaching writing (Berlin, 1988). Hence, expressive perspective to writing encourages students to express free authentic compositions which mostly encompasses personal essays and journal writing (Johns, 1990).

Cognitive perspective is the most well-known one which stresses on the cognitive processes the writer go through which was mostly covered by Hayes and Flower (1981) and Bereiter and Scardamalia (1985) writing models. Generally, there are three main steps in the cognitive strand of the process approach to teaching writing skill, namely, planning, drafting and reviewing. The main shortcoming of the cognitive strand of the process approach to writing, according to Grabe and Kaplan (1996) refers to the fact that

writers are not likely to be uniform with respect to their processing preferences and cognitive abilities; [...] a protocol analysis approach [which was used by Hayes and Flower] may not be a valid primary methodology for the

study of the writing process to the extent that Flower and Hayes claim [...] [or at least from a more moderate perspective] it cannot be the primary source of evidence for a theory of the writing process" (pp. 92-933).

The cognitive strand highly emphasizes on the cognitive processes by neglecting the social context in which writing occurs which was criticized and resulted to the social strand of the process approach to teaching writing. Social perspective to process approach to writing underscores the social context (Hyland, 2002). Hyland (2002) argues that social perspective the process approach to teaching writing demands an integration of the cognitive structures and physical and experiential contexts in which writing occurs.

Sarala, Salam, and Ismail (2014) argue about eight steps in conducting a process approach to teaching writing, namely, brainstorming, planning, mind mapping, first draft, peer feedback, editing, final draft, and evaluation. Hence, in a process approach to teaching writing, teacher plays a facilitator role instead of the model role which played by a teacher in product approach to teaching writing.

Genre approach to teaching writing as a new direction in the field of teaching writing emphasizes on audience (discourse community) and social context which underscores the role played by the rhetorical knowledge like format, style and content (Tribble, 1996).

Genre approach to teaching writing considers writing ability as "the ability to perform writing tasks for a given purpose, satisfy a given discourse community with regard to the structure and content of the discourse, and communicate functionally" (Yi, 2009, p. 61).

III. METHODOLOGY

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

A. *Participants*

The participants of the study were 57 intermediate language learners studying English in language institutes for several years, with 28 students in experimental group and 29 students in control group. It is worth emphasizing that all the participants were undergraduate students with the age range of 19 to 24. All participants were Iranian students with Persian as their mother tongue. The participants were from the both genders—33 females and 24 males.

B. *Instrumentations*

The first instrument utilized in the study was a version of TOEFL test. The selected proficiency test, i.e. the TOEFL test composed of 32 questions—12 language form and meaning questions which test the grammatical features of language along with 20 reading questions which are based on reading comprehension. In fact, this version of the TOEFL test was adopted based on the proficiency level of the subjects and time-efficiency.

The second instrument was Van Dijk's (2000) socio-cognitive model which was selected as a baseline for designing an innovative model for teaching writing to the experimental group. In fact, Van Dijk's (2000) socio-cognitive model was used as a guide which helped the researcher to design her particular procedure for teaching writing skill which was amalgamated with teaching writing skill.

Hence, Compositions written by the participants were the third instruments which were evaluated using holistic scoring. In fact, the participants were asked to write on the topic assigned to them which were scored and analyzed in terms of group and gender.

C. *Data Collection Procedure*

At the beginning, in order to have a homogenous group, the participants took an adopted version of a TOEFL test. In fact, 69 English language learners who took the TOEFL test out of them 57 ones were those whose scores were one standard deviation above and below the mean score were included.

The selected subjects were divided randomly into two groups of experimental and control—experimental group with 28 students and the control group with 29 students. It is worth mentioning that the study included both females and males in order to provide more dependable results. Hence, the study was administered by participating 33 females and 24 males out of them the experimental group composed of 16 females and 12 males and control group of 17 females and 12 males.

Both groups received instructions on writing utilizing Zemach and Rumisek's (2003) College Writing during ten sessions. The experimental group received some instruction on several micro- and macro-strategies suggested by Van Dijk (2000) and were encouraged to utilize the strategies in order to manipulate language and express their meanings whereas, the control group didn't.

Generally, both experimental and control groups went through a three-stage model (pre-writing, during-writing and post-writing). In the pre-writing stage, the students' background knowledge was raised about the topic on which the students were supposed to write on a session.

The students' ideas were written on the board (brainstorming). On the during-writing phase, the necessary lexical and grammatical language was presented to the students. Furthermore, the students were allowed to use dictionary or other sources to complete the writing tasks.

The teaching procedure on writing had some differences between the instruction provided for the experimental group and the instruction presented to the control group in which the experimental group received some instruction of some suitable discursive strategies, namely, comparison, example (illustration), explanation, repetition, reasonableness and context description. The experimental group, for example, was instructed to utilize the discursive strategies of explanation, comparison, etc. Then, the both groups of experimental and control went into the post-phase on which they received some feedback about their writing and they were assisted to revise their writing tasks.

After instruction, two groups were asked to write on a topic selected from www.ets.org/Media/Tests/TOEFL/pdf/989563wt.pdf.

The writings were scored using holistic scoring procedure in order to guarantee the high reliability. Holistic scoring is a procedure for scoring of writing in which the effectiveness of the composition is evaluated in terms of a set of overall descriptions. In other words, the score given to the compositions show the overall effectiveness of students' communication.

D. Data Analysis Procedure

In order to analyze the data in this study, the writings were scored holistically by the researcher. In addition, the scores given to the compositions were tabulated and compared through t-tests using SPSS version 22 in order to determine if there was any significant difference between the performance of the experimental and control groups. In fact, t-test is a statistical procedure which determines whether the means of two groups, i.e. experimental and control are statistically different from each other.

IV. RESULTS

A. Results: Proficiency Test and the Performance of Participants

It was mentioned that 69 EFL learners were the potential subjects of the study. These 69 EFL learners took the proficiency test, i.e. a version of the TOEFL test. Hence, 57 homogenous EFL learners whose scores were one standard deviation above and below the mean score were selected as the participants of the study. Table 4.1 shows the performance of the 69 subjects on the proficiency test:

TABLE 1
PROFICIENCY TEST AND THE PERFORMANCE OF THE SUBJECTS

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
TOEFL	69	20.00	32.00	26.0889	3.89077

Considering the information given in Table 1 illustrates that the participated subjects had the mean of 26, standard deviation of 3.89 with the minimum of 20 and the maximum score of 32.

Hence, in order to control the proficiency level of the students, the subjects whose scores were between one standard deviation above and below the mean score were included. It means that the subjects whose scores were between 22 and 30 were selected as the participants of the study.

The selected subjects were randomly divided into two groups of experimental and control—28 students in experimental group and 29 students in control group. Hence, the experimental group has composed of 12 males and 16 females. Furthermore, the control group has composed of 12 males and 17 males.

T-test statistic was performed on the performance of each group of experimental and control to determine whether the differences between the mean of the two groups were significant or not. The results are given in table 2:

TABLE 2
T-TEST AND PROFICIENCY TEST: EXPERIMENTAL VS. CONTROL

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	t-test for Equality of Means								
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower Upper	
TOEFL	Equal variances assumed	.205	.653	-1.198	55	.236	-.83744	.69906	-2.23838	.56351
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.196	54.373	.237	-.83744	.69995	-2.24054	.56567

The information of the t-test indicated to the non-significant differences between the performances of the two groups since the p-value is 0.23 which is quite above the cut score of 0.05.

This study tried to control the issue of gender. To this end, the performance of the two genders on the proficiency test. As table 3 shows 33 females and 24 males were the subjects of the study. According to table 4.3, female participants had the mean score of 26.27 and the standard deviation of 2.62; whereas, the male participants had the mean score of 25.95 and the standard deviation of 2.72.

TABLE 3
PROFICIENCY TEST AND THE PERFORMANCE OF THE TWO GENDERS

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
TOEFL	=male	24	25.9583	2.72635	.55651
	=female	33	26.2727	2.62527	.45700

T-test statistic was performed on the proficiency test in terms of the performance of the two genders; its results are given in table 4

TABLE 4
T-TEST AND PROFICIENCY TEST: FEMALES VS. MALES

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
TOEFL	Equal variances assumed	.113	.738	-.439	55	.662	-.31439	.71575	-1.74879	1.12000
	Equal variances not assumed			-.437	48.596	.664	-.31439	.72011	-1.76181	1.13302

Table 4 shows the p-value of 0.66 which is quite above the cut score of 0.05. It indicated to the non-sufficient difference between the performances of the two genders.

B. Results: Post-test and the Performance of Participants

The two groups went under 20 hour instruction in 5 weeks which was followed by a posttest in which they were asked to write on a topic (the effect of TV on children). Their compositions were scored based on holistic scoring procedures out of 10. Table 5 sheds light on the descriptive statics of the results of the post-test.

TABLE 5
POST-TEST AND THE PERFORMANCE OF THE TWO GROUPS

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Posttest	=experimental	28	7.5714	1.95180	.36886
	=control	29	6.4483	1.91956	.35645

Table 4.5 shows that the experimental group had the mean score of 7.57 and standard deviation of 1.95. Whereas, the control group had the mean score of 6.44 and the standard deviation of 1.91.

TABLE 6
T-TEST AND POST-TEST: EXPERIMENTAL VS. CONTROL

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Posttest	Equal variances assumed	.275	.602	2.190	55	.033	1.12315	.51279	.09549	2.15081
	Equal variances not assumed			2.190	54.850	.033	1.12315	.51295	.09512	2.15118

In order to figure out whether there is significant difference between the performances of experimental group and control group, t-test statistic was run which resulted into table 6.

By considering the Sig. (2-tailed) value, it becomes evident that the observed differences between the performances of the two groups on the posttests are significant since the Sig. (2-tailed) value is 0.033 which is less than 0.05. Because of this, we can conclude that there is a statistically significant difference between the mean score of the post-tests for the groups of experimental and control.

Considering the greater mean score of the experimental group, it indicated that the experimental group had a better performance on the post-test.

In the second phase, the performance of genders was compared on the posttest which resulted into table 7:

TABLE 7
POST-TEST AND THE PERFORMANCE OF THE TWO GENDERS

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Posttest	=female	33	6.9697	1.77632	.30922
	=male	24	7.0417	2.31214	.47196

According to table 7, the mean score of the females was 6.96 and their standard deviation is 1.77. In addition, the males had the mean of 7.04 and the standard deviation of 2.31.

TABLE 8
T-TEST AND POST-TEST: FEMALE VS. MALE

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Posttest Equal variances assumed	4.779	.033	-.133	55	.895	-.07197	.54131	-1.15678	1.01284
Equal variances not assumed			-.128	41.489	.899	-.07197	.56424	-1.21107	1.06713

Considering the information in table 4.8, it is demonstrated that gender was not a crucial element in writing ability since the p-value is 0.89 which is quite above the cut score of 0.05. It means that difference between the performances of the two genders is non-significant. Hence, there is similar variability in the two performances of the two genders.

Considering the second and third questions of this study, the issue of gender was explored in each group separately which resulted into the following results.

TABLE 9
POST-TEST AND THE PERFORMANCE OF THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP: FEMALE VS. MALE

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Posttest	=female	16	7.0625	1.69189	.42297
	=male	12	8.2500	2.13733	.61699

Table 9 illustrates the performances of the two genders in the experimental group. As the table shows, experimental group composed of 16 females and 12 males. In this group, the females showed the mean of 7.06 and standard deviation of 1.69; whereas, males showed the mean of 8.25 and the standard deviation of 2.13. In order to determine whether gender played a role in the experimental group, t-test statistic was performed its results are given in table 10:

TABLE 10
T-TEST AND GENDER: EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

	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
Posttest Equal variances assumed	1.843	.186	-1.643	26	.113	-1.18750	.72297	-2.67359	.29859
Equal variances not assumed			-1.587	20.456	.128	-1.18750	.74806	-2.74569	.37069

Considering the information in table 10, it is illustrated that gender had not played any role in writing ability since the p-value is 0.11 which is quite above the cut score of 0.05. It means that difference between the performances of the two genders is non-significant. Hence, there is similar variability in the two performances of the two genders. Table 11 sheds light on the role of gender in the control group in terms of descriptive statistics.

TABLE 11
POST-TEST AND THE PERFORMANCE OF THE CONTROL GROUP: FEMALE VS. MALE

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Posttest	=female	17	6.8824	1.90008	.46084
	=male	12	5.8333	1.85047	.53418

Table 11 shows that the control group had composed of 17 females and 12 males in which the females had the mean of 6.88 and the standard deviation of 1.90. Moreover, the males had the mean of 5.83 and the standard deviation of 1.85. In a similar vein, t-test statistic was run which resulted into table 12.

As table 12 shows, the p-value is 0.15 which is higher than the cut value of 0.05. It means that the observed differences between the two genders in the control group were non-significant. Hence, the two genders had the same variability in the control group.

TABLE 12
T-TEST AND GENDER: CONTROL GROUP

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper	
Posttest	Equal variances assumed	.029	.866	1.480	27	.150	1.04902	.70884	-.40540	2.50344
	Equal variances not assumed			1.487	24.237	.150	1.04902	.70550	-.40630	2.50434

V. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

This study tried to find the answers for the three raised questions based on which this study was conducted.

The first question of this study was:

► Is there any difference between the performance of the subjects in the experimental and the control groups?

The descriptive statistics as well as the results of t-test statistics showed significant differences between the performances of the subjects who went under CDA-based approach in teaching writing and the ones who received instruction based on the traditional approach.

Accordingly, the first hypothesis which states (There is no difference between the performance of the subjects in the experimental and the control groups) was rejected.

In fact, the way the principles of critical discourse analysis following the micro-strategies suggested by Van Dijk (2000) was implemented in teaching writing to the experimental group highlights soft structures which underscore the function of language (Rogers, 2004). Soft structures, according to Rogers (2004), refer to the level of abstraction which are highly emphasized and implemented in CDA. In fact, CDA attempts “to describe, interpret, and explain the relationship between the hard and soft structures of language” (Rogers, 2004, p. 2).

Given this study with its focus on writing skill utilizing the micro-strategies of Van Dijk (2000), it seems to be beneficial to combine a perspective of teaching writing skill with social and critical issues of language.

Put is simply, critical discourse analysis as a representation of discourse analysis may be implemented through analyzing the patterns which according to Jørgensen and Phillips (2002) structure language in different ways. In fact, these patterns are followed by people “when they take part in different domains of social life” (Jørgensen & Phillips (2002, p. 1).

The second question this study attempt to answer was:

► Is there any difference between the performances of males and females who receive instruction through CDA?

The descriptive statistics as well as the results of t-test statistics revealed non-significant differences between the performances of the two genders who went under CDA-based approach in teaching writing.

Hence, the second hypothesis which states (There is no difference between the performances of males and females who receive instruction through CDA) was supported.

Finally, the study tried to answer the third raised question which asks

► Is there any difference between the performances of males and females who receive instruction through the traditional model?

The results of descriptive statistics and t-test demonstrated non-significant difference between the performances of the two genders who went under a traditional approach in teaching writing.

As a result, the third hypothesis which states (There is no difference between the performances of males and females who receive through the traditional model) was also supported.

Likewise, gender is one of the variables which may affect the process of writing skill. However, gender, according to Kamari, Gorjian, and Pazhakh (2012, p. 759), is a notion “that contributes different linguistic strategies to both genders based on context”; this study showed that gender is not a variable which influences the way the females and males produce their writings.

Contrary to the argument of Kamari, Gorjian, and Pazhakh (2012, p. 759) who argue that the notion of gender “implicitly presents the social and contextual expectations each society put on part of each gender culturally as well as socially”; this issue seems to be neutral by implementing a CDA-based approach in teaching writing skill.

Considering the review of literature on the relation between writing skill and gender illustrates paradoxical and vague results, for example some studies, according to (Swan, 1992) demonstrates that females outperform the males while others attribute much assertiveness to males. In addition, there are some studies which indicated greater verbal capabilities of females (Halpern, 1986).

Likewise, the results of the study contradict the arguments of Halpern (1986), Mahony (1985), Spender and Sarah (1980) or Swann (1992) who considered superior writing ability for the females. The results of the study may be justified through the implemented writing teaching approach which tried to equip the learners with the appropriate discursive strategies suggested by Van Dijk (2000). The results of the study in terms of relation between writing ability

and gender is in line with Chu-yao, (2008) whose study showed non-significant differences between the performances of the two genders.

In a nutshell, writing skill is approached differently by different researchers based on their different perspectives. Generally, writing skill may be addressed through three main approaches, namely, product/text-oriented, process/cognitive-oriented and reader/genre-oriented.

This study, in a similar vein with Hyland (2002), argued that teaching writing skill should be addressed by considering audience and social context. In fact, a CDA approach to writing skill is text-oriented as well as writer-reader-oriented. It means that writing skill should be approached as an intertwined network of the interactive processes in order to construct different facts and ideas in a coherent way.

It is worth emphasizing that teaching writing skill in this study was not approached just in terms of mechanical and structural characteristics of the texts. Instead, writing skill needs to be regarded as a creative and discovery-oriented activity in which cognitive processes play a crucial role; and this issue seems to be covered utilizing the micro-strategies suggested by Van Dijk's (2000) socio-cognitive approach. However, this study steps further by considering a role for audience (i.e. discourse community) as well as the social context. In fact, the way the principles of critical discourse analysis following the micro-strategies suggested by Van Dijk (2000) was implemented in teaching writing to the experimental group highlights soft structures which underscore the function of language (Rogers, 2004).

VI. PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Generally, CDA helps the learners to raise their sensitivity and consciousness regarding the implicit, indicative and even invisible parts of any text which they can also implement in their writing to transmit much more powerful meaning. Hence, different aspects a writer wants to transmit may be handled smoothly through the discursive strategies the learners need to learn, for example socio-political background, historical context, as well as the cultural dispositions which seem to be crucial for critical thinking and self-actualization which in its turn are the utmost purpose of any educational course (Reichenbach, 2001). Furthermore, a CDA-driven approach based on Van Dijk's (2000) framework seems to be pedagogically beneficial for improving the ability of EFL learners for implementing certain ideologies and some particular microdiscursive strategies like explanation, actor description, etc.

This study utilized CDA to improve the writing ability of Iranian EFL learners. Hence, CDA is beneficial in developing the notions of discursive structures to be utilized in writing samples. One role of a CDA-based model for teaching in EFL classes is related to its efficiency for raising awareness of language learners to get access to the hidden strategies of discourses including the discursive strategies.

Utilizing the principles of critical discourse analysis suggested by Van Dijk (2000), Iranian EFL learners were equipped to "tip of the ideological iceberg" (Van Dijk, 1997) which lead them not to consider the text as a real reflection of realities and at the same time using discursive strategies convince the readers from their points of view. In fact, a critical discourse analysis methodology mixed with the principles of teaching writing skill equip the learners to consciously consider even the content of their composition and the way it should be molded. It seems that a CDA-driven approach improve the learners' capability in writing through the appropriate useful strategies. In fact, the utilized CDA-approach in teaching writing in this study help the students to mold their ideas using appropriate lay-out and plan. Hence, the results of the study seem to pedagogically applicable for language learners, language teachers, teacher's trainers and even for syllabus designers.

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Sociolinguistics and English Teaching in China

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Abstract—As a wide-ranging inter-discipline which rose in the 1960s, sociolinguistics takes language as a part of society and culture and explores how to relate the rules of language with social factors as its basic task. At the same time, its theories and practices are not only an important supplement and development for linguistics, but also very important for theories and practices of foreign language teaching. The foreign language teaching must pay attention to the cultivation of students' communicative ability. However, foreign language teaching in China has ignored the communicative ability with only paying attention to the language form for a long time. The paper is intended to analyze the reasons why sociolinguistics encounters so many obstacles in English teaching in China and the existing problems of China's foreign language teaching to help the readers have a better understanding of the application of sociolinguistics in China's English teaching.

Index Terms—sociolinguistics, English teaching, application, communicative ability

I. INTRODUCTION

Sociolinguistics is the study of language in relation to society. Generally speaking, the essence of sociolinguistics is how social factors influence the structure and use of language. It is the field that studies relations between the use of language and the social structure in which the language users live.

Generally speaking, the major topics that are covered in sociolinguistics are as follows:

- (1) the language strata of one country or district, such as diglossia, bilingualism, multilingualism or multi-dialects;
- (2) language variation consisting of regional dialect and social dialect, endonormative and vernacular, formal style and informal style;
- (3) the relationship between the conversation and the choice of code, and the interaction between the code choice and personal relationships;
- (4) the society and different groups' estimate of and attitude towards all languages or language variation and the resulting social effects;
- (5) the ways and rules of language change which results from social, cultural or political factors and language contact.

Sociolinguistics broke away from the pure linguistic tradition that linguistics studies language itself (such as voice, grammar, vocabulary, etc.), and it began to study the rules of language and its use from the relationship between language and many social factors. This kind of linguistic research opens up a more extensive new field, and it will have a far-reaching impact on foreign language teaching. Broadly speaking, sociolinguistics is beneficial to language teaching in the following two aspects:

Firstly, sociolinguistics extends theoretical linguistics in the direction of language learning and teaching so that the teacher is enabled to make better decisions on the goal and content of the teaching.

Secondly, sociolinguistics states the insights and implications that linguistic theories have on the language teaching methodology. Once the goal and content of the teaching are settled, the teacher has to consider questions of how to teach.

Many language learning theories are proposed based on certain linguistic theories. In fact, linguistic knowledge lies at the root of understanding what language learners can learn, how they actually learn and what they learn ultimately. Social linguistics provides us with a brand new perspective to approach foreign language teaching and learning.

II. A SURVEY OF SOCIOLINGUISTICS

Since linguistics is defined as the scientific study of language, it is obvious that such a study would help a lot in language teaching and learning. Linguistics defines the nature of language learning in connection with various linguistic theories. Therefore, it helps the teachers to choose teaching methods and techniques.

Sociolinguistics rose in the 1960s as a wide-ranging interdisciplinary. As a branch of macro-linguistics, sociolinguistics studies languages in relation to social factors, such as social class, educational level, age, gender, race and so on. It takes language as a part of society and culture and explores how to relate the rules of language with social factors as its basic task. In simple words, sociolinguistics studies the use of language in society and its related issues. As J. A. Fisherman (1971) says, "sociolinguistics studies on who uses what kind of languages to what kind of people in what

time.”

Language is a social phenomenon. It is a means of communication that people rely on in this society. Language and man and society are inseparable. There will be no human beings and society without language; on the contrary, there will be no language without human beings and society. Language is produced along with the production of society and develops with the development of society. The relationship between language and human society is so close, so language research must be connected with human society and social culture, namely, we analyze language from the perspective of society.

Structural linguistics and other linguistic schools, studying language forms at a standstill and ignoring the social function of languages and the social cultural factors, are divorced from the society for half a century. In contrast, sociolinguistics emphasizes the socialization of languages. It broke the pure form of static description which ruled language field for a long time. Sociolinguistics pays attention to the dynamic study of the application of cross-disciplines and begins to focus on the social functions of language (Ellis, 1994). It studies the relationship between language and social culture systematically. And it researches on languages, language variations, language rules and communicative functions of languages dynamically by using social viewpoints and methods. As Ellis (1994) points out, “whereas much of the earlier second language acquisition work focused on the linguistic and, in particular, the grammatical properties of learner language and was psycholinguistic in orientation, later work has also attended to the pragmatic aspects of learner language and, increasingly, has adopted a sociolinguistic perspective.”

III. THE RELATIONS BETWEEN SOCIOLINGUISTICS AND ENGLISH TEACHING

Sociolinguistics and English teaching have a long-time and close relation. For example, Yang Yonglin (2004) points out that first, from the angle of theoretical reference, Hymes' Communicative Language Teaching, Labov's sociolinguistic theory of variant, etc. all provide references for English teaching; second, from the angle of research on extension, the observing scopes of sociolinguistics have extended from the concrete use of language in the social context to the influence of cultural and social factors on the environment of foreign language acquisition. Obviously, this overlaps with the research scope of English teaching; last, from the angle of academic publishing, the publication of many monographs and proceedings such as Preston's *Sociolinguistics and Second Language Acquisition* and Wolfson's *The Multi-Dimension Sociolinguistics and English Teaching* fully indicate that the cooperation between sociolinguistics and English teaching is increasingly close. Thus, sociolinguistics and English teaching become increasingly closer in recent years, which not only provides a new theoretical perspective for the research of English teaching, but also provides concrete guidance for English teaching practice.

IV. THE IMPLICATIONS OF SOCIOLINGUISTICS ON ENGLISH TEACHING

Linguistics is the scientific study of language and so linguistics theories, which can be used as the guiding principles of language teaching, are of great use in English teaching. Among the various branches of linguistics, applied linguistics, sociolinguistics and pragmatics, etc. influence language teaching more than other branches. (Xie Xiubang, 2003) The importance of social and cultural factors in language teaching cannot be too emphasized in sociolinguistics. Sociolinguistics emphasizes the language utilization, highlights the communicative skills and studies language in its relation to society and culture, for every language is the reflection of a certain culture and has profound cultural connotation. If we compare a language to a tree, then culture is a forest. Supposing that we only pay attention to the language itself without understanding the culture which language depends upon for survival, it is equivalent to losing a wood for a tree. Therefore, it will be very difficult for us to completely understand and use the language accurately and appropriately (Xie Xiubang, 2003). If we want to master a language really, we must have an adequate knowledge of the rich social and cultural backgrounds in which the language exists; rich social and cultural knowledge also benefits the comprehension and use of language, and the two complement each other. So the introduction of social and cultural knowledge in English teaching is necessary. As an emerging discipline, though sociolinguistics does not exist for a long time, it has had great influence on the content and methods of English teaching. (Gao Zhengheng, 2006)

A. *Paying Attention to the Students' Subjective Emotional Factors*

Teachers should emphasize the emotional communication of the students. The harmonious teacher-student relationship can provide a friendly atmosphere and harmonious interpersonal relationship for the teaching, contribute to improving teaching quality and foster the students' integrated thinking ability and proactive spirit, and lay the foundation for the effective implement of various teaching means. (Deng Yanping, 2002) In addition, when teachers organize the students to carry on the classroom learning, they should pay attention to the understandability of language input and the tolerance of language output. The understandability of language input refers to that the language which the teacher inputs can be easily understood by the students. If the students can not understand what the teacher says, they will feel antipathic and have defiant mood. The tolerance of language output refers to that the teacher should hold a tolerant attitude towards the mistakes the students make in their language output and by doing so, they avoid the negative influence which produces because of worrying about making mistakes.

B. *Combining Language Teaching with Cultural Teaching*

As a social phenomenon, language is a tool for communication and it is also all important part of culture as well as a mirror which reflects a nation's culture and reveals its cultural content. Therefore, in language teaching, teachers should not only teach the students language knowledge such as the vocabulary and grammar, but also introduce the cultural background and teach the communication principles which combine with various social and cultural factors, thus the students know what to say in what situations. Gradually, they can use the language appropriately. Introducing culture is very important in language teaching because it is directly related to the appropriateness of students' language utilization. We know that if we want to master a language successfully, we must exactly understand its social and cultural backgrounds, so we can say that learning a language is the process of understanding its culture.

C. *The Occurrence of Situational Language Teaching*

Language can only realize the function of social communication in certain situations. The same grammatical sentence in different situations will have different influences. If we say something inappropriate, our communication will possibly become a failure. Therefore, in language teaching, teachers should not only make the students know the different meanings of language in different situations, but also set up various situations that the students are likely to encounter in real life to teach them suitable language.

V. DIFFICULTIES OF APPLYING SOCIOLINGUISTIC APPROACH TO ENGLISH TEACHING IN CHINA

Sociolinguistics regards relationships between language, culture and social intercourse function of language as its research target from the beginning. As a new branch of linguistics emerged from the 1960's, linguistic views and research results of sociolinguistics provide a lot of new content for linguistics. At the same time, its theories and practices are not only an important supplement for and development of linguistics, but also very important for theories and practices of foreign language teaching. It became linguistic theoretical basis of communicative language teaching. And it has been and is continuing to have its profound impact. Its implications on foreign language teaching are as follows:

The foreign language teaching must pay attention to the cultivation of students' communicative ability directly.

By definition, language education includes the training of language skills (such as: listening, speaking, reading, writing, etc.). Therefore, language learning should be the cultivation of integrated skills. The aim of English teaching is to enable students to use languages in communication. In the book *On Communicative Competence*, American society linguist Hymes (1972) points out, "languages must have use doctrines; otherwise the rules of grammar are meaningless." His "use doctrine" refers to the appropriateness of the use of language in communication. Canale & Swain (1980) defines the communicative competence as "the combination of communicative function of knowledge that basic rules of grammar and language play in specific social occasions and discourse and communicative function under certain principles". In their views, the communicative functions are sensitive to various changing factors (such as context, register, social status, gender, age, etc.). There is no doubt that the ultimate goal of foreign language teaching is to cultivate students' communicative competence.

However, foreign language teaching in China ignored the communicative ability, only paying attention to the language form for a long time. To some extent, this phenomenon is the consequence of traditional structural linguistics. It has ruled linguistics for a long time and has serious negative effect on foreign language teaching in China. Communicative language teaching which was based on sociolinguistic theory was introduced into China in the 1980s, and it has great influence on foreign language teaching in china. But over the past few decades, the communicative approach has not become the mainstream of English Teaching in China.

In author's opinion, the main reasons are as follows:

1) There is short of natural environment for foreign language teaching in China. Communication would be impossible with no natural environment. Compared with traditional teaching methods, communicative approach needs a larger and more suitable language environment which enables learners' language skills to be consolidated and strengthened. However, we lack such language an environment, so students have few opportunities to use English in extra-curricular time or even in the classroom. The most important reason may be the problem of language policy. In China, English is the first foreign language, so every college student has to learn English at University at least for two years (University English syllabus, 1991). Students should participate in all kinds of examination; however, these examinations regard the language points as their importance but ignore the communicative ability. In this case, teachers and students' motivation are all put into how to pass the exam (CET4, CET6). The result is bound to lead the English education to come back to books, neglecting to cultivate students' ability of using language. It is not difficult to find that both teachers and students are not very clear about the fundamental goal of English teaching.

2) Teachers are not up to the requirements of the communicative teaching approach. Compared with the traditional teaching approach, communicative teaching approach sets higher demand for foreign language teachers. First, teachers are required to use English proficiently and properly. In addition, they should have strong ability to organize the classroom. The most important and difficult role for teachers is to be a good organizer. However, most teachers in China are most concerned about is not how to improve students' communicative competence, but how to complete the school's teaching plan and improve the passing rate of CET4 and CET6. So presently, they don't have ability to achieve the communicative goal completely.

3) At present, the environment of classroom teaching in China is not suitable for the communicative teaching approach. As what has been mentioned above, communicative teaching approach requires teachers to design a variety of teaching activities. However, what is the present situation of classroom English Teaching in China? There are lots of students in English class, so it is not easy for teachers to organize communicative activities in classroom. Even activities can be organized, the efficiency of classroom teaching will be greatly reduced.

4) There is still a lot to do in regard to sociolinguistic studies. We have obtained notable achievements in sociolinguistic theories by far, but we still need to study more from abroad. We can often hear some partial or one-sided statements concerning linguistic theories. As for English teaching, some people think communicative teaching should just practise listening and speaking, needless to pay attention to reading and writing. If a teacher teaches intensive reading course, they should just teach students how to read well, disregarding speaking. It is a common phenomenon that a teacher keeps cramming in analyzing a text with students having no chance to ask questions or do any interactive activities. It is also not uncommon that a listening teacher just plays the record again and again without explaining. We see these kinds of practice so much so that we are used to take it for granted that it is what an English class should be. It is high time to do something to reform English teaching in China. We need to learn more advanced linguistic theories and methods to guide us. We also need to study our domestic linguistic theories together with advanced sociolinguistic theories abroad to reform English teaching in China fundamentally.

VI. CONCLUSION

In a word, sociolinguistics has great influence on English teaching. Language is a kind of social phenomenon and it always appears and develops against a certain social background. Hence, the teachers should not only pay attention to the teaching of language rules while ignoring the social context. In order to achieve the real goal of English teaching, we should integrate language with the social context.

Studying English teaching of China from the angle of sociolinguistics, both the English teachers and the English syllabus designers should not only pay attention to the language itself which is taught, but also should be concerned about the social factors which are related to it. In addition, we should associate the language with these social factors to set the teaching aims, such as how to improve the students' English communicative competence, design teaching program, determine teaching method and finish teaching task etc. Sociolinguistics defines a connected series of utterance, a text or conversation as discourse, which exists in a context. Context can choose the structure of a discourse, theme, semantics, etc. Based on communicative competence, English teaching thus requires College English teaching should plan teaching activities according to the particular discourse or text from the whole discourse to the detailed language points.

Take the text "Big Bucks the Easy Way" from *College English Book 4* (Dong Lifen, 1995) for example, teachers may first lead students to discuss the overall background concerning self-efficiency. Speaking of American kids doing part-time jobs to help pay for their school tuition and other expenses, teachers may compare this culture with Chinese traditional child-rearing ways to inspire students to think about the questions like: "Which way are you inclined to?" Other cultural background points may also be taken into consideration such as: the ads by some American supermarkets, by department stores, by grocery stores or by drugstores, the advertising mode, a brief introduction to Sears and Montgomery Ward, etc. With the relevant background information, students will easily make sense of these cultural shocks: different self-support life, different ad performance and results, and different sales promotion strategies. These student-centered interactive activities will definitely help analyze the text's theme, register, characters involved in language activities and their social cultural background, their possible ages, occupations, education, the relationships between each other like father and son, husband and wife in this text.

The overall context determines its language style, formal or informal, spoken or written. It is necessary for teachers to interpret the usage of a certain word or expression according to its context. For example, in this text, when Father scolds Son, an informal or spoken language is employed: "Do it!" "Idiot!" "I'll kill you if you threaten one of the kids again!" The polite or formal language like "Excuse me...", "Thank you...", "Will you please...?" should be used on certain occasions. Teachers need to let students know how to use as well as when to use these kinds of expressions. Through discourse teaching, students can not only learn how to use appropriate language in social communication, but also get to know how to deal with different writing tasks. In this sense, sociolinguistics penetrates into each aspect of English teaching and social communication.

Sociolinguistics does provide us with a brand new perspective of seeing language. It has been applied in many fields today and English teaching is one of the rising fields. However, English teaching is limited by many practical factors, such as the shortage of natural environment for foreign language teaching in China, the inadequacy of teachers' communicative teaching approach and the discrepancy of the classroom teaching environment etc. As is seen, the researchers still need a long way to go to tackle with the better combination of sociolinguistics and English teaching in China.

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A Review of Relationship between Self-regulation and Reading Comprehension

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Abstract—Over the past three decades, researchers have found that motivational variables have an effective role in language skills and in academic achievement and success (Khajavi & Abbasian, 2013). An attempt was made in the present research to review the relationship between self-regulation as one of the motivational variables and reading comprehension. Moreover, the present paper is organized in the way that some of the significant notions of self-regulation and cyclical phases, and some models of self-regulated learning Pintrich's model and characteristics of self-regulated learners will be explained. Then, the notion of reading comprehension and different purposes of reading will be defined. Finally, some empirical studies on the relationship between self-regulation and reading comprehension will be elaborated.

Index Terms—self-regulation, reading comprehension, learner's motivational variables

I. INTRODUCTION

Research studies have shown an increased interest in the importance of reading for EFL/ESL students (Grabe & Stoller, 2001). Reading is seen as a self-discovery process in which the reader interacts with the texts by employing cognitive as well as metacognitive information (Tung-hsien He, 2001). Kucer (2005) states that reading is a complicated and determined sociocultural, cognitive, and linguistic process in which individuals utilize their information about the topic and also culture at the same time to create the meaning of the text.

With regard to effective ways for improving reading comprehension, a set of recent studies have found that motivational variables are related to accomplishment and success of learners' academic life and especially reading comprehension (e.g., Khajavi & Abbasian, 2013). Therefore, recognizing ways which contribute to achieving learners' motivational variables seems helpful in improving reading comprehension.

Self-regulation is one of motivational factors which has recently drawn more attention. According to Zimmerman (2000), self-regulation is ones' ability to formulate thought, feeling and actions that result in gaining one's goals utilizing some information that an individual has acquired from previous performances; this is a cyclical process. Self-regulated learners are good in performing the learning materials because they possess a set of learning and metacognitive strategies. Moreover, self-regulated learners are famous as good decision makers having a large number of aims to pursue (De Bilde, Vansteen Kiste & Lens, 2011).

Therefore, considering the importance of self-regulation as facilitative factor in reading skill, the purpose of this paper is to review recent research into the relationship between self-regulation and reading comprehension.

II. SELF-REGULATION AND CYCLICAL PHASES

Studies on academic self-regulation emerged in the middle of 1980s from an interest in answering the question of how learners become the director of their own learning process (Zimmerman, 1989). According to Zimmerman (2000, 2002), self-regulation is ones' ability to formulate thought, feeling and actions that result in gaining one's goals utilizing some information that an individual has acquired from previous performances. Self-regulated learners believe academic learning is a proactive activity, needs self-beginning motivational and behavioral processes in addition to metacognitive ones (Zimmerman, 1986). These self-initiated processes make it possible for students to become director or manager instead of the victims of their difficult learning experiences. For instance, self-regulated learners are much better in their aims, more precise in their behavioral self-controlling, and being innovative in strategic thoughts (Schunck & Zimmerman, 1994). Zimmerman and Schunk (2008, p.1) point put that in comparison to poor self-regulators, good self-regulators “set better learning goals, implement more effective learning strategies, monitor and assess their goal progress better, establish a more productive environment for learning, seek assistance more often when it is needed, expend effort and persist better, adjust strategies better and set more effective new goals when present ones are completed”.

Academic self-regulation that is not an intellectual capability like intelligence or academic skills such as reading competency is defined as a self-directed process by which students convert their intellectual capabilities into academic

skills. This idea views learning as an activity that students do for themselves in a proactive way, instead of converting an event that occurs to them reactively as a result of teaching experiences. In this regard, numerous self-regulation theoreticians believe that learning is a multidimensional processes that include individual (cognitive and emotional), behavioral, and environmental aspects (Zimmerman, 1986, 1989). To become competent in academic skill, learners must use these three factors simultaneously. Furthermore, this process needs cyclical attempts to learn, because self-direction is engaged in correlating personal, behavioral, and contextual factors, each of which is individually dynamic and interactive implying that each cognitive learning strategy does not work well in solitarily.

Therefore, learning is supposed to be a dynamic, cognitive, productive, important, moderate, and self-regulated process (Beltran, 1996) and academic learning can aid learners to be conscious about their own thoughts, to be strategic and to manage their emotions toward significant goals. There are several studies in this field and great deal of study on self-regulated learning is published (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1994; Zimmerman & Schunk, 1989; Zeidner, Boekaerts, Pintrich, 2000; Zimmerman & Schunk, 2001). What the self-regulation process is and how students can become self-regulated will be discussed in the following cyclical phases which is classified and explained in different self-regulation models.

A. Models of Self-regulated Learning

A large number of self-regulated learning models have been developed, most of which suppose that the self-regulation of an individual's learning activities is functioned in cycles of three or four phases. Winne and Hadwin (1998), for instance, suggested a model of self-regulated learning involving four phases: (1) describing the task, (2) goal setting or planning, (3) enacting study tactics and strategies, and (4) metacognitively adjusting studying for the future. Zimmerman (1998, 2000) also proposed a social cognitive model of self-regulated learning. According to this model, self-regulation is developed in three cyclical aspects: (1) forethought, (2) performance or volitional control, and (3) self-reflection (see figure 1).

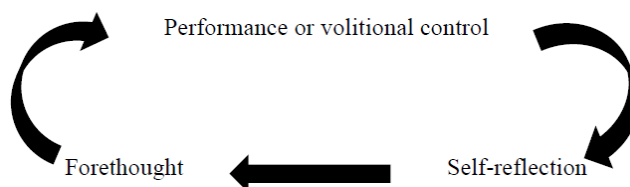


Figure.1. Academic learning cycle phase

Forethought phase have five elements in studies on academic self-regulation learning (table 1). The first element is goal-setting which depends on making decision in specific goals of learning (Locke & Latham, 1990). The second element of forethought is strategic planning which is related to the selection of learning strategies or methods planned for acquiring specific aims (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1992).

TABLE I.
CYCLICAL PHASES AND SUB-PROCESSES OF SELF-REGULATION

Cyclical self-regulatory phases		
Forethought	Performance / Volitional control	Self-reflection
Goal setting	Attention	Self-evaluation
Strategic planning	Self-instruction/ imagery	Attribution
Self-efficacy beliefs	Self-monitoring	Self-reactions
Goal orientation		adaptivity
Intrinsic interest		

These two processes are affected by some individual beliefs, like the student's self-efficacy, goal orientations, and intrinsic interest in or value of the task. The third element of forethought phase is self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is defined as individual's belief about one's ability to learn or function at specific designated levels (Bandura, 1986). For instance, students with self-efficacy beliefs set many aims for themselves (Zimmerman, Bandura, & Martinez-Pons, 1992) and utilize effective learning strategies more than students who have lower level of self-efficacy (Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994). Self-efficacious students reveal a learning goal orientation inclined to focus attention on learning process instead of competitive results and inclined to learn more impressively than learners with implementation aims (Ames, 1992). The fourth element is goal orientation. Mirhassani, Akbari and Dehghan (2007, p. 119) asserted that "achievement goal orientation as constructs that address the issue of the purpose or reason students are pursuing an achievement task". Moreover, those learners with the intrinsic interest in doing task will go on learning attempts, even in the lack of actual rewards (Deci, 1975).

The second phase of self-regulation is performance or volitional control including three processes (see table 1). These processes help students concentrate on the task and improve their performance. The first category of volitional control is attention. Harnishferger (1995) defines attention as a cognitive process which needs self-monitoring. Frequently this process involves clearing the mind from distractors, as well as searching the appropriate environment for learning such as quiet place for study (Winne, 1995). In this regard, volition theorists like Kuhl (1985), Heckhausen (1991), and

Corno (1993) insist on the necessity for students to support their goals to learn from distractions and from challenging goals. The next category which has an influence on increasing students learning is self-instructions or imagery (Schunk, 1982), and describes how individual precedes a learning task like problem solving. The third type of performance control is self-monitoring. It is the process of observing and evaluating students' behavior in relation to their aims. Self-regulated students self-monitor their improvement, and also set their learning aims and plans; moreover, they are motivated to encounter with their goals and they utilize learning strategies to make understanding material easier (Zimmerman, 2004). Many theoreticians suggests students don't need to monitor their performance all the time as the learning process get into routine, but Carver and Scheier (1981) assumed students change their self-monitoring to a more total stage. For instance, writer doesn't have a long time worrying about closely monitoring his/her grammar and can change attention to metaphorical qualities of created text.

The third phase is self-reflection which involves processes that emerge after learning attempt and have effects on learners reactions to the tasks by which learners attempt to measure the outcome of their efforts. It includes four elements and cyclically affects forethought aspect. Self-evaluating is the initial element of self-reflection. It involves comparing self-monitored knowledge with some aims, like evaluating feedback regarding the students' evaluation of their performance on the learning task. Self-regulated students need to know about how well they are doing promptly and correctly, and learners will compare their performance with other students when there are not any formal standards available (Festinger, 1954).

The second phase of self-reflection is attribution. In attribution phase learners manage their feeling about the outcomes of the task. Self-evaluation usually leads to attributions about the meaning of the outcomes, like whether weak performance is relevant to one's weak ability or inadequate attempt (Weiner, 1979). These attribution processes are very important for self-reflection because attribution of mistakes to capability compel students to respond negatively and stop attempting to progress. Attributions are influenced by a diversity of personal and environmental aspects, for example, individuals' goal orientation, following task conditions, and how well other did the task. Self-regulated students are inclined to attribute shortcomings to correctable reasons, and attribute success to individual capabilities.

However, strategic attributions not only leads to increasing self-reactions (self-reaction is the third phase during which students are engage in measuring responses to judgment of their function such as good/bad – acceptable/not acceptable), but also helps to classify the source of learning errors and adjust individuals' performance (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1992). Strategic attributions strengthen systematic variations in approach till students find the best strategy to be utilized. Finally, the fourth phase of self-reflection is adaptive decision, that is, students are willing to perform the tasks again but whether they are inclined to use previous or new strategies to get better results. Self-regulated students evaluate their acting suitably because they are so adaptive. Suitable self-reactions sequentially increase positive forethought about oneself since students pursue high self-efficacy about finally mastering the academic skill (Dweck, 1988), and more intrinsic interest in the task (Zimmerman & kinstantas, 1997). Self-regulatory phase cycle is completed by connection of self-reflection and forethought processes. Because utilizing of self-regulation process is naturally reciprocal, the phases inclined to be self-sustaining in the sense that each phase produce inertia that makes learning easier during cyclical phases.

In conclusion, in the forethought aspect of self-regulation, students get ready before learning activities; it has an influence on the performance or volitional control aspect in which students have focus attention on the tasks to improve their performance. This phase also has an effect on self-reflection aspect in which students make a judgment about their performance and goals. Finally, the self-reflective processes have cyclical influence on forethought and makes students ready for further learning attempts and efforts to achieve mastery over learnt material.

B. The Pintrich's Model

Pintrich (2000), based on social cognitive theory, asserted the theoretical framework of self-regulation the purpose of which is to categorize and analyze diverse process that take apart in self-regulation learning. In this model, self-regulation process includes four stages: planning, self-monitoring, control and evaluation. Within every stage, self-regulation activities are sequentially structured into four domains: cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and contextual. For Pintrich, these four stages are cyclical that students perform the task step by step, but these sequences are not hierarchically or linearly structured. The stages can be presented synchronically and dynamically, developing several interactions between diverse processes and constituents. Moreover, Pintrich asserted that all academic tasks do not involve self-regulation; occasionally, the implementation of a particular tasks doesn't need the learner's plan, control and evaluation of what they are going to do. That is, the implementation can be done automatically.

TABLE II.
PHASES AREAS FOR SELF-REGULATED LEARNING (PINTRICH, 2000, P. 454)

Phases	Cognition	Motivation/Affect	Behavior	Context
1-Forthought Planning, and Activation	Target goal setting prior content know- ledge activation Metacognitive	Goal orientation adoption Efficacy judgments Ease of learning judg- ments (EOLs); perceptions of task difficulty Task value activation Interest activation	(Time and effort planning) (planning for self- observations of behavior)	perceptions of task) (perceptions of context)
2-Monitoring	Metacognitive awareness and monitoring of cognition (FOKs, JOLs)	Awareness and monitoring of motivation and affect	Awareness and monitoring of effort, time us, need for help Self-observation of behavior	Monitoring changing task and context conditions
3-Control	Selection and adaptation of cognitive strategies for learning, thinking	Selection and adaptation of strategies for managing motivation and affect	Increase/decrease effort Persist, give up Help-seeking Behavior	Change or re- negotiate task Change or leave context
4-Reaction And Reflection	Cognitive judgments attributions	Affective reactions Attributions	Behavior choice	Evaluation of task Evaluation of Context

The first stage in Pintrich's model is planning. In this phase there are some essential strategies like goal setting, utilizing background knowledge about the material and metacognitive information, for example, students identify the problems or difficulties when they are engaged with diverse tasks, classify information and skills required for applying them, and gather some information about sources and strategies that are useful for doing tasks, and so on.

The second phase is self-monitoring which helps learners become aware of their cognition, motivation, emotion, and individual learning strategy to utilize not only the time and effort but also situation of the tasks and environments. In this phase students get involved with metacognitive awareness.

The third phase introduce self-control that involves the collection and usage of thought control strategies and control of different tasks in different situation, (using cognitive and metacognitive strategies), using motivational strategies and control their feeling, control the time and performance and control different activities and tasks, control the context and structure of the class. At this phase, it is complicated to distinguish between the stages of self-observation from the cognitive control, as it is in some self-regulation models (Butler & Winne, 1995), while both of them realized the discrete processes. Though at a notional level make it possible to differentiate those processes engage in self-observation and in cognition control, usually both processes happen synchronically.

Reflection or evaluation is fourth phase. Students can evaluate their tasks and compare it with previous tasks and decide whether they are successful or failed, so they choose their good behavior and follow it in the future tasks, as well they have total assessment about their tasks and class context. Pintrich (2000) stated that phases two and three are most important result in the term of schooling. All four phases represent a global time sequence that learners should pass when perform a task.

In conclusion, the Pintrich model is suggested as a global, understandable framework that analyzes the diverse cognitive, motivational, behavioral and contextual processes in detail.

C. What Is the Characteristic of Self-regulated Students?

According to Zimmerman (2001, 2002), self-regulated learners are active participants in the learning process from the metacognitive, motivational and behavioral perspective. They are students with high-ability and high-performance. Though, with sufficient practicing in this area, students can progress their degree of self-monitor on activities and learning, lots of learning disabilities that is found in low performance learner can be reduced. Generally, the following characteristics show the differences between self-regulated students in their learning process than those students who are not (Corno, 2001; Weinstein, Husman & Dierking, 2000; Winne, 1995; Zimmerman, 1998, 2000, 2001, 2002).

1) They are aware of how they are able to utilize of cognitive strategies such as repetition, elaboration, and arrangement that they can transform, arrange, elaborate and retrieve information.

2) They are aware of how to prepare, manage and guide intellectual process for achieving individuals' goals (metacognitive).

3) They reveal a group of motivational beliefs and adaptive feelings, for instance, having high level of self-efficacy, selecting the appropriate learning goals, increasing the positive feeling for doing tasks such as an enjoyment, satisfaction and enthusiasm, and also having ability to control and classify them, and adapting them to necessity of the tasks in particular learning context.

4) They set and control the time and attempt to utilize them on the tasks, they are aware of how they can innovate and construct the enjoyable learning context, like providing appropriate place to study, getting help from teacher and other students when they are encountered with problems or difficulties.

5) They have shown more attempts to participate in managing and monitoring the academic tasks, classroom setting and structure.

6) They can select a set of strategies, avoid intrinsic and extrinsic distractions in order to continue their attention, and have enough motivation and effort for performing tasks.

In conclusion, if we consider such students' characteristics, self-regulated students are performer of their behavior, they believe that learning is an active process; they are self-motivated and utilize different strategies for achieving to their goals.

III. READING COMPREHENSION

Reading skill is one of the key factors for EFL learners' success not only in educational area, but also in their social lives and it is also considered as the most essential skill in their academic life (Sajadi & Oghabi, 2011). Chastain (1988, p. 216) defines "reading is a process involving the activation of relevant knowledge and related language skills to accomplish an exchange of information from one person to another. Reading requires that the reader focus attention on the reading materials and integrate previously acquired knowledge and skills to comprehend what someone else has written". As a matter of fact, reading can be seen as an interaction between the text and the reader or the reader and the writer.

The second or foreign language readers have different purposes for reading. A number of researchers such as Alderson (2000) and Urquhart and Weir (1999) state the purpose for reading can include the following: a) reading for finding information such as scanning and skimming. It is covering a large amount of materials with the purpose of locating a particular fact or information quickly. In this case, readers scan the text for a particular word, name, date, phrase, form, or number. In skimming skill reader rapidly moves the eyes over the text in order to find the main idea. b) reading to learn: not only it needs to be aware of the main idea but also it requires to know about the details of the text and organization framework in which the diverse meanings of the text are related. c) reading to critique and evaluate, d) reflection and expansion relations to previous knowledge and an integration with previous information, containing the readers attitudes, feelings, motivations for reading the text, and level of topic-specific previous information. Reading speed is slow for this purpose. The most general, and most essential, reading goal is reading for general comprehension, it contains the readers' expectations for understanding the main idea and a group of supporting ideas. While it is well known as 'basic' and 'general', it isn't easy to accomplish fluently. Reading for understanding with normal processing speed, needs great deal of recognition vocabulary, "automaticity of word recognition for the most of words in the text, a reasonably rapid overall reading speed for text-information integration, and the ability to build overall text comprehension under some times pressure" (Alderson, as cited in Grabe, 2002, p. 50).

IV. SOME EMPIRICAL STUDIES ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-REGULATION AND READING COMPREHENSION

Improving reading skills needs some motivational variables such as self-regulation that work as facilitative factors. Zimmerman (2002) defines self-regulation as ones' ability to formulate thought, feelings and actions that result in gaining one's goals. Those who are extremely regulatory can be adapted to different occasions and come up with an answer while approaching a task in a confident tenacious purposeful manner (Zimmerman, 2002). Self-regulated learners are good in performing the learning materials because they possess a set of learning and metacognitive strategies. Moreover, self-regulated learners are famous as good decision makers having a large number of aims to pursue (De Bilde, Vansteen Kiste & Lens, 2011). With regard to effective ways for improving reading comprehension, a set of recent studies have found that motivational variables are related to accomplishment and success of learners' academic life and especially reading comprehension (e.g., Khajavi & Abbasian, 2013).

However, in a recent study, (Nabavi, Ekhlas & Shangarfam, 2012), investigated the relationship between determinant factors of self-regulation strategies, main skills and overall proficiency. Participants were 150 candidates of IELTS examination-Academic Module. The finding of the study showed that reading is solitary skill can be anticipated by behavioral self-regulation strategies. Behavioral self-regulation related to "students' proactive use of self-evaluation strategies which help them to provide information about themselves which will provide information about accuracy and whether checking must continue through enactive feedback", (Zimmerman, 1989, p. 331). It was also found that the motivational factors are precisely related to the improvement and success of student in educational life.

In another study, Turan and Demirel (2010) studied the relationship between self-regulated learning skills and achievement. The results indicated that if learners' self-regulated learning skills are enhanced, their awareness of subject area and efficiency of learning will be increased. In addition, Mirhassani, Akbari and Dehghan (2007) examined the relationship between Iranian EFL learners' goal-oriented and self-regulated learning and their language proficiency. Based on their findings, those self-regulated language learners in learning process got better scores in language proficiency tests; therefore, they concluded that self-regulated learning is a wide structure that involves a broad variety of elements like cognitive strategies, metacognition, motivational beliefs and so on. Also, those language students who understand the advantages of self-regulated characteristics are more successful than who don't understand those features. Khajavi and Abbasian (2013) studied on the improvement of EFL students' self-regulation in reading English using the cognitive tool of concept mapping. The finding of the study showed that the learners' self-regulation in reading have

been significantly developed as the result of the concept mapping strategy direction. There are a number studies in this regard, all indicating that the motivational factors have an influence on learning language skills. Nami, Enayati, Ashouri (2010), for example, examined the relationship between self-regulation approaches and learning approaches in English writing tasks on English language students. The results of the study revealed that learning approaches have a significant relationship with self-regulation aspects, such as memory strategy, goal-setting, self-evaluation, seeking assistance, environmental structure, responsibility organizing.

Moreover, Nejadhassan (2015) investigated the relationship between self-efficacy, self-regulation and reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners. The participants of the study were 99 male and female pre-intermediate university students. Their age ranged was from 18 to 47 years. Furthermore, they were homogenized through Quick placement test. In order to evaluate self-regulation of students, the researcher employed the Academic Self-Regulated Learning Scale recently developed by Magno (2010). In order to decrease the participants' misunderstanding about the meaning of the items, the researcher translated the items into Persian. This questionnaire consisted of 54 items which students answered on a four point Likert scale (strongly agree = 4, agree = 3, disagree = 2, strongly disagree = 1). In addition, the reading comprehension test consisted of four texts from pre-intermediate level of Select Reading Book (Lee & Gundersen, 2002). The result of the study showed that there was no significant relationship between self-regulation with reading comprehension. These findings with regard to previous studies were unexpected and the researcher thought it might be the result of; students are unique and different in their way of thinking and feeling.

V. CONCLUSION

In this review article, the relationship between self-regulation as a motivational variable and reading comprehension was described. In other words, the aim was to understand whether students with high self-regulation have high level of reading comprehension or not. A quick review of literature demonstrated that learners can improve such motivational variables by using some strategies, and also through these can improve their reading comprehension. That is, self-regulation is one of the essential determinant factors of learners' learning outcomes.

Providing the chance for learners to be a self-regulated through teaching self-regulation strategies and explaining why it is useful, teachers can demonstrate the way that self-regulation strategies use, give learners practice by applying these strategies in the learning occasion, make them understand how they can measure themselves, and also what they do when it doesn't work.

It seems that in the EFL/ESL contexts, teachers don't pay attention to the learners' motivational variables in teaching reading comprehension and they use traditional ways in the academic studies. However, they can encourage learners to pay attention to the teaching self-regulation strategies through helping students with establishing a suitable to be good readers. In general, English as second or foreign language requires more researches in Iran, because the populations of EFL/ESL learners are growing and the study is not keeping up.

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Exploring the Professional Identity of the Iranian English Teachers: The Case of English Institutes of Iranshahr

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Abstract—In the past few decades, professional identity has emerged as a separate research area in the field of teaching and learning language. Research has shown that many contextual factors are involved in teachers' perception about their personal identities and the formation of this personality trait. It has been found that professional identity is one of the factors that impacts the curriculum, teachers' beliefs and behavior, and students' learning. Accordingly, the present study attempted to investigate the professional identity of the language teachers in Iranshahr city, Iran. The relationship between gender and work experience of teachers and their professional identity was also explored to determine any significant relationship. 79 language teachers of private language institutes in Iranshahr city participated in this study. To collect the data, a questionnaire developed by Beijaard, Verloop and Vermunt (2000) was used. The questionnaire was piloted and its reliability and internal consistency was verified. Beijaard et al. (2000) identified three aspects of professional identity: teachers as subject matter experts, teachers as didactical experts, and teachers as pedagogical experts. The results showed that teachers identify themselves mostly as didactical experts, then as pedagogical experts, and least as subject matter experts. There was no significant relationship between the gender and experience of the participants and the three sub-scales of professional identity, except for a significant relationship between subject matter expert and experience of the teachers.

Index Terms—professional identity, language teachers, teaching English

I. INTRODUCTION

Both teaching and learning are socially embedded in our emotional experience (Hargreaves, 1998). Teachers' identity is an individual factor which has its roots in social and contextual factors and has been subject of many studies so far. This concept emerged in educational research in 1990s and soon became one of the central topics in the field of education. Gradually in foreign language teaching, concerns about identity increased as well. It seems that understanding how emotions guide teachers' professional practices and decisions, and how it affects their professional identity depends on extending our understanding of the self-image that teachers have about themselves in relation to their profession (Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2004). As a result, research about how social and individual perspectives relates to teachers' practice seems to be necessary.

There has been much debate on the concept of identity, however, what everybody appears to agree on is that identity is not an attribute one possesses, but rather a relational phenomenon (Beijaard et al., 2004) which teachers themselves adopt or is assigned to them (Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, & Johnson, 2005). Lasky (2005) defines professional identity as how teachers define their professional roles. Professional identity is the professional self-concept each person perceives about themselves based on their experiences, motives, beliefs, and values (Ibarra, 1999). Teachers are continuously in a process of interpreting and reinterpreting their professional identities according to their experiences (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Ashforth and Tomiuk (2000) argue that professional identity involves a combination of personal, professional, and situational factors; they believe that in every situation one of these components may take over and become dominant. Most importantly, professional identity determines teachers' beliefs, the reason they chose teaching, and how they function in the teaching environment (Kompf, Bond & Boak, 1996).

Professional identity is a dynamic construct (Varghese, Morgan, Johnston & Johnson, 2005; Barrett, 2008) which impacts teachers' behaviors in classroom (Abednia, 2012), their teaching effectiveness (Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000), and their sense of well-being. It also affects their professional development and helps them to cope with educational changes, bring innovation in the classroom and be creative in their teaching practice (Beijaard, Verloop & Vermunt, 2000). Teachers interpret the curriculum and textbooks, choose the style of their teaching, and gain an understanding of students' learning based on their professional identities (Caihong, 2011).

Since teachers' professional identity experiences are the core of their teaching practice and their commitment as professionals (Dillabough, 1999; Day, Elliot, & Kington, 2005; Burn, 2007), exploration of teachers' professional identity has great implications for curriculum reform, classroom teaching, and student learning (Caihong, 2011), Hamachek, (1999) states that teachers teach students what they know consciously and teach who they are unconsciously.

On the other hand, many factors contribute to teachers' perception of their professional identity. Schooling, training, work environment, years of work experience, etc., have been found to contribute to formation of teachers' professional identity (Kompf, Bond & Boak, 1996). Urzu'a and Va 'squez (2008) believe that teachers' professional identity manifests itself through their social actions. Teaching context, teaching experience, and the biography of the teacher are highly influencing factors on professional identity of the teachers (Beijaard et al., 2000). Therefore studies on professional identity are integrated into research on language teaching and learning. All in all, due to the role of professional identity in the process of teaching and variety of factors contributing to it, attempting to gain a clearer sense of it in different contexts of language teaching seems logical.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Many researchers has ventured to explore the professional identity in recent years (e.g., Duff & Uchida, 1997; Beijaard et al., 2000, Beijaard et al., 2004, Liu, 2009; Tsui, 2007; Clarke, 2008), but despite the impact that this concept has on the teaching process, professional identity has been a poorly defined concept. A close look at the literature reveals that professional identity is a difficult concept to define, since various aspects are involved in exploration of the professional identity. Beauchamp and Thomas (2013) explored the core and peripheral aspects of professional identity using the six-domain O*NET® Content Model. They highlighted the role of teachers' characteristics, occupational and worker requirements, experience requirements, occupation-specific information, and workforce characteristics.

Professional identity has been studied in relation with varied individual and contextual factors such as the gender and power relationships (Dillabough, 1999; Lortie, 1975). Dillabough (1999), for example, challenged the concept of teachers' professional identity from a feminist perspective and demonstrated that gender and history of male dominance is a core element in the formation of professional identity. The relationship between professional identity and social structure was also investigated in construction of identity (e.g., Coldron & Smith, 1999; Reynolds, 1996); the results indicated that the development of a teacher's professional identity depends on various social factors. Concerning the relation between work environment and professional identity, in a research, Reynolds (1996) pointed out that workplace greatly influences teachers' identity and suggested that the work environment can be very persuasive, demanding, and often restrictive. Professional identity was found to be also related to life experiences (Knowles, 1992; Huberman, 1993; Sugrue, 1997) and process of identity formation (Tsui, 2007). Regarding the relationship between the work experience of teachers and their professional identity, a few studies investigated the professional identity of novice teachers (Turbill & Kervin, 2007; Timoštšuk & Ugaste, 2010). Turbill and Kervin (2007) conducted a study on how first year pre-service teachers develop a professional identity; and Timoštšuk and Ugaste (2010) investigated how beginner teachers understand and describe their professional identities, and how teacher training can affect formation of professional identity.

Beijaard et al. (2000) identified factors influencing professional identity and described how different aspects of professional identity are perceived by teachers. In another study, Beijaard et al. (2004) reviewed the studies which investigated teachers' characteristics of professional identity. They argued that in future studies relevant concepts such as "self", "identity", role of context, and perspectives other than cognitive need to be considered in designing research.

Inspired by a research by Bromme (1991), Beijaard et al. (2000) suggested three sub-identities for professional identity: teachers as subject matter experts, teachers as pedagogical experts, and teachers as didactical experts. They explained that teachers as subject matter experts should be able to process the knowledge they have in order to consciously change the programs, develop tasks, and diagnose students' misconceptions adequately; in didactical field teachers deal with guiding and influencing students' thinking so they can gradually take control of their own learning process and become autonomous; and in pedagogical expert moral and ethical dimensions are covered.

In the context of Iran, there has been some research about the concept of professional identity. For example, Abednia (2012) explored the professional identity of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers in Iran. In his study he observed that a major shift happened in the professional identity of the teachers through taking a critical education course.

A. *Significance of the Study*

As Timoštšuk and Ugaste (2010) put it learning about teaching is the heart of teacher education. Understanding the teachers and trying to gain a clear sense of their identity is the key to understanding the process of teaching and learning (Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, & Johnson, 2005). Moreover, investigating the contextual aspects of learning facilitates an in-depth approach to this complex process. Teaching is not only a matter of applying decontextualized set of skills and knowledge; it is a dynamic process reliant on the teachers' individual characteristics and contextual factors. Many contextual factors play a role in the formation of professional identity; therefore it seems necessary to explore how teachers perceive their professional identity in different contexts. Since this area of teaching language has been an understudied area in the context of Iran, studies which attempt to explore the professional identity of teachers of language institutes in the context of Iran seem essential. Furthermore, exploring the relationship between such factors as work experience and gender and professional identities of the teachers become a prominent part of research too.

B. *Research Questions*

This study attempted to investigate the aspects of the professional identity of the English teachers in Iranshahr, Iran. Recently, teachers; teaching context, their experiences, and biographies has been put in the spotlight in research of language teaching and learning. These factors are assumed to interact with each other and influence teachers' beliefs, actions, and behavior (Beijaard, et al., 2000). Accordingly, in the present research, years of teachers' work experience and their gender were considered as influential elements that might affect teachers' perception about their professional identity. Therefore, the current study posed the following questions to discover whether there was a significant relationship between professional identity and contextual factors such as years of work experience and gender.

1. Do teachers' of the language institutes in Iranshahr see themselves more as subject matter experts, didactical experts, or pragmatic experts?
2. Is there a significant relationship between teachers' years of work experience and their professional identity in the language institutes in Iranshahr?
3. Is there a significant relationship between teachers' gender and their professional identity in the language institutes in Iranshahr?

III. METHOD

The present study aimed to explore the teachers' professional identity in relation to their work experience and gender. Professional identity as the main variable had three sub-scales which were investigated individually. The sub-scales included subject matter field, pedagogical field, and didactical field.

A. Participants

The participants of the study were 79 English teachers (37 were male, 42 were female) who taught English in the private language institutes in Iranshahr, Iran. Their age ranged from 22 to 39 with the mean of 28.3 years old. Most of them had B.A and M.A degrees in English (45 B.A degree, 34 M.A degree). They had between 2 to 12 years of teaching experience (mean, 5.7 years). All of the teachers taught intermediate and advanced classes at their institutes. The respondents were selected from 8 different language institutes in the city.

B. Instruments

For the purpose of this study, items used in the study of Beijaard et al. (2000) were designed into a questionnaire and were applied to collect the data. The questionnaire consisted of four parts, the first part consisted of questions about the background variables, questions about teachers' gender, age, and years of experience. The second part encompassed the subject matter field (4 items) these questions explored the extent to which teachers put their teaching on the basis of subject matter knowledge and skills. The third part covered didactical field (6 items), in this part teachers were asked to what extent their teaching was based on knowledge and skills regarding the planning, execution, and evaluation of teaching and learning processes. And the last part was pragmatic expert (4 items), in this part teachers described how much they base their teaching on knowledge and skills to support students' social, emotional, and moral development. Since the questions were translated in Persian, the reliability of the questionnaire needed to be re-evaluated. In order to determine the reliability, the questionnaire was piloted and the Cronbach's alpha test of reliability was run on a sample size of 15 teachers. The obtained Cronbach's alpha was 0.804, which indicates a high level of internal consistency for our questionnaire.

C. Procedures

The present study was carried out in Iranshahr City. Iranshahr is a city in Sistan and Baluchestan Province. For the convenience of the respondents and accuracy of the responses the questionnaire was translated into Persian. Then, it was piloted and its reliability was estimated. To fill the questionnaires, English teachers were approached in language institutes randomly and were asked to fill the questionnaires. Filling the questionnaires was not compulsory and the questionnaires were returned on the spot. 5 questionnaires were discarded in the data analysis due to insufficient data. The data were analyzed by the SPSS statistic software version 20.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. In the first step mean and standard deviation were calculated for every item by assigning values to the choices (1. strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Not sure, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly agree). The teachers had to express to what extent they agreed with each item. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1.
MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF THE ITEMS OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY QUESTIONNAIRE

Variant	Mean	Std. Deviation
Subject matter field		
1. It is necessary to keep pace with new developments.	3.475	.29861
2. It is necessary for students to have a knowledgeable teacher.	4.350	.52126
3. Teachers cannot permit themselves to make mistakes.	3.175	.44694
4. Subject matter is not the only basis for a teacher.	4.150	.30861
Didactical field		
5. It is important to keep into account the students' level.	4.575	.23599
6. There are many ways to teach and learn the same thing.	4.650	.17957
7. Students' ways and strategies of learning is important.	4.350	.47957
8. Planning and organization are the basis for teaching.	4.075	.52858
9. To motivate and interest students by changing learning activities is important.	4.225	.46753
10. It is Necessary to be alert by listening and observation.	4.125	.24798
Pedagogical field		
11. It important to be positive, open, respectful etc. when approaching students.	4.550	.23851
12. Good/safe classroom climate is a necessary condition for teaching.	4.475	.24001
13. Being alert for signs of students/ showing involvement is important.	3.850	.18835
14. Students' situation/well-being is starting point for the lessons.	3.292	.57748

Table 1 presents the data regarding the three sub-scales of professional identity. A closer look at the data reveals that all the items have a high mean. In the subject matter field, the highest agreement was on the statement 'students need to have a knowledgeable teacher' (mean=4.35). However, the lowest agreement was on item 3: "Teachers cannot permit themselves to make mistakes" (mean=3.175). This may indicate that teachers confirm that they should be knowledgeable but they do not need to have perfect knowledge in order to be successful in teaching.

In the didactical field, all the items have a mean higher than 4. Teachers realize that it is important to take into account the students' level (mean= 4.575) or consider the strategies that they use in their teaching (mean= 4.350). They are also aware that there are various ways to teach a single concept (mean= 4.650). These items point out those teachers try to have learner centric classes and choose teaching strategies according to students' needs. They also pay attention to students motivation (mean= 4.225), and listening and observation of the class (mean= 4.125).

Responses in the pedagogical field also showed high agreement of the teachers to the items. They reported that it is necessary to be positive and open in class, respect students (mean= 4.550), and make the class environment safe to facilitate the learning of the students (mean= 4.475).

In the next part, to determine how teachers see themselves as teachers, the sum of mean and standard deviation for the three scales were calculated. Table 2 contains the results for the mean, standard deviation, and the Cronbach's alpha for the internal consistency of each part.

TABLE 2.
CRONBACH'S ALPHA, MEAN, AND STANDARD DEVIATION FOR THREE SCALES OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

Variant	C alpha	Mean	Std. Deviation
Subject matter field	.72	3.78	1.80526
Didactical field	.69	4.33	2.34247
Pedagogical field	.78	4.04	2.00240

As the above table indicates internal consistency of the scales is within the acceptable range. Furthermore, as the mean of each scale shows, teachers see themselves more as didactical (mean= 4.33) and then as pedagogical experts (mean= 4.04) and less as a subject matter expert.

In order to assess the supposed relationships between the professional identity and gender of teachers, male and female teachers were compared to each other in terms of the sub-scales of professional identity. The results can be seen in Table 3.

TABLE 3.
COMPARISON OF MALE AND FEMALE TEACHERS IN TERMS OF THREE SUB-SCALES OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

gender		Subject matter field	Didactical field	Pedagogical field
Male	Mean	3.70	4.28	3.86
	Std. Deviation	1.90201	1.86689	1.59963
Female	Mean	3.86	4.38	4.22
	Std. Deviation	1.83533	2.84492	2.41704

With respect to gender, males consider themselves to be subject matter and didactical experts more than females, while females see themselves as pedagogical expert more than males. Perhaps this is an indicator that female teacher put more emphasis on the affective, moral, and ethical domain of language teaching and learning, and care more about learners' feelings and creating a safe and positive learning environment.

To examine whether there was a significant difference in the perception of teachers with respect to their gender and work experience, chi-square test was applied. Table 4 encompasses the results regarding the chi-square analysis of experience and gender.

TABLE 4.
THE RESULTS OF CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS REGARDING GENDER AND EXPERIENCE

		Subject matter field	Didactical field	Pedagogical field
Gender	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	.821	.134	.935
	Value	3.630	12.394	1.825
Experience	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	.022	.548	.117
	Value	111.972	93.686	86.476

The results in Table 4 revealed that there was only a significant relationship between experience and subject matter field ($p < .05$). No other significant relationship was observed between the variables. Gender of the teachers had no significant relationship with any of sub-scales of their perceived professional identity. And there was no significant relationship between the work experience and didactical and pedagogical field.

V. CONCLUSION

The present study was carried out in the Iranshahr city of Iran to explore the professional identity of the language teachers in the private language institutes. The first question of the study was to investigate the teachers' knowledge of their professional identity, and how they perceive themselves as teachers. It appears that teachers identify themselves more as didactical experts. This means that teachers focus on planning and execution of proper teaching, as well as evaluating both teaching and learning processes. After that teachers consider themselves as pedagogical experts, hence, they pay attention to students' social, emotional, and moral development as an integrated element in learning process. Teachers were found to identify themselves as subject matter experts less than pedagogical and didactical experts. However it should be noted that this does not mean that they have a low opinion regarding the importance of the subject matter field. Although, the obtained results for the subject matter field were lower than pedagogical and didactical fields, they realized the importance of subject matter field as a part of their professional identity. Teachers has simply realized that although the knowledge of subject matter is significant, being a didactical and pedagogical expert helps students more in the process of their learning.

Professional identity was also studied with respect to gender and experience in order to find that if there was a significant relationship between these variants and professional identity. So, to answer the second and third question that the study posed, female teachers tended to be pedagogical experts more than males, while male teachers were more didactical and subject matter experts. It can be concluded that female teachers are more attentive to moral and affective domain of teaching. The analysis of the data revealed only a significant relationship between subject matter expert and years of teachers experience as a language teacher. This may indicate that although experience of the teachers does not have any significant relationship with didactical and pedagogical field, it contributes to the subject matter field. No other significant relationship was detected between professional identity and gender and experience of the teachers.

This study was carried out in the hope that in the long run, similar studies help to cast light on the issue of professional identity of language teachers. It is suggested that for further research researchers try to investigate factors that influence this personality trait, and carry out similar studies in different contexts to compare the results with the present study and explore the role of contextual factors. Due to limitations of the study and role of contextual factors, it is expected that studies on the same subject elsewhere show similar or different results.

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On Suggestions of Strategy Training in Reading Comprehension

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Abstract—This paper introduces the goals of strategy training and provides kinds of forms that are taken when designing strategy training. Models are firstly listed to make sense of general procedures of strategy training which ensue an approach to integrating strategy training into the regular reading classroom, as a blueprint for teachers to put it into practice.

Index Terms—reading comprehension, strategy training, suggestions

I. INTRODUCTION

It is known that there do exist some differences in the use of learning strategies in reading comprehension between students with different ages, sexes and motivations. Appropriate use of learning strategies in reading comprehension can facilitate reading. Then the evidence leads to the question: Can strategies be trained and taught in order to promote their reading competence? As opinions vary, no unanimous conclusion can be drawn. During the last few decades, many researchers have determined the effectiveness of strategy training through a large number of empirical studies. Stern (1983) argues that it is plausible to assume that failure to learn can be attributed to failure to employ one or the other strategies at a time when its use would have been critical strategy training that leads to overall skill improvement with extensive research documenting the role of a variety of conscious strategies awareness. Therefore training strategy use has become a natural concern of those with a strong belief in the positive effect of strategies on language learning. A wealth of programs and materials research has been developed to train to use effective strategies and extensive effectiveness, many of which have produced favorable findings. Numan (1991) finds learning strategy training does lead to greater sensitivity to the language learning process. Although training research on strategy is proved to be effective, some researchers hold a contrary opinion. Wang Chunming et al (1987) takes a skeptical attitude towards the effect of strategy training and the teaching value. The research on strategy training abroad seems to overemphasize the importance of strategy training. Haastrup, K. (1991) stresses that too much enthusiasm for strategy training should lower the temperature.

We think that denying the effectiveness of strategy training lacks scientific basis and there is no doubt that strategy training can be taught and trained. Learning strategies in reading comprehension have considerable potentiality for enhancing the development of reading competence. Though incompetent readers may play host to the same reservoir as competent readers, the former have no idea about when, how to employ and even why. Poor students can turn out to be better through effective strategy training.

II. GOALS OF STRATEGY TRAINING

In the past few decades, there has been a marked shift from the focus of language instruction, to the needs of individual students in the classroom by attempting to meet their various goals, while at the same time adapting their instruction to meet the students' different language learning needs. In general, Cohen, A.D. (2000) puts that the instruction has changed to one that is more interactive, and less teacher-centered. Implication from this study is that the ability of strategy is a competence for knowing not only what strategy use but also how to use them appropriately and successfully, so what teachers do is help students to know how to use strategy.

The goal of strategy training is for students to become autonomous ones with the dexterity and wisdom to use strategies appropriately in a variety of contexts. However, in the beginning, students should learn when and in what contexts to use particular strategy or require direction and guidance from teachers. In other words, the teachers' goal of strategy training is to teach how, when, what and why strategies can be used to enhance their learning. The first step is to introduce and demonstrate strategies. The aims are to enable students to choose strategies suited to themselves, understand the effectiveness and feasibility of certain strategies, master their concrete operation and thus improve students' competence of applying strategies comprehensively. In the course of first step, we should take many aspects into consideration, for example, the individualization. As we know, students each has their own age, sex motivation, learning style, capacity, personality as mentioned in Chapter three. There is such situation that one strategy is suitable for some students but is not suitable for the others, so teachers should specify a set of strategies which are considered to be good to give students to alternate. The second step is to train students to self-evaluate the efficiency. Through these self-evaluations, students can set up their own evaluation criteria, measure training paces, heighten their consciousness

and train their self-act abilities. In a word, students can learn more correctly and effectively as long as teachers encourage them to self-evaluate and self-direct their learning.

A further goal of strategy training is to improve students' autonomy. The general trend in language education has been seen toward learner-centeredness. No longer does the teacher control every aspect of the process, rather the students are allowed and required to play a fuller, more active and participatory role in learning process, develop strategies and become increasing independent and autonomous in their learning. Furthermore, what's learned at school can't be used throughout one's career at all. It's safe to say that all students need learn to be independent from the teacher. For example, most reading happens out of class that is the main method to obtain information. If students don't form their own strategies of reading, they can't do well. In their spare time, if they can't understand a passage well, how can they ask the teacher? So it's necessary for them to master certain learning strategies in reading comprehension to tackle with the passage while reading by themselves.

The general goal of strategy training is to impart cognitive strategies and to raise metacognitive strategies. Students without metacognitive strategies are regarded as those without direction to monitor their progress. Cognitive strategies exert an operative or cognitive-processing function, because of their operation direct on incoming information, manipulating it in ways that enhance learning. To sum up, we should make students be knowledgeable about how and when to use strategies. Most importantly, they are capable of assessing particular strategies and developing a repertoire of effective strategies spontaneously without special interventions of teachers.

III. MODELS OF STRATEGY TRAINING

In order to heighten students' autonomy and teach them how to use strategies efficiently, strategy training has undergone many kinds of professionals' exploration. There are models designed to raise students' awareness as to the purpose and rationale of strategy use, to give students chances to practice the strategies that they are being taught, and to help them understand how to use the strategies in new learning contexts, at least four different models are worth elaborating.

A. *General Study-strategy Courses*

General study-strategy courses help students to develop general learning strategies, to clarify their educational goals and values and to diagnose individual learning preferences. Students can be encouraged to participate in these courses which can be transferred to the process of learning a second language, such as using flash cards, overcoming anxiety and developing good grouping strategy. These kinds of programs are especially helpful to more motivated students who are experienced in transferring learning strategies and assisting students in the development of a general awareness of the learning process. However, general study-strategy courses may be insufficient training for the task demand of learning a second language, even though they are not provided with contextualized practice in language setting.

B. *Awareness Training*

As we all know, awareness training is as consciousness rising or familiarization training. After training, students can become aware of and familiar with the general idea of language strategies and help them to accomplish various language tasks. Oxford (1990) describes awareness training as a program in which students become aware of and familiar with the general idea of language learning and the way that strategies can help them to accomplish various language tasks.

In the course of awareness training, it consists of separated lectures and discussions, short workshops and peer sessions. As we all know, awareness training is as consciousness rising. By increasing consciousness, students tend to use more strategies and know how to approach the new raw materials and how to monitor or assess the learning process. Holec H (1988) describes peer tutor system as a direct language exchange program. Though mutual monitor and direction, students exchange views about the kinds of learning strategies that they typically use. The advantage of this system for students is to experience lower stress than in a formal class instruction.

As an example of awareness training in learning strategies in reading comprehension, students can exchange ideas on the reading habits, reading problems, strategy use and so on and so forth. The teacher guides their discussion on such issues as what strategies are used? When and how? Attention is particularly paid to those strategies selected strategies for training. In the next step, the teacher explains the selected strategies in detail and demonstrates how to use them to solve reading problems. For example, when training the learning strategies in reading comprehension: predicting and inferencing, the teacher first explains to the students what predicting and inferencing are and why and when use such strategies. The teacher tells students that reading is an activity involving constant guesses and predicting those later sentences, relying on a number of words or cues to get an idea of what information. Then the teacher facilitates students to understand. One of such examples is predicting and inferencing the content of a passage by the title and the first paragraph, and lastly, students should do some exercises to consolidate the use of the strategies. The aim is to raise the students' awareness of their reading process and strategy use that can lead students to read better.

C. *Insertion of Strategies into Language Textbooks*

Sometimes the rationale for strategy training is only explained in the teacher's manual and the teacher doesn't have

sufficient training to explain the strategy's importance or value as learning tools. At other times, a strategy may be described briefly in English, but the strategy is not subsequently reinforced through other activities in the textbook. But now many foreign language textbooks have begun to immerse strategies overtly or covertly into the assignments and thus into the language curriculum. Because of this, strategy training actually does take place since students are reminded of how and when to use strategies. Of course we can not ignore teacher's role, the teacher has to explicitly debrief student about the strategies and reinforce those that appear in the textbook, making sure that the students are aware of the purpose of systematic strategy use.

There are a few advantages of using textbooks with explicit strategy training and reinforcement, the most obvious of which is that contextualized practice provided by textbook guides and encourages students to transfer language strategy to other similar language tasks because the strategies are already included as part of the regular language course. In addition, these textbooks reinforce strategy use across both tasks and skills, and thus encourage students to continue to apply the strategies and finally form a repertoire of individualized strategies.

D. Strategy-based Instruction

Strategy-based instruction (SBI) is a learner-centered approach to teaching that extends classroom strategy training to include both explicit and implicit integration of strategy into the course content. The aim of this instruction is to help students to learn most effectively, enhance their own comprehension and production of the target language and assist them in learning on their own. There are many means available for strategy instruction: such as general study-strategy course, awareness training, insertion of strategy into language textbook, peer tutoring, short workshops, and so on, but strategy-based instruction is one of the most effective means. Although it may seem that in class strategy training takes valuable time away from teaching the language and content, teachers' using strategy-based instruction has reported that their students become more efficient in completing language training tasks, take more responsibility for self-directing their learning outside class, gain more confidence in their ability to learn and use the target language and have opportunities to share own preferred strategies with other students. Furthermore, the teacher can individualize the strategy training, after valuable feedback on the effectiveness of an integrated strategy approach, suggest language specific strategies, and reinforce strategies at the same time that they are presenting the regular course content.

What's teacher's role in strategy-based instruction? Rubin, H (1987) states that the most important teacher's role in foreign language teaching is the provision of a range of tasks to match various learning styles. Therefore teachers should learn about their students including ages, sexes, motivations, learning styles, etc. help individuals discern which strategies are most relevant to their goals, aid students in developing orchestrated strategy use, analyze their textbooks to see whether the textbooks include language strategies, etc. How do teachers conduct SBI? Cohen, A.D (2000) claims the sequence is as follows.

- (1) set the goal for SBI
- (2) describe, model, and give examples of potentially useful strategies
- (3) elicit additional examples from students based on their own learning experiences
- (4) lead small-group/whole-class discussions about strategies
- (5) encourage their students to experiment with a broad range of strategies
- (6) integrate strategies into every class materials, explicitly and implicitly embed them in the language tasks to provide for contextualized strategies practice

To sum up, strategy training should be applied systematically and continuously and complemented with each other in order to avoid training at will and in no planned way. Strategy training should also be explicit, overt and relevant and provide practice and evaluation of their progress according to their own differences.

E. A Three-step Model of Strategy Training

Strategy training is playing an important role in the field of SLA, we are putting more eyes on how to practice the SBI and we should pay more attention to all kinds of elements. When we design an overt strategy training, we should take many aspects into consideration, we are about to describe a strategy training program that can be applied in the reading comprehension class. There are three steps: before-training, while-training and post-training.

1. Step 1-----before-training

At the beginning, it is very crucial for teacher to draw up a training plan, choose training materials, study students' factors and training methods. This step is for students and teachers to prepare strategy instruction that can be compared to a foundation of constructing a building. Thus, it's indispensable to any successful strategy instruction. It encompasses studying student factors and motivating them for strategies.

The training plan should be suited to students' current language levels and the training forms should be various. Unified training, decentralized training and individual coaching should be integrated with each other. To different students with different age, such as mentioned in the case study, the teacher can take different training forms. The older adult students are experienced in cooperation with others, so the teacher can use short workshop to train their reading. The younger adults are rarely use social/affective learning strategies in reading comprehension, so the teacher should stimulate them to discuss with peers or teachers.

After having determined the plans, the teacher should choose the suitable materials according to students' language levels, strategy types and textbooks, which should be analyzed to see whether they already embrace learning strategy in

reading comprehension training. Perhaps upon careful observation, you will be surprised to find out many learning strategies incorporated into the teaching materials. If not, you may look for other teaching materials or just design a new material where strategies overtly are immersed. For example, College English published by Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press (2001) incorporates “learning strategies in reading comprehension” exercises that highlight learning strategies in reading comprehension and encourage students to use them in reading tasks. One example like Lesson One “How to Improve Your Study Habits” is just an instruction about metacognitive learning strategies.

The effect of students’ factors on strategy instruction can’t be overemphasized nor ignored. It has been elucidated that individual differences may have an impact on learning strategies in reading comprehension. Factors such as age, sex, motivation and learning style, etc. may be key to the receptiveness of students to learning strategies training and in their ability to obtain new learning strategies. Motivation is probably the most important characteristic that students bring to a learning task. O’malley and Chamot (1990) claim that learning strategy training will be most valuable for students who are not successful. Students indicate they are not good at language or don’t have an ear for language and therefore may not consider it worthwhile to make an effort to improve their own language learning. Learning strategy training can help reluctant students over the initial hurdle of learning to use new strategies. Once students begin to experience success in using strategies, their attitudes about their own abilities may change and they can increase their motivation. Therefore, letting students know when the strategy is used affectively is one of the keys to motivating them.

Teachers need consider their training methods and overall instructional style and they should also well decide whether the training style student-centered or teacher-centered, whether strategy training is explicit or implicit and whether the style of instruction of strategies is prescriptive or descriptive.

Before designing strategy training program, it is very important for teachers to diagnose the strategies students already used so that the strategies selected are not in students’ repertoire but are potentially to them.

2. Step 2-----While-training

In this step, the teacher should present and model the strategy. The teacher should give a clear definition of the strategy, as well as some of the benefits of learning the strategies excluding the strategies used in preparatory step. The teacher should also describe the rationales for use of the strategies, the characteristics of the strategies and identify real assignments in specific classes what and when the strategies might be used. After describing the strategies, the teacher models the use of the target strategies. For example, the teacher can demonstrate to make predictions based on the title, guess the meaning of unfamiliar words from context, monitor rhetorical structure and evaluate how competent students have been in learning from the text. How can the students master such strategies? The teacher should grasp the usefulness and compatibility of the strategies and then train the students to strengthen their awareness of strategy use. The teacher can ask students to recall the strategies they used and encourage them to discuss the appropriateness of using the strategies. This model helps students visualize their working successfully on a similar strategy.

Finishing the first half part of this step, students have the opportunity to practice the learning strategies in reading comprehension with an authentic reading comprehension. So, in this step, materials appear very important when creating and selecting materials for this step. This practice will frequently take place during collaborative work with classmates. For example, a group of students might read a story, describe the images of the story, discuss unfamiliar words encountered, and infer meanings through contextual cues, and take turns to summarize the main points of the story. This contextual practice fosters students’ autonomy to independently regulate their reading process. When the teacher finds students use metacognitive strategies and social/affect strategies, he/she should remind them of the use of cognitive strategies. When the teacher finds students perform cognitive strategies but rarely use metacognitive strategies and social/affect strategies, he/she should encourage them to use the latter. The goal is attained when the students are able to use strategies from consciously to unconsciously.

Another competent of the practice is to collect feedbacks. It’s critical for the teacher to give students advice on their strategy use when the teacher helps students learn how to use strategy effectively and how to change what they are doing if a particular approach is useless. How can the teacher know the students’ effectiveness of their strategy use? Through collecting feedbacks, the teacher can understand in time how students use strategies, put right the incorrect operations and then can monitor the training speed. For instance, boy students always translate the passage into Chinese to understand and can’t paraphrase some sentence, then the teacher knows that boy students has used learning strategy in reading comprehension: Translation. When the teacher explains the use of Translation strategy, he/she needn’t spend much time on it.

In this step, the teacher should remember to motivate the students to take active part in strategy training, just as Oxford et al. points out that if students have gone through a strategy assessment step, their interest in strategies is likely to be heightened; if the teacher explains how to use good strategies students can learn language easier, students will be even more interested in participating in strategy training. Haastrup, K. (1991) thinks some inducements such as extra credit may substantially increase enthusiasm in the college classroom.

It’s necessary to mention that at the beginning of language strategy training, the practice step is usually focused on a simple strategy, after strategy training has progressed to the point where students have a repertoire of strategies, the students can practice the complex strategies. That is to say, the practice is conducted step by step.

3. Step 3-----after-training

In the last step of training, teachers’ reflection and students’ self-evaluation are a necessary link. It is useful for

teachers to reflect on their own positive and negative experiences in teaching reading which is in accordance with what Graham (1985) suggests that those teachers who have thought carefully about how they learn a language about which strategies are most appropriate for which task are more likely to be successful in developing strategic competence in their students. In addition to teachers' own reflection, it's essential to encourage students to self-evaluate after the reading classes. Students need to find out which language strategies work best for them for certain tasks, and why they work, and why they are not effective. Through such self-evaluation students consciously monitor these effective and ineffective strategies that refine their individual repertoire of strategies. Some methods of encouraging students' self-evaluation of their language strategies include the following: language strategies checklists, learning logs, diaries and journals on strategy use or other means. Checklists may focus on one particular task, or they may refer to strategy use over time. For example, students may be asked to check off how many times within a week they used the strategies inference. Similarly, logs, diaries and journals can be used on a daily basis to record strategy use and its effectiveness and to communicate with the teacher. As mentioned above, the older adult students with integrative motivation use more self-evaluation than the younger adult students with instrumental motivation, so in the course of strategy training, we'd pay more attention to the younger use of self-evaluation.

This step completes the learning phase of strategy training and serves as a transition to application of the strategies. Thus students prepare for generalization of the strategy use into classroom and other educational situations.

IV. CONCLUSION

Reading comprehension is an active mental process and in a sense, it is a kind of strategy learning. Teachers should consider strategy training as a necessity in reading teaching. One feasible means is to arouse the students' awareness of the reading process and make strategy knowledge explicit to them, followed by a training instruction integrated into the routine teaching activities. One important goal of reading teaching should help students become more effective and strategic ones according to their own factors. Teachers should provide students with a large range of strategies and leave students to make decisions of their own on when and how they should employ strategies and what strategies they need to enhance reading comprehension.

The importance of learning strategy in reading comprehension training includes: first, strategies help students to improve reading comprehension; second, strategies also help students enhance efficiency in reading; third, strategies help students process the text actively and monitor their comprehension. Most of important, teachers should be good at motivating students to participate in strategy training. Also, there are some reports of unsuccessful strategy trainings abroad. The reason why strategy training fails sometimes is multi-faceted including teachers' professionalism about learning strategies in reading comprehension, students' factors, social context, etc. After all, students' lack of success in learning may be far more complex and the teaching of more learning strategies may not be the only answer. SBI is only designed to improve students' independent learning and enhance their ability to perform future tasks of the same kind.

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Student-engaged Viewpoint on Technology in Learning English in Zanjan Public High Schools

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Abstract—The purpose of this study was to investigate Iranian high school EFL students' viewpoint of technology in general and CALL (computer-assisted language learning) in particular on their learning process of English. In order to collect data, a quantitative research design was applied. The quantitative data was collected through a validated questionnaire, CALL attitude instrument (CALLAI). The questionnaire was distributed in two different high schools (one male and one female high school) in Zanjan. Participants were 340 high school students who filled in CALLAI questionnaire. The data of the questionnaire was analyzed using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 20. Descriptive statistics including frequencies and percentages were used to analyze questionnaire items. In addition, Independent Samples Tests were applied to measure difference of attitudes by gender. Findings revealed that high school students hold positive attitude toward computer technology use in their learning process. Additionally, it was found that gender does not influence attitude of students.

Index Terms—English learning, student viewpoint, technology

I. INTRODUCTION

Today rapid development in technology and computer sciences has influenced all aspects of life, especially education. Integration of technology into education system and curriculum of schools has recently started in some developing countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines, and newly in Iran. In developing countries, the commitments of technology implementation have created a set of furious assumptions about the requirement of educational reforms "initiation stage", which requires information collection and planning, sounds to be blurring in this breakneck process of technology implementation (Young, 1991). Among different fields, implementation of technology in language learning and teaching has become very diverse and the ways that they are being used in classrooms all over the world have become central to language practice.

For decades, tape recorders and videos have been used as technological devices in language classrooms to optimize language teachers' face to face teaching (Pardede, 2012). Today computer assisted language learning (CALL) has provided wide teaching tools and materials in English classroom situations. CALL as a new methodology in the field of language teaching requires more studies to adapt classroom situations' and students' needs. Richards (2015) states that technology devices like the Internet, media, visual and audio social networks out of school contribute more greatly to meaningful and authentic language use of students than those in classroom. Integration of technological devices such as computers, interactive whiteboards, etc. into language classroom on the one hand and students as the user of these tools on the other hand put great emphasis on exploring the students' attitude toward technology and its merits and demerits on language learning process.

Attitude, a nonlinguistic variable, has been introduced as subcategory of affective variables that plays crucial role in language students learning process and is said to mirror the students' beliefs, views, ideas (Gardner, 1985; Ushida, 2005; Yu & Watkins, 2001). Some researchers have shown that attitude and motivation are interrelated, i.e. a language student's positive attitude will lead to high motivation of learning that language (Dörnyei, 2001; Gardner et al., 1985; Krashan, 1981; Ushida, 2005; Yu & Watkins, 2001). In other words, measurement of students' attitude, aspiration, and desire to learn together forms the motivation. Regarding importance of attitude, many research studies explored the language students attitude toward technology and CALL in language classroom (Jalali 2014; Onsoy, 2004; Son, 2007; Stepp-Greany, 2002; Talebinezhad, M. R., & Abarghoui, 2013; Teo, 2006; Weib, 2010). Students' attitude toward computers can be considered "a critical criterion" in evaluating and developing computer courses and curricula (Woodrow, 1991, p. 165, as cited in Afshari, et al., 2013). Investigation of students' attitude toward technology and CALL help the teachers and administrators to identify students' needs and meet these needs.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Technology has been part of our life for thousands years. In the field of foreign language teaching, every type of language teaching methods and techniques has exploited its own technological tools nearly. Warschauer and Meskill

(2000) stated that language classrooms managed by grammar translation method used a very common and primitive technology: blackboard (as cited in Sadeh Pour, 2013). Although use of technology into foreign language classrooms started over 1950s, it played an important role in teaching and learning process of EFL because of the problems related to technological structures (Alsied & Pathan, 2013). Years of 1970s and 1980s witnessed arrival of personal computers and use of this newly developed technology in education, particularly foreign language teaching. In the 1980s, technology in language classrooms was applied in the form of television, radio, film, language labs with audio and videotapes, computers, and interactive video (Cunningham, 1998). Tendency towards communicative approaches demanded new student engagement in authentic and meaningful interaction. Therefore, technology integration into communicative classroom required different cognitive and sociocognitive approaches plus modern materials and instruments (Warschauer & Meskill, 2000). Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) also developed into commonplace method in various types.

Today, use of technology, in general, and CALL in particular has been introduced as a methodology that engages students better in language learning activities and increase students motivation. According to Riasati, Allahyar and Tan (2012), integration of technology improves students' engagement and enhances their motivation in accomplishing their tasks. Warschauer and Healey (1998) suggested that CALL integration creates an authentic context in which students use language meaningfully via different language skills like listening, speaking, writing, and reading. Among different materials and methodologies in language teaching, attitudes of students toward CALL are considered a major factor influencing its influential implementation (Ayres, 2002; Ushida, 2005). Attitudes of today's students assist the instructors and faculty members to understand how students function within classrooms.

Oz, Demirezen, and Pourfeiz (2015) investigated the relationship between computer literacy, attitudes towards foreign language learning and computer-assisted language learning. Participants were 123 university students majoring in English as a foreign language. With regard to data collection, two different questionnaires, Attitudes towards Foreign Language Learning (A-FLL) Scale and the Attitudes towards Computer-Assisted Language Learning (A-CALL) Scale were used. Findings revealed positive correlations between A-FLL and A-CALL. In addition, it was found that gender and computer literacy plays significant role in attitude toward CALL.

Kitchakarn (2015) investigated the EFL students' attitudes toward use of computers in a private university on their language learning process. Regarding this, some factors including gender, experience of using computers, and perceived abilities in using programs were taken into account. In order to collect data, 192 undergraduate students filled in a questionnaire. Findings of the study revealed that computer was considered a useful tool on learning process of students. Effect of gender was not found to be significant on students' attitude, while abilities to use program had effect on students' attitude.

Kalanzadeh, Soleimani, and Bakhtiarvand (2014) examined the relationship between Iranians EFL students' motivation and use of technology in university classroom. For the purpose of data collection, 60 Iranian EFL students from different courses answered the questionnaire items. Findings revealed that university students maintained positive attitude toward technology use in their English classes. It also found that there is a relationship between learning English and using technology in EFL classroom.

In a similar study, Afshari, Ghavifekr, Siraj, and Jing (2013) examined the university students' attitudes toward use of computer-assisted language learning. A survey questionnaire was used to collect data from 100 students at university of Malaya. Students showed a moderate attitude toward CALL. In addition, three predictors: perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and subjective norms were the most effective factors on computer attitude.

Chen and Kessler (2013) examined how students used tablets for informal language learning in order to consider their attitudes. Participants of study were 10 English major students of university. A questionnaire was used to collect background knowledge of participants and a two-cycle procedure followed to evaluate students' daily English learning activities informally and the problems might students face. Findings of the study showed that students had positive attitude toward effectiveness of tablets as a learning tool. Furthermore, it was found that students needed more chances to be autonomous on their informal learning out of classroom.

Students' attitude is critical in integration of technology in their learning process. The research questions aim to elicit students' responses regarding their utilization and perception of technology in their everyday practice and learning. The study seeks answers to the following research questions:

1. What is the nature of community high school student experiences using computer technology in the process of learning?
2. Is there a significant difference between high school students view point of computer technology in the process of learning by gender?

H₀1: There is no significant difference between high school students view point of computer technology in the process of learning by gender.

III. METHOD

The purpose of this study was to investigate the use of technology by high school students and their attitude toward technology use in their learning process. In order to conduct the study, quantitative method design was used.

Quantitative data was gathered through questionnaires. In addition, students' attitude was compared based on gender factor.

Population of this study was students from two high schools (one male, and another female high school) in Zanjan, Iran. The entire population consisted of 638 high school students- 245 males and 393 females. In order to determine the number of the target sample, Cochran formula was used. In survey and questionnaire type studies, one of the key issues that every researcher faces is sample size. It is chiefly stated that involving the whole population in research is not necessary while small size sample decreases the practicality of results (Cochran, 1977; Dornyei, 2003). The target sample of the study consisted of 147 male and 193 female students. In order to select sample of students from first, second, and third grade of high school, proportionate stratified random sampling was applied. The final sample size of the study was selected randomly from first, second, and third grade stratum by sampling fraction of $\frac{1}{2}$. The final sample size included 87 first grade, 122 second grade, and 134 third grade students.

A validated questionnaire- CALL attitude instrument (CALLAI) - by Aryadoust, Mehran, and Alizadeh (2015) was used. The items of the questionnaire include affective, behavioral, and language skills factors. Furthermore, it was validated for Persian language contexts like Iran.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

All the items in the questionnaires were analyzed using the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 20 except the open-ended questions relating to students background information and further questions. Frequencies, percentages and the means were calculated for each item. Since the data distribution was normal, parametric tests were used to analyze gender difference among students' attitude. Independent Samples T-Test was used to examine whether there is any difference in students attitude by gender. Results related to research questions were provided in this section. First, descriptive statistics of all questions of the questionnaire (Table 1, Appendix A) were analyzed by the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 20.

Research Question 1

What is the nature of community high school student experiences using computer technology in the process of learning?

Regarding the first research question, high school students' experiences using computer technology in the process of learning, students answered to items 1, 2, 6, 7, 13, 19, and 21 relating to language skills components i.e. to reading, listening, speaking, writing, and vocabulary, communication, and grammar skills, respectively. It can be seen that 81.6%, 83.1%, 76.4%, 54.9%, 75.4%, 79.9%, and 57.7% of participants strongly agreed and agreed that computer technology is helpful in learning reading, listening, speaking, writing, vocabulary knowledge, communication, and grammar skills, respectively. Overall, students of the study showed positive attitude toward use of technology on learning different language skills.

Behavioral and affective components of the questionnaire addressed to usefulness, facility, necessity of CALL and learners independence, anxiety, eagerness, and attraction of CALL. Students showed their strong and moderate agreement with easier independent learning, easier learning English in classroom, advantage of learning through computer over traditional method, usefulness of computers in correcting mistakes, necessity of CALL, and help of computer in English learning 58.8%, 75%, 67.3%, 75%, 80%, 60.2%, 88.7%, respectively. Questions 23, 25, and 26 showed 56.4%, 80.2%, and 73.6% of students' agreement moderately and strongly toward usefulness of email, chatting and computer technology on learning English. Questions 3, 8, 9, 11, 16, 20, 22, 27 of the questionnaire were related to affective component including anxiety, eagerness, and attraction toward computer technology. Regarding attraction 56.6%, 59.5%, and 72.9% of participants strongly agreed and agreed with question 3, 8, and 20. Students showed 64.4% and 67.6% of agreement with gaining motivation and self-confidence through technology use. It was seen 67.3% of students agreed CALL provides a stress-free environment. Also, a majority of participants (82.7%) strongly and moderately disagreed that CALL makes them feel uncomfortable and tense. Finally, 57.7% of students strongly agreed and agreed that computers dehumanize learning English and fewer students (39.1%) showed their disagreement with dehumanizing effect of computers on learning English.

Research Question 2

2- Is there any significant difference between high school students view point of computer technology in the process of learning by gender?

Second research question examined that whether there is any significant difference between participants attitude toward computer technology use on their English learning by their gender. Using an Independent Samples Test (Table 2, Appendix B) showed that there was not found any significant difference for all items of the questionnaire except item 24. In other words, it was found that there is statistically significant difference between students' attitude toward item 24 "I need training in using language learning software programs" (Sig = p -value = 0.001 < 0.05 = α . Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This difference might be due to accessibility to technological devices.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate Iranian EFL students' viewpoint of technology and CALL use on their learning process in sample of two different high schools, one male, and one female high school. In order to collect quantitative data, a validated questionnaire by Aryadoust et al. (2015) for measuring the students' attitude in Persian countries context was used. Results of the study showed students' attitude toward learning English through computer technology. It was found that students hold the highest positive attitude toward listening, reading, speaking, vocabulary knowledge, writing, and grammar skills. Similar findings were found by Kitchakarn (2015). He found that students perceived use of computer technology positively in their listening, speaking, writing, reading skills, and vocabulary knowledge except that they showed lowest mean score regarding improvement of their grammatical knowledge through using computer. In addition, Kalanzadeh, Soleimani & Bakhtiarvand (2014) revealed that participants agreed with effectiveness of films, videos, CDs, and e-learning on development of their language skills.

Furthermore, it was found that students' had positive feeling toward using computer on their learning English process. Although, findings revealed that students strongly and moderately perceived computer technology useful in independence learning, easier learning, receiving feedback, and corrections of mistakes, more than half of students showed that they do not use computer to do their assignments. It might be due to that there is not enough CALL homework in the syllabus of English classrooms. Students of the study revealed that learning English lessons through CALL are more interesting than learning through traditional language instruction. Also, they generally reported that computer makes learning English more attractive. Regarding eagerness, students positively revealed that CALL use in the classroom motivates them and they feel confident using computer technology in the classroom. It was reported that CALL creates stress-free environment. Overall, it was found that students had positive feeling toward computer technology. Similarly, previous researches in the study showed that students regarded computer technology useful, enjoyable, stress-free, interesting, and attractive on their learning process (Afshari et al., 2013; Chen and Kessler, 2013; Kitchakarn, 2015; Kalanzadeh et al., 2014; Riasati et al., 2012).

Additionally, it was found that there was not any significant difference between students' attitude by gender. Except item 24 relating to the need for training in using language learning software in which students showed slight difference. Based on the statistics, male students showed more than female students need for training. The difference might be due to degree of accessibility and familiarity with technological tools. Similarly, some previous studies (Kitchakarn, 2015; Toe, 2006) indicated that there is not any difference between students' attitude. However, Oz, Demirezen, & Pourfeiz (2015) revealed that there is slight difference among students by gender on computer literacy. Training can inspire students and assist them to better use computer technology in their learning process.

APPENDIX A

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS

Question Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1. Computer is a useful tool to access various types of English materials for reading.	93	32.7	139	48.9	25	8.8	16	5.6	273	96.1
2. CALL helps me improve my listening skills.	121	42.6	115	40.5	31	10.9	13	4.6	280	98.6
3. CALL makes lessons more interesting than traditional English instruction	70	24.6	91	32.0	71	25.0	34	12.0	266	93.7
4. Computers make English learning easier for independent learning.	41	14.4	126	44.4	84	29.6	28	9.9	279	98.2
5. Computers make English learning easier in the classroom.	65	22.9	148	52.1	50	17.6	15	5.3	278	97.9
6. CALL helps me improve my speaking skills.	82	28.9	135	47.5	45	15.8	16	5.6	278	97.9
7. Computer is a useful tool for developing writing tools.	48	16.9	108	38.0	75	26.4	41	14.4	272	95.8
8. I like learning a new language by computer.	67	23.6	102	35.9	67	23.6	40	14.1	276	97.2
9. I can get more useful feedback in CALL lessons.	45	15.8	138	48.6	71	25.0	25	8.8	279	98.2
10. I can get more useful feedback in CALL lessons.	66	23.2	149	52.5	48	16.9	11	3.9	274	96.5
11. I am confident about working with computers.	58	20.4	134	47.2	63	22.2	16	5.6	271	95.4
12. I often use computers to do my English assignments.	23	8.1	58	20.4	117	41.2	76	26.8	274	96.5
13. CALL helps me enlarge my vocabulary knowledge.	80	28.2	134	47.2	47	16.5	15	5.3	277	97.5
14. It is essential for English language learners to master computer skills.	89	31.3	138	48.6	38	13.4	11	3.9	276	97.2
15. Using computer tools to learn English is a great advantage over traditional methods.	61	21.5	130	45.8	68	23.9	16	5.6	275	96.8
16. CALL is a stress-free environment to learn English.	67	23.6	124	43.7	61	21.5	22	7.7	274	96.5
17. Learning English through computers is not necessary.	23	8.1	84	29.6	103	36.3	68	23.9	278	97.9
18. I find that using computers does not help my English learning.	9	3.2	21	7.4	137	48.2	115	40.5	282	99.3
19. The use of computers can help improve my communication skills.	69	24.3	158	55.6	39	13.7	11	3.9	277	97.5
20. Using a computer makes language lessons more interesting to me.	60	21.1	147	51.8	56	19.7	19	6.7	282	99.3
21. CALL helps me develop my grammar.	43	15.1	121	42.6	78	27.5	29	10.2	271	95.4
22. CALL makes me feel tense and uncomfortable.	13	4.6	29	10.2	125	44.0	110	38.7	277	97.5
23. Communicating by e-mail is good way to improve my English.	36	12.7	124	43.7	74	26.1	43	15.1	277	97.5
24. I need training in using language learning software programs.	27	9.5	87	30.6	96	33.8	68	23.9	278	97.9
25. Chatting with native English speakers on the internet is helpful for learning English.	114	40.1	114	40.1	31	10.9	20	7.0	279	98.2
26. I can cover more material on my own when I study English with computers.	56	19.7	153	53.9	46	16.2	21	7.4	276	97.2
27. Computers will dehumanize learning English.	58	20.4	106	37.3	69	24.3	42	14.8	275	96.8

Note. F: Frequency, %: Percentage.

APPENDIX B

TABLE 2
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Q24	Equal variances assumed	7.083	.008	3.369	276	.001	.375	.111	.156	.594
	Equal variances not assumed			3.326	247.004	.001	.375	.113	.153	.597

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An Evaluation of TEFL Postgraduates' Testing Classroom Activities and Assignments Based on Bloom's Revised Taxonomy

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Abstract—In this study, we attempted to examine the quality of Iranian MA and PhD testing classes to find out how they prepare potential teachers and test makers for the journey of testing in their professional career and whether the exercises and assignments can prepare them to apply higher order thinking in their test construction process. Ten university professors holding PhD in TEFL, along with their students, participated in this study. After recording the assignments and activities, the data were listened, re-listened, and transcribed. The results showed that lower order thinking skills (69.445%) were used more than medium (30.555%) thinking skills in MA testing classroom activities, but higher order thinking skills (0%) were never used. On the other hand, medium order thinking skills (58.335%) were used more than higher order thinking skills (41.665%) in PhD testing classroom activities, and lower order thinking skills were never used. Moreover, activities and assignments given to postgraduate students first led to lower order thinking skills, next led to medium order thinking skills, and finally led to higher order thinking skills. There was a systemic pattern in the distribution of the order of thinking skills of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy in postgraduate activities and assignments. The findings of this study offer several pedagogical implications for students, instructors, and test designers in TEFL.

Index Terms—Bloom's taxonomy, higher order thinking skills, lower order thinking skills, medium order thinking skills, TEFL postgraduate, testing classroom activities and assignments

I. INTRODUCTION

Phrases such as "our students know nothing about what they must know", "they cannot think reflectively", or "they rarely introduce new ideas" have become teachers and professors' catchwords around the globe these days (Egege & Kutieleh, 2004). A quite tangible and alarming absence of high quality thinking which is often referred to as critical, reflective, or reasoned thinking has become a great concern in higher education context, a place traditionally considered as a hub of such thinking. When it comes to the higher education, this fact calls our attention to a disastrous educational crisis. This issue becomes a serious challenge when we are dealing with university students at postgraduate levels because the preconception about a postgraduate student is a person who ponders, analyses, evaluates, and creates innovative ideas, that is to say, such learners are required to be instructed not only to explain and choose but also to compose and devise a new technique and activity. The former asks students just to memorize and give back information without thinking about it, but by contrast, the latter requires learners to do something with the information they have been provided with. Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) revised Bloom's taxonomy and identified a taxonomy of learning with six levels. The taxonomy of instructional learning offers a straightforward way to classify instructional activities as they advance in difficulty. The lower levels, that are remembering, understanding, and applying, require less thinking skills while the higher levels, namely analyzing, evaluating, and creating are more challenging. Bloom's Taxonomy can assist learners to get more clarity and preciseness about teaching, testing and students' outcome. Forehand (2005) has showed the levels of Bloom's Taxonomy as stair steps; the higher the stairs, the higher the level of thinking.

Chyung and Stepich (2003) in a case study explained how the use of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives was instrumental in the development of graduate-level online instruction. They found that the taxonomy was an effective guideline for designing graduate-level online instruction because it helped them maintain the congruence among instructional components. Furthermore, Garekwe (2010) analyzed the examination questions administered for a four year academic period, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal School of Nursing according to bloom's level of cognitive domain. The results revealed that all six categories of the cognitive domains in Bloom's taxonomy were utilized for the four levels in the Bachelor of Nursing program. Totally, about 57% of the questions' objectives were for lower level (knowledge, recall and comprehension) whilst only 43.4% were for higher levels (application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation).

Based on this pyramid of instructional outcomes, the six levels of Bloom's taxonomy are described below:

(a) Remembering: This is the lowest level which asks a learner to define, duplicate, list, memorize, recall, repeat, and reproduce state.

(b) Understanding: This level asks learners if they can explain ideas or concepts by asking them to classify, describe, discuss, explain, identify, locate, recognize, report, select, translate, and paraphrase.

(c) Applying: It involves students in applying information in a new way which requires learners to choose, demonstrate, dramatize, employ, illustrate, interpret, operate, schedule, sketch, and solve.

(d) Analyzing: class activities and assignments for this level require students to break information into parts to explore understandings and relationships by asking them to classify, compare, contrast, differentiate, and examine.

(e) Evaluating: Evaluation necessitates justifying a stand or decision by asking students to appraise, argue, defend, judge, select, support, and evaluate.

(f) Creating: This is the highest level of instructional outcome requiring students to compose, construct, devise, formulate, predict, and infer.

Taxonomy of learning has been identified by Benjamin Bloom for the cognitive domain which includes six progressive levels (Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1956). As learners make headway through the increased critical thinking levels, it can be self-assured that the earlier level of thinking for that concept has been mastered. More complex thinking is required for each category in comparison with the category before it (Moseley, Elliott, Gregson, & Higgins, 2005). However, mastery of one level does not mean that the students can perform at a higher level (Aviles, 2000). Aviles (2000) believes that Bloom's taxonomy of Educational Objectives is an instrument from the broad context of education that can assist new and experienced social work educators to think more exactly about what it means to teach and test for critical thinking. Bloom's Taxonomy in his regard can help social work educators to achieve greater clarity and precision about teaching, testing and students' outcome. Lots of scholars have illustrated the levels of Bloom's Taxonomy as stair steps; if the stairs be as high as possible, the level of thinking will be higher (Forehand, 2005). As often as possible, learners need to be thinking at the high point of the stairs.

Qaisar (1999) carried out a research in order to evaluate first year teachers' lesson plans in terms of Bloom's Taxonomy. For this reason, the lesson plans of 67 newly certified instructors were evaluated to determine if lesson objectives developed higher-level thinking as defined by Bloom's Taxonomy. The lesson plans were gathered during a three-year period. The results demonstrated that about less than fifty percent (41%) of the objectives were written at the knowledge level.

Cross and Wills (2001, as cited in Mosallanejad, 2008) conducted a longitudinal study in which they attempted to mix Stephen Tsuchi's workday activities with Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives to bridge the WAC/WID (Writing across the Curriculum/Writing in the Disciplines) divide. The involved instructors found exposure to Bloom's objectives and related writing activities helpful. All the instructors planned to use them, and they became more aware of advantages of linking objectives and writing assignments.

Bastick (2002) considered the possibility that different formats of objective test questions might differentially favor males or females and that male and females might respond differently to objective questions aimed at assessing abilities at different levels of Bloom's cognitive domain. Class tests were constructed on recently taught topics, with each test containing questions in three parallel subtests, multiple-choice, true-false, and matching. Each subtest had six questions, and each of the questions was targeted to one level of Bloom's Cognitive Domain by the test writers. Results showed only one significant difference in gender performances across the levels of Bloom's Cognitive Domain and that was a female advantage at the level of Analysis. A comparison of mean male and female scores on the three subtest formats also showed only one statistically significant advantage--an advantage for females on the matching questions. This was found to be due to significant female advantages at the Analysis and Synthesis levels.

Gegen (2006) in a study addressed questioning and higher-level thinking in a low-level high school mathematic class. Results of the study suggested that by incorporating higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy through questioning and activities students would score higher on tests, thus making them better problem solvers and critical thinkers. Her study proved that Bloom's Taxonomy influenced students' scores on tests and students' confidence in math.

Anthony (2007) in a study with pretest-posttest control group design investigated the effects of Bloom's Taxonomy as an oral-questioning scaffold in writing performance of the learners by encouraging higher order thinking. The results of the study showed that the use of higher order questioning improves writing in response to reading; there is no difference whether it scored holistically or with points. High inter-rater reliability also has been represented in writing score. The results revealed that when students have been instructed with a higher order questioning scaffold based on Bloom's taxonomy, their writing significantly improve. Overall, his study provided preliminary support to the importance of using higher order thinking as a questioning scaffold.

Plack et al. (2007) based on Bloom's Taxonomy described a reliable method that determined whether students have gained higher order thinking through reflective journal writing. This method, the authors claimed, could provide a baseline for facilitating and improving higher order processing, critical thinking, and reflective practice.

Interestingly enough, we see the application of Bloom's Taxonomy in an entirely different field that is nursing. Larkin and Burton (2008) conducted a case study that attempted to review the course of treatment for one patient throughout the perioperative continuum, including the postoperative unit where a pre-arrest situation developed. In this study, they demonstrated how effective communication between caregivers could have averted a crisis and how an

educational intervention using the framework of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives assisted staff members in being able to critically evaluate the patient scenario with the objective of preventing future patient complications. In fact a workshop using Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives was held and allowed staff members to more clearly comprehend the patient's situation. It also let the participants to gain an increased understanding of significant data and was strategic in preventing patient complications.

In a quite recent study done by Crews (2010), the effects of aligning the Virginia Standards of Learning Framework for English with Bloom's Taxonomy on student achievement was investigated. The author wanted to investigate the impacts of developing reading lesson plans in terms of the SOL English Framework aligned with Bloom's Taxonomy to continually include higher order thinking skills. He eventually found that combining Bloom's Taxonomy with the SOL English Framework had a positive effect on learners' scores in comparison with the same students' pretest and posttest scores.

In the same year, Hawks (2010) did something similar. He tried to know whether instructors who developed lessons with regard to Bloom's Taxonomy and the Virginia Standards of Learning Curriculum Framework observed increased scores on the mathematics benchmark assessment for fourth grade. However, he came to a different result. Because it was found that the mean scores of the experimental group in which the instructors developed lessons using Bloom's Taxonomy was not significantly more than the scores of the control group which used traditional, textbook bound instruction as demonstrated by scores from the Third Nine Weeks Fourth Grade Mathematics Benchmark Assessment.

Issues relating to the design, selection, and evaluation of learning activities have been relatively neglected in educational research and scholarship. To this end, they can set assignments and classroom activities to their students to lead them to develop a creative mind. Classroom activities and assignments can be a very influential learning tool in higher education due to the fact that most of the activities and assignments are supposed to be on research projects. In other words, students are expected to examine, appraise and compose and make a valuable contribution to their major. Therefore, suitable homework can be conducive to a desired result in learning. Although a host of research projects indicates the importance of creativity on testing and evaluation over several decades, little is done to study quality in Iranian MA and PhD testing classes which can reveal how we prepare potential teachers and test makers for the journey of testing in their professional career and if the exercises and assignments given to students can prepare them to apply higher order thinking in their test making. In line with the objectives of the study, the following research questions were raised:

1. How do PhD and MA testing classroom activities and assignments differ in terms of Bloom's revised taxonomy?
2. Do activities and assignments given to postgraduate students lead to higher order thinking in testing?

II. METHOD

Participants

Ten university professors (five female and five male) holding PhD in the fields pertinent to TEFL (the teaching of English as a foreign language) along with their students were randomly chosen. Moreover, five MA and five PhD classes at two universities were selected. All instructors were assistant or associate professors with teaching experience of five to twenty years at MA or PhD levels. One class of each professor was selected randomly. The number of the students in MA classes ranged from 15 to 20 with the age range of 24-35 and the number of PhD students was five with the age range of 27-40. Because of privacy issues, numbers were assigned to the instructors to refer to them.

Data collection procedure

Data collection for this research was carried out during the autumn term, 2015. The required data for the study were a recorded corpus obtained from MA and PhD testing classes at the universities studied. We informed the professors of the general aim of the study. We used a sound recorder to record the assignments and activities given by the professors to their students. After the provision of the databank, the data were listened, re-listened, and transcribed with the help of a PC.

III. RESULTS

The data for this study were mainly activities and assignments which were chosen since they were the building blocks of testing courses. After recording, listening and transcribing the assignments and activities given by the professors to their students, evaluation was performed to determine what levels of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy (BRT) was used in each PhD and MA testing classroom activities and assignments.

Answer to the First Research Question

In order to answer the first research question about how PhD and MA testing classroom activities and assignments differed in terms of Bloom's revised taxonomy, we had to first investigate MA testing classroom activities and assignments and then examine PhD testing classroom activities and assignments.

MA testing classroom activities and assignments

In this section, it was attempted to examine the levels of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy used in MA testing classroom activities and assignments. As mentioned before, five MA classes were randomly selected; each class had different professors. The assignments and activities were recorded. After the provision of the databank, with the help of a PC, the

data were listened, re-listened, and transcribed. Each class's activities and assignments were examined, and three activities were randomly selected for each class at two universities. Since Bloom's Revised Taxonomy contains meaningful verbs signaling the level of complexity the students are asked, the verbs of each activity were referred in order to be able to answer the first research question. Verbs describe actions and thinking is an active process. Table 1 shows which levels of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy were used in each activity and assignment in MA testing classes at two universities.

TABLE 1:
THE LEVELS OF BLOOM'S REVISED TAXONOMY USED IN EACH ACTIVITY
IN MA TESTING CLASSES AT TWO UNIVERSITIES

Universities	Classes	Activities	The verbs used in each activity	The levels of Bloom's Taxonomy
University A	Class 1	Activity 1	describe	First level: Remembering
		Activity 2	list	First level: Remembering
		Activity 3	compare	Second level: Understanding
	Class 2	Activity 1	recall	First level: Remembering
		Activity 2	reproduce	First level: Remembering
		Activity 3	examine	Third level: Applying
	Class 3	Activity 1	discuss	Second level: Understanding
		Activity 2	find	First level: Remembering
		Activity 3	outline	Second level: Understanding
University B	Class 4	Activity 1	write	First level: Remembering
		Activity 2	use	Third level: Applying
		Activity 3	practice	Third level: Applying
	Class 5	Activity 1	recognize	First level: Remembering
		Activity 2	classify	Third level: Applying
		Activity 3	distinguish	Second level: Understanding

As shown in Table 1, there were 5 levels of remembering, 3 levels of understanding, and 1 level of applying in MA testing classroom activities at University A. It meant that lower order thinking skills of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy (remembering and understanding: 8 instances) were mostly used in MA testing classroom activities at University A. There was only one instance of medium order thinking style (applying), and there were no instances of any use of higher order thinking skills (evaluating and creating) in MA testing classroom activities at University A. On the other hand, there were 3 levels of applying, 2 levels of remembering, and 1 level of understanding in MA testing classroom activities at University B. It meant that lower (remembering and understanding: 3 instances) and medium order (applying: 3 instances) thinking skills were equally used in MA testing classroom activities at University B. Furthermore, there were no instances of any use of higher order thinking skills (evaluating and creating). Table 2 shows the frequencies and percentages of the use of lower, medium and higher order thinking skills in MA classroom testing activities at both universities.

TABLE 2:
THE PERCENTAGES OF THE USE OF LOWER, MEDIUM AND HIGHER ORDER THINKING
SKILLS IN MA TESTING ACTIVITIES AT TWO UNIVERSITIES

	Bloom's Revised Taxonomy							
	Lower order		Medium Order		Higher order		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
University A	8	88.89%	1	11.11%	0	0%	9	100%
University B	3	50%	3	50%	0	0%	6	100%
Average Percentage	-	69.445%	-	30.555%	-	0%		

Figure 1 shows the percentages of the use of lower, medium, and higher order thinking skills of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy in MA testing classes' activities at two universities.

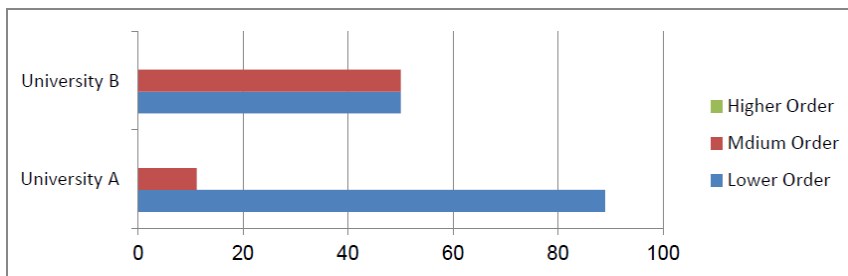


Figure 1: The percentages of the use of lower, medium, and higher order thinking skills of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy in MA testing classes' activities at two universities

Moreover, in order to examine whether MA testing classroom activities and assignments at two universities differ in terms of Bloom's revised taxonomy or not, chi square (X^2) statistic was used. In other words, this test was utilized to investigate whether distributions of categorical variables (the levels of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy) differed from one another. Since the sampling method in this study was simple random sampling, and the variable under study was categorical, Chi-Square Goodness of Fit Test was used. Table 3 depicts the observed and expected frequencies of the levels of Bloom's Taxonomy in MA testing classes' activities at two universities, and Table 4 shows Chi-square test for the levels of Bloom's Taxonomy in MA testing classes' activities at two universities.

TABLE 3
THE OBSERVED AND EXPECTED FREQUENCIES OF THE LEVELS OF BLOOM'S TAXONOMY IN MA TESTING CLASSES' ACTIVITIES AT TWO UNIVERSITIES

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Lower Order	11	7.5	3.5
Medium Order	4	7.5	-3.5
Higher Order	0	7.5	-7.5
Total	15		

TABLE 4
CHI-SQUARE TEST FOR THE LEVELS OF BLOOM'S TAXONOMY IN MA TESTING CLASSES' ACTIVITIES AT TWO UNIVERSITIES

	The levels of Bloom's Taxonomy
Chi-Square	3.267 ^a
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.071

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 7.5.

According to Table 4, the chi-square value is 3.267, degree of freedom is one, and the p value is .071. Since the p value is greater than alpha level (.05), it can be concluded that the levels of Bloom's taxonomy appears to produce frequencies that are consistent with expectations. The observed frequencies match well the expected proportions. Therefore, MA testing classroom activities and assignments at two universities do not differ in terms of Bloom's revised taxonomy.

PhD classroom activities and assignments

In this section, we attempted to examine the levels of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy used in PhD testing classroom activities and assignments. We randomly selected five MA classes (four classes from University B and one class from University A), each class having different professors. Similar to previous section, we recorded the assignments and activities given by the professors to their students, and then we listened, re-listened, and transcribed the data. We examined each class's activities and assignments, and we randomly selected three activities for each class at two universities. Table 5 shows the levels of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy used in each activity in PhD testing classes at two universities.

TABLE 5:
THE LEVELS OF BLOOM'S REVISED TAXONOMY USED IN EACH ACTIVITY AND ASSIGNMENT
IN PHD TESTING CLASSES AT TWO UNIVERSITIES

Universities	Classes	Activities	The verbs used in each activity	The levels of Bloom's Taxonomy
University A	Class 1	Activity 1	classify	Third level: Applying
		Activity 2	analyze	Forth level: Analyzing
		Activity 3	assess	Fifth level: Evaluating
University B	Class 2	Activity 1	categorize	Forth level: Analyzing
		Activity 2	justify	Fifth level: Evaluating
		Activity 3	generate	Sixth level: Creating
	Class 3	Activity 1	compare	Forth level: Analyzing
		Activity 2	examine	Third level: Applying
		Activity 3	investigate	Forth level: Analyzing
	Class 4	Activity 1	contrast	Forth level: Analyzing
		Activity 2	check	Fifth level: Evaluating
		Activity 3	create	Sixth level: Creating
	Class 5	Activity 1	design	Sixth level: Creating
		Activity 2	outline	Forth level: Analyzing
		Activity 3	hypothesize	Sixth level: Creating

As shown in Table 5, there were two instances of medium order thinking skills (applying and analyzing) and one instance of higher order thinking skills (evaluating) in PhD testing classroom activities at University A. It means that medium order thinking skills were mostly used in PhD testing classroom activities at University A. However, there were six instances of higher order thinking skills (evaluating and creating), and six instances of medium order thinking skills (applying and analyzing) in PhD testing classroom activities at University B. It meant that medium and higher order thinking skills were equally used in PhD testing classroom activities at University B. Table 6 shows the percentages of the use of lower, medium and higher order thinking skills in PhD classroom testing activities at two universities.

TABLE 6:
THE PERCENTAGES OF THE USE OF LOWER, MEDIUM AND HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILLS
IN PHD CLASSROOM TESTING ACTIVITIES AT TWO UNIVERSITIES

	Bloom's Revised Taxonomy							
	Lower order		Medium Order		Higher order		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
University A	0	0%	2	66.67%	1	33.33%	3	100%
University B	0	0%	6	50%	6	50%	12	100%
Average percentage	-	0%	-	58.335%	-	41.665%		

Figure 2 shows the percentages of the use of lower, medium and higher order thinking skills of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy in PhD testing classes' activities at two universities.

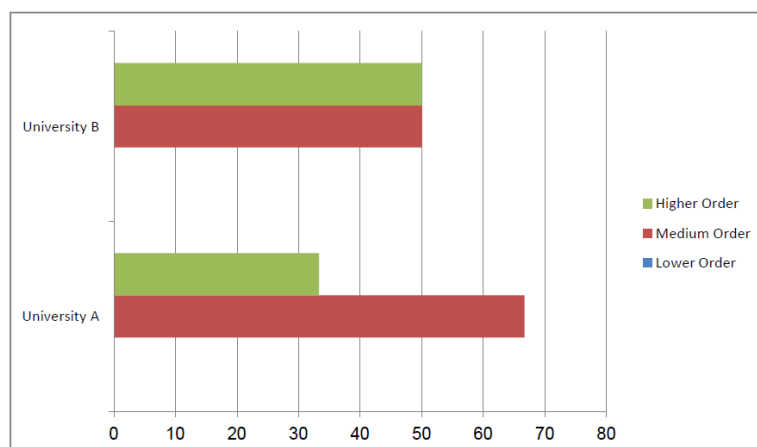


Figure 2: the percentages of the use of lower, medium and higher order thinking skills of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy in PhD testing classes' activities at two universities

Moreover, in order to examine whether PhD testing classroom activities and assignments at two universities differ in terms of Bloom's revised taxonomy or not, chi square (X^2) statistic was used. In other words, this test was utilized to determine whether distributions of categorical variables (the levels of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy) differed from one another. Since the sampling method in this study was simple random sampling, and the variable under study was categorical, Chi-Square Goodness of Fit Test was used. Table 7 depicts the observed and expected frequencies of the

levels of Bloom's Taxonomy in MA testing classes' activities at two universities, and Table 8 shows Chi-square test for the levels of Bloom's Taxonomy in MA testing classes' activities at two universities.

TABLE 7
THE OBSERVED AND EXPECTED FREQUENCIES OF THE LEVELS OF BLOOM'S TAXONOMY
IN PHD TESTING CLASSES' ACTIVITIES AT TWO UNIVERSITIES

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Lower Order	0	7.0	-7.0
Medium Order	8	7.0	1.0
Higher Order	6	7.0	-1.0
Total	14		

TABLE 8
CHI-SQUARE TEST FOR THE LEVELS OF BLOOM'S TAXONOMY IN
MA TESTING CLASSES' ACTIVITIES AT TWO UNIVERSITIES

	the levels of Bloom's Taxonomy
Chi-Square	.286 ^a
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.593

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 7.0.

According to Table 8, the chi-square value is .286, degree of freedom is one, and the p value is .593. Since the p value is greater than alpha level (.05), it can be concluded that the levels of Bloom's taxonomy appears to produce frequencies that are consistent with expectations. The observed frequencies match well the expected proportions. Therefore, PhD testing classroom activities and assignments at two universities do not differ in terms of Bloom's revised taxonomy.

Now we can answer our first research question. By looking at Table 1, we could conclude that MA testing classroom activities at University A mostly made use of lower order thinking skills, but MA testing classroom activities at University B utilized lower and medium order thinking skills equally. In Table 2, we measured the percentages of lower, medium and higher order thinking skills and found that, on the whole, lower order thinking skills (69.445%) was used more than medium (30.555%) thinking skills, but higher order thinking skills (0%) were never used.

On the other hand, Table 3 showed that PhD testing classroom activities at University A mostly made use of medium order thinking skills, but PhD testing classroom activities at University B equally utilized medium and higher order thinking skills. However, by looking at the percentages shown in Table 4, we found that, on the whole, medium order thinking skills (58.335%) were used more than higher order thinking skills (41.665) in PhD testing classroom activities, and lower order thinking skills were never used.

To put in a nutshell, lower order thinking skills (69.445%) were used more than medium (30.555%) thinking skills in MA testing classroom activities, but higher order thinking skills (0%) were never used. On the other hand, medium order thinking skills (58.335%) were used more than higher order thinking skills (41.665%) in PhD testing classroom activities, and lower order thinking skills were never used.

Answer to the Second Research Question

In this section, we tried to answer the second research question of whether activities and assignments given to postgraduate students lead to higher order thinking in testing or not. Table 9 shows the percentage of lower, medium and higher order thinking skills in MA and PhD testing classroom activities and assignments.

TABLE 9:
THE PERCENTAGE OF LOWER, MEDIUM AND HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILLS IN MA
AND PHD TESTING CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS

	Bloom's revised taxonomy		
	Lower order	Medium Order	Higher order
MA activities and assignments	69.445%	30.555%	0%
PhD activities and assignments	0%	58.335%	41.665%
Average	69.445%	44.445%	41.665%

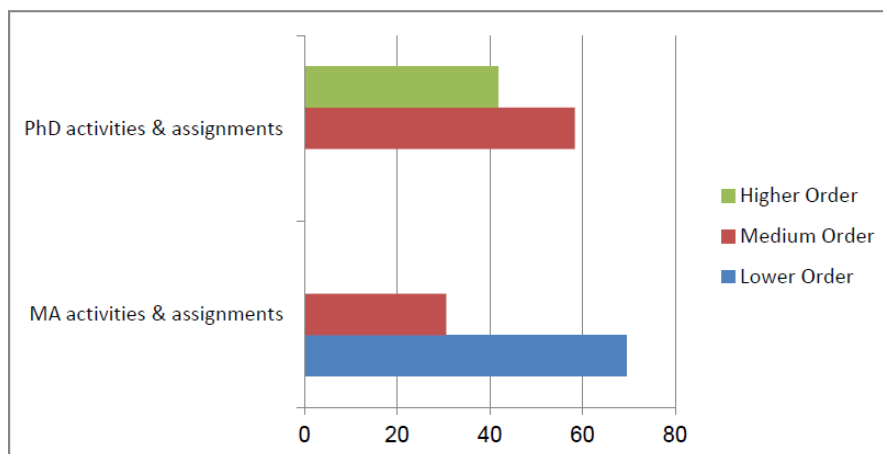


Figure 3: The percentage of lower, medium and higher order thinking skills in post-graduate testing classroom activities and assignments

We can conclude that activities and assignments given to postgraduate students first led to lower order thinking skills, next led to medium order thinking skills, and finally led to higher order thinking skills. Fortunately, systematicity was found in the pattern of learning objectives in postgraduate activities and assignments. There was a systemic pattern in the distribution of the order of thinking skills of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy in postgraduate activities and assignments. Bloom's Revised Taxonomy comprises six categories each needing accomplishment of the prior skill before the next more difficult one. The studied postgraduate activities and assignments followed the regular pattern introduced in Bloom's Revised Taxonomy which was first to master the lower order thinking skills, next to master medium order thinking skills, and finally to master higher order thinking skills. To conclude, we could say that activities and assignments given to postgraduate students led to higher order thinking in testing.

IV. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Universities are nowadays concentrating more on active skills development and less on passive learning of theoretical ideas. Therefore, practitioners have traditionally taken it upon themselves to train their potential teachers and test makers the best they can. For universities to prepare students for careers in teaching and test making, it is advisable that they take approaches where students can significantly develop these skills. Skills development can start when students move upward from the lower levels of Bloom's taxonomy where they acquire their elementary knowledge. Nowadays, since clear adjustment of educational goals with local, state, and national standards is beneficial, teachers must decide carefully about how to spend their classroom time. The Revised Bloom's Taxonomy clarifies if each lesson plan fits the purpose, essential question, goal or objective.

In this article, we tried to study quality in Iranian MA and PhD testing classes revealing how we prepare potential teachers and test makers for the journey of testing in their professional career and if the exercises and assignments given to students can prepare them to apply higher order thinking in their test making. The results showed that activities and assignments given to postgraduate students led to higher order thinking in testing. They first led to lower order thinking skills, next led to medium order thinking skills and finally led to higher order thinking skills. Moreover, MA testing activities and assignments mostly used lower order thinking skills, and PhD testing activities and assignments used medium order thinking skills more than higher order thinking skills, and did not use lower order thinking skills.

The findings of this study offer several pedagogical implications for learners, teachers, and textbook writers, and test designers in the realm of TEFL in particular and education in general. Bloom's taxonomy serves as the backbone of many teaching philosophies, especially those that bend more towards skills rather than content. Teachers and learners would view content as a means to teach skills. Bloom's taxonomy can be utilized as a teaching tool to assist to make a balance among assessment and evaluative questions in class, assignments and texts to guarantee that all orders of thinking are practiced in student's learning. Students might benefit from a critical thinking procedure where they learn to use higher order thinking.

In light of the findings of the study, it is recommended to improve the activities and assignments given to students to cover the six levels of the new version of Bloom's Taxonomy, and train teachers and designers of curriculum to use and write activities and assignments following the new version of Bloom's Taxonomy.

Conducting the present study, some suggestions for further research came out that might be useful. With regard to this line of research, a study can be conducted to see the representation of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy in the tests designed for these MA and PhD students. One can also investigate the teachers and students' beliefs and ideas regarding these activities and assignments. This can be done via interviewing them or some carefully designed questionnaires based on Bloom's Revised Taxonomy. In this way, we can see the representation of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy in classroom activities and assignments from the point of view of actual users. Other similar studies can be carried out to examine the representation of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy in course books that are taught in classrooms.

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A Study on Self-regulated Micro-course Learning and Implicitly Layered Flipped Classroom

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Abstract—The paper firstly introduces the developing process of flipped classroom home and abroad, and then illustrates the connotations, models and practical strategies of micro-courses and flipped classroom. The highlight of the paper is in the third part which details how the study of self-regulated micro-course learning and implicitly layered flipped classroom designed and developed. To divide the students into five implicit layers and to upload five-levelled micro-courses and preview learning materials are two preparatory steps. In-class teaching tasks mainly cover providing the critical review of learning material and settling the common questions raised by QQ group members; asking the main points of the text to check preview effects; selecting different-layered students to play different roles in the scenario; consolidating new knowledge with exercises and giving assignments in the form of discussion, translation or writing. After teaching practice and feedback analysis, we can get the result that ILFC (implicitly layered flipped classroom) enables 80 percent of the students to take active part in teaching activities, especially in text analysis and theme discussion. Moreover, it promotes multi-dimension interaction and increases deep-levelled cooperation and understanding. English learning interests and learning atmosphere are simultaneously inspired and improved.

Index Terms—micro-course, implicitly layered, flipped classroom, practical strategies

I. INTRODUCTION

In the autumn of 1996, Maureen J. Lage and Glenn J. Platt firstly put forward a design of Flipped Classroom and made experiment accordingly in the college. (Lage, Platt, Treglia, 2000) Four years later, Wesley J. Baker constructed Model of Classroom Flipping which includes pre-class self-regulated learning about teaching materials in the form of teaching video and in-class interactive and cooperative learning between teachers and students. (Baker, 2000) when it came to 2007, two American chemical teachers in senior high school recorded videos for their lectures and PPT and uploaded them into the network, which exceeded expectations greatly. Hence, this new teaching reform of Flipped Classroom gained popularity from then on. At the moment, the teaching practice and research were carried out by western countries led by America, and they have achieved abundant fruits. In 2010, 140 students in Clinton & Dell High School got much higher academic records, failing rates in different subjects descending from 50 percent to 35 percent. (Liu & Wang, 2014) After experiments of Marcey, Brint and Grandgenett in 2013 and 2014, most of participants believed that flipped classroom helped them fulfill the pre-class task of collecting research information and in-class task of comprehending those conceptions. (Zhai & Lin, 2014) It is revealed that an increasing number of western teachers are applying the flipped classroom in their teaching practice with positive teaching feedbacks.

In recent years, Chinese educators and teachers started their initial research into flipped classroom, drawing a primary conclusion on the components of Flipped Classroom Model (FCM). Our flipped classroom model also adheres to the basic model of knowledge learning after class and knowledge internalization in class. Different teaching procedures are almost reproductions of western flipped classroom without Chinese peculiarity. It is known to all that the teaching activities can be existed and developed under the specific educational and cultural backgrounds. As the imported goods, flipped classroom should be reconsidered and reconstructed in correspondence to the Chinese educational peculiarities and the status quo of Chinese students. The paper explores the possibility of constructing implicitly layered flipped classroom in college English teaching in order to solve the problems of differentiation in English learning and realize the traditional Confucius concept of teaching students according to their aptitudes in the form of implicitly layered flipped classroom.

II. THEORETICAL STUDY OF MICRO-COURSE AND FLIPPED CLASSROOM IN CONNOTATIONS AND PRACTICAL STRATEGIES

A. The Analysis of Micro-course in Composition and Applied Teaching Model

There is no definite or unified definition of micro-course at present, but each micro-course is a video course characterized by single objective, less content, short learning period and good structure. Micro-course, in essence, is a new course resource supporting teacher’s teaching and student’s learning. Micro objective, micro teaching plan, micro teaching material and micro exercise, all these components compose Micro-course which belongs to the category of curriculum theory. When the students begin learning through micro-course, conducting on-line discussion and face-to-face communication to fulfill meaningful teaching and learning activities. In this process, micro-course belongs to another category of teaching theory. From the perspective of the whole process of teaching activity, Professor Hu advances that micro teaching video, micro teaching plan, micro teaching software, micro exercise, micro reflection, micro assessment, and micro feedback are seven elements of micro-course resources. (Hu, 2013) Professor Liu Mingzhuo, from the perspective of curriculum nature, upholds that it should possess the necessary curriculum elements, such as teaching objective, teaching content, teaching activity, teaching resources, teaching assessment, and other technological support like learning tools of notebook and comments. (Liu & Zhu, 2013) However, micro-course as a digital teaching resource should include such elements as objective, content, teaching activities, interaction, and multi-media. Their inter-relationships are reflected in Fig.1.

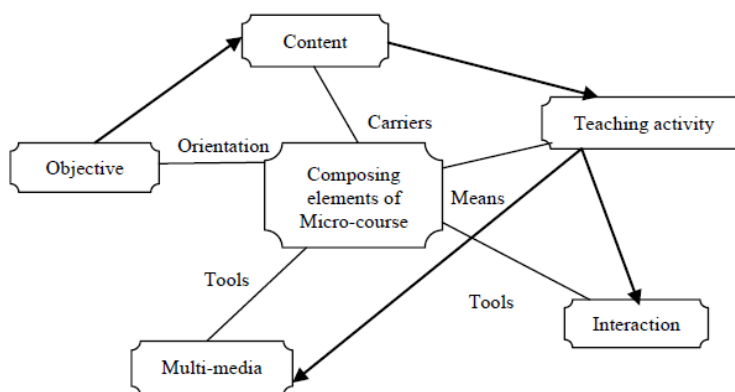


Fig.1: The composing elements of Micro-course (Su, Guan, Qian, Zhu, 2014)

The applied teaching models of micro-course generally include supporting flipped classroom, in-class differentiated teaching and after-class counseling. According to the arrangement of flipped classroom, micro-course can be arranged before class or in class. The key feature of flipped classroom is that the students learn micro-course before the teacher organizes the question exploring or gives lectures, which is defined as “to learn first, and to instruct afterwards.” After learning micro-course, the students are assigned appropriate pre-designed assignments. Teachers can obtain the students mastery of micro-course, providing feedback information for the follow-up teaching decisions. As to the in-class differentiated teaching model, teachers tend to require students to finish the corresponding tasks in order to test their learning effects or expand teaching materials. But due to the learning differentiation among students, some students cannot finish in-class assignment smoothly. Fortunately, these students will watch prepared micro-course to review relevant language points, sentence structures and grammatical explanations which help students fulfill the assignments without hindrances. Often times, the students encounter difficult problems while doing exercises after class. On this occasion, teachers record the micro video to help students analyze these difficult problems and solve them ultimately. Table 1 illustrates these three applied teaching models in college English teaching practice. Overall, there are two chief features of micro-course teaching application: it’s suitable for individual learning in or after class; owing to the time limitation, it’s generally arranged before or after class.

TABLE 1:
THE APPLIED TEACHING MODELS OF MICRO-COURSE IN TEACHING PRACTICE (SU, GUAN, QIAN, ZHU, 2014)

Applied teaching models	Teaching procedures	Functions of micro-course
Flipped classroom	Learn micro-course → Finish pre-designed tasks Clarify problems and puzzles → Teacher’s lecture and group discussion Teacher’s decision after getting feedbacks Individual or group learning	Pass on knowledge Inspire the students’ thinking and clarify problems and puzzles Provide information for teacher’s teaching decision
In-class different teaching	Students fulfill in-class tasks → Students learn micro-course → Individual or cooperative learning	Review key points of English learning Provide individual guidance
After-class counseling	Do after-class exercises Learn micro-course, individual learning	Provide target guidance for exercises Provide counseling relevant to language points and exercises

B. The Connotation and Basic Teaching Model of Flipped Classroom

The Flipped Classroom or Inverted Classroom refers to a kind of teaching pattern aimed at realizing teaching objectives through two steps, the first one is teacher making teaching videos and students watching video explanations at home or after class, and the second one is both of them coming to the classroom to engage in face-to-face sharing, communicating learning results and experiences. (Liu, 2012) This teaching pattern is guided by constructivism, which reverses the traditional one with the support of modern educational technology, following such procedures as teaching design, video making, online self-regulated study, cooperative study, individual guidance and teaching evaluation. Fig 2 records these teaching and learning procedures concretely and apparently.

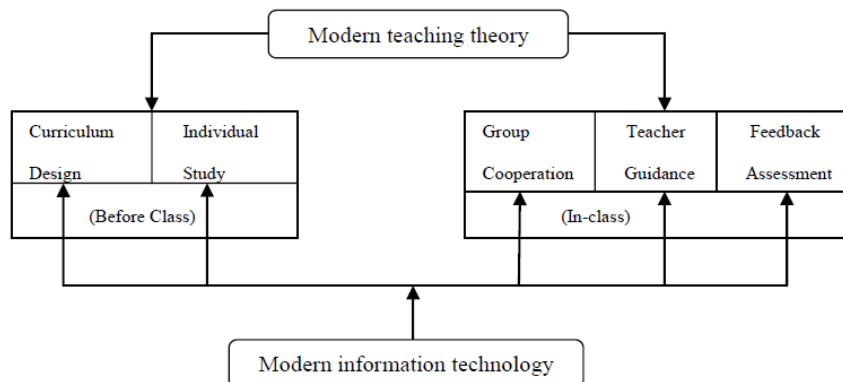


Fig.2: The basic pattern of flipped classroom (Jiang, Xu, 2014)

At present, there are three popularly typical flipped classroom patterns. The first pattern is quite similar to the one put forward by the experts of Baker and Talbert. The merit of this pattern consists in the clear presentation of its key element, which is to put teaching contents to outside the classroom, but to put homework to inside the classroom. The demerit lies in its over-brevity without demonstrating the students' learning activities. The second pattern is an improved and combined pattern based on constructivism learning theory and systematic teaching design theory. This pattern emphasizes information technology and activity learning as two levers to construct learning environment for flipped classroom, reflecting the students' learning activities clearly and completely. The only deficiency is its no easy operation. The third pattern, based on the experiment of flipped classroom, proposes two improved theoretical models of self-regulated flipped classroom and cooperative-explored flipped classroom. (David, 2004) This pattern put more emphasis on students' learning autonomy, making the teachers and students discover the advantages of flipped learning at the very start with the shortcoming reflected in lack of presentation for students' individual and autonomous activities.

C. The Practical Strategies of Flipped Classroom

To explore the possibility of flipped classroom from the range of application: according to the recent survey, many teachers believe that flipped classroom is suitable for students in high school or college with learning autonomy and willingness to express viewpoints. In particular, the flipped classroom tends to practice in small-size class teaching experiment in USA, but in China, our classroom is normally large-scale class teaching more than 40 or 70 students, which increases the difficulty of operating individual teaching practice of flipped classroom. This is a difficult point for the Chinese teachers to straighten out in future research.

To explore the practicable teaching content for flipped classroom: the theoretical basis of flipped classroom is Mastery learning theory which stresses the objective targeting and feedback correcting. We have to understand and analyze the type of knowledge to target our teaching objective so as to bring the superiority of flipped classroom into full play. Generally speaking, knowledge can be classified into declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge. The first four teaching procedures for teaching declarative and procedural knowledge are similar including informing teaching objectives, recalling and consolidating the previous knowledge, presenting organized new knowledge, and explaining the relationship between new and old knowledge to promote understanding of the new knowledge. But for the second-staged learning, declarative knowledge learning pays more attention to guide students to review and memorize the new knowledge, but the procedural knowledge learning attaches importance to inspire the students to react to teaching activities, to offer feedback and correction. As a result, the preview effects are vital foundation of in-class teaching effects, so many a teacher concentrate on making micro-course videos, but in-class procedures are also as important as the previous one.

To explore the feasibility of flipped classroom from the teachers' fundamental qualities: it's not the technology, but the design of deep-leveled learning that constitute the core of flipped classroom. The professional qualities for the teachers contain personality, teaching design, teaching practice and teaching reflection. It's necessary for the teachers to be equipped with logical thinking ability in order to enhance class teaching intelligence. The ability of finding the problem is one of the basic internal capacities which can be displayed explicitly in organizing classroom teaching activities. The skill in asking questions corresponds to six levels of cognition: recalling, understanding, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating. (Song, 2010)The American online learning counselor Andrew Miller reviews that if you are not a good teacher, the flipped classroom cannot ensure a better learning effects. (Rong & Peng, 2015) A

good teacher's external realization consists in solid teaching qualities, such as the analysis of teaching contents, the design of declarative teaching objective, the transformation from learning theory to teaching theory and technology, the flexibility in the use of learning tool software and traditional reading materials to implement teaching practice.

III. CONSTRUCTION AND PRACTICE OF SELF-REGULATED MICRO-COURSE LEARNING AND IMPLICITLY LAYERED FLIPPED CLASSROOM

A. *The Precondition Analysis of Constructing Self-regulated Micro-course Learning and Implicitly Layered Flipped Classroom*

After consulting several academic recourses database, such as HowNet, Wanfang, Duxiu Network and bing Network, we found that there are many repeated applied researches into micro-course learning and flipped classroom without deep and meticulous research. The review for Netease open class, TED, and micro-course from Khan Academy is similar to the students' response to college English teaching: for the same teaching content, some students regard them as simple one, while others as difficult. These different reactions reveal that the micro-courses meet the individual needs in time, but neglect the difference in learners' cognitive levels. Only three papers have been indexed in HowNet till now, mainly revolving around information and English teaching in high school. According to our available information, there are no such researches as self-regulated micro-course learning home and abroad at the moment. But all these advantages of easy approaches, short period, concise content, and modular and scenario design from micro-course can only play their full play on pushing different-levelled course to different-levelled students so as to realize the educational goal of teaching students according to their aptitudes. At the same time, many researchers believe that implicitly layered teaching is better than explicitly layered teaching, for it is conducive to improve students' non-intellectual factors, and hence benefits the college students' English performance in larger scale. (Yan, 2008) The public basic courses represented by college English face the same problem that the students will be assigned to the same class with similar scores in college entrance exams but with different academic bases. College English classroom being characteristic of focusing on language points and text comprehension has been the normal state in vast number of colleges. The purpose of this research is to transform this awkward situation, providing a practicable and operational teaching way of thinking and empirical approach which not only utilizes the network software technology and corresponding teaching software to improve the students' abilities to straighten out the real problems in their careers, but also enhance the students' autonomy and flexibility in English learning in class and after class.

B. *Design of Self-regulated Micro-course Learning and Implicitly Layered Flipped Classroom*

The goal of the research is to construct an integrated teaching pattern with layered micro-course, cooperative student-and-teacher online learning community and implicitly layered flipped classroom.

Step one: Teachers divide the students into five (A, B, C, D and E) implicit layers through tests, classroom observations, questionnaires, students' reflection and evaluation by stage, making detailed analysis on the number, basic language abilities, and key language points to direct for different layers of students.

Step two: According to the analytical results, teachers prepare for the new lesson together, making different-leveled micro-courses to meet the needs of the students with different language bases and demands.

Before learning the new unit, teachers are required to select the main contents including basic language points, sentences, and paragraphs and design self-regulated preparatory materials for students. Teachers make teaching videos in teaching video-room and edit them in educational technology center, or make PPT with teachers' mob video and then change them into avi-form files. Different-leveled micro-courses are labeled as five levels of A, B, C, D and E, and the students choose to watch micro-course independently. Learning length and times to play depend on students' willingness and abilities. Table 2 displays the whole process of college English flipped classroom.

TABLE 2:
TEACHING PLAN FOR COLLEGE ENGLISH IMPLICITLY LAYERED FLIPPED CLASSROOM PATTERN

Time	Teachers' tasks	Students' tasks	Forms	
Preparatory -stage	To divide the students into five groups according to their English levels.		Teachers prepare for lessons cooperatively	
Two weeks before class	To write teaching design; to record five-levelled micro-courses; to assign different pre-exercises.		Teachers prepare for lessons cooperatively	
One week before class	To upload the micro-courses to QQ group.	To watch micro-course suitable for one's English level, taking notes, learning relevant language points on one's own, doing exercises and writing down the questions.	Students' self-regulated learning	
		To participate in QQ group discussion, putting forward questions, looking for answers and advancing the common questions of the group.	Students' cooperative learning through online learning community	
The day before the class	To go into QQ group to check learning effects and analyze the main learning problems	To interact with other students or teachers to present the questions and to explore them.	Intercollegiate teacher-to-student online interactive learning	
Flipped Classroom	20 min.	Teachers give the concluding review of learning material, drawing the conclusion on the common questions put forward on QQ group.	Internal cooperative learning among teachers and students	
	25 min.	Teachers ask the main points of the text, checking preview effects.	Group discussion; teachers require the students to answer different-levelled questions according to implicit layering	
	break			
	30 min.	To assign training scenario, to participate in students' training, and to evaluate the training process in formative form.	Teachers select different-layered students to play different roles in the scenario. The students improve their performance according to teachers' guidance, fulfill different-levelled scenario with newly-learnt knowledge.	Implicitly layered teaching; multimodality interaction; exploratory activities
	15 min.	To consolidate with exercises and give assignments in the form of discussion, translation or writing.	To review and consolidate the main points of the text as requested.	Teacher-to-student interaction
Next day after class	To evaluate the whole learning process and results, answering the remaining questions, emphasizing the assignment and training projects	To watch micro-course appropriate for one's abilities; to review learning together; to write reflection; to finish assignments to consolidate the main points of the text.	Self-regulated learning; interactive learning through online learning community	
Next week after class	Students can keep on scenario training through network platform, QQ or WeChat in order to internalize the knowledge of the text and improve teaching effects in classroom. Teachers can join in their interaction or collect those unclear questions, answering them online. It is required that all students should reflect on the whole process of flipped classroom, concluding learning procedures, results, the remaining puzzles, improvements, and the comparative study with the traditional classroom. All these reflections can offer good food for teachers to improve teaching pattern and contents of flipped classroom.		Intercollegiate cooperation; ubiquitous interactive learning	

C. Teaching Practice and Feedbacks of Self-regulated Micro-course Learning and Implicitly Layered Flipped Classroom

After careful designing for the flipped classroom in college English, teachers start teaching experiment in the English class, and the subjects are freshmen coming from the department of Criminal Technological Investigation. In the first procedure, the students watch micro-course and learning materials through QQ group or learning platform. The highlight of the learning materials is division of five levels and the students can select materials appropriate for their abilities to preview. These five levels include key words and expressions, structural analysis, discussions, quotations and scenario training. Fig. 3 and Fig. 4 are the presentations of the 2nd and 3rd level of preview learning materials.

Part Division of the Text

Parts	Para(s)	Main Ideas
1	1	John Blanchard was expecting someone at Grand Central Station.
2	2~6	How John Blanchard had fallen in love with Miss Maynell.
3	7~15	Miss Maynell put Blanchard to a test.
4	16~17	It was wise of Miss Maynell to give such a test.

Fig.3: The 2nd level of preview learning material for Unit 6: A Valentine Story in flipped classroom

Group Discussion

Do you think that cyber love is believable and reliable? Why or why not?



Fig.4: The 3rd level of preview learning material for Unit 6: A Valentine Story in flipped classroom

After following the whole teaching procedures from preview, in-class explorative discussion and critical thinking, and after-class consolidation and expansion, teachers finish the questionnaires about this flipped classroom practice. Table 3 recorded the different feedbacks of eight questions about the teaching effects of flipped classroom.

TABLE 3:
ANALYSIS OF THE FEEDBACKS OF IMPLICITLY LAYERED FLIPPED CLASSROOM

Questions	Feedbacks			Reasons
1. Compared with traditional teaching pattern, flipped classroom pattern is	Better 81%	Same 16%	Worse 3%	Better: Active learning atmosphere; interesting and innovative; increasing the opportunity of discussion and independent study The same: Have their own advantages and disadvantages; autonomous learning is more important Worse: providing no reasons
2. Compared with the previous unified preview, this one providing different-levelled learning material without strict requirements is	Better 71%	Same 26%	Worse 3%	Better: Enhance learning efficiency; teach students according to their aptitudes; free and convenient self-learning; understand the text further; with good preview result; bring the students' potentiality into full play; have clear direction for preview The same: Too much learning material for preview; being difficult to understand learning material Worse: Have no self-control; being unable to preview independently
3. Compared with the previous units, the number of new words and expressions that you can remember is	More 52%	Same 45%	Less 3%	
4. Preview time?	20min. 10%	30-45min. 82%	Around 1 hour 8%	
5. Times for answering questions?	3-5times 50%	1-2 times 30%	0 20%	
6. Are you satisfied with the design of this flipped classroom?	Very satisfied 16%	Satisfied 78%	Dissatisfied 6%	
7. Which is the important part to discuss in the flipped classroom?	Consolidation of language points(explanation) 49%	Cultural backgrounds and text theme (discussion) 26%	Expansion and deepening of the theme (case study) 25%	
8. What you have gained the most in this flipped classroom?	Enhance English learning interests; understand the theme of the text deeply; expand thinking space; enlarge vocabulary; increase the abilities in group cooperation; increase interaction with teachers and other students; understand others' ideas and levels through active discussions			

According to the feedbacks from students of Grade 2015, Class 3 and 4 in Criminal & Technological Investigation, we come to the following conclusions: compared with the traditional teaching pattern, FCM possesses the huge advantages over the traditional one; the implicitly layered flipped classroom can provide different-levelled learning materials and micro-courses to correspond to different-levelled students, which helps attain the educational goal of teaching students according to their aptitudes; FCM enables most of the students participate into teaching procedures and activities focusing on profound, wide-ranged and critical-thinking questions; FCM promotes multi-dimension interaction and increase deep-levelled cooperation and understanding. Learning interests and learning atmosphere are greatly inspired and improved. In a word, FCM for College English teaching is a beneficial attempt worthy of further exploration and improvement.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

This implicitly layered flipped classroom allows students to adopt the most appropriate learning approach to watch the micro-course and preview learning materials according to their real English capabilities so as to enhance learning efficiency and results. They can also have opportunities to fulfill some professional assignments as virtual roles with the teachers and students from different colleges or universities. The multi-mode interaction in flipped classroom can not only train the students' cooperative ability and team spirit, but also work out the practical problems in the future work by applying English knowledge points. As to English teachers, they can be free from the simple and repeated explanations of language points and careful preparation for each unit, putting more efforts into those challenging and flexible work in putting forward meaningful and critical questions to discuss, coordinating multi-dimension cooperation and exploration, and making profound conclusion on the themes and connotations of the text.

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Critical Thinking, Autonomy, and Lexical Knowledge of Iranian EFL Learners

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Abstract—The present study was conducted in order to identify the relationship among autonomy, critical thinking ability, and lexical knowledge of Iranian EFL learners. 114 male and female learners learning English as a foreign language participated in the present study. The obtained data was analyzed by using Pearson correlation coefficient and One-Way ANOVA. The results of the present study indicated that there was a significant positive relationship between autonomy and lexical knowledge of learners. Moreover, the results of One-Way ANOVA revealed that learners with high critical thinking ability level were the most autonomous learners. Furthermore, learners with high critical thinking ability had high lexical knowledge.

Index Terms—autonomy, critical thinking ability, lexical knowledge, Iranian EFL learners

I. INTRODUCTION

The importance of critical thinking can be traced back to Dewey (1933) who believed that the main purpose of education is learning to think. Recently, critical thinking has become one of the major notions in education especially in different research areas related to vocabulary, autonomous learning, and teaching. As Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) point out that:

"critical thinking has been defined and measured in a number of ways but typically involves the individual's ability to do some or all of the following: identify central issues and assumptions in an argument, recognize important relationships, make correct inferences from data, deduce conclusions from information or data provided, interpret whether conclusions are warranted on the basis of the data given, and evaluate evidence or authority" (p. 118).

Moreover, learner autonomy has become more important recently and more learners try to be autonomous. As O'Donnell, Reeve and Smith (2012) suggest, autonomy is one of the internal factors that help learners experience being autonomous, competent, and related to others. According to Ku (2009), promoting learner autonomy needs taking advantage of learner's potentials for learning through critical reflection. In addition, Wagner (1997) believes that people cannot develop knowledge or skills in various areas without engaging in the process of thinking.

Additionally, Fan (2003) argues that shortage of lexical knowledge hampers language learning. Therefore, promoting learner's lexical knowledge has change to a topic of paramount importance which clearly requires more attention for further research. As Verhallen and Schoonen (1993) and Nation (2004) believe, vocabulary learning is a multifaceted process which includes factors such as memorizing words, being able to remember them, and applying them appropriately.

Although many researchers have investigated lexical knowledge, critical thinking ability and autonomy (e.g. Myers and Dyer, 2006; Nation and Meara, 2002; Yahong, 2009), few have examined research on the relationship among them. Therefore, the present study aims to find answers to the following questions:

1. Is there any significant relationship between autonomy and lexical knowledge of Iranian EFL learners?
2. Does critical thinking ability level significantly influence autonomy of Iranian EFL learners?
3. Does critical thinking ability level significantly influence lexical knowledge of Iranian EFL learners?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Learner autonomy is learners' ability to make their own decisions instead of being influenced by someone else. Little (1995) defines autonomy as a matter of learning and learning how to learn in formal educational settings. Also, Dickinson (1995) defines autonomy as attitudes of learners towards learning through which they practice taking responsibility for learning. However, Breeze (2000) argues that learner autonomy is an inquiry of attitudes and experience.

According to Benson and Voller (1997) autonomy includes five central categories including inborn capacities which are supposed by institutional education, exercises of learners' responsibility for their own learning, the rights of learners in order to determine the direction of their own learning, sets of skills which can be learned as well as concerned in self-directed learning, and situations in which learners study on their own.

Thanasoulas (2000) points out that many factors such as learner's motivation, attitude, needs, learning styles, language learning strategies and language awareness are significant in promoting learner autonomy. Furthermore, Nation and Macalister (2010) point out that learners should have the capacity to examine "how to learn a language and how to monitor and be aware of their learning, so that they can become effective and independent language learners" (p. 38). Moreover, Nation (2001) believes that "no matter what the teacher does or what the course book presents, ultimately it is the learner who does the learning" (p. 394).

As Scharle and Szabo (2000) maintain, autonomy involves raising awareness, changing attitudes and transferring roles to learners. According to many researchers (e.g. Dam, 1995; Holec, 1981; Little, 1991) believe that autonomy has a major role in education. They agree that learners who are more autonomous are more motivated to learn and achieve knowledge and also have higher senses of self-efficacy in their learning. Holec (1981) believes that fixing the goal, defining the content and development, selecting the processes and methods to be used, monitoring the acquisition procedure as well as evaluating what has been acquired are the main components of self-directed learning.

Critical thinking is the ability that people utilize in order to analyze facts, create ideas and classify them, make comparisons and inferences, and solve problems. Willingham (2008) believes that critical thinking determines considering issues from various perspectives and permits facts change thought and ideas. Paul, Elder and Bartell (1997) define critical thinking as "the intellectually disciplined process of activity 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 (p. 4).

Beside autonomy, Lexical knowledge has a great role in communication as it is impossible for learners to communicate without knowing the required vocabularies. According to Catalan (2003), vocabulary learning strategies are the "knowledge about the mechanisms (processes, strategies) used in order to learn vocabulary as well as steps or actions taken by students (a) to find out the meaning of unknown words, (b) to retain them in long-term memory, (c) to recall them at will, and (d) to use them in oral or written mode" (p. 56).

In a distinct study, Kabilan (2000) mentions that learners need to be able to think creatively and critically in order to be proficient in language learning since the communicative approach to language teaching does not even help students to be proficient. However, Schmitt (2000) revealed that acquiring strategies are required for learners to learn on their own. Also Richards and Renandya (2002) believe that learner autonomy is a process which enables learners to distinguish and evaluate their own needs as well as to choose and apply their own strategies in order to learn effectively.

In another study, Mirzai (2008) examined the relationship between lexical inferencing and critical thinking ability of learners. Based on the results, learners with high critical thinking ability were better in lexical inferencing comparing to learners with low critical thinking ability. Nevertheless, Arkoç (2008) conducted a study to find the effect of autonomy on listening comprehension success. Results of the study revealed that there was no significant relationship between autonomous learning and listening comprehension ability of the learners.

In some other studies the interrelationship between critical thinking and learner autonomy have been investigated. Sheikhi (2009) examined the relationship between autonomy, reading comprehension and critical thinking ability of learners. The results revealed that there was a positive relationship between critical thinking and reading comprehension. A significant relationship between autonomy and reading comprehension was also found.

Fahim and Komijani (2011) conducted a study in order to examine the relationship among critical thinking ability, L2 vocabulary knowledge, and L2 vocabulary learning strategies. Based on the results learners' vocabulary knowledge and critical thinking ability were significantly correlated. Moreover, there were positive correlations among learners' critical thinking ability and their self-assessed degree of determination, memorization, cognitive, and meta-cognitive strategies of vocabulary learning.

Additionally, Fahim and Sa'eepour (2011) investigated the effect of teaching critical thinking skills on reading comprehension ability on the one hand, and the effect of applying debate on critical thinking of EFL learners on the other hand. Based on the results, there were significant differences among learner's reading comprehension scores. Nonetheless, the differences among learners' critical thinking scores were not statistically significant.

Strategy training has also been the focus of attention. In a study by Nour Mohammadi, Heidari and Dehghan Niray (2012), the relationship between learner's critical thinking ability and their reading strategy use were examined. Results indicated that there was a low positive correlation between learners' critical thinking ability and their overall use of reading strategies. Moreover, meta-cognitive strategies were the most frequent strategies used by learners.

Some researchers highlighted the significance of reading strategies in relation to critical thinking and autonomy. Hosseini, Khodaei, Sarfallah and Dolatabadi (2012) investigated the relationship among reading comprehension, critical thinking and reading strategies of 70 English university students. Results showed that there was a significant positive relationship between participants' critical thinking ability and their reading comprehension as well as participants' critical thinking ability and reading strategy use. Moreover, cognitive and affective strategies and critical thinking ability were the best predictors of reading.

Likewise, Tabatabaei and Parsafar (2012) examined the effect of learners' self-directed learning on their critical thinking ability. Based on the results, self-directed learning significantly affected learners' critical thinking ability. Similarly, Zarei and Haghgoo (2012) examined the relationship between critical thinking and L2 grammatical knowledge as well as critical thinking and L2 lexical knowledge of Iranian learners. Based on the results, there was not a significant correlation between critical thinking and vocabulary knowledge of learners. The correlation between grammatical knowledge and critical thinking ability of learners was not significant.

The role of computerized technology was a focal point in this area of research as well. Kasmani and Davoudy (2013) investigated the effect of using audio CDs on reading comprehension of 200 pre-intermediate learners. Results revealed a positive relationship between simultaneous reading and listening comprehension of the participants.

Vocabulary learning and its relation to critical thinking was also emphasized extensively in different studies. Nosratinia, Eftekhari and Sarabchian (2013) for instance, investigated the relationship between learner autonomy and vocabulary learning strategies. Based on the results, there was a significant relationship between EFL learners' autonomy and vocabulary learning strategies. Moreover, social strategy was the best predictor of learner autonomy. Nosratinia and Zaker (2013) conducted another study in order to investigate the relationship between critical thinking ability and autonomy of 182 Iranian male and female learners. The results of the study indicated that there was a significant and positive relationship between critical thinking and autonomy of the participants.

Hassani, Rahmany and Babaei (2013) considered the relationship between journal text reading comprehension and critical thinking of 90 Iranian EFL learners. Results indicated a strong and positive correlation between learners' critical thinking ability and their reading comprehension.

In addition, Fahim and Hoominian (2014) investigated the relationship between critical thinking ability and reading strategies of Iranian EFL learners. The results showed that meta-cognitive and cognitive strategies were the most frequent strategies used by learners. Moreover, there was no correlation between critical thinking ability of learners and their overall use of reading strategies. Besides, Fahim and Haghghi (2014) examined the relationship between EFL learners' academic self-regulation and their critical thinking ability. 90 EFL learners participated in the study. Results indicated that there was a significant positive relationship between self-regulation and critical thinking ability of the learners.

Nosratinia, Abbasi and Zaker (2015) conducted a study in order to investigate the relationship among learners' critical thinking ability, autonomy, and the choice of vocabulary learning strategies. The results revealed significant relationship between learners' autonomy and their critical thinking ability, learners' critical thinking ability and vocabulary learning strategies as well as autonomy and vocabulary learning strategies. Also, autonomy was the best predictor of vocabulary learning strategies. Finally, Azadi, Zare and Khorram (2015) examined the relationship between learners' critical thinking ability and their listening strategies. The results revealed a significant and positive relationship between them. Also, meta-cognitive strategies were the most strategies used by learners.

III. METHOD

Participants

125 Iranian male and female learners learning English as a foreign language at Andisheh-Nou Language School in Qazvin participated in the present study. After taking the results of the Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency into account, the number of the participants was reduced to 114. The learners' age ranged from 16 to 30.

Instruments

The following instruments were used in order to answer the research questions:

1. A Proficiency Test
2. An IELTS Test
3. An Autonomy Questionnaire
4. A Critical Thinking Ability Questionnaire

First, a proficiency test (The Michigan English Language Proficiency Test) was administered in order to homogenize the participants. Second, an IELTS test was administered. Third, a learner autonomy questionnaire including 52 items was given to the students in order to investigate the participants' level of autonomy. The learner autonomy questionnaire was designed and validated by Spratt, Humphreys, and Chan (2002). The questionnaire included four sections examining the participants' views of their responsibilities and those of their teachers (13 items), the participants' confidence in their ability to operate autonomously (11 items), participants' level of motivation to learn English (1 item) and participants' practice of autonomous learning inside and outside of classroom (27 items). The questionnaire was in the form of a Likert scale from "not at all" to "completely" in section one ("not at all", "a little", "some", "mainly" and "completely"), from "very poor" to "very good" in section two, setting 5 to 1 beside the first to the last choices in section three and from "never" to "often" in section four ("never", "rarely", "sometimes", and "often").

Afterwards, a critical thinking ability questionnaire which had been developed by Honey (2000) was administered. The critical thinking ability questionnaire aims at investigating the comprehension, analysis and evaluation skills of the participants. It is a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always) including 30 items examining the participants' abilities in summarizing, paraphrasing, questioning, note-taking, classifying, researching, discussing, comparing and contrasting, inductive and deductive reasoning, outlining, distinguishing, inferencing and synthesizing.

The Persian version of the questionnaire which was translated and validated by Naeini (2005) was utilized in the present study.

Procedures

In order to achieve the purpose of the present study, the following procedures were followed. First, a general proficiency test was administered in order to be certain about the proficiency level of the students. The participants had one hour to answer the questions. Second, an IELTS test was administered in order to investigate the vocabulary knowledge of the participants which took 90 minutes. Third, the participants were asked to complete an autonomy questionnaire and a critical thinking ability questionnaire. They had 1 hour to complete these two questionnaires.

The scores of the participants on the general proficiency test were summarized. The scores of those who achieved more than one standard deviation away from (above or below) the mean were excluded from all the subsequent analyses. Then, the obtained data were analyzed for further statistical analyses.

Data Analysis

In order to analyze the data and to answer the research question number one, which is the relationship between autonomy and lexical knowledge of Iranian EFL learners, one Pearson Correlation procedure was used. Then, to answer the research questions number two and three, which is the effect of participants' critical thinking ability level on their autonomy and the effect of critical thinking ability level of the participants on their lexical knowledge, two one-way ANOVA procedures were used.

IV. RESULTS

Investigation of the First Research Question

The first research question sought to investigate the relationship between autonomy and lexical knowledge of Iranian EFL learners. Therefore, a correlation procedure was run to answer this question. Table 1 presents the results of the correlation procedure for autonomy and lexical knowledge of learners.

TABLE 1.
CORRELATION BETWEEN AUTONOMY AND LEXICAL KNOWLEDGE OF IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS

		Autonomy	Lexical Knowledge
Autonomy	Pearson Correlation	1	.983**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	114	114

As Table 1 shows, there is a significant relationship between autonomy and lexical knowledge of Iranian EFL learners ($r = .983$, $p < .01$).

Investigation of the Second Research Question

The second research question sought to find out whether critical thinking ability influences Iranian EFL learners' autonomy. Therefore, participants were divided into three equal groups of high, medium, and low level of critical thinking ability based on their scores of the critical thinking questionnaire. One-Way ANOVA was run to examine the effect of critical thinking ability level on the autonomy of learners. Table 2 shows the descriptive and test statistics. Based on Table 2, the high critical thinking ability group has the highest mean (mean = 213.24), followed by the medium critical thinking ability group (mean = 122.21), and the low critical thinking ability group (mean = 65.03). Moreover, F-value is statistically significant ($F = 466.321$, $p < .01$). Therefore, the differences among three critical thinking ability groups in autonomy are significant.

TABLE 2.
DESCRIPTIVE AND TEST STATISTICS FOR THE ANOVA ON CRITICAL THINKING ABILITY AND AUTONOMY OF IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
High	38	213.24	24.327	205.24	221.23
Mid	38	122.21	23.935	114.34	130.08
Low	38	65.03	14.183	60.36	69.69
Total	114	133.49	64.845	121.46	145.52
F = 466.321		Sig = .000			

To locate the differences among the three critical thinking ability groups, the post hoc Scheffe test procedure was run, presenting the following results:

TABLE 3.
POST HOC MULTIPLE COMPARISONS OF CRITICAL THINKING ABILITY AND AUTONOMY OF IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS

(I) Critical Thinking Ability	(J) Critical Thinking Ability	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
High	Mid	91.026*	.000	78.88	103.17
High	Low	148.211*	.000	136.07	160.36
Mid	Low	57.184*	.000	45.04	69.33

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

Figure 1 shows the differences among the three critical thinking ability groups conspicuously.

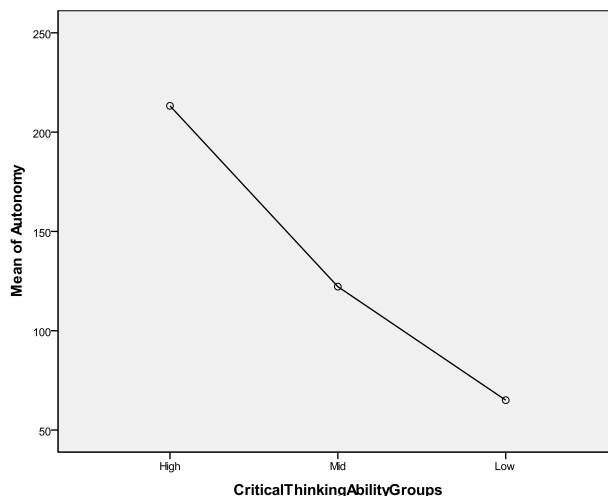


Figure 1. The Differences among the three critical Thinking Ability Groups and Autonomy of Iranian EFL Learners

Investigation of the Third Research Question

The third research question sought to see whether critical thinking ability influences Iranian EFL learners' lexical knowledge. Therefore, participants were divided into three equal groups of high, medium, and low level of critical thinking ability based on their scores of the critical thinking questionnaire. One-Way ANOVA was run to examine the effect of critical thinking ability level on the autonomy of learners. Table 2 shows the descriptive and test statistics. Based on Table 4, the high critical thinking ability group has the highest mean (mean = 52.76), followed by the medium critical thinking ability group (mean = 41.61), and the low critical thinking ability group (mean = 29.61). Moreover, F-value is statistically significant ($F = 431.544$, $p < .01$). Therefore, the differences among three critical thinking ability groups in lexical knowledge are significant.

TABLE 4.
DESCRIPTIVE AND TEST STATISTICS FOR THE ANOVA ON CRITICAL THINKING ABILITY AND LEXICAL KNOWLEDGE OF IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
High	38	52.76	3.332	51.67	53.86
Mid	38	41.61	3.522	40.45	42.76
Low	38	29.61	3.453	28.47	30.74
Total	114	41.32	10.090	39.45	43.20
F = 431.544		Sig = .000			

To locate the differences among the three critical thinking ability groups, the post hoc Scheffe test procedure was run, presenting the following results:

TABLE 5.
POST HOC MULTIPLE COMPARISONS OF CRITICAL THINKING ABILITY AND LEXICAL KNOWLEDGE OF IRANIAN EFL LEARNERS

(I) Critical Thinking Ability	(J) Critical Thinking Ability	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
High	Mid	11.158*	.000	9.20	13.11
High	Low	23.158*	.000	21.20	25.11
Mid	Low	12.000*	.000	10.04	13.96

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

Figure 2 shows the differences among the three critical thinking ability groups clearly.

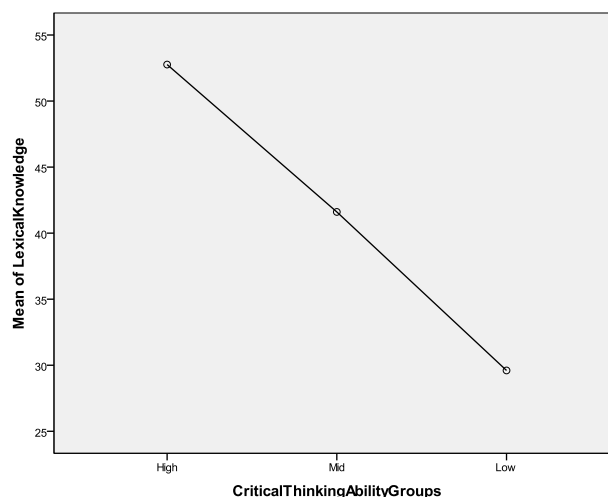


Figure 2. The Differences among the three critical Thinking Ability Groups and Lexical Knowledge of Iranian EFL Learners

V. DISCUSSION

The present study sought to investigate the relationship between autonomy and lexical knowledge of Iranian EFL learners, the effect of critical thinking ability level on learners' autonomy and the effect of learners' critical thinking ability on their lexical knowledge. One of the findings of the present study was that there was a significant and positive relationship between learner autonomy and lexical knowledge of Iranian EFL learners. This outcome is in line with a number of previous studies (Dam, 1995; Holec, 1981; Little, 1991) who found that learners who had higher degrees of autonomy were more motivated to learn and achieve knowledge and also had higher senses of self-efficacy in their learning.

Moreover, the results of this study are compatible with those of Sheikhi (2009) who found a significant relationship between autonomy and reading comprehension of learners. The present study supports findings of Nosratinia, Eftekhari and Sarabchian's (2013) study who found a significant relationship between EFL learners' autonomy and vocabulary learning strategies. Also, this finding is compatible with those of Nosratinia, Abbasi and Zaker (2015) who found that autonomy and vocabulary learning strategies were significantly correlated.

The other finding of the present study was that critical thinking ability level significantly affected learners' autonomy. In other words, learners with higher level of critical thinking ability were the most autonomous learners. This finding is in line with the finding of Tabatabaei and Parsafar's (2012) study. They found that self-directed learning significantly affected learners' critical thinking ability. Also, the findings of the present study lend support to those of Nosratinia and Zaker (2013) who reported that there was a significant and positive relationship between critical thinking and autonomy of the participants. Moreover, this study is compatible with Fahim and Haghghi's (2014) study who found a significant positive relationship between self-regulation and critical thinking ability of the learners. Furthermore, this study is well-matched with the study which has been conducted by Nosratinia, Abbasi and Zaker (2015). They reported that there was a significant relationship between learners' autonomy and their critical thinking ability.

The other conclusion of the present study was that the level of critical thinking of learners significantly affected their lexical knowledge. In other words, learners with higher critical thinking ability had higher lexical knowledge. This result is compatible with Sheikhi (2009) who found that there was a positive relationship between critical thinking and reading comprehension. The findings of this study can support the findings of Nosratinia, Abbasi and Zaker's (2015) study who found that learners' critical thinking ability and their vocabulary learning strategies were significantly correlated.

Additionally, the results of the present study is compatible with the results of Mirzai's (2008) study who found that learners with high critical thinking ability were better in lexical inferencing than learners with low critical thinking ability. Moreover, this study is in line with Fahim and Komijani's (2011) study who found that learners' vocabulary knowledge and critical thinking ability were significantly correlated.

In addition, the present study is in line with Nour Mohammadi, Heidari and Dehghan Nirya's (2012) study. They reported that there was a low positive correlation between learners' critical thinking ability and their overall use of reading strategies. Also, these findings lend support to those of Hosseini, Khodaei, Sarfallah and Dolatabadi (2012) and Hassani, Rahmany and Babaei (2013), who found a significant positive relationship between participants' critical thinking ability and their reading comprehension.

At the same time, the results of the present study contradict a number of previous studies (e.g. Arkoç 2008; Fahim and Sa'eepour, 2011; Zarei and Haghgoo, 2012). Likewise, the findings are in contrast to those of Arkoç (2008) who found that there was no significant relationship between autonomous learning and listening comprehension ability of the learners. Also, this study is in contrast with the study of Fahim and Sa'eepour (2011) who found no significant

differences among learners' critical thinking scores. Moreover, the findings of the current study contradict the study of Zarei and haghgoo (2012) who found no significant correlation between critical thinking and vocabulary knowledge of learners as well as grammatical knowledge and critical thinking ability of learners.

VI. CONCLUSION

The present study aimed at investigating the relationship among autonomy and lexical knowledge of Iranian EFL learners, the effect of critical thinking ability level on learners' autonomy, and the effect of learners' critical thinking ability on their lexical knowledge. One of the findings of the present study was that there was a statistically significant and positive relationship between learner autonomy and lexical knowledge of Iranian EFL learners.

The other finding of the present study was that critical thinking ability level significantly affected learners' autonomy. In other words, learners with higher level of critical thinking ability were the most autonomous learners. The other finding of the present study was that the level of critical thinking of learners significantly affected their lexical knowledge. In other words, learners with higher critical thinking ability had higher lexical knowledge. The positive interrelationship among the above-mentioned factors requires more attention on behalf of researchers in this field.

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A Contrastive Study of ESP Text Books and Content Books for Metadiscourse Markers: The Cases of Psychology, Medicine, and Mechanical Engineering

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Abstract—The present study sought to investigate the extent to which discipline specificity of the occurrence of metadiscourse (MD) elements had been taken into account in developing ESP textbooks in Iran. To do so, three distinct disciplines, namely, psychology, medicine, and mechanical engineering were chosen for investigation. For each discipline, two textbooks were analyzed; one content book, and one ESP textbook developed for students in the Iranian academic context. To analyze the six textbooks, Hyland's (2005) taxonomy of MD markers was adopted. The occurrence and frequency of each type of MD marker in the corpus were then identified and counted by a computational software (Anticon 2.3). The obtained results were further analyzed through SPSS (18) to see if the differences between the frequencies of different types of MD elements in the three disciplines and two textbook types in each discipline were statistically significant. Regarding variations across the disciplines, the results showed that MD markers were used in medicine and psychology texts the most and in mechanical engineering ones the least. As to the differences between content textbooks and ESP ones, the results indicated that MD markers occur significantly fewer in the ESP textbooks than in the content ones in all three disciplines. This may have some implications for ESP material developers to incorporate the metadiscoursal aspects of English in general and those of each discipline in particular into the ESP textbooks.

Index Terms—content books, ESP textbooks, interactional metadiscoursal markers, interactive metadiscoursal markers, materials evaluation

I. INTRODUCTION

Ever since the textbooks in EFL programs were recognized as psychological aids for English learners and assessment tools for English teachers (Sheldon, 1988), the role of textbooks has always been emphasized as an unavoidable part of any ELT program (Harwood, 2005). It is, in fact, claimed that language teachers can use textbooks as 'bridges' to stimulate L2 learners' thinking and as the basis for providing the most appropriate classes in their own context (Canagarajah, 1999; Gray, 2000, 2002). This central role of textbooks heralded a new direction toward designing and developing new textbooks which increasingly catered for the L2 learners' various needs and incorporated research findings into their material (Harwood, 2005). What has been frequently referred to as the major concern in textbook development and evaluation is the consistently acknowledged diversity observed in English learners' language needs. Such needs seem to be more significant in ESP contexts where the students in each field of study need specific aspects of English in specific amounts (Hyland, 2005). Further, this understanding of the disciplinary variations in the ESP students' needs has even led scholars to argue that English language learning in ESP contexts is such a complex process that the present textbooks cannot meet the varied set of needs the students call out to have (Thornbury & Meddings, 2001).

Consistent with the above argument, ESP textbooks are claimed to understate the enormous disciplinary variations in language and style that corpora reveal (e.g. Harwood, 2003; Hyland, 2000, 2002; Swales et al., 1998). Alternatively stated, there seems to be a mismatch between the way the professionals in a particular discipline present their ideas and thoughts in spoken and written discourses and the way the related ESP textbooks represent the specific language that a discipline employs (Bhatia, 2002; Lockett, 1999). This may further point to the teachers' dubious assumption that a textbook is the product of a careful collaboration between theoreticians and practitioners (Richards, 1993). It is, in fact, perceived that EAP textbook writers rely far too much on intuition or folk beliefs when attempting to describe academic

discourse norms (Lockett, 1999). This may necessitate more research-led materials for such English language teaching contexts. Accordingly, the state-of-the-art research findings about disciplinary discourse norms must be taken into account in designing and developing ESP textbooks (Bruton, 1997; Harwood, 2005; Swales, 1980, 2002).

In the same vein, a feeling of dissatisfaction with the ESP textbooks used in Iranian academic context has been frequently documented in the literature (Baleghinejad & Rahimi, 2011; Erfani, Iranmehr & Davari, 2011; Farhady, 2005; Ghalandari & Talebinezhad, 2012; Hatam & Shafiei, 2012; Manafi Anari, 2005; Nikpour, 2008; Rezaei, 2009; Razmjoo & Raissi, 2010). Baleghinejad and Rahimi (2011) made an evaluation investigation on the pedagogical suitability of an ESP textbook developed for the students of sociology at the University of Tehran. The researchers examined six main criteria, namely course objectives, practical concerns, linguistic issues, language skills and strategies, variety of tasks and activities, and the materials layout. The overall findings revealed the inefficiency of the textbook for the course and for the target audience it was intended to reach. Nikpour (2008) conducted an evaluation study, based on the Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) framework, on an ESP textbook developed for Iranian nursing students. The results showed that the textbook was not a useful one for the students of nursing. The book was full of grammar, reading comprehension and writing tasks and there was no use of translation and speaking activities in the units, whereas such students are in real need of developing English-into-Persian translation abilities as well as English oral skills.

Razmjoo and Raissi (2010) made an evaluation of ESP textbooks which had been developed for the students of medical sciences. They based their study on a questionnaire consisting of 55 specific criteria sorted in six categories. The overall results of the analysis of the teachers' as well as students' opinions about the efficiency of the ESP medical textbooks showed that neither the students nor the teachers were satisfied with most of the standards and criteria. Both groups revealed their disappointment of how theoretical considerations, organizational features, the contents and language skills were realized in the textbooks.

Overall, when closely examined, the related literature on ESP materials evaluation reveals that little attention has been paid to the importance of the disciplinary discourse norms as the real needs of ESP students (Erfani, Iranmehr & Davari, 2011). Indeed, most of the ESP textbook evaluations concentrate on the general aspects of the content and are mainly based on some pre-determined evaluation criteria that have been presented during years and decades (e.g. Hutchinson & Water, 1987; Sheldone, 1988) and were not concerned with the discipline specificity of discursive conventions shared by community members. Accordingly, the characteristics and norms of the specific discourse where the EAP students grow up are needed to be first recognized and then incorporated into the related EAP materials. This highlights the role of discourse analysis in designing and developing instructional materials which represent disciplinary variations in style and language.

Within the very broad field of discourse analysis, metadiscourse refers to elements in a text which are used to organize the text, indicate the writer's attitudes, and represent the intended message of the text in order to make it more effective and more understandable to the intended readers (Hyland, 2005). The term metadiscourse was first defined by Harris (1959) as a way of understanding language in use which helps the writer or the speaker to guide the receivers' understanding of a text (cited in Hyland, 2005). To date, different definitions and classifications of metadiscourse markers have been proposed (Crismore, 1984; Hyland, 2005; Vande Kopple, 1985). Vande Kopple (1985) states that metadiscourse is "discourse about discourse" and refers to the author's or speaker's linguistic manifestation in his text to interact with his receivers. Crismore, Markkanen and Steffensen (1993), though slightly different from Vande Kopple's definition, refer to metadiscourse as: "linguistic material in texts, written or spoken, which does not add anything to the propositional content but that is intended to help the listener or reader organize, interpret and evaluate the information given" (p. 40). A more comprehensive idea seems to have been suggested by Hyland (2005) who believes that communication is not just the exchange of information; it shows the personalities, attitudes and assumptions about the communicators. In fact, writers use metadiscourse markers to interpret, evaluate, discuss or reject the idea in the propositional content and also to present themselves and their ideas through the text.

Metadiscourse is, therefore, a crucial device for writers as they want to engage and influence readers in the text and for readers as they tend to make sense of the text in the way the writer intended it to be. However, by using MD markers, writers can avoid misinterpretations or misrepresentation of self and they can represent the real intention of the text clearly. So, the presence of these kinds of markers in different kinds of texts with different purposes and specific readers should be taken into account based on various characteristics including culture, languages, etc. Among these different characteristics, language specificity and discipline specificity would be two broad elements which affect metadiscourse functions in texts.

A plethora of research studies have been done on the analysis of MD markers in different disciplines and different languages (Abdollahzadeh, 2011; Dahl, 2004; Fatemi & Shojaei, 2012; Hyland, 2004; Jalilifar & Alavi-Nia, 2012; Noorian & Biri, 2010; Zarei & Mansoori, 2011). The overall results of these studies indicate that there is a strong association between the distribution of metadiscourse markers and the specific discipline. Consequently, the fact that the presence and distribution of metadiscourse markers are language-bound and discipline-bound has promoted an agreement among metadiscourse researchers on the influence MD markers have on the ways that writers communicate with their readers (Abdi, 2002; Blagojevich, 2004; Dahl, 2004; Hyland & Tes, 2004; Zarei & Mansoori, 2011). Therefore, the importance of metadiscourse lies in its association with the contexts in which it occurs. In other words,

the ways that writers present themselves and engage with their readers are closely related to the norms and expectations of particular professional communities and contexts (Hyland, 2004).

Working on the above problem and examining the related literature, Hyland (2004) concludes that EFL and EAP textbooks ignore metadiscourse features and cannot be of that much help for learners. Assuming that the presence of MD is language- and discipline- bound, and that the texts which are selected, adopted or summarized to be included in ESP textbooks are to be representative of the authentic materials in each specific discipline, this study is going to investigate the extent to which discipline specificity of MD use has been taken into account in developing ESP textbooks in the Iranian academic context. Accordingly, the following research question was formulated.

- To what extent have the distributions of metadiscoursal markers in medicine, psychology and mechanical engineering English textbooks been observed in the field-related ESP textbooks used in the Iranian Academic context?

II. METHOD

A. Materials

This study involved a corpus of six textbooks from three disciplines. For each discipline, two textbooks were selected: a content textbook, and an ESP textbook developed for university students in the Iranian academic context. The majors under investigation were mechanical engineering, medicine, and psychology. These disciplines represent the three different disciplinary bases, namely engineering, empirical science, and humanities. These disciplines were chosen so that the results could be generalized to a wider range.

The ESP textbooks under analysis were: 1) *English for the students of mechanical engineering* (Jalalipour, 2011), 2) *English for the students of psychology* (Kamarzarin, 2012), and 3) *English for the students of medicine* (Tahririan, 2011). These textbooks had been for long assigned to the students in the related fields in almost all universities in Iran. Besides, the English content textbooks which were examined in this study were: 1) *A first course in fluid mechanics for engineers* (Hewakandam, 2012), 2) *Child and adolescent clinical psychology* (Carr, 2005), and 3) *Harrison's principles of internal medicine* (Harrison, 2008). This latter group of textbooks was agreed upon by the content instructors to be widely used and referred to in the related fields. The numerical description of the data is shown in the table below:

TABLE 1.
LENGTH OF THE TEXTS (NUMBER OF WORDS) BY DISCIPLINE AND TEXTBOOK TYPE

	Mechanical engineering	Psychology	Medicine
ESP	39123	48253	13305
Content	38388	48253	14578

B. The Model of Analysis

The present study was a descriptive one employing a quantitative approach to analyzing the data. The frequency of different types of MD markers was the dependant variable and the language and discipline as the independent ones. Among the metadiscourse classifications the one used to analyze the data in this study was Hyland's (2005) Interpersonal Metadiscourse Taxonomy presented below (Table 2). This taxonomy is the most recent one and is different from previous taxonomies in that other scholars have divided MD elements into textual and interpersonal ones, but Hyland (2005) believes that all metadiscourse markers are interpersonal. He has further divided interpersonal MD markers into two broad categories: interactive and interactional, each of which contains five subcategories delineating different functions they have in a text.

TABLE 2.
HYLAND'S (2005) INTERPERSONAL METADISOURSE TAXONOMY

Category	Function	Examples
Interactive MDs	Help to guide the reader through the text	Resources
Transitions	Express relations between main clauses	In addition; but; thus; and
Frame markers	Refer to discourse acts, sequences or stages	Finally; to conclude
Endophoric markers	Refer to information in other parts of the text	Noted above; see fig; in section 2
Evidentials	Refer to information from other texts	
Code glosses	Elaborate propositional meaning	According to X; Z stated Namely; e.g.; such as; in other words
Interactional MDs	Involve the reader in the text	Resources
Hedges	Withhold commitment and open dialogue	might; perhaps; possible; about
Boosters	Emphasize certainty or close dialogue	in fact; definitely; it is clear that
Attitude markers	Express writers' attitude to proposition	unfortunately; I agree; surprisingly
Self mentions	Explicit reference to author(s)	I; we; my; me; our
Engagement markers	Explicitly build relationship with reader	consider; note; you can see that

C. Data Analysis

In order to be readable by *Antconc3.2.1w*, the software which is commonly used for corpus analysis, the required parts of each book were scanned and then converted to the word processing format using Optical Character Recognition

(OCR), a mechanical convertor of scanned images of type-written or handwritten texts into machine-encoded text. After that, all cases of MD markers occurred in the content and ESP textbooks were identified, classified based on the model, and counted. The obtained frequencies were finally categorized based on the MD subtypes, the disciplines and the textbook types. This categorization allowed the researchers to examine the differences between the occurrences of different types of MD markers in each discipline across the two types of textbook.

Additionally, Z-test was used to further the analyses and to see whether there were significant differences between English content texts and ESP texts regarding interactive and interactional elements and in order to examine the difference between the required proportions of each subcategory of interactive and interactional MD markers in two groups and three disciplines. The results of the data analysis are presented in the following section.

III. RESULTS

As it is consistently documented in the related literature and also assumed in this study, the frequencies and distributions of MD elements are language and discipline bound. Therefore, the analysis of data was mainly concerned with variations in the distributions of different MD types across the two categories of texts; content and ESP. Accordingly, the overall occurrences of MD devices in the three disciplines and the two corpora are presented first (Table 3, below) and then the frequencies, percentages and Z-test results for each MD type in each discipline are reported (Tables 4, 5, and 6).

TABLE 3.
THE FREQUENCIES, PERCENTAGES AND Z-TEST RESULTS OF MD MARKERS IN THE CORPUS

Disciplines	Content	ESP	Z-test
Mechanical Engineering	3201 (8.3%)	2156 (5.5%)	15.51*
Psychology	6217 (12.8%)	4553 (9.4%)	16.72*
Medicine	1943 (13.3%)	1093 (8.2%)	13.69*

* = significant at $P < 0.05$ Critical: 1.96

As evidenced in Table 3, in the three disciplines, the percentage of MD occurrence was higher in the content texts than in the ESP texts. However, in the two corpora the proportion of the MD markers to the total number of words was remarkably lower in Mechanical Engineering than in the two other disciplines. Moreover, as the Z-test results indicate, the differences in the MD occurrence were statistically significant in all three disciplines meaning that the content texts contained more MD devices than the ESP ones which had been developed for the academic context in Iran.

TABLE 4.
THE FREQUENCIES, PERCENTAGES AND Z-TEST RESULTS OF MD MARKERS IN THE MECHANICAL ENGINEERING CORPUS

Interactive	Content	ESP	Z-test	Interactional	Content	ESP	Z-test
Code Glosses	258(50.9%)	249 (49.1%)	0.86	Attitude Markers	68 (55.3%)	55 (44.7%)	1.27
Endophoric markers	260(66.3%)	132 (33.7%)	6.66*	Boosters	334 (72.8%)	125(27.2%)	9.98*
Evidential markers	10 (52.6%)	9 (47.4%)	0.27	Self mention	159 (63.6%)	91 (36.4%)	4.45*
Frame markers	169(53.3%)	148 (46.7%)	1.35	Engagement Markers	429 (70.7%)	178 (29.3%)	10.46*
Transition markers	1110 (56.5)	854 (43.5%)	9.47*	Hedges	404 (56.2%)	315 (43.8%)	3.59*
Total	1807 (56.5)	1392 (43.5)	8.04*	Total	1394 (64.6%)	764(35.4%)	14.20*

* = significant at $P < 0.05$ Critical: 1.96

As reported in Table 4, both interactive and interactional MD markers occurred statistically more frequently in the content texts of mechanical engineering than in its corresponding ESP texts (8.04 and 14.20 respectively). A closer examination of the two corpora revealed that endophoric and transition metadiscourse markers were the only significantly different subcategories of interactive markers (6.66 and 9.47, respectively) with regard to their frequency of occurrence, whereas all interactional marker types, except for 'attitude markers' (1.27), occurred more frequently in the content texts than in the ESP texts which was shown to be significant.

Considering the psychology corpus, it was shown (Table 5) that the two text types differed in their use of MD markers. The difference was significant in case of both interactive markers (with the exception of evidential markers: 0.42) and interactional markers (except for boosters: 0.67 and engagement markers: 0.74). It is worth mentioning that the two texts were mostly different in their employment of endophoric markers and hedges.

TABLE 5.
THE FREQUENCIES, PERCENTAGES AND Z-TEST RESULTS OF MD MARKERS IN THE PSYCHOLOGY CORPUS

Interactive	Content	ESP	Z-test	Interactional	Content	ESP	Z-test
Code Glosses	1012(64.8%)	546 (35.2%)	11.80*	Attitude Markers	177 (57.3)	132 (42.7%)	2.51*
Endophoric markers	199 (80.2%)	49 (19.8%)	9.49*	Boosters	212 (48.5%)	225 (51.5%)	0.67
Evidential markers	224 (51.1%)	214 (48.9%)	0.42	Self mention	49 (37.1%)	83 (62.9%)	2.99*
Frame markers	370 (66.5%)	186 (33.5%)	7.76*	Engagement Markers	291 (51.7%)	272 (48.3%)	0.74
Transition markers	2581 (53%)	2287 (47%)	4.14*	Hedges	1102 (66.3%)	559 (33.7%)	13.33*
Total	4386(57.2%)	3282(42.8%)	12.90*	Total	1831(59%)	1271(41%)	10.07*

* = significant at $P < 0.05$ Critical: 1.96

Finally, Table 6 reveals that the medical content texts contained more MD markers than the ESP ones of the same field. This is more vivid in the presence of interactive markers which were used in the content texts almost twice more than in ESP texts.

TABLE 6.
THE FREQUENCIES, PERCENTAGES AND Z-TEST RESULTS OF MD MARKERS IN THE MEDICINE CORPUS

Interactive	Content	ESP	Z-test	Interactional	Content	ESP	Z-test
Code Glosses	356(70.5%)	149(29.5%)	8.26*	Attitude Markers	58(49.6%)	59(50.4%)	2.69
Endophoric markers	89 (89%)	11(11%)	7.36*	Boosters	79(59%)	55(41%)	1.55
Evidential markers	45 (73.8%)	16(26.2%)	3.36*	Self-mention	23(57.5%)	17(42.5%)	0.66
Frame markers	121(70.8%)	50(29.2%)	4.85*	Engagement Markers	103(58.2%)	74(41.8%)	1.57
Transition markers	798(61.2%)	505(38.8%)	6.63*	Hedges	271(63.3%)	157(36.7%)	4.60*
Total	1409(65.8%)	731(34.2%)	13.06*	Total	534(59.6%)	333(40.4%)	4.44*

* = significant at $P < 0.05$ Critical: 1.96

Moreover, it is worth mentioning that from among the subcategories of interactional MD markers, ‘hedges’ was the only class the frequency of which was significantly different across the two text types (4.60).

IV. DISCUSSIONS

Based on the obtained results, the ESP texts under analysis generally contained fewer MD markers than their corresponding English content texts. The difference was more noticeable regarding ‘engagement markers’ and ‘boosters’ in case of mechanical engineering, ‘frame markers’ and ‘hedges’ in psychology texts, and ‘code glosses’ and ‘engagement markers’ in the medical corpus. In addition, comparing the three disciplines, one can conclude that medical texts made use of interactive markers the most and that the interdisciplinary variation with regard to interactional markers was not significant.

In preparing an ESP textbook, the main texts are usually selections, adaptations or summaries of authentic passages. It is, then, quite likely that in doing so, the texts lose their naturalness as has long before been warned by Chastain (1988) that simplification or shortening of a reading passage does not necessarily make it more comprehensible but may make the passage more difficult to read by ruining its discursal organization and coherence. The results of this study revealed a meaningful difference between Iranian ESP textbooks and their English counterparts. This finding runs against Richard’s (2001) recommendation that ESP material should be representative of real and authentic situation, whether linguistically, discursively or meta-discursively.

Serious problems are caused when unnatural material (in terms of discourse) is selected and used in the ESP curriculum (Manafi Anari, 2005). On the other hand, Rezaei (2009) considers textbooks as the prime source of learning in ESP classes. These highlight the pivotal role of textbook evaluation for selecting or developing ESP textbooks. The results of the present study point to the inadequacy of home-made, specifically-tailored ESP books and call for ESP courses to be redefined and reevaluated especially in terms of their textbooks as many other Iranian researchers have also shown such inadequacies before (Baleghinejad & Rahimi, 2011; Farhady, 2005; Nikpour, 2008; and Razmjoo & Raissi, 2010).

The results of the present study are also in line with Hyland’s (2004) opinion who believes that there is a close association between the type and frequency of MD markers and social organization of disciplinary communities. In other words, disciplinary culture and rules affect both textual styles of writing and writer-reader interactional signals. It was shown that the frequency of MD markers was different across the three disciplines with regard to interactive markers. This supports Zarei and Mansoori (2007) who claim that interactive markers are used more frequently than interactional ones, showing that textuality is emphasized over reader/writer interaction in academic texts. This is fortunate since the preference is also observed by native English authors (Faghih & Rahimpour, 2009).

More specifically, from among interactive subcategories, ‘transitions’ were the most frequent markers used in this study corpus. Bearing in mind that transitions are mainly used to help readers interpret the links between ideas in a text, the observation is justified. The texts of mechanical engineering, however, contained fewer transitions than the other two disciplines probably because the method of communication in the field is different since the majority of content is expressed through formulas, figures, tables and charts.

Moreover, the observation was that ‘hedges’ were the most frequently occurring interactional subcategory across the three disciplines. Indeed, the frequency of occurrence of such elements – used to highlight subjective opinion- was significantly higher in psychology texts which, again, mirrors the nature of a field that deals with the mentality of a dynamic creature called human, pushing the psychologist to show his/her degree of confidence in what is stated.

The observed variations across the three disciplines and the two types of textbook run counter to the concept of the universal scientific discourse proposed by Widdowson (1979). Based on the findings of this study, each discourse community may require specific rhetorical pattern to establish a specific kind of relationship among the community members. Of course, the established norms must not be taken as rigid standards with hard and fast regulations, but as “general tendencies which could soften the interlingual differences, leading to more intelligible contexts for communication” (Zarei & Mansoori, 2007, p. 34) and hence avoiding the possible breakdown of communication

(Martin, 2003; Connor, 1996). This may lend support to Hyland (2004) who asserts that effective writing in different cultures involves a different culture-oriented deployment of resources to represent text and reader.

V. CONCLUSION

All in all, the study aimed at investigating the extent to which ESP textbooks developed for use in Iran resemble their English content counterparts with respect to discipline-specific meta-discourse markers. Textbooks from three disciplines were analyzed based on Hyland's (2005) model. It was revealed that the ESP books persistently contained fewer MD markers than the English books. This signals a need for textbook evaluation and reconsideration of ESP material in terms of its naturalness and authenticity. Differences were also found among texts from the three disciplines under scrutiny which were discussed to be originating from the nature of such fields.

Nonetheless, it must be mentioned that the current study focused on the quantitative analysis of metadiscourse markers in two text types, and did not further investigate the exact socio-cultural factors which might underlie the observed differences. Thus the obtained findings can be attributed to the fact that the identified variation across the two types of textbooks depends both on the social origin and the activity (e.g. textbook development) in which one is engaged which is very well supported in the systemic-functional framework (Halliday, 1994) where language use is "viewed as a configuration of the semantic resources which members of a culture associate with a situation type" (Zarei & Mansoori, 2007, p. 35). This highlights the idea that variation across disciplines and textbooks can be accounted for by the socio-cultural aspects of the languages which need to be explored through further studies delving into the underlying patterns which are likely to give rise to the differences.

As a final point, in the selection of the materials for analysis, this study did not consider the related variations within the three disciplines under enquiry here. Ignoring such intra-disciplinary variations may limit the generalizability of the results obtained in the present study. Therefore, the findings have to be interpreted cautiously.

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Conversation Code-switching in Class with Chinese as Foreign Language

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Abstract—This study focused on the function, forms, and frequency of conversation code-switching used by bilinguals in the class with Chinese as foreign language. Qualitative questionnaire and quantitative conversation audio data were collected and analyzed among 56 teachers and 315 overseas students as participants in the study. The questionnaire and data conversation analysis showed both teachers and students were free to use their L1 or L2 according to their own needs and desires, which meant code-switching was not as directly related to the target language proficiency as expected. Instead, it could be a strategy for successful class communication to repair trouble source in listening, understanding or expressing. In some cases, code-switching could be a turn mark to initiate a new turn or remind other participants to be attentive to catch the utterance at the possible transition relevant space (TRS). It also found code-switching between L2 and L1 possibly meant some trouble source initiated repair in understanding, expression or interaction especially in foreign language class conversation. Finally, neither teacher nor students meant to prefer L1 or L2, they preferred to switch to the appropriate language in sequence organization to make sure the class interaction could be carry on smoothly.

Index Terms—class communication strategy, bilingualism, code-switching, conversation analysis, Chinese as foreign language

I. INTRODUCTION

Some studies which used conversation analysis (CA) to investigate the aspects of institutional interaction between teachers and students suggested that we should look at the whole sequences of classroom talk to see the relative values or patterns of class discourse (Van Lier, 1996). Markee (2000) and Wang (2015) have analyzed language using in classroom interactions with CA as a data-driven methodology.

Study of classroom interaction with CA manifests the following characteristics: CA sees classroom interaction as “living interpersonal interaction” with teachers and students as participants. Each talking action could be related to teaching function; CA relates language forms with its function rather than contents.

It was found the context, especially in foreign language (FL) classroom, was extremely complex and variable, in which code-switching was quite often (Sampson, 2012). Since 1980s, the study of classroom code-switching has been conducted in Canada, Europe, and Africa. Merritt (1992) explored the determinants of teacher code-switching between English, Swahili and mother tongue in three Kenyan primary schools by ethnographic observations. The reasons why they put forward codes-switching were the teachers’ social status, linguistic competence and insecurity. Moodley (2007) carried a preliminary code-switching study in a classroom with French as foreign language, which revealed an extensive use of code-switching in the teacher’s explaining sequence including linguistic insecurity, affective functions, socializing functions, repetitive functions, etc. Garc á & Li (2014) preferred a new concept, translanguaging, to elaborate the importance of multi-language phenomena in foreign language class and they asserted that translanguage was not just about to reinforce the acquisition process or to enhance the understanding, but about using multiple semiotic resources to create meaning and the learning and teaching process.

Auer (1999) identified a number of sequential patterns of language choice based on the Italian migrants in Germany. He said the sequential organization of language choice provided a frame of reference for the interpretation of functions or meanings, where CA could provide the most precise description, but not meaningful explanation. Then Yu (2008) reminded CA approach should orient to establish the meaning of code-switching by examining the types of interaction which involved the very act of language interaction instead of focusing on the perceived, symbolic values of the different language. We (Wang, 2015) have observed and analyzed the forms and functions of conversation repair (trouble source, repair initiation, and repair outcome) which proved to have notable influence on the interaction between teachers and students and teaching functions in the class with Chinese as foreign language. Here we sketched another interlinked conversational organizations: bilingual speakers might use code-switching as an additional resource to coordinate turn-taking. The following study will be concerned with the conversation code-switching in the class with Chinese as foreign language.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. *The Participants in This Study*

The total of 56 Chinese teachers and 315 overseas students in universities or colleges of Shanxi province took part in this investigation. All students are foreign students with Chinese as a foreign language for them. Their Chinese level ranged from HSK-3 or 4, and they are aged between 22 to 40 years. At the same time, they represented a wide range of different nationalities and engaged in different subjects of study. Fifty-six native speaker teachers in these classes have been teaching Chinese to overseas students for several years.

Qualitative and quantitative data were collected using two data sources. The questionnaire, consisting of a demographic section and a perception section with five scales measuring the use of CS and its effectiveness, was administered to participants in their regular class time. Though participation was voluntary, everyone agreed to answer the questionnaire. The recording course lasted for 16 weeks. The permission of all parties was obtained for recording session. It was agreed that all teachers would not change their regular plan because of recording. Full freedom was given to the teacher, without the presence of the presence of researcher during recording, so that the data could not be collected as unobtrusively and naturally as possible.

To achieve integration of the two data sources, this study was conducted in three phases: Phase I involved analyzing the responses of closed-ended questions in the questionnaire using SPSS software for Windows XP. Phase II was the process of coding the responses of open-ended questions in the questionnaire and discovering the themes. Lastly, Phase III involved transcribing the recorded lecture audios data at various points in the discussion of the results.

B. *Data Analysis*

The transcribed data were analyzed to investigate the roles of conversation code-switching, especially the organizations of sequence, adjacency pairs, turn-taking and repair in these particular settings.

The questionnaire data served as the second source. In accordance with the research questions, the questionnaires were organized into two major sections: the use of code-switching and the effectiveness of code-switching (see appendix 1,2). The questionnaire consisted of 14 closed-ended and 1 open-ended questions. The teachers and students were asked to check how much they use code-switching and explain how they perceive the effectiveness of code-switching in their teaching and learning of Chinese.

C. *Transcription*

The recording were transcribed by the analyst and finally checked by the teacher who taught the classes. The transcription conventions proposed by Jefferson (1978) were adapted, with a few additions and simplifications that are convenient for interaction.

III. ANALYSIS AND RESULT

A. *Perceptions of Code-switching*

The first five questions elicited information about the participants and their classes as well as their estimate of the extent of their own use of code-switching in their classes (See Table 1 and 2).

TABLE 1
TEACHERS' EXPERIENCE WITH CHINESE AS FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Years of teaching Chinese as foreign language	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 3years	11	19.9
3 years—less than 6 years	25	44.2
More than 6 years	20	35.9
Total	56	100

TABLE 2
SELF-EVALUATED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY OF TEACHERS AND CHINESE PROFICIENCY OF STUDENTS

Levels of proficiency	English proficiency of teachers		Chinese proficiency of students	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Superior	6	10.9	6	1.9
Advanced	17	28.8	147	46.6
Intermediate	28	50.9	122	38.7
Low	3	5.9	38	12.1
Total (missing)	54 (2)	100 (3.5)	313 (2)	99.3 (0.7)

Most of the students considered themselves proficient in Chinese with an advanced level or higher (48.5%) while many of the teachers evaluated their English levels as intermediate (50.9%) or low (5.9%). For the degree of comprehension (See Table3), interestingly, a majority of the teachers (51.8%) believed that most of the students seemed not to understand the content in Chinese-only lectures very well, whereas the students responded that they (63.7%) could understand more than 60% of the Chinese lecture. These results imply that the teachers might have used code-switching more often on purpose to help their students to understand their Chinese lectures. The range of their

reported use of code-switching varied considerably: some teachers indicated that they used English almost exclusively (39.7%), while others suggested that many of their classes were conducted in Chinese (24.8%). Only 23.2% of students like to use L2 in their classes (See Table 3).

TABLE3
COMPREHENSION OF STUDENTS IN CHINESE-ONLY LECTURES

Degree of comprehension	In teachers' opinion		In students' opinion	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Over 80%	4	7.1	44	13.9
60%-80%	13	23.2	157	49.8
30%-60%	29	51.8	96	30.5
Less than 30%	10	17.9	9	2.9
Total (missing)	56(0)	100(0)	306(9)	97.1(2.9)

TABLE4
PROPORTION OF L2 USE IN CLASS

Proportion of L2 use	Teachers		Students	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Over 60% of L2	125	39.7	13	23.2
30%--60% of L2	107	33.9	29	51.8
Less than 30% of L2	78	24.8	10	17.9
Total (missing)	310 (5)	98.4 (1.6)	52(4)	92.9(7.1)

**For Chinese teachers L2 is English, but for overseas students is Chinese.*

With regard to item 7 in the questionnaire, there was great variability among teachers regarding their views about the optimal proportion of L1 and L2 use (See Table4). However, generally the teachers felt comfortable using L2 when explaining content compared to other areas such as expressing opinions rather than presenting facts. Nevertheless, they also indicated that they needed to switch from Chinese to English to facilitate the students' understanding. They claimed that their use of code-switching was affected by factors such as their personal beliefs, the instructional materials they used, and their students' proficiency levels. The proportion of L2 use by teachers was also noticed by students. Some of them considered the use of English by teachers was very helpful for them to understand in the class, but others wanted 100% Chinese in the classroom.

TABLE 5
EFFECTIVENESS OF CODE-SWITCHING TO OVERSEAS STUDENTS' LANGUAGE SKILLS IN TEACHERS' OPINION

Effectiveness	General		Listening		Speaking		Reading		Writing	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Negatively	7	12.5	10	17.9	3	5.4	7	12.5	10	17.9
No effect	10	17.9	6	10.7	9	16.1	11	19.6	13	23.2
Somewhat	28	50	23	41.1	29	51.7	13	23.2	18	32.1
Positively	8	14.3	13	23.2	15	26.8	20	35.7	14	25
Total (missing)	53(3)	94.7(5.4)	52(4)	92.9(7.1)	56(0)	100(0)	51(5)	91.1(8.9)	55(1)	98.2(1.8)

TABLE6
EFFECTIVENESS OF CODES-WITCHING TO OVERSEAS STUDENTS' LANGUAGE SKILLS IN STUDENTS' OPINION

Effectiveness	General		Listening		Speaking		Reading		Writing	
	frequency	percentage	Frequency	percentage	Frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage	Frequency	percentage
Negatively	13	4.1	19	6.1	11	3.5	15	4.8	17	5.4
No effect	27	8.6	33	10.5	65	20.6	29	9.2	66	20.9
Somewhat	191	60.6	153	48.6	114	36.2	154	48.9	149	47.3
Positively	82	26.1	107	33.9	120	38.1	109	34.6	74	23.5
Total (missing)	313(2)	99.4(0.6)	312(3)	99.1(0.9)	310	98.4(0.6)	307(8)	97.5(2.5)	306(9)	97.1(2.9)

The teachers' and students' views on the effectiveness of code-switching on teaching and learning new skills in both content areas and language development were showed in Table 5, 6. Some teachers (26.1%) believed that code-switching was very beneficial when teaching difficult issues in content areas, but others (12.7%) also indicated that the L2 language should not be used too much in the classroom. While 4.1% of teachers considered that it might be harmful for students to understand concepts, they did not think it served to improve students' Chinese in general. Half teachers (60.6%) felt it would be somewhat helpful. The students had the similar perceptions in use of code-switching. They thought it was somewhat helpful in understanding difficult concepts, especially in developing listening, reading and writing skills.

B. Function of Code-switching

In order to obtain a fuller picture, the code-switching patterns were analyzed, because it was not only related to language cognition, but important socio-cultural factors of language choice. By using the CA approach to analyze the transcribed excerpts from class with Chinese as foreign language, we focused on the roles of conversational code-switching in the complex organizations of interaction, namely, adjacency pairs, turn taking, preference organization and repair in these particular settings.

(1) Code-switching and turn-taking design

In the followed extract1, the teacher was talking about the sentence organization in Chinese. The subject and object definition was kind of confused the student, and he wanted to ask something about that, so he just cut in the teacher's utterance with a insertion word 'so' to get the conversation turn, because the teacher recognized the English word 'so' possibly meant the foreigner student got some problem in following understanding, so she abandoned her turn and gave it to that student (in line2). While she checked student's understanding was right by his question, the teacher got her turn back with Chinese word 'dui (right)' (in line3) and continued the explanation (in line5).

Extract1

- 01 T: zhuyu he xiao weiyu ha, xiamian ju [zi
subject and little predicate following sentence
subjective and sub-predicate, in the following sentence
- 02 S: [So:::ah:::zhuyu ye:: wei [yu
so subjective also predicate
So (this) could be subjective or predicate
- 03 →T: [>dui<
right
Right
- (0.5)
- 04 T: DUI
right
Right
(1.5)
- 05 T: zhege juzi limian shouxian you liangceng, diyiceng shi zhuyu
this sentence in first there are two first is subject
In this sentence, there are two (logic) predicate, the first subject is...

Extract2

In lecture of 'predicate and object', the teacher was trying to interpret the predicate 'give' and its objects. As if the student could not follow the past predicate topic about 'Aimen's mom', so he tried twice with English word 'so' to get the turn. The first one was in line2 with English words 'so, ok', and the second one was in line4 with Chinese words 'dui, dui, dui', but he failed to cut in. The teacher neglected the student's overlapping and moved on. He tried thirdly in line8, and finally he got the turn. Actually the silence of 0.8s (in line9) meant the student was waiting to see if he got the turn or not, and then continued his question (in line10).

- 01 T: GEI shi weiyu, [wo shi binyu
give is predicate me is object
'give'(in this sentence)is predicate and 'me' is object.
- 02 → S: [so, ok
so ok
So, ok
- 03 T: ranhou cha ne shi yige yuan [binyu
then tea is a remote object
Then 'tea'(in this sentence) is a remote object.
- 04 → S: [dui dui dui
right right right
Right, right, right
- 05 T: you liangge binyu object, [object1
there are two object object object1
There are two objects (in this sentence): object1,
- 06 → S: [so
so
So
- 07 T: object2=
object2
object2
- 08 → S: =so:::
so
So
- 09 (0.8)
- 10 S: Aimen de mama weiyu ye zhuyu, duibudui?
Aimen's mom predicate also subject right or not
Aimen's mom could be predicate or subject, right?

Turns at talk are made of blocks called turn constructional units (TCUs). A TCU can be made up from single word, phrases, sentences or physical movement like nodding, hand gestures and so on (Schegloff, 2000). In above extracts, teacher or students sometime used Chinese words ‘name/’, ‘hao’, ‘dui’, ‘jiexialai’, or sometimes English words ‘so’, ‘ok’, ‘right’, ‘then’ as a turn-taking mark. But Li or L2 the speaker choosed finally was dependent on his/or her familiar extent to this language or the prior participant’s language, because this behavior was possibly kind of a subconscious action when you were focused on the followed utterance instead of the beginning. Besides, TCU sometimes did not run smoothly. There was some ‘silence’ or ‘gap’ between or within TCUS. For example, in line9 of extract 2 there was a 0.9s of silence, which occurred within TCUs. This was a quite long silence and it ‘belonged to’ the prior student. He ‘ought to’ be speaking in line9, but he did not because of last twice failure of turn-taking, and he wanted to wait to make sure he could talk this time. It was supposed that TCUs project that they were not possibly complete; about to be complete, or possibly complete, which were called transition relevant space (TRS). Here we could see that overlapping talk always occurred just before or after that transition space.

(2) Code-switching and repair organizations

Extract 3

In extract 3, the student tried to find an accurate word ‘ziji’ (line 13) in Chinese to tell the teacher she watched the news of her own country, Because the Chinese character ‘ji’ and ‘yi’ had very similar font, finally she failed to recall the pronunciation (‘wo wang le’ means ‘I forgot’ in English), and she switched to English words ‘what news’ to seek help (self-initiation repair).

- 01 T: ni xihuan kan xinwen ma
you like watch news QMP
Do you like watch news?
- 02 S: xihuan
like
(I) like
- 03 T: xihuan kan xinwen. ni xianzai kan ma?
like watch news you now watch
(You) like to watch news. Do you watch it now?
- 04 S: a:: xianzai a: kan
Now watch
(I) watch news now
- 05 T: xianzai a: zen me kan ne?zai wangshang haishi zai dianshi shang?=
now ah how look online still on TV
By what means do you watch news? On line or TV?
- 06 S: =zai wangshang
online
On line
- 07 T: zaiwang shang kan, kan de shi zhongwen de hai [shi:::
online look SP be Chinese SP still be
Online. News in Chinese or...?
- 08 S: [a: bushi
no
No
- 09 T: bu shi?=
no
No?
- 10 S: =ao, wai
foreign
Foreign (language news)
- 11 (3.0)
- 12 T: [wai guo de
foreign country SP
International (news)
- 13→S: [a zi ziji]a::>zi ji yi ji< ziji ziji?,↓ wo wang le, ouch, what news
self self self already self self self I foget what news
‘ziji’ or ‘ziyi’ I forgot how to pronounce.

In following extract, the student told teacher she would watch TV news online at night, and when the teacher asked her what news in extract4, she tried to use the word ‘guoji’ in Chinese to answer the question, but she forgot the right pronunciation ‘guo::guo’(self-initiation) (line2), at this moment, the teacher gave an English prompt ‘international’ and then switched to Chinese ‘guoji’ at once (other-repair) (line3) to help the student finish her answer.

Extract4

- 01 T: kan shenme xinwen ne?
watch what news
What news?
- 02→S: kan::: guo::guo::
watch national
Watch national...
- 03→T: guo:: international↑guo [ji
International international
International
- 04 S: [guoji
international
International
- 05 T: guoji xinwen
international news
International news.
- 06 S: guoji xinwen
international news
International news.

Extract 5

The teacher asked the students to read the text, and one student read the second paragraph, while he should read the third one. He found his mistake once after the first sentence, then he switched to his mother language 'NO' (line1) (*self-initiation/self-repair*) and moved to the right paragraph started with 'chexiang li...'. It was suggested that people like to use his or her mother language especially in some urgent situations.

- 01→S: wo zuowei shi, NO, chexiang li yige pang nüren zheng::((cough))
me seat is NO carriage inside a fat lady is
My seat (number) is, NO, (I came into) carriage, (I saw) a fat lady
- 02 T: >you<
leisure
Nonsense (just a pronunciation)
- 03 S: youranzide
leisurely
Leisurely
- 04 T: dui
right
Right
- 05 S: youxianzide de zuozai 13 hao zuowei shang.
leisurely sitting 13 number seat upper.
sitting leisurely in the 13 seat.

Actually we have talked about conversation repair elaborately (Wang, 2015), but here the repair way with code-switching were analyzed. In case of repair, speakers altered the action in some significant way. For instance, they might alter the valence of the action, the syntactic form of the action, or the nature of the action itself. We found self-repair gave us access to the work of constructing a turn, which meant they brought to the interactional surface the work in which speakers engaged in order to construct the action. From above examples, we could find that the appearance of switching from L2 to L1 in foreign language learning class was kind of a repair mark of trouble source in understanding, expression or interaction. In extract3, the student switched to English herself to seek help; In extract4, the teacher switched to student's familiar language, English to offer help; In extract5, the student switched to his spoken language to make a correction. In all cases, speaker tried to make sure the communication could carry on smoothly by code-switching, which meant students would switch to participate, to elaborate ideas, and to raise questions; teachers would switch to involve and give voice, to clarify, to reinforce, to manage the classroom, and to extend and ask questions. Obviously, CS repair provided the evidence that speakers oriented to what was the appropriate form for doing an action. Also it played an important role in maintaining shared understanding in literal problem of hearing or understanding, troubles in the appositeness of the prior turn or other social actions.

(3) Code-switching and preference organizations

In following extract, the student organized the sequence in English way, but every time he talked the question itself, he switched to Chinese word, as we could see 'shitang' in line1, 'zenmeyang' in line5, and 'zai nar' in line9. At the same time, the teacher switched between English and Chinese once again aligned with the language the student used in prior turn, like 'shitang' in line2 was Chinese word, but 'place' in line10 changed to English. This supposed be kind of affiliation to participant. Also in line11, when the student realized that the teacher was kind of confused by his English word, he immediately initiated a correction---he switched to Chinese translation 'difang', which was an other-initiated self-repair. Obviously, neither teacher nor students preferred L1 of L2, they just wanted to make sure the class

communication could carry on smoothly.

Extract 6

- 01 → S: So 〉 can I can I 〈 say so like:: shitang ne?
so can I say so like dinning hall
So, can I say (where is) dinning hall?
- 02 → T: shitang ne?,
dinning hall
Dinning hall?
- 03 S: so that means
so that means
So that means
- 04 (0.1)
- 05 → S: where is dinning hall? or could also means zenmeyang?, shitang?
where is dinning hall or could also means how dinning hall
where is dinning hall or could also means how is dinning hall?
- 06 (0.1)
- 07 S: 〉 how about that 〈
how about that
how about that
- 08 (0.1)
- 09 → S: my my question is only for place? only for zai nar?
my my question is only for place only for where
My question is (this sentence) only for place (question)?
- 10 → T: place?=
place
place?
- 11 → S: =difang
place
place
- 12 T: shitang shi yige sheme defang? Maybe, it's a building, [ta jiu zai nar
dinning hall is a what place maybe it's a building it just is there
'dinning hall' is a place, It's a building just lies there.
- 13 S: [so
so
So
- 14 T: ta jiu zai nar ta shi guding de.
it just is there it is immovable
It just lies there. It is immovable.

Extract 7

- 01 T: diyige. diyige ne biru shuo
first first like say
The first one is like...
- 02 (0.1)
- 03 T: wo xihuan xihuan ting yinyue, ni ne? I like to listen music=
I like like listen music you I like to listen music
I like music, and you?
- 04 S: =and you=
and you
And you?
- 05 → T: =DUI
right
Right

In extract 7, right after the teacher's voice of example (in line 3), a student followed an English answer 'and you?' (in line 4), while the teacher used English at the end of prior turn (in line 3). Because of the student's correct answer, the teacher gave an immediate confirm with Chinese word 'DUI'. This was a good example of smooth interaction among teacher and students in foreign language class.

Similarly, in following extract 8, the teacher gave a positive response 'dui' (in line 3) to the student's question 'dui?' (in line 2). Almost the same time, the student used another 'dui' (overlapping in line 3), which did not mean right or not, but 'ok, then/accordingly', to project his second question (in line 6). Within this TCU, there was a gap (0.2s) (in line 7), which could 'belong to' the teacher, because the student possibly completed his question and expected an answer. But

the student continued after waiting without recipient's utterance.

Extract8

- 01 T: zhe shi yige fu weiyu
this is a double predicate
There is a double predicate (in this sentence).
- 02 S: so, ahm:::Aimen gei wo cha, gei wo cha shi weiyu, dui?=
Aimen give me tea give me tea is predicate right
So, (in that sentence) 'Aimen give me tea' is predicate, right?
- 03→T: =[dui
right
Right
- 04 S: [dui.
right
Ok (then...)
- 05 (0.2)
- 06 S: So Aimen de mama gei wo cha. gei wo cha shi weiyu? haishi::
so Aimen's mom give me tea give me tea is predicate or
So in the sentence 'Aimen's mom give me tea', 'give me tea' is predicate, or
- 07 (0.2)
- 08 S: mama weiyu?=
mom predicate
mom is predicate?
- 09→T: =n i kan a, shei shei sheide mama a:=
you see who who whose mom
You see, somebody's mom
- 10 S: =[Aimen de mama gei wo cha
Aimen's mom give me tea
Aimen/s mom give me tea
- 11 T: [mama GEI wo cha
mom give me tea
mom give me tea.

In this extract, there were two different kind of preferred sequence. The first one was in line3, the teacher confirmed the student's answer immediately. The second different one was in line9, the teacher gave a dispreferred response with a preferred way, even without negative words, instead, she explained directly why the student's expression was wrong. It was also worth to be mentioned that right after the student's question (in line8), the teacher began to try an explication (in line9), but her words 'shei shei sheide', which exactly meant 'somebody' instead of asking, but the student considered the teacher was asking 'whose mom', so he answered 'Aimen de mama'. This misunderstanding led to an overlapping in line10 and 11.

When a speaker proffers an initial assessment that invites agreement, a recipient may elect to respond with actions that are neither stated agreements nor disagreement. The sequence organization is intertwined with preference, so affiliative, face-affirming actions are done early and briefly---in ways that promote their occurrence, conversely, disaffiliative, face-threatening actions are delayed and mitigated---in ways that inhibit their occurrence (Pomerantz, 2013). Preference organization itself 'prefers' social solidarity and human affiliation. That's why, in line5 of extract 6 and line3 of extract7 the response utterance were supplied without any hesitation, because that was a positive confirmation to the prior participant.

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

A. Major Concepts of the Study

It was found that both teachers and students were free to use their L1 or L2 according to their own needs and desires. This study suggested that code-switching was not as directly related to the target language proficiency as expected. Rather, the use of code-switching had motivational underpinnings. In other words, teachers and students in this study perceived that code-switching were a type of teaching and learning strategy that positively affected the learning of knowledge as well as the target language.

If there was a reflexive relationship between conversational code-switching and sequence organizations, line turn-taking, preference organization and repair? The previous excerpts meant to highlight the role of conversational code-switching as a device or strategy for successful communication.

Conversational code-switching could be used strategically to initiate and repair trouble source in listening, understanding or expression for the smooth communication in class with Chinese as foreign language. The repair sequence was mainly ended up with initiator's self-repair by repetition, as discussed by Wang (2015). If a repair was

initiated in one language without being repaired immediately by the partner, code-switching would usually be applied on the position of turn transition space (TRS). At the same time, code-switching could also serve as a turn-taking marker, which meant to initiate a new turn or remind other participants to be attentive to catch the utterance. It was also found that conversation participants tended to use former's switched language as an adjacency post pair part. On the other hand, teachers and learners always switched to L1 after period of waiting for the response, especially in teacher-student interaction.

B. Implications of the Study

Firstly, distribution of turns ranges greatly from class to class and almost the teacher's turns were more than the students'. It was found some teachers always hold longer turns of long monologues, which refer to the monotonous explanation of the words, phrases and content of text with little students' participation or interaction. In this way, the teacher usually held the floor, controlling and allocating the turns. While some of the students' turns just some simple words or phrases, and the students have few opportunities to participate in the class discussions. The phenomena might be attributed to the influence of the culture—the asymmetrical relationship between teachers and students, and the traditional teacher-centered teaching model. Therefore, the teachers were suggested to give sufficient time and adequate turns to the students. Moreover, the turn-taking strategies for the students to obtain were also worthy of our highly attention, since the Chinese classroom interaction incorporates both the students' and teacher's participation.

As to teacher's questions, the numbers of questions, especially the number of referential questions, Varied from 3 to 20. However, the displaying questions explored by teachers are far more than referential questions in the classes with Chinese as foreign language. It was found that the students' output would be more complicated and natural when referential questions are employed by teacher, which could bring more class interaction (Tian & Macaro, 2012). Therefore, more instructive referential questions should be used to bring out more communication between students and teachers, which inspiring students to learn to think critically in class, which was similar to previous perspective that teachers must be ready to co-teach and to co-learn as they no longer possess the authority role in the classroom (Garcia & Li, 2014). Besides, it was found the questions were mostly concerned with vocabulary or structure of the texts, but some popular issues, reading strategies are mentioned were far to be enough.

Thirdly, meaning negotiation provides learners with the chance to acquire comprehensible input, and it is necessary for meaning negotiation between teachers and students (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). In most cases teachers used comprehension checks instead of clarification requests to take care of the whole class, which was easy to encounter interaction difficulties. To solve this problem, teacher's awareness of employing more strategies of meaning negotiation was supposed to choose more suitable strategies in appropriate time for further interaction with students.

Finally, In terms of the teacher's feedback, the positive ones were preferred rather than the negative, which were agreement with previous studies (Wang, 2015). However, the teachers' feedback were comparably simple and short sentences, lacking more information and opportunities for students' output. More valuable and instructive feedback strategies were suggested in class with Chinese as foreign language.

C. Prospects for Further Research

As has been discussed previously, most researches focused on the theoretical exploration of discussion models or the organization of teaching process. This study conducted more consideration on class interaction from the perspective of conversation analysis, including question-answer sequence organization, turn taking, meaning negotiation, teachers' feedback, conversation repair as well. All these results suggested a newly presented interactive model in class with Chinese as foreign language, instead of neither teacher-centered nor students-centered. Actually, Garcia and Li (2014) reemphasized 'translanguaging to learn' after the investigation of many Spanish primary and secondary classrooms to clarify how and for what purpose pupils translanguaging, and how translanguaging impacted classroom participation. We are considering the social impact of identities, heritages and ideologies to bilingual students' translanguaging in the class with Chinese as foreign language from multilingual and intercultural mediation scenarios.

Because of the limitation of time and available equipments, the data collected in this study were audio-recording rather than video-recording, and nonverbal communication were not put into consideration. In future research both video-recording and audio-recording should be carried out, which could provide access to verbal language as well as non-verbal language. In addition, a large scale of cross section participants should be engaged to accelerate the demonstration representativeness.

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APPENDIX

A. Questionnaire for instructor participants

Please put a checkmark (✓) in the brackets that applies to you or specify the information about yourself in the

other category.

1. Sex
 - Male
 - Female
2. Age
 - 31 ~ 35
 - 36 ~ 40
 - 41 ~ 45
 - 46 ~ 50
 - over 50
3. Years of Teaching with Chinese as foreign language
 - less than 3 year
 - 3 year ~ less than 6 years
 - more than 6 years
4. Levels of Your English
 - Superior
 - Advanced
 - Intermediate
 - Low
5. Degree of Comprehension of students in Chinese-only lectures in your opinion
 - over 80%
 - 60%-80%
 - 30%-60%
 - Less than 30%
6. How much do you use L1 and L2 in your class?
 - Over 60% of L2
 - 30% -60% of L2
 - Less than 30% of L2
7. How do you think of your code-switching for teaching content areas in general?
 - Helpful and should be used a lot
 - Helpful but shouldn't be used a lot
 - Not very helpful and shouldn't be used a lot
 - Not very helpful and shouldn't be used at all
8. Do you think code-switching works for improving overseas students' Chinese listening skills?
 - Negatively
 - No effect at all
 - Somewhat positively
 - Very positively
9. Do you think code-switching works for improving overseas students' Chinese speaking skills?
 - Negatively
 - No effect at all
 - Somewhat positively
 - Very positively
10. Do you think code-switching works for improving overseas students' Chinese reading skills?
 - Negatively
 - No effect at all
 - Somewhat positively
 - Very positively
11. Do you think code-switching works for improving overseas students' Chinese writing skills?
 - Negatively
 - No effect at all
 - Somewhat positively
 - Very positively
12. Do you think code-switching works for developing overseas students' confidence in Chinese?
 - Negatively
 - No effect at all
 - Somewhat positively
 - Very positively
13. Do you think your code-switching works for developing overseas students' interests in Chinese?
 - Negatively
 - No effect at all
 - Somewhat positively

- Very positively
14. Do you think your code-switching works for lowering overseas students' anxiety in Chinese?
 Negatively
 No effect at all
 Somewhat positively
 Very positively
15. Any comments on code-switching?

B. Questionnaire for student participants

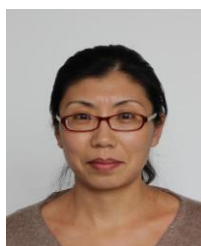
Please put a checkmark (✓) in the brackets that applies to you or specify the information about yourself in the other category.

1. Sex Male
 Female
2. Age 19 ~ 25
 26 ~ 30
 31 ~ 35
 36 ~ 40
 Over 40
3. Years of studying Chinese as foreign language
 no experience
 1 semester
 2 semesters
 3 semesters
 More than 4 semesters
4. Levels of Your Chinese
 Superior
 Advanced
 Intermediate
 Low
5. Degree of Comprehension of students in Chinese-only lectures in your opinion
 over 80%
 60%-80%
 30%-60%
 Less than 30%
6. How much do you think your Chinese teacher use L1 and L2 in your class?
 Over 60% of L2
 30% -60% of L2
 Less than 30% of L2
7. How do you think the teacher's code-switching for teaching content areas in general?
 Helpful and should be used a lot
 Helpful but shouldn't be used a lot
 Not very helpful and shouldn't be used a lot
 Not very helpful and shouldn't be used at all
8. Do you think the teacher's code-switching works for improving overseas students' Chinese listening skills?
 Negatively
 No effect at all
 Somewhat positively
 Very positively
9. Do you think the teacher's code-switching works for improving overseas students' Chinese speaking skills?
 Negatively
 No effect at all
 Somewhat positively
 Very positively
10. Do you think the teacher's code-switching works for improving overseas students' Chinese reading skills?
 Negatively
 No effect at all
 Somewhat positively
 Very positively
11. Do you think the teacher's code-switching works for improving overseas students' Chinese writing skills?
 Negatively

- () No effect at all
 () Somewhat positively
 () Very positively
12. Do you think the teacher's code-switching works for developing overseas students' confidence in Chinese?
 () Negatively
 () No effect at all
 () Somewhat positively
 () Very positively
13. Do you think the teacher's code-switching works for developing overseas students' interests in Chinese?
 () Negatively
 () No effect at all
 () Somewhat positively
 () Very positively
14. Do you think the teacher's code-switching works for lowering overseas students' anxiety in Chinese?
 () Negatively
 () No effect at all
 () Somewhat positively
 () Very positively
15. Any comments on code-switching?

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