

The Effect of Dyadic and Triadic Interaction on Iranian EFL Learners' Oral Proficiency

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Abstract—Knowing about interaction and applying it among EFL learners, is one of the crucial and important factors which needs to be taken seriously in English education. This study aimed to investigate the effect of Dyadic and Triadic Interaction between young Iranian English learners and to find out how the different forms of interaction between the learners in classroom practice can enhance their oral proficiency by drawing on some theories such as Social Learning, Social Development Theory and Interaction Hypothesis. 61 Iranian young learners participated in the study, taking part in two interviews that were based on Young Learners English Test YLE Cambridge University (Starter). The subjects' interactional behaviors were determined by the researcher with a checklist which named Learner's Interaction. Multivariate and discriminate analyses of both experimental groups and control groups' scores indicated that dyadic interaction between young learners could enhance their oral proficiency more effectively in comparison with that of control group in which all activities were conducted individually, but it didn't improve learners' oral proficiency significantly in comparison with Triadic interaction. The results can be used to pave the way for adopting effective educational planning and consequently enhancing teaching education system and improving teachers' practice and learning in EFL contexts.

Index Terms—dyadic interaction, triadic interaction, group working, oral proficiency

I. INTRODUCTION

Human beings, as social creatures, live in a unity which is called society, viewed as a complicated system of parts that are interconnected to each other. "Society is a reality which is constructed by human beings in order to interact with one another". (Macionis, 2006)

Undoubtedly, communication is one of the most difficult and intricate types of human affairs which bonds the members of the society together and facilitates social interaction. The role of interaction in this significant and sensitive work is the highly effective and the constructive one. Thus, interaction plays a central role in diverse aspects of humans' lives. From the early life, human beings start to interact with others and there are some evidences which indicate that "children's shared activities with peers play a central role in their cognitive growth. During peer interactions, children learn new skills, motivate each other to face challenging situations, and assist one another in practicing existing abilities" (Rogoff, 1998; Rubin et al., 2006, cited in Ramani & Brownell, 2013, p.93). Notably in the realm of English education and learning, interaction would be considered as a kind of pattern which is used in modern English learning classes such as English as a second language (ESL) or English as a foreign language (EFL).

Over the past two decades, research in the realm of education especially second language (L2), has largely paid attention to Learner-centered approaches and second language teaching which lead learners towards autonomous and independent language learning (Reiss, 1985; Wenden, 1991; Tamada, 1996, cited in Patil & Karekatti, 2012, p.2). In the current study, we discuss how interaction contributes to promote learning and develop oral proficiency among young Iranian learners as well as how it can shift the class trend from the teacher-centered to learner-centered by using interaction between them; the problems with most English language classes in institutes of Iran in which the teacher is the most dominant figure during the time of the class.

Following are summaries of some related theories, helpful to explain why interaction between learners can be beneficial for the improvement of their oral proficiency: Social Learning Theory, Social Development Theory, The Zone of Proximal Development, and Interaction Hypothesis.

Social Language Theory (SLT) is associated by Albert Bandura's work in the 1960s that is viewed as a useful theatrical framework which involves the social aspect of learning into pedagogy program. According to this theory, any type of behavior displayed socially is learned primarily by observing and imitating the actions of others. He believes that through observation, the process of learning and the knowledge of individuals have been formed (Bandura, 1977). This theory is somehow the bridge between the Behaviorism and Vygotsky's Social Development Theory which emphasizes the importance of social aspect of learning. In this study, the potential use of SLT is explored by interpreting the effectiveness of interaction between two and three learners which is designed to support teachers in

using student-centered approaches in their teaching. Moreover the main purpose of this study is to consider the students as the central core of learning process in EFL classes.

The second theoretical framework for the concept of learning adopted in the present study is Social Development Theory that is stated by Vygotsky in 1962. This theory contains two aspects. First, it refers to “sociocultural theory of human learning that describes learning as a social process and the origination of human intelligence in society or culture” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). Vygotsky believes that “whatever has been learned by individuals happened at two levels. First, through interaction with others; it can be referred to as social level, and then integrated into the individual’s mental structure; individual level” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 57). The second aspect of this theory is the idea that cognitive development of the individuals is bounded to a "zone of proximal development" (ZPD). ZPD is defined by Vygotsky (1962) as the difference between what a learner can do without help and what he or she can do with help. He believes that individuals require help and social interaction to develop their process of learning.

The third one is Interaction hypothesis, first defined by Long (1996), is regarded as an important framework for the present study. Long argued that in order to achieve oral proficiency in foreign language (L2), learners require sufficient face-to-face interaction. He also suggested that interaction acts as a vessel by which a learner acquires second language (L2). The present paper is targeted to explore how oral proficiency of the young learners progresses through in-class social interaction that lies on the Iranian EFL classes which are usually followed in teacher-centered approach, in which avoid learners being engaged in oral communication.

All in all, this study was conducted to investigate the effect of different interactions on the oral proficiency of EFL learners. One type of interaction which was considered in this study is Dyadic Interaction. Peer work or Dyadic interaction can be described as a fundamental type of social group that consists of only two people, called a dyad. Within the context of dyadic interactions, learners communicate in different forms such as eye contact, facial expression, vocalizations. Together, the members of the dyad groups appear to engage in turn-taking and co-constructive dialogues. (Fogel, 1993; Stern, 1985)

Another type of interaction is Triadic Interaction, regarded as a social group, which engages three people. This seemingly simple addition of just one person significantly affects the group interactions and dynamics. If two people in a triad do not have willingness to talk, the third member of the group can act as mediator and bring contribution to the group. Thus, there are some studies have been conducted on the role of triadic interaction. For instance, one type of Triadic interaction can be seen as students “working side-by-side, with a joint focus of activity, the object (the computer screen) as a third interlocutor of sorts” (Van Lier, 2002, pp. 147-48, cited in Brockely, 2012, p.14). In this current study, triadic interaction refers to the group of three learners that consist of two low advanced and one high advanced learner, communicating with each other in order to gain the purpose of educational pedagogy, which is progress in oral proficiency

II. THE REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The important role of English language in the real life situations and educational field has been noted by Hamzah and Ting (2010 cited in Azadi et al., 2015). They believed that “English is a world language” (p.126) that consists of four main English language skills – listening, speaking, reading, and writing – the most important one is speaking. Cinderella skill and overbearing elder sister are two the most interesting expressions that have been introduced by Nunan (2001). He believes that “listening is considered as the Cinderella skill in second language learning and speaking as the overbearing elder sister. He also stated that functioning in another language is generally characterized by the ability to speak that language”. (Cited in Azadi, 2015, p.126)

Richards (2006, cited in Azadi, 2015, p.127) emphasized that for many EFL and ESL learners, speaking in English is the most important skill that they “evaluate their language learning success and their effectiveness of English course based on their improvement in spoken language proficiency”. However all four English language skills are very significant to learn English language, the amount of one’s improvement in a language is understood by others through speaking. It has been believed that “If one wants to be understood or express his/her feelings, speaking is the most common way” (Azadi, 2015, p.127).

In-depth studies conducted by many researchers such as Khadidja (2009-2010, cited in Azadi, 2015) have paid more attention to improving learners’ speaking skill especially in foreign language situations. He investigated the relationship between the opportunities for producing language in a classroom setting and the development of the oral proficiency. For data collection, questionnaires were performed. The conclusion was that classroom interaction can have a positive impact on learners’ oral proficiency. Other factors that have an influence on the learners’ speaking skill were investigated by Bashir, Azeem, and Dogar (2011). They came to this conclusion that English should be used as a medium of instruction, promoting interactive techniques, and cultivate English communication culture by the teacher during the class and it is better to have the promotion of questioning and answering in English by both teachers and students.

Yule (2006) defines an activity that happens between two or more people in which they take turns at speaking as English conversation. In this regard,

Azadi(2015) asserted:

One speaker starts speaking and participants wait until s/he indicates the end of his/her speaking, usually by a completion point such as asking a question or pausing. Other participants can take the speaking turn in a number of ways such as making short sounds, using body shifts, or facial expressions. In this way they indicate that they have something to say. (p.127)

“Interaction is face-to-face communication with Particular prosody, facial expression, silence, and rhythmical patterns of behavior between the participants” (Crystal, 2003, cited in Azadi, 2015, p.127). Any opportunities for producing language and receiving feedback can also be provided by Interaction. The interaction can be between both teacher and students and student and student. Both of these kinds of interaction need to be enhanced in the classroom environment. It has been said that through interaction people get familiar with each other’s culture and express their necessities by giving and taking information. In EFL situations, Azadi et al (2015) believe that “due to lack of the real encountering with the foreign language, there is a need to provide similar situations in classrooms in order to make learners interact and experience using the new language. (p.127)

Advantages of interaction and group work exist in a large number in literature. According to Allwright (1984) classroom interaction is regarded as a productive teaching technique which manages the classroom language learning. Menegale (2008) believed that teacher-student interaction can be expanded through more effective classroom questions. He also stated that interaction that happened between teacher and students “can be used not only as a means to promote learning in content and language integrated learning contexts but also as a means to enhance students’ participation and, as a result, their oral production. The conclusion revealed that teachers tend to use questions which recall the students’ former knowledge” (Cited in Azadi et al., 2015, p. 128).

In most EFL countries such as Iran in which English mostly is taught as a “compulsory subject in educational programs”, speaking as the most essential skill in the realm of learning and teaching has not received much attention and often does not receive due attention in final examinations. In most EFL countries such as Iran where English is used as a foreign language and it is mostly taught as a compulsory subject in educational programs, speaking as the most essential skill in the realm of learning and teaching has not received much attention and often does not receive due attention in final examinations. (Azadi, 2015, p. 128)

The effect of combining the four main language skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) on improvement of speaking ability was studied by Liao (2009, cited in Azadi, 2015, p.128); this is also applied in this current study by the researcher. The writer came to this conclusion that the opportunities of combination of skills should be provided by the teacher, because this is what happens in real life. Interaction in second language classroom is addressed by Choudhury (2005). He explored the problem of active participation by incorporating the researchers’ views and his own teaching experience.

He asserted:

Teachers and learners together were the contributing source in managing the classroom interaction and at the same time managing learning opportunities. The findings revealed that making learners actively participate as much as possible cannot be universally right, as not all learners learn best in the same way. What all learners need is an environment in which they can settle down to productive work, each in their various subtle ways. (Cited in Azadi, 2015, p. 128)

The effect of interaction as a kind of strategy on group interaction and task performance was also examined by Lourdunathan and Menon (2005). For this purpose ten groups of students were trained by the researchers. The findings revealed that there is a significance relationship between training of interaction strategies and more effective interaction between groups of learners. The effect of classroom structure on the speaking skills of Iranian EFL learners was studied by Mohammadi, Gorjian, and Pazhakh (2014). They also found out that the performance of the learners was improved whenever they competed together in a co-operative environment.

Although group working, peer working and interaction between EFL and ESL learners in English Language Teaching (ELT) classrooms have a long established history as a worthwhile practice which have shown that the performance of the learners has been highly progressed through interaction versus those activities which is done individually, little attention has been paid to interaction between young EFL learners inside the classroom, especially in Iran as a foreign context and very little research has been conducted on the comparability between different types of interaction such as dyadic and triadic interaction between Iranian young EFL learners. This study aimed to explore the role of interaction could play on improving oral proficiency.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Learning how to speak English fluently and accurately is always a grand task for Iranian students who learn English. One of the prominent features among Iranian teachers is their tendency when they come to teach. They are not clearly aware of how to engage their learners in the learning process (Zohrabi and et al., 2012). The purpose of this study is to check whether different types of interaction assigning to foreign language learners during the class time, which involve students more in the activities, can play a significant role to increase their speaking ability.

Another problem in Iranian English classes is that most of them are teacher- centered, so they do not provide sufficient time for the learners to be as productive as they should. Although most teachers believe that learners would benefit from interaction, they act like the lecturer in order to transfer any information to the students that exist in their mind. In most of the teacher- centered EFL classes, the most authoritative figure in the class is teacher.

So the central aim of this study is to provide a bird's-eye view of the role of interaction as a link of group work in the process of learning English especially oral proficiency. Moreover this study is a quest for acquiring an ability to understand the relationship between interaction and developing oral proficiency. In other words, the researcher is seeking the effectiveness of group work and different types of interactions such as dyadic and triadic interaction in EFL classes versus individual activities. For this purpose, the researcher has turned to discover how Dyadic Interaction (DI) and Triadic Interaction (TI) and oral proficiency are connected to each other.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

Research questions of the study

Referring to the above-mentioned problem, the present study will be an attempt to investigate the following research questions:

RQ1: Does Dyadic interaction have an effect on EFL learners' oral proficiency?

RQ2: Does Triadic interaction have an effect on EFL learners' oral proficiency?

RQ3: Is there any difference between Dyadic and Triadic interaction regarding their effect on EFL learners' oral proficiency?

Statement of the hypotheses

The above questions have been reworded to make the following hypotheses:

H01: Dyadic interaction doesn't have any effect on EFL learners' oral proficiency.

H02: Triadic interaction doesn't have any effect on EFL learners' oral proficiency.

H03: There is no difference between the dyadic and triadic interaction regarding their effect on the oral proficiency.

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The present study is a Factorial Quasi-Experimental research with a pretest/posttest design to examine the research questions. In pretest/posttest design, the immediate effect of treatment and the extent to which a treatment results in learning can be determined.

Participants

This study included 61 participants. They were selected randomly among the students of a language institute in Tehran, Iran. All participants were divided into three groups, two groups as the experimental groups and the other group as the control group. The experimental groups were included of 20 and 21 and the control group was included of 20 both females and males. In all three groups most of learners were female. Their ages ranged from 10 to 13. All of them had Iranian as their first language at elementary level. The reason for selecting this sample is that at this level learners do not have a good ability at speaking English.

Instrumentation

The following instruments were used to gather data in this study. Test of oral proficiency is selected from authentic and validated source of Young Learners English Tests (YLE) of Cambridge University, 2014. This is Starters Test which was acted as both pre-test and pos-test; the objective of the first test was to obtain information about the current oral proficiency of the learners and also to consider their homogeneity. The second test focused on learners' progress in oral proficiency with respect to the use of the target language, pair and group work, and CL after any interaction with their peers while they carried out the CL tasks.

The pretest/ posttest (see Appendix A) consisted of five parts. In the 4 first part there were 22 closed questions that presented by picture and in the last part, 20 open-ended questions were designed by the author of this study. The total time for oral proficiency test was maximum 15 minutes. And also for the purpose of study Learners' Interaction Checklist Observation (LICO) (see Appendix C) was prepared by the researcher based on the treatment that were observed in the class also used by the researcher during the observation, in order to see the amount of cooperation among young English learners.

Procedures

As indicated before, "Young Learners English Tests (YLE) of Cambridge University, 2014 (Starters Test) was given to the learners to determine their levels and make them homogeneous. For carrying out this study, the pretest was taken in the form of interview, that all the participants were examined at the same time. The building construct of the 42 structured items were scored on Penny Ur's scale of oral testing criteria (A Course in Language Teaching, p 135). Learners' responses were scored according to this scale which is divided into two categories that includes Accuracy and Fluency. Both accuracy and fluency ranged from 6 to 10 that marked by two examiners. Then the marks were added to achieve a single mark. The marks were for the whole speaking test, not for each part of the test.

Then, during 8 weeks, 3 sessions per week, interaction and group work strategies were taught to the participants in both experimental groups (Dyad and Triad). Apart from introducing these strategies to the learners, there was a story telling for some sessions. The control and experimental groups had the same topics for story. The only difference was that the experimental groups received the different types of interaction (Dyadic & Triadic) strategies. After performing the classes, the posttest was given to the learners to consider their progress. The pretest and posttest were the same for both control and experimental groups.

IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In order to have more reliable test, Reliability of the pretest and posttest scores of two raters in this study were calculated. In this regard, the researcher considered the Inter-rater reliability. Table 1 considers the relationship between score (A) and score (B) in Dyadic group using Pearson correlation coefficient. As seen in the following table, the correlation coefficient is 0.758. So, there is a significant and positive relationship between the two series of subjects' scores. On the other word, the two raters have high agreement between the two raters who rated the subjects' performance on the pretest of speaking ($R = .75, P < .05$).

TABLE 1
INTER-RATER RELIABILITY OF TWO SCORES (A, B)

		Score A	Score B
Score A	Pearson Correlation	1	.758**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	20	20
Score B	Pearson Correlation	.758**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	20	20

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 considers the relationship between score (A) and score (B) in Triadic group using Pearson correlation coefficient. As seen in the following table, the correlation coefficient is 0.811. So, there is a significant and positive relationship between the two series of subjects' scores. On the other word, the two raters have high agreement between the two raters who rated the subjects' performance on the pretest of speaking ($R = .81, P < .05$).

TABLE 2
INTER-RATER RELIABILITY

		Score A	Score B
Score A	Pearson Correlation	1	.811**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	21	21
Score B	Pearson Correlation	.811**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	21	21

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 considers the relationship between score (A) and score (B) in Control group using Pearson correlation coefficient. As seen in the following table, the correlation coefficient is 0.884. So, there is a significant and positive relationship between the two series of subjects' scores. On the other word, the two raters have high agreement between the two raters who rated the subjects' performance on the pretest of speaking ($R = .88, P < .05$).

TABLE 3
INTER-RATER RELIABILITY OF TWO SCORES A, B

		Score A	Score B
Score A	Pearson Correlation	1	.884**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	20	20
Score B	Pearson Correlation	.884**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	20	20

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

There was a significant difference between the means of post-test in Control group ($M = 16.97, SD = .638$) and post-test in Dyadic group ($M = 16.97, SD = .638$) at the *Hoor* institute of Iran. (Table 4)

TABLE 4
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF DYADIC AND CONTROL GROUP

<i>Paired Samples Statistics</i>		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
<i>Pair 1</i>	<i>Posttest of Dyadic group</i>	16.9750	20	.63815	.14269
	<i>Posttest of Control group</i>	15.7250	20	1.10591	.24729

As stated earlier, the first research question intended to check if there is any relationship between dyadic interaction and speaking improvement among Iranian English learners. To find this relationship, Paired Sample Test and correlation coefficient was run. (Table 5)

TABLE 5
DYADIC INTERACTION AND SPEAKING IMPROVEMENT

<i>Paired Samples Correlations</i>			
		N	Correlation Sig.
<i>Pair 1</i>	<i>Posttest of Dyadic & Control</i>	20	.624 .003

Table 5 considers the relationship between Dyadic interaction and improving speaking skills using Paired Sample Test. As seen in the above table, the correlation coefficient is 0.624. So, there is a high correlation between Dyadic interaction and oral proficiency. Thus, there is a significant and positive relationship between the two variables and employing interaction between learners inside the classroom improved their speaking skills. In the following table since $t = 6.455$ (p -value = 0.000), we shall reject the null hypothesis. (Table 6)

TABLE 6
PAIRED SAMPLE TEST FOR CONSIDERING POSTTEST DIFFERENCES IN DG & CG

<i>Paired Samples Test</i>									
		<i>Paired Differences</i>			<i>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</i>		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
		<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>	<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>			
<i>Pair 1</i>	<i>DG&CG Posttest</i>	1.25000	.86603	.19365	.84469	1.65531	6.455	19	.000

The second research question aimed at finding if there was any relationship between triadic interaction and speaking improvement among Iranian English learners (2- Does Triadic interaction have an effect on EFL learners' oral proficiency?). To find this difference, Paired Sample Test was employed. As the output in Table 7 shows, there was a significant difference between the means of post-test in Control group ($M = 15.725$, $SD = 1.10$) and posttest in Triadic group ($M = 18.70$, $SD = .937$) at the *Hoor* institute of Iran.

TABLE 7
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF TRIADIC AND CONTROL GROUP

<i>Paired Samples Statistics</i>					
		<i>Mean</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>
<i>Pair 1</i>	<i>Posttest of Triadic group</i>	18.7000	21	.93752	.20964
	<i>Posttest of Control group</i>	15.7250	20	1.10591	.24729

As stated earlier, the second research question intended to check if there is any relationship between triadic interaction and oral proficiency improvement among Iranian English learners. To find this relationship, Paired Sample Test and correlation coefficient was run. (Table 8)

TABLE 8
TRIADIC INTERACTION AND SPEAKING IMPROVEMENT

<i>Paired Samples Correlations</i>			
		N	Correlation Sig.
<i>Pair 1</i>	<i>Posttest of Triadic group & Control group</i>	20	.855 .000

Table 8 considers the relationship between Triadic interaction and improving speaking skills using Paired Sample Test. As seen in the above table, the correlation coefficient is 0.855. So, there is a high correlation between Triadic interaction and oral proficiency. Thus, there is a significant and positive relationship between the two variables and employing interaction between learners inside the classroom improved their speaking skills. In the following table since $t = 23.221$ (p -value = 0.000), we shall reject the null hypothesis. (Table 9)

TABLE 9
PAIRED SAMPLE TEST FOR CONSIDERING POSTTEST DIFFERENCES IN TG & CG

<i>Paired Samples Test</i>									
		<i>Paired Differences</i>			<i>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</i>		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
		<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>	<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>			
<i>Pair 1</i>	<i>TG & CG</i>	2.97500	.57297	.12812	2.70684	3.24316	23.221	19	.000

The third research question aimed at finding if there is any difference between dyadic and triadic interaction and improving learners' oral proficiency. To find this difference, three way ANOVA was carried out to evaluate the relationship between three groups' scores (DG, TG & CG). In this regard, the three means of both experimental groups Dyadic, Triadic and control group in pre test and post test were compared to each other. As it shown in Table 10 the F value is .011 with a significance value of .989. Since the significance value is greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$), there is not a significant difference between the three mean of scores of pretest variances.

TABLE 10

THREE WAY ANOVA FOR CONSIDERING INTERACTION DIFFERENCES IN ORAL PROFICIENCY OF DYADIC, TRIADIC & CONTROL GROUP'S PRETEST

Source	of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	.023 ^a	2	.012	.011	.989
Intercept	10341.955	1	10341.955	9492.555	.000
Pre Score	.023	2	.012	.011	.989
Error	63.190	58	1.089		
Total	10411.250	61			
Corrected Total	63.213	60			

a. R Squared = .000 (Adjusted R Squared = -.034)

As it is obvious from the Table 11, the F value is 49.758 with a significance value of 0.000. Since the significance value is less than 0.05 (p<05), there is significant difference between the three groups variances.

TABLE 11

THREE WAY ANOVA FOR CONSIDERING INTERACTION DIFFERENCES IN ORAL PROFICIENCY OF DYADIC, TRIADIC & CONTROL GROUP'S POSTTEST

Source	of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	86.523 ^a	2	43.262	49.758	.000
Intercept	17840.819	1	17840.819	20519.953	.000
Score	86.523	2	43.262	49.758	.000
Error	50.427	58	.869		
Total	18039.000	61			
Corrected Total	136.951	60			

a. R Squared = .632 (Adjusted R Squared = .619)

The third research question was stated as:

'Is there any difference between Dyadic and Triadic interaction regarding their effect on EFL learners' oral proficiency?'

In this regard, Chi-Square Test was conducted to investigate whether there were any statistical differences between students' oral proficiency in terms of different types of interaction. As it is obvious, there is significance difference between learners' behavior in triad and their behavior in dyad group. (Table 12, 13)

TABLE 12

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF THE LEARNERS' BEHAVIOR IN DG

	A ¹	B ²	C ³	D ⁴	E ⁵	F ⁶	G ⁷	H ⁸	I ⁹
N Valid	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
Missing	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Mean	18.65	6.90	9.60	6.05	33.15	48.95	21.50	23.40	27.65
Minimum	15	5	7	4	27	33	17	14	20
Maximum	22	9	12	9	38	59	28	35	45

- 1: On Task
- 2: Contributed Ideas
- 3: Helped Group mates
- 4: Asked for Help if Needed
- 5: Receptive and expressive language Skills
- 6: Social language Skills
- 7: Criteria Understanding
- 8: Criteria Completion
- 9: Inference and Comprehension Skills

TABLE 13

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF THE LEARNERS' BEHAVIOR IN TG

	A ¹	B ²	C ³	D ⁴	E ⁵	F ⁶	G ⁷	H ⁸	I ⁹
N Valid	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	25.29	7.95	13.24	8.19	40.43	63.24	25.10	35.90	36.10
Minimum	20	6	10	6	37	60	20	32	31
Maximum	29	10	15	10	44	70	30	40	40

- 1: On Task
- 2: Contributed Ideas
- 3: Helped Group mates
- 4: Asked for Help if Needed
- 5: Receptive and expressive language Skills
- 6: Social language Skills
- 7: Criteria Understanding
- 8: Criteria Completion
- 9: Inference and Comprehension Skills

The above Tables 12, 13 indicate that after conducting the scores of each participant in both groups, the mean of each part in LICO was calculated by the researcher. Comparing the total score means of the two groups in different parts of checklist indicate that there is a high significant difference between DG and TG in the matter of interactional behavior.

The average means of both groups can be suggested that the learners' interactional behavior with group mates in triad group is more than dyad one. (Table 14)

TABLE 14
CHI-SQUARE COMPARISON FOR LEARNERS' BEHAVIOR IN LICO

	Chi- square ^a (DG&TG)	
	χ^2	p
On task	851.378 ^a	.000
1. Showed interest in group activity by sitting close to group members 2. Made eye contact with members of the group 3. Stayed on task 4. Did not become frustrated or stop trying if activity was difficult 5. Performed assigned role 6. Understood instructions and was able to begin activity	360.005 ^a	.000
Contributed Ideas	339.006 ^a	.000
7. Contributed opinions orally during group activity 8. Waited for teammates to finish speaking before contributing opinions	292.172 ^a	.000
Helped Group mates	1278.357 ^a	.000
9. Encouraged teammates by giving positive feedback or words of encouragement 10. Respected teammates by using kind words ('please', 'thank you', etc) 11. Volunteered to help teammates if necessary	1697.533 ^a	.000
Asked for Help if Needed	1485.977 ^a	.000
12. Asked teammates for help 13. Asked teacher for help 14. Asked other classmates for help	1786.748 ^a	.000
Receptive and expressive language Skills	1622.066 ^a	.000
15. Listened to group mate-directed talking 16. Recalled information presented in the group during talking 17. Participated in group mate-directed discussion 18. Collaborate with other member to exchange information 19. Organized and expressed idea in their groups 20. Answers were related to questions asked 21. Made the same mistake over and over again 22. Had trouble learning new things 23. Tried to avoid speaking in the class	1786.748 ^a	.000
Social language Skills	1485.977 ^a	.000
25. Get along well with other group mates 26. Interacted appropriately in a relevant way in conversation with peers in their group 27. Used the social rules of conversation (turn taking ...) 28. Rarely started a conversation with other member of the group 29. Did not participate in group discussion 30. Appeared awkward or shy when talking with other member of the group 31. Tried to avoid talking in group 32. Had hard time talking with group members 33. Avoided social interaction 34. Struggled when trying to communicate in group 35. Being rude to other members when talking 36. Demonstrated kindness, commitment and fairness in his or her dealings with other members 37. Being attentive and involvement in the group 38. Collaborated with other member of the group	1485.977 ^a	.000
Criteria Understanding	1786.748 ^a	.000
39. Completion of the task according to criteria set 40. Ability to meet academic standards used in the task 41. Ability to work independently when needed 42. Ability to work with a group 43. Communication skills 44. Problem-solving skills	1786.748 ^a	.000
Criteria Completion	1622.066 ^a	.000
45. Following written and oral directions 46. Using medium and materials in useful and productive ways 47. Giving each member of the group an opportunity to produce 48. Completing assigned tasks in the group 49. Resolving problems and conflicts 50. Working as a team 51. Completing a product of which they are asked 52. Completing the task or product on time and within the guidelines	1622.066 ^a	.000
Inference and Comprehension Skills	1622.066 ^a	.000
53. Able to summarize and understand the story from a literal level 54. Able to analyze the theme(s) of the story 55. Able to pick out critical details in the story 56. Able to remember and describe setting and background 57. Able to explain the behavior of characters and their motivation 58. Able to sequence the plot and events 59. Able to relate the story to his or her own experience 60. Able to infer deeper meaning from the story	1622.066 ^a	.000

* α : 0.05

As table 14 shows, triadic interaction has more effect on the subjects in the matter of doing of given task in comparison to dyadic interaction. Also Triadic interaction between learners influences the learners' tendency towards contributing ideas.

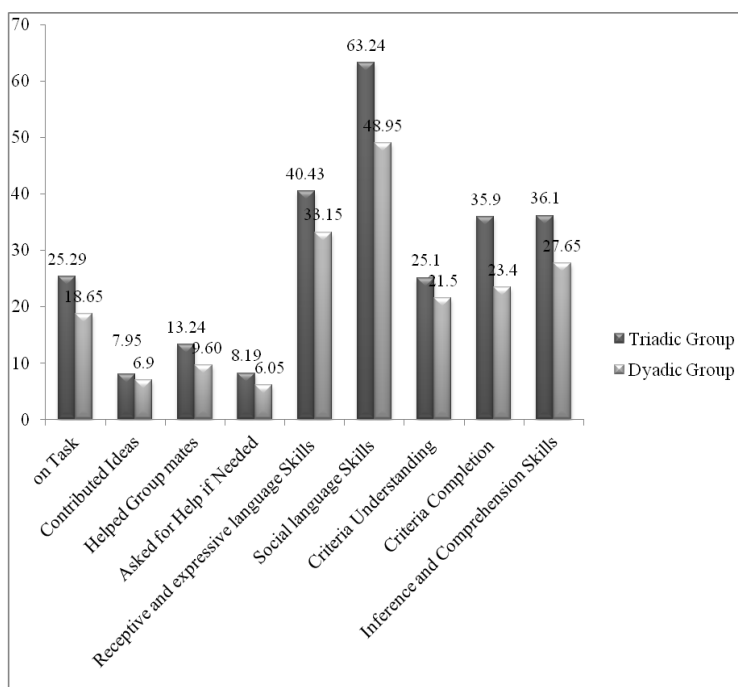
This result indicates that in triadic interaction the spirit of cooperation among participant is somehow more than in comparison with dyadic interaction. On the other word, in triadic interaction learners are more eager to help to their group mates. Do to the result, in triadic interaction whenever the members have question they ask for the help enthusiastically in comparison with dyadic interaction that may have some hesitation for the help.

Furthermore, in triadic interaction the receptive and expressive language skill is more than dyadic interaction. On the other word, participants in triadic groups listen to their group mates more than in dyadic groups. In triad discussion members participated more in comparison with dyad.

The social language skill as one the main part in this checklist revealed that in triadic interaction, social behavior in the matter of turn taking, being polite to members of the group etc is more than in dyadic. This test shows you that there is high significant difference between the TG and DG groups in terms of interactional behavior they revealed. Communication skills and Problem-solving skills as the two important items in this section revealed by the test that in triadic interaction members in group communicate with others more than in comparison with dyadic group.

In the matter of completing a product of given task in the form group working, resolving problems and conflicts there is high significant difference between the TG and DG groups. As mention before, working on the story (Three Billy Goats) as one part of lesson, was the researcher' s focus of attention during this study. Although telling the story was somehow difficult for this type of participant at this level and age, but according to the result of the test, there is high significant difference between the TG and DG groups. On the other word, we can say that triadic interaction helped learners in the matter of telling story more than dyadic interaction.

In order to have a clear look, the following graph displays the mean scores of all section of checklist. As the graph shows, there is high significant difference between the mean score of Triadic group and Dyadic group related to their behavior with their group mates and peers.



Graph 1

correlation between whole participants' behavior to the items, based on the checklist items related to 9 sections.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

DISCUSION

Regarding the relationship between interaction (Dyad & Triad) and learners' oral proficiency, using the results obtained from the table of frequencies, correlational analysis, Paired Sample Test, multiple ANOVA and also Chi-Square Test comparing dyad and triad groups of learners' behavior to the items based on the 9 sections of learning behavior in interaction under the study and also interview, we found that although holding slightly similar standpoints in some cases and in some aspects of learning in Dyadic group and Triadic group, both shared relatively similar basic effect on the oral proficiency, the strength of these two types of interactions is all in all relatively different. In other words, the effect of Triadic interaction on the learners' oral proficiency is somehow much more than Dyadic one. It is

also found that generally, Iranian young English learners in both groups of Dyadic and triadic group, acted totally different.

All in all, this study provides a support for the previous findings that interaction among EFL learners acts differently in implementing in the classroom among different types of learners at different levels. It is found that there are relatively high differences between two different types of interaction which are in consistent with the claims of other researchers that highlight the strength of the relationship between interaction and speaking in learning English. (e.g. Chen, 2006; Azadi, 2014). Maybe the main difference goes back to Iranian lack of cooperative spirit and group working of given task.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the role of interaction on learner's oral proficiency. To carry out the study, the sample was chosen among language learners in Hoor institute in Tehran, Iran. In addition to investigating the role of classroom interaction on improving oral proficiency, the effect of different types of interaction on improving oral proficiency was also assessed. To test the research questions of the study, inferential statistics was utilized using SPSS software.

Paired Sample Test results showed that there was a positive and significant relationship between classroom interaction and improving oral proficiency. It means that by using interaction inside the class the oral proficiency of the learners is improved. The third question was tested using three way ANOVA. The level of significance proposed that there was a high significant difference between triadic and dyadic interaction and improving oral proficiency.

According to the present research findings, it can be concluded that there was a positive and significant relationship between the variables such as the number of learners in group of classroom interaction with oral proficiency. It can be concluded that this factor can be considered as one of the main factors that helps learners to improve their speaking proficiency.

LIMITATION AND SUGGESTION

There were some limitations in conducting the research that need to be addressed. The first limitation goes back to the observation of learners' interaction and group work activities conducted during the lesson time. The threat to the reliability of the observation is the observer. When the researcher is sole observer, he or she unconsciously tends to see what he or she expects to see, so as result overlook those events that do not fit his or her theory. Also his or her attitude, feeling may distort their observation (Best, 2006, p. 309). The second problem is bounded to the size of the sample that results in less reliability, which cannot be generalized. Only 61 English language learners of both males and females were investigated that most of them were female learners.

Thus, generalizing the findings should be made cautiously. The reliability can be increased with more participants. It is also suggested that "more observers, perhaps three to four, are needed to monitor a classroom conducting pair-work activity to gain more information and further consistency of the results" (Achmad & Yusuf, 2014, p. 161). Another limitation goes back to the place of conducting the research which was in one of the institute in Tehran. Therefore, the findings of the study cannot be generalized to other institutes and also in other cities. This study will investigate how two pairs and three pairs at the elementary level of proficiency adult English as foreign language (EFL) learners' help each other to improve their oral proficiency.

APPENDIX C LEARNER’S INTERACTION CHECKLIST (LICO)

Teaching Assistant: Faculty Supervisor:
 Class observed: Date:
 Department: Time:

*Respond to each statement using the following scale:

1 2 3 4 5
 Not at all Somewhat Moderately Much Very much

All items marked Not Observed must be explained in Comments

Achievement objectives	Rating Scale				
On-Task	1	2	3	4	5
Showed interest in group activity by sitting close to group members					
Made eye contact with members of the group					
Stayed on task					
Did not become frustrated or stop trying if activity was difficult					
Performed assigned role					
Understood instructions and was able to begin activity.					
Comments:					
Contributed Ideas	1	2	3	4	5
Contributed opinions orally during group activity					
Waited for teammates to finish speaking before contributing opinions					
Comments:					
Helped Group mates	1	2	3	4	5
Encouraged teammates by giving positive feedback or words of encouragement					
Respected teammates by using kind words ('please', 'thank you', etc).					
Volunteered to help teammates if necessary					
Comments:					
Asked for Help if Needed	1	2	3	4	5
Asked teammates for help.					
Asked teacher for help.					
Asked other class mates for help.					
Comments:					
Receptive and expressive language Skills	1	2	3	4	5
Listened to group mate-directed talking					
Recalled information presented in the group during talking					
Participated in group mate-directed discussion					
Collaborate with other member to exchange information					
Organized and expressed idea in their groups					
Answers were related to questions asked					
Not made the same mistake over and over again					
Not Had trouble learning new things					
Not Tried to avoid speaking in the class					
Comments:					
Social language Skills	1	2	3	4	5
Get along well with other group mates					
Interacted appropriately in a relevant way in conversation with peers in their group					
Used the social rules of conversation (turn taking ...)					
Rarely started a conversation with other member of the group					
participated in group discussion					
Not Appeared awkward or shy when talking with other member of the group					
Tried not to avoid talking in group					
Not had hard time talking with group members					
Not Avoided social interaction					
Not struggled when trying to communicate in group					
Not Being rude to other members when talking					
Demonstrated kindness, commitment and fairness in his or her dealings with other members					
Being attentive and involvement in the group					
Collaborated with other member of the group					
Comments:					

Criteria Understanding	1	2	3	4	5
Completion of the task according to criteria set					
Ability to meet academic standards used in the task					
Ability to work independently when needed					
Ability to work with a group					
Communication skills					
Problem-solving skills					

Comments:

Criteria Completion	1	2	3	4	5
Following written and oral directions					
Using medium and materials in useful and productive ways					
Giving each member of the group an opportunity to produce					
Completing assigned tasks in the group					
Resolving problems and conflicts					
Working as a team					
Completing a product of which they are asked					
Completing the task or product on time and within the guidelines					

Comments:

Inference and Comprehension Skills	1	2	3	4	5
Able to summarize and understand the story from a literal level					
Able to analyze the theme(s) of the story					
Able to pick out critical details in the story					
Able to remember and describe setting and background					
Able to explain the behavior of characters and their motivation					
Able to sequence the plot and events					
Able to relate the story to his or her own experience.					
Able to infer deeper meaning from the story					

Comments:

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