

Theory and Practice in Language Studies

ISSN 1799-2591

Volume 6, Number 7, July 2016

Contents

REGULAR PAPERS

- Code-switching in English Language Education: Voices from Vietnam 1333
Nhan Trong Nguyen, Peter Grainger, and Michael Carey
- Challenges in Translating Phraseological Units 1341
Leyla Mirhasan Jafarova
- Investigating EFL Learners' Multiple Intelligences in the Preparatory Year at Taif University 1347
Tha'er Issa Tawalbeh
- Bangladeshi EFL Learners' English Connectors: Overused or Underused? 1357
Syed Md Golam Faruk and Pulak Barua
- The Interrelationship among L1 Writing Skills, L2 Writing Skills, and L2 Proficiency of Iranian EFL Learners at Different Proficiency Levels 1364
Amir Marzban and Faezeh Esmaeelnia Jalali
- Dark Energy in Robert Frost's Poems 1372
Yujie Su
- A Comparative Study of Modernism in the Poems of Forough Farrokhzad and Adunis 1377
Ahmad Lamei Giv and Majid Shahbazi
- A Genre Analysis of Discussion Sections of Qualitative Research Articles in Applied Linguistics 1383
Leila Dobakhti
- A Survey Study of Chinese College Engineering Students' Use of Metacognitive Strategies in English Writing 1390
Xin Chen and Gengsheng Xiao
- Development of a Questionnaire for the Assessment of Writing Problems 1396
Amineh Danaee
- The Impact of Portfolios and Journals on Iranian Pre-university Students' Vocabulary Learning 1403
Abdolhossein Omid and Nahid Yarahmadzahi
- An Investigation of Motivation in Children's Foreign Language Learning Process — A Case Study on the Basis of Needs Analysis 1413
Na Wei
-

A Comparative Study of the Effects of Recasts and Scaffolded Feedback on the Grammatical Accuracy of Elementary EFL Learners <i>Fateme Saeb, Dariush Nejad Ansari Mahabadi, and Akbar Khazaei</i>	1420
The Impact of Cooperative Learning on Grammar Learning among Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners <i>Abdolvahed Zarifi and Azimeh Taghavi</i>	1429
On Metacognitive Strategy Use for College Students in English Listening Teaching <i>Lihua Tang</i>	1437
Identifying Young Learners' Learning Styles among Iranian EFL Learners <i>Noushin Asadipiran</i>	1444
Discourse Markers in Academic and Non-academic Writing of Iranian EFL Learners <i>Nasim Ghanbari, Tahereh Dehghani, and Mohammad Reza Shamsaddini</i>	1451
Implications of Australia's Bilingual Education of Aboriginal People <i>Jie Li</i>	1460
The Effect of Using Humor on High School Students' Grammar Performance and Motivation <i>Elham Kavandi and Reza Kavandi</i>	1466
The Effect of Using Short Stories on Vocabulary Learning of Iranian EFL Learners <i>Fatemeh Parvareshbar and Behrooz Ghoorchaei</i>	1476
Rhetorical Ways of Interpersonal Meaning and Translation Strategy <i>Xiufang Xia</i>	1484
The Effect of Cultural Transfer of Connotative Meaning of Vocabularies on Iranian EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension <i>Narjes Mabhoot and Mitra Zeraatpishe</i>	1489
The Effect of Dyadic and Triadic Interaction on Iranian EFL Learners' Oral Proficiency <i>Abbas Moradan and Nayereh Ahmadian</i>	1498
Absurdity and Postmodernism: An Analysis of Barthelme's <i>The Glass Mountain</i> <i>Lingeng Han</i>	1513

Code-switching in English Language Education: Voices from Vietnam

Nhan Trong Nguyen

Faculty of Science, Health, Education and Engineering, University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia

Peter Grainger

Faculty of Science, Health, Education and Engineering, University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia

Michael Carey

Faculty of Science, Health, Education and Engineering, University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia

Abstract—Why do bilingual language teachers and students switch between the two languages in their language classrooms? On the evidence of current research findings in relation to English-Vietnamese code-switching in the educational contexts of Vietnam, this article identifies that classroom code-switching between the second language and the first language has its own pedagogic functions and it can be a valuable language classroom resource to both teachers and learners. In Vietnam, the implementation of the monolingual approach of teaching English-through-English-only faces many challenges such as inadequate classroom resources, students' low levels of English competence, motivation and autonomy, teachers' limited English abilities, and inappropriate teaching methods. Many Vietnamese teachers of English support code-switching in the classroom and they teach English through the bilingual approach. English-Vietnamese code-switching is reported not to be a restriction on the acquisition of English; rather, it can facilitate the teaching and learning of general English in Vietnam. This practice of code-switching is not just due to a lack of sufficient proficiency to maintain a conversation in English; rather, it serves a number of pedagogic functions such as explaining new words and grammatical rules, giving feedback, checking comprehension, making comparison between English and Vietnamese, establishing good rapport between teachers and students, creating a friendly classroom atmosphere and supporting group dynamics.

Index Terms—classroom code-switching, English, Vietnamese, pedagogic functions, bilingual, language education

I. INTRODUCTION

The debate on code-switching between English and the first language (L1) in English as a foreign/second language (EFL/ESL) classrooms has been ongoing for over 20 years (Macaro & Lee, 2013). According to Harmer (2007), there has been a strong body of opinion supporting the English-only policy or monolingual approach in EFL/ESL education. Most advocates of the pure-English-input approach argue that the use of the L1 restricts EFL/ESL learners' exposure to the target language that is "an ideal source of language for student acquisition" (Harbord, 1992, p. 353). However, the literature on the functions of code-switching has seriously questioned this position. Many studies examining the use of more than one language in English language classrooms find that code-switching is a common phenomenon in bilingual and multilingual educational contexts, and both students and teachers code-switch for different reasons (Macaro, 2009; Sampson, 2012). Instead of impeding the English language teaching and learning, the purposeful and appropriate use of the mother tongue can facilitate the English teaching process and improve the learner's English competence (Miles, 2004; Vaezi & Mirzaei, 2007). The bilingual approach which involves the use of both English and the learners' L1 recognizes that many learners need to operate in bilingual environments where translation and code-switching are valued skills (Sridhar & Sridhar, 1986). The bilingual approach also acknowledges that many EFL/ESL learners wish to preserve their own cultural and linguistic identities while learning and using English (Seidlhofer, 2011).

In Vietnam, a national policy on the use of classroom languages in foreign language education has not been developed yet (Nguyen, 2013). Therefore, both English and Vietnamese can be used in English classes in Vietnam, and code-switching between the two languages is popular in these classes (Canh, 2014). However, there are several Vietnamese EFL teachers, who strongly advocate the monolingual approach – Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and have negative attitudes towards the use of the mother tongue in English language classrooms in Vietnam. The lack of a documented policy on the medium of instruction in foreign language education in Vietnam implies that there are also no formal guidelines or training materials for Vietnamese teachers on the use of classroom languages. The debate between Vietnamese supporters of the monolingual approach and those of the bilingual approach requires an official policy which explicitly designates the classroom language use in foreign language education in Vietnam.

This article aims to guide Vietnamese policy makers on formulating an informed policy on the use of classroom languages in English language education in Vietnam, to contribute to the academic knowledge of code-switching in general English classrooms in Vietnam, and to raise awareness of the importance of the first language in the teaching and learning of EFL/ESL. In order to achieve those purposes, this paper summarises, analyses and discusses current research findings vis-à-vis (1) the pedagogic functions of classroom code-switching between the target language and the L1 in language education settings, (2) constraints on the implementation of the monolingual approach in Vietnam, and (3) English-Vietnamese code-switching in the context of general English education in Vietnam.

It is not a simple task to clearly define and distinguish code-switching, henceforth CS, from other terms of language contact phenomena. There have been different definitions of CS and other forms of bilingual behaviour (Kamwangamalu, 2010). In order to provide a focus and direction for this research, the following definitions are used. The term “code” is simply regarded as a verbal component which can be a morpheme, a word, a phrase, a clause or the entire system of language. In the EFL educational context of Vietnam, the definition of “code” certainly deals with only two different languages that are the first language, i.e. Vietnamese, and the target language, i.e. English. The term “code-switching” in this paper refers to “the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems” (Gumperz, 1982, p. 59). Exploring CS from a sociolinguistic approach, this study looks for the functions of classroom CS occurring among teacher-student and student-student interactions in foreign/second language educational situations. For that reason, we view the term “code-switching” from the functional perspective, which means that CS refers to any inter-sentential and intra-sentential alternating use of the target language and the mother tongue in an interactional discourse. The term “code-switching” is sometimes written as codeswitching or code switching. Our preference is to spell code-switching with a hyphen, and this preferred spelling of code-switching and its acronym (CS) will be used throughout this paper. However, original spelling of this term will be preserved in direct quotations and references.

II. THE FUNCTIONS OF CLASSROOM CODE-SWITCHING BETWEEN THE TARGET LANGUAGE AND THE MOTHER TONGUE

CS in education or classroom CS involves the simultaneous use of the target language and the learners’ L1, or two varieties (one standard and one nonstandard) of the target language, for classroom interactions and instructional exchanges (Kamwangamalu, 2010). Lin and Li (2012) state that there has been a well-established tradition of research on CS entailing the second language (L2) and the mother tongue in education, which is often complicated and controversial. The central debate in this research trend is about why bilingual teachers and students switch between the two languages in their classrooms and whether classroom code-switching is a resource or an obstacle to learning (Kamwangamalu, 2010). This section will provide an up-to-date review of the literature on the functions of code-switching between the target language and the mother tongue in language education settings.

One of the most consistent findings in the TESOL literature is that both learners and teachers find the teachers’ proficiency in the learners’ first language as a positive and useful resource (Mahboob & Lin, 2016). As summarised by Halliday (1994), the practice of switching to the mother tongue in second/foreign language classes has three main functions which are ideational functions, textual functions and interpersonal functions. Ideational functions include translating, explaining or annotating key L2 terms, and elaborating or exemplifying the L2 academic contents. Textual functions comprise highlighting or signaling topic shifts and marking out transitions between different activity types or different focuses. Interpersonal functions consist of sharing cultural values and negotiating shifts in frames, relationships, identities and social distance.

Even in English teaching approaches where the L1 is supposed to be avoided, such as the Natural Approach (NA) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), there is still room for CS between English and the L1. While the NA states that an L2 can be taught best by using it naturally and actively through demonstration and actions without the learner’s L1 (Richards & Rodgers, 1986), Nunan and Lamb (1996) found that the NA teacher occasionally used the students’ L1 in class. Investigating CS by teachers and learners in foreign language classrooms, Dailey-O’Cain and Liebscher (2009) show that many EFL students in CLT classes use their L1 as a resource. In addition, Newman (2014) argues that the use of CS in communicative classes can be seen as a facilitative tool to aid in and check the L2 comprehension and vocabulary acquisition; therefore, not allowing L2 learners, especially low proficiency learners, to use their L1 in communicative classes can be inhibiting to second language acquisition and learning.

In Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), although an L2 is supposed to be used as a medium of instruction and learning for specialized subjects (Mehisto, Marsh, & Frigols, 2008), CS to the L1 can work as an aid to the learning of both the subject contents and the L2 (Newman, 2014). Coyle, Hood, and Marsh (2010) state that in CLIL, “the systematic switch is based on a planned development of content, language and cognition” (p. 16). Besides, CS in CLIL classrooms can promote individual learning and can be seen as a part of scaffolding (Dailey-O’Cain & Liebscher, 2009). The main functions of CS between the target language and the L1 in CLIL classrooms are to explain and summarise the lesson contents, to check comprehension and to build up the students’ confidence (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010).

García (2001) indicates that CS is not only a necessary pedagogical tool for teachers to effectively spread knowledge and information but it also accelerates second language acquisition and the academic use of that L2. In this sense, classroom CS can be seen as an aid to explain meanings of new words, to check learners’ understanding and give

feedback to individual learners (Zacharias, 2003), to promote solidarity with learners (Ferguson, 2003), to praise and scold students (Moodley, 2003), to give grammar instruction, manage the classroom, and to compensate for a lack of comprehension (Edstrom, 2006). Using the first language in a second language classroom can also raise the learners' awareness of the differences between the two languages, which can help them understand certain classes of errors (Deller, 2003; Schweers, 1999).

Exploring communication strategies used by learners of Japanese in foreign language learning environments, Grainger (1997, 2010, 2012, 2013) finds that the learners' CS is a spoken communication strategy related to interacting and compensating. These students intentionally switched to the native language in their Japanese classrooms to ask for meaning and to compensate for their low levels of Japanese proficiency (Grainger, 2013). Regarding learner autonomy and evaluation, Ellis (2003) argues that switching to the L1 allows EFL/ESL learners to give ongoing feedback about the course and their experiences of learning much more fluently than they do in English. Ellis also states that in the process of discovery and creation, the L1 use also facilitates the L2 learning.

In addition, classroom CS can be used to develop the speakers' identities and to negotiate changes in frames and role-relationships. Canagarajah (2001) found that both teachers and students, by switching comfortably between Tamil and English, were simultaneously constructing their bilingual identities. Investigating CS in French-as-a-foreign-language classrooms in Thailand, Simon (2001) indicated that classroom CS was employed to negotiate different frames (formal institutional learning frame vs. informal friendly frame) and role-relationships (teacher vs. friend).

In short, empirical studies around the world show that CS between the target language and the mother tongue in foreign/second language classrooms is a communicative resource and it has three main functions which are ideational functions, textual functions and interpersonal functions. Language teachers and learners all over the world have used L2-L1 CS as an educational tool or a classroom aid to satisfy many different classroom needs such as developing rapport and solidarity among the class members, enhancing second language acquisition, managing the class, checking comprehension and giving feedback. The next section will problematize the implementation of the monolingual approach in Vietnam.

III. CONSTRAINTS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MONOLINGUAL APPROACH IN VIETNAM

As pointed out earlier in this paper, Vietnam has not yet formulated an official policy on the medium of instruction in foreign language education (Nguyen, 2013). Therefore, both the monolingual approach and the bilingual approach have been used in English classes throughout Vietnam (Canh, 2014). While the effectiveness of the English-only policy in EFL/ESL education is still questioned in Vietnam, several Vietnamese teachers believe that an EFL classroom should be an English-only environment and they try to impose a ban on the use of Vietnamese in their EFL classes (Hoang, Jang, & Yang, 2010).

Over the past decade, some English as a medium of instruction programs have been implemented at some Vietnamese universities, creating enormous difficulties for not only Vietnamese learners but also their teachers (Vu & Burns, 2014). Vu and Burns indicate that when English is the exclusive means of communication in class, Vietnamese lecturers are challenged by their limited English abilities, teaching methods, students' English competence and learning styles, and inadequate classroom resources. These findings support those reported by Hickmann (2001) that academic difficulties result in an advocacy for second language instruction. This is also the reason why Sato and Kleinsasser (1999) argue that it is a mistake to underestimate the role of the L1 in the teaching and learning of an L2, and the dogmatic use of the target language may increase the learners' stress, frustration and embarrassment.

Hoang, Jang, and Yang (2010) conducted a study to re-examine the practice of English-only-instruction in terms of its pedagogical effectiveness and desirability in the tertiary EFL educational settings in Vietnam. Their findings indicated that the English-only policy failed to guarantee the majority (70%) of the students' sufficient understanding of the lessons. Moreover, roughly two thirds of the sampled students admitted having difficulties expressing their thoughts and communicating with others in the target language. Regarding the learners' attitudes, approximately 55% of the students confirmed their deep prejudice against the English-only policy, and around 70% of them endorsed the use of Vietnamese as a contributory teaching and learning medium.

It is generally assumed that the world of English language teaching (ELT) has witnessed an era of methodology improvements and innovation since the monolingual approach - Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) came into existence in Western English-speaking countries in the 1970s (Richards, 2002). CLT proposes that learning a language is not only knowing a set of grammatical, lexical and phonological rules but also developing an ability to use that language effectively for real communicative needs; therefore, the first language should be avoided in communicative English classes (Larsen-Freeman, 1986). According to Barnard and Viet (2010, p. 78), CLT has been espoused as a pedagogical innovation and "the guiding principle of many national curricula in Asian school systems, as elsewhere." However, Bax (2003) and Littlewood (2007) report that the transfer of CLT from the Western contexts to Asian countries like Japan, Korea and China is problematic. Empirical studies in Vietnam (Hiep, 2004, 2007) also found a mismatch between CLT tenets and the local classroom cultures. For example, CLT principles such as "changing teachers' and students' roles, and breaking down hierarchic barriers in the classroom" (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. 66) challenge the basic socio-cultural values of the formal Vietnamese classroom, where the power distance or the

hierarchical relationship between teacher-as-superior and student-as-inferior is very distinctive (Nhan & Lai, 2012b, 2012c).

Hiep (2007, p. 195) argues that in English speaking countries, immigrants learn English to communicate with native speakers of English, so it is necessary that English classes operate “on the principle of immersing learners in Anglo-Saxon society.” However, when this principle is applied in Vietnam, many issues emerge because the socio-cultural, political, and physical conditions of Vietnam markedly differ from those in the UK or the USA. As described by Brown (1994), practices in CLT classrooms include the use of authentic language input in real life contexts to encourage learners to produce the target language for genuine and meaningful communication. Nevertheless, Hiep (2007) states that as Vietnamese students of English share the same mother tongue - Vietnamese, they do not have the immediate need to use the target language - English in the classroom, and nor most of them have this need outside the classroom. Therefore, Hiep (2007) questions the applicability of the in-class CLT tasks to the world outside the classroom, and he wonders if Vietnamese learners are really engaged in genuine communication when they are asked to do tasks in English only. Moreover, many Vietnamese learners find it difficult to read English authentic texts (as opposed to simplified texts created by language book publishers) and they only practise reading in English under compulsion by teachers (Nhan & Lai, 2013).

Before learning an L2, each learner has a ready-made knowledge system of his/her L1, so a ban on the L1 sounds unreasonable because people naturally tend to communicate in the best way they can, i.e. in their first most fluent language. That is also the reason why Le (2005) argues that L2 learners feel more secure when they are allowed to switch to their mother tongue. In line with Le’s (2005) argument, Nhan and Lai (2012a) state that equivalents in the first language should be given where possible to EFL learners, especially beginners, in order to help them understand more. This will also help them combine different words in English in different ways to produce new sentences.

In short, research shows that the monolingual approach – CLT may be not applicable in some contexts. The concept of avoiding the mother tongue in EFL/ESL education should be reconsidered, and the application of CLT as well as its influence upon the teaching and learning of EFL/ESL should be critically discussed in different education settings. In the Vietnamese educational situations, the implementation of the monolingual approach has been constrained by inadequate classroom resources, teachers’ limited English abilities, teaching methods, students’ low levels of English competence, motivation and autonomy. The following section will describe the CS practice in general English classrooms in Vietnam.

IV. CODE-SWITCHING IN GENERAL ENGLISH CLASSROOMS IN VIETNAM

Although there are not many studies on classroom code-switching between English and Vietnamese, they all arrive at the conclusion that English-Vietnamese CS commonly occurs in general English classes in Vietnam (Canh, 2014). Research shows that classroom CS is not detrimental to the general English teaching and learning, but a useful and important resource for both Vietnamese students and instructors (Nguyen, 2013). In addition, CS between English and Vietnamese has been widely supported by both Vietnamese students and teachers (Hien, 2012; Hoang, Jang, & Yang, 2010). It is not true that Vietnamese EFL teachers and learners switch to Vietnamese just because of their lack of linguistic competence in English; this section will point out the pedagogic functions of code-switching in general English classrooms in Vietnam.

According to Huong (2006) switching to the mother tongue helps Vietnamese students feel more at ease in learning English and thus supports their second language acquisition. In addition, Oanh (2006) notes that when Vietnamese EFL students use their first language among themselves and with the teacher, it has a positive effect on group dynamics. Apart from formal teaching and learning, jokes and small-talk in the learners’ first language can establish good rapport among students and between teachers and students, which helps create a friendly classroom atmosphere (Nhan & Lai, 2012a).

Studying attitudes of Vietnamese university teachers and students about the use of both English and the mother tongue in EFL classrooms in Vietnam, Anh (2009) reported that most of the participants held a supportive view on English-Vietnamese CS. Focusing on the functions of Vietnamese EFL teachers’ CS, Hien (2012) found that switching to Vietnamese mainly served the ideational functions, as categorised by Halliday (1994), which are to explain vocabulary, clarify grammatical rules, make comparisons between English and Vietnamese, check the learners’ comprehension and give feedback to individuals. Moreover, Hien found that some teachers carefully prepared their CS practice in their lesson plans. Vietnamese teachers of EFL tend to speak English to their students first, and then switch to Vietnamese as a translation to ensure the low-level students’ sufficient understanding of meta-language (Canh, 2014).

In order to explore factors affecting CS in tertiary English classrooms in Vietnam, Tien (2012) conducted a case study on one teacher teaching two different general English classes at two universities in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. He indicated that CS in the research context was influenced by contextual factors such as the class timetabling, the learners’ English proficiency levels and cultural values, teacher evaluation systems and teacher cognition. His investigation also revealed that more CS occurred in the public university than in the private one due to the lower English proficiency learners at the public university, and inter-sentential CS was dominant compared to intra-sentential CS, which suggests that the choice to CS was deliberate rather than the result of a lack of vocabulary or control of

syntax. Tien (2012) concluded that the EFL teacher used CS as a communicative and facilitative tool to check and reinforce her Vietnamese learners' English comprehension and vocabulary acquisition.

Nhan and Lai (2012a) state that each EFL/ESL student's background knowledge and identity are formed through his/her mother tongue, and his/her natural inclination to communicate in the first language is non-negotiable. Whether teachers like it or not, their Vietnamese learners of EFL, especially low proficiency learners, are still thinking in both Vietnamese and English, and CS between English and Vietnamese just naturally happens in the classroom. In addition, Nhan and Lai (2012a) point out considerable benefits of classroom CS to both language teachers and students, and argue that Vietnamese EFL teachers can use CS as a classroom aid to enhance their teaching practice and get more success with lower-level students.

In short, despite the dominance of CLT in many countries around the world, research on classroom CS in Vietnam reveals that CLT is not always the case. English-Vietnamese CS has gained good support from many Vietnamese EFL teachers and students, and it has been reported not to be an obstacle but an effective strategy in the teaching and learning of general English in Vietnam. English-Vietnamese CS in general English classes has performed a number of pedagogical functions such as enhancing second language acquisition, explaining new words and grammar, making comparisons between the two languages, checking students' understanding and giving feedback to individuals. Besides, Vietnamese EFL learners and instructors have used their familiar local language in the unfamiliar target language classroom to establish close rapport between them, create a friendly classroom atmosphere and support group dynamics.

V. CONCLUSION

English language education has been in the Post Methods era which lays an emphasis on the process of teaching, the understanding of language and how learning takes place rather than ascribing the success of ELT to pedagogic methods (Richards & Lockhart, 1996). Studies in Vietnam and other Asian countries such as Japan (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008), Thailand (Tayjasanant & Barnard, 2010), China (Hu, 2002) and Korea (Yoon, 2004) found a mismatch between CLT tenets and local classroom cultures. Therefore, it is recommended that every EFL/ESL teacher be flexible and innovative in adopting and adapting new pedagogical approaches in their own educational contexts.

Although the monolingual imperatives dominate language teaching theories and second language acquisition research (Cook, 2008), L2-L1 CS commonly occurs in many language classrooms all around the world, especially in classrooms where teachers and students share the same mother tongue. Research shows that foreign/second language teachers and learners have their own pedagogic motivations for L2-L1 CS, and this practice of code-switching has many positive impacts on the teaching and learning of a foreign/second language. L2-L1 CS has been used as an educational tool to satisfy many different classroom needs and it serves three main functions which are ideational, textual and interpersonal functions.

In the educational situations of Vietnam, the concept of avoiding the first language in the teaching and learning of EFL does not work well due to inadequate classroom resources, teachers' limited English abilities, teaching methods, students' low levels of English competence, motivation and autonomy. CS between English and Vietnamese exists in many general English classrooms and it has been supported by many Vietnamese learners and teachers of EFL. The primary functions of CS in general English education settings in Vietnam are to explain vocabulary, clarify grammar, give feedback, compensate for a deficiency of comprehension, compare and contrast English with Vietnamese, build good rapport between learners and teachers, create a friendly classroom atmosphere and facilitate group dynamics. In addition, CS in the EFL educational environment in Vietnam is affected by contextual factors such as students' English proficiency and cultural values, the testing and evaluation systems, the class timetabling and teacher cognition.

Classroom CS has been proved to be an important resource for second/foreign language teachers. Lower proficiency learners, up until the intermediate level, rely more on and benefit from CS in the classroom, but it is possibly not as beneficial in the learning progress for students who wish to advance beyond that stage of proficiency. Vietnamese teachers, educators and policy makers should keep reasonably informed of not only the influences of CS on the teaching and learning of EFL but also other new emerging challenges and achievements in other educational contexts in Vietnam. The absence of an official policy on the medium of instruction in foreign language education in Vietnam should not continue, and there should be formal guidelines and training materials for Vietnamese schools and teachers on how to maximise the benefits of CS in the classroom.

Most of the studies on classroom CS between English and Vietnamese that have been discussed in this paper used survey and/or interview data. This means that only some of them were based on an analysis of the actual classroom language use. Therefore, Vietnam needs more instruction-based and classroom-practice-based studies which provide more descriptions of the actual practice of CS inside the classroom.

In addition, the literature on English-Vietnamese CS reveals that studies conducted in Vietnam only focus on EFL teachers' attitudes towards CS in their general English classes, and there has been no published research on CS by both teachers and learners in the contexts of English for specific purposes or English for academic purposes. This gap in the literature needs to be addressed in order to create a better understanding of both students' and teachers' practice-based perspectives on classroom code-switching in different contexts in Vietnam.

REFERENCES

- [1] Anh, K. H. K. (2009). Use of Vietnamese in English language teaching in Vietnam: Attitudes of Vietnamese university teachers and students. M.A. thesis, HoChiMinh City Open University, Vietnam.
- [2] Barnard, R. & N. G. Viet (2010). Task-based language teaching (TBLT): A Vietnamese case study using narrative frames to elicit teachers' beliefs. *Language Education in Asia* 1.1, 77-86.
- [3] Bax, S. (2003). The end of CLT: A context approach to language teaching. *ELT Journal* 57.3, 278-287.
- [4] Brown, H. D. (1994). Principles of language learning and teaching. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Regents.
- [5] Canagarajah, S. (2001). Constructing hybrid postcolonial subjects: Codeswitching in Jaffna classrooms. In M. Heller & M. Martin-Jones (eds.), *Voices of authority: Education and linguistic difference*. Westport, CT & London: Ablex, 193-212.
- [6] Canh, L. V. (2014). Codeswitching in universities in Vietnam and Indonesia. In R. Barnard & J. McLellan (eds.), *Code-switching in university English-medium classes: Asian perspectives*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters, 118-131.
- [7] Cook, V. (2008). Second language learning and language teaching. London: Hodder Education.
- [8] Coyle, D., P. Hood & D. Marsh (2010). CLIL: Content and language integrated learning. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [9] Dailey-O'Cain, J. & G. Liebscher (2009). Teacher and student use of the first language in foreign language classroom interaction: Functions and applications. In M. Turnbull & J. Dailey-O'Cain (eds.), *First language use in second and foreign language learning*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters, 131-145.
- [10] Deller, S. (2003). The language of the learner. *English Teaching Professional* 26, 5-7.
- [11] Edstrom, A. (2006). L1 use in the L2 classroom: One teacher's self-evaluation. *The Canadian Modern Language Review* 63.2, 275-292.
- [12] Ellis, E. M. (2003). Bilingualism among teachers of English as a second language: A study of second language learning experience as a contributor to the professional knowledge and beliefs of teachers of ESL to adults. Ph.D. dissertation, Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia.
- [13] Ferguson, G. (2003). Classroom code-switching in post-colonial contexts: Functions, attitudes and policies. *AILA Review* 16, 38-51.
- [14] Garc ía, O. (2001). Bilingual education is beneficial. In M. E. Williams (ed.), *Education; opposing viewpoints*. San Diego: Greenhaven Press, 126-129.
- [15] Grainger, P. (2012). The impact of cultural background on the choice of language learning strategies in the JFL context. *System* 40, 483-493.
- [16] Grainger, P. R. (1997). Language-learning strategies for learners of Japanese: Investigating ethnicity. *Foreign Language Annals* 30.3, 378-385.
- [17] Grainger, P. R. (2010). Spoken communication strategies used by learners of Japanese in a foreign language learning environment. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia.
- [18] Grainger, P. R. (2013). Bedrock/Core, Base, Plus, and Threshold strategies in the JFL context. *Foreign Language Annals* 45.4, 599-621.
- [19] Gumperz, J. (1982). Discourse strategies. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [20] Halliday, M. A. K. (1994). An introduction to functional grammar. London: Edward Arnold.
- [21] Harbord, J. (1992). The use of the mother tongue in the classroom. *ELT Journal* 46.4, 350-355.
- [22] Harmer, J. (2007). The practice of English language teaching. Harlow, England: Pearson Education.
- [23] Hickmann, M. (2001). Language and cognition in development: Old questions, new directions. *Pragmatics* 11.2, 105-126.
- [24] Hien, P. T. (2012). An investigation into teachers' use of Vietnamese in English classrooms for young learners at a language centre. M.A. thesis, Hanoi National University, Vietnam.
- [25] Hiep, P. H. (2004). Trained in the West, teaching in the East: Vietnamese teachers returning from TESOL courses abroad. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.
- [26] Hiep, P. H. (2007). Communicative language teaching: Unity within diversity. *ELT Journal* 61.3, 193-201.
- [27] Hoang, N. T. B., S. H. Jang & Y. Yang (2010). English-Only classrooms: Ideology versus reality. Paper presented at the 2010 AARE Annual Conference, Melbourne. <http://www.aare.edu.au/data/publications/2010/1755HoangJangYang.pdf> (access 28/11/2014).
- [28] Hu, G. (2002). Potential cultural resistance to pedagogical imports: The case of communicative language teaching in China. *Language, Culture and Curriculum* 15.2, 93-105.
- [29] Huong, T. N. N. (2006). Linguistic imperialism, English as an international language, and Vietnam. *Teacher's Edition* 20, 27-33.
- [30] Kamwangamalu, N. M. (2010). Multilingualism and codeswitching in education. In N. H. Hornberger & S. L. McKay (eds.), *Sociolinguistics and language education*. UK: Multilingual Matters, 116-142.
- [31] Larsen-Freeman, D. (1986). Techniques and principles in language teaching. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [32] Larsen-Freeman, D. (2000). On the appropriateness of language teaching methods in language and development. In J. Shaw, D. Lubelska & M. Noullet (eds.), *Partnership and Interaction: Proceedings of the fourth international conference on language and development*. Bangkok: Asian Institute of Technology, 65-72.
- [33] Le, N. T. C. (2005). From passive participant to active thinker: A learner-centered approach to materials development. *English Teaching Forum* 43.3, 2-9.
- [34] Lin, A. Y. M. & D. C. S. Li (2012). Code-switching. In M. Martin-Jones, A. Blackledge & A. Creese (eds.), *The Routledge handbook of multilingualism*. Oxford: Routledge, 470-481.
- [35] Littlewood, W. (2007). Communicative and task-based language teaching in East Asian classrooms. *Language Teaching* 40, 243-249.

- [36] Macaro, E. (2009). Teacher use of code switching in the second language classroom: Exploring “optimal” use. In M. Turnbull & J. Dailey-O’Cain (eds.), *First language use in second and foreign language learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 35-49.
- [37] Macaro, E. & J. H. Lee (2013). Teacher language background, codeswitching, and English-only instruction: Does age make a difference to learners’ attitudes? *TESOL Quarterly* 47.4, 717-742.
- [38] Mahboob, A. & A. M. Y. Lin (2016). Using local languages in English language classrooms. In W. A. Renandya & H. P. Widodo (eds.), *English language teaching today: Building a closer link between theory and practice*. New York: Springer, 1-18.
- [39] Mehisto, P., D. Marsh & M. J. Frigols (2008). *Uncovering CLIL*. UK: Macmillan.
- [40] Miles, R. (2004). Evaluating the use of L1 in the English language classroom. M.A. thesis, University of Birmingham, UK.
- [41] Moodley, V. (2003). Language attitudes and codeswitching behaviour of facilitators and learners in language, literacy and communication senior phase outcomes-based education classrooms. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Natal, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.
- [42] Newman, I. H. (2014). Code-switching: Using L1 and L2 in bilingual education – The case of Asturias. M.A. thesis, University of Oviedo, Asturias, Spain.
- [43] Nguyen, T. H. (2013). Vietnamese university EFL teachers’ code-switching in classroom instruction. Ph.D. dissertation, Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand.
- [44] Nhan, N. T. & H. T. Lai (2012a). The current state of the art in ELT with special reference to the use of the first language in EFL classes in Vietnam. *Language in India* 12.3, 558-575.
- [45] Nhan, N. T. & H. T. Lai (2012b). The enhancement of learner autonomy and the growth of English language proficiency. *Language in India* 12.4, 427-439.
- [46] Nhan, N. T. & H. T. Lai (2012c). The influences of age and power relations on Vietnamese tertiary students of non-English majors in making spoken invitations in English. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies* 2.5, 902-908.
- [47] Nhan, N. T. & H. T. Lai (2013). A comparison on the use of language learning strategies by male and female Vietnamese tertiary students of non-English majors. *Language in India* 13.4, 185-210.
- [48] Nishino, T. & M. Watanabe (2008). Communication-oriented policies versus classroom realities in Japan. *TESOL Quarterly* 42.1, 133-138.
- [49] Nunan, D. & C. Lamb (1996). *The self-direct teacher: Managing the learning process*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [50] Oanh, D. T. H. (2006). Community values and classroom dynamics in Vietnam. *Teacher’s Edition* 20, 35-42.
- [51] Richards, J. C. (2002). 30 years of TEFL/TESL: A personal reflection. *RELC Journal* 33.2, 1-35.
- [52] Richards, J. C. & C. Lockhart (1996). *Reflective teaching in second language classrooms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [53] Richards, J. C. & T. S. Rodgers (1986). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [54] Sampson, A. (2012). Learner code-switching versus English only. *ELT Journal* 66.3, 293-303.
- [55] Sato, K. & R. Kleinsasser (1999). Communicative language teaching (CLT): Practical understandings. *Modern Language Journal* 83.4, 494-517.
- [56] Schweers, C. W. Jr. (1999). Using L1 in the L2 classroom. *English Teaching Forum* 37.2, 6-9.
- [57] Seidlhofer, B. (2011). *Understanding English as a Lingua Franca*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [58] Simon, D. L. (2001). Towards a new understanding of codeswitching in the foreign language classroom. In R. Jacobson (ed.), *Codeswitching worldwide 2*. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 311-342.
- [59] Sridhar, K. & S. Sridhar (1986). Bridging the paradigm gap: Second language acquisition theory and indigenized varieties of English. *World Englishes* 5.1, 3-14.
- [60] Tayjasanant, C. & R. Barnard (2010). Language teachers’ beliefs and practices regarding the appropriateness of communicative methodology: A case study from Thailand. *Journal of Asia TEFL* 7.2, 277-311.
- [61] Tien, N. Q. (2012). English-Vietnamese code-switching in tertiary educational context in Vietnam. *Asian Englishes* 15.2, 4-29.
- [62] Vaezi, S. & M. Mirzaei (2007). The effect of using translation from L1 to L2 as a teaching technique on the improvement of EFL learners’ linguistic accuracy – focus on form. *Humanising Language Teaching* 9.5. <http://www.hltmag.co.uk/Sep07/mart03.htm> (accessed 1/12/2014).
- [63] Vu, N. T. T. & A. Burns (2014). English as a medium of instruction: Challenges for Vietnamese tertiary lecturers. *The Journal of ASIA TEFL* 11.3, 1-31.
- [64] Yoon, K. (2004). CLT theories and practices in EFL curricula: A case study of Korea. *Asian EFL Journal* 6.3, 1-16.
- [65] Zacharias, N. T. (2003). A survey of tertiary teachers’ beliefs about English language teaching in Indonesia with regard to the role of English as a global language. M.A. thesis, Assumption University, Bangkok, Thailand.

Nhan Trong Nguyen is a Lecturer at English Department, Ho Chi Minh City University of Transport, Vietnam. He obtained his MA in Applied Linguistics from Curtin University of Technology, Australia, and Postgraduate Diploma in TESOL from SEAMEO RELC, Singapore. Currently, he is a PhD candidate at the University of the Sunshine Coast, Australia, where he is investigating classroom code-switching between English and Vietnamese. His primary research interests are sociolinguistics, pragmatics and second language acquisition.

Peter Grainger is an Applied Linguist with a PhD in the field of second language acquisition from the University of Queensland, Australia. He has taught in four universities in Queensland (Griffith University, CQUniversity, James Cook University and the

University of the Sunshine Coast). His research focuses are assessment (grading tools), second language learning (Japanese) and more recently, Peer Review processes in tertiary educational institutions.

Michael Carey is an expert in TESOL with a PhD in Applied Linguistics. He has taught and conducted research within linguistics since 1992 in the fields of TESOL, speech science (perception and pronunciation modification), academic writing, language testing and assessment, and preparation for IELTS. Dr Michael Carey's teaching role at the University of the Sunshine Coast includes coordination for the combined secondary Education programs and teaching language and literacy courses.

Challenges in Translating Phraseological Units

Leyla Mirhasan Jafarova
Azerbaijan University of Languages, Azerbaijan

Abstract—The article investigates the challenges in translating phraseological units. It states that phraseology has been in the centre of attention of linguists since the beginning of the 20th century. The works regarding phraseology by foreign and Azerbaijani linguists such as V.V.Vinogradov's, A.Hajiyeva's, N.Ch.Valiyeva's and others have been studied by the author and the methods of translating phraseological units suggested by them have been thoroughly considered. The author mentions proverbs, sayings and idioms as branches of phraseological units. They are considered to be the product of a nation's intelligence. The author also writes about the importance of the context while translating phraseological units. She claims that depending on the context the translation of the same phraseological units may differ. The author also explains the differences between proverbs and idioms using various linguistic sources. She comes to the conclusion that the above-mentioned methods are very important while translating phraseological units. The importance of phraseological units, namely proverbs and idioms in the communication process has been stated in the article as well.

Index Terms—phraseology, unit, proverb, sayings, context, method, translation, dictionary

I. INTRODUCTION

Phraseology is the study of proverbs, sayings and set-expressions. It has been in the limelight of linguistics as of the 20th century. The Russian linguist Vinogradov published his first article on "Basic Notions of Russian Phraseology"; following this was the article titled "Main Types of Russian Phraseological Units" which was published in 1947. Further to these two articles there emerged a growing interest for this discipline of linguistics in the Soviet Union. The above-mentioned articles by Vinogradov drew linguists' attention by the complexity and significance of the posed issues. Vinogradov's work opened new horizons for studying phraseology of various languages intensively (Vinogradov 1977, p. 6). Moreover, a number of bilingual phraseological dictionaries were compiled under the scholar's direct guidance.

II. METHODOLOGY

Every language has peculiar phraseological dictionaries of its own. Nevertheless, it is not possible to freely state that all of them meet the core requirements. Bilingual phraseological dictionaries either don't maintain required standards or don't exist at all. This issue has been solved in the Azerbaijani language. There are some linguists having compiled phraseological dictionaries in Azerbaijani. The names of A.Hajiyeva, N.Ch.Valiyeva could be mentioned in this regard. Particularly, the Azerbaijani - English - Russian dictionary by N.Valiyeva should be emphasized. The following methods of translation have been utilized in the dictionary:

1. Equivalent method. The meaning and figurativeness of the phraseological units used while translation must coincide. For instance:

Be as busy as a bee - arı kimi məşğul olmaq, arı kimi çalışqan olmaq;

Be as strong as a horse - at kimi mǎhkəm olmaq, at kimi güclü olmaq;

2. Analogue method. Despite retaining the meaning and context of the translated phraseological units in the original and target languages, the figurativeness is modified by applying this method. For example:

a drop in the bucket - dəryada bir damla

birds of fine feather flock together - Su axar, quxurunu tapar.

Queen Ann is dead - Sənin gətirdiyin xəbər kǎnəlib.

3. Descriptive method. It is extremely challenging to find any equivalent or analogue for some phraseological units. In this case it is important to find out the description of the translated phraseological unit. For example:

To cross the floor of the house - bir siyasi partiyadan digərinə ke qnək

To accept the Chiltern Hundreds - Parlament üzvü səlahiyyətini üzərindən gǎ ürmək

To fiddle while Rome burns - ölkənin ağır günündə lazım olmayan işlərlə məşğul olmaq

4. Antonym method. This method encompasses presenting a negative unit in the original language as positive and vice versa:

Don't count your chickens before they are hatched - C ücəni payızda sayarlar.

Let sleeping dogs lie - Yatan iti oyatmazlar.

5. Calque method. It is important to retain the figurativeness of phraseological unit using this method.

The owner of the honey is the bee - Balın sahibi arıdır.

An egg today is better than a hen tomorrow - Bugünkü yumurta sabahkı toyuqdan yaxşıdır;

A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush - Soğan olsun, nəğd olsun.

Wisdom is not sold for money - Ağıl para ilə satılmaz.

6. Combination method. This method is usually applied when either an analogue in the target language cannot fully convey the meaning of the one in the target language or an image of a different time and space is created. In this case calque translation, then descriptive translation is utilized, for comparison - the analogue in the target language is presented (Valiyeva 2010, p. 21). For instance:

To carry coal to Newcastle - Nyukasla k ömür aparmaq. It implies carrying coal to the place where there is plenty of it. There exists a similar expression in Azerbaijani: *Naxçıvana duz aparmaq.*

III. ANALYSIS

Any of the above-mentioned methods can be employed save upon the literal translation since the literal translation either perverts the meaning of the phraseological unit or does not correspond the normative aspects of the original language.

It is relevant to give the translation of the expression *G öxim səndən su i qnir* based upon the context. It is important to note that the role of the context is also particularly significant alongside with the above mentioned methods. There might be some cases in which the translation of one and the same phraseological unit differs according to the context. For instance, *Rome was not built in a day - Roma bir gündə tikilməyib.* This phraseological unit is not only used to encourage someone experiencing difficulties in challenging work, but also can be used to convey that the construction work cannot be finalized soon.

Sometimes it is extremely challenging to find an equivalent for a word existing in the original language. The words that do not have any correspondence are termed as non-equivalent lexis. Besides this, there are some polysemantic words that have a number of referents or meanings. As a rule, while translating, polysemy is eliminated by referring to the context or situation. Newmark differentiates among syntactic, phrasal, situational, cultural and personal idiolectal types of the context (Newmark 1988, p. 215). In all of these contexts the word is considered to be a main source and in order to understand the meaning of the word used in the context it is essential to understand the meaning of the context itself.

In traditional translation theory narrow (microcontext) and broad (macrocontext) contexts are differentiated. Narrow context denotes the narrow linguistic surrounding of a word, i.e. a phrase or a sentence. The meaning of a phrase or a sentence is defined and treated as a basic reference for translation. The following proverbs clearly illustrate it:

Don't cast pearls before swine - Eşşək nə bilir zəfəran-plov nədir.

To cut pearls before swine.

Don't put the cart before the horse - İşi tərşinə, baş-ayaq g örmə.

To put the cart before the horse.

Unlike narrow (microcontext) meaning, a word used in broad (macrocontext) context goes beyond the meaning of a sentence and accordingly possesses textual meaning. The meaning of a word used in such a context is clarified within the text or discourse. It is impossible to identify the limits of broad context; in this end, a whole paragraph, several sentences or an entire text must be text. It should be emphasized that in a few cases lexico-semantic context does not allow to select an equivalent word in the process of translation.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

It is noteworthy to mention that a large portion of phraseological units consist of proverbs, sayings and idioms. Proverbs, sayings and idioms are the product of a nation's intelligence. Proverbs and sayings cover immensely vast subjects such as life, welfare and economy. As a rule, they emerge due to experience obtained throughout life. All of them reflect lifestyle and standards of a nation.

One should be particularly careful while translating proverbs and sayings. Nearly all proverbs are related with life events and as the time passes their meaning becomes more abstract since the connection with original meaning is gradually lost. A special attention should be paid not only to the structure difference, but also the meaning difference should also be considered as proverbs incorporate double meaning. Let's study the instances below:

As you sow you will mow - Nə əkərsən, onu da bi çərsən.

Truth is always bitter - Həqiqət həmişə acı olur.

Set a beggar on horseback and he will ride to the devil. - Donuzu masanın araxasına oturt, o ayaqlarını masanın üstünə qoyar.

The main points in the translation of proverbs can be observed in the translation of Dada Gorgud into various languages. The following examples are noteworthy to study:

Allah-allah diməyincə işlər onmaz.

Qadir tənri verməyincə ər bayımaz.

Əzəldən yazılmasa, qul başına qəza gəlməz.

Əcəl vədə irməyincə kimsə ölməz.

The translation into English by Faruk Sumer:

Among his wise sayings were those which follow:

Nothing goes well without mentioning the name of Allah.

No one can prosper without the will of Almighty Allah.

Nothing happens if it was not already written down in the beginning.

As it is seen, if we don't mention the source of the presented abstracts, each of them can freely be used as proverb in any different contexts.

Fedorov writes about the rules to be followed while translating proverbs: " Proverbs incorporate a full meaning and are formed similar to sentences with regards to the structure, while being different from the sentence system not only in terms of structure, but of meaning as well. Proverbs have double meaning: on one hand, they have concrete meaning, on the other hand, there exists abstract meaning which is usually termed as figurative meaning not fitting the literal meaning of the constituent words." (Fedorov 1969, p. 81)

Proverbs have been named differently by researchers of the English language. Amosova terms them "phraseological units with predicative structure" (Amosova 1963, p.135). Coonin uses the term "predicative phraseologisms" (Coonin 1972, p.122). Furthermore, he has employed a second term to describe them -"communicative phraseological units".

Vinogradov and his followers claim that proverbs must be studied together with phraseological units (Vinogradov 1977, p. 89). The other groups of linguists such as Amosova and others are of the opinion that since proverbs and sayings carry out a communicative function, they must be treated as independent units. The Azerbaijani linguist Bayramov regards proverbs as a subject of folkloristics (1978, p. 36).

The words forming idioms lose their meanings and form a new meaning in the units. For instance, *I could eat a horse.* – Dəhşətli dərəcədə acam. (Acımdan ölürəm; Acımdan bir qoyun da yeyə bilərəm.); *Money doesn't grow on trees.* (Pulun qədrini bilmək lazımdır. (məc. Pul yerdən yığılmır; Pul özünə hərmət istər.); *We are all at sixes and sevens.* (Biz tamamilə çəş-baş qalmışıq; məc. Başımızı itirmişik. Nə edəcəyimizi bilmirik.); *I got there in the nick of time.* (Mən ora ən son anda çatdım; məc. Mən ora bir göz qırpmında çatdım).

Most words forming idioms have figurative meanings. In modern English the figurative meanings of words are used more than their literary meanings. For instance, the word *to catch* is often used figuratively. The following examples can illustrate them:

Literary meaning	Figurative meaning
I have been fishing, but caught absolutely nothing. (Mən balıq tuturdum, amma tamamilə he çənə tuta bilmədim.)	1. Yesterday I caught the bus. (Dünən avtobusa çatdım.) 2. Try to catch his eye. (Çalış onunla göz-gözə gələsən.) 3. You'll catch your death of cold. (Soyuqlayacaqsan.) 4. Wait while I catch my breathe. (Nəfəsimi dərənə kimi gəzlə.)

There are some words in the dictionaries that have already lost their literary meanings, and can only be used as figuratively. For example, the verb *to plough* (əkmək, bi qmək). This verb is mostly observed in the idioms. For example,

1. *He had to plough hundreds of pages of American history to get ready for his test.* (O, Amerika tarixindən testi vermək üçün yorulmadan çalışıb; O, Amerika tarixindən testi vermək üçün kağızların arasında itib-batmışdı.).

2. *You can plough money into a business.* (Sən bu işə sərmayə yatıra bilərsən; Sən bu işə pul buraxa bilərsən.).

3. *Profits can be ploughed back.* (Qoyulan sərmayə qazanc gətirə bilər.).

Similarly, the verb *to rack* is also used figuratively much. For example,

He racked his brain to remember his last. (O, keçmişini xatırlamaq üçün beyinini qurdaladı.) (Mustafayeva 2012, p.36).

Whether a unit is an idiom or not is a matter of degree. Sometimes the meaning of a word or a sequence of words is too difficult to translate. For instance, *kick the bucket, red herring*, etc., are considered to be idioms as we cannot directly translate them into our language. If we translate them word by word (*kick-təpik; bucket-vedrə*) in Azerbaijani, the meaning will be lost.

Likewise phraseological units, idioms also require a special treatment in the process of translation. Idioms cannot be translated literally. If they were translated in this way, the meaning would be perverted and they would even sound strange and ridiculous. Unlike idioms, there exist a number of proverbs that coincide both in meaning and figurativeness as well as lexical composition. The examples below illustrate it:

You must reap what you have sown. - Nə əkərsən, onu da bi çərsən.

No flying from the fate. - Tələdən qa qmaq olmaz.

We can live without our friends, but not our neighbours – Dostsuz yaşamaq olar, qonşusuz yox.

He that has a tongue in his head may find his way anywhere - Ağzında dili olan hər kəs hər yerdə öz ünə yol tapar.

Man may meet but mountains never - Dağ dağa rast gəlməz, insan insana rast gələr.

As you sow you will mow - Nə əkərsən, onu da bi çərsən

To be a scientist is easy, but to be a man is difficult - Alim olmaq asandır, insan olmaq çətin.

Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise. - Tez yatan və tez duran insanda can sağlığı, dövlət və ağıl olar (Mustafayeva 2012, p.82).

The following notes should be taken into account while translating idioms:

(1) Idioms should be used in the same way as they are in the vocabularies.

(2) The words forming idioms can be used literally as well as figuratively.

(3) Idioms have a fixed grammatical structure.

Therefore, the problem of idioms is involved with much wider issue of word formation. New and more complex lexemes can be formed from simpler ones. There are such expressions such as public house, whose meaning is “inn”. This word cannot be considered to be a total like idiom because the meaning can in part be related to public and house. But from the words themselves the existence of the compound cannot be certainly predicted.

The meaning of the phraseological units can also be predicted from the meaning of the individual words. Some phraseological units may involve some association with the ideas. For instance, *to kick the bucket* – to die, *to fly off the handle* – to become very angry, *to spill the beans* – to tell somebody something that should be kept secret and private, *red herring* – an important fact, idea, event, etc. that takes people’s attention away from the important ones, etc. As we see the meanings of some of these idioms are not related to the meaning of the individual words, though some are nearer to the meaning of a single word such as *to kick the bucket* equals *todie*. It is necessary to mention that the phraseological unit, namely an idiom may be used as a single word, but it cannot function like one. Therefore, we cannot add the suffix *-ed* to the end of the last word in *kick the bucket* (*kick the bucketed*). It can only function as a normal sequence of grammatical words, so that the past tense form is *kicked the bucket*. For example, He kicked the bucket last year, didn’t he? Though the verbs in the idioms may function as a normal sequence of grammatical words, the number of the nouns can never be changed. We can use *spilled the beans*, but not *spill the bean*. Equally there is no: *fly off handles*, *kick the buckets*, *put on good faces*, *blow one’s tops*, etc. Though the noun in the idiom *red herring* may be plural, but the adjective cannot be comparative (the *-er* form). We may use *red herrings* but not *redder herring* (Palmer 1976, p. 82).

There are also a lot of syntactic restrictions in the phraseological units. Some have passive forms, but others do not. For example, *to lay down*, *to spill the beans*, etc., can be used in the passive as *The law was laid down*; *The beans will be spilled*, etc. But we cannot say: *The bucket was kicked*. The restrictions vary from idiom to idiom. Some are more restricted or “frozen” than others.

The words like *make up*, *give in*, *put down*, etc. are a very common type of phraseological units in the English language. This type of phraseological units is called the phrasal verb. They have the combination of the verb plus the adverb. The meaning of these combinations cannot be predicted from the individual verb and adverb. There is a single verb with the same or a very close meaning such as *to make up* – *to invent*, *to give in* – *to yield*, *to put down* – *to quell*, etc. It is necessary to mention that not all combinations of this kind are idiomatic. For instance, *to put down* has also a literal sense. There are also many others that are both idiomatic and not. For instance, *The speaker took the audience in*, *The woman took the homeless children in*.

The phrasal verbs may not only consist of the verb plus the adverb. There are also sequences of verb plus preposition, such as *to look after* and *to go for*. The sequences of the verb, adverb and preposition, such as *to put up with* (“tolerate”) or *to do away with* (“kill”), etc. These phrasal verbs may be idiomatic too.

Partial idioms are the kind of idioms which one of the words retains their usual meaning, but the other has a meaning that is peculiar to the particular sequence. For example, if we use *red hair*, it doesn’t mean that we consider the *hair* that is *red* in colour. The other example of this kind that is often used by comedians *to make a bed* in the meaning of *a set of carpenter’s tools*. *White coffee*, *white wine*, *white people* can be considered to be idiomatic only if we define the term as “with the lightest of the colours normally associated with the entity”. It is important to mention that colour words in English are not always in the ways that correspond to their scientific definition. For instance, *white* is brown when relating to coffee, yellow when referring to wine and pink as applied to people.

But *black* is used as its opposite for coffee and and people, since it is not used for *wine*. So, it means that partial idioms can be a matter of degree and may be in some cases be little more than a matter of collocational restriction.

In this case we want to draw attention to the fact that words may have specific meanings in particular collocations. For instance, we can say *abnormal* or *exceptional weather* if the weather is too hot in December, but *an exceptional child* doesn’t equal *an abnormal child*. *Exceptional* means greater than usual ability; *abnormal* is used for some kind of defect. It is noteworthy to state that collocation is not just a matter of association of ideas. For instance, though *milk* is white, we shouldn’t say *white milk*. But *white paint* is quite possible to say. In this case the importance of context shouldn’t be forgotten. Depending on the context different meanings of words can be distinguished. For example, Nida gives examples using the word *chair* in various contexts (Nida 1964, p.98):

- (1) sit in a chair – (stulda oturmaq)
- (2) the baby’s high chair – (körpənin hündür stulu)
- (3) the chair of philosophy – (fəlsəfə kafedrası)
- (4) has accepted a University chair (universitetin fakültəsinə qəbul olmuşdur)
- (5) the chairman of the meeting (iclasın aparıcısı)
- (6) will chair the meeting (iclasa rəhbərlik edəcək)
- (7) the elect chair (seçki bürosu)
- (8) condemned to the chair (ölümə məhküm edilmiş).

Though collocations can be determined by meaning, but sometimes they are fairly idiosyncratic and cannot be predicted in the terms of the meaning of the associated words. For example, *a blond door* or *a blond dress* cannot be used, though the color is the same as in *blond hair*.

As it is known, proverbs don't absolutely overlap with idioms. Therefore, while translating them a number of factors should be taken into account. In this regard, semantic and structural features as well as the function carried out by them should be taken into consideration. Simply put, unlike idioms, proverbs always have the structure of a sentence (a statement, interrogative or imperative). Nonetheless, idioms consist of at least two constituents and don't possess any characteristics of a sentence. Idiom is defined as a main and elementary unit; a sentence might be formed based on it. For instance, the idiom "to go to the whole hog" (öz bildiyini heçkimə verməmək, öz bildiyi kimi hərəkət etmək) do not express a completed thought. It should be used in a sentence in order to convey a completed meaning. For example, *When she takes a thing in her head, she goes the whole hog.* - Ağlına bir şey gəldisə, o, öz bildiyini heçkimə verməz.

Proverbs usually form one part of composite complex sentence. They either serve as a principal or a subordinate clause. For example:

The cat shuts its eyes, while it steals cream. - Tülkü başını soxur kola, quyruğundan xəbəri yoxdur. İnsanlar öz günahlarına göz yumurlar.

As thief passes for a gentleman when stealing has made him rich. - Oğurluqla varlanmaq olsaydı, siçan hamıdan dövlətli olardı.

Idioms consist of two or more words and function as a part of a thought in the process of communication.

While idioms perform the nominative function in a sentence, proverbs fulfil the communicative function and can be observed in different types of the sentence.

Proverbs are idioms having multiple components with regards to context. The main differentiating feature between idioms and proverbs is the fact that idioms can be separated neither syntactically nor lexically, while proverbs can be separated and used as a phraseological unit or an idiom. To illustrate this, let's consider the example:

The idiom *to catch a straw* (saman çöpündən yapışmaq) has been derived from the proverb *A drowning man will catch a straw* – Suda boğulan saman çöpündən yapışar.

An early bird catches the worm – Tez oyanan həmişə qalib gəlir; tez yatanla tez duran uduzmaz. Qurdu erkən duran quş tutar. In this proverb the idiom *an early bird* (erkən duran, tez oyanan) is used.

While polysemy might be observed in idiomatic expressions, all proverbs are monosemic.

V. CONCLUSION

Phraseological units such as idioms, idiomatic expressions, proverbs, etc. have long been investigated by various scientists, but the challenges in translation are still observed. While translating phraseological units the above mentioned methods should be followed; at the same time, peculiar characteristics of both target and original languages have to be considered. Moreover, since both idioms and proverbs have a certain purpose in the process of communication, a translator should be particularly careful about retaining original contextual meaning as well as literal and figurative meanings. Besides, as the idiomaticity depends on precisely what is meant by the term, the degree of idiomaticity should also be taken into account while translating phraseological units.

REFERENCES

- [1] Amosova, N.N. (1963). *The English phraseology*. Leningrad: Higher School Publishers.
- [2] Abakumova, S.I. (1946). *The Modern Russian language*. Moscow: State Publishing House of Political literature.
- [3] Bayramov, G. (2008). *The profession of translation*. Baku: "OKA" Printing House.
- [4] Bayramov, H.A. (1978). *The basics of the Azerbaijani phraseology*. Education, Baku.
- [5] Coonin, A.V. (1972). *The phraseology of modern English*. Moscow: Moscow Publishing House.
- [6] Fedorov, A.I. (1969). *The semantic basis of graphic means of the language*. Novosibirsk: SIBAC.
- [7] Jafarov, S. (1970). *The Azerbaijani language*. Baku: Education Publishing House.
- [8] Mustafayeva, S.B. (2012). *Grammar through proverbs*. Baku: Science and Education Publishing House.
- [9] Newmark, P. (1988). *A Textbook of translation*. Hertfordshire: Prentice Hall.
- [10] Nida, E.A. (1964). *Towards a science of translating*. Leiden: Brill.
- [11] Palmer, F.R. (1976). *Semantics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [12] Vinogradov, V.V. (1977). *The main understanding of Russian phraseology as a linguistic discipline*. Moscow, Science.
- [13] Valiyeva N.CH. (2010). *Azerbaijani-English-Russian phraseological dictionary*. Baku: Azerpress Publishing House.

Leyla Mirhasan Jafarova (Baku, 1974) is professor and head of the English Grammar Department at the Azerbaijan University of Languages. She obtained her Ph.D. in Philology in 2002 on the thesis under the title "The Language and personality of the Writer in the Structure of the Text" and her doctorate in Linguistics on the thesis "The Role of the Stable expressions in the Structural - Semantic Organization of the Literary Text" in 2014.

She teaches and lectures in English on the courses of the Theoretical Grammar, Modern Syntactic Theories, and the Grammatical Difficulties in Translation. She runs two modules: one on the various aspects of linguistics and one on the teacher training. She trains and instructs a group of younger teachers of the department. She also supervises a number of M. A. and post-doctoral students in various aspects of linguistics. She is the member of the Scientific Seminar of AUL. Parallel to her employment at the Azerbaijan University of Languages she delivers lectures on Modern Methods of Teaching and Academic Writing and Reading at the Baku Teachers Institute and on Theoretical Grammar - at the Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University.

Her current research interests lie in the area of Modern Syntactic Theories and particularly in combining the advantages of generative and functional approaches to syntax. Her recent publications include the works on "Grammar and Translation"(Baku, 2015), "Glossary of Grammatical Terms" (Baku, 2014) and "English Grammar in Tables" (Baku, 2013).

Investigating EFL Learners' Multiple Intelligences in the Preparatory Year at Taif University

Tha'er Issa Tawalbeh

English Language Center, Taif University, Taif, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Abstract—The present paper aims to investigate the English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' multiple intelligences (MIs) in the preparatory year at Taif University in Saudi Arabia, and to provide suggestions for EFL instructors to integrate MIs in their lesson plans for instructional use in the classroom. To achieve these purposes, the researcher attempted to answer three questions. The first question investigated the different types of MIs that EFL learners possess. The second question examined whether there were any statistically significant differences ($\alpha= 0.05$) in EFL learners' MIs due to stream (Humanities, Sciences and Health). The third question was an attempt to synthesize literature in order to suggest ways for instructors to integrate MIs in the EFL classroom. A questionnaire of 4- Likert Scale was used to gather data from four hundred and eighty two students to answer the first two questions. And content analysis was used to answer the third question. The collected data were analyzed in the form of descriptive statistics. The results revealed that students do not tend to have interest in musical and naturalistic intelligences. In addition, there were statistically significant differences among the streams in the perceptions of their MIs in favor of the health stream students. The researcher also synthesized literature and suggested a number of techniques and activities to help instructors integrate MIs in their plans. Based on the results, the researcher presented a number of conclusions and recommendations.

Index Terms—multiple intelligences, English as a foreign language, preparatory year, Taif University

I. INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Teaching is a process meant mainly to facilitate students' learning. It is a teacher activity which aims to provide learners with better learning opportunities. In this context, learners have different needs, interests and learning styles. Sometimes, teachers struggle to meet these needs. This entails that teachers should adjust their instructional strategies so that they can cater for the varying needs of EFL learners. Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences could help teachers be aware of students' individual characteristics in order to cater for these needs. They can incorporate these intelligences in their lesson plans for practical use in the classroom.

A. An Overview of Multiple Intelligences

Gardner's theory (1985) proposed various types of intelligence capacities that result in many different ways of understanding and learning about the world. As Gardner (1993) states: *It is of the utmost importance that we recognize and nurture all of the varied human intelligences, and all of the combinations of intelligences. We are all so different largely because we all have different combinations of intelligences. If we recognize this, I think we will have at least a better chance of dealing appropriately with the many problems we face in the world* (Gardner, 1993:15).

Christison (1998) stated that her students demonstrated so many different individual strengths and skills, and they were constantly changing, learning, and grow. She proposed that intelligence was not just one form of cognition. Rather, intelligence comprised different intelligences. Christison & Kennedy (1999) maintained that the theory of multiple intelligences includes more than verbal/linguistic and logical/mathematical abilities. MIs theory implies that all humans possess at least eight different intelligences that represent a variety of ways to learn and demonstrate understanding.

Gardner (1985) identified eight intelligences summarized as follows:

Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence: the ability to use the body to express ideas and to solve problems. This includes physical skills such as coordination, flexibility, speed, and balance. Teachers can help students develop their bodily-kinesthetic intelligence by providing opportunities for physical challenges during the lesson.

Intrapersonal intelligence: the ability to understand oneself, including strengths, weaknesses, desires, and intentions. This includes skills such as understanding how one is similar to or different from others, reminding oneself to do something, knowing about oneself as a language learner, and knowing how to handle one's feelings. Teachers can help students by letting them express their own interests and help them understand their own styles of learning.

Interpersonal intelligence: the ability to understand another person's feelings and intentions. This includes skills such as responding effectively to other people in some pragmatic way, such as getting students to participate in a project. Teachers can help students through activities that involve them in solving problems.

Linguistic intelligence: the ability to use words effectively both orally and in writing. This intelligence includes skills such as the abilities to remember information, to convince others to help you, and to talk about language itself. Teachers can help students by creating a rich print environment; by providing things to look at, listen to, and write about, and by creating opportunities for interaction among students and between the teacher and students.

Logical-mathematical intelligence: the ability to use numbers effectively. This includes skills such as understanding the basic properties of numbers and principles of cause and effect, the ability to predict. Teachers can help students by experimenting with numbers and by using simple machines or computer programs to help students think about cause and effect.

Musical intelligence: the ability to sense rhythm, pitch, and melody. This includes skills such as the ability to recognize simple songs and to vary speed and rhythm in simple melodies. Teachers can help students by using tape recorders for listening, singing along, and learning new songs.

Spatial intelligence: the ability to sense form, space, color, line, and shape. This includes the ability to represent visual ideas. Teachers can help students by providing opportunities for visual mapping activities and encouraging students to vary the arrangements of materials in space by creating charts and bulletin boards.

Naturalist intelligence: the ability to recognize and classify plants and animals. It is also the ability to recognize cultural artifacts like cars or sneakers. Teachers can help students by focusing their attention on the world outside the classroom.

B. Implications of Gardner's MIs in EFL Teaching and Learning

The theory of MIs includes a number of educational implications. Armstrong (1994) summarized these ideas into four key points:

1. *Each person possesses all eight intelligences.* In each person, the eight intelligences work together in unique ways. Some people have high levels of all or most of the eight intelligences. Other people are in the middle, with a few intelligences highly developed, most modestly developed, and one or two underdeveloped.

2. *Intelligences can be developed.* Gardner (1985) suggests that everyone has the capacity to develop all eight intelligences with help, instruction and encouragement.

3. *Intelligences work together in complex ways.* Intelligences work and interact with each other. No intelligence really exists by itself in life.

4. *There are many different ways to be intelligent.* There is no standard set of attributes that one must have in order to be considered intelligent.

Campbell (1997) suggests that teachers expand their techniques and strategies beyond the typical linguistic and logical ones used in classrooms. According to Silver, Strong, and Perini (1997), all learners have different abilities, so one strategy that might work well with a group of students might not with another group. Because of individual differences among students, teachers are advised to use a broad range of teaching strategies. Christison (1998) stated that educators have taken the theory, put it together in different ways, and applied it to their lesson planning and curriculum development. They help us understand the diversity we observe in our students and provide a framework for addressing these differences in our teaching. Stanford (2003) maintained that the theory helps teachers accomplish what good teachers have always done: Reach beyond the text to provide varied opportunities for students to learn and show evidence of learning. MIs theory provides a framework for teachers to reflect on their best teaching methods and to understand why these methods. It also helps teachers expand their teaching practices to include a broader range of methods and techniques to reach a wider range of learners. MIs theory opens the door to a wide variety of teaching strategies that can easily be implemented in the classroom. Nolen (2003) added that many teachers struggle with finding ways to reach individual learning styles and needs. One teaching method that can accommodate for this variety of learning styles is Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences. He summarized the following implications for the MIs in language teaching and learning:

- Linguistic or verbal intelligence focuses on the mastery of language. People with verbal intelligence tend to think in words. Linguistic intelligence enables one to pay attention to grammar and vocabulary. Those with linguistic intelligence memorize by using words. Teachers can help linguistic learners progress by using language that the student can relate to and comprehend. If used correctly, language can provide a bridge between the material and the learner.

- Musical intelligence makes use of sound. Learners with musical intelligence have a firm understanding of pitch and rhythm. Through music, they are able to convey their emotions.

- Mathematical-logical intelligence includes the ability to detect patterns, reason deductively, and think logically. Learners can explore this intelligence by ordering and re-ordering objects.

- Spatial intelligence includes the ability create mental images in order to solve problems. Learners with spatial intelligence are best taught using pictures or photographs.

- Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence includes the ability to understand the world through the body. Learners can use their body in skilled ways for a distinct purpose. Kinesthesia is the capacity to act gracefully and to apprehend directly the actions or the dynamic abilities of other people or objects.

- Interpersonal intelligence includes the ability to understand and discriminate between people's moods and feelings. It can be enhanced by encouraging students to work together.

- Intrapersonal includes the ability to know oneself. Learners with intrapersonal characteristics need to be praised frequently in the class. It can be enhanced through imagination exercises. Learners could be given long-term projects with various stages that need to be checked before moving onto the next.

- Environmental intelligence includes the ability to understand nature. Learners with naturalistic intelligence often recognize and classify plants and animals. Teachers can plan activities such as: observing nature, labeling specimens from nature, and noticing changes in the environment.

Wilson (2005) stated that MIs theory helps teachers to develop an effective instruction methodology to promote understanding and learning appreciation of students. The classrooms can then be a place for intellectual and emotional development of the students because all students are individuals with different talents. Gouws (2008) believes that by implementing the theory in the classroom, educators will be able to change their teaching and learning strategies and cater for the individual differences of learners. The implication for educators is that they are constantly responsible for creating a positive learning environment that provides learners with adequate opportunities to practice, using the new knowledge and skills that they have learned. Educators are also responsible to cater the learners' individual learning needs and interests. Not all learners learn equally well from the same experiences. Therefore, educators are required to consider a number of ways for helping learners to achieve outcomes. In addition, learners should be provided with time and help to realize their potential. Maftoon & Sarem (2012) pointed out that teachers should recognize and teach to a broader range of talents and skills that depend on a variety of intelligences. Teachers can take advantage of exercises, activities, and techniques that help enhance their students' intelligences. Another implication added by Maftoon & Sarem (2012) is that by paying attention to all intelligences, teachers can try to design a syllabus taking advantage of a variety of games, stories, music, images to utilize all intelligences in their classes.

Effective assessment comes in alignment with instructional practices (Bellanca, Chapman, & Swartz, 1994, Stanford, 2003). Stanford (2003) pointed out that changing teaching strategies and curricula should be in parallel with changing assessment methods. Traditional assessment limits learners to a pencil-and-paper test as the primary means of demonstrating knowledge and skills. Multiple intelligences theory brings about an awareness of many assessment strategies that allow students to demonstrate that they understand and can use new information in unique ways. Assessment alternatives include logs and journals, graphic organizers, observational checklists, video samples, rubrics, miscue analyses, and portfolios. Such alternative forms of assessment offer students the potential to demonstrate learning content in a variety of ways.

To conclude, all of the intelligences above are a better way for teachers to understand learners' learning styles. Teachers should present materials in a style which engages all or most of the intelligences. Teachers can optimize learning for all the learners if they consider their students' needs and interests. Teachers who teach towards the MIs realize the benefits of active learning. Each of the intelligences is potential in every learner, and it is part of a teacher's job to help learners develop their own intelligences.

C. *Problem Statement and Objective*

Based on the researcher's observation and experience in teaching English as a foreign language, it has been obvious that EFL learners are different in their needs, interests and learning styles. Many teachers find it difficult to reach all learners' learning styles. They need to be aware of these individual characteristics so that they can cater for them in their teaching practices. Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences is a solution that helps teachers meet the variety of learning styles. The researcher believes that it is valuable to investigate these intelligences so that teachers can adjust their instructional strategies to be better able to meet learners' varying needs. The present study aims to investigate the different types of EFL learners' MIs in the preparatory year at Taif University, and to suggest ways to help teachers incorporate these intelligences in their daily lesson plans for practical use in the classroom. By doing this, learners are enhanced to learn in a way that is associated with their strengths and skills.

D. *Research Questions*

This paper is an attempt to answer the questions below:

- 1- What are the different types of EFL learners' multiple intelligences in the preparatory year at Taif University?
- 2- Are there any statistically significant differences ($\alpha = 0.05$) in EFL learners' multiple intelligences in the preparatory year due to stream (Humanities, Sciences and Health)?
- 3- What are the suggestions highlighted in literature for instructors to integrate multiple intelligences in the EFL classroom?

E. *Significance of the Study*

The results of this study should be of importance to:

- EFL instructors to consider which multiple intelligences EFL learners possess during their course of study in the preparatory year. These intelligences will be ranked as high and low so that instructors consider these in their lesson plans for practical use in the classroom.
- EFL instructors to consider suggestions highlighted in literature for integrating multiple intelligences for practical use in the classroom.

- The Quality Assurance and Professional Development Unit to consider the multiple intelligences in their plans of instructors' professional development.
- EFL practitioners in terms of conclusions and recommendations based on the results of the study to conduct further research.
- EFL existing body of research for the reference of EFL researchers and specialists.

F. Definition of Terms

The following terms will have the associated meaning whenever they appear in this paper:

- Multiple intelligences: A set of individual characteristics, strengths and skills learners possess to understand and learn more about the world. According to Gardner (1985), these include the linguistic, musical, mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and environmental intelligences.
- Preparatory Year: A program targeted for high school students who study fundamental courses that prepare them to specialize in the following year.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES

Many studies have provided evidence that MIs theory and its implications have a direct impact on developing EFL learners' skills and strengths (Khamis, 2005; Mohammadi, Abidin & Ahmad, 2012; Faoury, 2012; Ghamrawi, 2013). Other studies have also emphasized the importance of raising students' and teachers' awareness of the MIs theory, and incorporating it in teachers' instructional practices (Fortner, 2004; Mohammadi, Abidin & Ahmad, 2012).

Krstanoviae (2003) examined the implication of MIs Theory for learning styles in the EFL classroom. The multiple intelligence profiles of students and teachers at two secondary schools were obtained in order to identify their strengths and weaknesses in the different intelligences. In addition, the teachers' and learners' preferences for EFL activities catering for the intelligences were defined. Results showed the need for raising both the teachers' and learners' awareness of the existence of MIs learning styles.

Fortner (2004) investigated the relationship between middle school English teachers' instructional practices related to brain-based learning in multiple intelligences and students' achievement. The participants completed a questionnaire, as well as an instructional practices survey to measure pedagogical practices related to brain-based learning in MIs. The results indicated some implications for integrating multiple intelligences into instructional practices as a means to improve students' achievement.

Khamis (2005) investigated the effect of a multiple-intelligences based teaching program on Jordanian tenth grade students' paragraph writing ability in English. The researcher developed a four-question achievement test intended to measure students' paragraph writing ability. The results indicated a statistically significant difference in all students' paragraph writing ability on English in favor of the multiple-intelligences-based teaching program.

Madkour (2009) explored the experiences of 20 qualified teachers who used the MIs for improving the teaching strategies of English as a second language (ESL) at university level. The findings of the study confirmed the importance of multiple intelligences to language acquisition. Synthesis of the study findings revealed seven themes. These include using MIs as integrated domains; integrating MIs into language learning theories; enhancing MIs through cooperative learning; using technology for teaching MIs; incorporating language taxonomies into MIs; differentiated instruction is compatible with MIs; and employing authentic assessment in ESL enhances MIs. The Study's recommendations included training strategies for ESL teachers to use MIs in order to improve students' language acquisition.

Mohammadi, Abidin & Ahmad (2012) explored the relationship between students' strengths in MIs and achievement in learning English. Findings from this study suggested that in a learning environment where MIs may not be actively used, there is a tendency to have weak and negative correlation between multiple intelligences and English language achievement. Yet, there are distinct differences in the relationship between the two streams of Science and Art regarding the subjects they take. Practical implications for these findings recommended that teachers ought to utilize multiple intelligences in the teaching and learning process to provide opportunities for students to enhance their MIs.

Al Faoury (2012) investigated the effect of an integrative skills program on developing Jordanian university students' achievement in English and select-multiple MIs. The study also aimed to explore the effect of gender and the interaction between gender and the instructional program on students' achievement in English and students' linguistic, logical, interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences. The results of the study revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of students' achievement in the posttest due to the effect of the teaching method in favor of the students in the experimental group who were taught using the integrative method. In addition, the findings indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of students' linguistic, logical, interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences due to the teaching method in favor of the students in the experimental group who were taught using the integrative method.

Ibnian & Hadban (2013) explored implications the MIs theory has in English language teaching field. The study attempted to investigate the main features of the multi-intelligence theory and the implications of the multi-intelligence theory in English language teaching field. Results of the study showed that in EFL class, it is possible to motivate learners by making use of the nine different types of intelligence.

Ghamrawi (2013) investigated teachers' use of the MIs theory on vocabulary acquisition by preschoolers during English as a second language (ESL) classes in a K-12 school in Lebanon. The study used mixed methods, including observations of videotaped sessions, teacher surveys, and student interviews. Results indicated that students acquired new vocabulary faster using traditional methods of teaching; however, their retention of such vocabulary was significantly weaker when compared with the vocabulary acquired in MIs classes. In addition, the MIs profile of the teachers was correlated with their teaching styles and lesson delivery. Furthermore, teachers who used MI in their teaching also had lower usage of higher order thinking skills. The study recommends the utilization of MIs in ESL teaching and learning, yet also stipulates some aspects to be taken into consideration.

To sum up, the MIs studies discussed above revealed that there is a positive relationship between using the MIs theory and students' achievement. However, the context in which these studies have been experienced is different. The present study is an attempt to investigate the multiple intelligences EFL learners possess in their preparatory year at university level. The researcher examined which of these intelligences ranked higher than others to provide instructors with ideas to consider the multiple intelligences in their lesson plans. In addition, the researcher reviewed literature to synthesize ways for instructors to integrate multiple intelligences for practical use in the EFL classroom.

III. METHOD

In this section, the researcher describes the methodology followed to collect and analyzes data. It shows how population and sample of the study were identified, how validity and reliability of the study instrument was checked, procedures followed to conduct the study, and statistical analysis used to analyze the data.

A. Population and Sample Selection

The study population comprised two thousand and five hundred students learning English in the first semester of the academic year 2015-2016. Four hundred and eighty two students responded to the questionnaire.

B. Study Instrument

The researcher adopted the MI questionnaire used by ITC publications to measure and ranks EFL learners' multiple intelligences in their preparatory year. It has been translated into Arabic, and a bilingual specialized in English and Arabic was asked to make back translation to ensure validity. A 4- Likert Scale (1= Agree, 2= strongly agree, 3= disagree, 4= strongly disagree) was used to investigate the EFL learners' MIs.

C. Instrument Validity and Reliability

It can be argued that the instrument is valid since it has been developed by a recognized institution in the field. However, five EFL specialists were kindly requested to check if the items were appropriate and relevant to the context. In addition, in order to check the instrument reliability the checklist was distributed to 20 EFL students. They were asked to respond to the questionnaire. It was then distributed to them again after two weeks. The results were analyzed and the correlation coefficient (Pearson) between the previous and post time was 0.87. The Cronbach alpha reliability for the checklist was .85.

D. Study Procedures

The researcher formally requested the approval of the preparatory year dean to conduct the study and distribute the questionnaire to the EFL learners during their course of study. The instrument was checked for validity and reliability. Having the consent of the participants, the questionnaire was distributed and collected after being filled in. The researcher processed the results using the appropriate statistical methods to get the findings. Based on the findings, relevant conclusions and recommendations were drawn.

E. Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistical analysis was used to answer the first two questions which aimed to investigate the multiple intelligences EFL learners possess, and content analysis was used to answer the third question meant to suggest ways for teachers to integrate MIs in the classroom.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To answer the first question related to the different types of EFL learners' multiple intelligences, Table 1 shows the means and standard deviation of all the students' perceptions towards multiple intelligences in health, sciences and humanities streams

TABLE 1.
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF THE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR MIs IN THE THREE STREAMS

No.	Descriptive Statistics			
	Domains	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	musical intelligence	482	2.33	.69
2	naturalistic intelligence	482	2.06	.52
3	verbal/ linguistic intelligence	482	1.94	.47
4	intrapersonal intelligence	482	1.91	.45
5	mathematical/ logical intelligence	482	1.87	.42
6	visual/ spatial intelligence	482	1.86	.44
7	interpersonal intelligence	482	1.84	.47
8	bodily/ kinesthetic intelligence	482	1.81	.44

It is clear from the table above that the students in all the three streams do not agree with only the first two domains regarding their perceptions of their multiple intelligences, and they agree with the other six domains. The mean in the first two domains is more than 2, which indicates that they do not tend to have interest in musical and naturalistic intelligences. This could be explained on the ground that many students have a negative attitude towards music in general, and the context in which they live probably does not enhance their interest in nature, environment, gardens, and plants as other sectors take care of these aspects in nature. In addition, students do not study music or nature- related courses that may enable them to realize the importance of these two domains in their life, and to encourage them to have interests in them. Not being interested in music may negatively affect their listening and speaking competencies in terms of recognizing and performing tone, pitch, rhyme and rhythm. All in all, the students in general have a relatively positive attitude towards all the domains of MIs except the first two. This can be due to fact that the six domains of MIs directly relate to them and fostered in the courses they study at university.

To discuss the question in more details, tables 2, 3 and 4 show means, standard deviation of the students' perceptions of MIs in each stream separately.

TABLE 2.
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF THE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF MIs IN THE HEALTH STREAM

No.	Descriptive Statistics			
	Domains	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	musical intelligence	49	2.44	.80
2	naturalistic intelligence	49	2.11	.65
3	verbal/ linguistic intelligence	49	1.94	.48
4	intrapersonal intelligence	49	1.90	.60
5	mathematical/ logical intelligence	49	1.88	.47
6	visual/ spatial intelligence	49	1.82	.38
7	interpersonal intelligence	49	1.75	.48
8	bodily/ kinesthetic intelligence	49	1.68	.34

The table above displays that health stream students are not interested in the first two domains of musical and naturalistic intelligences, which goes with the results displayed in table 1.

TABLE 3.
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF THE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF MIs IN THE SCIENCE STREAM

No.	Descriptive Statistics			
	Domains	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	musical intelligence	216	2.35	.69
2	naturalistic intelligence	216	2.08	.497
3	verbal/ linguistic intelligence	216	1.93	.476
4	intrapersonal intelligence	216	1.88	.472
5	mathematical/ logical intelligence	216	1.86	.403
6	visual/ spatial intelligence	216	1.86	.461
7	interpersonal intelligence	216	1.84	.481
8	bodily/ kinesthetic intelligence	216	1.78	.456

The table above shows that science stream students are not interested in the first two domains of musical and naturalistic intelligences as well, which goes with the results displayed in table 1 and 2.

TABLE 4.
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF THE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF MIS IN THE HUMANITIES STREAM

No.	Descriptive Statistics			
	Domains	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	musical intelligence	217	2.30	.66
2	naturalistic intelligence	217	2.04	.51
3	verbal/ linguistic intelligence	217	1.94	.43
4	intrapersonal intelligence	217	1.91	.47
5	mathematical/ logical intelligence	217	1.91	.41
6	visual/ spatial intelligence	217	1.88	.44
7	interpersonal intelligence	217	1.86	.41
8	bodily/ kinesthetic intelligence	217	1.81	.45

The table above shows that humanities stream students do not tend to have interest in the first two domains of musical and naturalistic intelligences, which also goes with the results displayed in table 1, 2 and 3.

As regards the second question which seeks whether or not there are any statistically significant differences in EFL learners' MIs due to stream (Humanities, Sciences and Health, table 5 shows the means and standard deviation of the students' perceptions of MIs in the three streams.

TABLE 5.
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF THE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF MIS IN THE THREE STREAMS

No.	Domains	Streams	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Verbal/ linguistic intelligence	Health	49	1.82	.38
		Science	216	1.93	.47
		Humanities	217	1.91	.47
		Total	482	1.88	.47
2	Mathematical/logical intelligence	Health	49	1.88	.47
		Science	216	1.86	.40
		Humanities	217	1.88	.44
		Total	482	1.87	.42
3	visual intelligence	Health	49	1.68	.34
		Science	216	1.84	.48
		Humanities	217	1.91	.41
		Total	482	1.86	.44
4	Interpersonal intelligence	Health	49	1.90	.60
		Science	216	1.86	.46
		Humanities	217	1.81	.45
		Total	482	1.84	.47
5	Musical intelligence	Health	49	2.44	.80
		Science	216	2.35	.69
		Humanities	217	2.30	.66
		Total	482	2.33	.69
6	Naturalistic intelligence	Health	49	2.11	.65
		Science	216	2.08	.49
		Humanities	217	2.04	.51
		Total	482	2.06	.52
7	Bodily/kinesthetic intelligence	Health	49	1.75	.48
		Science	216	1.78	.45
		Humanities	217	1.86	.41
		Total	482	1.81	.44
8	Intrapersonal intelligence	Health	49	1.94	.48
		Science	216	1.88	.47
		Humanities	217	1.94	.43
		Total	482	1.91	.45

It appears from the means in the table above that there are differences among the streams in the students' perceptions of their MIs. However, analysis of variance (ANOVA) test was made to see if these differences were statistically significant. Table 6 displays the results of the ANOVA test.

TABLE 6.
ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Linguistic/ verbal intelligence	Between Groups	1.534	2	.767	3.490	.031
	Within Groups	105.278	479	.220		
	Total	106.812	481			
Mathematical/ logical intelligence	Between Groups	.025	2	.012	.068	.935
	Within Groups	87.896	479	.183		
	Total	87.921	481			
Visual intelligence	Between Groups	2.272	2	1.136	5.830	.003
	Within Groups	93.349	479	.195		
	Total	95.621	481			
Interpersonal intelligence	Between Groups	.400	2	.200	.888	.412
	Within Groups	107.754	479	.225		
	Total	108.154	481			
Musical intelligence	Between Groups	.852	2	.426	.882	.415
	Within Groups	231.263	479	.483		
	Total	232.115	481			
Naturalistic intelligence	Between Groups	.305	2	.153	.559	.572
	Within Groups	130.812	479	.273		
	Total	131.117	481			
Bodily/ kinesthetic intelligence	Between Groups	.863	2	.432	2.211	.111
	Within Groups	93.483	479	.195		
	Total	94.346	481			
Intrapersonal intelligence	Between Groups	.495	2	.247	1.179	.309
	Within Groups	100.466	479	.210		
	Total	100.960	481			

It is evident from the table above, that there are statistically significant differences ($\alpha= 0.05$) among the streams in the students' perceptions of their linguistic/verbal and visual intelligences in favor of the health stream. This is true as table 5 shows that the mean in the linguistic/verbal intelligence for the health stream is 1.82, whereas the means for the science and humanities streams were 1.93 and 1.91 respectively. In addition, the visual intelligence mean for the health stream is 1.68, while those for the science and humanities streams were 1.84 and 1.91 respectively. Health stream students joined the university based on the high grades they got in the competency and achievement tests administered to them. Besides, these groups of students are frequently requested to perform presentations and write reports based on visual aids, which would enhance their verbal and visual strengths. Besides, the majority of those students came from a rich educational background where there is focus on extra-curricular activities that would enhance various types of MIs.

Concerning the third question which aimed to suggest ways for instructors to integrate MIs in the EFL classroom, educators suggested various ways, activities and techniques for teachers to benefit from in their lesson plans for practical use in the classroom (Christison, 1999; Kallenbach, 1999; Spirovska, 2013).

Christison (1999) stated that rather than functioning as a prescribed teaching method, curriculum, or technique, MIs theory provides a way of understanding intelligence, which teachers can use as a guide for developing classroom activities that address multiple ways of learning and knowing. Kallenbach (1999) maintained that teaching strategies informed by MIs theory can transfer some control from teacher to learners by giving students choices in the ways they will learn and demonstrate their learning. By focusing on problem-solving activities that draw on multiple intelligences, these teaching strategies encourage learners to build on existing strengths and knowledge to learn new content and skills.

Christison (1999) identified four ways in which the MI theory can be used in the classroom as follows:

- 1- As a tool to help students develop a better understanding and appreciation of their own strengths and their preferred ways of learning.
- 2- As a tool to develop a better understanding of learners' intelligences.
- 3- As a guide to provide a greater variety of ways for students to learn and to demonstrate their learning.
- 4- As a guide to develop lesson plans that address the full range of learners needs.

Krstanoviae (2003) suggested a number of techniques and activities for EFL teachers to integrate the multiple intelligences in the classroom:

Linguistic Intelligence: lectures, presentations, discussions, debates, speeches, word games, journal writing, word search puzzles, crossword puzzles, reporting, process writing, reading activities, and publishing.

Logical-Mathematical Intelligence: mystery solving, problem solving, classifying, placing in categories, conducting experiments, Socratic questioning, analogies, and logic puzzles

Spatial Intelligence: color cues, charts, diagrams, maps, using drawings, using symbols, describing pictures, visual imagery, posters, videos, painting, computer use, graphic symbols, and visualization

Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence: hands-on activities, role play, simulations, manipulating objects, miming, and using gestures

Musical Intelligence: songs, singing, chants, background memory music, and creating melodies

Interpersonal Intelligence: pair-work, group-work, peer teaching, cooperative groups, team games, group brainstorming, active listening, and simulation

Intrapersonal Intelligence: reflection moments, options for homework and assignments, opportunities for choices, setting goals, independent study, and individual work.

Naturalist Intelligence: nature walks, field trips, ecology projects, nature videos, and Eco study.

In life, none of the intelligences work in isolation. Likewise, none of the activities and techniques mentioned focus only on one intelligence. There is no doubt that learners have certain intelligences more developed than others. Integrating multiple intelligences and learning styles into the EFL classroom enables teachers to accommodate learner diversity and respect each learner's uniqueness. Learners are allowed to work in their comfort zones; however, through exposure to diverse learning modes and techniques, they are also challenged to adapt and develop the intelligences which would otherwise be neglected. This developmental model allows for personal growth in neglected intelligences and it allows the teacher to work with the learner's strengths and help develop the weaknesses. Working with the learner's intelligences will heighten motivation and reduce anxiety and foster learning. Oxford (1999) suggested that teachers can reduce learners' language anxiety by providing "activities that address varied learning styles and strategies in the classroom".

Spirovska (2013) suggested a wide range of activities which might be used in order to cater for the different types of intelligences and applied in EFL/ESL classroom. These activities can be grouped as follows:

Linguistic Intelligence: reading a story, choosing appropriate word to fill in a gap in a sentence, choosing an appropriate synonym or antonym for a given word, answering multiple questions related to a text.

Logical Mathematical Intelligence: sequencing events in a chronological order, finding logical errors, presenting timelines of events presented in a story or a text, jigsaw puzzles and games, concept maps.

Bodily Kinesthetic Intelligence: drawing, coloring, miming, dramatization, making models of objects and using realia (real objects), games.

Visual Spatial Intelligence: drawing diagrams, concept maps, matching pictures with words, describing pictures or images.

Musical Intelligence: songs, tongue twisters, rhymes, playing songs in order to introduce a topic or analyze the lyrics, transforming lyrics into a text.

Interpersonal Intelligence: analyzing a character, reflections on characters and their actions or motivation, analyzing or retelling/rewriting a text from another's character point of view, group work.

Intrapersonal Intelligence: journal keeping, activities in order to elicit personal experiences (reflections, discussions and sharing personal experiences).

Naturalistic Intelligence: comparison between a novel and a film, news broadcasted by two different resources, categorizing, analyzing settings, field trips and projects.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The present paper aimed to investigate EFL learners' MIs in the preparatory year at Taif University in Saudi Arabia, and to provide suggestions for EFL instructors to integrate MIs in their lesson plans for instructional use in the classroom. The results revealed that students do not tend to have interest in musical and naturalistic intelligences, which can be due to having a negative attitude towards music in general, and that the context does not probably enhance their interest in nature. In addition, there are no formal courses that support students in learning music or nature at university. This would have a negative effect on their listening and speaking competencies in terms of recognizing and performing tone, pitch, rhyme and rhythm. In addition, the results indicated there were statistically significant differences among the streams in the perceptions of their MIs in favor of the health stream students who generally scored higher than the other two groups in the competency and achievement tests before joining the university. Scholars suggested a number of ways, techniques and activities for teachers to incorporate MIs in the ELF classroom, and to consider these ways in their lesson plans for practical use in the class. Based on these findings, teachers are recommended to identify students' learning styles, interest and multiple intelligences, and consider the results in their lesson plans to devise teaching techniques in such a way that meet the varying needs, learning styles and intelligences of their students. There are a number of ways suggested in this paper to help EFL teachers integrate multiple intelligences in their classes. The Quality Assurance and Development Unit in the English Language Center is recommended to consider the results of this paper in their plans of teachers' professional development. It may conduct sessions where multiple intelligences are introduced, discussed, and instructors are invited to benefit from the scholars' techniques that may help them meet students' various strengths and learning styles. It may also highlight the areas revealed in this study where students have a negative attitude towards musical and naturalistic intelligences. Instructors may be asked to utilize their expertise to suggest ways to help students strengthen their musical and naturalistic intelligences in the EFL courses they study at university.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The researcher would like to acknowledge the contribution of the instructors who validated the study instrument and the students who responded to the questionnaire. Special thanks also go to the colleagues who assisted in the manuscript preparation.

REFERENCES

- [1] Al Faoury, O. (2012). The Effect of an Integrative Skills Program on Developing Jordanian University Students' Achievement in English and Select Multiple Intelligences. Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Yarmouk University, Jordan.
- [2] Armstrong, T. (1994). Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- [3] Bellanca, J., Chapman, C., & Swartz, E. (1994). Multiple Assessments for Multiple Intelligences. Palatine, IL: IRI/Skylights Publishing.
- [4] Campbell, L. (1997). Variations on a Theme- How Teachers Interpret MI Theory. *Educational Leadership*, 55(1), 14–19.
- [5] Christison, M., A. (1998). Applying Multiple Intelligences Theory in Preservice and Inservice TEFL Educational Programs, *Forum*, 36 (2), 2-20.
- [6] Christison, M.A. and Kennedy, D. (1999). "A Guidebook for Applying Multiple Intelligences Theory in the ESL/EFL Classroom." Burlingame, CA: Alta Book Center.
- [7] Christison, M.A. (1999). Multiple Intelligences. *ESL Magazine*, 2(5), 10-13.
- [8] Fortner, G. (2004). Examining Pedagogical Practices through raBin-Based Learning in Multiple Intelligences Theory. Unpublished Dissertation, Regent University, USA.
- [9] Gardner, H. (1985). Frames of mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences. New York: Basic Books.
- [10] Gardner H. (1993). Multiple intelligences: The Theory and Practice. New York: Basic Books.
- [11] Ghamrawi, N. (2013). Multiple Intelligences and ESL Teaching and Learning: An Investigation in KG II Classrooms in One Private School in Beirut, Lebanon, *Journal of Advanced Academics*, 25 (1), 25-46.
- [12] Gouws, F., E. (2008). Teaching and Learning through Multiple Intelligences in the Outcomes-Based Education Classroom, *Africa Education Review*, 4 (2), 60-74.
- [13] Haley, M. (2001). Understanding Learner-Centered Instruction from the Perspective of Multiple Intelligences. *Teachers College Record*, 106 (1), 163-180.
- [14] Ibnian, S. & Hadban, D. (2013). Implications of Multiple Intelligences Theory in ELT Field, *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 3 (4), 292-297.
- [15] Khamis, M. (2005). The Effect of a Multiple-Intelligence-Based Teaching Program on Jordanian upper Basic Stage Students' Paragraph Writing Ability. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Amman Arab University for Graduate Studies, Amman.
- [16] Kallenbach, S. (1999). Emerging Themes in Adult Multiple Intelligences Research. *Focus on Basics*, 3(A), 16-20.
- [17] Krstanoviae, I. (2003). Multiple Intelligences in the EFL Classroom: A Perspective in Context, Unpublished MA Dissertation, Brattleboro, Vermont.
- [18] Madkour, M. (2009). Multiple Intelligences and English as a Second Language Explorations in language acquisition. Unpublished Dissertation, University of Phoenix, Phoenix.
- [19] Maftoon, P., & Sarem, S. N. (2012). The Realization of Gardner's Multiple Intelligences (MI) Theory in Second Language Acquisition (SLA), *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 3 (6), 1233-1241.
- [20] Mohammadi, M., Abidin, M. & Ahmad K. (2012). The Relationship between Students' Strengths in Multiple Intelligences and Their Achievement in Learning English Language, *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 3, (4), 677-686.
- [21] Nolen, J., L. (2003). Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom, *Education*, 124 (1), 115-119.
- [22] Oxford, R. (1999). Anxiety and the Language Learner: New Insights. In Arnold, J. (ed.), *Affect in Language Learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [23] Silver, H., Strong, R., & Perini, M. (1997). Integrating learning styles and multiple intelligence. *Educational Leadership*, 55(1), 22–27.
- [24] Spirovska, E. (2013). Integrating Multiple Intelligences in Teaching English as a Foreign Language- SEEU Experiences and Practices, *SEEU Review*, 9 (1), 1-12.
- [25] Stanford, P. (2003). Multiple Intelligences for Every Classroom, *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 39 (2), 80-85.
- [26] Wilson, L. O. (2005, 6). <http://www.newhorizons.org/>. Retrieved 4 2, 2011, from new horizons: <http://education.jhu.edu/newhorizons/strategies/topics/mi/wilson1.htm>.



Tha'er Issa Tawalbeh was born in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in June, 10, 1968. He got his BA in English Language and Literature from Yarmouk University, Jordan in 1986. In 1997, he got his MA in TEFL from Yarmouk University. And in 2005, he graduated from Amman Arab University for Graduate Studies with a PhD in TEFL.

His teaching experience ranges from being a teacher of English, a supervisor, a head division of foreign languages in the Jordanian Ministry of Education, and instructor in the University of Jordan and Arab Open University in Jordan. He has been the Testing Unit Supervisor in Taif University in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia English Language Center since 2012. He published a number of articles. The latest ones are: Instructors' Perceptions and Barriers of Learner-Centered Instruction in English at the University Level,

Higher Education Studies, 2015. The other one is:

Instructors' Perceived Effectiveness of Current Professional Development Programs at Taif University English Language Center, English Language Teaching, 2015. The third one is Investigation of Teaching Competencies to Enhance Students' EFL Learning at Taif University International Education Studies, 2014. His research areas focus on teachers' professional development and curricula development and evaluation.

Dr. Tawalbeh participated in a number of international conferences and seminars such as TESOL Arabia and IATEFL and presented papers in conferences.

Bangladeshi EFL Learners' English Connectors: Overused or Underused?

Syed Md Golam Faruk

Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Bangladesh

Pulak Barua

Dept. of English, East Delta University, Bangladesh

Abstract—The paper investigates the answer scripts of an “English Writing” exam of 72 students in a Bangladeshi university in order to find out the nature and extent of the use of connectors in their second semester-final exam. It also tries to find out similarities and differences between the connector use of Bangladeshi non-native speakers (BNNS) and that of French, Japanese, Swedish, and Chinese non-native speakers on the one hand and between the connector use of BNNS and that of the native speakers of English (only British and American) on the other. To this end, the secondary data for other non-native and native speakers (NS) of almost the same age and level were collected from some published articles. The paper finds that in comparison to NS, BNNS, like most other non-native speakers, underuse most of the connectors.

Index Terms—connectors, native speakers, non-native speakers, underuse, overuse, Bangladesh

I. INTRODUCTION

Bangladeshi tertiary level English teachers often grumble that their students' texts usually lack coherence and appropriate cohesive ties. It is commonly believed that Bangladeshi Non Native Speakers (BNNS), like some other non-native speakers, either overuse or underuse them. But no other study has yet been conducted in order to find out the cohesive ties that BNNS most frequently use or to find out whether they use them appropriately or not. In this context, this paper investigates the scripts of a final writing exam of 72 students studying in the 2nd semester of Business Administration Department in East Delta University (EDU), Chittagong, Bangladesh. The study focuses mainly on two aspects—the cohesive ties that BNNS use most frequently and their use, i. e. whether they are overused or underused. Their overuse and underuse are measured against the way the native speakers use them. In addition to that, BNNS are also compared with four other groups of non-native speakers—Swedish Non Native Speakers (SNNS), Japanese Non Native Speakers (JNNS), French Non Native Speakers (FNNS), and Chinese Non Native Speakers (CNNS).

We did not collect any primary data for NS and other non-native speaker groups. The data for these groups were collected from the following studies— Heino, (2010); Shea, (2009); Tapper, (2005); Narita, Sato, and Sugiura, (2004); Yaochen, (2006); and Granger and Tyson (1996). All of these studies used the International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE) corpus as the source of their data. The corpus contains essays written by English language learners with many different language backgrounds (Granger et al, 2002). Each sub-corpus, for each group of non-native speakers, contains about 200,000 words, representing approximately 400 essays each of which has around 500 words. All learner writers have submitted detailed learner profiles where information about their sex, native language, education, and under which conditions the essay was written is provided (Granger, 1996, p. 71). For native speakers, the data were collected from a sub-corpus, Louvain Corpus of Native Essay Writing (LOCNESS), which consists of what is described as comparable types of essays written by American and British university students. As they were born and brought up in America or England, they are considered to be the representative of Native Speakers (NS).

II. ROLE OF CONNECTORS AND THEIR USE IN NON-NATIVE LEARNERS' TEXTS

Sparked off by Halliday and Hasan's *Cohesion in English* in 1976 a number of studies of cohesion and coherence have been carried out over the last 40 years. Many of these studies tried to find out whether there is a correlation between cohesive ties and coherence. On the whole, no positive correlation has been found between these two variables. For example, Tierney and Mosenthal (1983, p. 225) find out that cohesion is “causally unrelated to coherence.” Neunar (1987) finds that the quality of American essays does not depend on the number of cohesive ties. Witte and Faigley (1981, p. 200) state that there is positive correlation between cohesion and coherence to some extent but “a cohesive text may be only minimally coherent.”

However, no significant studies have been carried out regarding the interaction between cohesion and coherence in the texts written by the non-native speakers of English. It can be assumed that for the non-native speakers it is not easy to use connector appropriately. For them it is difficult because in English writing connectives are optional (Hartnett, 1986). They only enhance coherence in a text. Therefore, if they are used wisely, they aid the communicability, and if

they are used poorly, they create confusion. The hypothesis of most of the studies was that the non-native speakers of English tend to overuse the connectors. It was believed that the overuse is found particularly in Sentence Initial Connectors (SIC). However, the hypothesis was not always substantiated by the findings.

For example, Granger and Tyson (1996) hypothesized that French learners would overuse connectors in their essay writing though at the end of the study they find that French learners overuse the semantic categories of connectors and underuse the others like stylistic and syntactic categories. They argue that this happens because of the difference in French/English argumentation. Milton and Tsang (1993, p. 239) conclude their study of Hong Kong learners' use of connectors in the following way: "there is a high ratio of overuse of the entire range of logical connectors in our students' writing, in comparison to published English." Field and Yip (1992) has similar findings. They find that Cantonese EFL learners use far more linking devices than their English-speaking counterparts. Evensen and Rygh (1988) compare some Norwegian students' L1 and L2 (English) writing and find that they use more connectors in L2 than in L1. These findings are strongly supported by the contrastive literature on French/English connector usage (Vinay and Darbelnet, 1977; Newmark, 1988).

Narita, Sato, and Sugiura (2004) analyze 25 logical connectors in advanced Japanese university students' essay writing and compare them with those used by French, Swedish, and Chinese learners of English. They find that Japanese EFL learners overuse some connectors like "for example", "of course", and "first" in sentence-initial positions and on the other hand they underuse such connectors as "then", "yet", and "instead". In the comparative study among the four learner groups, they find that all of them except the Chinese learners overuse the appositive items like "for example" and "for instance" and the additive connectors like "moreover". Tapper (1998) finds that in all the semantic categories Swedish learners overuse the connectives — particularly in the corroborative and clarifying categories. Similar findings are found in Swedish students' expository essays (Wikborg and Björk, 1989). Regarding appositive conjuncts Altenberg and Tapper also find the instance of overuse.

There is also a significant difference between the positional tendencies of the connectors used by native and non-native speakers. For example, Japanese learners are quite different from the English native learners. Japanese EFL learners clearly prefer sentence-initial position, whereas English native students use the connectors in sentence-medial positions. Field and Yip (1992) find that sentence-initial position, or ISP as they call it, is the most common position for all L2 writers and that "L1 writers used the NIP (non-initial position) significantly more than L2 writers" (1992, p. 22). They also find that the impression of overall overuse of connectors is increased by L2 preference for placing connectors in sentence and paragraph initial position: "The impression of too many devices in the L2 scripts may be compounded by a strong use of the initial sentence and paragraph position" (1992, p. 25). They continue "it is possible that the NIP position may have a positive effect beyond variation in that it points the reader more firmly to content than the ISP position" (1992, p. 26). Therefore, the use of ISP points the reader towards both the organization of the text and the role of writer.

In this context, this paper tries to find out the nature and extent of connectors used by BNNS and compares them with FNNS, JNNS, SNNS, and CNNS on the one hand and with NS on the other. To this end, the paper tries to answer the following research question: *Do advanced Bangladeshi EFL learners use the connectors in the same way as the advanced EFL students of France, Japan, Sweden and China?*

III. METHOD

As this study compares some primary data with secondary data, both of the following sub sections— participants and procedure—consist of two parts: one (primary data) is for BNNS and the other (secondary data) is for NS, CNNS, JNNS, FNNS, and SNNS.

Participants

The study was conducted in East Delta University, a private university in Chittagong, the second biggest city in Bangladesh. The data collection process was integrated with a regular writing course of the 1st year students. The number of students was 72 aged between 18 – 20. Among them 52 were male and 20 were female students. They were studying in BBA (Bachelor of Business Administration). At secondary level, most of them (60) studied in Bangla medium schools and the rest graduated from English medium schools.

The studies for NS, CNNS, JNNS, FNNS, and SNNS had similar kind of participants. Apart from the differences in nationalities they were of the same age group and were between the second and the fourth semesters during the time when the studies were conducted. Students of this particular level were chosen because at this "advanced" stage they were supposed to make relatively few morphosyntactic errors. It is to be noted here that all the learners were learning English as a foreign language not as a second language. The homogeneity was maintained keeping Nickel's (1989, p. 298) observation in mind that in many cases EFL learners differ from ESL learners, particularly as regards the question of transfer.

Materials

The data for other native and non-native speakers were taken, as mentioned before, from ICLE. The data for native speakers were taken from a sub-corpus of ICLE, LOCNESS (Louvain Corpus of Native Essay Writing), which consists of 53 argumentative essays (30, 531 words) written by American university students (mostly 17-23 years old). The CNNS corpus contains 200 argumentative essays (56,293 words). The learners were second or third year Chinese

university students. The JNNS corpus contains 75,794 word tokens (6,014 word types) used by the Japanese third or fourth year college students in order to write argumentative essays. The FNNS corpus containing 89,918 words is slightly bigger than the Japanese corpus. The SNNS corpus contains 30,595 words. The Swedish EFL students from Lund University and Gothenburg University in their third or fourth semester of English studies wrote 53 argumentative essays each of which had a mean length of 577 words.

As the purpose of the study is to compare the connector use of BNNS with that of FNNS, JNNS, SNNS, CNNS, and NS, we tried to get the data from similar kind of text in Bangladesh. Following ICLE, we instructed the students to write argumentative essays, as connective usage is shown to be closely related to register and discourse type (Biber, 1988; Altenberg, 1984 & 1986).

Procedure

The study conducted for BNNS was integrated with a writing course offered in EDU, Bangladesh. During the course, the teacher taught the learners the use of connectors among other sub skills of writing and time and again made the students aware of the importance of coherence and cohesion of a text. The teacher instructed the students that connectors are not to be used as “stylistic enhancers” but as higher level discourse units. He also advised the students to distinguish between semantic and syntactic connectors. Regarding semantic connectors, the students were advised to differentiate individual linking devices and regarding syntactic connectors, the students were advised to learn the flexibility of connector positioning by studying authentic texts. At the end of the course, he gave a test as he always does and the students always take in other courses. The students did not know that their use of connectors would be analyzed after the test. It means that the whole process happened without being affected by the researchers.

The first task, after the test, was to detect the connectors for study. Unlike the studies based on ICLE, here we marked all the connectors used in the texts manually. Like ICLE studies, we did not collect the data by computer for three reasons. Firstly, we thought while collecting data manually, we would have better idea about the connectors used by BNNS, and secondly, we wanted to analyze stylistic, semantic, and syntactic misuse of connectors, and finally, we wanted to see the connectors in context in order to disambiguate the uses of the connectors as Granger and Tyson (1996, p. 20) observe “‘so’ can function both as adverb and as connector.”

After detecting every instance of each of the connectors, their raw frequencies were recorded and then they were calculated per 30,570 words in order to make the data comparable with the data of the studies carried out before on the basis of ICLE.

As for NS, all tokens were extracted by hand. The researchers began with the list of connectors provided by Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999, p. 530). Later on they added other connectors to the list when encountered in the text. For CNNS, according to semantic relations, all adverbial connectors were classified into seven categories: Resultive, Listing, Contrastive, Appositive, Corroborative, Summative, and Transitional. Then the researchers first used Word Smith tools, a word list made for each corpus used in the study to get the frequency for each adverbial connector. Then they made concordances for the adverbial connectors which also have usages other than linking. Next they compared the overall frequencies of adverbial connectors so that they could find out how learners overused and underused the adverbial connectors. Afterwards they compared the difference in the distribution of semantic categories between the two corpora namely: the Corpus of Chinese University Student English and the Corpus of Canadian Native University Student English. Finally they conducted the chi-square tests to see whether the differences were significant or not ($p < 0.05$).

In the case of JNNS, the researchers extracted all instances of target logical connectors from the target corpus with its adjacent contextual information. Then they discarded irrelevant instances by manually checking all the instances. Finally, they computed frequency counts of each logical connector per its occurrence position. For FNNS, the researchers first made a list of 108 connectors. Next they applied TACT concordancing software to extract all instances of each of these connectors from the corpus. The task of this TACT concordancing software is to provide raw frequencies of particular words and strings of words and to display these words and phrases within five lines of context. Here contextualization was important because many connectors may have two or more different uses (for example ‘so’ can function both as adverb and as connector). After contextualization overall frequencies were calculated (raw frequencies and per 100,000 words). Finally the researchers examined and analyzed all the connectors including cases of stylistic, semantic and syntactic misuse.

For SNNS, the researchers used a synthesis of Quirk et al’s (1985) and Martin’s (1992) models. They categorized the connectors into six divisions: additive, clarifying, contrastive, resultive, transitional and corroborative. They took the term “corroborative” from Ball (1986) (see Granger (1996) for discussion). However, they included only non-clause-integrated adverbial connectives in this new classification. As according to Granger (1996), connectives denoting a temporal relationship were regarded as external to argumentative text types, these were not included. Finally they came up with a list of 170 adverbial connectives. They wanted to develop a detailed systematic classification of connectives in order to facilitate the analysis, and identify differences in the usage of connectives between the two groups.

Tapper, (2005) compared native speaker students and Swedish EFL learners calculating the connector frequencies out of 30,595 words. Therefore, in order to make the other EFL learners’ corpora comparable with them we converted all the data, including BNNS’s raw data, and calculated them out of 30,595 words.

IV. RESULTS

The statistics are presented in Table 1 and Table 2. Table 1 presents all the connectors used by Bangladeshi university students and Table 2 shows the comparison among five groups of learners: BNNS, NS, CNNS, JNNS, FNNS, and SNNS.

TABLE 1:
CONNECTOR TYPES AND THEIR FREQUENCY IN BNNS

SL	Connector	Type	Total	Percentage
1.	But	Contrastive	107	20.42
2.	So	Resultive	103	19.66
3.	Because	Resultive	32	6.107
4.	However	Contrastive	30	5.725
5.	for example	Clarifying	23	4.389
6.	on the other hand	Contrastive	18	3.435
7.	Another	Additive	18	3.435
8.	Moreover	Additive	14	2.672
9.	in conclusion	Concluding	14	2.672
10.	Firstly	Additive	11	2.099
11.	Then	Resultive	10	1.908
12.	as a result	Resultive	10	1.908
13.	so that	Resultive	10	1.908
14.	Besides	Additive	9	1.718
15.	Like	Clarifying	9	1.718
16.	Secondly	Additive	8	1.527
17.	And	Additive	8	1.527
18.	that's why	Resultive	8	1.527
19.	for this	Resultive	8	1.527
20.	Finally	Concluding	6	1.145
21.	Overall	Resultive	5	0.954
22.	for that reason	Resultive	4	0.763
23.	such as	Clarifying	4	0.763
24.	Again	Additive	4	0.763
25.	Without	Additive	4	0.763
26.	Similarly	Additive	3	0.573
27.	Also	Additive	3	0.573
28.	One	Clarifying	3	0.573
29.	in summary	Concluding	3	0.573
30.	by this	Clarifying	3	0.573
31.	as	Resultive	3	0.573
32.	after that	Additive	3	0.573
33.	Thus	Resultive	2	0.382
34.	therefore	Resultive	2	0.382
35.	in addition	Additive	2	0.382
36.	furthermore	Additive	2	0.382
37.	that (is)	Clarifying	2	0.382
38.	otherwise	Contrastive	2	0.382
39.	Rather	Corrective	2	0.382
40.	Now	Temporal	2	0.382
41.	in contrast	Contrastive	1	0.191
42.	Thirdly	Additive	1	0.191
43.	Other	Additive	1	0.191
44.	Yet	Contrastive	1	0.191
45.	to sum up	Concluding	1	0.191
46.	at the end	Concluding	1	0.191
47.	to conclude	Concluding	1	0.191
48.	Though	Contrastive	1	0.191
49.	for instance	Clarifying	1	0.191
50.	on the contrary	Contrastive	1	0.191
	Total		524	

TABLE 2:
COMPARISON OF THE USE OF SEVEN CONNECTORS AMONG FIVE GROUPS

Connectors	LOCNESS		BNNS		CNNS		JNNS		FNNS		SNNS	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
However (contrastive)	174	15.9	44	5.72	20	5.06	36	18.36	16	4.83	129	8.7
Therefore (resultive)	81	7.4	3	0.38	—	—	—	—	11	3.32	75	5.1
Such as (clarifying)	68	6.2	6	0.76	—	—	—	—	—	—	40	2.7
For example (clarifying)	56	5.1	34	4.39	22	5.56	37	18.87	—	—	125	8.4
Also (additive)	53	4.8	4	0.57	72	18.22	—	—	—	—	—	—
Yet (contrastive)	45	4.1	1	0.19	—	—	2	1.02	6	1.81	—	—
So (resultive)	42	3.8	152	19.66	96	24.30	—	—	—	—	55	3.7

Table 1 starts with the most frequently used connector “but” (20.42%) and ends with the two least used connectors “for instance”(0.191%) and “on the contrary” (0.191%). Fifty connectors used by the Bangladeshi university students can be categorized in seven ways: contrastive (8), additive(15), resultive (12), clarifying (7), concluding (6), corrective (1), and temporal (1). Most of the connectors fall under additive and resultive categories.

In Table 2, there are two comparable contrastive connectors—“however” and “yet”. Both of them are underused. “However” is underused by BNNS (5.72%), like two other groups of non-native speakers—SNNS (8.7%) and CNNS (5.06%), whereas the native speakers’ use of the connector is 15.9%. Only one group of non-native speakers—JNNS (18.36%)—overuses it. Similarly, the proportion of “yet” in BNNS (0.19%) is far less than that in NS (4.1%), but slightly less than that in JNNS (1.02) and FNNS (1.81).

There are two resultive connectors—“therefore” and “so”. They are used quite differently in BNNS. In BNNS, “therefore” is underused at 0.38% while the proportions in the other groups like SNNS (8.7%) and FNNS (4.83%) are nearer to that of NS (7.4%). On the other hand, “so” is overused in BNNS (19.66%) like CNNS (24.30%), whereas in SNNS (3.7%) the use of this connector is almost equal to NS (3.8%).

Two clarifying connectors—“such as” and “for example”—are used quite dissimilarly in BNNS. In BNNS, the connector “such as” is underused at 0.76%, like in SNNS (2.7%) whereas in NS the proportion is 6.2%. In the case of the other clarifying connector—“for example”—BNNS (4.39%) is similar to NS (5.1%) and CNNS (5.56%). In SNNS (8.4%), the proportion is a bit bigger but the highest proportion for this connector is found in JNNS (18.87%). The additive connector “also” is significantly underused by BNNS at 0.57% and remarkably overused by CNNS at 18.22%, whereas in NS its use is 4.8%.

There is also striking similarity between BNNS and other non-native speakers regarding the connector positions. In this study, the learners used all the connectors in sentence initial positions. In the interviews conducted after the data collection, some students informed the researchers that they thought that that was the only position where connectors could be used and some other learners found it difficult to use them in non-initial positions.

V. DISCUSSION

In the collected data, the total number of connectors used by BNNS is 524. Among them the most frequently used connectors are “but”, “so”, “because”, “however”, “for example”, “on the other hand”, “another”, “moreover”, “in conclusion” and “firstly”. Interviews with the students and teachers suggest that the reasons behind this are L1 influence and the way the teachers taught the connectors throughout their English education. Four of the six students said that they are used to use the Bangla counterparts of the connectors listed above—কিন্তু like “but” and “however”, তাই like “so” and “because” like উদাহরণ স্বরূপ like “for example”, অপরপক্ষে like “on the other hand”, তদুপরি like “moreover” etc. In a similar vein, while analyzing their own teaching, two teachers realized that the similarities between L1 and L2 might have influenced the students to emphasize these particular connectors.

However, although *however* is in the list of frequently used words by BNNS, it is to be termed as underused connector when BNNS is compared to NS. The other least frequent words in BNNS—*also*, *such as*, *therefore*, *yet*—are to be categorized as underused connectors as well if their use in NS is considered. Like *however*, *for example* is also in the list of most frequently used connectors in BNNS and the proportion is almost equal to that in NS. Therefore, it is used neither as an overused or as an underused connector in BNNS.

In the last few years *so* has been used almost as a Bangla word by the rising middle class of Bangladesh. Naturally, this is counted not only as the most frequent connector in BNNS but also the most overused cohesive device in comparison to NS.

VI. CONCLUSION

In this paper we have reported on our quantitative analysis of 50 logical connectors used by advanced Bangladeshi students (BNNS) and then selected seven of them to be compared with their use by other groups—American and British (NS), Chinese (CNNS), Japanese (JNNS), French (FNNS), and Swedish (SNNS) advanced students. Only seven of them were selected as all of these connectors were used by NS and most of them were found in other groups. In fact, we tried to find out all the connectors which were used in the same way by both BNNS and NS in order to detect the overused and underused connectors by BNNS. At the same time, we also compared BNNS with other non-native speaker groups.

Among seven connectors, five of them—*however*, *therefore*, *such as*, *also*, and *yet*—are underused by BNNS, only one—*so*—is overused, and in the case of *for example*, there is no difference between BNNS and NS. It is interesting to note that the underused connectors are also used in almost the same way by other non-native speakers. For example CNNS, FNNS, and SNNS also underuse *however*. Only JNNS use the connector as the native speakers. The most underused connector in BNNS is *therefore*. This connector is also underused by FNNS and SNNS. We did not get any data regarding this connector in JNNS and CNNS.

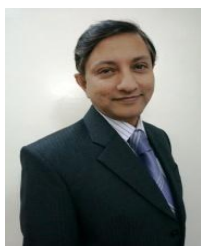
In the case of *such as*, we could find out the data in only one other group of non-native speakers—SNNS—and they also underuse the connector. In a similar vein, JNNS and FNNS—the only groups of non-native speakers where we got

the data for the connector, *yet*, show the tendency of underusing the connector like BNNS. The only connector *for example* is used almost in equal numbers by BNNS, NS, CNNS and SNNS. It is overused by only JNNS. No data was found for this connector in FNNS. Only one underused connector—*also*—is found to be overused by CNNS. The data for this connector was not found in the groups of other non-native speakers. *So* is the only connector which is overused but as it is already mentioned that nowadays Bangladeshi middle class people including Indian Bengalis use this connector as a Bangla word.

Therefore, in answer to the research question—*Do advanced Bangladeshi EFL learners use the connectors in the same way as the advanced EFL students of France, Japan, Sweden, and China*—it can be said that Bangladeshi advanced EFL learners like most other non-native advanced EFL learners underuse most of the connectors and use them mostly in sentence-initial positions.

REFERENCES

- [1] Altenberg, B. (1984). 'Causal linking in spoken and written English'. *Studia Linguistica*. 38. 20- 69.
- [2] Altenberg, B. (1986). Contrastive linking in spoken and written English. In G. Tottie & I. Bäcklund (eds.), *English in Speech and Writing: A Symposium*. Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell. 13-40.
- [3] Ball, W. J. (1986). *A Dictionary of Linking Words*. London: Macmillan.
- [4] Biber, D. and E. Finegan. (1988). Adverbial stance types in English. *Discourse Processes*. 11. 1-34.
- [5] Celce-Murcia, M., & Larsen-Freeman, D. (1999). *The grammar book: An ESL/EFL teacher's course*. United States: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
- [6] Evenson, L. S. & Rygh, I. L. (1988). Connecting L1 and FL in discourse-level performance analysis. *Papers and Studies in Contrastive Linguistics*. 22. 133-178.
- [7] Field, Y. & Yip, L. M. O. (1992). A comparison of internal cohesion conjunction in the English essay writing of Cantonese speakers and native speakers of English. *RELC Journal*. 23 (1). 15-28.
- [8] Granger, S. & Tyson, S. (1996). Connector usage in the English essay writing of native and non-native EFL speakers of English. *World Englishes*. 15. 17-27.
- [9] Halliday, M. A. K., & Hassan, R. (1976). *Cohesion in English*. New York: Longman.
- [10] Hartnett, C.G. (1986). Static and dynamic cohesion: signals of thinking in writing. In *Functional approaches to writing: Research Perspectives*, ed. B. Couture. London: Frances Pinter.
- [11] Heino, P. (2010). *Adverbial Connectors in Advanced EFL Learners' and Native Speakers' Student Writing*. Bachelor degree project, English, Stockholm University.
- [12] Martin, J. R. (1992). *English Text. System and Structure*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
- [13] Milton, J. & Tsang, E. S. C. (1993). A Corpus-Based Study of Logical Connectors in EFL Students' Writing: Directions for Future Research. In R. Pemberton & E. S. C. Tsang (eds.), *Lexis in Studies*. 215-246. Hong Kong: The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.
- [14] Mosenthal, J. H., & Tierney, R. J. (1983). *Cohesion: Problems With Talking about Text: A Brief Commentary*. Technical Report No. 298.
- [15] Narita, M., Sato, C., & Sugiura, M. (2004). Connector usage in the English essay writing of Japanese EFL learners. In *Proceedings of 4th International Conference on Language Resources and Evaluation (LREC 2004)*. 1171-1174.
- [16] Neuner, J. L. (1987). Cohesive ties and chains in good and poor freshman essays. *Research in the Teaching of English*. 21(1). 92-103
- [17] Newmark, P. (1988). *A Textbook of Translation*. New York: Prentice Hall.
- [18] Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G., & Svartvik, J. (1985). *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. London: Longman.
- [19] Shea, M. (2009). A Corpus-based Study of Adverbial Connectors in Learner text. *MSU Working Papers in Second Language Studies*. 1(1).1-13.
- [20] Tapper, M. (2005). Connectives in advanced EFL Learners' written English – Preliminary results. In F. Heintz & E. Klingvall (eds.), *The department of English in Lund: Working papers in linguistics 5*. Lund: Department of English, Lund University.
- [21] Vinay, J. P. & Darbelnet, J. (1977). *Stylistique Comparée du Français et de l'Anglais*. Paris: Les Éditions Didier.
- [22] Wikborg, E. & Björk, L. (1989). *Coherence in text: An empirical study with pedagogical sequences for composition teaching*. Uppsala: Hallgren & Fallgren.
- [23] Witte, S. P. & Faigley, L. (1981). Coherence, cohesion and writing quality. *College Composition and Communication*. 32 (2).189-203.
- [24] Yaochen, D. (2006). Use of Adverbial Connectors in Chinese EFL Learners' Argumentative Writing. *CELEA Journal*. 29 (6). 32-41.



Syed Md Golam Faruk did his PhD in Applied Linguistics and ELT. He has been teaching English language and literature for more than 26 years in different colleges and universities of Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia. The last university he was affiliated with is King Khalid University, KSA. At present, he is working as the Director of Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, Bangladesh. He does research, publishes articles, and participates in international conferences in the areas like “English Language Teaching” and “Language Policy and Planning”.



Pulak Barua was born in Chittagong, Bangladesh on 16 December 1981. He did his M.A. in English from Chittagong University in 2003. In addition to that he did CELTA course in Chennai, India in 2013. He has worked with three universities in Bangladesh including Metropolitan University, Sylhet; BGC Trust University, Chittagong; and East Delta University, Chittagong. Besides, he has also worked with two universities in Saudi Arabia: King Khalid University and Bisha University. He does research, writes articles and attends national and international workshops and conferences. His research interests include “English Language Teaching” and “Curriculum Development”.

The Interrelationship among L1 Writing Skills, L2 Writing Skills, and L2 Proficiency of Iranian EFL Learners at Different Proficiency Levels

Amir Marzban

Department of English Language, Islamic Azad University, Qaemshahr Branch, Qaemshahr, Iran

Faezeh Esmaeelnia Jalali

Allameh Mohaddes Nouri University, Mazandaran, Iran

Abstract—This research aimed to investigate the interrelationship among L1 writing skills, L2 writing skills, and L2 proficiency of Iranian English language learners at different proficiency levels. To this aim, two groups of advanced and lower-intermediate participants consisting of twenty learners were asked to write on the same topic in Persian and English in one week interval. Subsequently, the compositions were evaluated based on Jacob Composition Profile (1981). Then, the Pearson product-moment correlation was calculated to examine the correlation between the compositions' overall scores in Persian and English in both groups. To determine which variables, L1 writing skills or L2 proficiency, is a more significant predictor of L2 writing at these different proficiency levels, and investigate the difference between them, multiple regression analysis was calculated. The results displayed large correlation between compositions' overall scores in advanced group, but not in lower-intermediate group. Also, L1 writing was a more significant predictor at advanced level; however, at lower-intermediate level, L2 proficiency was a more significant predictor of L2 writing. These findings entail some pedagogical implications for effective language teaching in L2 writing classes.

Index Terms—L1 writing skills, L2 writing skills, L2 proficiency, cross-linguistic transfer, linguistic threshold, linguistic interdependence, common underlying proficiency

I. INTRODUCTION

Writing is considered as an important instrument through which People can communicate with each other by sharing ideas, convincing and persuading one another. For most of the EFL learners, writing in a second language is so difficult, since writing skill has not received enough attention so far. However, the significant role of writing skill and its importance in demonstrating students' learning ability cannot be denied in writing in the first or second language. As a result, any studies that could focus on writing skill and ways to facilitate its learning would be very important.

Similarities can be found between first language writing and second language writing at superficial levels and between the processes that the writers go through (Silva 1993, as cited in Blackmore-Squires, 2010). As a result, enough attention must be paid to the relationship between L1 and L2 writing to find how and in what degree L1 can facilitate the acquisition of the L2. In other words, it must be found when and how positive transfer of L1 skills happens in the language acquisition process. Positive transfer of skills does not occur randomly; it can only happen under right conditions. Based on the Linguistic Threshold Hypothesis (LTH) (Cummins, 2000), if a learner reaches a critical level in L2 proficiency, positive transfer of skills occurs in the L2 acquisition process. In other words, L2 proficiency below this critical level may have a detrimental effect on the development of L2 acquisition. However, based on Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis of Cummins (1979) only if a learner has sufficient exposure to L2 and motivation to learn it, language skills will transfer from first language to second language.

Following the contention made by LTH (Cummins 1979), this study concentrates on the relationship between Iranian language learners L1 and L2 writing skills at high and low proficiency levels to find if low proficiency in second/foreign language impedes the positive transfer of writing skills from L1 to L2. It also tries to investigate whether or not those at higher levels of language proficiency can positively transfer the skills between languages. The role of L1 knowledge and its influence on L2 acquisition is an important issue in the field of language learning. It is also so important to find the role of L2 proficiency on the relationship between L1 and L2 writing, and the transfer of writing skills between languages.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. Linguistic Threshold Hypothesis

The Linguistic Threshold Hypothesis (Cummins, 2000) asserts that a minimum level in L2 proficiency must be passed before L2 learners can reap any benefits from L1. In other words, they must gain a certain amount of control

over L2 before applying their L1 skills to L2. This certain amount "is referred to as a "threshold level of linguistic competence" by Cummins (1979) or a "language ceiling" by Clark (1979).

Cummins's (1981) states that transfer of skills between languages is only possible after a learner has achieved a threshold level of L2 proficiency. He contends that for an effective language transfer, a minimum level of linguistic competence is necessary, and the better the L2 proficiency level of the learners, the higher transferability of the L1 writing skills to L2 writing could be.

B. Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis

Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis is the other perspective through which Cummins (1979) has examined L2 acquisition. In this hypothesis, Cummins (1979) proposed that "only if a learner has sufficient exposure to L2 and motivation to learn it, language skills will transfer from first language to second language." Based on Cummins (1984), the "underlying cognitive/ academic proficiency," which is common across languages allows the cognitive/ academic or literacy related skills to be transferred across them.

This Hypothesis reveals the relationship between L1 and L2 learning and indicates how L1 affects learning of another language. In other words, first and the second language are dependent on each other despite the differences between them. According to this hypothesis, certain L1 linguistic knowledge and skills can be positively transferred during the process of L2 acquisition, and transfer happens automatically (Cummins, 1979).

C. Common Underlying Proficiency

Common underlying proficiency (Cummins, 2000) provides the base for the development of both the first language and second language. The term CUP has also been used to refer to the cognitive/ academic proficiency that affects performance in both languages (Cummins, 2000). The relationship between first and second language literacy skills suggests that effective development of L1 skills can provide a conceptual foundation for long-term growth in L2 literacy skills. As Cummins (2000) asserts, "Conceptual knowledge developed in L1 makes input in the L2 comprehensible." He states that when a student learns a set of skills in one language, he/she can transfer these skills when learning another language.

D. Related Studies

There is a growing interest about the possible relationships among first language and English as foreign/ second language and language proficiency level. As a result, a number of investigations have been done about the interrelationship between L1 and L2 writing quality and L2 proficiency in recent years.

De Jesus (1984) studied the relationship between L1 and L2 writing quality of 344 Spanish-speaking university students learning English in Puerto Rico. Finally, his correlational analysis revealed a moderate correlation between students' Spanish and English writing score.

Other investigations about the relationship between the students' L1 (Japanese) and L2 (English) writing skills were conducted by Hirose and Sasaki. The two studies of Hirose and Sasaki (1994) on 19 EFL university learners, and Sasaki and Hirose (1996) on 70 EFL university students also revealed that there is a significant relationship among students' L1 and L2 writing scores. Thus, they concluded that students' compositions in English and Japanese are similar in quality. Similarly, Kamimura (2001) studied the correlation between L1 and L2 writing skills of 45 Japanese EFL students and found that there is a significant relationship between the skills in both languages.

In contrast to these quantitative analyses, there are some studies which did not reveal a significant correlation between L1 writing skills and L2 writing skills. For instance, Carson, Carrell, Silberstein, Kroll, and Kuehn (1990) examined the correlation between first and second language writing performance of 57 Japanese students and 48 Chinese students Japanese. The results of their study revealed a weak but positive correlation between writing skills of Japanese students ($r = .23$) but they did not find a positive relationship for Chinese students' composition skills ($r = -.19$). Pennington and So's (1993) case study also revealed data that did not support the L1-L2 positive significant writing relationship. They studied the writing performances of six university students and found only a weak correlation between their L1 (English or Chinese) and L2 (Japanese) writing performance. Similarly, Abu-Akel (1997) studied the relationship among writing quality of 55 Arabic students and 45 Hebrew students. Finally, he found a weak but positive correlation for Arabic students but the correlation between writing quality of Hebrew students was non-significant.

Ito (2004) in his study of 262 Japanese EFL students examined the interrelationship among their L1 and L2 writing skills, and L2 proficiency. Finally, he concluded that there is a significant correlation among participants' L1 and L2 composition scores, and their L2 knowledge. He also found that participants' L1 writing skills are a more significant predictor of their L2 writing skills than their L2 proficiency.

In another study Dweik and Abu Al Hommos (2007) studied on writing skill of 20 bilingual students studying English in Jordan. They found that Arabic writing skills can be transferred positively to English despite the differences between two the languages. Likewise, Alsamandani (2010) investigated the relationship between Saudi university students' writing competence in Arabic and English and found a strong correlation between them. The study also examined the relationship between students' self-regulatory abilities and their L1 and L2 writing competence and revealed that those who scored high in L1 or L2 writing had high self-regulation abilities.

In another study, Ito (2009) investigated the existence of the threshold level in L2 writing quality of 317 Japanese university students and found that the participants' essays in L1 and L2 were similar in quality. He also found that participants' low English proficiency has a detrimental effect on their L2 writing.

Yigzaw (2013) also tried to find whether grade 11 students' L1 (Amharic) writing and their L2 (English) proficiency could significantly predict their L2 writing. He also studied whether the students' L2 vocabulary knowledge, grammar, and reading could significantly determine their L2 writing. The results indicated that all the independent variables significantly correlated with the dependent variable (L2 writing); however, only students' L1 writing, first semester overall English and reading test scores were significant predictors of their L2 writing.

In order to examine the transfer of writing skills between Persian and English few researches have been done. Two cases of these studies are conducted by Zia Houseini and Derakhshan (2006) and Javadi-Safa, Vahdany, and Khalili (2013).

Ziahosseini and Derakhshan (2006) examined the correlation between Iranian university students' L1 and L2 writing skills. Thus, the participants wrote argumentative and narrative essays in Persian and English, and the essays were evaluated based on ESL composition profile (Jacobs, Zinkgraf, Wormuth, Hartfiel, & Hughey, 1981). Finally, they concluded that there is a significant relationship between students' L1 and L2 writing tasks.

In a similar study Javadi-Safa, et al., (2013) investigated the relationship between Persian and English writing skills of upper-intermediate learners. His study not only examined the relationship between overall scores of compositions but also investigated the transfer of each of five major components of ESL composition Profile (Jacobset al., 1981). For this purpose, the students wrote two different argumentative essays one in Persian and one in English. Then, the essays were evaluated based on ESL compositions profile. Finally the results showed a significant correlation between the overall scores of the compositions and also between the five writing sub-skills in both languages.

As reviewed so far, a number of investigations have been conducted throughout the world about the possible relationship between L1 and L2 writing quality and L2 proficiency of language learners. However, there is not a clear agreement on the relationship among these three variables in L2 writing researches. As a result, there is a need to continue investigating the relationship among these variables. Moreover, most of these studies did not take in to account the role of L2 proficiency and only investigated the relationship between the participants' L1 and L2 writing skills, and examined the strength of positive transfer of skills between languages at high proficiency levels. As a result, there is a need to examine the role of L1 on L2 writing and transfer of skills between the two languages at different proficiency levels. Thus, this study tries to respond to the following research questions:

1. Is there any significant relationship between Iranian advanced learners' overall proficiency in L1 (Persian) writing skills and L2 (English) writing skills?
2. Is there any significant relationship between Iranian lower-intermediate learners' overall proficiency in L1 (Persian) writing skills and L2 (English) writing skills?
3. Are Iranian EFL learners' L1 writing skills a more significant predictor of L2 writing skills than their L2 proficiency at advanced proficiency level?
4. Are Iranian EFL learners' L1 writing skills a more significant predictor of L2 writing skills than their L2 proficiency at lower-intermediate proficiency level?

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

A total of seventy-eight (54 females, 24males) Iranian EFL students studying at a private English Institute in Babol comprised the population of this study. They have been studying English for some years at the Institute and they all have already passed some English writing courses and were familiar with academic writing. Some of them were also university students studying English Translation; as a result, they have also passed some English writing courses at the University. The participants were both females and males between the ages of 17 to 25. Then a version of Oxford Placement Test was administered to all the volunteer students who took part in this exam to find two groups of participants needed for the study. Based on the result of OPT, twenty (15 females, 5 males) participants who scored between 30 to 39 out of 60 were considered as "lower-intermediate" level and twenty others (17 females, 3 males) who scored between 48 to 54 out of 60 were considered as "advanced" level.

They are two reasons for selecting these proficiency levels. First, based on the Cummins' LTH (1979) and results of some studies (e.g. Ito, 2009; Behjat & Sadighi, 2010) low proficiency level impedes the positive transfer of writing skills from first language to second language, while based on the results of Ito's (2009) study, EFL learners can positively transfer their skills across languages at intermediate & advanced proficiency levels, and also based on Cummins' (1979) LIH, high proficiency level students can easily transfer their L1 writing skills to L2 while writing in English. According to Ito's (2009) study, this critical level exist somewhere below the intermediate level. Hence, in order to support these hypotheses, and to show that low proficiency level students may face difficulties in transferring their skills from their L1 to L2 while writing in English, but high level students may have few difficulties in transferring skills and do it more easily, this study investigated two groups of lower-intermediate & advanced learners to find whether there is a relationship between their first language (Persian) and foreign language (English) writing skills at

these language proficiency levels. Second, only students at these proficiency levels (advanced & lower-intermediate) were familiar with academic writing and have passed English writing courses at the Institute or at University.

B. Instruments

In order to collect the necessary data for the present study two testing instruments were used, including one English proficiency test and two writing exams. To determine the participants' level of L2 proficiency the Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was administered and those students who scored between 30 to 39 out of 60 on this test were considered as "lower-intermediate" level and those who scored between 49 to 54 out of 60 on this test were considered as "advanced" level.

The second testing instrument included two writing tasks, one in Persian and the other one English. The participants were asked to write an Expository composition on a given topic. The reason for choosing an Expository composition is that most standardized tests often include an Expository prompt and this genre is commonly used as a tool for classroom examination. In addition, since in most of the previous studies the relationship between L1 writing skills and L2 writing skills has been investigated in Argumentative and Narrative genre of essay writing, there was a need to investigate the relationship between these variables in an Expository composition. The Persian topic was the translated version of the same English topic. Like other studies, in order to reduce the variability of the raters' evaluation and also participants' performance from topic to topic, the students were asked to write on the same topic in Persian and English (e.g., Friedlander, 1990; Jacobs, Zinkgraf, Wormuth, Hartfiel, & Hughey, 1981; Reid, 1990).

The compositions were evaluated by two raters in both languages, based on ESL Composition Profile (Jacobs et al., 1981, p. 91) for analytical scoring including 21 analytical subcomponents of five major components of writing (Content, Organization, Vocabulary, Language use, and Mechanics). These five major components were differentially weighted. Content as the first component received 30 points, language use was given 25 points, organization and vocabulary were given 20 points, and mechanics received the least emphasis about 5 points. The concepts represented by the Profile criteria are consisted of four mastery levels of "excellent to very good" "good to average" "fair to poor" and "very poor".

Based on ESL Composition Profile (1981), Compositions were rated through holistic judgment for 21 analytical subcomponents of five major components of writing including:

- 1) Content: knowledge of subject, development of thesis, range of substance, and relevance to assigned topic.
- 2) Organization: fluency of expression, clarity of stated/supported ideas, quality of organization, succinctness, logical sequence of ideas, and cohesion
- 3) Vocabulary: range of vocabularies, effectiveness of word/idiom choice and usage, register appropriateness, and word form mastery.
- 4) Language use: effectiveness and complexity of constructions, and grammatical correctness including: tense, agreement, articles, prepositions, pronouns, number, word order/function.
- 5) Mechanics: few errors of punctuation, spelling, paragraphing, and capitalization.

However, since there is no capitalization in Persian writing it was not taken in to consideration in evaluating Persian compositions.

Procedure

This study involved three sessions of English proficiency test, L1 writing task and L2 writing task which were conducted in one week-interval. At the first session a version of English proficiency test (OPT) was administered to identify the participants' L2 proficiency level and choose the two groups of advanced and lower-intermediate level which were needed for conducting this study. One week after OPT administration the first writing task was conducted. At this session two groups of students took part in the writing task independently. In order to do that, half of the students in advanced group (10 students) were asked to write an Expository essay on a particular topic in Persian and the other half (10 students) were asked to write in English on the same topic. The same procedure was used for the lower-intermediate group as well. One week later which was the third session, the second writing task was administered and those students in advanced group who had written in Persian were asked to write in English and those who had written in English were asked to write in Persian on the same topic. Similarly the lower-intermediate group participated in the second writing test.

For both writing tasks, the participants were not told what topic they were going to write on, and they also did not know that they had to write on the same topic in both languages. During each writing task, the participants had to write at least 250 words in about 45 minutes for each Persian and English composition. Also, half of the participants in each group wrote an essay in English and the remaining half did so in Persian to neutralize a possible order effect of L1 and L2 writing tasks.

After collecting participants' compositions to have more reliable results in the rating scores, the compositions were given to the trained raters to be evaluated. There were two raters for evaluating Persian compositions and two raters for evaluating English ones. The English compositions were evaluated by two qualified English language teachers, based on ESL Composition Profile (Jacobs et al., 1981). Similarly, the Persian compositions were rated by two qualified Persian language teachers, using a Persian counterpart of Jacobs et al., (1981) profile developed by Persian writing specialists. Also, before evaluating students' essays, there was a brief session to explain the scoring procedure to the raters.

The score for each composition was the average of two independent ratings. After collecting data, it was analyzed through SPSS. To examine the interrelationship among participants' Persian and English writing skills, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was calculated between the mean scores of Persian and English compositions for both groups of learners at advanced and lower-intermediate level. Following that, to determine which variables, L1 writing skills or L2 proficiency, is a more significant predictor of L2 writing at these proficiency levels, and investigate the difference between them, multiple regression analysis was calculated.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The inter-rater reliability was examined to ensure the consistency of the four raters' evaluations (the two Persian raters and two English raters). The inter-rater reliability indexes were high for both Persian raters (.881) and English raters (.917) in lower-intermediate group of participants. They were also high for both Persian raters (.867) and English raters (.884) in advanced group of participants which indicate a strong correlation and are acceptable for a reliable writing assessment.

Descriptive analysis of compositions revealed higher mean scores for Persian compositions in comparison to English ones for advanced proficiency learners, which indicate that writing in English is more difficult for the students than writing in Persian (Table1). It is because Persian is the students' native language. It is also similar to the results of previous studies conducted by Zia Houseini and Derakhshan (2006) and Javadi-safa et al., (2013) which revealed higher mean scores for Persian compositions. Based on this difference between mean scores, these researchers concluded that transfer of skills between the languages is from Persian to English. Furthermore, they concluded that the smaller value of standard deviation for Persian compositions shows more homogeneity between them which is also similar to the results of the present study (Table1).

TABLE1.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE SCORES FOR L1 WRITING AND L2 WRITING FOR THE ADVANCED GROUP

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
L1Writing Advanced	20	76.50	95.00	86.5250	5.00717	25.072
L2Writing Advanced	20	68.50	91.75	82.5625	5.92934	35.157
Valid N (listwise)	20					

In a similar way, the mean scores of Persian compositions in lower-intermediate learners were higher than the mean scores of English ones, which indicate that writing in English is more difficult for the students, and also this difference must be attributed to the participants' lower proficiency in the second language (Table2). The value of the standard deviation was also lower for Persian compositions in comparison to English ones (Table 2), which suggests greater homogeneity between each of Persian compositions (Table 2). It is worth mentioning that the difference between the mean scores of Persian compositions and the mean scores of English ones is greater for lower-intermediate learners than the advanced learners. This difference is due to the difference in their L2 proficiency level, the lower the proficiency level the greater the difference. It indicates that low proficiency level learners cannot easily transfer their skills from Persian to English.

TABLE2.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE SCORES FOR L1 WRITING AND L2 WRITING
AT THE LOWER-INTERMEDIATE GROUP

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
L1WritingLow	20	78.50	96.00	87.2750	4.87063	23.723
L2WritingLow	20	46.50	74.75	61.0125	8.40914	70.714
Valid N (listwise)	20					

In order to answer the first research question about the relationship between advanced language learners' L1 (Persian) writing skills and L2 (English) writing skills, Pearson product moment correlation analysis was run after confirming the normality of distribution scores through a Shapiro-Wilk. The results revealed a large correlation ($r = .926, p < .05$) (Table 3) which indicates a significant relationship between L1 (Persian) and L2 (English) writing skills of advanced language learners. The result is consistent with the Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis which claims that certain L1 linguistic knowledge and skills can be positively transferred during the process of L2 acquisition, and transfer happens automatically (Cummins, 1979) specially at high proficiency levels which is congruent with Linguistic Threshold Hypothesis. The finding is also consistent with the results of similar studies investigating L1-L2 writing relationship (e.g. De Jesus, 1984; Hirose & Sasaki, 1994; Sasaki & Hirose, 1996; Kamimura, 2001; Ziahouseini & Derakhshan, 2006; Dweik & Abu Al Hommos, 2007; Alsamandani, 2010; Javadi-safaet al., 2013) and suggests that the students' Expository essays in Persian and English are similar in quality. However, it is inconsistent with the studies of Carson, Carrell, Silberstein, Kroll, and Kuehn (1990), Pennington and So (1993), and Abu-Akel (1997) which revealed data that did not support the L1-L2 positive significant writing relationship.

TABLE3.
RESULT OF THE PEARSON PRODUCT-MOMENT CORRELATION FOR THE WRITING OF THE ADVANCED GROUP

		L1WritingAdvanced	L2WritingAdvanced
L1WritingAdvanced	Pearson Correlation	1	.926**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	20	20
L2WritingAdvanced	Pearson Correlation	.926**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	20	20

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

Following that, in order to answer the second research question, about the relationship between lower-intermediate language learners' L1 writing skills and their L2 writing skills, first the normality of distribution scores was confirmed through Shapiro-Wilk. Then, Pearson product moment correlation analysis was run to examine the correlation between the overall scores of Persian and English essays. The result showed no significant correlation ($r = .009, p > .05$) (Table 4) which indicates that there is not a significant relationship between Persian and English writing skills of students at this proficiency level. This finding supports the Linguistic Threshold Hypothesis which states that a minimum threshold in L2 proficiency must be passed before L2 learners can reap any benefits from L1. Based on LTH (Cummins, 1979) low proficiency in foreign language impedes the positive transfer of skills from L1 to L2. The result is consistent with previous studies which indicated that low proficiency level has a "short-circuit" effect on L2 acquisition (Sasaki & Hirose, 1996; Ito, 2004; Ito, 2009).

TABLE4.
RESULT OF THE PEARSON PRODUCT-MOMENT CORRELATION FOR THE WRITING OF THE LOWER-INTERMEDIATE GROUP

		L1WritingLow	L2WritingLow
L1WritingLow	Pearson Correlation	1	.009
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.968
	N	20	20
L2WritingLow	Pearson Correlation	.009	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.968	
	N	20	20

The third research question was also examined using multiple regression analysis to determine which variables, L1 writing skills or L2 proficiency, is a more significant predictor of L2 writing at advanced proficiency level. In order to run the multiple regression analysis, three assumption of normality for data distribution, independence of observation, and model fit were tested through Normal P-P Plot, Durbin-Watson test, and ANOVA test. Then, a multiple regression was run to predict L2 writing from L1 writing and L2 proficiency. The results showed that L1 writing (1.115) is a more significant predictor than L2 proficiency (-.289) for the advanced group participants (Table5) which indicates that L1 writing skills play a more significant role in L2 writing than L2 proficiency scores at advanced level. This may mean the increase in students' L1 writing scores may increase their L2 writing scores. Conversely, it may mean the less the students' L1 writing scores indicate the less their L2 writing scores would be. This result suggests that at high proficiency levels students' L1 writing skills affect their L2 writing skills development. The result is congruent with Ito's (2004) study which revealed that L1 writing skills were a more significant predictor of L2 writing skills than L2 proficiency ;although, in his study both of the two variables contribute significantly to L2 writing skills. It is also consisted with Yigzaw's study (2013) which indicated that L1 writing significantly correlated with L2writing, and was a significant predictor of student's L2 writing. The finding supports Cummins' (1979) Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis, and suggests that at high proficiency levels students' L1 writing skills have greater impact on their L2 writing skills than their L2 proficiency levels.

TABLE5.
THE COEFFICIENTS TABLE TO PREDICT L2 WRITING FROM L1 WRITING AND L2 PROFICIENCY IN THE ADVANCED GROUP

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		95.0% Confidence Interval for B			
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
1	(Constant)	.896	15.550		.058	.955	-31.912	33.705
	L1WritingAdvanced	1.115	.106	.941	10.475	.000	.890	1.339
	L2ProficiencyAdvanced	-.289	.275	-.094	-1.049	.309	-.869	.292

Dependent Variable: L2WritingAdvanced

Similarly, the fourth research question was tested using multiple regression analysis, after testing three assumption of normality for data distribution, independence of observation, and model fit through Normal P-P Plot, Durbin-Watson test, and ANOVA test. The results showed that L2 proficiency (2.70) is a more powerful predictor than L1 writing(.026) for the lower-intermediate group participants (Table 6). The results indicated that L2 proficiency plays a more significant role in L2 writing than L1 writing skills at lower-intermediate level, and L2 proficiency is a more significant predictor of L2 writing. This may mean the increase in students' L2 proficiency scores may increase their L2 writing scores. Conversely, it may mean the less the students' L2 proficiency scores indicate the less their L2 writing scores

would be. This result implies that at low level of L2 proficiency students' proficiency levels affect their L2 writing skill development. The result supports Cummins' (1979) Linguistic Threshold Hypothesis which states that a minimum threshold in L2 proficiency must be passed before L2 learners can reap any benefits from L1. The finding is consistent with the results of the study of Sasaki and Hirose (1996). Also it is congruent with other similar studies which examined the relationship between L2 writing skills and L2 proficiency (e.g., Pennington & So, 1993; Ito, 2004). However, it is inconsistent with statistical investigations of Sasaki and Hirose (1994).

TABLE 6.
THE COEFFICIENTS TABLE TO PREDICT L2 WRITING FROM L1 WRITING AND L2 PROFICIENCY IN LOWER-INTERMEDIATE GROUP

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t
1 (Constant)	-34.028	19.000		-1.791 .091
L1WritingLow	.026	.179	.015	.147 .885
L2ProficiencyLow	2.700	.310	.904	8.706 .000

a. Dependent Variable: L2WritingLow

V. CONCLUSIONS

The results of the present study show that there is a significant relationship between L1 (Persian) writing skills and L2 (English) writing skills in advanced group; however, no significant relationship is found in lower-intermediate group. It indicates that the students make use of their L1 (Persian) when writing in their L2 (English) as a tool to facilitate their writing process. In fact, learners transfer their L1 writing skills to L2 writing, and these skills are transferred across languages positively. However, L2 proficiency might mediate the successful transfer of L1 writing skills. Lower proficiency writers may not be able to easily transfer L1 writing skills when writing in a L2. Therefore, advanced learners appear to be better able to use Persian writing skills and are also better able to make use of these skills while writing in English than lower-intermediate learners.

Moreover, based on the findings of the study at higher proficiency level students' L1 (Persian) writing skills are more significant predictor of their L2 (English) writing. Therefore, it can be concluded that at high levels of language proficiency, writing difficulty is due to the lack of writing abilities in language learners, and that they have not received enough instruction in Persian or they are not good at writing even in their L1. In fact, these EFL writers transfer both good and weak writing skills from Persian to English, and weaker writers' failure to produce a well-formed composition in English is based on their failure to write well in Persian. In other words, skills that have never been acquired in their L1 could not be transferred to the L2.

Furthermore, at lower proficiency level, students' L2 proficiency is a more significant predictor of their L2 (English) writing than their L1 (Persian) writing. As a result, it can be concluded that at low proficiency levels, writing difficulty is due to the lack of enough linguistic knowledge, and shows that language learners have limited English proficiency, thus they just need more L2 practice and exposure in their L2. In other words, low L2 proficiency level is an impediment to transfer skills from L1 to L2. Even if language learners are perfect L1 writers, and have the knowledge to produce a well-formed composition by expressing ideas, supporting, and organizing them in Persian, they cannot easily transfer these skills to English. Following the Linguistic Threshold Hypothesis (LTH)(Cummins, 1981) language transfer is possible only after a threshold level of L2 proficiency has been attained, and learners reach a certain level in L2 proficiency.

Based on the findings of the present study, it can be concluded that EFL teachers and curricula developers must pay attention to the relationship between Persian writing and English writing. In fact they should study Persian and English compositions to find their similarities and differences and to acquaint themselves with learners' weaknesses and strengths. Thus, they should take into account teaching how to write in English alongside with Persian to have good results in their L2 writing classes. This indicates that it is better to integrate the instruction of the two languages in EFL textbooks which makes them pedagogically more meaningful and practical. However, based on the findings of the present study at lower-intermediate level, for an effective transfer of writing skills from L1 to L2 a minimum level of linguistic competence is necessary. Therefore, teaching how to write in English alongside with Persian is only effective if the learners have passed a minimum level of linguistic competence.

REFERENCES

- [1] Abu-akel, A. (1997). On reading-writing relationships in first and foreign languages. *JALT Journal*, 19, 198-216.
- [2] Alsamandani, H.A. (2010). The relationship between Saudi EFL students' writing competence, L1 writing proficiency, and self-regulation. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 16 (1). Retrieved March 3, 2015 from http://www.eurojournals.com/ejss_16_1_06.pdf.
- [3] Behjat, F., & Sadighi, F. (2010). Iranian English major students' L2 grammar development: Linguistic Threshold hypothesis. *The Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language*, 13(4), A-6. Retrieved February 23, 2015 from <http://tesl-ej.org/pdf/ej52/a6.pdf>.

- [4] Blackmore-Squires, S. (2010). An investigation into the use of blog as a tool to improve writing in the second language classroom (MA dissertation). Submitted to the University of Manchester. Retrieved February 23, 2015 from <http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/Thesis/Thesis-Squires.pdf>.
- [5] Carson, J.E., Carrell, P.L., Silberstein, S., Kroll, B., & Kuehn, P.A. (1990). Reading-writing relationships in first and second language. *TESOL Quarterly*, 24, 245-266.
- [6] Clarke, M. (1979). Reading in Spanish and English: Evidence from adult ESL students. *Language Learning*, 29, 121-150.
- [7] Cummins, J. (1979). Linguistic interdependence and the educational development of bilingual children. *Review of Educational Research*, 49, 222-251.
- [8] Cummins, J. (1981). The role of primary language development in promoting educational success for language minority students. In *Schooling and language minority students: a theoretical framework*, 3-490. Los Angeles: Evaluation, Dissertation and Assessment Center, California State University.
- [9] Cummins, J. (1984). *Bilingualism and special education: issues in assessment and pedagogy*. Clevedon, Avon, England: Multilingual Matters.
- [10] Cummins, J. (2000). *Language, power and pedagogy: Bilingual children in the crossfire*. Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.
- [11] De Jesus, S. (1984). Predictors of English writing performance of native Spanish-speaking college freshmen. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 256 184).
- [12] Dweik, B. S., & Abu Al Hommos, M.D. (2007). The effect of Arabic proficiency on the English writing of bilingual-Jordanian students. Retrieved March 10, 2015 from <http://www.eric.ed.gov>.
- [13] Friedlander, A. (1990). Composing in English: Effects of a first language on writing in English as a second language. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Second language writing: Research insights for the classroom*. (pp. 109-125). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [14] Hirose, K. & Sasaki, M. (1994). Explanatory variables for Japanese students' expository Writing in English: An exploratory study. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 3, 203-229.
- [15] Ito, F. (2004). The Interrelationship among first language writing skills, second language writing skills, and second language proficiency of EFL university students. Retrieved February 14, 2015 from <http://www.eric.ed.gov>.
- [16] Ito, F. (2009). Threshold to transfer writing skills from L1 to L2. Retrieved February 14, 2015 from <http://www.eric.ed.gov>.
- [17] Jacobs, H. L., Zinkgraf, S. A., Wormuth, D. R., Hartfiel, V. F., & Hughey, J. B. (1981). *Testing ESL composition: A practical approach*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House Publication.
- [18] Javadi-Safa, A., Vahdany, F., & Khalili, S. M. (2013). A study of the relationship between Persian and English writing skills among Adult EFL learners in Iran. *International Journal of Applied Linguistic & English literature. IJALEL* 2 (2) 43-52. Retrieved April 10, 2015 from <http://dx.doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.2n.2p.43>.
- [19] Kamimura, T. (2001). Japanese students' L1-L2 writing connections: Written texts, writing competence, composing processes, and writing attitudes. *The Bulletin of the Kanto-Koshin-Etsu English Language Education Society*, 15, 165-183.
- [20] Pennington, M. C., & So, S. (1993). Comparing writing process and product across two languages: A study of 6 Singaporean university student writers. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 2, 41- 63.
- [21] Reid, J. (1990). Responding to different topic types: A quantitative analysis from a contrastive rhetoric perspective. In B. Kroll (Ed.), *Second language writing: Research insights for the classroom* (pp. 191-210). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [22] Sasaki, M. & Hirose, K. (1996). Explanatory Variables for EFL Students' Expository Writing. *Language learning*, 46, 137-174.
- [23] Yigzaw, A. (2013). Students' first language writing skills and their English language proficiency as predictors of their English language writing performance. *Journal of languages & culture* 4 (6), 109-114.
- [24] Ziahouseini, S. M., & Derakhshan, K. (2006). Transfer of first language of foreign language writing: A contrastive rhetoric study of English & Farsi. *Quarterly Journal of Humanities*, Alzahra University, 16(58), 75-91.

Amir Marzban is an assistant professor of TESOL at Islamic Azad University, Qaemshahr branch. His research interests include conversation analysis, L2 reading & writing, CALL, and teacher education. He has published in both Iranian and International journals and also has presented in many international conferences.

Faezeh Esmaeelnia Jalali graduated with an M.A. in Teaching English as a foreign language from Allameh Mohaddes Nouri University, Mazandaran, Iran. She is currently teaching English courses at different language institutes in Iran.

Dark Energy in Robert Frost's Poems*

Yujie Su

Wenzhou University, China;
Chonnam National University, Korea

Abstract—Robert Frost is regarded as one of the most distinguished American poets in the twentieth century. His work usually realistically describes the rural life in New England in the early twentieth century and conveys complex social and philosophical themes. But his personal life was plagued with grief and loss, which is also reflected in his poems, and the dark energy distinguishes Robert Frost's poems, frequently conveyed in the use of lexical words like *dark* and its derivatives or synonyms, *woods*, *snow*, *night*, and so on. The present study starts with the survey of the lexical representations of dark energy used in Robert Frost's poems, which are collected in *The Oxford Book of American Poetry*, and the other poems listed on the website which are not collected in the book but written by Robert Frost¹, aiming to gain more understanding of the great poet's contemplation involving human and nature.

Index Terms—dark energy, Robert Frost, lexical words, poem

I. INTRODUCTION

It's well established among the editors of the *Contemporary Literary Criticism* that Frost tried to obtain an insight of "fundamental questions of existence, depicting with chilling starkness the loneliness of the individual in an indifferent universe"² in his best works. And the critic T. K. Whipple stated that "in much of his work, particularly in *North of Boston*, his harshest book, he emphasized the dark background of life in rural New England, with its degeneration often sinking into total madness."³ In Brodsky's eyes, in real life Frost was a dark, "terrifying" poet as Lionel Trilling had called him, by a sense "of his own negative potential."⁴

Robert Frost chose to use languages that stayed close and true to the experience in his verses and he was successful in bringing the realm of poetry closer to the hard realities of everyday life. Most of Frost's poems put settings in winter. The world of Robert Frost's poetry contains *snow*, *woods*, *birches* as well as *lakes*. What is more striking in Robert Frost's poems is that lots of lexically and semantically associated words like *dark*, *darkness*, *darken* as well its synonym like *black*, or its extensions as nouns like *night*, *evening woods*, *moon*, *etc.*, and as verb phrases like *to sleep*, revealing the theme of darkness. For example, in the last sentence of Frost's poem *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening* "*But I have a promise to keep. And miles to go before I sleep*" (Frost, 2006, p.229), here 'sleep' is usually interpreted as 'I's contemplation of suicide. (Michael Richard Gargiulo, 2010)

The contemplation of humans and nature are thought to be a lasting theme in Frost's poems. And the nature is usually of dark features while humans are in the darkness of nature, struggling and living. In terms of the dark features mentioned above, there is a necessity to obtain an objective view of the relations between human and nature in Frost's poems.

II. A SURVEY INTO FROST'S POEMS

Robert Frost's poems have been widely known and received a fairly large body of criticism. And Robert Frost, hence, has many labels like nature poet, New England Yankee, symbolist, humanist and many others. But more importantly, the poems Frost has written are of greater significance on contemplation of humans and nature. The present survey into Frost's poems aims to gain more knowledge and understanding about his contemplation of humans and nature.

A. Background Information of the Survey

Some critics have noted something darker blowing the placid surface of the pastoral in Frost's poems, which the critic M. L. Rosenthal interpreted as a "shocked sense of the helpless cruelty of things in 'Once by the Pacific'"⁵. In this poem the use of words like *dark*, *night* accentuated the negative sense.

Frost's personal state of mind and tragic incidents happening to his family can partly explain the prevailing key undertones in his poems. Firstly, the darkness in the poems is closely related to the poet's own health problems. Frost himself suffered all his years from the effects of mental illness. He was in constant depression and often felt himself

* I would like to thank Profess Yang (양승갑) for his lectures and comments.

¹ referring to the website: <http://www.poemhunter.com/robert-frost/poems/> (accessed 20/11/2015).

² referring to the website: <http://images.sciencesource.com/preview/16377518/JC3294.html> (assessed 8/4/2016).

³ referring to the website: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Frost (accessed 20/11/2015).

⁴ referring to the website: <http://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/robert-frost-darkness-or-light> (accessed 20/11/2015).

⁵ Robert Frost: Depression and Tragedy. <http://www.shmoop.com/robert-frost/depression-tragedy.html> (accessed 20/11/2015).

unhinged by his darker impulses. Secondly the successive misfortunes of his family members gave him repeated blows. In 1920 his sister Jeanie had to be sent to a Maine state Mental Hospital and died 9 years later. Then his daughter Marjorie died in childbirth in 1934. And his wife Elinor died of heart failure in 1938, followed by his son Carol who committed suicide at the age 38 in 1940. What's more, his daughter Irma was committed to a mental hospital in 1947.

Though his fears, angers, and jealousies could be alarmingly intense, he took to poetry and distilled the vast terrifying wild into controlled verse. Frost's poems are critiqued in *Anthology of Modern American Poetry* (2015) as presenting "pessimistic and menacing undertones which often are not recognized nor analyzed".⁶

B. Scope of the Survey

As for how many poems Frost had written, the best answer given by Yahoo is 180 and a half, which is incomplete and unpublished. But the total number given by Google is much lower, 121 poems. Then on the website of poemhunter⁷, there are altogether 158 Frost's poems collected

After some efforts of proofreading and comparing with the search results from Yahoo, Google, together with Frost's famous and typical poems collected in *Anthology of Modern American Poetry*, finally it's settled that there are altogether 160 poems for the present survey.

C. Tools Applied in the Survey

Looking into certain lexical words manually is surely more time-consuming and less efficient than making use of a computation system. The tool used for the present survey is AntConc 3.2.4 w (widows) 2011, which is developed by Professor Laurence Anthony and colleagues in the Center for English Language Education in Science and Engineering of Waseda University in Japan. AntConc is a freeware, a multiplatform tool for carrying out corpus linguistics research and data-driven learning. The Concordance Tool in AntConc shows the search results in a "KWIC" (KeyWord in Context) format, which allows the users to see how words and phrases are commonly used in a corpus of text.

With the search engine ready, the collection of Frost's 160 poems is arranged in a certain form and order, which facilitates the search of certain lexical elements.

D. Results of the Survey

Before the computation, four groups of words related to dark energy are divided and investigated separately, which is listed as follows:

- 1) *dark* and its derivatives like *darkness*, *darken*
- 2) *black*⁸
- 3) related nouns like *night*, *evening*, *woods*, *winter*, *snow*, *moon*, *stars*
- 4) related verbs like *to sleep*⁹

By using the search tool AntConc, lexical words related with dark energy in Frost's poems are calculated and investigated, and then generate the following results, as shown in Table 1 (See Appendix1).

According to Table 1, compared with other words, it's obvious that the frequency of *night* and its plural form *nights* ranks the highest, followed by *snow* and *star*, while words like *dark*, *stars* and *woods* are used almost at the same frequency in the poems.

Based on the results in Table 1, a further survey of how many poems contain the dark energy related words is preceded, obtaining 97 poems in general. As it has been mentioned above, the pessimistic and menacing undertones in Frost's poems can be detected in terms of dark energy related words, which indicates that about 60.6% of Frost's 160 poems have the connotation of such pessimistic and menacing undertones.

It seems true to think that if a poem contains more dark energy related words, it is considered to be more likely to connote the darkness and depressive undertones. From Table 2 (See Appendix2), the two poems like *The Onset* and *The Death of the Hired Man* have the highest occurrences of dark related words, 8 of which are involved in the two poems which are followed by the poem *The Bonfire* having 7 while the other two like *The Star Splitter* and *An Old Man's Winter Night* have 6. As for the poems containing less than 6 occurrences of dark energy related words, the total number is quite remarkable, almost 57.5 % of the collection for the survey. In other words, almost the majority of Frost's poems more or less connote negative undertones.

III. INTERPRETATION OF DARK ENERGY IN FROST'S POEMS

Depressive or negative undertones, conveyed in terms of dark energy related words are often regarded to relate to the themes of death, anxiety and fear, isolation and depression in Frost's poems. These themes are discussed in details via typical poems in the following sections.

A. Death

⁶ Biography of Robert Frost. <http://www.poemhunter.com/robert-frost/biography/> (accessed 22/11/2015).

⁷ Referring to the website: <http://www.poemhunter.com/robert-frost/poems/> (accessed 20/11/2015).

⁸ As for the derivatives of *dark's* synonym *black*, there is no occurrences of *blackness* and *blacken* in the collection.

⁹ The verb phrase "*sleep*" is restricted for the research rather than words like *die*, *died*, *dead*, *death* or *grave*, because the verb *sleep* is more likely to be used metaphorically than the other words mentioned here.

In western literature, *snow* or *winter* is thought to have an intrinsic relation to death, not to mention words like *dead*, *ghost*, *grave* or *graveyard*. Words like *snow* and *snows* occur in Frost's 31 poems and *winter* in 12 poems, which may imply that Frost did deal a lot with the themes of death or life and death. There many of Frost's poems are titled with the words mentioned above, like *Dust of Snow*, *A Patch of Old Snow*, *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*, *The Death of the Hired Man*, *Spoils of the Dead*, *The Disused Graveyard*, *Home Burial*, *Ghost House*, *Goodbye*, and *Keep Cold*, *Looking for a Sunset Bird in Winter*, *An Old Man's Winter Night*, and so on. The key words in the titles help the readers to gain an easier understanding of the themes.

Frost develops a tone of melancholy contentment throughout the poem *Ghost House*, which describes a sad but beautiful picture of the house in terms images of nature, triumphant over the homes, fences, and roads of man, and so on. However, a careful attachment is given to the rebirth and regrowth of this nature, maintaining the funereal tone of the poem.¹⁰

The poem *Home Burial*, which is one of the 11 containing 3 occurrences of dark energy related words, describes the destruction of a couple's marriage after the death of their child due to their inability in communication and mutual understanding, which Frost possibly referred to the tragic death of his first son during infancy. In the poem *The Death of the Hired Man* an ordinary man and his wife are engaging in a philosophically significant debate, representing two different attitudes and two ways to look at fellow beings or even life itself. The wife stands for love and sympathy, emotion and imagination, evaluating human beings not in terms of reasons but out of emotions, while her husband sees the affair from the perspective of a practical modern man, evaluating or judging people by their work, worth, contribution, etc. To put it more correctly, the husband represents "reason, intellect, utilitarianism, practicality, rationality, and the like".¹¹ Silas, who is the hired man, is now weak and unable to contribute to the work and in fact he is dying. But the wife still insists on hiring him again. The conflict between the couple ends as they finally come close to each other. In the poem, Frost emphasized the importance of reconciliation and expressed the idea that people could not stand alone and thrive and the people should provide a little substance to the needy in a stark modern world.

The other two poems like *Come In* and *The Onset*, though one is titled with a verb phrase indicating an action and the other with a nominal phrase indicating the beginning of an affair or activity, both having no death-related words in the titles, share similar themes of life and death. Rothman (2013) interpreted the poem *Come In* as the poet invites himself to the edge of the woods, and trying to quell his own impulses, in terms of the singing of a thrush somewhere in the trees, which the man hears when he approaches the edge of the woods but fails to see the bird for the woods are shadowed. Therefore, Joshua Rothman comes to the interpretation of the expression "come in" as "die".

Death does not necessarily have to be the end. Lakshmi (2010, p.8) stated that in death there is continuation of life. The poem *the Onset* is considered the remaining part of *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*. Khan and Saddique (2014, p.122) said that the former poem presents the poet's consentment about the realities of life and death while the latter presents the conflict between commitments of life and peacefulness of death so one cannot decide whether to go to fulfill promises or to stay among woods and result is uncertainty and melancholy. Warren (1947, p.5) explained that the poem "*Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*" left the paradox or the problem that the capacity to stop by the roadside and the contemplation involving a repudiation of the world of action and obligation it canceled the definition of our humanity. Life and death are consistent and connected parts of humans.

B. *Anxiety and Fear*

Lionel Trilling remarked Frost's poems as "terrifying" in 1959. Though many were startled at the remarks, Frost's poems are indeed terrifying. Frost's Secretary Elizabeth Shepley Sergeant once quoted Robert Frost's words and said that the poem *Directive* indicated Frost's capture of his fears in terms of the values of the children's world.¹² The poem *Design* or *In White*¹³ suggests that life is full of both evil and innocence and in front of massive nature, and human beings are just like the moth and the spider fragile and in constant hazardous state. The human beings are also products of these natural forces, not spiritual design, as indicated in the last two lines "What but design of darkness to appall?/ If design govern in a thing so small"¹⁴. Pack (2003, p.163) interpreted Frost's *Directive* that it expresses the identical anxiety as the journeyer seeks "A broken drinking goblet like the Grail", but fears the mystery of salvation, for perhaps the goblet is "Under a spell so the wrong ones can't find it./ So can't get saved as Saint Mark says they mustn't"¹⁵. Similarly, in the poem *After Apple Picking*, the narrator expresses the anxiety and fear of being rejected and finally judged worthless. The poem *Two Look at Two* reveals the existential fear the lovers have about each other. This fear that essentially there is nothing unique in being human must be overcome if love is to flourish. (Pack, 2003, p. 166)

Frost integrated gentle observation and evocative rural scenes, and expressed his sense of being lost in the universe in the poem like *The Star Splitter* tells of a New England farmer who "burned his house down for the fire insurance and spent the proceeds on a telescope to satisfy a lifelong curiosity about our place among the infinities". (Abel, 1980) After

¹⁰ Referring to the website: <http://letsstalktreasure.blogspot.kr/2010/11/tone-analysis-ghost-house-by-robert.html> (accessed 23/11/2015).

¹¹ Referring to the website: <http://www.bachelorandmaster.com/britishandamericanpoetry/the-death-of-the-hired-man.html> (accessed 23/11/2015).

¹² Referring to the website: <https://www.nytimes.com/books/99/04/25/specials/frost-terror.html> (accessed 23/11/2015).

¹³ Frost's poem "In White" is the first draft of what became to be the poem "Design". The differences are minimal, only some grammar changes that don't affect the overall meaning of the poem.

¹⁴ Frost. (2006). *Design*. 233-234.

¹⁵ Frost. (2006). *Directive*. 237-238.

long looking at the stars, the farmer and his friend the poet-narrator found them as indifferent to man. The farmer McLaughlin's crazy but eccentrically sensible justification for buying the telescope impresses us with his imaginative, haphazard nature, which "stands a sharp contrast with the deep-rooted pragmatic, nose-to-the-grindstone farming folk of the town."¹⁶

As seen from Table 1, there are 21 Frost's poems employing *star* or *stars*. Similar to *The Star Splitter*, poems like *Stars* is the symbol of the longest reach of man's speculation. That indicates that there is an equation of ratio to threat of nature against man: threat is measured as force divided by distance. The threat of stars is greatest in force, but is so remote in distance, which means slight time.

C. Isolation and Depression

John T. Ogilvie (1957, p.72) in his critical essay *From Woods to Stars: A Pattern of Imagery in Robert Frost's Poetry* comments, "In several of Frost's poems...The dark woods stand for the privacy of the self, the sacred domain where poetry is made. Their area is the area of the poet's introspective life, his subjective experience. ..The poet guards and cherishes the woods as his own."

Poems like *An Old Man's Winter Night*, *Once by the Pacific*, *Acquainted with the Night* show a preoccupation with the themes of isolation and depression, and the poem *An Old Man's Winter Night* never offers the reason why the old man is alone, but reiterates his complete isolation and inability to have the comfort of companionship. And the old man himself remains silent throughout the poem. The time he does make sound, he stomps his feet more animalistically rather than give out his voice. By rendering the old man mute, Frost tries to make the readers feel the same sense of isolation that the old man himself is experiencing.¹⁷ In *Acquainted with the Night*, the narrator is overwhelmed with the feeling of isolation and depression as he walks the isolated city streets at night. Even though at the time of coming across a watchman and hearing a cry from a nearby street, the narrator, the sole "I," remains solitary as "I" look up at the moon in the sky and acknowledge that time has no meaning for "me" because the isolation is unending.

What's more, poems such as *After Apple-picking* and *The Death of the Hired Man* discuss particularly the loss related to the changing seasons and the sense of isolation inherent in New England's rural environment.

IV. CONCLUSION

Though the poems in question are not the complete volumes of Robert Frost, by investigating into the dark energy in Robert Frost's poems, in terms of images like *snow*, *winter*, *dark*, *black*, and so on, it helps to shed light on the poet's real inner world, which also resonates the common psychological thinking among the human beings.

A high percentage of Frost's poems reveal his contemplation involving the contrasts between humans and nature. There are two layers of dark references in Frost's poems. On the surface, it refers to the real wood, the snow, the night or the nature. On the deeper layer, it connotes the sinister beauty and peace of the wood or the treacherous beauty and peace of the nature, which are suicidal to the humans. Human's repudiation to surrender to the beauty or peaceful nature and the struggles and resistance to the pulling of nature arouse resonance within the readers and shed light on the meaning of life itself.

APPENDIX 1

TABLE 1:
THE RESULTS OF DARK ENERGY RELATED WORDS

dark energy related words	frequency	total frequency	number of poems
dark	32	32	23
darkness	6	6	6
darken/darkened	1+3	4	4
black	20	20	12
night/nights	70+1	71	48
evening/evenings	9+0	9	7
woods ¹⁸	31	31	24
winter	20	20	12
snow/snows	44+1	45	31
moon	22	22	9
star/stars	19+21	41	21
sleep/slept/ sleeping	15+7+2	24	16

¹⁶ referring to the website: <http://thegoodtypist.blogspot.kr/2008/12/review-star-splitter-by-robert-frost.html> (accessed 23/11/2015).

¹⁷ Referring to the website: <http://www.gradesaver.com/the-poetry-of-robert-frost/study-guide/summary-an-old-mans-winter-night-1916> (accessed 25/11/2015).

¹⁸ Here only the plural form is investigated because the woods and its singular form have different reference. The reference of the plural one is what the present research concerns.

APPENDIX 2

TABLE 2:
OCCURRENCES OF POEMS OF DARK ENERGY RELATED WORDS

occurrences	poems	Total numbers
8	The Onset; The Death of the Hired Man	2
7	The Bonfire	1
6	The Star Splitter; An Old Man's Winter Night	2
5	Design; Maple; Reluctance; In the Home Stretch; Spoils of the Dead; Evening in a Sugar Orchard; Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening	7
4	In white; Come In; Ghost House; Christmas Tree; Two Look at Two; Spring Pools; A Star in the Stone Boat; Wind and Window Flowers Desert Places; Place for a Third; They're Welcomed to Their Belief	11
3	Birches; The Axe-Helve; Paul's wife; Iris by Night; The Black Cottage; Once by the Pacific; After Apple-picking; Home Burial; Canis Major; Looking for a Sunset Bird in Winter; On Looking up by Chance at the Constellations	11
2	Out, Out; The Code-heroes; The Fear; The Mountain; Blueberries; God's Garden; Departmental; A Line-storm Song; The Gum Gather; Tree at My Window; The Freedom of the Moon; My Butterfly; Stars; Hyla Brook; In a Disused Graveyard; The Trial by Existence; The Oft-repeated Dream; The Most of It; My November Guest; Good-bye, and Keep Cold; Mending Walls; A Dream Pang; The Wood-pile; The Tramps in Mud Times; Misgiving; Storm Fear; The Hill Wife (also titled The Impulse)	27
1	Acquainted with the Night; Waiting; In a Vale; Bond and Free; The Exposed Nest; Putting in the Seed; Love and a Question; Leaves Compared with Flowers; The Telephone; Relevation; The Tuft of Lovers; A Servant to Servants; A Cliff Dwelling; A Prayer in the Spring; The Road not Taken; Waiting- a Field at Dust; Lodged; A Patch of Old Snow; Plowmen; In a Vale; Dust of Snow The Vantage Point; Not to Keep; In Equal Sacrifice; The Line-Gang; A Considerable Speech; Directive; A Question; Into My Own; The Hardwood Groves; Fragmentary Blue; The Generation of Men; Asking for Roses; Love and a Question; Pan with Us; Never Again Would Bird's Song be the Same	36

REFERENCES

- [1] Abel, Darrel. (1980). Robert Frost's "Second-Highest Heaven". *Colby Quarterly*, 16 (2), 78-90.
- [2] Nelson, Cary. (ed.) (2015). *Anthology of Modern American Poetry* (Second Edition). New York: Oxford University Press.
- [3] Frost, Robert. (2006). Design. In David Lehman & John Brehm (Eds.), *The Oxford Book of American Poetry*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, Inc, 233-234.
- [4] Frost, Robert. (2006). Directive. In David Lehman & John Brehm (Eds.), *The Oxford Book of American Poetry*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, Inc, 237-238.
- [5] Frost, Robert. (2006). Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening. In David Lehman & John Brehm (Eds.), *The Oxford Book of American Poetry*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, Inc, 228-229.
- [6] Khan, A. B. Raffique, S. & G. Saddique. (2014). Stylistics Analysis of the Poem 'The Onset' by Robert Frost. *International Journal of Academic Research and Reflection*, 2 (4), 121-126.
- [7] Lakshmi, S. N. Radhika. (2010). Life, Love, Death, and Poetry in the Work of Brian Patten. *IRWLE*, 6 (1), 1-11.
- [8] McGlinn, James E. (2010). *A Teacher's Guide to the Signet Classics Edition of Poems by Robert Frost*. New York: Penguin Group (USA).
- [9] Michael Richard Gargiulo. (2010). The Darkness of Robert Frost. <http://www.personal.psu.edu/mrg5299/blogs/mrg/2010/06/the-darkness-of-robert-frost.html> (accessed 20/11/2015.).
- [10] Ogilvie, John T. (1959). From Woods to Stars: A Pattern of Imagery in Robert Frost's Poetry. *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 1, 64-74.
- [11] Pack, Robert. (2003). *Belief and Uncertainty in the Poetry of Robert Frost*. Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England.
- [12] Rothman, Joshua. (2013). Robert Frost: Darkness or Light?. <http://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/robert-frost-darkness-or-light> (accessed 23/11/2015).
- [13] Warren, Robert Penn. (1947). The Themes of Robert Frost. *Michigan Alumnus Quarterly Review*, LIV (10), 1-11.

Yujie Su was born in Pingyang Town of Wenzhou, China in 1978. She received her MA degree in Foreign linguistics and Applied Linguistics from Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, China in 2009. And she is.

She is currently a Ph.D degree candidate in Chonnam National University and a lecturer in Wenzhou University, Wenzhou, China. Her research interests include Foreign linguistics and foreign language teaching.

A Comparative Study of Modernism in the Poems of Forough Farrokhzad and Adunis

Ahmad Lamei Giv*

Department of Persian Language and Literature, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, University of Birjand, Birjand, Iran

Majid Shahbazi

Department of Persian Language and Literature, Faculty of Literature and Humanities, University of Birjand, Birjand, Iran

Abstract—Clash of the West with East countries (Iran, Lebanon and Syria) was a factor in changing the structure of Eastern societies, resulting in the emergence of political and social developments like constitutional movements. There are undeniable similarities between Arabic and Persian poetry because of the long historical ties, similar political and social contexts, close cultural backgrounds and the influence of European culture on their literatures. After the literary revolution occurred under the influence of European culture and literature, attention to modernism is a common approach used by Persian and Arabic poets. In both Arabic and Persian literature, Modern poet expresses his surrounding issues according to the needs of the community. Attention to the culture of the West is a common point closing Forough Farrokhzad and Adunis as two contemporary poets. Due to the different cultural and intellectual situations as well as the degree of their familiarity with the West, they have differences and similarities in the methods and the effects of modernization in the West. Using a descriptive-analytical approach, this article will show that Forough and Adunis have used modern manifestations such as secularism, feminism, nihilism, freedom, deconstruction, city and nationalism in their poems due to their relations with the West under the influence of cultural-political developments in their own societies.

Index Terms—Adunis, Forough Farrokhzad, culture of the West, secularism, feminism

I. INTRODUCTION

Since Forough and Adunis are the prominent modernist poets in Iran and Arab society, their influences on both societies pattern is evident. Moreover, Modernism in poetry is one of the contentious issues in the developing world among literary scholars and thinkers in recent years because they fear of losing their language identity. This article tries to investigate some Westerns approaches in the poems of Forough Farrokhzad and Adunis. They are included in Modern poets of Iran and Arab world who reflect on the transformation of their ages in their poems. As an Iranian contemporary poet, Forough has understood fully the spirit of modernity. Her genius and artistry became more evident when one knows that she keeps her Modern mentality even when she is composing her inner pains in poetry. Adunis is also an Arab Modern poet who is familiar with new world and new components. He reflects on social problems based on present facts. The main question is “What is the influence of Western culture on the poems of Forough Farrokhzad and Adunis?” Using available sources, this paper answers this question through a descriptive analytical method.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Many studies have been conducted on the works of Forough; researchers have mostly focused on deconstruction and modernity in the form. For instance, Moshref Azad Tehrani wrote the book *The Princess of Poetry* in this regard. Other poets have investigated her life. Many papers have been released about Modern Arab poetry that many of them have spoken of Adunis and his poetry. For instance, Dr. Habibullah Abbasi’s *Approaches to Contemporary Arab Poetry*. However, no independent research has been conducted on the comparison study of teachings of West culture in poems of these two poets.

III. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Some elements of the West have entered into the culture and language of Eastern societies into without their will. These elements are so important that some scholars in Eastern countries with civilization, language and powerful call the entrance of the elements a cultural invasion. Since Forough and Adunis are the prominent modernist poets in Iran

* Corresponding Author
Email: Ahmad.lamei2@birjand.ac.ir

and Arab society, their influences on both societies pattern is evident. Moreover, Modernism in poetry is one of the contentious issues in the developing world among literary scholars and thinkers in recent years because they fear of losing their language identity. Therefore, this study investigates some elements of Western culture in the poems of Forough and Adunis.

IV. DEVELOPMENTS IN LEBANON, IRAN, AND SYRIA

Lebanon and Syria as well as Iran were experiencing transformations in the course of their acquaintance with the West. A group of Lebanese and Syrians migrated to Egypt in the last third of the nineteenth century. These groups were graduates of Jesuits' school and American and European groups who had been tired of Ottomanians' oppression and they had taken the decision to migrate. The group, who had begun a new experience in the hope of individual freedom and rights, achieved their demands in Egypt. Soon, they collaborated with Egyptians in the literary movement and even some of them excelled at this point of time. Attention to literature in the first place caused most communication with European literature. West-oriented movement was quick in Syria and it developed in many Christian communities, especially Lebanon. The supporters were missionaries and schools that led the younger generation under the influence of European thought, and they expand the study of the works of the West, especially France (Al-Fakhoury, 1982, p. 642). One of the most important factors that influence the Western culture in the Levant, which includes Lebanon and Syria, was fellow European Christians who lived in the country (Enayat, 1991, p. 16). Lebanese and Syrian dealing with Europe makes intellectuals in these countries familiar with new structures of the West. These educated intellectuals began to establish new changes in their countries in European style including establishment of schools and newspapers that led to changes in attitudes, growing urbanization, the expansion of printing industry and newspapers. Therefore, fundamental transformation occurred in the thoughts of the people. The manifestations of the movement in the Levant, due to interaction with the West, was the propagation of schools, newspapers and magazines, printing industry, scientific and literary societies, and libraries. These factors were effective in the spread of liberalism, progress of science and knowledge, motivation of efforts and writers, and developments in the intellectual foundation of Arab society (Al-Fakhoury, 1982, p. 640). These factors were influential in f knowledge and understanding of the people of Syria and Lebanon about the modern world, the West, and accepting some new ideas.

During the course of Iranian and Arab thinking (Lebanon and Syria), if one disregards the story of their conversion to Islam, the entrance of Western thought and civilization is the most important issue in the evolution of the idea of these lands. Some individuals were effective paving the way for great social-political changes by employing the experience of transformation of Western societies in different cultural aspects. The Constitutional Uprising and The Arab Movement are two important points in the history of these nations. Iran and Arab countries underwent transformations in the all areas through these two developments. Concurrency of political-cultural transformations in both nations and their imitation from European culture caused the existence of many intellectual and cultural resemblances in the contemporary era. Literary development was one of the consequences of following the Western doctrine, which changed the scholars in terms of both thought and the works.

In the same pattern, Persian poetry experienced a rebirth in the Constitutional age. It walked in new path, which had never been walked. Persian literature had also been influenced by the modern world. Transformation in social, political and economic areas caused changes in the content of thought. However, poets could not change poetry immediately because they could not deconstruct the traditional system and began a new trend for two reasons. First, for the sacredness of eternal-immortal system of Persian poetry that had been established in poets' minds and collective conscience with its metaphor, metonymy, symbols, and puns. Second, for social passiveness and paralysis of thought and imagination of poets for a century because they could not establish a new system in the case of rejecting the current system (Shams Langroodi, 2005, p. 36). Therefore, the evolution of contemporary Persian poetry was performed step by step. Years 1961 to 1970 can be called escalation of armed conflict in Iran. Forough is placed in the center of this period. Mysticism influenced by Buddha is one of the themes of the poetry in this period, which is tangible in Sohrab's poems. Another important social period is the years 1970 to 1978. Some young poets in the period are wondered of the social events. Shamloo, Gole Sorkhi and Meymenat are important figures in this age (Shafiei Kadkani, 2001, pp. 45-80). In general, Arab and Persian poetry transformations in the twentieth century are due to their familiarity with Western thought and the translation of foreign language poems. Hence, many changes occurred in terms of idea, emotions, and concepts; then, another changes occurred in contents, images, and finally in the music of poems (ibid: p.29). The result of two mentioned movements in Iranian and Arab society was the advent of modern poets who had traveled around the world and introduced new the elements on Modern world by their poems. Along with these transformations, some changes took place in the form and content of the poems and literary works.

V. LIFE AND WORKS OF FOROUGH AND ADUNIS

Forough Farrokhzad was born in 1937 in Tehran. Forough continued her studies to junior high school in Khosrow Khavar School; then, she went to art school and learned art of sewing and painting. She describes her interest in sewing as, "When I come back from sewing class, I can compose poems better" (Jalali, 1993, p. 559). In 1953, she published her first collection of poems called *Captive*. In 1957, she began to travel to Europe; in the same year, she released her

second collection of poems called *The Wall*. In 1958, when she was 23, she entered the field of cinema and cinematic art found a great place in her life. In 1959, Forough Farrokhzad printed her third collection of poems called *Rebellion*. She traveled to England for the first time in this year to pass a course about movie making. Her fourth collection of poems, *Rebirth*, was released in 1962; she went to Tabriz in this year to evaluate making a movie about Leprosy and its patients. In winter 1963, she spent twelve days in Tabriz and made a documentary called *The House is Black* about the patients of Leprosy. Four European countries including Germany, Sweden, England and France proposed Forough to be translated and publish poems. Forough's travels to Europe made her familiarity with artistic and literary culture in Europe and provided a basis for changing her mind. Acquaintance with Ebrahim Golestan, a famous Iranian author and filmmaker, resulted in changes in social space and Forough's intellectual and literary development. Massoud Farrokhzad- Forough's brother- is another influential person in Forough's familiarity with Modern ideas. Because he was fluent in German, he helped Forough to translate some selections of German poems to Persian. Forough's familiarity and association with these poems was effective in transfer of modern culture to Forough's thought and poems. Forough was familiar with the literature of America and South America by her friends. He read Persian translation of the Argentine woman poet Alfonsina Storni's works by Shoja al-Din Shafa (Moshref Azad Tehrani, 1933, p. 48). The emergence of Forough Farrokhzad was a rare and extraordinary event in contemporary Persian poetry. Talking about Forough Farrokhzad, Most literary scholars, either they are agree or disagree with her, cannot hide their admiration because the advent of such poet in traditional society of the East rises the wonder of every fair person. She had been grown up in a patriarchal society where the ancient beliefs and traditions of had taken the power of women performance. Forough is the only explosion of silence, solitude and complex of Iranian women (Baraheni, 2001: 210). She expresses boldly her opinions and speaks in her own language in her poems, as she is anti-traditional and deconstructionist. Her poetry is outcry of a contemporary woman against conventions limiting women in Eastern society.

Farrokhzad understood precisely the transformations of his time. She had comprehended the concept of Modernity and figured out the truth of evolution in the ideas of poets. In a speech in this regard, she articulates, "Today, everything has changed; our world has nothing to do with the world of Hafez and Saadi. I think that my world has nothing to do with my father's world. Gaps have been raised (Jalali, 1993, p. 169).

Ali Ahmad Said Esber, known as Adunis, was born in 1930 in al-Qassabin, a village in Syria. He finished his secondary education in 1949 and graduated from philosophy in 1954 from the University of Damascus. In 1956, he went to Lebanon and received Lebanese citizenship. In 1957, he collaborated in the establishment and authorship of *Poetry Journal* that was the most innovative and effective literary journal of its time as well as consolidation of Arab poetry; he continued this career to 1963. He founded the rich journal *Mawaqif* in 1968. In 1967, he received his Ph.D. in Literature from St. Joseph University of Beirut. He began teaching in 1974 in Lebanon. He left Lebanon to Paris in 1986. He went to Iran in 2005. He is one of the most modern Arab poets in poetry and poetry criticism, especially by the standards of modernization of the West. He learned Western literature from the gate of French literature; he has comprehended many Modern streams of poetry in Europe. Publishing *Two Journals of Poetry and Mawaqif*, he has propagated Modern culture in Arab world. Adunis does not recognize any boundary for modernity and believes that a poet experiences and opens new horizon a new frontier in every moment; therefore, breaking traditions and creating heresy know no bounds. This departure from traditions went as far as that he rejected Islam and converted to Christianity. He was blamed by both religious and non-religious fanatics (Kamal al-Din, 1964, pp. 125-127). Some of his poetic works are *First Poems* (1957), *The Book* (1985), *The Book of Siege* (1985), and *Another Alphabet* (1994).

VI. A STUDY OF THE COMMON FEATURES OF MODERNITY IN THE POEMS OF FOROUGH AND ADUNIS

As two contemporary poets in Persian and Arab literature, Forough and Adunis have shown many capabilities in literature. Both created transformations in the contemporary poetry in terms of content. Modernism is the common and inherent poetic characteristic of both poets that contains the content of their poems. Both have social concerns. Although Forough and Adunis may have not been influenced by each other, their ideas on addressing the problems of the modern world are very similar. These similarities include:

A. *Secularism*

Secularism is one of the elements of Modernity and subjects used by Forough and Adunis in their poems. The term secular is used as an antonym for religious or spiritual. Some scholars believe that Adunis has a mystical vision and new approach. The study of his poetic themes uncovers the hidden points of his anti-religious ideas. This does not mean that all Adunis' ideas are anti-religion. In most of his poems, he uses the advantages of symbols to express thoughts and ideas. The story of Adam (AS) and its dismissal from Heaven is a well-known story; but Adunis uses this story to describe human sufferings. He shouts suffering and human troubles on Earth. In addition to non-religious use of some phrases, he utters some words that are far from words of a Muslim. He questioned the three basic doctrines of Islam (monotheism, resurrection, prophethood). In *Bashar's Requiem*, traces of secularism, or separation of religion and politics and social affairs, are available.

Secularism is evident in the poems of Farrokhzad. In her collection of poems called *Rebellion*, she works on fundamental issues such as Being and Nothingness, good and evil and so on. In Forough's mind, the Western world,

intellectuals have never gained the opportunity to challenge Holy saints, as they have been challenged in Western societies. Forough's world is transparent and free of duplicity. Her world is compatible with the natural world and in conformity with it. Forough has a modern appreciation of the world; thus, she finds all her failures in the inappropriateness of the world.

In Adunis' poetry, this element is manifested based on West foundations with he they lived. In other words, Adunis lived and educated in a Modern world. Moreover, he reveals his secular ideas by attack on the religious beliefs that are sacred in people's minds because he understands the religion and literature of the Arab nation. On the contrary, apart from some of her trips to Europe, she had not understood the spirit of Modernity and she had not been educated in any Modern school. Therefore, she is trapped by sensation due to her superficial understanding of Modernity.

B. Feminism

The women's movement became widespread in the 19th century in France and called Feminism. Feminism series of efforts to create a context to defend political, economic and social rights of women as well as to create equal opportunities for women and girls in education and employment. Scholar such as Forough had been dissatisfied of the marginal role of women in society so that she states about the marginal role of women, "I wish the freedom of Iranian women and equality of their rights with men. I am aware of the sufferings of women of my land due to men's injustice (Haeri, 1955, pp. 27-28). Forough expresses the cultural situation of women in her age in a realistic and accurate perspective. She pays all her efforts to inform and free them. For instance, in her poem *The Wind-Up Doll*, Forough asks women to solve their great riddle of existence and look at the world from their own perspectives (Farrokhzad, 1998, p. 289). In Persian poetry, Forough is among women who transgress the silence of not using the earthy loves. She regards men as the main reason for women enslavement. She argues that many female talents have been destroyed in the border of narrow, ugly and reprehensible traditions of community.

With regard to the new role of women in society, Adunis tries to establish an independent consciousness and wisdom for the public and its audiences. He mixes new ideas about the role of women in society and among people, women's rights, and its impact on the development of the country with his poetic pure imagination to present the audiences the result of his ideas in verse. Feminism and women's rights are stated in in the poetry of Adunis as an objective process; it means that Adunis tries to use the idea of human rights to portray victimization of women and their oppression. However, he tries not to damage the male personality and keeps his position alongside the women. With the appropriate use of the theme of myths, stories and discovering natural symbols, he tries to express effects of modern feminism in his own poetry. Nevertheless, in her poems about women's rights, Forough criticizes men who have damaged her. It has been revealed that apart from having been influenced by the West, Forough pays more attention to this element due to his failures in life for get rid of the complexes; thus, she rebels against men. On the contrary, Adunis has reached the conclusion under the influence of Western culture to fulfill the rights of women.

C. Deconstruction

Breaking old traditions, patterns, and ideas is the main feature of Modernism. Forough was a complete Modernist since the beginning of her poetic career. She even criticizes herself to reject conventions, "I blame myself more than blaming others. It is natural that many of my poems are nonsense" (Jalali, 1993, p. 206). She is a deconstructionist among Iranian poet and declares her hatred of the relationships among people in her age. Therefore, she is seeking a key for freeing herself from this chain. She sees this freedom from conventions in committing sins. Some of her poems revolt clearly against the traditions of society. Extremism in rebellion in breaking with tradition leads Forough to rebellion against social norms. She talks about her emotions towards the lover, longing for him, and her sinful affections (Farrokhzad, 2003, p. 166).

Adunis has uses deconstruction. Adunis is a universal poet due to the quality of his works, taboo-breakings, and innovations in Arab poetry as well as his perspective about literature and the type of his smart approach to form. He uses all the capabilities to compose his poems. He rejects the current situation and firm old traditions. There is no a middle ground; any affair is all (Modern) or nothing. He expects emergence of great transformation (modernism) in his society. Adunis does not recognize any boundary for modernity and believes that a poet experiences and opens new horizon a new frontier in every moment; therefore, breaking traditions and creating heresy know no bounds. This departure from traditions went as far as that he rejected Islam and converted to Christianity (Kamal al-Din, 1966, pp. 193-194). Deconstruction is an important feature in Modernism that has many manifestations. Both try to break the traditions and red lines that have been established in Arab and Iranian society while they have been taboo for thousand years and they are ingredients of the cultures. This element is very ambiguous in the poetry of Adunis and requires historical information. This element is more evident in Forough's poetry.

D. Nihilism

Nihilism is a psychological and epistemological status in which the meanings of life and existence have been lost; therefore, a mental confusion that trigger anxiety is experienced. Nihilism is the disrespecting the world, life and what they encountered (Zamanian, 2006, p. 90). It seems both poets have entered despair, hopelessness and decay into their poems under the influence of nihilistic thoughts; but death is more prominent in Adunis' poems.

E. Freedom

The term freedom, as a fundamental concept of Modernity, signifies different meanings including self-government and independence as well as general ability to get things done, having different choices and the ability to achieve goals. Freedom has a special place in the poems of Forough so that he calls for women's freedom under the influence of the Western culture; she reflects its absence in her poems. She not only considers women's freedom but also wishes for freedom of expression. The poems, "Said Ali to His Mother, a Day", "Bird Was Just a Bird", "Oh! The Precious Borders", "Meet at night" in the collection of *Rebirth*, and "I Feel Sorry for the Garden", "One Who Is not Like Anybody" from the collection *Let's Believe* are examples in this regard. Adunis has also worked on this concept. He tries to eliminate the obstacles to understand realities; he described the realities behind the scene that are the bad state of his society. Homeland has a particular place in his poems. He admires freedom so that he regards the quality of his existence as a unique freedom. He seeks a new innovation along with freedom.

F. City

Persian and Arab poets have associated with the concept of city under the influence of the West and due to their own experiences and perceptions. Feeling a captive of city, homesickness, anxiety and ruin, Arab poet speaks the same as Western poets who feel tired of restrictions in dependency on the new civilization, especially metropolises (Abbas, 2005, p. 186). Regardless of the poets of the past who used concepts such as river and mountain and nature, Forough decorates her poems with new concepts and new sensations in describing her city. Forough feeling toward the town of his life was significant. She says, "I love our own Tehran, In any case... There, my existence finds a goal to live..." (Farrokhzad, 1998, *An Introduction to Let's Believe in the Beginning of the Cold Season*). For Adunis, city is a phenomenon composed of many improper patches while the poet tries to destroy it. Leaving Damascus is a cause for development and insults it. Adunis remembers his pains and difficulties in Damascus. Teheran relaxes Forough but city takes Aduni's peace; thus, he likes returning to nature. It seems that Adunis would prefer to take refuge in an old element of poetry, nature.

G. Nationalism

Nationalism has been included in Forough's poems, but Adunis pays attention to this concept more than Forough. In "Oh! The Precious Borders", Forough is happy of the obtained freedom and remembers, "Said Ali to His Mother, a Day", "Bird Was Just a Bird", "Oh! The Precious Borders", "Meet at night" in the collection of *Rebirth*, and "I Feel Sorry for the Garden", "One Who Is not Like Anybody" from the collection *Let's Believe* national ravages and honors to awaken the people's patriotism. To portray the Arab nation, Adunis uses the famous symbol of tree; but he expresses the bent and sleeping palms (Adunis, 1996, vol. 1, p. 156). In addition, day, which is the symbol of brightness and awakening for Arab nation, has been killed. Poet's anxiety and stress rises from the absence of a unified Arab nation. The poet sees the unification as a manifestation of Modernism in European countries; but finally, he believes in his nation and speaks of tomorrow, fight certainty and victory. If he talks about past, he uses it as a fulcrum for the future, he is expecting. In this future, Arab nation is restored and it welcomes the entire world.

VII. CONCLUSION

The influence of Western civilization is a common point closing Forough Farrokhzad and Adunis. A comparison study of commonalities and differences between the two poets uncovers the following words:

Forough Farrokhzad and Adunis have reflected new concepts in their poems under the influence of the teachings of the modern culture of the West so that both are called the modern poets of their own culture. Their inclusion in the category of Modern poets does not mean that they have not used traditional elements in their poetry. Secularism, feminism, nihilism, freedom, breaking with tradition, city and nationalism are manifestations of the influence of the West on their poems. In the use of Modern elements, Adunis pays more attention to secularism because he is familiar with the culture of West and imbued with the spirit. Conversion from Islam to Christianity is a proof in this regard. Nevertheless, Forough's feminist insight is more evident in her poems. Moreover, the nationalism is reflected more in Adunis' poems rather than Forough's poems.

REFERENCES

- [1] Abbas, Ehsan. (2005). *Approaches to Contemporary Arab Poetry*, translated by Habibullah Abbasi. Tehran, Sokhan.
- [2] Adunis. (1996). *Poetic works: Complete Edition*. Vol. I, Beirut: Dar al- Madi Li-Thaqafi wa al-Nashr.
- [3] Al-Fakhoury, Hanna. (1982). *History of the Arabic Literature*. Trans. Abdol Hamid Ayati. Tehran: Tous.
- [4] Baraheni, Reza. (2001). *Gold in copper*. Tehran: Zaryab.
- [5] Enayat, Hamid. (1991). *An Introduction to Arab Political Thought*: Tehran: Amir Kabir.
- [6] Farrokhzad, Forough. (1999). *I will say hello to the sun again*. Tehran: Sokhan.
- [7] Farrokhzad, Forough. (2003). *Full Collection of Poems: Captive, Wall, Rebellion, Rebirth*. Tehran Afarin.
- [8] Haeri, Seyyed Hadi (kooroush). (1955). *The most beautiful poems of Forough Farrokhzad*. Tehran: Javidan.
- [9] Jalali, Behrooz. (1993). *Eternal life*. Tehran: Morvarid.
- [10] Kamal ol-Din, Jalil. (1964). *Modern Arab Poetry and Spirit of Time*. Beirut: Dar – ol- Elm- Lel Malayeen.
- [11] Langroodi, Shams. (2005). *Analytical History of modern poetry*. Tehran: Markaz.
- [12] Moshref Azad Tehrani, Mahmood. (2000). *The Princess of Poetry*. Tehran: Thaleth Publications.

- [13] Shafiei Kadkani, Muhammad Reza. (2001). *The Ages of Persian Poetry from the Constitution to the fall of monarchy*. Tehran, Sokhan.
- [14] Zamanian, Ali. (2006). *Nihilism from Denial to Reality*. *Rahboord*, No. 40, summer, p. 87-114.



Ahmad Lamei Giv, was born in Birjand (Iran) in 1969. He has got a Ph.D. in Arabic language and literature from Saint Josef University, Lebanon, 2007. The author has 16 years of academic experience including: Assistant professor of University of Birjand, Faculty of Literature and Humanities (Iran); Scientific and executive secretary of more than 40 conferences and scientific and cultural meetings. Publications are: *Hassan Parsi*, Birjand, Southern Khorasan, Iran; Chardarakht Publication, 2015; *University and the active culture*, Birjand, Southern Khorasan; Chardarakht Publication, 2013. The author is interested in Literary criticism, Literary history, Arabic grammar, Contemporary literature, Research methodology, Comparative (interdisciplinary) literature, and Rhetorics. Dr. Lamei Giv. was selected as the top cultural and social national researcher of National Academic Congress of Harkat (Movement) of Iran's Universities in 2013 and 2014.

Majid Shahbazi has received an MA degree in Comparative Literature, University of Birjand, Birjand, Iran. His research interests are Contemporary literature, Research methodology, Comparative (interdisciplinary) literature.

A Genre Analysis of Discussion Sections of Qualitative Research Articles in Applied Linguistics

Leila Dobakhti

Tabriz Islamic Art University, Tabriz, Iran

Abstract—This paper reports on a genre study of the Discussion sections of 15 qualitative research articles in Applied Linguistics from five high impact journals published from 2003-2009. Based on Swales' (1990, 2004) move structure model, this study aims to develop a description of move structure in this corpus and introduce the available patterns and options. The analysis reveals that there are similarities and differences between the generic structure of qualitative research articles identified in this paper and those found concerning empirical research articles.

Index Terms—move structure, discussion section, qualitative research, applied linguistics

I. INTRODUCTION

Research articles (RAs) are a high valued genre in building and disseminating knowledge in academic communities. Writing a research report is a challenging task for writers as it requires them not only to establish the importance of their research but also to be familiar with the conventions of their discourse communities and be able to apply that knowledge in their writing. One attempt to identify community expectation has been taken through ESP genre analytical approach (Bhatia, 1993; Swales, 1990). The approach is based on the assumption that genres are communicative events which are organized by conventions that belong to discourse communities. There is a vast amount of literature on the generic features of RAs in various disciplines which have investigated either the whole article or one section of RAs within the IMRD (Introduction, Method, Results, and Discussion) framework including: research articles in Applied Linguistics (Yang, 2001); research articles in Biochemistry (Kanoksilapatham, 2005); research articles in Computer Science (Posteguillo, 1999); research articles in Medicine (Nwogu, 1997); Abstracts and Introductions in Conservation Biology and Wildlife Behavior (Samraj, 2005); introductions in Applied Linguistics (Ozturk, 2007); result section in Management research articles (Lim, 2006); discussion sections in History, Political Science and Sociology (Holmes, 1997); and discussion sections in Agricultural Economics (Holmes, 2000).

However, these studies have been concerned with empirical RAs. Empirical research can be defined as “the construction of knowledge by means of systematic observation, analysis, and representation of behavior and/or its artifact” (Silva, 2005, p. 10). Based on this definition qualitative and quantitative designs fall into empirical research. However, as we know, these two designs are different in the knowledge claim they make, their main purpose, the research questions they impose, their data, and their methods of data analysis (Creswell, 2003; McKay, 2006).

Quantitative research is based on the assumption that the world is governed by rules and knowledge is created when researchers “examine causes that influence outcomes” to verify or refute these rules (Creswell, 2003, p. 5). Thus, reality is broken down into variables and questions or hypotheses are formed. Then, experiments or surveys are conducted to collect data that amends itself to statistical analysis. Based on these numbers and counts, the causal relationships of variables or the context of concern are studied and finally the question is answered or the hypothesis is either verified or refuted. The quantitative research, thus, is based on prediction, hypothesizing, testing and control.

On the other hand, qualitative research is based on the assumption that reality is multiple and constructed socially and can be studied holistically. Thus, knowledge is created by people through the interpretation and understanding of a phenomenon in various social and historical contexts. Instead of “narrowing meanings into a few categories or idea”, the researcher’s aim is to “interpret” the multiple meanings that “others have about the world” (Creswell, 2003, pp. 8-9). Using strategies such as narratives, case studies, ethnographies, phenomenology, discourse studies and ground theories, researcher collects data through open-ended questions, interviews, observations, texts, and image analysis. Instead of analyzing data statistically, as in quantitative research, the qualitative researcher’s aim is to categorize and interpret the data in order to provide a deep verbal description of the “meanings that people attach to things in their lives” (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 3) to understand how people make sense of their world. In other words, qualitative research “refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols and description of things” (Berg, 2001, p. 2).

Considering all these differences, it is not unreasonable to assume that writers use various rhetorical strategies in writing qualitative and quantitative research articles. The study reported in this paper focuses on the discussion section of qualitative research articles in the field of Applied Linguistics. Discussion section enjoys a crucial role in any

academic writing. This section is important because “results and interpretations need to be presented in ways that readers are likely to find persuasive” (Hyland, 2005, p. 176). Besides, it is the section that students find the most problematic to write and understand (Bitchener & Basturkmen, 2006; Dudley-Evans, 1994). It is hoped that the findings of this study could facilitate the writing of research articles especially for novice ones.

II. METHODOLOGY

The present study builds on a corpus of 15 qualitative research articles’ discussions from five high impact journals in the field of Applied Linguistics published from 2003 to 2009.

A. The Selection of the Journals

In order to select the journals, first the list of high impact journals in the field of Linguistics reported in Journal Citation Reports (Social Sciences Edition) 2008 was printed which included a total of 68 journals. The criteria considered for selecting journals included their availability (either electronic version or hard copy) in University of Malaya library and their relatedness to Applied Linguistics rather than Linguistics per se. It was also important to ensure that the journals published qualitative RAs. To ensure this matter, a few issues of remaining journals were checked out one by one and the journals that were concerned with mostly quantitative articles such as *Modern Language Journal* and *Language Learning* were excluded. From the remaining journals, these five journals were selected: *Applied Linguistics* (APP), *English for Specific Purposes* (ESP), *Journal of Pragmatics* (PRAG), *Language Teaching Research* (LTR), and *TESOL Quarterly* (TESOL).

B. The Selection of the Articles

Each article in each issue of the five journals published from 2003 to 2009 were checked in order to select the corpus. The first criterion was the inclusion of a separate discussion section. If the articles matched this criterion, then it was checked for being qualitative or quantitative. The first priority was given to the writers’ own explicit statement about the design they had used. If they had not mentioned it explicitly, the method, the title, the abstract and the methodology section were examined carefully to categorize the articles as qualitative or quantitative. Those that were experimental or dealt with completely statistics were identified as quantitative and those articles that relied mainly on verbal description were classified as qualitative. Those articles that used both qualitative and quantitative designs were classified as mixed method studies and were excluded. Finally, classifying all articles in the journals as qualitative or quantitative, three articles from each journal (making 15 in all) were selected randomly for analysis (see Appendix 1 for list of articles and Appendix 2 for the particulars of the corpus).

C. Data Analysis

The sample articles were examined in terms of type of Moves, Steps and Sub-steps. Move can be defined as a communicative unit which carries the specific communicative purpose of a particular part of the text under study. A Move may be realized by one or more subsequent elements called Steps. Prior to attempt to analyze the texts, first, the whole articles were read to obtain a general idea about them. Identification of Moves was made on the basis of linguistic evidence and knowledge about the content of the text (Dudley-Evans, 1994; Nwogu, 1997). The identification of Moves and Steps in the corpus was done recursively. In other words, re-readings or re-analyses of any part of the RAs were carried out until the identification of the communicative units of Moves and Steps were satisfactorily done. In order to ensure the reliability of the analysis, twenty percent of the corpus (three RAs) was analyzed by a Professor who is a specialist in genre analysis. The Cohen kappa inter-rater agreement showed a kappa value of 0.81.

III. FINDINGS

The preliminary analysis of 15 qualitative research articles revealed 11 moves in the corpus. The characteristics of these moves and the steps that realize them are described in this section.

A. Move 1- Reporting Findings

This move which occurred in all of the RAs in the corpus was realized through two steps: *Stating Findings* and *Summarizing Findings*. While all the Discussions included Move1-Step1, Step2 of Move1 occurred only at the end of one of the sections where the writer summarized the main findings as a concluding point.

Move 1- Step1: Stating Findings

(1) The findings reveal some important differences in the nature of the oral interaction experienced by Soon Yi and Ivan in the classroom and real-world contexts. (LTR1)

(2) The present study has revealed a difference between the JNSG and the LJG in the interpretation of the key meaning feature ‘shinmi/sympathetic’. (PRAG2)

Move 1-Step2: Summarizing Findings

(3) Claudia presented an architectural self seemingly more closely aligned to an objective orientation; similar in presentation style to that identified by Darling (2005) in engineering design discourse, in which speaking competently was associated with attention on the object and away from the self. Both the successful students, Adam (first year) and

Ben (fourth year), conveyed an architectural self that fits well with what Coyne, Snodgrass, and Martin (1994) refer to as a romantic orientation... (ESP1)

B. Move 2: Referring to Data to Provide Evidence for Findings

Occurring in 11 RAs, this move appeared immediately after Move1-Step1 (Presenting Findings). After presenting their findings, writers referred to their data to support, illustrate or provide evidence for their findings. In excerpt 4, for example, the writers first present the finding (in NOM sessions the teacher was an important player) and in the following sentences they refer to their data to illustrate and support this finding (... *the teachers in this study used several interactional moves during the NOM sessions... First, they had... At the same time they were sensitive to... Third, they directed the audience... Finally, they supplied...*).

(4) Our analysis of NOM sessions also showed clearly that the teacher, although not the sole factor in improving stories, was a critical player. As described above, the teachers in this study used several interactional moves during the NOM sessions that seemed to be effective in improving the stories told. First, they had an ear for the storyteller to provide it. At the same time, they were sensitive to interpretations and presuppositions on the part of the tellers that came from their cultural knowledge and that might have confused the audience. Third, they directed the audience by encouraging members to ask questions, checking what the audience members had understood of the story, and making sure that the conversation did not stay too far from the point of the story. Finally, they supplied words, phrases, and idiomatic expressions when storytellers needed them and helped with pronunciation difficulties that interfered with the storyteller's meaning (Providing Evidence for Findings from Data). (TESOL3)

C. Move 3: Commenting on Findings

In this move, which occurred in 12 RAs, the writers went beyond the "objective" presentation of findings and offered their own understandings of them. This move was realized by three steps of *Explaining Findings* (where the comment was an attempt to provide a reason for why the findings were obtained); *Interpreting Findings* (where the comment was a speculation about what the findings meant); and *Evaluating Findings* (where the comment was an evaluation of findings).

Move3- Step 1: Explaining Findings

This step was realized through two sub-steps: Providing an Explanation or Alternative Explanations and Rejecting a Possible Explanation. In Step1A writers provide one or several reasons to explain the findings.

Move 3- Step 1A: Providing an Explanation or Alternative Explanations

(5) This uncertainty among outer-circle speakers may be the result of their experience with multiple and conflicting norms for English. (TESOL1)

(6) How do we explain this difference between idealistic desire and critical evaluation of speech and silence?[...] First, the difference between the two sample groups may appear to be a product of differing English proficiency level... Another factor impacting on the different evaluations of speech and silence may be the educational goals of each cohort ... (TESOL2)

Move 3- Step 1B: Rejecting a Possible Explanation

(7) Nor does familiarity with the workshop content seem to be a reasonable explanation for the reduced attention to language in the real world context. (LTR1)

Move 3- Step 2: Interpreting Findings

This step was realized by two sub-steps: Providing an Interpretation by writer or Providing an Interpreting by Referring to Literature.

Move 3- Step 2A: Providing an Interpretation

(8) It appears that Fengchen saw the essence of genres as repeated social actions, as evidenced in his recognition of the item-by-item and the review-evaluation patterns as recurring generic features that other researchers use to organize their literature reviews, and thus patterns that he could use to organize his own literature reviews. (ESP2)

Move 3- Step 2B: Providing an Interpretation by Referring to Literature

(9) The use of specific grammatical constructions to counter the static quality of visual representations in academic presentations has been noted by several researchers. Ochs, Gonzales and Jacoby (1994, pp. 162–163) report how the use of dynamic grammar and gesturing in the presentations of physicists served as devices to help an audience accept the credibility of a scientific experiment through a sort of "virtual witnessing" of the procedure. In the field of architecture, Medway (1996) reports that architects in professional practice discuss features of their designs using a dynamic grammar (e.g. "pressing against one another" "pulling back from a square"), and concludes that such language that "graphically expresses the dramas and dynamics occurring between shapes and masses" is typical of architectural discourse (p. 497). In this sense, Ben's use of verbs of motion (e.g. where the building or elements of the building are described as stretching, folding, moving through, and popping up) can be seen as helping to convey the dynamic quality of his design... (ESP1)

Move 3-Step 3: Evaluating Findings

(10) However, any direct link between culture and behavior must be questioned. Just as cultural explanations may be used erroneously by teachers to explain student silences, cultural explanation can also be used by students to justify their silences or even to identify as silent students... (TESOL2)

D. Move 4: Supporting the Explanation/Interpretation/Evaluation/Rejected Explanation

This move which was present in 7 RAs occurred after Move 3 (Commenting on Data) where the writers attempted to support or provide evidence for the explanation/ interpretation/evaluation and/or rejected explanation by referring to data or referring to literature. For example, in excerpt 11, after providing an explanation for the findings in the first sentence, the writers refer to the data to support or provide evidence for their explanation. In excerpt 12, after presenting the interpretation of the findings in the first sentence, the writer refers to the literature to support the interpretation.

Move 4- Step1: Referring to Data to Support the Explanation / Interpretation / Evaluation / Rejected Explanation

(11) *A more plausible explanation for the limited overt attention to language in the tutoring context is that Soon Yi and Ivan realized that despite the non-native aspects of their language, they could be understood well enough to achieve their objectives in the workshops and help the high school students with their homework. The high school students tolerated a range of non-native aspects of the tutors' language, including grammatical errors and accented speech, only reacting when pronunciation impeded comprehension, or word-search interfered with the pace of the conversation. Evidence in support of this interpretation comes from the tutors' journal entries which, as the volunteer program progressed, focused more on descriptions of task execution than on concerns over their level of language.* (LTR1)

Move 4- Step 2: Referring to Literature to Support Explanation/Interpretation

(12) *This implies that it is difficult for learners to apply the Japanese rule, even if they have the necessary knowledge. The following quotation supports this view:*

In fact, I was warned before I came to Japan to be cautious of hai, that it didn't necessarily mean 'yes, I will do that.' It meant 'yes, I understand that.' And even with knowing that, I still found difficulties at first in understanding between the people in my company that speak very good English. (JETRO, 1980 cited from Miller, 1991:125) (PRAG2)

E. Move 5: Comparing Findings with Literature

In this move writers related their findings to previous works. They either compared their findings with the findings from other studies, as in excerpts 13 and 15, or indicated the consistency and/or inconsistency of their findings with a claim, contention or theory in the literature, as in excerpts 14 and 16. This move occurred in nine of the RAs as an independent move; although, in several cases it was embedded in other moves such as Stating Findings.

Move 5- Step1: Indicating Consistency of Findings with Literature

(13) *Previous research on spoken academic genres has illustrated that narrative typically functions to create rapport with an audience and to draw them into the speaker's world (Thompson, 2002). In our data, a narrative rhetorical style seemed to be one of the more important components of a successful design presentation.* (ESP1)

(14) *Heyman (1986:40) further claims that what is 'essential for the topical organization of the talk and orientation to this topic by members is clarification of the task demands, i.e., describing the gist of the task at the beginning of the talk'. Kasper (2004) has also shown how the definition of characteristics of task is procedurally consequential in topic initiation of talk. In our data, it can be seen that formulation of the task demand was well integrated into the discussion.* (APP1)

Move 5- Step2: Indicating Inconsistency of Findings with Literature

(15) *In their analysis of topic shift in OPI, Kasper and Ross (2007: 2061) suggest that topic shifts are a fragile environment where test candidates may have difficulties providing relevant answers. The peer participants in the group oral discussion task in our study had no identifiable trouble handling topic shifts from the ongoing sequence.* (APP1)

(16) *One of the criticisms of task-based communicative language pedagogy has been that students' preoccupation with finishing a task may result in minimal use of language, and little attention to language form (Seedhouse, 1999; see also Swan, 2005). The findings of this study suggest that for adult learners, particularly those with some proficiency in the language, attention to language during oral interaction may in fact compromise task completion.* (LTR1)

F. Move 6: Referring to Data to Provide Evidence for Inconsistency of Findings with Literature

This move which was found in one case in the corpus occurred immediately after Move5- Step2. In excerpt 17, a continuation of excerpt 16, the writer refers to the data to provide evidence for the inconsistency of findings (*attention to language during oral interaction may in fact compromise task completion*) with a criticism in literature towards task-based pedagogy (*finishing a task may result in minimal use of language, and little attention to language form*).

(17) *Although Soon Yi and Ivan were given interactional opportunities that had the real-world feature of a defined ending point, this point was often not reached. They appeared to regard all activities, however interesting, as pretexts for practicing language rather than as tasks that had to be completed. Soon Yi and Ivan actively reflected on language, even when otherwise engaged with the intended communicative purpose of the task. Classroom tasks are often implemented to give students practice in rehearsing for an exchange they might have in the real-world, and the pair and group management of the tasks suggested that they too understood they were rehearsing...* (LTR1)

G. Move 7: Recommendation for Practice

In this move, which was present in the five RAs, the writers went beyond their results and made some recommendations for practice based on their findings from the study. Conditional clauses, hedging words and suggestive words were used in this move.

(18) *If it is indeed difficult to attend to both form and fluency at once, then the first step may be to separate the two and to stop attempting to assess both at once.* (LTR2)

H. Move 8: Deduction

Occurring in 10 RAs in the corpus, the writers usually presented a claim with reference to the main points of the study. It usually occurred at the end of a section within Discussion after a particular finding had been presented and discussed or at the end of the Discussion section. Appearing at the end of a particular finding, the deduction was limited to that specific finding but when it occurred at the end of the Discussion section it was more general and the writer made a conclusion about the findings.

(19) *Thus, one often overlooked aspect of the construct of scaffolding is the essential role played by the learner in guiding the scaffolding process. Without the ability or willingness to engage with the more knowledgeable other or a readiness to incorporate and appropriate what has been revealed in interaction with the more knowledgeable other, the learner cannot make progress—at least not immediately.* (TESOL3)

I. Move 9: Providing Information

This move, which occurred in four RAs, was used to provide readers with information. It was either used to provide *Background Information* (e.g. aim of the study) or present *Preview* information (what is coming next). The writers provided background information (e.g. restated the aim of the study) either in the starting part of the Discussion or at the ending part of it before summarizing their findings.

Move 9-Step 1: Background Information

(20) *In this study, we were interested in how students contextualised their designs – expressed in terms of the stance they conveyed towards their design artefacts, the design process, themselves as architects-in-training and their audience.* (ESP1)

Move 9-Step 2: Preview

(21) *In what follows we will interpret our students' (novice scientists') practices and beliefs by first acknowledging the novice's perspective, which then leads to a discussion of the formalicity of scientific writing and originality in science.* (APP2)

J. Move 10: Stating Limitations

This move which occurred only in two RAs was present towards the end of the Discussion section where the writers stated the limitations of their study.

(22) *As with all forms of research, limitations are inherent in this present study.* (APP3)

K. Move 11: Recommending Further Research

This move, found in six RAs, usually occurred after Move10 (Stating Limitations) where the writers suggested new lines of inquiry and how these limitations could be improved.

(23) *Further research is needed to explore task types that encourage a focus on fluency and meaning, such as interactive tasks and information transfer, as suggested by Robinson (2001).* (LTR2)

IV. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to identify the rhetorical structure of Discussion section of qualitative RAs in Applied Linguistics. The analysis of the Discussion section of 15 RAs revealed a total of 11 moves in the corpus. The only move that was present in all of the RAs was Move1-Step1 (Stating Findings). The next most frequent moves were Move3 (commenting on findings) which occurred in 12 RAs, Move2 (Referring to Data to Provide Evidence for Findings) which occurred in 11 RAs and Move5 (Comparing Findings with Literature) which was present in 9 RAs. As was expected, there are similarities and differences between the moves and steps that were identified in this study and those found by investigating empirical RAs. Possibly the most significant difference was the continuous reference of qualitative RA writers to their data. The analysis revealed one new move (Move2) which appeared after the writers stated their findings (Move1-Step1). In this move the writers referred to their data to provide evidence and support their findings. Another new move found was Move4 (Supporting the Explanation/Interpretation/Evaluation/Rejected Explanation) where the writers provided evidence for their comments on findings by referring to their data and/or literature.

This frequent reference to data as evidence and support can be explained in the light of characteristics of qualitative research. Qualitative research is a thick description of the phenomenon under study where the researcher is the primary source of data collection, analysis and interpretation. It seeks to understand and provide insight into a given issue from the vantage of other people. While description provides factual and accurate information on the phenomena, in Discussion section, researcher goes beyond the 'objective' description and tries to provide reasonable insights into the issue. Thus, the researcher interprets the findings and "gives meaning to the raw data" (Stead, 2007, p. 172). However, the analyst needs to balance between this description and interpretation and display "that the explanations and conclusions presented are generated from, and grounded in the data" (White, Woodfield, & Ritchie, 2003, p. 289). It seems that the writers of qualitative research try to justify and validate their findings and comments on findings by

frequent reference to their data. Smith (1996) suggests that two important criteria for evaluating the internal validity and reliability of qualitative research are internal coherence and presentation of evidence. The internal coherence refers to whether the argument presented within a study is consistent and supported by the data. The presentation of evidence refers to inclusion of sufficient raw data to enable readers to evaluate the findings and interpretations. The analysis of our corpus suggests that the writers use illustration as a means of convincing their audience so that the audience could have some understanding of the processes of thinking that have led to the conclusions. This allows the reader to examine the data and process to confirm the findings and interpretations.

V. CONCLUSION

Writing Discussion section particularly in qualitative research has been considered as a demanding task. This study aimed to identify and introduce the available patterns and options in writing discussion section of qualitative RAs in Applied Linguistics. It is hoped that the findings could help writers, particularly novice ones, to overcome the problems they may encounter in academic writing. However, as we know, genre is dynamic and this study does not claim that the generic structure introduced here is the one and only way of writing discussion section in Applied Linguistics.

The corpus demonstrated that the generic structure of discussion section of qualitative RAs are both different and similar to those identified in literature investigating empirical RAs. These differences can be attributed to the different characteristics of qualitative research. Previous researchers have identified disciplinary differences in generic structure of RAs. This study suggests that while Applied Linguistics is considered as a discourse community, it seems that research design (qualitative, quantitative) influences the conventions and norms within a disciplinary discourse.

APPENDIX 1. LIST OF RESEARCH ARTICLES USED IN ANALYSIS

Applied Linguistics (APP):

Gan, Z., Davison, C. & Hamp-Lyons, L. (2009). Topic negotiation in peer group oral assessment situations: A conversation analytic approach. *Applied linguistics*, 30(3), 315-334. **(APP1)**

Flowerdew, J. & Li, Y. (2007). Language Re-use among Chinese Apprentice Scientists Writing for Publication. *Applied linguistics*, 28(3), 440-465. **(APP2)**

Farrell, T. S. C. & Tan Kiat Kun, S. (2007). Language Policy, Language Teachers' Beliefs, and Classroom Practices. *Applied linguistics*, 29(3), 381-403. **(APP3)**

English for Specific purposes (ESP):

Morton, J. (2009). Genre and disciplinary competence: A case study of contextualisation in an academic speech genre. *English for Specific Purposes*, 28, 217-229. **(ESP1)**

Cheng, A. (2007). Transferring generic features and recontextualizing genre awareness: Understanding writing performance in the ESP genre-based literacy framework. *English for Specific Purposes*, 26, 287-307. **(ESP2)**

Shi, L. & Kubota, R. (2007). Patterns of rhetorical organization in Canadian and American language arts textbooks: An exploratory study. *English for Specific Purposes*, 26, 180-202. **(ESP3)**

Journal of Pragmatics (PRAG):

Schnurr, S., Marra, M. & Holmes, J. (2007). Being (im)polite in New Zealand workplaces: Maori and Pakeha leaders. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 39, 712-729. **(PRAG1)**

Ishida, I. (2006). Learners' perception and interpretation of contextualization cues in spontaneous Japanese conversation: Back-channel cue Uun. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 38, 1943-1981. **(PRAG2)**

Fukuda, C. (2005). Children's use of the masu form in play scenes. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 37, 1037-1058. **(PRAG3)**

Language Teaching Research (LTR):

Springer, S. & Collins, L. (2008). Interacting inside and outside of the language classroom. *Language Teaching Research*, 12(1), 39-60. **(LTR1)**

Murphy, L. (2005). Attending to form and meaning: The experience of adult distance learners of French, German and Spanish. *Language Teaching Research*, 9(3), 295-317. **(LTR2)**

Nkosana, L. (2008). Attitudinal obstacles to curriculum and assessment reform. *Language Teaching Research*, 12(2), 287-312. **(LTR3)**

TESOL Quarterly (TESOL):

Higgins, C. (2003). "Ownership" of English in the outer circle: An alternative to the NS-NNS dichotomy. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37(4), 615-644. **(TESOL1)**

Ellwood, C. & Nakane, I. (2009). Privileging of speech in EAP and mainstream university classrooms: A critical evaluation of participation. *TESOL Quarterly*, 43(2), 203-230. **(TESOL2)**

Ko, J., Schallert, D. L. & Walters, K. (2003). Rethinking Scaffolding: Examining Negotiation of Meaning in an ESL Storytelling Task. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37(2), 303-324. **(TESOL3)**

APPENDIX 2. PARTICULARS OF THE CORPUS

Journal	No. of Text	Year	Average Length of Text (in word)	Total Size of Texts (in word)
Applied Linguistics	3	2007, 2008, 2009	1,125	3,375
English for Specific Purposes	3	2007 (2), 2009	970	2,909
Language Teaching Research	3	2005, 2008 (2)	853	2,560
Journal of Pragmatics	3	2005, 2006, 2007	706	2,118
TESOL Quarterly	3	2003 (2), 2009	1,020	3,059
Total Number of Texts in Corpus= 15		Total Size of Corpus (in words) = 14,423		

REFERENCES

- [1] Berg, B. L. (2001). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences* (4th ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- [2] Bhatia, V. K. (1993). *Analysing genre: Language use in professional settings*. London: Longman.
- [3] Bitchener, J., & Basturkmen, H. (2006). Perceptions of the difficulties of postgraduate L2 thesis students writing the discussion section. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 5(1), 4-18.
- [4] Brett, P. (1994). A genre analysis of the results section of sociology articles. *English for Specific Purposes*, 13(1), 47-59.
- [5] Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage.
- [6] Dudley-Evans, T. (1994). Genre analysis: An approach to text analysis for ESP. In M. Coulthard (Ed.), *Advances in Written Text Analysis* (pp. 219-228). London: Routledge.
- [7] Holmes, R. (1997). Genre analysis, and the social sciences: An investigation of the structure of research article discussion sections in three disciplines. *English for Specific Purposes*, 16(4), 321-337.
- [8] Holmes, R. (2000). Variation and text structure: The discussion section in economics research articles. *ITL: Review of Applied Linguistics*, 131-132, 107-135.
- [9] Hyland, K. (2005). Stance and engagement: a model of interaction in academic discourse. *Discourse Studies*, 7(2), 173-192.
- [10] Kanoksilapatham, B. (2005). Rhetorical structure of biochemistry research articles. *English for Specific Purposes*, 24(3), 269-292.
- [11] Lim, J. M. H. (2006). Method sections of management research articles: A pedagogically motivated qualitative study. *English for Specific Purposes*, 25(3), 282-309.
- [12] McKay, S. (2006). *Researching second language classrooms*. London: Routledge
- [13] Nwogu, K. N. (1997). The medical research paper: Structure and functions. *English for Specific Purposes*, 16(2), 119-138.
- [14] Ozturk, I. (2007). The textual organisation of research article introductions in applied linguistics: Variability within a single discipline. *English for Specific Purposes*, 26(1), 25-38.
- [15] Posteguillo, S. (1999). The Schematic Structure of Computer Science Research Articles. *English for Specific Purposes*, 18(2), 139-160.
- [16] Samraj, B. (2005). An exploration of a genre set: Research article abstracts and introductions in two disciplines. *English for Specific Purposes*, 24(2), 141-156.
- [17] Silva, T. J. (2005). On the philosophical bases of inquiry in second language writing: Metaphysics, inquiry paradigms, and the intellectual zeitgeist. In P. K. Matsuda & T. J. Silva (Eds.), *Second language writing research: Perspectives on the process of knowledge construction* (pp. 3-15). Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- [18] Smith, J. A. (1996). Evolving issues in qualitative psychology. In J. R. (ed) (Ed.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods in Psychology and the Social Sciences* (pp. 189-201). British Psychological Society: Leicester.
- [19] Stead, G. B. (2007). *Planning, designing and reporting research* (4th ed.). South Africa: Pearson Education.
- [20] Swales, J. M. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- [21] Swales, J. M. (2004). *Research Genres: Explorations and applications*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [22] Taylor, J. R., & Bogdan, R. (1998). *Introduction to qualitative research methods* (3rd ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- [23] White, C., Woodfield, K., & Ritchie, J. (2003). Reporting and Presenting Qualitative Data. In J. Ritchie & J. Anelewis (Eds.), *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers* (pp. 287-320). London Sage Publications.
- [24] Yang, R. (2001). A genre analysis of research articles in applied linguistics. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis. National University of Singapore, Singapore.
- [25] Yang, R., & Allison, D. (2003). Research articles in applied linguistics: moving from results to conclusions. *English for Specific Purposes*, 22(4), 365-385.

Leila Dobakhti is an assistant professor at Islamic Art University of Tabriz, Iran. She earned her PhD in Applied Linguistics from the University of Malaya, Malaysia. Her areas of interest are genre analysis, discourse analysis, material evaluation and ESP.

A Survey Study of Chinese College Engineering Students' Use of Metacognitive Strategies in English Writing*

Xin Chen

School of Foreign Languages, University of South China, Hengyang, China

Gengsheng Xiao

School of Foreign Languages, University of South China, Hengyang, China

Abstract—Metacognitive strategy has been recognised as a crucial factor in language learning, and its role in English writing for Chinese learners still remains unknown. The present study investigates 215 Chinese college engineering students' use of metacognitive strategies through employing research methods of questionnaire survey and writing proficiency test. According to the results, it is found that selective attention and self-monitoring are used in writing quite often, while planning and self-evaluation are seldom used. Besides, the differences in the use of metacognitive strategies between freshmen and sophomores are not statistically significant. It is also found that engineering students of higher writing proficiency tend to employ metacognitive strategies in academic writing more frequently and effectively than those with poor writing skills. It is eventually suggested that metacognitive strategies should be imparted to the students, and that the training of metacognitive strategies should be integrated into classroom activities of English writing teaching.

Index Terms—metacognitive strategy, English writing, strategy-based instruction

I. INTRODUCTION

In the past decades, the educational concept of learner-centeredness and autonomous learning has been increasingly accepted in second/foreign language teaching practice. Thus, much attention has been paid to language learning strategies, and it is widely agreed that effective learning strategies can help them enhance language learning efficiency, improve learning quality, and cultivate autonomous learning ability (Chamot et al., 1999). Besides, what strategies learners are equipped with and how learning strategies are used by them exert great influence on learners' academic performance, and in other words, learning strategy is a significant factor to explain and predict learning outcome.

Since 1980s, learning strategies have been divided into different categories. According to the theoretical framework put forward by O'Malley & Chamot, learning strategies consist of metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies and social strategies, among which metacognitive strategies concern the knowledge about cognitive process (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). To be specific, metacognitive strategies include the following subcategories, such as beforehand planning, selective attention, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation and etc. They serve the function of adjusting or managing cognitive processes. Metacognitive strategies are essential for successful planning, monitoring and evaluation of learning activities, which play a significant role in improving learning quality.

Due to the great importance of metacognitive strategies in learning, metacognition and metacognitive strategies have attracted increasing attention and interest from applied linguists and language teachers. More and more researchers, scholars and teachers come to realize that learning strategies have considerable influence on the effectiveness and efficiency of learning. Based on such a consensus, they integrate the notion of metacognitive strategies into linguistic research and language education, the scope of which covers almost every aspect of second/foreign language teaching and learning.

Under this context, some scholars have introduced the concept of metacognition into second/foreign language writing pedagogy and several studies have been conducted on the relationship between metacognition and second/foreign language writing. According to the study carried out by Devine et al., the data collected from the subjects of the 20 freshmen indicated that there was a positive correlation between metacognitive strategy and writing performance. Moreover, it was pointed out that metacognition or metacognitive strategy played a more important role than linguistic competence in developing second language writing skills (Devine, Railey, & Boshoff, 1993). According to Kasper's (1998) research, which took 120 learners from different cultural backgrounds as the participants, it was found that there was a significant connection between metacognitive strategy and English writing score. Furthermore, it was also found

* This research is financially supported by the Ministry of Education in China's Project of Humanities and Social Sciences (No. 15YJC740106), the Hunan Provincial Education Sciences Planning Project (No. XJK014QGD011), the National University Foreign Language Teaching and Research Project (No. 2014HN0018A).

that high level learners were more likely to be equipped with more metacognition than median level learners, and their differences were significant in the variable of strategy. Then, Victori (1999) conducted an investigation into 4 undergraduates majoring English and the research showed that the differences in metacognitive knowledge between learners could give rise to different writing proficiency levels. Recent studies have found that metacognitive strategies are frequently used in English writing, and they are very helpful for improving writing quality from various aspects, including content, organization, vocabulary and grammar.

In China, in the field of English teaching, scholars also pay increasing attention to the relationship between metacognition and English writing. Through a large-scale questionnaire survey of 1422 non-English majors from 61 colleges in China, Wu & Liu (2004) found that metacognition is made up of metacognitive strategy and metacognitive evaluation. Besides, they identified the factors constituting the two constructs. Then, the researchers carried out an investigation of 308 college students, and the findings indicated that there were four types of metacognitive strategies which could have influence on learners' writing performance, which were comprised of strategy of selecting lexical items, strategy of equally stressing structure, content and language, strategy of exercise and positive experience, and strategy of turning to others for revising composition. Despite previous studies on the use of metacognitive strategies in writing, so far there are still quite few empirical studies focusing on how Chinese students employ metacognitive strategies in their English writing. Owing to the fact that engineering students at the tertiary level are confronted many difficulties in English academic writing and that great importance has been attached to the cultivation of engineering students' comprehensive quality since the *Excellent Engineer Education and Training Program* was initiated throughout Chinese universities nationwide in 2010, the present study aims to conduct an investigation into college engineering students' metacognitive strategies in English writing (Xiao & Chen, 2015).

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Questions

The present study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the general characteristics of Chinese college engineering students' use of metacognitive strategies in the process of English writing?
2. What are the differences in the use of metacognitive strategies in the process of English writing between engineering freshmen and sophomores? Are the differences statistically significant?
3. What are the differences in the use of metacognitive strategies in the process of English writing between college engineering students of high level writing proficiency and the ones of low level? Are the differences statistically significant?

B. Research Subjects

The present study selected 215 college engineering students as participants. All of the subjects are from the same university in central China, whose fields of study range from mechanical engineering to nuclear engineering, environmental engineering, and construction engineering. The subjects are made up of 168 males and 47 females, which objectively represent the gender proportion of engineering students at the tertiary level in China. The participants consist of 112 freshmen and 103 sophomores, with students of the two grades being comparable.

C. Research Instruments

The research instruments adopted in the present study include questionnaire and test paper of English writing.

Firstly, questionnaire survey was administered. The questionnaire is intended to investigate what metacognitive strategies are used in learners' English writing and how frequently the metacognitive strategies are used. The design of the questionnaire items are mainly based on the theoretical framework on metacognitive strategies in the study conducted by O'Malley & Chamot (1990) and the questionnaire developed by Lu (2006). There are altogether 27 items in the questionnaire, which cover 4 factors of metacognitive strategies, and to be specific, items (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8) aim to measure the use of planning in English writing, items (9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15) for selective attention, items (16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21) for self-monitoring, and items (22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27) for self-evaluation. All the items take the form of 5-points Likert scale, from "1" indicating that the strategy is never used in English writing to "5" indicating that the strategy is always used in English writing.

The proficiency test of English writing is also administered. All the subjects in the present study were required to write an argumentative composition of more than 150 words within 30 minutes during class time. Each test paper was graded by three experienced English teachers, with the mean of the three scores as the final score of the student's English writing.

D. Data Collection and Data Analysis

The questionnaire survey was conducted at the end of a semester, which took place during class time. Before the questionnaire was filled in, the researchers spent about two minutes telling the subjects the purpose of the survey and explaining how to respond to the questionnaire items. Then, the subjects completed the questionnaire paper by choosing between "1", "2", "3", "4", and "5" for each item, which indicates the frequency of using the metacognitive strategy in

the process of English writing. According to Oxford & Burry-Stock (1995), the mean of each strategy can be used to represent the frequency with which the subjects adopt the strategy. To be specific, the mean between 1.0 and 1.4 indicates that “the learner never uses the strategy”; the mean between 1.5 and 2.4 indicates that “the learner seldom uses the strategy”; the mean between 2.5 and 3.4 indicates that “the learner sometimes uses the strategy”; the mean between 3.5 and 4.4 indicates that “the learner often uses the strategy”; the mean between 4.5 and 5.0 indicates that “the learner always uses the strategy”.

After the completion of questionnaire survey, the subjects were required to take English writing test. Then, the researchers collected all the questionnaire papers and writing test papers. Moreover, obtained were all the data from questionnaire survey and the scores that the three teachers gave by grading students' writing test papers. After that, the data were put into the computer and then were statistically processed and analyzed through SPSS 18.0. The analytical procedures were as follows. Firstly, a descriptive analysis of all the data was carried out and some important descriptive statistics would be computed, e.g. the mean and standard deviation of each strategy. Secondly, the researchers statistically computed the mean of each factor of metacognitive strategies in the two grades of college engineering students and compared the means by conducting independent samples t-test. Thirdly, the researchers statistically computed the mean of each factor of metacognitive strategies in the two groups of college engineering students, one of high level writing proficiency and the other of low level, and compared the means by conducting independent samples t-test.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. General Characteristics of College Engineering Students' Use of Metacognitive Strategies in English Writing

Through a statistical analysis of the data from questionnaire survey, the present study has obtained the following descriptive statistics presented in Table 1, i.e. mean and standard deviation of each factor of metacognitive strategy, which sketch the general characteristics of college engineering students' use of metacognitive strategies in English writing.

TABLE 1
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF THE FOUR FACTORS OF METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES USED BY ENGINEERING STUDENTS

Factor of Metacognitive Strategy	Mean	Std. Deviation
Planning	2.36	.43
Selective Attention	3.67	.51
Self-Monitoring	3.58	.46
Self-Evaluation	2.39	.49

From Table 1, it can be seen that Chinese engineering students tend to use metacognitive strategies when they are engaged in English writing tasks, and meanwhile they adopt the four different types of metacognitive strategies with different frequencies.

On the one hand, after more than twelve years of formal education and about ten years of English learning, college engineering students have accumulated relevant metacognitive knowledge and they are also aware that metacognitive strategies are beneficial to improve their learning quality and efficiency. Despite several years of language learning and practice, writing is still one of the most awkward language skills for most Chinese college students, and engineering students are especially less proficient writers for they are usually burdened with a series of specialized courses and some other demanding courses, such as Advanced Mathematics, College Physics and so on. Anyway, just because of their lack of solid foundation in English writing skill, college engineering students gradually learn to adopt metacognitive strategies in the process of English writing. All the four types of metacognitive strategies, i.e. planning, selective attention, self-monitoring and self-evaluation are used with some frequencies when college engineering students are involved in English writing task.

On the other hand, among the four different types of metacognitive strategies, college engineering students use selective attention and self-monitoring much more frequently than planning and self-evaluation. Firstly, it can be seen that they use selective attention quite often (3.67) when engaged in English writing tasks. In other words, they often consciously assign attention to some important aspects of writing, for example, careful reading of the task requirement, the connection of previous background knowledge and composition content, accurate use of words, phrases, sentence patterns, punctuations, cohesive devices and topic sentence in each paragraph etc. Secondly, self-monitoring strategies are also often (3.58) used when engineering students carry out English academic writing. In other words, in the process of writing, the students can often consciously check up whether all the content is centered on the title of the composition, whether there is a topic sentence in each paragraph and other sentences in each paragraph develop its topic sentence, and whether the language items are correctly or properly used. They often accordingly make revisions. Besides, they often regulate their writing speed according to the time left for their writing tasks. Thirdly, planning is the least frequently used (2.36) among the four types of metacognitive strategies. In other words, they seldom make plans for improving their academic English writing or they also seldom make such preparations as accumulation of relevant words, phrases, sentence patterns and sample essays for reference before they conduct specific writing tasks. Finally,

self-evaluation is also seldom adopted (2.39) in engineering students' English writing. The students rarely evaluate their own compositions from different perspectives, such as task fulfillment, content, cohesion and coherence, vocabulary, and grammar. The students seldom have self-evaluation of the learning strategies adopted in the process of writing and they rarely sum up their strengths, weaknesses and approaches to making improvement.

B. Differences in the Use of Metacognitive Strategies in English Writing between Engineering Freshmen and Sophomores

The subjects participating in the present study consist of freshmen and sophomores. In order to examine whether there are significant differences in the use of metacognitive strategies between engineering freshmen and sophomores, the statistical analysis of independent samples T-test is implemented, and the results are presented in Table 2.

TABLE 2
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST ON ENGINEERING FRESHMEN AND SOPHOMORES'
USE OF METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES IN ENGLISH WRITING

Factor of Metacognitive Strategy	Mean		Std. Deviation		t	sig.(2-tailed)
	Freshmen	Sophomores	Freshmen	Sophomores		
Planning	2.32	2.40	.42	.49	-1.29	.187
Selective Attention	3.61	3.74	.52	.50	-1.87	.096
Self-Monitoring	3.63	3.53	.47	.52	1.48	.165
Self-Evaluation	2.35	2.43	.48	.47	-1.23	.201

From Table 2, it can be seen that the differences in learners' use of metacognitive strategies between freshmen and sophomores are quite slight. When engaged in English academic writing, the freshmen tend to use three types of metacognitive strategies less frequently than sophomores. Firstly, the mean of the frequency with which planning is used by freshmen is 2.32, lower than that of sophomores (2.40), but the difference is not statistically significant (with sig. being .187, larger than .05). Similarly, the frequencies with which freshmen and sophomores adopt selective attention and self-evaluation in the process of English writing are quite close, and the differences are not significant from the perspective of statistics. In terms of self-monitoring strategy, surprisingly, the freshmen use this type of metacognitive strategy more frequently than the sophomores, with the means of 3.63 versus 3.53. However, the differences in the use of self-monitoring strategy between the freshmen and sophomores are not statistically significant.

According to the above results, it can be concluded that freshmen and sophomores use metacognitive strategies in English writing with similar frequencies. In other words, the learners do not make notable progress in the use of metacognitive strategies in the process of English writing though they spend more time learning English and they may acquire more language knowledge. The result that college engineering students' use of metacognitive strategies in English writing can not improve significantly can ascribe to the fact that the learners can not acquire metacognitive strategies naturally and that English teachers seldom impart metacognitive knowledge to the students and they also rarely integrate metacognitive strategy training into the cultivation of language skills. Thus, strategy-based instruction should be implemented in English writing teaching. Teachers should firstly give students lectures on metacognitive strategies, and acquaint the students with such strategies as planning, selective attention, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation. After that, the metacognitive strategy training should be further conducted in combination with specific writing tasks, and thus, students' knowledge of metacognitive strategies can be applied and strengthened in English writing. Through strategy training and strategy-integrated practice in English writing teaching, students are certain to use metacognitive strategies in English writing more flexibly and more effectively.

C. Differences in the Use of Metacognitive Strategies in English Writing between High-level and Low-level College Engineering Students

In order to examine whether there are significant statistical differences in the use of metacognitive strategies in English writing between engineering students of proficient writing skills and those of less proficient writing skills, the present study firstly selects those whose writing scores rank top 25% (i.e. the top 54 most proficient writers) as the high-level group and those whose writing scores rank bottom 25% (i.e. the bottom 54 least proficient writers) as the low-level group, and then the statistical analysis of independent samples T-test is implemented to compare the two groups' use of metacognitive strategies in English writing, and the results are presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST ON HIGH-LEVEL AND LOW-LEVEL COLLEGE ENGINEERING STUDENTS'
USE OF METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES IN ENGLISH WRITING

Factor of Metacognitive Strategy	Mean		Std. Deviation		T	sig.(2-tailed)
	High-level	Low-level	High-level	Low-level		
Planning	2.62	2.19	.48	.42	7.01	0.00
Selective Attention	3.93	3.26	.52	.55	9.20	0.00
Self-Monitoring	3.87	3.42	.45	.43	7.51	0.00
Self-Evaluation	2.71	2.23	.46	.51	7.26	0.00

According to Table 3, it can be clearly seen that the engineering students whose writing skills are proficient use metacognitive strategies in English writing with significantly higher frequency than those who are less proficient

English writers. The four types of metacognitive strategies are employed with considerably different frequencies by the two groups of engineering students. To be specific, the frequencies with which planning, selective attention, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation are applied by successful engineering students are 2.62, 3.93, 3.87, and 2.71 respectively, while by contrast, their less proficient counterparts are at 2.19, 3.26, 3.42, and 2.23. Furthermore, the differences in the use of the four types of metacognitive strategies between the groups are statistically significant, with the sig. (2-tailed) being 0.00. From the results of independent samples T-test, it can be concluded that successful English writers tend to use metacognitive strategies in academic writing more frequently, flexibly, and effectively, while learners with low writing proficiency are likely to have poor performance in using metacognitive strategies. Therefore, in order to improve engineering students' writing proficiency and cultivate their writing skills, it is imperative that metacognitive strategies should be trained and integrated into English writing teaching and specific writing practice.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Through questionnaire survey and writing proficiency test, the present study investigates the use of metacognitive strategies in English academic English by engineering students at the tertiary level in China. The findings indicate that engineering students gradually develop awareness of metacognitive strategies and to some extent employ metacognitive strategies when engaged in English writing. Among the four types of metacognitive strategies, engineering students tend to use selective attention and self-monitoring more frequently and effectively, while planning and self-evaluation are applied with quite low frequencies. It is also found that the differences in the use of metacognitive strategies between the freshmen and the sophomores are not statistically significant, while engineering students of higher writing proficiency employ metacognitive strategies with higher frequencies than less proficient writers, and the differences between the two groups in the use of all the four types of metacognitive strategies, i.e. planning, selective attention, self-monitoring and self-evaluation, are statistically significant.

According to the findings of the present study and the effectiveness of metacognitive strategy training in the cultivation of language skills (Wang, 2014), it is strongly recommended that the training of metacognitive strategies should be implemented in the teaching of English writing for engineering students at the tertiary level in China. The strategy-based instruction can be conducted by taking the following two steps.

To begin with, English teachers should impart the knowledge of metacognitive strategies to engineering students and raise their metacognitive awareness, and in this way, the learners will increase their metacognitive knowledge and they will be acquainted with various types of metacognitive strategies, such as planning, selective attention, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation.

After the students have acquired sufficient knowledge of metacognitive strategies and have gained full understanding of them, the teachers are suggested to integrate the training of metacognitive strategies into classroom activities of English writing teaching. Only by combining metacognitive knowledge and specific writing tasks can the learners use metacognitive strategies flexibly and effectively.

REFERENCES

- [1] Chamot, A. U., Barnhardt, S., El-Dinary, P. B., & Robbins, J. (1999). *The Learning Strategies Handbook*. White Plains, NY: Longman.
- [2] Devine, J., Railey, K., & Boshoff, P. (1993). The implications of cognitive models in L1 and L2 writing, *Journal of Second Language Writing* (3), 203-225.
- [3] Kasper, L. F. (1998). ESL writing and the principle of nonjudgmental awareness: Rationale and implementation, *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* (25), 58-66.
- [4] Lu, W. (2006). The relationship between metacognitive strategies and English writing, *Foreign Languages and Their Teaching* (9), 25-27.
- [5] O'Malley, J. M., & Chamot, A. U. (1990). *Learning Strategies in Second Language Acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [6] Oxford, R. L., & Burry-Stock, J. A. (1995). Assessing the use of language learning strategies worldwide with the ESL/EFL version of the strategy inventory for language learning (SILL), *System* (23), 1-23.
- [7] Victori, M. (1999). An analysis of writing knowledge in EFL composing: A case study of two effective and two less effective writers, *System* (27), 537-555.
- [8] Wang, X. (2014). The effect of metacognitive strategy training on reading comprehension and metacognitive awareness of English majors in a vocational technology college, *World Transactions on Engineering and Technology Education* (12), 78-83.
- [9] Wu, H., & Liu, R. (2004). A metacognitive framework for L2 writing: A factor analysis approach, *Foreign Language Teaching and Research* (34), 187-194.
- [10] Xiao, G., & Chen, X. (2015). English academic writing difficulties of engineering students at the tertiary level in China. *World Transactions on Engineering and Technology Education* (13), 259-263.

Xin Chen was born in Chenzhou, China in 1983. She received her Master Degree in Linguistics from University of South China in 2011. She is currently a lecturer in the School of Foreign Languages, University of South China, Hengyang, China. Her research interests include Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) and Interpretation.

Gengsheng Xiao was born in Hengyang, China in 1980. He received his PhD in Applied Linguistics from Huazhong University of Science and Technology, Wuhan, China. He is currently an associate professor in the School of Foreign Languages, University of South China, Hengyang, China. His research interests include Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) and Corpus Linguistics.

Development of a Questionnaire for the Assessment of Writing Problems

Amineh Danaee

Young Researchers Club, Garmsar Branch, Islamic Azad University, Garmsar, Iran

Abstract—Due to the importance of publishing and its advantages for professors at the present time, this article intends to develop a questionnaire based on Bachman's model (1990) to seek Iranian professors' attitude toward major problematic areas of writing Iranian scholars encounter trying to create a scientific paper so as to diminish rejection upon submission. The findings of the questionnaire demonstrated that regarding organizational competence, rhetorical organization, vocabulary, morphology and syntax were taken much more essential in this regard. On the subject of pragmatic competence, ideational functions and sensitivity to naturalness received greater importance. Concerning lower level skills of writing, professors declared the importance of spelling and punctuation in writing. General publishing problems asked from the professors exhibited the importance of all the items, but with greater emphasis on quality in writing. As a final point, professors' comments were described.

Index Terms—writing, academic publishing, scientific paper, Iranian scholars, Iranian professors

I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the prominence of English writing is properly established to the degree that by writing effectively, one can make a good impression on others and be in the position of authority. So, an effectively written scholarly paper, which investigates a research field and finds out the results, can be published by a journal. Besides, article publishing, along with a lot of advantages, can bring about the promotion of professors. Not every paper can be published as an article, though. The paper must be based on the requirements of the journal to which it has been sent. Good English must also be taken into account. If one of these elements is overlooked, a paper is apt to be rejected. On the one hand, many scholars attempt not to go against journal requirements; on the other hand, they are aware of the research activities proposed by Wong (2008) such as reading journals and E-journals, surfing the internet for information, attending conferences and taking courses; therefore, this is the use of English that must be competent. The criteria for writing well in English, however, are controversial. Zinsser (2010), for example, states four main principles for writing good English, i.e. to write simply, clearly, briefly, and humanly. The problems of this skill can also go beyond lower level skills, to be exact, sentence-level such as grammar, vocabulary, misspelling and etc and can deal with higher level skills as well. Besides, problems can stem from lack of writing voice including the audience and the format, absence of style and so forth.

A lot of research has been done on NN writers' problems. Bahrami and Riazi (n.d.), for instance, bring together a number of these difficulties that are found out by others in this issue. The writers declare while having simple language and style and lacking sufficient knowledge of words and appropriate amount of force to make claims for their research and interfering of first language, it takes longer for NN scholars to write qualitatively. Research in this respect is not restricted, and in the same way, Adams-Smith (1984), Bazerman (1988), Dudley-Evans (1994), Johns (1993), Mauranen (1993), St. John (1987), and Swales (1990) state other areas of difficulty that are summarized by Flowerdew (1999, p. 127). They rely on not having the ability of linking the text to the audience, making reference to the published literature, revealing and concealing the point of view of the author and applying hedges to indicate caution expected by the academic community as other writing problems of NN writers. These writers mention that NN speakers cannot write grammatically and coherently whilst they affect their own cultural views regarding the nature of academic processes.

Similar to publication growth among scholars in many countries, causing a widespread movement, Iran as a developing country is in the process of scientific advancement and its publications in international journals have been increased. As a result, as far as Professors' promotion, research grants, sabbatical leave and other rewards intended for publications (Bahrami & Riazi, *ibid.*) are all associated with publishing articles; Iranian scholars pay more attention to publish their articles in indexed journals while they also receive frequent direct and indirect instructions to publish their articles. A high fee paid for publishing articles in ISI journals is not negligent accordingly. Article's publishing as a requirement for Ph.D. students is another reason, emphasizing the importance of producing better academic articles in English.

Altogether, even though, causes of rejection are not confined to English writing deficiencies mentioned above and some reasons might be wholly research based, that is to say, absence of originality, appropriate message and statistical analysis, etc., this article, with regard to the importance of academic publication in English for the Iranian scholars, in line with previous studies regarding NN deficiencies in writing for publishing confirms some of these prominent

problems. Unlike earlier studies, this article is not going to analyze one problem in detail. However, the originality of the current study in relation to former studies is that it reflects these problems from the point of view of Iranian professors through a comprehensive original questionnaire given to them. It is hoped that the results help Iranian scholars know the current problems hence improve their publications.

II. METHOD

Participants

A questionnaire was used for elicitation of Iranian professors' opinion about publishing problems of Iranian scholars. 50 professors to whom it was handed were selected from Semnan Azad and Payamnoor University among engineering, management, accounting fields. The professors were almost equally males and females.

Instrumentation and Data collection procedures

The questionnaire was prepared in six different sections on likert scale of *not at all important*, *slightly important*, *important*, *very important* and *of utmost importance* (Likert, 1932). For the purpose of assessing Iranian professors' ideas regarding publishing problems in Iran, a general model of communicative language ability as a standard classification proposed by Bachman (1990) was employed; therefore, four sections of this questionnaire including fifteen items were made according to that model (see appendix A).

Higher level skills of writing were included in the first four sections, so another section was devoted to lower level skills of writing (mechanics) and the problems related to them. The items in this section including five items were chosen according to Richards and Schmidt (2002)'s book, dictionary of applied linguistics.

The last section entitled "general academic publishing problems" was mainly based on what Flowerdew (op. cit.) discovers as NN scholars' difficulty in writing as well as other areas of difficulty distinguished by Adams-Smith et al. (1984), and summarized by Flowerdew (ibid.). 9 items were also assigned for this section. Therefore a questionnaire was made in 6 sections with 29 items. Moreover, any comments could be added by Iranian professors.

Before given to actual subjects, it was translated into Persian (see appendix B) and handed to two professors who were experts at the content of the questionnaire. These experts verified the relevance and relation of each question with its considered definition by a four choice scale of *irrelevant*, *a little relevant*, *almost relevant* and *of great relevance*. Then, obtained data from each professor's referee were entered into a table. The extent of agreement between the experts was gained through Spearman coefficient of correlation. At the 0.01 level the correlation is significant, in this way the questionnaire was validated. To establish its reliability, a pretest was arranged, so the questionnaire was handed to five Iranian professors. Then, Cronbach's alpha equals 0.512, indicating the reliability of this questionnaire. Then a sample of 50 Iranian professors was selected and the questionnaire was handed to them. In all the stages of the questionnaire, correlation coefficient was used. For example, it was used in validating the questionnaire with two people, piloting the questionnaire with five persons and handing it to the actual subjects to evaluate the relation between the answers of these people.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In reporting the results, the number of those whose frequency number of selecting a particular item was less than 10 among 50 professors was neglected.

Grammatical Competence Problems

According to the results, a piece of writing can be created only if a combination of skills is present all together. Lexical knowledge, for example, as stated by Henry and Roseberry (2007) plays a greater role than grammar in the genre based writing of advanced academic ESL students. This study substantiates this matter in a way that among the fifty professors, 40.0 percent as a minimum supposed that *academic vocabulary* is very important, and 30.0 percent believed it is important while 24.0 percent of them considered the choice of utmost importance. The results of *technical vocabulary* was not very different from academic vocabulary to the degree that 30.0 percent equally considered it to be important and of utmost importance. 34.0 percent knew it very important. *Morphology* was assumed to be very important (38.0 percent) and important (34.0 percent). *Syntax* was very important (34.0 percent). 32.0 percent claimed that it is important and 26.0 percent very important. Based on the majority of the opinions, all these items were very important and in the case of academic and technical vocabulary of utmost importance. Although the results of the two elements were the same, students of different fields of study know their specific or technical words; therefore, these are semi academic or general words that they need to learn. Until now regarding professors' opinions, knowing words and morphology do not suffice for constructing an article thus the role of syntax is complementary. *Phonology* by 46.0 percent was mentioned to be slightly important and 40.0 percent to be not at all important. The reason for this result is possibly due to the primary impression that this term had on the professors, grouping sounds and symbols together. Even though it looks as if this item is related to speaking in the in the first place, this factor seems to be necessary in the first stages of learning to write.

Textual Competence Problems

42.0 percent deemed that *cohesion* or grammatical and/or lexical relationships are very important. In addition, based on 40.0 percent, it was important while *the rhetorical organization* or underlying structure was deemed to be of utmost importance by 34.0 percent, very important by 42.0 percent and important by 22.0 percent.

Illocutionary Competence Problems

On the subject of *illocutionary competence problems* or inability in conveying a message, *ideational functions* were selected by 36.0 percent to be important and very important in the same way. 18.0 percent claimed of utmost importance for this item. Ideational function according to Bachman (ibid.) is the use of language to exchange information and feelings about that information. The answers exhibit the significance of organization of experience and expression of meanings in terms of the world experience as part of a writer. 42.0 percent believed that *manipulative functions* are important. However, 28.0 percent considered it to be slightly important. The primary purpose of utterances with a *manipulative function* is to affect the world around us (Bachman, ibid.) and in this way they control the behavior of others and build up relationships. Based on the opinions, these functions are not of that significance in writing a research article. *Heuristic functions* were considered slightly important by 40.0 percent and important by 36.0 percent. A writer utilizes this function in exploring the world when he tries to teach others about the world (Littlemore & Low, 2006). The answers for this item cannot reveal the great importance of these functions in writing a research paper. The last item of this section is *imaginative function* that refers to one's ability to create and extend his environment for humorous or aesthetic purposes (Bachman, ibid.). This item was stated, by 46%, to be slightly important. 22% stated it was not important and 22% stated that it was. In general, as stated earlier, ideational functions reflect the greater importance in comparison with other functions in writing for publication. However, this sentence does not indicate that their importance in other writing genres is disregarded.

Sociolinguistic Competence Problems

44.0 percent stated that *sensitivity to dialect* or *variety* is slightly important. 26.0 percent supposed it not at all important and important correspondingly. *Sensitivity to dialect or variety* recognizes differences and conventions in language use in different regions or by different social groups in various social contexts (Pawlikowska-Smith, 2002). The results were not significant; that may be due to language of academic articles which is a standard language among the members of the academic community and does not differ from one social group to another. *Sensitivity to register* was expected to be important by 46.0 percent and very important by 20.0 percent, while 22.0 percent indicated that it is slightly important. The item is related to academic words or special words of a field of study in some way, indicating that a certain subject matter needs its own language with a style applicable to that domain that according to the sample was important in writing a research article. 42.0 percent uttered *sensitivity to naturalness* as an important and very important issue (32.0 percent), on the other hand, 22.0 percent stated its slightly importance. According to Bachman (ibid.), *sensitivity to naturalness* refers to the way our language sounds natural not a strange, "foreign," archaic or bookish language. The findings represent that natural spontaneity has an absolute position in writing. 46.0 percent expressed that *cultural references & figures of speech* to be slightly important, but then again 36.0 percent declared the importance of these items. Generally speaking, interpretation of figures of speech such as simile, hyperbole, metaphor and so on requires knowledge more than knowing words and grammar. People typically do not have any trouble in interpreting the figures of speech of their own language but the use of them requires knowing conventions that are deeply rooted in the culture of a given society or speech community (Bachman, op.cit.). Concerning professors' answers, the role of this item in writing an article for publication is insignificant in spite of the fact that some knew it an important factor.

Problems with Lower Level Skills of Writing

46.0 percent declared *spelling* importance; in addition, 30.0 percent knew it to be very important. The *Use of apostrophes* by 42.0 percent was considered to be slightly important in contrast 24.0 percent reckoned its importance. *Punctuations* were important by 28.0 percent, very important by 34.0 percent and of utmost importance by 26.0 percent. 40.0 percent expressed *capitalization* slight unimportance while 22.0 percent explained its importance. *Abbreviations & numbers* were perceived to be slightly important by 42.0 percent conversely 28.0 percent declared their importance. The findings represented among lower level skills used mainly in editing and revision stages of writing and compared with higher level skills, spelling and punctuation are more essential than others.

General Academic Publishing Problems

In the last section, 46.0 percent proved the importance of *Article translation* and 30.0 percent confirmed it to be very important. The results indicate the necessity of skill in this item. Iranian scholars often have difficulty in this matter, so they give their articles to be translated. In fact, as far as writing skill matters, writers should write their articles simultaneously in English but because of weakness in English writing, they write their articles in Persian and then change the language. Translating an article equal to writing an article needs proficiency at all the levels of writing, except generating the ideas that this case will be done by the writer himself. 44.0 percent declared that *L1 interference* is important and 36.0 percent declared that it is very important. By the same token, the problems caused by *L1 interference* were confirmed to be significant. Conversely, Brown (2000) claimed that research indicated that the saliency of interference from the first language does not imply that interference is the most crucial factor in adult language learning. Similarly, 44.0 percent believed that *taking longer to write* is an important problem and 30.0 percent expressed that it is very important. This problem is simply caused by a lot of factors joint together and mentioned

directly above such as lack of vocabulary and grammar knowledge, experience, and so forth. *Making reference to a published literature* by 44.0 percent was considered to be important and 26.0 percent to be very important. Contrariwise, 22.0 percent explained that it is slightly important. The citation is a significant matter in literature review too, so scholars must learn to use paraphrasing or exact quoting to maintain their articles' quality. 36.0 percent revealed that *relating text to audience* is important and 24.0 percent expressed that it is very important while 32.0 percent uncovered that it is slightly important. This item was somehow equally important and slightly important. As apparently known, writing is a demanding skill for a writer because he must talk indirectly to an audience that receives his message without being able to give him any feedback. Consequently, this is writers' art to relate their text to the audience and to be able to convey their experience as in ideational functions, influence their readers as in manipulative functions, and the like. 44.0 percent professors exhibited that *revealing or concealing the point of view of the author* is slightly important, on the other hand, 28.0 percent pointed to its importance. The results hint at the use of third person point of view instead of first person point of view in writing an academic paper due to the fact that an academic article must be objective. As a whole, the issue of voice, authorial identity, or authorial presence in L2 writing has recently received considerable attention from second language researchers. *Use of "Hedges" to indicate caution expected by the academic community* by 46.0 percent was proved to be important and by 34.0 percent to be very important.

According to Richards and Schmidt (op. cit.), hedges are linguistic devices that writers use either to indicate the writer's lack of commitment to the truth of a statement or a desire not to express that commitment categorically. Since every writer is a member of an academic community aforementioned statements are sufficient to prove the significance of hedges in writing a research article. Also, 42.0 percent mentioned that if Iranian scholars' writing follows a *formulaic language & style*, it is not perhaps important, that is why they selected slightly important for this item. Of course, there was 32.0 percent who considered it as an important problem. Hartely (2008) declared that anything that has structure is easy for NN writers to follow and he pointed toward IMRAD as an example of this. *Paying attention to the quality of articles* by 46.0 % was decided on being of utmost importance. 36.0 % individuals substantiated it as a very important problem in publishing academic articles. The problem is equally not so much with the quantity of the scholarship, but rather with the quality (Dawson, 2010).

Professors' Comments

In the end, a few professors reflected on this section that their opinions are explained. One of them stated that the greatest problems of article publishing out of Iran is usually due to editing problems, writing methods and the use of literature review. Another claimed that despite having a high scientific status, Iranian researchers' lack of ability in a proper presentation of articles in English has caused their output decline that learning can be a useful help for them. One emphasized on the originality of the topic in the first place. One professor declared that writers should pay more attention to the applicability of the articles and new methods rather than imitating the previous studies. Another professor explained that Iranian scholars usually consider bulky literature review and they are good at writing literature review, but their articles do not have a rich discussion section. One declared that Iranian researchers should consult with a well-informed expert and apply their feedbacks. It is worth mentioning here that Bachman (op. cit.) added strategic competence, as an entirely separate element of communicative language ability, which can repair the competence underlying one's ability. Therefore, even if Iranians might be weak at all the other abilities, this competence can help them do up their drawbacks in part.

IV. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This article attempts to examine Iranian writing for publishing problems from the point of view of Iranian professors. The findings of the questionnaire demonstrate that regarding organizational competence, rhetorical organization, vocabulary, morphology and syntax were much more essential. On the subject of pragmatic competence, ideational functions and sensitivity to naturalness receive greater importance. Concerning lower level skills of writing, professors declare the importance of spelling and punctuation in writing. General publishing problems declare the importance of all the items, but with greater emphasis on quality in writing.

In accordance with the results, some remedies are proposed for the improvement of scholarly writing. For example, writing for academic publishing course can be included among other subjects at universities in Iran. As a result, the role of a teacher as a writing advisor to help students expand their step by step writing procedures should not be ignored.

Teachers are advised to take into account the background of the students in writing, equip themselves with the latest knowledge and become familiar with the culture and the use of English so as to provide students with the rich input. Before writing, opinion-gap problem can be sorted out by planning prediscussions. Students can be encouraged to revise their own papers and their peers' papers in class.

There can also be email correspondence between Iranian article writers and advisors. The mutual interaction through email encourages students to improve their writing style. Novice English language teachers and novice non-major English researchers can work together to create articles. Teachers can suggest their students to work with native speaker to develop their writing.

Models of accepted articles can be read in class. While reading, they develop an awareness of English language prose style, stylistic choices, grammatical features, methods of development, markers of cohesion and coherence, and so on. The articles in the form of a collection CDs or DVDs can be given to students so that they use as a self-study reference.

The most challenging words, according to the results are academic words, so efficient methods must be applied with the intention of students' better retention. Another way is to suggest a list of the most frequent words to them. Along with what was remarked on, morphosyntax or the interface between syntax and morphology (Richards & Schmidt, op.cit.) is advised to Iranian scholars.

APPENDIX A

English version of the questionnaire given to Iranian professors

How do you consider each of the following problems is in writing academic article for Iranians? Please tick.

<i>Grammatical competence problems</i>		Not at all important	Slightly important	Important	Very important	Of utmost importance
Vocabulary	academic	1	2	3	4	5
	technical	1	2	3	4	5
Morphology		1	2	3	4	5
Syntax		1	2	3	4	5
Phonology		1	2	3	4	5

<i>Textual competence problems</i>	Not at all important	Slightly important	Important	Very important	Of utmost importance
Cohesion	1	2	3	4	5
Rhetorical organization	1	2	3	4	5

<i>Illocutionary competence problems</i>	Not at all important	Slightly important	Important	Very important	Of utmost importance
Ideational functions	1	2	3	4	5
Manipulative functions	1	2	3	4	5
Heuristic functions	1	2	3	4	5
Imaginative functions	1	2	3	4	5

<i>Sociolinguistic competence problems</i>	Not at all important	Slightly important	Important	Very important	Of utmost importance
Sensitivity to Dialect or Variety	1	2	3	4	5
Sensitivity to Register	1	2	3	4	5
Sensitivity to Naturalness	1	2	3	4	5
Cultural References & Figures of speech	1	2	3	4	5

<i>Problems with lower level skills of writing</i>	Not at all important	Slightly important	Important	Very important	Of utmost importance
Spelling	1	2	3	4	5
Use of apostrophes	1	2	3	4	5
Punctuations	1	2	3	4	5
Capitalizations	1	2	3	4	5
Abbreviations & numbers	1	2	3	4	5

<i>General academic publishing problems</i>	Not at all important	Slightly important	Important	Very important	Of utmost importance
Article translation	1	2	3	4	5
L1 interference	1	2	3	4	5
Taking longer to write	1	2	3	4	5
Making reference to a published literature	1	2	3	4	5
Relating text to audience	1	2	3	4	5
Revealing or concealing the point of view of author	1	2	3	4	5
Use of "Hedges" to indicate caution expected by the academic community	1	2	3	4	5
Limited by formulaic language & style	1	2	3	4	5
Paying attention to the quality of articles	1	2	3	4	5

Please write your comments (if any) on academic article publishing in Iran

.....

.....

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

APPENDIX B

Persian version of the questionnaire given to Iranian professors

هدف این پرسشنامه بررسی مشکلاتی می باشد که نویسندگان ایرانی بعضاً در چاپ مقالات و نگارش مقالات خود با آن مواجه می باشند و همین امر منجر به عدم پذیرش مقالات آنان می گردد. اهمیت هر یک از موارد زیر را در نگارش مقالات علمی نویسندگان ایرانی چگونه می بینید؟ لطفاً گزینه مورد نظر خود را انتخاب نمایید.

مشکلات صلاحیت گرامری	اهمیت ندارد	کم اهمیت است	اهمیت دارد	بسیار مهم است	بیشترین اهمیت را داراست
لغات علمی	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵
تخصصی	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵
نحوه ترکیب کلمات	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵
نحو	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵
آوا شناسی	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵

مشکلات صلاحیت متنی	اهمیت ندارد	کم اهمیت است	اهمیت دارد	بسیار مهم است	بیشترین اهمیت را داراست
تجانس متنی	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵
پیوستگی معانی	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵

مشکلات صلاحیت انتقال اهداف	اهمیت ندارد	کم اهمیت است	اهمیت دارد	بسیار مهم است	بیشترین اهمیت را داراست
اهداف سازمان دهنده تجارب نویسندگان	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵
اهداف تحت نفوذ قرار دادن خواننده توسط نویسندگان	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵
اهداف بر انگیزنده حس جستجو گرانه خواننده	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵
اهداف ایجاد کننده تخیل در خواننده	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵

مشکلات صلاحیت زبانی- اجتماعی	اهمیت ندارد	کم اهمیت است	اهمیت دارد	بسیار مهم است	بیشترین اهمیت را داراست
حساسیت بروی گویش یا گونه زبانی	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵
حساسیت بروی گونه کاربردی	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵
حساسیت بر روی طبیعی بودن کلام	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵
منابع فرهنگی و صنایع ادبی	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵

مشکلات مهارت سطح پایین نوشتار	اهمیت ندارد	کم اهمیت است	اهمیت دارد	بسیار مهم است	بیشترین اهمیت را داراست
دیکته	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵
کاربرد اپوسطروف (´)	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵
علامت گذاری	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵
بزرگ نوشتن حرف اول کلمات	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵

مشکلات معمول چاپ علمی	اهمیت ندارد	کم اهمیت است	اهمیت دارد	بسیار مهم است	بیشترین اهمیت را داراست
ترجمه مقاله	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵
دخالت زبان اول	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵
صرف زمان طولانی تر برای نوشتن	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵
اشاره به ادبیات گذشته	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵
ارتباط دادن متن به مخاطب	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵
اشکار یا پنهان سازی زاویه دید نویسنده	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵
استفاده از ابزار زبانی به منظور ایجاد احتیاط در نوشتار	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵
محدود بودن به سبک و زبان فرمول دار	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵
توجه به کیفیت مقالات	۱	۲	۳	۴	۵

در صورت نیاز نظر خود را در مورد چاپ مقالات علمی در ایران بنویسید

از شما به خاطر وقتی که درکامل نمودن این پرسشنامه گذاشتید متشکرم.

REFERENCES

- [1] Adams-Smith, D. (1984). Medical discourse: Aspects of author's comment. *English for Specific Purposes*, 3, 25-36.
- [2] Bachman, F. (1990). *Fundamental Consideration in Language Testing*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- [3] Bahrami, A. and Riazi, M. (n.d). Non-native scholars and the imperative of publishing in English: the case of Iranian scholars. *Applied Linguistics & Language in Education Research Centre*.
- [4] Bazerman, C. (1988). *Shaping Written Knowledge*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- [5] Brown, H. D. (2000). *Principle of Language Learning and Teaching*. San Francisco: Pearson Education Company.
- [6] Dawson, A. (2010). Academic freedom and the digital revolution. *AAUP Journal of Academic Freedom*, 16-19.
- [7] Dudley-Evans, T. (1994). Research in English for scientific purposes, In R. Khoo (ed.). *LSP: Problems and Prospects*. Singapore: RELC.
- [8] Flowerdew, J. (1999). Writing for scholarly publication in English: The case of Hong Kong'. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, (8), 123-145.
- [9] Hartley, J. (2008). *Academic Writing and Publishing*. London & New York: Routledge.
- [10] Henry, A. and Roseberry, R. L. (2007). Language errors in the genre-based writing of advanced academic ESL students. *RELC Journal*, (38), 171-197.
- [11] Johns, A. (1993). Written argument for real audiences: suggestions for teachers research and classroom practice. *TESOL Quarterly*, (27), 75-90.
- [12] Likert, R.A. (1932). A technique for the measurement of attitudes. *Archives of Psychology*, 40-52.
- [13] Littlemore, J. and Low, J. (2006). Metaphoric competence, second language learning and communicative language ability. *Applied Linguistics*, 27 (2), 268-294.
- [14] Mauranen, A. (1993). Contrastive ESP rhetoric: metacontext in Finnish-English economics texts. *English for Specific Purposes*, (12), 3-22.
- [15] Pawlikowska, G. (2002). *Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000: Theoretical Framework*. Canada: Centre for Canadian Benchmarks.
- [16] Richards, J.C. and Schmidt. R. (2002). *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics*. London: Pearson Education.
- [17] St John, M. J. (1987). Writing processes of Spanish scientists publishing in English. *English for Specific Purposes*, (6), 113-120.
- [18] Swales, J. (1990). *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [19] Wong, R. (2008). Non-native English speaking novice researchers developing research skills in the ESL research community. *ESP Across Cultures*, 5, 153-176.
- [20] Zinsser, W. (2010). Writing English as a second language. Retrieved September 4, 2012, from [sputnik.ece.ucsb.edu > Resources > Zinsser](http://sputnik.ece.ucsb.edu/Resources/Zinsser).

Amineh Danaee is a member of Young Researchers Club and holds an M.A. in TEFL from Islamic Azad University, Garmsar Branch, Iran. Her fields of interest include EAP, ELT and language skills.

The Impact of Portfolios and Journals on Iranian Pre-university Students' Vocabulary Learning

Abdolhossein Omid

Faculty of Management & Humanities, Chabahar Maritime University, Chabahar, Iran

Nahid Yarahmadzahi

Faculty of Management & Humanities, Chabahar Maritime University, Chabahar, Iran

Abstract—This study was conducted to investigate the impact of portfolios and journals on Iranian Pre-university students' vocabulary learning. Fifty female pre-university students who were studying General English as a part of their course syllabus at Tooba Pre-university Center of Tang Eram, Bushehr, Iran comprised the participants in the main phase of the study. This study adopted a convenience sampling procedure, since the real act of randomization was not feasible. The participants of the study were divided into two groups. The experimental group (N=25) received the treatment i.e. portfolios and journals, while the control group (N=25) underwent the traditional assessment. The results of data analyses indicated that the students in experimental group outperformed the students in control group in terms of their lexical knowledge. Moreover, the results of correlational analyses revealed that there was a strong positive correlation between the students' lexical scores and their scores on motivation to alternative assessment in the experimental group. The results have some implications for EFL teachers, learners, and parents as well as for curriculum developers and syllabus designers.

Index Terms—assessment, alternative assessment, portfolios, journals, self-assessment, vocabulary

I. INTRODUCTION

Traditionally viewed, little priority was given to vocabulary instruction and learning in second language programs (Hedge, 2008). It was considered a neglected subskill in the past (French, 1983) and received only incidental consideration in educational textbooks and language programs. Nevertheless, it has recently received a considerable amount of attention and a renewed interest regarding both its nature and its role in learning and teaching English in a sense that Chastain (1988) aptly argued it "...plays a greater role in communication than the other components of language" (p. 327).

Vocabulary is considered central to English language learning, since it furnishes much of the basis for how well learners listen, speak, read, and write. In other words, the learners need to have sufficient lexical knowledge to understand others or express their own ideas. As it turned out, *The Lexical Syllabus* (Willis, 1990), *Lexical Phrases and Language Teaching* (Nattinger & De Carrico, 1992) and *The Lexical Approach* (Lewis, 1993) tellingly characterized the assumption that "the building blocks of language learning and communication are not grammar, functions, notions, or some other units of planning and teaching but lexis, that is, words and words combinations" (Richards & Rodgers, 2002, p. 132). While grammar and vocabulary are often viewed as complementary, Wilkins (1972), in his carefully worded and frequently cited quotation, asserted that "...while without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed" (p. 111). This shows how important the lexical knowledge is for language proficiency as well as for communication.

As far as vocabulary assessment is concerned, there are two major opposing forces at work in educational evaluation today. On the one hand are the traditional standardized tests like multiple-choice and other selected-response tests. On the other hand stand alternative assessment techniques. In the traditional standardized type of testing, teachers test their students' performance at the end of each educational semester or year. As a result, those who are successful in the final exam will pass the course. Being single-shot examinations, traditional forms of assessment do not adequately evaluate student's performance in real life situations. Regarding Iranian educational system, there are at least two reasons why traditional assessment is undesirable. One is educational, the other is psychological. By the educational aspect, it is meant that the single-shot final examinations merely strengthen students' memorization abilities and lead to rote rather than meaningful learning. By the psychological aspect, it is meant that these single-shot final examinations are stress-inducing. From the very beginning of the course, the students know that their failure or success in the course is solely determined based on their performance on that one single-shot final examination. All of this makes the learning process as stressful as possible; thus negatively affecting students' performance.

Alternative assessment techniques including portfolios and journals are expected to reduce these educational and psychological shortcomings to a considerable extent, since they assess students' performance during and throughout a semester or even during an educational year. Moreover, since alternative assessment techniques are more student-centered and their emphasis is on process rather than product, it is expected to remove stress on the part of learners and

lead to better learning in comparison to old traditional forms of assessment. Considering the significance and importance vocabulary, as an essential microskill, has in developing language macroskills, the current study carefully scrutinized the potential weight and impact of portfolios and journals as two kinds of alternative assessment tools on Iranian pre-university students' vocabulary learning. It also attempted to investigate students' perceptions, through the utilization of a motivation questionnaire (Deci, Eghrari, Patrick, & Leone, 1994), about portfolios and journals in order to see to what extent they made students motivated when they were implemented in the classroom. In response to this need, the current study aimed to probe the following research questions:

1. Do alternative assessment techniques (portfolios and journals) have any significant impact on Iranian pre-university students' vocabulary learning?
2. Is there any significant relationship between the students' motivation and their scores on the vocabulary posttest?

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Few studies have investigated the impact of alternative assessment techniques on Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary knowledge. It was Nassirdoost and Mall-Amiri (2015) who investigated the impact of portfolio assessment on EFL learners' vocabulary achievement and motivation for the first time. To carry out their study, they non-randomly selected 90 female learners of Marefat language school situated in Maragheh, Iran. Sixty students out of 90 whose ages mainly ranged from 15 to 20 were selected as the participants of the study by taking a Preliminary English Test (PET). They were randomly labeled as experimental group (n=30) and control group (n=30). During the treatment which lasted 12 sessions, the experimental group received portfolio assessment, while the control group received traditional assessment. The results of their study indicated that, owing to the implementation of portfolio assessment, learners' achievements increased in terms of their lexical knowledge. But, as far as motivation is concerned, their study's findings substantiated that the use of portfolio assessment had no significant impact on EFL learners' motivation levels.

Reviewing the literature relevant to the discussion indicates that most researchers have tried to probe the potential impact of portfolios and/or journals on EFL/ESL learners' major skills achievement, mainly on writing and marginally on reading, listening and speaking skills. Ghorchaei, Tavakoli, and Nejad Ansari (2010), in their quasi-experimental study, probed the effect of portfolio assessment on Iranian EFL students' writing ability. The participants of the study consisted of 61 undergraduate EFL students at the University of Isfahan. The researchers used a convenience sampling process. As a result, the subjects were divided into two classes: one as control group (n=31), and another as experimental group (n=30). The experimental group was exposed to portfolio assessment, while the control group received the traditional assessment. Each group received a writing test both as the pre-test and post-test. The results of the study indicated that the subjects in experimental group outperformed the subjects in the control group not only in their overall writing ability but also in the sub-skills of focus, elaboration, organization, and vocabulary; implying that portfolio assessment is influential in enhancing EFL learners' sub-skills like vocabulary which is per se a key component for developing English writing ability.

Another study dealing with the impact of portfolio assessment on learning was that of Yurdabakan and Erdogan (2009). They aimed to investigate the effects of portfolio assessment on reading, listening, and writing skills as well as to probe the students' perceptions regarding portfolio assessment. The participants of the study were randomly assigned into the experimental group (n=22) who received activities dealing with portfolio assessment and the control group (n=22) who followed the traditional ordinary course program. To collect data, they made use of a reading test, a listening test, a writing essay test, and six open-ended items. After analyzing the data and comparing the mean scores of both groups in pre-test and post-test, they found that the implementation of portfolio assessment had significant impact on students' writing skill, but similar findings were not found and reported for other two skills under study, namely, reading and listening. In order to probe into students' perceptions toward portfolio assessment, the researchers also analyzed the students' answers to the open-ended questions. The findings showed that on the positive side the students were more motivated to work with and take responsibility in portfolio assessment in comparison to traditional approaches of assessment. Regarding the effect of portfolio assessment on writing ability, similar findings have been reported (Khodashenas, Kishani Farahani, & Amouzegar, 2013; Moradan & Hedayati, 2011; Rouhani & Taheri, 2015; Tabatabaei & Assefi, 2012).

Rokni and Seifi (2014) investigated the impact of dialogue journal writing on EFL learners' speaking accuracy and fluency. The participants of their study, 48 male intermediate level English learners whose ages ranged mainly from 14 to 27, were randomly selected from two classes at Simin language Institute in Qaemshahr, Iran. They were randomly labeled as one experimental group (n=24) and one control group (n=24). During the treatment which lasted for 20 sessions, the experimental group was asked to keep a journal writing entry for each session. Each student was given an opportunity to express (read and speak) to the students what he had written. At the same time the control group received the regular class instruction. After analyzing the mean scores obtained from both groups' oral interview pre-test and post-test, the researcher found that there was a significant difference between the two groups' performance in terms of speech accuracy and fluency. In other words, the findings showed that experimental group did better than control group on oral interview post-test, implying that dialogue journal keeping helped learners to speak more accurately and more fluently.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants and Research Design

This study was conducted during a three-month term in a pre-university center in Tang Eram, Iran. Each term included 24 sessions and each session lasted for 90 minutes. The classes were held twice a week. Fifty female pre-university students who were studying General English as a part of their course syllabus at Tooba Pre-university Center of Tang Eram comprised the participants of this study. These students whose ages mostly ranged from 17 to 19 had just graduated from high school and had finished their 11 years of education. The students, all Iranian and native speakers of Persian, were designated into two groups: one experimental and the other control group, each including 25 students; and both receiving the same amount of instruction time. Due to the fact that the participants (both experimental and control groups) of the present study had been enrolled to their courses prior to the conducting of the research, the real act of randomization was not feasible. Accordingly, a quasi-experimental design was adopted during the treatment.

B. Instruments and Materials

The present study made use of the following data collection instruments:

Pretest: Prior to the onset of the treatment and based on the assumption that the participants might be acquainted with the meaning of some items, a Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS) (Paribakht and Wesche, 1996) (appendix A) including 100 lexical items was administered as a pretest to make sure that the participants had no previous knowledge of the vocabulary items to be taught. It consisted of all the words to be taught during the intervention. The VKS utilizes a five-point Likert-type scale with the aim of assessing the learners' lexical knowledge on a continuum – from unknown to known, 'from vague to precise', from no knowledge (level 1) to vocabulary recognition (levels 2, 3, and 4) to vocabulary production (level 5). The participants were asked to provide their knowledge of each item by ticking from 1 to 5: just ticking (levels 1 and 2), ticking and providing synonyms or L1 equivalence (levels 3 and 4) or ticking and writing an example sentence for each item (level 5).

Post-test: At the end of the experiment, in order to assess learners' after-intervention knowledge of lexical items, the VKS, in which the order of words was reversed to make it different from pre-test, was administered again as a post-test so as to investigate the impact of alternative assessment techniques on subjects' vocabulary learning.

Motivation Questionnaire: Moreover, to address the second research question, a motivation questionnaire developed by Deci, Eghrari, Patrick, and Leone (1994) (Appendix B) was distributed, at the end of the treatment, among the subjects in experimental group. The reason behind this was to determine whether there was any relationship between the subjects' scores on motivation and their post-test VKS scores, i.e., the scores obtained from the VKS as a post-test for the experimental group and the scores gathered from their responses to the questionnaire regarding their motivation to alternative assessment techniques, namely, portfolios and journals.

The following materials were also used in the current study:

Collaborative Activity: Regarding portfolios, eight tasks were developed each assessing the subjects' lexical knowledge of the words they have learned in each instructional half of a session. They were labeled as collaborative activities since the learners had not only the opportunity to move and communicate with each other, but they also received feedback from their instructor as well as from their classmates so as to demonstrate and develop their understanding of words. In these collaborative activities, the subjects were asked to recognize and learn the meaning of the words they had previously learned at three levels: Word Level Recognition (WLR), Sentence Level Recognition (SLR), and Text Level Recognition (TLR). (The collaborative activity for the first session, *Task I*, is provided in Appendix C).

Write About: Having learned the new words in instructional time and reviewed them in assessment section at three levels mentioned above, the learners were asked to write a paragraph on the topic of lesson by making use of the recently learned words in their writing. Like collaborative activities which were saved as learners' portfolios, their *Write Abouts* were also collected and kept as their journals for further reference and future use. (*Write About* for the second session, *Task II*, is provided in Appendix D).

C. Procedure

This study consisted of a pretest, an eight-week long treatment, and an immediate post-test. In order to assess the subjects' vocabulary knowledge prior to the experiment, the VKS scoring procedure developed by Paribakht and Wesche (1996) was utilized. Based on their scoring system, score 1 is given when the subject has not seen the word before. This level is not considered a level at all by some researchers (Waring, 2002), nevertheless it indicates that the subject does not know the word. In this scoring system, score 2 means the subject has seen the word before, but he doesn't know its meaning. Score 3 is given to the subject who has provided the synonym or L1 translation for an item but he is not completely sure of its correctness. Score 4 goes to the subject when he has provided the proper synonym or L1 translation of an item. And ultimately, score 5 is given to those words used in a sentence both syntactically and semantically correct. Based on the subjects' responses to pretests, 80 words which were unknown to the subjects were selected to be taught to both the experimental and control group.

Afterwards, the treatment commenced which lasted for eight weeks including 16 ninety-minute sessions. The researcher made two important decisions in this study. First, each ninety-minute session was divided into two equal forty-five minute parts: the first part for teaching vocabulary and the second part for its assessment – either alternative for

experimental group or traditional for control group. Second, the whole treatment period (16 sessions in eight weeks) was labeled either as odd (the first session in each week) or even (the second session in each week). In a nutshell, subjects in the experimental group were taught 10 words in the first half of each odd session and received ‘collaborative activities’ to do in the second half of that odd session which were kept as their portfolios, whereas in the instructional half of each even session they were taught other parts like grammar and in the assessment half of that session they wrote a paragraph (*Write Abouts*) by making use of the vocabulary learned in the odd sessions. The ‘Write Abouts’ were saved as their journals. Meanwhile, control group received the same odd and even instructional halves, but the techniques used for the odd and even assessment halves were traditional mainly including their textbook exercises like sentence completion or multiple choice completion. One day after the treatment, the subjects were post-tested on their lexical knowledge with the same VKS scale so as to obtain data on their progress in performance through the special treatment. The scoring system which was utilized in subjects’ post-tests was the same as that used in their pre-tests. Additionally, to address the second research question, a day after the treatment, the motivation questionnaire developed by Deci, Eghrari, Patrick, and Leone (1994) (Appendix B) was distributed among the subjects in experimental group to explore their perceptions about the tasks utilized during the intervention either as portfolios (*collaborative activities*) or journals (*Write Abouts*).

IV. RESULTS

A. Prior to the Treatment

Two days prior to the onset of the experiment, all participants were pre-tested on the VKS. Table I indicates both groups’ descriptive statistics on their pre-tests including mean value, number of cases, standard deviation, and standard error of means.

TABLE I.
GROUPS’ DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ON PRE-TEST

Group	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean
Control	90.40	25	6.285	1.257
Experimental	89.80	25	5.867	1.173
Total	90.10	50	6.025	.852

Based on the results in table I, there is a slight difference in the performance of the two groups, that is, control group had a partially better performance on pre-test. To determine whether this difference of groups’ mean scores was statistically significant, an independent samples t-test was run. The generated output is presented in table II.

TABLE II.
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST ON PRE-TEST

		Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Pretest	Equal variances assumed	.161	.690	.349	48	.729	.600	1.719	-2.857	4.057
	Equal variances not assumed			.349	47.774	.729	.600	1.719	-2.858	4.058

The independent-samples t-test was run to compare the VKS scores of control and experimental groups on their pre-tests. There was no significant difference in scores for control group ($M = 90.4, SD = 6.29$) and experimental group [$M = 89.8, SD = 5.87; t(48) = .35, p = .73$].

B. The First Research Question

The first research question sought to investigate the potential impact of alternative assessment techniques, namely, portfolios and journals on the students’ vocabulary learning. To this end, the average scores of experimental group were compared against those of control group regarding their scores which were gathered from their post-tests on VKS. Table III indicates both groups’ descriptive statistics on their post-tests including mean value, number of cases, standard deviation, and standard error of means. A brief look at this table indicates that experimental group outperformed the control group because the value of their mean ($M=334.52$) was much higher than that of the control group ($M=293.04$).

TABLE III.
GROUPS’ DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ON POST-TEST

Group	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error of Mean
Control	293.04	25	12.677	2.535
Experimental	334.52	25	8.776	1.755
Total	313.78	50	23.566	3.333

To determine whether this difference of groups' mean scores was statistically significant, it was made use of another independent samples t-test, the results of which are presented in table IV.

TABLE IV.
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST ON POST-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	
Post-test	Equal variances assumed	8.929	.004	-13.452	48	.000	-41.480	3.084	-47.680	-35.280
	Equal variances not assumed			-13.452	42.706	.000	-41.480	3.084	-47.700	-35.260

This independent-samples t-test was run to compare the VKS scores for control and experimental groups on their post-tests. The results indicated that there was a significant difference in scores for control group ($M=293.04, SD=12.68$) and experimental group [$M=334.52, SD=8.78; t(48) = -13.45, p<.0005$].

C. The Second Research Question

The second research question of the study sought to investigate whether there was any relationship between the subjects' motivation and their posttest VKS scores. Prior to performing a correlation analysis between two variables, a scatter plot was generated to check for the linearity and the equality of statistical variances, usually called, homoscedasticity. The output from the scatter plot is displayed in figure 1.

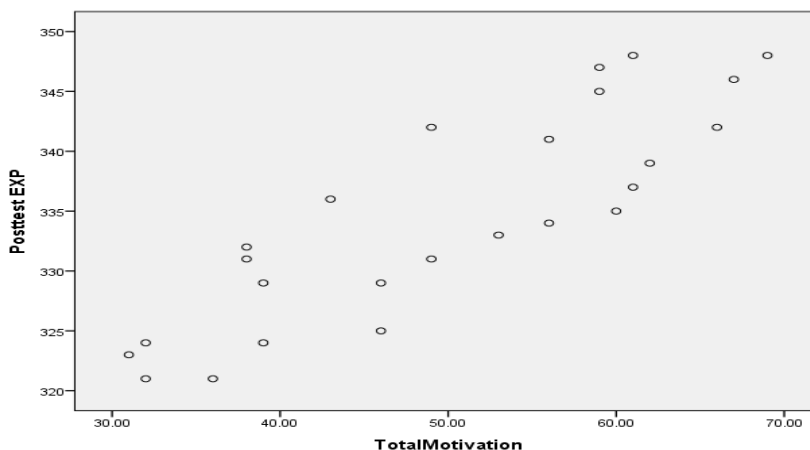


Figure 1. Scatter plot for the exploration of the relationship between VKS scores and motivation

Having investigated the distribution of data points, based on figure 1, it suggests quite a strong relationship between variables since data points are arranged in a roughly linear shape. And regarding the direction of the relationship, since the scatter plot shows an upward trend from left to right it can be construed that there is a positive relationship between variables. Therefore, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) can be calculated to exactly determine the strength of relationship between two variables, since a straight line can be drawn through the cluster of the data points. The results of PPMCC are presented in table V.

TABLE V.
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN EXPERIMENTAL GROUP'S VKS SCORES AND THEIR MOTIVATION

		Posttest EXP	Total Motivation
Posttest EXP	Pearson Correlation	1	.862**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	25	25
Total Motivation	Pearson Correlation	.862**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	25	25

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

As noted above, preliminary analyses were made to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. Based on the result of correlational analyses, it is evident that there was a very strong, positive correlation between the two variables [$r=.86, n=25, p<.0005$], with high levels of post-test VKS scores associated with high

levels of motivation scores. In other words, high scores on X axis (total motivation) are associated with high scores on Y axis (experimental group's post-test).

V. DISCUSSION

The results of the present study indicate that the implementation of portfolios and journals as two types of alternative assessment techniques in the classroom do have a significant impact on the students' lexical knowledge. This finding is in consonance with the research results existent in the literature. For instance, Nassiridoost and Mall-Amiri (2015) investigated the impact of portfolio assessment on EFL learners' vocabulary achievement and their motivation. The results of their study indicated that, owing to the implementation of portfolio assessment, learners' achievements increased in terms of their lexical knowledge. But, as far as motivation is concerned, their study's findings, in contradiction with the findings of this study, substantiated that the use of portfolio assessment had no significant impact on EFL learners' motivation levels. The results of this study are also in accordance with the findings of other studies done in Iran with their main focus on investigating the impact of portfolios and/or journals on Iranian EFL learners' writing skill (Ghorchaei, Tavakoli, & Nejad Ansari, 2010; Khodashenas, Kishani Farahani, & Amouzegar, 2013; Moradan & Hedayati, 2011; Rouhani & Taheri, 2015; Tabatabaei & Assefi, 2012) or on their reading comprehension ability (Rostami Charvade, Jahandar, & Khodabandelou, 2012), all confirming the positive impact of portfolios and/or journals on learners' writing or reading skills achievements.

In another study whose results parallel the findings of this study, Yurdabakan and Erdogan (2009) investigated the effects of portfolio assessment on reading, listening, and writing skills as well as the students' perceptions about portfolio assessment. They found that the implementation of portfolio assessment had significant impact on students' writing skills, though similar findings were not found and reported for other two skills under study, namely, reading and listening. Moreover, in their investigation of the students' perception, Yurdabakan and Erdogan (2009) found that the students were more motivated to work with and take responsibility in portfolio assessment in comparison to the employment of traditional assessment approaches.

Regarding the impact of journals (journal keeping) on language learning achievements, Trong Tuan (2010), in his investigation of journal keeping on EFL learners' writing skill, found that journal keeping, as an extensive activity, had a positive effect not only on EFL learners' writing fluency but also on their writing accuracy. Similar findings have been reported by Rokni and Seifi (2014) and Woodward (2006).

To address the second research question, it was concluded that there was a highly strong positive correlation between the experimental groups' motivation scores and their vocabulary scores on their VKS post-tests. It can be fairly construed that the proper implementation of portfolios and journals as alternatives to traditional testing approaches can enhance learners' motivation to language learning in general and vocabulary learning in particular. In examining the effects of alternative assessment on students' motivation and self-efficacy, Zimbicki (2007) argued that students' motivation levels decrease when the teachers utilize traditional assessment methods including objective and essay type tests for evaluating their progress. The results of data analyses indicated that the implementation of alternative assessment increased the students' motivation and self-efficacy to higher levels in comparison to the utilization of traditional methods of testing. The results are also consistent with those of Tiwari (2003) which corroborated that portfolio assessment had effective impacts on enhancing students' learning. In order to probe students' perceptions about this form of assessment, the researcher made use of individual semi-structured interviews. After the data analyses, the results showed that the students mostly favored the utilization of portfolio assessment. Additionally, portfolio preparation process proved fruitful for enhancing the interest in learning for those students who lacked motivation. Other researchers (Barootchi & Keshavarz, 2002; Calfee & Perfumo, 1993; as cited in Yurdabakan and Erdogan, 2009) have endorsed the potential impact of portfolio assessment on increasing learners' motivation for learning, sense of confidence, and taking responsibility toward learning. Moreover, after probing the participants' perceptions about portfolio assessment, they found that learners judged portfolio assessment as a much fairer approach in comparison to the traditional forms of assessment.

VI. CONCLUSION

Viewing assessment as a part of learning process, alternative assessment techniques can be regarded as one of the basic ingredients of instructional program. If used properly in the classroom, they would enable students to evaluate their own performance (self-assessment), their classmates' performance (peer assessment), as well as to take control of their own learning (autonomy). They can also be regarded by students as an effective tool for establishing meaningful learning through monitoring and assessing learning process as well as learning product (outcomes). Based on the above-mentioned merits of alternative techniques of assessment, they deserve to find their right place in educational curriculum and to be included properly in the instructional programs.

The present literature can take advantage of the findings of this study. First of all, the first finding accrued from the data analysis showed that the implementation of alternative assessment techniques were effective for and influential to students' lexical knowledge enhancement. Such effectiveness was confirmed by rejecting the first null hypothesis of the study. Thus, it can be fairly claimed that the employment of alternative assessment techniques (portfolios and journals) for the purpose of evaluating the vocabulary knowledge results in a significant difference in EFL learners' performanc-

es. Reviewing the relevant literature, there were some other studies whose results verified the effectiveness of alternative assessment techniques in general and portfolios and/or journals in particular on language main skills: reading, listening, and writing or on its subskills like vocabulary. In a similar vein, the findings of this study corroborate the usefulness of implementing such techniques for enhancing learners' lexical knowledge in EFL classes.

In exploring the second research question, the results of data analysis indicated that there was a highly strong positive correlation between the experimental groups' motivation scores and their scores on their VKS post-tests. As the second conclusion, it can be rightly claimed that the implementation of portfolios and journals as the right and proper alternatives to traditional testing approaches can increase learners' motivation to language learning in general and vocabulary learning in particular.

Noticing the results accrued from analyzing the data that were collected in this study, one can simply weigh the performance of experimental group against that of control group in order to see how effective portfolios and journals were in enhancing students' lexical knowledge. Since the implementation of portfolios and journals as a special treatment made the experimental group's lexical knowledge outperform that of control group on post-test, it can be rightly claimed that this study is consonant with the paradigmatic shift in language learning assessment, i.e., from traditional testing to alternative assessment techniques.

APPENDIX A.

Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS)

(Used as Both Pre-test and Post-test)

Name:

Look at the following list of words and give each one a number rating 1-5 based on how well you know the words.

Look at the Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS) below:

- 1. I have not seen this word before.
- 2. I have seen this word but I don't know the meaning.
- 3. I have seen this word and I think it means..... (synonym or translation)
- 4. I know this word: it means..... (synonym or translation)
- 5. I can use this word in a sentence, e.g.....

(ref: Wesche, M. & Paribakht, T. S. (1996). Assessing second language vocabulary knowledge: Depth versus breadth. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 53(1), 1-28.)

English Word	1	2	3	4	5	synonym; translation; example
1. aerobic						
2. anxious						
3. article						
4. audience						
5. aware						
6. bend						
7. compare						
8. concentrate						
9. concerned						
10. create						
11. crust						
12. damage						

.....

APPENDIX B.

Motivation Questionnaire

First name: Last name:

Gender: male female

Grade:

Dear student,

This test contains a number of statements about motivation. You will be asked what you yourself think about these statements. There is no right or wrong answers. Your opinion is what is wanted.

Please circle your response to the items. Rate aspects of the course on a 1 to 5 scale; from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). 1 represents the lowest and most negative impression on the scale, 3 an adequate impression, and 5 the highest and most positive impression.

<i>statements</i>	<i>strongly disagree</i>			<i>strongly agree</i>	
1. After working at this activity for a while, I felt pretty competent.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I am satisfied with my performance at this task.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I didn't pay much energy into this.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I didn't try very hard to do well at this activity.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I enjoyed doing this activity very much.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I think I am pretty good at this activity.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I think this was a boring activity.	1	2	3	4	5
8. It was important to me to do well at this activity.	1	2	3	4	5
9. This activity did not hold my attention at all.	1	2	3	4	5
10. While I was doing this activity, I was thinking about how much I enjoyed it.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I thought this activity was quite enjoyable.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I tried very hard at this activity.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I would describe this activity as very interesting.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I think I did pretty well at this activity, compared to other students.	1	2	3	4	5

Reference:

Deci, E. L., Eghrari, H., Patrick, B. C., & Leone, D. (1994). Facilitating internalization: The self-determination theory perspective. *Journal of Personality*, 62, 119-142.

APPENDIX C.

Collaborative Activity

TASK I

1st Session

Name ----- Date -----

I. Word Level

<i>Match the items in A with those in B. There is one extra item in B.</i>	
A	B
1. pump ()	a. keep safe
2. lift ()	b. better
3. rely ()	c. needing oxygen
4. more efficiently ()	d. depend
5. increase ()	e. physical harms to the body
6. aerobic ()	f. an activity or role
7. function ()	g. raise something; pick up
8. protect ()	h. force a liquid or gas to flow
9. injuries ()	i. parts of the body where two bones meet
10. joints ()	j. run quickly
	k. become larger or greater

Compare your answers with a partner's.

II. Sentence Level

<p><i>Fill in the blanks with the words in Part A. Make any changes if necessary. (There is one extra word.)</i></p> <p>11. It is important to.....your skin from the harmful effects of the sun.</p> <p>12. She survived the accident without</p> <p>13. The <i>function</i> of the heart is toblood through the body.</p> <p>14. He believes that the trueof art is to tell the truth.</p> <p>15. exercise is a type of activity highly requiring the presence of oxygen.</p> <p>16. After the accident, she's been having pain in her muscles and</p> <p>17. He stopped writing by..... his pen from the paper.</p> <p>18. It on you to do exercises regularly in order to keep your body and mind healthy.</p> <p>19. The costs of lifein our country each year.</p>

Compare your answers with a partner's.

III. Text Level

<p>Fill in each blank in the following paragraph with one of the new words you learned this week.</p> <p>Everybody knows what the..... (20) of heart is. It is to..... (21) the blood throughout your body. Since it cannot.....(22) weights, it would.....(23) on you to do.....(24) exercise. When you do this kind of exercise, it can.....(25) the speed of blood movement in your blood vessels. As a result, your heart works.....(26). Exercising is also useful for other parts of your body. For example, strong.....(27) and muscles can..... (28) you against..... (29).</p>
--

Compare your answers with a partner's.

IV. This week's idiom 'bag of bones'	To say that someone is a <i>bag of bones</i> means that they are extremely thin. (30). <i>Example:</i> When he came home from the war he was a bag of bones .
---	--

APPENDIX D.

Write About

TASK II

2nd Session

Name ----- **Date** -----

Topic -----

<p>Draw a picture or write symbols in this box to illustrate the topic.</p>	<p>List of recently learnt words.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> -----</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> -----</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> -----</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> -----</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> -----</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> -----</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> -----</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> -----</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> -----</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> -----</p>
<p>Paragraph: Write a paragraph about the topic by using the words above. Check off the terms as you use them. Then circle them in your paragraph.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	

REFERENCES

[1] Barootchi, N. & Keshavarz, M. H. (2002). Assessment of achievement through portfolios and teacher-made tests. *Educational Research*, 44(3), 279-288.

[2] Calfee, R. & Perfumo, P. (1993). Student portfolios: Opportunities for a revolution in assessment. *Journal of Reading*, 36(7), 532-537.

[3] Chastain, K. (1988). *Developing second language skills: Theory and practice*. San Diedo, CA: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

[4] Deci, E. L., Eghrari, H., Patrick, B. C., & Leone, D. (1994). Facilitating internalization: The self-determination theory perspective. *Journal of Personality*, 62, 119-142.

[5] French, A. V. (1983). *Techniques in Teaching Vocabulary*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

[6] Ghorchaei, B., Tavakoli, M., & Nejad Ansari, D. (2010). The impact of portfolio assessment on Iranian EFL students' essay writing: A process-oriented approach. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*, 10(3), 35-51.

[7] Hedge, T. (2008). *Teaching and learning in the language classroom*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

[8] Hubbard, P. (1983). *A training course for TEFL*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

- [9] Khodashenas, M.R., Kishani Farahani, S. & Amouzegar, E. (2013). The effect of keeping portfolio on writing ability of advanced EFL learners. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World*, 4(2), 80-88.
- [10] Lewis, M. (1993). *The lexical approach*. London: Language Teaching Publications.
- [11] McKeown, M. G. L. (2002). *Bringing words to life: Robust vocabulary instruction*. New York, NY: Guilford.
- [12] Moradan, A. & Hedayati, S. N. (2011). The impact of portfolios and conferencing on Iranian EFL learners' writing skill. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Learning*, 8, 115-141.
- [13] Nassirdoost, P. & Mall-Amiri, B. (2015). The Impact of portfolio assessment on EFL learners' vocabulary achievement and motivation. *Journal for the Study of English Linguistics*, 3(1), 38-50.
- [14] Nation, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- [15] Nattinger, J. & DeCarrico, J. (1992). *Lexical phrases and language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [16] Paribakht, T. S. & Wesche, M. (1996). Assessing second language vocabulary knowledge: Depth versus breadth. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 53(1), 1-28.
- [17] Richards, J. C. & Rodgers, T. S. (2002). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- [18] Rokni, S. J. A. & Seifi, A. (2014). Dialog journal writing and its effect on Learners' speaking accuracy and fluency. *Studies in English Language Teaching*, 2(1), 28-37.
- [19] Rostami Charvade, M, Jahandar, S., & Khodabandelou, M. (2012). The impact of portfolio assessment on EFL learners' reading comprehension ability. *English Language Teaching*, 5(7), 129-139.
- [20] Rouhani, A. & Taheri, F. (2015). The effect of portfolio assessment on EFL learners' expository writing ability. *Iranian Journal of Language Testing*, 5(1), 46-59.
- [21] Tabatabaei, O. & Assefi, F. (2012). The effect of portfolio assessment technique on writing performance of EFL learners. *English Language Teaching*, 5(5), 138-147.
- [22] Tiwari, A. (2003). From process to outcome: The effect of portfolio assessment on student learning. *Nurse Education Today*, 23(24), 269-277.
- [23] Trong Tuan, L. (2010). Enhancing EFL learners' writing skill via journal writing. *English Language Teaching*, 3(3), 81-88.
- [24] Waring, R. (2002). Scales of Vocabulary Knowledge in Second Language Vocabulary Assessment. Retrieved July 12, 2015, from robwaring: <http://www.robwaring.org/papers/various/scales.html>.
- [25] Widdowson, H.G. (1989). *Learning purpose and language use*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [26] Wilkins, D. A. (1972). *Linguistics and language teaching*. London: Edward Arnold.
- [27] Willis, J. F. (1990). *The lexical syllabus*. London: Collins COBUILD.
- [28] Woodward, H. (2006). Reflective journals and portfolios: Learning through assessment. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 23(4), 415-423.
- [29] Yurdabakan, I. & Erdogan, T. (2009). The effects of portfolio assessment on reading, listening, and writing skills of secondary school preparatory class students. *The Journal of International Social Research*, 2(9), 526-538.
- [30] Zimbicki, D. (2007). Examining the effects of alternative assessment on student motivation and self-efficacy. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Walden University.



Abdolhossein Omidi was born in Iran, in 1977. He did his BA in teaching English at Allameh Tabatabaei Teacher Training Center (TTC), Bushehr, Iran in 2000. Now he is doing his MA in teaching English in Chabahar Maritime University, Sistan & Balouchestan, Iran. He has been teaching English for high school students for fifteen years. He is currently teaching English in Tooba High School, Tang Eram, Iran.

Nahid Yarahmadzahi was born in Iran, in 1977. She finished her BA in English Language Pedagogy at Sistan & Baluchestan University, Zahedan, Iran in 1999. She did her MA and PhD in General Linguistics at Tehran University, Iran in 2002 and 2009 successively. Now, Dr. Yarahmadzahi is teaching English in Chabahar Maritime University, Chabahar, Iran.

An Investigation of Motivation in Children's Foreign Language Learning Process — A Case Study on the Basis of Needs Analysis

Na Wei

School of Foreign Languages, China West Normal University, China

Abstract—Affective elements in foreign language teaching area involve motivation, anxiety, self-confidence, self-image, inhibition, empathy, etc., all of which lead to differential success among second language learners. However, among all of them, motivation is often recognized as the first major factor. This article makes an investigation of children's learning motivation on the basis of Needs Analysis and the primary objective of this research is to find how the five needs (according to Maslow) are satisfied in child language learning process and how to stimulate and maintain their motivation to learn through needs satisfaction.

Index Terms—motivation, needs analysis, investigation

I. INTRODUCTION

A large number of language teaching researches and papers have dwell upon how to encourage children's interest for English learning, most of which focus on the principles of classroom activities and lay special emphasis on how to promote a good relationship between the teacher and the students during the child students' English language learning process on the basis of teaching experiences like Zhao (retrieved in 2016) and Song (2015)'s consideration and emphasis in their articles while affective teaching is being advocated in child language learning process. Henning indicates that successful SLA may be dependent on the interests that a language learner brings to the learning situation (cited in Larsen-Freeman, 2000). But we have to notice that interest and motivation are two different affective factors that may influence foreign language learning. Owing to children's popular biological and psychological features, their attentiveness to English language learning process is not fixed. But if we teachers pay attention to this kind of interest and keep encouraging their interest in language study, this kind of temporary interest will be converted into constant interest (Yu, 2004), which means the constant love and enthusiasm for English language learning. Therefore, learning interest might not last as long as the motivation. It just plays as a prerequisite for learning motivation, while motivation is an important guarantee for the interest.

Previous studies have generally laid stress on how to promote children's interest in learning English so that children can learn spontaneously to some extent. As mentioned above, interest and motivation are two different affective factors that may have certain effect on child English language learning, our present study will emphasize the maintenance of child language learning motivation through the satisfaction of five needs stated by Wang (2004). Four teachers and their child students are chosen to participate in our study, whose lessons are video captured and observed carefully, and interviews with whom are also illustrated, which provides us with great implications for child English language teaching.

II. MOTIVATION AND NEEDS ANALYSIS

A. Motivation to Learn

Motivation is the factors that determine a person's desire to do something (Richards, Platt & Platt, 2000). According to Williams and Burden (1997), it is made up of four parts: 1) The desire and determination for an action; 2) The interest for an object or an activity; 3) The energy one holds; 4) The maintenance of the interest and participation. Motivation is a subjective reason that can directly promote and preserve the study of the students, that is, learning motivation can make the students keep and carry out the study activities. Motivation is commonly viewed as an inner drive, impulse, emotion, or desire that moves the learners to a particular action (Brown, 1980).

It is proved that one of the reasons why students can't get good marks is due to the fact that the students have not formed a noticeable motivation. If a student has got a positive learning motivation, he will study more initiatively and actively, and his or her language learning will become a spontaneous process. If a student who has no learning motivation, his study can only depend on external factors. It is a mutual relationship between language learning and motivation to learn.

B. Review of Motivation Research

Motivation has been taken into account in foreign language learning research in the past decades. It serves as an

important prerequisite for language study, of which intensity determines different performances in learning process. American researchers Uguroglu and Walberg have already proved positive correlation between motivation and performance in language learning process through plenty of studies and research analyses (cited in Li & He, 1999). Higher level of motivation leads to higher achievement, while better achievement in return stimulates and strengthens the motivation.

Genesee, Roger and Holobow(1983) have also studied the relationship between motivation and context, from which they concluded that socio-psychological models of SLA need to consider the role of intergroup factors more seriously (Larsen-Freeman & Long, 2000). In other words, inner factors from the learners like the desire to learn a language should be taken into consideration. To maintain learner's motivation, Alpetkin(1981) recommends an ESP(English for specific purposes) approach in which the language is taught according to learner's specific language learning fields, and it is proved that instrumental motivations are greatly encouraged and strengthened in such a way. Thus, in child English language teaching, teachers should place more emphasis on learning motivation and try their best to foster and maintain the students' motivation that has a great influence on their language study result.

C. *A Brief Introduction of Needs Analysis*

American humanistic psychologist Abraham, H. Maslow (1999) has set up a hierarchic theory of needs. Physiological need generally refers to the homeostasis of the body, and this need is mainly satisfied in the way of eating. Safety need mostly indicates security, stability, dependency, protection, freedom from fear, anxiety and chaos; need for structure, order, law, limits; strength in the protector, and so on (Maslow, 1999). Belongingness and love need means a person may feel keenly the absence of parents, friends, lovers, or children. He will hunger for affectionate relations with people in general, namely, for a place in his group or family, and he will strive with great intensity to achieve this goal, or he will feel sharply the pangs of loneliness, of ostracism, of rejection, of friendlessness, of rootlessness (Maslow, 1999). The esteem need approximately includes man's eager for self-respect, or for the esteem of others. And lastly, the need for self-actualizing points out that a man can be what he wants to be, just as Maslow (1999)said, what a man can be, he must be. He must be true to his own nature.

Needs analysis is the process of gathering and interpreting information on the uses to which language learners will put the target language (TL) following instruction; and what the learners will need to do in the learning situation in order to learn the TL (Byram, 2001). The results of needs analyses are used in language program planning to make decisions about appropriate learning objectives, syllabus content, teaching and assessment methods, learning materials and resources (Byram, 2001). In this paper, results of needs analysis got in the research are used aiming at making decisions about instructional plans and teaching methods in English language teaching process in order to encourage students' motivation to learn.

The first model of needs analysis promoted by Richterich (1972) was carried out in the settings where learners would use the language, the people whom they would communicate with and the language exponents (syntax, lexis, functions, etc.). This type of needs analysis was later known as "target situation analysis" (TSA) (Chamber, 1980). The most influential model of TSA was John Munby's Communicative Needs Processor (Munby, 1978), an analytic implement with which language instructors build up a summarized account of a learner's communication needs. These needs were then translated into a list of language skills and micro-functions which formed the basis of the target syllabus specification (Byram, 2001, p.439). During the 1970s and 1980s, critics questioned the ignorance of learners' learning needs such as the learner's attitudes, motivation and learning style in Munby's model despite its concern with individual language needs. Subsequent approaches to needs analysis have therefore addressed Munby's model by focusing data collection on information about learner's current deficiencies, learners' wants and expectations of the course, etc. (Dudley-Evan and St John, 1998). Thus, motivation is gradually taken into account in needs analysis.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

The present study provides information concerning how the research has been carried out and tries to verify a hypothesis that will provide a better and optimal way to maintain motivation to learn and encourage effective child English language learning which is based on classroom observation and interviews.

Although there are lots of studies on affective teaching in children's English language learning process, there have been relatively few studies on specific psychological factors that may affect children's learning motivation for foreign language learning, and how to encourage their language learning motivation. Due to the lack of investigations on children's needs in their English learning process and studies on the relation between needs and learning motivation, the purpose of this study aims at identifying the existence of the five needs in children's language learning and finding the reasons why most of the child students lack motivation to learn.

A. *Subjects*

The subjects observed in this study are students who are aged 7 to 12 from Grade two through Grade six, studying in the Cambridge Young Learners English (CYLE) School in the city Nanchong and in Langzhong. The teachers involved in this research are the teachers working in school of foreign languages of China West Normal University. They all have three or more years' experience in English language teaching, and teach the students on every weekend. The textbook

used in CYLE School is “Cambridge Young Learners English Pupil’s Book”, which includes three levels: starters (primary 1-2), movers (primary 3-4), and flyers (primary 5-6).

B. Instruments

Video capturing device and interviews are the main instruments used in this study as the subject is child students and questionnaire is a little difficult to handle.

1) Video Capture

Some useful and important class presentation pieces were noted as often as possible, including the teacher’s strategies used for promoting children’s leaning motivation and the reactions the students showed in order to make the study more reliable. Additionally, three lessons of each teacher were examined in detail in the hope that they can help illustrate the specific strategies used in English language classes to encourage and maintain children’s motivation for learning English.

2) Observation

As one of the teacher participants is the researcher herself, most of her class presentations were mainly observed carefully by herself instead of video capturing. During the observation, not only the students’ performances in class were particularly noticed, but also the strategies used and the reason for using them were noted clearly. To do this is just for the purpose of making sure the reliability of this study.

3) Interviews

Interviews with the four teachers and their students were conducted throughout a whole year. What the students said was taken down by the researcher during the interview in order not to miss any useful information for the research. The main questions concerning the satisfaction of needs in child English language learning and motivation maintaining are given in the next part.

IV. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Data collected in the observation and transcriptions are carefully analyzed in this part. We are going to centre on the activities the students took part in and their reactions after an English lesson. The analysis and discussions will focus on the results of learners’ needs analysis based on the data collected from the observation and interviews.

A. Analysis of Needs in Child English Language Learning

In order to investigate how the five needs are satisfied in child English language learning, the researcher has tried to identify the characteristics of the children during the study.

Extract of the Interview with Students:

1. Why are you learning English?

A1: I like English cartoons.

A2: Parents ask me to study English.

A3: I have no idea.

2. Q: Do you think English is a very useful language?

A1: Yes.

A2: I don’t know.

A3: No.

3. Q: How do you feel when your teacher speaks English in class?

A1: Fantastic.

A2: I cannot understand.

A3: Interesting but difficult to understand.

4. Q: What are your favorite class activities?

A1: Group discussion.

A2: Story reading.

A3: Game playing.

5. Q: Do you like English? If do, how much do you like?

A1: Yes, very much.

A2: Yes, a little.

A3: No.

A4: I don’t know.

6. Q: How do you think of your English teacher’s teaching in your language classroom? Are you satisfied or not?

A1: Satisfied.

A2: Relatively satisfied.

A3: No, not satisfied.

A4: No comment.

7. Q: Do you usually become nervous when you are studying or using English?

A1: Yes.

A2: Sometimes.

A3: No.

8. Q: If you compare yourself to your classmates, what will your self-rating English proficiency level be? You can choose one from the following: Very bad; bad; medium; good; very good.

A1: Good.

A2: Medium.

A3: Bad.

9. Q: Do you often review or preview English lessons no matter the teacher asks you to do or not?

A1: Yes.

A2: No.

A3: Never think of.

10. Q: Have you ever tried to practice English with other students?

A1: Yes.

A2: No.

A3: Never think of.

11. Q: Do you want to learn about the culture of English speakers?

A1: yes.

A2: Never think of.

A3: No.

TABLE 1
FREQUENCY OF THE ANSWERS (TOTAL NUMBER: 27)

Questions \ Answers	A1	A2	A3	A4
Q1	8	15	4	
Q2	22	3	2	
Q3	6	12	9	
Q4	3	6	18	
Q5	8	7	7	5
Q6	14	3	3	7
Q7	12	10	5	
Q8	5	17	5	
Q9	11	9	7	
Q10	7	9	11	
Q11	8	13	6	

After observing the students in classrooms and talking to those specific child language learners, the researcher found some common characteristics of most of the subjects according to **Table 1**:

1. They are not curious enough as a young child should be and most of them have passive interest in language learning. (See Q1, Q11)

2. Ambiguity of language learning motivation exists. (See Q1, Q5, Q9, Q10, Q11)

3. They are not satisfied enough with the learning environment and the methodologies teachers employ in their classroom teaching. (See Q3, Q6)

4. Interactive activities are popular with child students. (See Q4)

5. Fear and anxiety are the main obstacles in child English language learning. (See Q3, Q7)

6. Lack conscious desire for success due to the class activities in which cooperation is emphasized while personal identification is neglected. (See 4, Q8, Q9)

The investigation into child students identifies the existence of the five needs, i.e. safety need, belongingness and love need, esteem need, apprehension need and the need for self-actualization in child language learning which have not been satisfied enough. For example, most child subjects avoid answering questions raised by the teacher in classes as well as practicing English with their classmates which implies their needs for safety and love are not well satisfied. Child students are also afraid of failures like adults, so to get more students motivated to involve in their classroom language learning, praise and encouragement from the teachers are required and designs of questions and classroom tasks need more careful consideration.

B. Causes of Lack of Learning Motivation

The author has probed into the causes of lack of motivation in child English language learning through the classroom observation and interviews with the specific four teachers involved in the study.

Extract of Interview with Teachers:

1. Q: Do you think English is necessary and important in your daily life?

T1: Yes.

T2: Yes.

T3: Yes.

- T4: Yes.
2. Q: Have you taken notice of the use of native language in your teaching process?
T1: Sometimes.
T2: Yes.
T3: Sometimes.
T4: Yes.
3. Q: What do you think is the major reason for lack of motivation in child English language learning?
T1: Age.
T2: Teaching approaches.
T3: Classroom activities.
T4: Unawareness of the value of English.
4. Q: What are your purposes of using interaction patterns in your classes?
T1: To arouse children's interest in language learning.
T2: To achieve effective English teaching.
T3: To facilitate English teaching.
T4: To make language learning more interesting and relaxed.
5. Q: What are the characteristics of interaction in your classroom?
T1: Not effective enough.
T2: Group work is usually taken.
T3: Whole-class work is often taken.
T4: Not effective enough.
6. Q: What are your favorable classroom activities?
T1: Pair work.
T2: Game playing.
T3: Story reading.
T4: Group work.

According to the results, three main causes of lack of motivation in children's English language learning are generalized below:

1) Lack of awareness of the value of English: Most of the children are not really aware of the importance of English language learning. They learn English just because they are required to study the language in schools and their parents ask them to do so. Child students rarely realize the usefulness of English language in our daily life, thus their interest in English learning would mostly be found in classroom study period and can not last for a long time.

2) Lack of interaction: Interaction between teachers and students should be more emphasized. Most of the teachers could not remember all of the children's names, and because of the big size of language classroom, they could not always keep an eye on students, listen to their opinions and give immediate feedback. Besides, interactions among child students need to be paid attention to. Group work and whole-class activities are favored by most English teachers because it can help save time since hours for class teaching on weekends are quite limited. Then some of the students may keep in silence while others are discussing and the teacher could not immediately identify them and encourage them to join in the discussion.

3) Lack of creative use of teaching materials: Teachers tend to give a careful explanation of their teaching materials like words explanation and sentence translation when trying to make their children understand what they are talking about. Since most of them are working in their spare time, the time for teaching preparation is not enough. Therefore, creative use of teaching materials is seldom seen in classroom teaching because everyone of them lay more emphasis on the accomplishment of teaching tasks.

V. PEDAGOGICAL SUGGESTIONS

First of all, both teachers and parents should try hard to arouse the awareness of the importance of English. English is frequently used in our daily life, and English stories and novels are becoming more and more popular among Chinese children since there are fresh ideas and a lot of interesting happenings in those books which are quite different from what they have read in Chinese traditional legends and fables.

Secondly, a pleasant and enjoyable environment should be advocated while children are trying to follow their teachers in language classes. Immersion Teaching is a good way for children to acquire a second language, but the application needs to be considered closely according to different situations in China. Thus, native language is still needed in children's foreign language classes. Krashen also cannot give a definite answer to the use of native language in his Input Hypothesis which partly agrees with immersion and bilingualism, while more and more studies and researches show the favor for use of native language in foreign language teaching (Luo & Cheng, 2006) towards which positive view is held by teachers and students. A better understanding of teaching materials and classroom activities will help diminish children's anxiety in foreign language learning and encourage them to take part in the learning process.

Thirdly, language teachers have to pay attention to the improvement of professional teaching. Regular study and training should be promoted in schools. Moreover, they need to be concerned about new teaching theories and the

development of teaching methodology. Therefore, they may have ideas in creative use of teaching materials with the help of various teaching approaches, such as Immersion Teaching, Total Physical Response, Communicative Approach, Situational Language Teaching, and so on, since one single method could not be applied in different circumstances. Besides, student-centered teaching could be taken into account during language teaching process. Most of the child students are willing to display their feelings and tell their ideas, which may facilitate the teaching focused upon children's language production. At the same time, teachers should emphasize the interaction among the children and pay more attention to the communication between the child and themselves in order to get immediate feedback in language learning.

VI. CONCLUSION

As intrinsic motivation is mainly influenced by internal factors which indicate the five needs generalized by Wang (2004), i.e. safety needs, belongingness and love needs, esteem need, apprehension need and self-actualizing need, the primary objective of this study is to ensure the existence of learning needs, find how the five needs are satisfied in child English language learning process and how to stimulate and maintain their motivation to learn through needs satisfaction.

Firstly, needs exist in child English language learning process and have not been well satisfied. Therefore, there's an urgent demand for needs satisfaction in English language classroom teaching. Secondly, lack of child English learning motivation lies in three aspects: unawareness of the value of English, lack of interaction between teachers and students and the interaction among students themselves which function as the main obstacles of needs satisfaction and motivation maintenance. Thirdly, as most of the children are learning English in language schools, learning motivation should be emphasized in school teaching and teachers play an important role in maintaining children's motivation in learning. They have to reconsider the organization of teaching materials and encourage the children to interact more with each other and with the teacher at the same time.

Since the research was only taken in a very limited area (only in the city Nanchong and Langzhong) and in limited time (for just one and a half years), so the findings of the study also bear some possible limitations. The first limitation is that the four classroom settings under observation and the ideas of the teachers and child students cannot represent ideas of all the others. The second one is the interview questions may have predetermined the categories of responses. The third limitation is that because before the teachers and the students were interviewed, they were all informed that the study focuses on their perspectives towards English language teaching, the validity of their answers are under criticism. Actually, the satisfaction of the needs can not be fully achieved during a single lesson. So study under longer-period observation is needed and it could be taken in a larger scope.

REFERENCES

- [1] Abraham, H. Maslow. (1999). *Motivation and Personality*. Beijing: China Social Sciences Publishing House.
- [2] Alpetkin, C. (1981). Sociopsychological and pedagogic Considerations in L2 Acquisition. *TESOL Quarterly*, (15), 275-284.
- [3] Brown, H.D. (1980). *Principles of language Learning and Teaching*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- [4] Brown, H.D. (2001). *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- [5] Byram, M. (2001). *Routledge Encyclopedia of Language Teaching and Learning*. London: Routledge.
- [6] Chamber, F. (1980). A Re-evaluation of Needs Analysis in ESP. *ESP Journal*, (1): 25-33.
- [7] Genesee, F., Rodgers, P. & Holobow, N. (1983). The Social Psychology of Second Language Learning: Another Point of View. *Language Learning*, (33), 209-224.
- [8] Larsen-freeman, Daine & Long, Michael H. (2000). *An Introduction to Second Language Acquisition Research*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- [9] Liu Xuan. (2015). Creating Situations for Arousing Student's Interest in English Learning. *Read and Write Periodical*, (10), 109-111.
- [10] Li Hongyu & He Yisu. (1999). *The Power in Learning*. Wuhan: Hubei Education Press.
- [11] Luo Weiwei & Cheng Youqiang. (2006). The Contradictory Phenomena among English Majors with the Use of Mother Language or Target Language in Foreign Language Classroom. *Journal of Tianjin Foreign Studies University*, (1): 76-80.
- [12] Munby, J. (1978). *Communicative Syllabus Design*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [13] Richards, Jack C., John Platt & Heidi Platt. (2000). *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- [14] Richterich, R. (1972). A Model for the Definition of Language Needs of Adults Learning a Modern language. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- [15] Song Tao. Happy Learning Principles and Its Application in Children's English Language Teaching. Retrieved 2015, December 16 from <http://wuxizazhi.cnki.net/Search/JYKX704.008.html>.
- [16] Wang Duqin. (2004). *Strategy and Method in English Language Teaching and Learning*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- [17] Williams M., & R. Burden. (1997). *Psychology for Language Teachers: a Social Constructive Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University press.
- [18] Yu Ming. (2004). *Primary School English Teaching Methodology and Examples*. Guangzhou: SCUT Press.
- [19] Zhao Aiping. Application of Affective Education in Primary School English Teaching. Retrieved 2016, March 15 from

<http://btzx.net/Article/showArticle.asp?ArticleID=202>.

Na Wei was born in Langzhong, China in 1981. She received her master degree in foreign language teaching methodology from China West Normal University, China in 2006.

She is currently a lecturer in the School of Foreign Languages, China West Normal University, Nanchong, China. Her research interests include psycholinguistics and English language teaching.

A Comparative Study of the Effects of Recasts and Scaffolded Feedback on the Grammatical Accuracy of Elementary EFL Learners

Fateme Saeb

University of Isfahan, Isfahan, Iran

Dariush Nejad Ansari Mahabadi

University of Isfahan, Isfahan, Iran

Akbar Khazaei

The Department of Education, Firoozan, Nahavand, Iran

Abstract—The study reported in this paper aimed at investigating the differential efficacy of scaffolded feedback and recasts as two types of corrective feedback (CF) in improving elementary EFL learners' grammatical accuracy. Forty-five beginner EFL students formed a control group (n= 16) and two experimental groups (scaffolding= 16, recast= 13). The use of the third person singular 's' morpheme for verbs was selected as the target structure to be treated through the provision of the corrective feedback. The scaffolded feedback was operationalized within a sociocultural framework as a collaborative process during which learners were provided with assistance adjusted to their individual needs. Recasts, on the other hand, were operationalized as reformulations of learners' erroneous utterances without the error. The results indicated a significant improvement in accuracy for the two experimental groups from pretest to posttest. Also, the difference between the scaffolding and recast groups in the posttest was significant. Overall, these findings confirmed the beneficial effects of CF and in particular scaffolded feedback on learners' grammatical accuracy.

Index Terms—corrective feedback, recasts, scaffolded feedback, sociocultural theory

I. INTRODUCTION

The study of learner errors as a reflection of interlanguage development has long been a central theme of second language research. Since the 1970s, however, SLA researchers have shifted attention from the analysis of errors in their own right to the investigation of potential effects of corrective feedback procedures on language learning. This turn of attention has mainly been based on the assumption that learners need information about the communicative success of their second language production and can use feedback on errors when they are not able to detect, having access only to positive evidence, how their interlanguage diverges from the target language norms (Lyster & Mori, 2006). Carroll and Swain (1993) also suggested that providing L2 learners with feedback might be unavoidable considering the inadequacy of relevant data available to them. Feedback, they asserted, can assist L2 learners to 'narrow the range of possible hypotheses that can account for the data' (p. 358). Furthermore, it has been proposed that corrective feedback may be contributive in the enhancement of learners' metalinguistic awareness (Swain, 1995).

Corrective feedback research, so far, has investigated either the relative effect of different types of feedback (Ellis, 2007; Ellis et al., 2006; Loewen & Nabei, 2007; Saeb, 2014; Sheen, 2007, 2010) or the effect of learner-internal and learner-external factors on the effectiveness of corrective feedback (Ammar & Spada, 2006; Carpenter et al., 2006; Goo, 2012; Mackey & Philip, 1998; Rassaei, 2013; Sheen, 2004). These studies have provided growing evidence that corrective feedback, as a focus-on-form technique, aids interlanguage development. There is little consensus, however, about the effects of different types of corrective feedback (Ellis, 2006). Many studies continue to confirm Chaudron's (1988) contention that "feedback is a complex phenomenon with several functions" (p.152). A particularly less-researched topic in this area has been the relative efficacy of scaffolded feedback and recast. Scaffolding as a feedback type has its theoretical roots in the Sociocultural Theory of language learning which, as Ellis (2008) argues, has become a major force in second language acquisition research. This fact makes it more appealing to examine its effectiveness as compared with recast which is characteristic of a cognitive approach to language learning. As few studies, thus far, have investigated this issue (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994; Nassaji & Swain, 2000; Rassaei, 2014), the need is felt to pursue research in this area in order to shed more light on this matter and increase the body of current knowledge about differential effect of feedback types.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Corrective feedback is defined in the literature as “any reaction of the teacher which clearly transforms, disapprovingly refers to, or demands improvement of the learner utterance” (Chaudron, 1977, p. 31). We will focus in this study on two feedback types of recast and scaffolded feedback. Recasts are implicit forms of corrective feedback that reformulate a learner’s erroneous utterance in a correct form. Lyster and Ranta (1997) defined recasts as a “teacher’s reformulation of all or part of a student’s utterance, minus the error” (p. 46). According to the research results, recasts are probably the most frequent feedback type in different educational settings including elementary, high-school, university-level, and immersion classrooms (Mori, 2002; Panova & Lyster, 2002; Roberts, 1995; Tsang, 2004). Based on observations that children tend to repeat parental recasts while acquiring their mother tongue, recast has been regarded as an important type of feedback, hypothesized to initiate noticing and subsequently drive L2 development forward (Lyster & Mori, 2006).

A number of studies focusing on the use of recasts have displayed their effectiveness in improving L2 knowledge. Long, Inagaki, and Ortega (1998) demonstrated that some target features can be better treated using recasts during experimentally controlled interactions in comparison to models which are presented to learners before they start their oral production. Also, Mackey and Philp (1998) showed that providing L2 learners with intensive recasts during interactions is more fruitful than interaction lacking intensive recasts. Furthermore, in regard to long term effects, corrective recasts were found more effective in comparison to no feedback in Doughty and Varela’s (1998) study. Their results revealed that a recast introduced by a repetition of the student’s incorrect form with additional intonation stress to highlight the incorrect and correct forms, also leads to more satisfactory results.

The term scaffolding, as mentioned above, is borrowed from the Sociocultural Theory which is itself derived from the Vygotskian school of thought. The central theme of this theory is that investigating cognition cannot be done in isolation from the social context. It deems language learning as dialogically based (Ellis, 2008). Researchers working within this framework argue that providing corrective feedback should be done having regard to the social relationships within the context of interaction. What differentiates this view from the common perspective is its approach to error correction as a social activity which requires cooperation and meaningful interaction between the learner and the teacher (Nassaji & Swain, 2000). Adopting such a viewpoint toward error correction, scaffolded feedback is defined as a collaborative process that initially requires learners to employ their interlanguage knowledge to amend their non-target production; if that attempt fails, the teacher or a more proficient learner enhances the amount of scaffolding through offering increasingly more explicit feedback. The distinctive characteristic of scaffolded feedback is that it is adjusted to the learner’s needs. In other words, it is attuned to their zone of proximal development (ZPD) which is defined by Vygotsky (1978) as a developmental zone in which learners are assisted to do tasks they would not be able to perform without assistance. In this view, learners’ current level of development is differentiated from their potential level of development.

As an early study within this framework, Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) investigated how different learners benefited from different levels of scaffolded feedback. The participants in their study were asked to write an assignment and then work with a tutor to correct their errors. The tutor provided them with corrective feedback. The data analysis yielded 12 levels of corrective feedback, ranging from the most implicit to the most explicit. The results indicated that different learners making the same error required different levels of corrective feedback to detect their error. The authors suggested that learners’ performance improved from other-regulated to self-regulated behavior. They concluded that effective feedback is dialogic between a learner and a more proficient individual and is of a collaborative nature.

In a more recent study, Nassaji and Swain (2000) compared scaffolded and non-scaffolded help for two adult learners of English at the intermediate level. The target structure was English articles. The scaffolded student was provided with corrective feedback based on a progress-sensitive regulatory scale developed by Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994), whereas the non-scaffolded student received corrective feedback picked randomly from the scale. They aimed to explore whether feedback adapted to the learners’ needs is more effective than random feedback. The results revealed that the scaffolded student outperformed the non-scaffolded student in the correct use of articles, suggesting that corrective feedback focused on learners’ needs may be more constructive than random feedback.

In line with the results of Nassaji and Swain (2000), Rassaei (2014) also found scaffolded feedback a more powerful and effective type of feedback. Within an experimental design, he examined the differential effects of scaffolded feedback and recasts on the acquisition of English wh question forms by intermediate students. An untimed grammaticality judgment test (UGJT) and an oral production task (OPT) were used as the pretest and posttest. The results of both the UGJT and the OPT indicated that the scaffolded feedback group significantly outperformed the recast group on the posttest.

Following Rassaei’s (2014) line of research, this study set out to investigate the comparative efficacy of recast and scaffolded feedback in improving learners’ performance. More specifically, we focused on the acquisition of the third person singular ‘-s’ morpheme by the elementary learners. The lower level of proficiency compared to the previous studies, was chosen to see whether the relative effectiveness of scaffolded feedback is mediated by learners’ proficiency level and whether the same superiority would be found for scaffolded feedback as opposed to recast for elementary learners. Finally, the research questions this study aimed to answer were formulated as follows: a) Does corrective feedback help elementary EFL learners become more accurate in the use of third person singular ‘-s’ for verbs? b) Is

there a significant difference in the effect of scaffolded feedback and recast directed at using third person singular '-s' for verbs?

III. METHOD

A. Participants

Three classes of elementary EFL learners in a language teaching institute participated in this study. The students were randomly assigned to two experimental groups of recast (n=13) and scaffolded feedback (n=16), and a control group (n=16). They were either primary school students or junior high-school students with their age ranging between 10-15. There were nine females and thirty six males. The students' level of proficiency was determined based on their scores from the institute's entrance examinations. One of the researchers was the teacher of the three classes. He was an accomplished non-native speaking teacher of English as a foreign language and held a master's degree in English language teaching.

B. The Target Structure

This study's target linguistic structure was the third person singular '-s' morpheme for verbs. Though it may seem a straightforward, simple rule to be learnt, the experience of many teachers shows that the use of third person singular '-s' for verbs is a quite difficult grammatical feature to be mastered by elementary and even intermediate students. A series of research by Pienemann and Johnston (1987) has led them to conclude that the acquisition of grammatical structures is determined by how difficult they are to process psycholinguistically, rather than how simple or complex they are grammatically. They illustrate this with the third person '-s' morpheme. Grammatically, this is a fairly simple item, but it is notoriously difficult for learners to learn. Pienemann and Johnston suggest that the difficulty originates from the fact that the form of the verb is ruled by three syntactic features, namely, the person and number of the subject noun, and the tense feature, and does not stand by itself (Nunan, 1994). According to Pienemann's (1998) Processability Theory, inter-phrasal morphemes such as third person '-s' can be acquired when the S-procedure becomes available in the interlanguage. This is well after the acquisition of morphemes such as past tense '-ed' or indefinite article 'a' which requires category or phrasal procedures. Given the difficulty associated with acquiring third person '-s' morpheme, and its repeated and obligatory use in different sentences, it provides us a suitable choice to investigate the effectiveness of different types of feedback.

C. Operationalization of Feedback Types

To put recast into practice in this study, the teacher reformulated the learners' erroneous sentences into a correct form. No additional information were provided. The following is an example of recast taken from the present study's data:

Example 1

Teacher: Does Mr. Brown ride a bike in this picture?

Learner: No, he doesn't.

Teacher: So, what does he ride?

Learner: He ride a horse.

Teacher: He **rides** a horse.

To operationalize scaffolding as a feedback type, Aljaafreh and Lantolf's (1994) framework for assistance was adopted. Assistance in this framework is finely addressed toward the learners' current needs and is distinct from types of prompts that include encouraging learners to self-correct without any attempt to recognize learners' needs. The distinctive features of scaffolded feedback proposed by Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) which were also practiced in this study are as follows: (a) It should be provided gradually with no more help than is required; (b) it should be dependent on learners' needs; and (c) it should be of a dialogic nature, i.e. the learner and the teacher work together to solve the problem. The exact procedure to apply these distinctive features during the treatment sessions was also adopted from Rassaei (2014). The scaffolded feedback moves started from the most implicit and progressed to the most explicit contingent on the learners' needs and developing abilities. Each incident of scaffolded feedback could include different kinds of assistance such as clarification requests, an indication of the source of error, explaining the rule, providing examples, providing metalinguistic information, and models. Two illustrative examples of scaffolded feedback episodes are presented below:

Example 2

Teacher: What does your brother do after school?

Learner: He is taking a nap.

Teacher: Again please!

Learner: He is taking a nap?

Teacher: I didn't ask what he is doing.

Learner: Um ... He take a nap?

Teacher: No, for example we say: he plays outside or he studies his lessons.

Learner: Aha! He takes a nap.

Teacher: Good for you.

Example 3

Teacher: Does Judy play with her toys?

Learner: No, she play computer games.

Teacher: Would you repeat your sentence, please?

Learner: She play computer games.

Teacher: Remember you're talking about Judy.

Learner: Judy plays computer games.

Teacher: That's correct.

D. Tests

An untimed grammaticality judgment test (UGJT) and an oral production task (OPT) were used as the testing instruments in this study. All three groups took both tests prior to the treatment and immediately following it.

1. Untimed grammaticality judgment test

The grammaticality judgment test included 17 sentences ten of which were focused on the use of the third person '-s' and the remaining seven functioned as distractors, containing errors other than the target structure. Of the ten target items, four sentences were grammatical and six were ungrammatical. To reduce the possibility of practice effect, some slight modifications were made to the items in the posttest. The reliability of the grammaticality judgment test was tested in a pilot study prior to the experiment yielding the Cronbachalpha of .80.

2. Oral production task

The procedure for conducting the oral production task was similar to the treatment task. It included picture description tasks using colourful picture cards depicting characters engaged in different activities. The teacher provided the students with the pictures and asked them to describe the activities as much as possible or tell a story about the picture in simple present tense. In case the learners didn't know the vocabulary items needed to describe some parts of the picture, the teacher provided them with the necessary content words in order to keep the flow of speech ongoing. The OPT pretest and posttest sessions for all three groups were video-recorded and transcribed for subsequent analysis.

E. Procedure

The study was conducted within an experimental design involving a pretest for the UGJT and the OPT, three sessions of treatment, and a posttest for each of the testing instruments. On the first day of the experiment, the pretest UGJT and OPT were administered. The next three sessions were devoted to the treatment activity which included narrative tasks based on picture-sequence stories. To elicit learners' production, students in each of the experimental groups were provided with colourful picture cards depicting scenes of everyday activities and were asked to describe the course of events which was happening in the pictures in simple present tense. The teacher provided the related type of feedback upon the emergence of errors. Learners in the control group performed the same task; however, they received no corrective feedback for their errors. The posttest for the UGJT was conducted at the end of the last treatment session and the posttest OPT was administered the next session.

F. Analysis

To examine the effects of the two types of corrective feedback on learners' use of the third person '-s', scores for the two administrations of the UGJT and the OPT were obtained.

The grammaticality judgment test was scored on a discrete item basis. One point was given for each correct grammaticality judgment. The distractors were excluded. Thus the perfect score for the test was 10 points. OPT scores were computed using obligatory occasion analysis (Ellis, Sheen, Murakami & Takashima, 2008). All obligatory occasions for the use of '-s' were spotted. Each occasion was then checked to determine whether the '-s' had been supplied. Each learner's score was then calculated by dividing the total number of supplied '-s'es by the total number of obligatory occasions and reported as proportions of 1. For testing the reliability of the scoring of the OPT, the productions of 15 students from the pre-test were randomly chosen from the three groups and were re-scored by the same researcher three weeks after they were scored for the first time. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation (r) of .95 was obtained for the two sets of scores.

The scores from the two tests were put into SPSS (2014) and the following descriptive and inferential statistics were run to answer the two research questions: first, descriptive statistics for all administrations of the two tests were computed. Then the scores of the pretest and posttest for each testing instrument were analyzed by means of a mixed between-within subjects analysis of variance (SPANOVA) and t-tests.

IV. RESULTS

A. The UGJT

Table 1 presents the means and standard deviations for the UGJT pretest and posttest for the three groups. The experimental groups and the control group improved their scores from the pretest to posttest. Fig. 1 illustrates this improvement. SPANOVA results revealed that there were significant time differences, $F(1, 42) = 129.30, p < .0005$, partial eta squared = .75 which can be considered a very large effect size according to standards set by Cohen (1988).

Significant group differences were also found, $F(2, 42) = 3.32, p = .04$, partial eta squared = .13. The scores of both scaffolding group ($t(15) = -11.66, p < .0005$) and the recast group ($t(12) = -4.75, p < .0005$) improved significantly from pretest to posttest, while no significant difference was found between the control group's scores in the pretest and the posttest ($t(15) = -1.95, p = .07$). A comparison of the two experimental groups' scores on posttest showed significant differences between them ($t(27) = 3.68, p = .001$).

TABLE 1.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE UGJT

Group	N	Pretest		Posttest	
		M	SD	M	SD
Scaffolding	16	3.37	1.25	8.00	1.09
Recast	13	4.07	1.89	6.30	1.37
Control	16	4.18	1.47	4.93	1.52

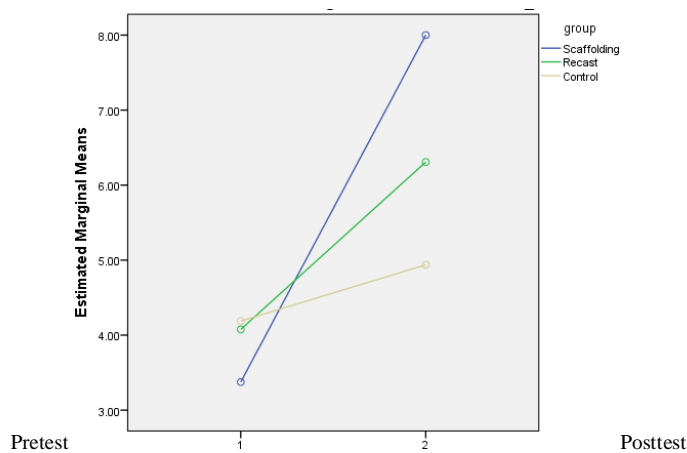


Fig. 1. Three groups' means on the UGJT pretest and posttest

B. The OPT

Descriptive statistics for the OPT pretest and posttest are presented in Table 2. Means of all three groups increased from the pretest to posttest. This raise in means is clearly shown in Fig. 2. SPANOVA results indicated that there were significant time differences, $F(1, 42) = 292.83, p < .0005$, partial eta squared = .87 which can be regarded as a very large effect size. Also, significant group differences were obtained, $F(2, 42) = 25.62, p < .0005$, again with a very large effect size, partial eta squared = .55. Both the scaffolding group ($t(15) = -12.49, p < .0005$) and the recast group ($t(12) = -11.89, p < .0005$) improved their scores significantly from pretest to posttest, whereas in the control group there was no significant increase ($t(15) = -1.78, p = .09$). Also, the scores of the two experimental groups on posttest were found to be significantly different ($t(27) = 2.29, p = .03$).

TABLE 2.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE OPT

Group	N	Pretest		Posttest	
		M	SD	M	SD
Scaffolding	16	.05	.089	.70	.209
Recast	13	.03	.075	.52	.200
Control	16	.05	.115	.07	.139

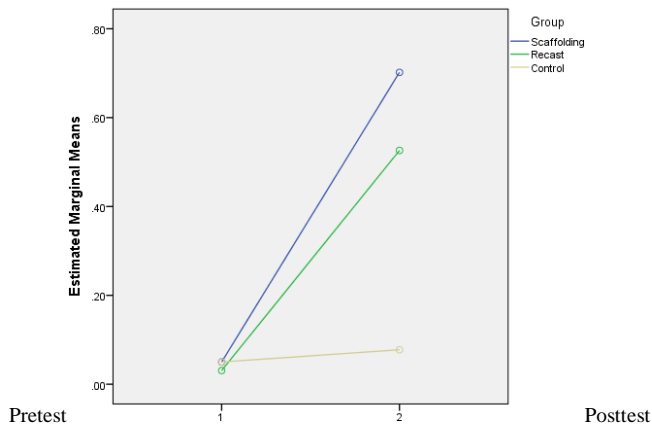


Fig. 2. Three groups' means on the OPT pretest and posttest

V. DISCUSSION

Research question 1 asked whether corrective feedback helped elementary EFL students use the third person singular 's' for verbs more accurately. To answer this research question, the results of the grammaticality judgment test and the oral production task in the pretest and the posttest must be examined. In the grammaticality judgment test, the students' ability to judge grammatical well-formedness using their metalinguistic knowledge is considered as a measure of their grammatical accuracy. The oral production task, on the other hand, offers an estimate of the learners' ability to accurately use the third person singular 's' while engaged in actual oral production and thus enjoys higher ecological validity.

The OPT results indicated that both experimental groups progressed significantly from the pretest to the posttest and both were better able to use the target feature in their oral production than the control group. The following extracts from the OPT pretest and posttest illustrate this improvement. Example 4 is extracted from a learner's production in the scaffolding group and the next example belongs to a learner in the recast group. The performance of these two learners is characteristic of the general improvement observed in the two experimental groups during the study.

Example 4:

Pretest

Mina go to the library and study her lessons. She come back home and eat lunch at 12:30. Then she takes a nap. After that she drink a cup of tea.

Posttest

Sarah watches TV after school. But Peter takes a nap. Tom and Bob play outside. Jack plays video games and Tina does her homework.

Example 5:

Pretest

Mr. Tehrani wake up at 6. He wash his hands and face. Then he say his prayers. He eats his breakfast and go to work. He is a teacher.

Posttest

Judy goesto art class on Monday. On Tuesday, she goto English class. Then she takes piano classes on Wednesday. And she goesto math class on Thursday.

As evident in the examples, the students in both groups were indiscriminate in their use of the third person singular 's' in the pretest. They failed to use it in most of the obligatory occasions. In the posttest, however, a much better control over the use of the 's' is obvious for both learners. The learner from the recast group supplied the 's' in three out of the four obligatory occasions while the learner from the scaffolding group supplied it in all four obligatory occasions, achieving a hundred percent accuracy.

The results for the UGJT confirmed those of the OPT. The students in both experimental groups showed significant gains from the pretest to the posttest. Furthermore, they both outperformed the control group in the posttest. The two students whose oral production was exemplified above, for example, increased their scores in the grammaticality judgment test from three to eight and from three to six respectively.

This pattern of results for the UGJT and the OPT suggests that the corrective feedback positively affected the learning of the third person singular 's'. Two points regarding the learners' progress corroborate this conclusion: the students did not receive any instruction or explanation on the use of the target structure other than what they were exposed to during the treatment sessions. The experiment was conducted during the summer holidays and the participants did not have the chance to receive instruction or practice the use of the third person singular 's' in their regular classes at school. Thus, corrective feedback could be considered as the sole cause of the improved accuracy. The second point is the very large effect size obtained for the time differences in both testing instruments which lends further support to the affirmative answer to the research question one.

The second research question asked whether the efficacy of the corrective feedback differed dependent on whether it was offered in the form of scaffolding or recast. The results displayed that it did. Significant differences were found between the scaffolding and the recast groups in both the grammaticality judgment test and the oral production task with the scaffolding group outperforming the recast group. This superiority is noteworthy taking into account the fact that the scaffolding group scored less than the recast group in the UGJT pretest. This finding is consistent with those of the previous studies in which scaffolded feedback proved to be more effective than other more implicit types of feedback such as recast (Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994; Ellis et al., 2006; Nassaji & Swain, 2000; Rassaei, 2013, 2014; Sheen, 2007).

The advantage of the scaffolded feedback group over the recast group might be explained with reference to Schmidt's hypothesis of the nature and the role of awareness in second language learning. According to Schmidt (1995) two levels of awareness can be distinguished, namely, noticing and understanding or metalinguistic awareness, with the latter being a higher level of awareness. While noticing involves attention to only the surface structure of sentences, attending to the underlying rules and principles occurs at the level of understanding. Therefore, it might be the case that whereas both scaffolding and recast stimulate awareness at the level of noticing, scaffolding might be the major promoter of metalinguistic awareness, hence contributing to the higher level of accuracy in the scaffolding group. Schmidt's hypothesis also predicts that this conscious attention to rules and principles resulted from understanding

substantially accelerates subsequent acquisition. The explicit nature of scaffolded feedback as opposed to the implicitness of recast which is parallel to their corresponding levels of awareness might have also contributed to their differential effectiveness. Recasts are likely to have gone unnoticed by some learners as instances of corrective feedback especially due to the learners' low level of proficiency as has been pointed out by Panova and Lyster (2002). This conclusion is confirmed by the results of corrective feedback studies which suggest that the effect of corrective feedback is affected by the degree to which it explicitly tells the learner about the error (Bitchener, Young, & Cameron, 2005; Carroll & Swain, 1993; Ellis et al., 2006; Panova&Lyster, 2002; Rassaei, 2013).

Furthermore, contrary to recasts, the effectiveness of scaffolded feedback is supported by the fact that it involves pushing learners to produce output by encouraging them to self-correct their erroneous utterances. This is substantiated by Swain's Output Hypothesis according to which comprehensible output is an indispensable process of second language acquisition (DeKeyser, 2007). Recasts, as mere reformulations of learners' errors may not offer as much opportunities for producing output as scaffolding does.

A third justification of the greater benefits of the scaffolded feedback comes from the Sociocultural Theory as its mother paradigm. As discussed above, the Vygotskian sociocultural perspective defines knowledge as having a social nature and believes it to be developed as a result of collaboration, interaction, and communication in a social setting and through interaction within the learners' ZPD. Therefore, unlike recasting, scaffolding does not treat all learners in the same way. From a sociocultural perspective, each individual learner's current level of development might be different from his/her peers and the corrective feedback should be tailored to this developmental level. Accordingly, two learners committing the same error may receive different amounts of assistance as was the case with the treatment procedure in the present study.

Finally, in spite of the above-mentioned interpretations, it would be wise to exert caution while construing the findings of the present study and studies of the like nature as Sheen (2007) asserted that corrective feedback is a complex issue. Ammar and Spada (2006) and Sheen et al. (2009) also pointed out that the effectiveness of scaffolding, recasts and other types of corrective feedback might be controlled by a host of factors ranging from age and level of proficiency to the target structure and educational setting.

VI. CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

The present study was designed to address the central issue of the differential efficacy of scaffolding and recast as two feedback types on elementary learners' grammatical accuracy. The results provided conclusive evidence of the greater power of scaffolded feedback in improving accuracy compared to recasts. Nevertheless, the current study is limited in some ways which should be taken into consideration while interpreting the results. The number of participants was fairly small, partly due to the enrollment problems in the institute where the experiment was conducted. The lack of a delayed posttest is also a drawback of the current study. Although the results demonstrated the favorable effect of CF on learners' grammatical accuracy, it is not clear whether the CF enables learners to achieve long-term gains in accuracy. A further limitation of the study was the fact that only three sessions of treatment were conducted which contributed to the relatively few number of overall corrections received by the students. Different results might have been obtained with tasks sustained over a longer period of time, particularly with respect to the relative benefits of scaffolding and recasts. Finally, the study was focused on the effects of corrective feedback on only one grammatical feature, and as such, the results may not be applicable to other grammatical structures. Bearing in mind the abovementioned limitations, it is recommended that future research address the efficacy of various CF techniques on the acquisition of different linguistic features in learners with differing levels of proficiency within EFL and ESL contexts. More specifically, studies with delayed posttests would be desirable in order to test the durability of corrective feedback effects.

This study contributed to the existing literature on corrective feedback by confirming the findings of previous studies supporting the superior efficacy of scaffolded feedback as opposed to recasts. In terms of pedagogical implications, results from studies like the present one may help foreign language teachers appreciate the collaborative value of scaffolded feedback within a classroom context. An understanding of the potentials of different feedback types might assist them to better adapt their corrective moves to their learners' needs, or more specifically, the learners' ZPD. However, as Panova and Lyster (2002) reminded, teachers and practitioners should not allow their faith in the efficacy of a certain CF type to lead them into the overuse of it. A balance of various feedback types chosen in view of diverse linguistic, cognitive and contextual circumstances may prove more successful in ensuring continued L2 development.

REFERENCES

- [1] Aljaafreh, A. & J. P. Lantolf. (1994). Negative feedback as regulation: Second language learning in the zone of proximal development. *Modern Language Journal*, 78, 465–483.
- [2] Ammar, A. & N. Spada. (2006). One size fits all? Recasts, prompts, and L2 learning. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 28, 543–574.
- [3] Bitchener, J., S. Young & D. Cameron. (2005). The effect of different types of corrective feedback on ESL student writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing* 9, 227–258.

- [4] Carpenter, H., K.Jeon, D.MacGregor & A. Mackey. (2006). Learners' interpretations of recasts. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 28, 209–236.
- [5] Carroll, S. & M. Swain. (1993). Explicit and implicit negative feedback: An empirical study of the learning of linguistic generalizations. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 15, 357–386.
- [6] Chaudron, C. (1977). A descriptive model of discourse in the corrective treatment of learners' errors. *Language Learning*, 27, 29–46.
- [7] Chaudron, C. (1988). *Second language classrooms*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- [8] Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical Power Analysis for the Behavioral Sciences*. Second ed. Erlbaum, Mahwah, NJ.
- [9] DeKeyser, R. M. (2007). *Practice in a Second Language Perspectives from Applied Linguistics and Cognitive Psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [10] Doughty, C. & E. Varela. (1998). Communicative focus on form. In C. Doughty & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (pp. 114–138). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- [11] Ellis, R. (2006). Researching the effects of form-focused instruction on L2 acquisition. In K. Bartovi-Harlig & Z Dörnyei (Eds.), *Themes in SLA Research (AILA Review, Vol. 19, pp. 18–41)*.
- [12] Ellis, R. (2007). The differential effects of corrective feedback on two grammatical structures. In A. Mackey (Ed.), *Conversational interaction in second language acquisition: A series of empirical studies* (pp.339–360). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [13] Ellis, R. (2008). *The study of second language acquisition*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- [14] Ellis, R., S. Loewen & R. Erlam. (2006). Implicit and explicit corrective feedback and the acquisition of L2 grammar. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 28, 339–368.
- [15] Ellis, R., Y. Sheen, M. Murakami & H. Takashima. (2008). The effects of focused and unfocused written corrective feedback in an English as a foreign language context. *System* 36, 353–371.
- [16] Goo, J. (2012). Corrective feedback and working memory capacity in interaction-driven L2 learning. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 34, 445–474.
- [17] Loewen, S.&T. Nabei. (2007). Measuring the effects of oral corrective feedback on L2 knowledge. In A. Mackey (Ed.), *Conversational interaction in second language acquisition: A Collection of empirical studies* (pp. 361–376). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [18] Long, M., S. Inagaki & L. Ortega. (1998). The role of implicit negative evidence in SLA: Models and recasts in Japanese and Spanish. *Modern Language Journal*, 82, 357–371.
- [19] Lyster, R. & H. Mori. (2006). Interactional feedback and instructional counterbalance. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 28, 269–300.
- [20] Lyster, R. & L. Ranta. (1997). Corrective feedback and learner uptake: Negotiation of form in communicative classrooms. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 20, 37–66.
- [21] Mackey, A. & J. Philp. (1998). Conversational interaction and second language development: Recasts, responses, and red herrings? *Modern Language Journal* 82, 338–356.
- [22] Mori, H. (2002). Error treatment sequences in Japanese immersion classroom interactions at different grade levels. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles.
- [23] Nassaji, H. & M. Swain. (2000). A Vygotskian perspective on corrective feedback in L2: The effect of random versus negotiated help on the learning of English articles. *Language Awareness*, 9, 34–51.
- [24] Nunan, D. (2002). *Syllabus Design*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- [25] Panova, I. & R. Lyster. (2002). Patterns of corrective feedback and uptake in an adult ESL classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, 36, 573–595
- [26] Pienemann, M. (1998). *Language processing and second language development: Processability Theory*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- [27] Pienemann, M. & M. Johnston. (1987). Factors influencing the development of language proficiency. In D. Nunan (Ed.), *Applying second language acquisition research* (pp. 45–141). Adelaide: National Curriculum Research Centre, Adult Migrant English Program.
- [28] Rassaei, E. (2013). Corrective feedback, learners' perceptions, and L2 development. *System* 41, 472–483.
- [29] Rassaei, E. (2014). Scaffolded Feedback, Recasts, and L2 Development: A Sociocultural Perspective. *The Modern Language Journal* 98 (1), 417-431.
- [30] Roberts, M. (1995). Awareness and the efficacy of error correction. In R. Schmidt (Ed.), *Attention and awareness in foreign language learning* (Tech. Report No. 9, pp. 162–182). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- [31] Saeb, F. (2014). The Effects of Focused and Unfocused Written Corrective Feedback on the Grammatical Accuracy of Beginner EFL Learners. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature* 3, 22-26.
- [32] Schmidt, R. (1995). Consciousness and foreign language learning: A tutorial on the role of attention and awareness in learning. In R. Schmidt (Ed.), *Attention and awareness in foreign language learning* (pp. 1–63). Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press.
- [33] Sheen, Y. (2004). Corrective feedback and learner uptake in communicative classrooms across instructional settings. *Language Teaching Research* 8, 263–300.
- [34] Sheen, Y. (2007). The effect of focused written corrective feedback and language aptitude on ESL learners' acquisition of articles. *TESOL Quarterly* 41, 255–283.
- [35] Sheen, Y. (2010). Differential effects of oral and written corrective feedback in the ESL classroom. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 32, 203–234.
- [36] Sheen, Y., D. Wright & A. Moldawa. (2009). Differential effects of focused and unfocused written correction on the accurate use of grammatical forms by adult ESL learners. *System* 37, 556–569.
- [37] Swain, M. (1995). Three functions of output in second language learning. In G. Cook & B. Seidlhofer (Eds.), *Principles and practice in applied linguistics* (pp. 125–144). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- [38] Tsang, W. (2004). Feedback and uptake in teacher-student interaction: An analysis of 18 English lessons in Hong Kong secondary classrooms. *Regional Language Centre Journal*, 35, 187–209.
- [39] Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind and society: The development of higher mental processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Fateme Saeb is a Ph.D. student in TEFL at the University of Isfahan. She received her BA and MA from Shahid Rajaei Teacher Training University in Tehran in 2009 and 2012 respectively. She has worked as a recruited English teacher at senior high schools since 2009. Her areas of interest include sociolinguistics, critical pedagogy and second language acquisition.



Dariush Nejad Ansari Mahabadi holds a Ph.D. in TEFL. He is an assistant professor at the Faculty of Foreign Languages in the University of Isfahan, Iran. He graduated with an MA in applied linguistics from Tarbiat Modarres University in 1996 and completed his Ph.D. at Allame Tabatabaei University in TEFL in 2009. His areas of interest include second language acquisition, academic writing and writing assessment. Currently, he teaches Ph.D. and MA courses in SLA and writing.



Akbar Khazaei was born in Nahavand, Hamedan, Iran in August, 11, 1972. He received his Bachelor's Degree in TEFL from Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran in 1996. He graduated with an MA in TEFL from Shahid Chamran University, Ahvaz, Iran in 2008. Since 1996, he has worked as a recruited English teacher at senior high schools. He also teaches general English courses at different universities in Nahavand, Iran. He follows a research-based teaching as an action researcher. His areas of interest include identification and interpretation of English euphemistic and idiomatic expressions, and English collocations.

The Impact of Cooperative Learning on Grammar Learning among Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners

Abdolvahed Zarifi

English Language Department, Yasouj University, Yasouj, Iran

Azimeh Taghavi

English Language Department, Islamic Azad University of Yasuj, Iran

Abstract—The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of cooperative learning activities on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' grammatical competence. This research was a quasi-experimental study and its design was comparison group design. The study included one control and one experimental group. In total, 50 students participated in the study. They were male and female intermediate English language learners studying English in EFL department at Shokuh-e-Danesh Institute, Dehdasht, Iran. Following a workshop on the implementation of cooperative learning activities, the experimental group was exposed to cooperative learning activities. The control group was, on the other hand, provided with traditional grammar learning methods. 25-item grammar tests were given to both groups before and after the eight-week treatment. T-tests were employed to analyze the obtained data. The results of the tests revealed significant differences between the control group and the experimental group regarding their grammar learning through cooperative learning. The findings of the study suggested that cooperative learning had positive effects on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' grammatical competence.

Index Terms—cooperative learning, grammar learning, EFL context

I. INTRODUCTION

Grammar refers to the collection of rules which are used to create words and sentences. Richards & Schmidt (2010) define grammar as a description of different ways in which bits of linguistic value are or can be combined so that longer linguistic units are made. In addition to empirical evidence in support of grammar instruction in both ESL and EFL contexts, some scholars argue that grammar instruction is almost inevitable in language learning. This position is deeply rooted in some well-known theories like Schmidt's Noticing Hypothesis (1990) and Swain's Output Hypothesis (1985) indicating that learners tend to fail to acquire language by simply getting exposed to comprehensible input. Moreover, Ellis (2002) is in favor of extensive grammar instruction as it, in the long run, would lead to the formation of implicit language knowledge. Despite the fact that grammar is the key component in language system and that it plays a key role in verbal communication, with the rise of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) with its main focus on meaning, grammar was either completely overlooked in language classes or it was simply dealt with in traditional teacher-fronted classes focusing on pure grammatical structures of the language with no care for meaning (Long & Robinson, 1998).

Focus on form has recently been considered as a working strategy for teaching grammar. For instance, Sheen (2003, p. 225) believes that in the focus on form approach "all classroom activities need to be based on communicative tasks, and that any treatment of grammar should arise from difficulties in communicating any desired meaning." In a similar way, Ellis (2006) argues "the grammar taught should be one that emphasizes not just form but also the meanings", and that focus on forms is valid, provided that students are given chances to use the discrete forms they have studied in communication tasks.

One teaching strategy that is considered an important component of the recent approaches to teaching a second or a foreign language is cooperative learning. Cooperative learning is an "arrangement in which students work in mixed ability groups and are rewarded on the basis of the success of the group" (Woolfolk, 2004). As Liang (2002) puts it, cooperative learning (CL) is very close in nature to the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Most researchers and practitioners have agreed on the effectiveness of cooperative learning in language learning. According to Hill and Flynn (2006) "Educators have found that cooperative learning groups foster language acquisition in ways that whole-class instruction cannot".

According to Slavin (1991), three techniques are widely used in employing cooperative learning approach, namely Jigsaw, Student Teams-Achievement Divisions (STAD) and Team-Games Tournament (TGT). While Jigsaw is mainly used in teaching reading and vocabulary, STAD and TGT can be implemented in teaching grammar. STAD and TGT, as defined by Slavin (1995), share the two basic features of cooperative group work: shared goals and individual accountability, in addition to equal opportunity of success, team competition and face to face interaction.

In Student Teams-Achievement Divisions (STAD) (Slavin, 1994a), students of different performance level, gender, and ethnicity are assigned to four-member learning teams. The members of each group are required to work together in their teams until they all have mastered the new lesson. They next take individual quizzes on the lesson. Then their scores on the quizzes are compared with their own past averages. The points of the members in each are then added up to form team scores. In Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT), another cooperative technique, students play games with members of other teams to add points to their team scores.

It is interesting to point out that cooperative learning is not only a simple group work. A basic difference between cooperative learning and traditional group work is that in traditional group work, students are asked to work in groups with no attention to group organization or planning, whereas in cooperative learning, group work is carefully organized, planned, and examined (Jacobs, 1997; Johnson & Johnson, 1994; Ng & Lee, 1996).

Considering the importance of grammar in language teaching and learning, seeking new methods of teaching grammar for the time being seems to be an urgent need since the existing method of grammar teaching in EFL contexts appears not to be effective. Thus, the present study was conducted to see if Cooperative Learning approach is applicable in teaching grammar in Iran. Therefore, the following research question was put into spotlight:

In search for new methods of teaching grammar in an EFL context, the present study was conducted to see if Cooperative Learning approach is effective with Iranian learners in learning grammar. In other words, the study addressed the following research question:

Does use of cooperative learning strategy significantly affect grammar learning among Iranian intermediate EFL learners?

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

When using cooperative learning, learners practice many strategies either directly or indirectly. Explaining, arguing, negotiating meaning, repeating key words several times, and using words in actual contexts are important to be used in cooperative learning (Hill & Flynn, 2006). Learners have to agree on certain goals and specific ways to achieve those goals. This obliges them to understand each other's points of view and to try to be aware of how others think and feel.

Some studies argue that learners who participate in cooperative learning have usually gained larger achievement than learners who use traditional groups learning (Gambrell, 2007). Haynes (2007) indicates that for English Language Learners (ELLs), using cooperative group activities would help them achieve their academic goals because they are actively involved in "comprehensible output" and, at the same time, they receive "comprehensible input"; both have almost the same importance in learning a language (p.6).

There are many positive results of using cooperative learning on the social relationships. First, it provides respect for others and cooperation between students (Hohn, 2005). When learners help their peers and feel helped by others, they start to strengthen their relationship with them and maximize their respect for them. Slavin (2006) thinks that this effect would last even outside the school. Stevens (2008) indicates that these social effects may go beyond time and place of using cooperative group work. In other words, the positive relationships that are built in the classrooms tend to remain even outside the classroom and after ending the cooperative work.

According to Brown (2001), the use of CL makes learners feel secure from criticism; this feeling has great effect on the effectiveness of CL. This security is derived from dividing the embarrassment that one would feel when correcting his mistakes among the group members. Through this way, all learners, even the shy ones, would become active participants in the leaning process. Johnson and Johnson (2005) note that the feeling of commitment learners have when they are involved in the cooperative wok will decrease their "disruptive" and "off-task behavior" (p.118). It is the students' feeling of participation in something meaningful and having active role in it that lead to commitment and feeling engaged in the activity.

Johnson, Johnson and Smith (1998) argue that there are two forms of group work, namely "pseudo-groups", which cause competition at close distance, and "Traditional Learning Group", which consists of individualistic learning with talk; none of them result in any cooperation (p.28). It is then only under some circumstances that group work will be cooperative. In cooperative learning, students have to sit near each other, explain, discuss, and teach what they know to their teammates. They have to help each other to be productive. This is what Johnson and Johnson (2005) considered one of the elements of effective cooperative leaning, and named "face-to-face promotive interaction" (p.118). This interaction cannot fulfill its purpose without practicing certain social skills which are definitely some key elements of cooperative learning. Examples of these skills are conflict management, decision making, communication, and trust building skills. When working together in cooperative groups, students should have the feeling that they need each other to accomplish their goals. Johnson et al. (1984) insisted that this feeling of interdependence on one another would enhance the chance of achievement.

The review of literature has shown the positive effects of cooperative learning across different subject areas and among learners of different age groups. However, a large body of research on cooperative learning mainly dealt with reading comprehension and not the possible impact of CL on grammar learning.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

This study assumed a quasi-experimental study and its design was comparison group design. The EFL participants in this study were selected out of a total population of 120 intermediate English language learners studying English in EFL department at Shokuh-e-Danesh Institute, Dehdasht, Iran. To establish the homogeneity of the participants, they were chosen from among the learner population who could pass the Oxford English Language Placement Test (OELPT, 2009) with a score range of 40-60 out of 100. This range is usually considered as the score limit for intermediate English language proficiency level. The subjects aged 20 to 25 years, and talked Persian as their native language. They had completed the elementary and pre-intermediate level of EFL programs in different institutes. The subjects were randomly divided into control and experimental groups (25 each).

B. Materials

'American English File 2', originally published by Oxford University Press, was assigned to be covered for intermediate EFL learners. Units 4-7 were taught during the experiment. The grammatical points which were taught in these units were present perfect, comparative and superlative adjectives, infinitives, first and second conditional sentences, present and past passives and modals of possibility and advice.

C. Instruments

1. Grammar Achievement Pre-test

After dividing the participants into one experimental and one control group using stratified random sampling, a grammar achievement test functioning as pretest (Appendix B) was designed in order to determine the prior grammar knowledge of the participants. The test items were selected from students' text book named "American English File 2". Thus, the pre and post-test consisting of a 25-item grammar test were administered on the content of 4 selected units covered in the duration of the study to evaluate their grammar proficiency before and after the treatment.

The pre-test was given to both groups to specifically verify the grammar knowledge of the participants. This test would reveal that all to-be-instructed grammar points in this study are new and unfamiliar for all the participants and ultimately any change in the grammar knowledge of the participants would be because of the treatment they received.

2. Grammar Achievement Post-test

The post test was exactly the same as the pre-test, consisting of the same 25-item grammar test (Appendix B). In order to eliminate the probability of remembering the correct answers from the pre-test, a similar version of pre-test with different item and option arrangement was used after the treatment of the study in order to detect the grammar achievement of the participants.

D. Procedures

After administering an Oxford Placement Test (OPT) and determining homogeneity and language proficiency level of the participants with regard to test scores, and a pre-test of grammar to make sure of students' unfamiliarity with the to-be-learned grammatical points to eradicate possible students' background knowledge, the next step was for the participants of the quasi-experimental and control group to undergo the treatment assigned for them based on the purposes of the study in hand.

Therefore, throughout the treatment which consisted of eight 120-minute sessions over a period of eight weeks, the two groups were exposed to a communicative language teaching approach. The only difference involved in the cooperative learning component which was practiced with the experimental group. A detailed description of the treatment procedure is provided in the following.

1. Procedure for Control Group

The students in control group received ordinary classroom instruction in each session. The teacher first explained each grammatical point in the students' mother tongue, Persian. Then she provided the students with some examples of each point and asked the control group to practice the grammatical points mostly individually. They were required to focus on their own learning rather than care for that of the others. If they faced any problems, they were required to ask the teacher. The students were sitting in rows and required to ask the teacher who was ready for instant help in case of any problems. This type of practice ensured that the sense of competition was dominant in the class among the students. They were, however, asked to work in pairs for a small portion of class time, practicing the same content of only some tasks.

2. Procedure for QEG Group

From the very beginning of the course, the participants of the experimental group were divided into five groups, each consisting of five students. In order to gain a sense of new identity, they were allowed to name their groups after their favorite actors, animals, or whatever they showed interest in.

As the CL approach calls for, the classroom environment was designed to be supportive and friendly to the students. The seating arrangement was, for instance, changed in a way that encouraged cooperation in the classroom. Therefore, instead of sitting in rows, the students sat face-to-face with their group members. The QEG then received 8 sessions treatment which incorporated a CL grammar learning with accompanying techniques of making the students work and cooperate with each other. Some of the CL activities and techniques that were practiced with the experimental group included Jigsaw Strategy, Round-robin and Learning together.

It is worth mentioning that it just took a little planning to teach grammar to the students via CL techniques, but students liked the method since they could learn how to work together to learn a great deal of information quickly. Of course the teaching of cooperative skills was quite necessary simply because as Johnson and Johnson (1994) argue, "Placing socially unskilled students in groups and telling them to cooperate did not guarantee that they would have the ability to do so effectively" (p. 38).

E. Data Analysis

After the treatment, the post-test was administered and the results were analyzed using the SPSS program. Descriptive statistical analysis was used to describe the information obtained from the results of pre-test and posttest administered to participants during this study. Therefore, the mean and standard deviation of the scores of each group were calculated.

IV. RESULTS

In order to check the level of the grammar knowledge of the participants, a grammar achievement test, was run among the participants of the two groups,. As it was already mentioned, this test was designed based on the students' textbook (American English File 2). The purpose of this test was in fact two-folded: first it was intended to determine the homogeneity of the participants; second, it was run to check the unfamiliarity of the subjects with the intended grammar points. Tables 4.1 and 4.2 present the results of this test.

TABLE 4.1.
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE CONTROL AND EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS IN PRE-TEST

VAR00001	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
VAR00002 1	25	37.8800	2.92005	.58401
2	25	36.2800	3.23419	.64684

According to the statistics presented in table 4.1, the mean difference between control and experimental group is 1.60. To ensure the homogeneity of the participants in terms of their grammar knowledge, an independent samples t test was run, the results of which are presented in table 4.2.

TABLE 4.2.
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST OF THE CONTROL AND EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS IN PRE-TEST

	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
	VAR00002 Equal variances assumed	.184	.670	1.836	48	.073	1.60000	.87147	-.15222
Equal variances not assumed			1.836	47.507	.073	1.60000	.87147	-.15269	3.35269

Based on the results of the independent samples t-test, the level of significance is higher than .05 (.073>.05); therefore, it can safely be claimed that both groups were rather homogeneous in terms of their grammar knowledge at the onset of the study.

Table 4.3 illustrates the mean difference between the participants in control and experimental groups after the treatment, which is 3.36. In order to ensure the claim of significant difference, an independent samples test was run between the two groups.

TABLE 4.3
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE CONTROL AND EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS IN POST-TEST GROUP STATISTICS

VAR00001	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
VAR00002 1	25	60.5600	5.44732	1.08946
2	25	57.2000	3.20156	.64031

1=Experimental Group
2=Control Group

Table 4.4 reveals that there was a significant difference between the participants in post-test at .05 level of significance (.011<.05). The statistical analysis of the post-test scores showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group. In other words, cooperative learning did significantly affect grammar learning among the Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

TABLE 4.4.
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST OF THE CONTROL AND EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS IN POST-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
VAR00002 Equal variances assumed	6.824	.012	2.659	48	.011	3.36000	1.26370	.81916	5.90084
Equal variances not assumed			2.659	38.813	.011	3.36000	1.26370	.80354	5.91646

V. DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

This study was intended to determine the effects of cooperative learning techniques on students' grammar learning. The findings of the study were indicative of the fact that CL is more effective than the traditional methods in helping the learners to acquire the grammatical knowledge. Table 4.6 showed that there existed a significant difference between the grammar knowledge of the participants in experimental and control group in post-test at .05 level of significance (.011 < .05). To put it in other words, utilizing cooperative techniques could positively enhance grammar achievement among the Iranian EFL learners.

The results of this research lend support to some previously conducted studies among which we can refer to Ghaith's (2003a) study. Ghaith also found that cooperative learning approach enabled the EFL learners to perform either significantly better than the whole-class learners or at the same level of them. In a similar way, the results were in line with the research findings of Akuka, Wambugu, and Anditi (2013) which revealed that Computer-based cooperative learning method put the students in a more advantageous position to improve their knowledge of English Grammar. Likewise, the present study supports Bibi (2002) who reported that group work activities significantly improved the academic achievement and the acquisition of the four language skills among the elementary as well as secondary stage learners of English. This study provided empirical evidence to argue that CL is an effective approach for teaching grammar. Therefore, EGFL teachers should be encouraged to employ the CL techniques to address the EFL learners' poor knowledge of the English grammar.

The effectiveness of the CL approach in this and other similar studies might be attributed to the fact that students act as investigators and discoverers in CL contexts. They actively participate in activities through asking questions, making predictions, analyzing, discussing, assessing their strengths and weaknesses, interacting together, and trying to learn. Unlike their dominant role in traditional methodology, teachers tend to act as facilitators in CL, helping the students work together and work out their learning problems.

Despite the huge bulk of research evidence in support of the effectiveness of the CL techniques in improving knowledge of the different aspects of language learning, there, however, exist few studies which are inconsistent. For instance, Parveen (2003) tested the effects of cooperative learning on the achievement of 8th grade students in the subject of Social Studies and found that cooperative learning was not a more advantageous instructional strategy than the traditional teaching method. Thus, care should be exercised that the inclusion of CL in language classes calls for careful planning and carrying out of the techniques associated with the CL.

Limitations of the Study and Suggestions for Further Research

Despite the insightful findings of the study, this study, like any other research studies, had some limitations, some of which are highlighted here:

The first limitation of this study was the time constraints. Since the study was conducted over a short period of time, the proper implementation of the research was very difficult. As a result, it was difficult to manage classes in a way that the CL techniques could be applied properly. Thus, further research conducted in a longer time span would help investigate the impact of CL strategies training in language learning regarding different skills. The second limitation was the sample size. This rather small sample size (50 students) would not represent the whole population, thus it is difficult to generalize these conclusions. Further studies with larger populations should be carried out to see whether other findings will be supportive of the findings of the present study. Doing so, it is advisable for the teachers to use pairs or small groups, especially at the beginning, in order to be able to manage them and to help the students to master working in a cooperative way with small number of students first, then move to larger number of groups. Moreover, students can be given the opportunity to choose their partners instead of teacher imposing on them group combination.

APPENDIX A

English grammar pre-test, units: 4 – 7(American English File 2)

Name:.....

date:.....

1. Los Angeles iscity I have ever been to.
a) the beautifullest b) the most beautiful c) the beautifuler
2. she doesn't work Mary.
a) as hard as b) as hard than c) the hardest
3.any of his movies?
a) Did you ever seen b) Have you ever saw c) Have you ever seen
4. We're thinking ofa new office.
a) opening b) to open c) open
5. He went to the supermarket some milk.
a) getting b) to get c) get
6. Sunday is Holiday. We..... work.
a) don't have to b) must not c) don't must to
7. What will you do if youthe exam.?
a) won't pass b) will pass c) don't pass
8. If we had a yard, Ia dog.
a) would buy b) 'll buy c) bought
9. What are you going to do this weekend? I don't know. I
a) might to go away b) might go away c) may to go a way
10. You coffee late at night.
a) shouldn't to drink b) shouldn't drink c) don't should drink
11. I've known my best friend
a) since 4 years b) for 4 years c) for 2004
12. How long your car.
a) do you have b) have you c) have you had
13. He 's divorced now. But he.....for 20 years.
a) has been married b) is married c) was married
14. He..... have a lot of friends at school. He wasn't very popular.
a) didn't use to b) don't used to c) didn't used to
15. The radioBy Marconi.
a) invented b) is invented c) was invented
16. Basketball isThan soccer in the US.
a) popularer b) the most popular c) more popular
17. JohnThe dishes.
a) has already done b) have already done c) has already does
18. I don't enjoy to the movies by myself.
a) go b) going c) to go
19. If hein that hotel, it will be very expensive
a) stays b) will stay c) stay
20. If I had a car, I.....to work.
a) would drive b) will drive c) drive
21. She's been afraid of flying
a) for many years b) since many years c) for 1998
22. IAna for ages.
a) have known b) have know c) knew
23. She with his mother, but now she lives with his father.
a) used live b) use lived c) used to live
24. Jacksad, if he doesn't see you tomorrow.
a) is b) will be c) was
25. You smoke in gas station.
a) don't have to b) don't must to c) must not to

APPENDIX B

English grammar post-test, units: 4 – 7(American English File 2)

Name:..... date:.....

1.any of his movies?
a) Have you ever seen b) Have you ever saw c) Did you ever seen
2. She doesn't work Mary.
a) the hardest b) as hard than c) as hard as
3. Los Angeles iscity I have ever been to.

- a) the beautifuler b) the most beautiful c) the beautifulest
4. We're thinking ofa new office.
a) opening b) to open c) open
5. What are you going to do this weekend? I don't know .I
a) might to go away b) might go away c) may to go away
6. Sunday is Holiday. We..... work.
a) don't have to b) must not c) don't must to
- 7.What will you do if youthe exam.?
a) don't pass b) will pass c) won't pass
8. If we had a yard, Ia dog.
a) 'll buy b)would buy c) bought
9. He went to the supermarket some milk.
a) getting b) to get c) get
10. You coffee late at night.
a) shouldn't to drink b) shouldn't drink c) don't should drink
11. I've known my best friend
a) since 4 years b) for 4 years c) for 2004
12. How long your car.
a) do you have b) have you c) have you had
13. He 's divorced now.but hefor 20 years
a) was married b) is married c) has been married
14. He..... have a lot of friends at school. He wasn't very popular.
a) didn't use to b) don't used to c) didn't used to
15. If hein that hotel, it will be very expensive.
a) stay b) will stay c) stays
16. Basketball isThan soccer in the US.
a) popularer b) the most popular c) more popular
17. JohnThe dishes.
a) has already done b) have already done c) has already does
18. I don't enjoy to the movies by myself.
a) to go b) going c) go
19. The radioBy Marconi.
a) invented b) is invented c) was invented
20. If I had a car, I.....to work.
a) would drive b) will drive c) drive
21. She's been afraid of flying
a) for many years b) since many years c) for 1998
22. IAna for ages.
a) knew b) have know c) have known
23. You smoke in gas station.
a) don't have to b) don't must to c) must not to
24. Jacksad, if he doesn't see you tomorrow.
a) is b) will be c) was
25. She with his mother, but now she lives with his father.
a) used live b) use lived c) used to live

REFERENCES

- [1] Abrami, P.C., Chambers, B., Poulsen, C., DeSimone, C., d'Apollonia, S., & Howden, J. (1995). Classroom connections - Understanding and using cooperative learning, Toronto: Harcourt Brace.
- [2] Akuka, R.O., Wambugu, P. & Zephania, O. A. (2013). Effects of computer-based cooperative learning method on students' achievement in English grammar in secondary schools in Njoro district, Nakuru county, Kenya. *Education Research Journal* 3(5), pp. 121- 128.
- [3] Arbab, S. (2003). Effects of Cooperative Learning on General Science Achievement of 9th Class Students. Unpublished Master dissertation, Rawalpindi: PAF College of Education for Women.
- [4] Bentham, S. (2002). Psychology and Education. New York: Routledge.
- [5] Bibi, A. (2002). The comparative effectiveness of teaching English grammar with the help of textbook and by using group work activities. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Islamabad: Allama Iqbal Open University.
- [6] Brown, H. D. (2001). Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy. 2nd Ed. New York: Longman.
- [7] Gambrell, L. B., Malloy, J., A., & Mazzoni, S. A. (2007). Evidence –Based Best Practices for Comprehence Literacy Instruction. In Linda B. Gambrell, Lesley Mandel Morrow, Michael Pressley (Edits), *Best Practices in literacy Instructions*. London and New York: Guilford Press, pp. 11-29.

- [8] Ghaith, G. M. (2003b). The relationship between forms of instruction, achievement and perception of classroom climate. *Educational Research*, 45, pp. 83-93.
- [9] Haynes, J. (2007). Getting Started with English Language Learners. The Association for supervision and Curriculum Development.
- [10] Hernanzed, S. (2002). Team Learning in Making Marketing Principles Course: Cooperative Structure That Facilitate Active Learning and Higher Level Thinking, *Journal of Marketing Education*, 24, pp. 73-85.
- [11] Hill, J. D. & Flynn, K.M. (2006). Classroom Instruction that works with English Language Learners. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, USA.
- [12] Hohn, R. L. (2005). Learning. In Steven W. Lee (Editor), *Encyclopedia of School psychology*. pp. 283-289. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publication, Inc.
- [13] Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (1994). Learning together and alone (4th ed.), Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- [14] Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T., & Smith, K. A. (1998). Cooperative learning returns to college: What evidences is there that it works? *Change*, 30, pp. 26-35.
- [15] Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T. (2005). Cooperative learning. In Stevens W. Lee (Editor), *Encyclopedia of School psychology* (pp. 283-289). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publication, Inc.
- [16] Johnson, D. W. and Johnson, R. T. & Holubec, E. J. (1984). Circles of Learning: cooperation in the classroom. 4th Ed. North Washington: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- [17] Johnson, D., & Johnson, R., (1994). Learning together and alone, cooperative, competitive, and individualistic learning. Needham Heights, MA: Prentice-Hall.
- [18] Pachler, N. & Field, K. (2001). Learning to Teach Modern Foreign Languages. Routledge Falmer, London: Taylor & Francis Group.
- [19] Parveen, Q. (2003). An Experimental study on the effects of cooperative learning on Social Studies achievement among 8th grade students. Unpublished M.A dissertation, PAF College of Education for Women, Rawalpindi.
- [20] Slavin, R. E. (2006). Educational Psychology: theory and practice. 8th Ed. Pearson Education, Inc.
- [21] Slavin, R. E., Hurely, E.A., & Chamberlain, A. (2003). Cooperative Learning and Achievement: Theory and Research. In William M. Reynolds, Gloria E. Miller, *Handbook of Psychology: Educational Psychology*. V 7. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- [22] Stevens, J. P. (1999). Intermediate statistics: A modern approach (2nd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. Retrieved October 17, 2014, from <http://www.questia.com>.
- [23] Williams, M. & Burden, R. L. (1997). Psychology for Language Teachers: a Social Constructive Approach. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.



Abdolvahed Zarifi is currently an Assistant Professor in TESL at Yasouj University, Yasouj, Iran. He is credited with being the first PhD candidate in the history of the Faculty of Educational Studies at UPM, Malaysia, to get a Distinction for his PhD thesis in TESL. He has developed two frameworks, namely Cognitive Load Framework and Focus Framework, for the use and assessment of vocabulary items in EFL/ESL materials. He has also developed a single-item test, Zar-Test, for the identification the English phrasal verbs. He has recently been awarded the ICELT 2015 gold medal for his paper on Zar-Test. His research areas of interest include ESL/EFL teaching, story schema, textbook analysis, corpus linguistics, etc. He is particularly interested in studying the English phrasal verb combinations.



Azimeh Taghavi, is an EFL teacher in Dehdasht, Iran. She holds a master's degree in English Language Teaching. She has been teaching English to EFL learners since 2002. Her field of interest is teaching vocabulary in particular and EFL teaching in general.

On Metacognitive Strategy Use for College Students in English Listening Teaching

Lihua Tang

School of Foreign Languages of China West Normal University, Sichuan Nanchong, China

Abstract—The frequencies of low achievers' metacognitive strategy use are examined in this study and in addition, it is proposed that a metacognitive strategy training model would be effective for low achievers. For these purposes, 146 students from China West Normal University were involved in a comprehensive research. The results indicate that language high achievers and language low achievers vary considerably in metacognitive strategy use and it is necessary to carry out the metacognitive strategy training to enhance the language listening proficiency.

Index Terms—language low achievers, language high achievers, metacognitive strategies, questionnaire, listening teaching, training

I. INTRODUCTION

Most ESL/EFL learners failed to become high-achieving and self-directed learners because don't know how to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning process (Tang, 2015). That is to say they are lacking knowledge of metacognitive strategies. Different studies found that what distinguished language low achievers was the inability to choose the right strategy for the task, not the lack of appropriate strategies (Tang, 2015). Some low achievers in their study are active strategy users, but it is appeared that they often failed to apply strategies appropriately to the task at hand. Apparently, they lacked certain necessary higher-order processes which would enable them to access the task and bring to bear the necessary strategies for its completion, and we often call them metacognitive strategies or self-regulatory skills (Tang, 2015).

Metacognitive strategies are the strategies a student uses when planning, monitoring, and evaluating learning or strategy performance and they are executive in nature (Ellis, 1994). Hence, they are often referred to as self-regulatory strategies. Language low achievers often find Learning becomes difficult when there are memory problems, difficulties in following directions, sustaining attention, trouble with the visual or auditory perception of information, or visual-coordination problems resulting in an inability to perform paper and pencil a task, so learning has become a difficult and painful process. Language low achievers are often overwhelmed, disorganized and frustrated in learning situations for the presence of a learning difficulty can make learning to read, write, listen, and speak especially challenging.

In order to resolve the problems mentioned earlier and help language low achievers to develop learning autonomy and improve their listening proficiency, the present research is designed to examine the frequencies of low achievers' metacognitive strategy use and propose an effective metacognitive strategy training model targeted at low achievers (Tang, 2015). For these purposes, 146 students from China West Normal University were involved in a comprehensive research. Modified SILL questionnaire was administrated to all the participants, and 85 low achievers, divided into an experimental group and a control group, attending a one-semester metacognitive strategy training designed by the researcher herself. Data were collected and analyzed using the statistical software of SPSS and adopting such statistical technique as simple descriptive statistics and T-test. This research will provide a new perspective on metacognitive strategy training since it may be one of the few who draw attention to a long-term collective instruction of language low achievers and involve them in a systematic training program. This new perspective, together with the findings in the research, will help teachers make decision in metacognitive strategy diagnosis, students counseling, and teacher training.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. A Review of Metacognitive Strategy

Just as language learning strategies are defined as techniques, approaches and deliberate actions that learners take to improve their language competence or facilitate their language learning, and metacognition is defined as learners' awareness of their cognitive process and their ability to control those processes, so the definition of metacognitive strategies could be seen as a combination of the definition of language learning strategies and metacognition.

O'Malley et al. (1985) maintains that metacognitive strategies involve planning for learning, thinking about learning process, monitoring of comprehension or production while it is taking place, and learning self-evaluation after the language activity has been complete (Tang, 2015)d.

Oxford (1990) posits that metacognitive strategies provides a way for learners to coordinate their own learning process and they are actions which go beyond purely cognitive devices. Metacognitive strategies allow learners to control their own cognition which coordinate the learning process by using functions such as centering, arranging, planning, and evaluating (Tang, 2015).

Cohen (1998) views metacognitive strategies allow learners to control their own cognition by coordinating the planning, organizing, and evaluating of the learning process by dealing with pre-assessment and pre-planning, on-line planning and evaluation, and post-evaluation of language learning activities and of language use events (Tang, 2015).

Wenden (1999) regards by metacognitive strategies, learners can manage, direct, regulate, and guide their learning, and they include planning, monitoring, and evaluating.

According to the definition of metacognitive strategies listed above, it is clear that there are similarities and agreements in these definitions. To put it simply, metacognitive strategies are skills, approaches, and thinking and actions learners use to control their cognition and learning process (Tang, 2015).

In addition, classification and categorization of metacognitive strategies have also been given by many scholars based on cognitive theory (Brown and Palincsar 1982; Anderson 1983; Wenden and Rubin 1987; O'Malley and Chamot 1990; Oxford 1990; Ellis 1994; etc.).

Brown and Palincsar (1982) use four designators---knowing about learning, planning, monitoring, and self-evaluation to describe metacognitive strategies.

Anderson (1983) mention three kinds of metacognitive strategies: planning, selective attention, and monitoring.

Wenden (1983) identifies three categories of metacognitive strategies which she calls "self-directing strategies"—knowing about learning, planning, and self evaluation. Wenden's classification corresponds to Brown's but lacks the monitoring categorization.

Oxford's metacognitive strategy classification generally matches Wenden's but has more or less different explanation concerning some items, and is more comprehensive. Since Oxford's taxonomy of metacognitive strategies contains more special planning and advance preparation strategies like setting goals and objectives, and makes more use of metacognitive knowledge such as finding out about language learning, identifying the purpose of a language task, etc, we will base our instruction on this system.

B. Differences between Expert and Novice Learners in Using Metacognitive Strategies

There are several differences between experts and novices in using metacognitive strategies. Generally speaking experts keep checking the process during making judgments.

In the use of metacognitive strategies, We take reading as examples and see in what aspects experts and novices differ. In reading, first, experts are aware of the general goals of reading and of the specific objectives of a particular task (Rohrer & Thomas 1989). Experts spend greater time and effort on more difficult tasks and allocate their time and efforts differently to different tasks. In other words, experts typically weigh the costs of using different strategies against the benefits of the goals to be achieved (Garner 1990). In contrast, novices adjust their reading behaviors to different kinds of content or reading situations and they do not tend to read for meaning. In addition, they do not slow down for difficult passages (Rohrer and Thomas 1989). Second, experts are aware of and use "fix-it" strategies when problems occur (Dole et al. 1991). By doing so, before they become major problems difficulties are solved. In contrast, novices use by-pass strategies when they meet problems. Third, experts are more likely to use the strategy of asking questions for themselves, looking back at prior text when a difficulty occurs which are available resource. Finally, experts is more flexible in the use of strategy than that of novices in two important ways. They are more likely to adapt question-asking strategies to different kinds of texts and use different strategies in different situations. Novices, however, do not apply them spontaneously (Rohrer & Thomas 1989). They tend to apply a single strategy across contexts, even though they may know how to use some strategies, such as context clues. Thus we conclude experts are more flexible in strategy use than novices in using metacognitive strategies because experts allocate their time and effort differently for different tasks, use "fix-it" strategies when problems occur.

C. Implications from the Previous Training

First, language-learning strategies can be taught to L2 learners (Chamot et al. 1999; Cohen 1998; Oxford 1990, 1996; Wenden 1987). Learning strategy instruction can help students acquire life-long learning ability, and strategy training is a very important part of learner autonomy development and hence an integrated part of curriculum. Although the training may hinder the pace of the curriculum in a certain period of time, but its benefits will pay off in the long run.

Second, metacognitive strategy training should come earlier than the other strategies, and developing learners' awareness of autonomy and their ability to learn autonomously should be the ultimate purpose of such training. Strategies are varied ability and the students will use new strategies autonomously even without the teacher's help.

Third, in carrying out strategy training, four basic principles should be followed (Wen Qiufang 2004): The wrong conception that strategies are a "wonder drug" must be cleared out; metacognitive strategy training must be conducted earlier than other learning strategies; strategy training must be based on the premise "I want to learn"; and strategy training must be done in a systematic way.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. *Research Questions*

The present study discuss whether it is necessary to propose an effective metacognitive strategy training model targeted at low achievers by probing into the metacognitive strategy use frequency of language low achievers in college and universities.

B. *Subjects*

The subjects in this study consist of 146 second-year students of non-English majors in China West Normal University for the questionnaire. 61 are language high achievers and 85 are low achievers.

C. *Instruments*

There are two instruments involved in the research: CEE (College Entrance Examination) and Modified Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) of Oxford (1990).

IV. DESIGN OF THE NEW METACOGNITIVE STRATEGY TRAINING

A. *Framework of the Design*

First, the design of the overall program of metacognitive strategy training was carried out by making use of Oxford's (1990) eight-step model, and then the concrete long-term strategy training of language low achievers follows by conducting Cohen's SBI model. The training program implemented into teaching content lasts 43 hours, totaling the whole term. By overcoming the limitation of being unsystematic which is characteristic of long-term training, the teacher has complete autonomy in the class arrangement and syllabus design in the process of the course. Besides, the collective instruction will suffice for an ideal result as far as the form of training organization is concerned because almost all the remedial students bear very similar features—low strategy use frequency, poor performance, yet comparatively high instrumental motivation to pass CET-4 and final English exam (Tang, 2015).

Besides the teacher's sole responsibility (i.e. carrying out the first six steps of the overall strategy design), the curricular metacognitive strategy training in the present research undergoes three stages: strategy assessment and awareness training; the actual SBI practice (i.e. conducting the explicit training in overall program design); strategy training evaluation and revision (i.e. the last two steps in overall program design).

B. *Strategy Assessment and Awareness Training*

The first step involves identifying and diagnosing the students' strategies they are already using to make the training program effective. In this research, the modified version of Oxford's (1990) SILL is employed as the assessment tool because it is "a valuable diagnostic tool" (Ellis 1994) (Tang, 2015).

When conducting the survey, the teacher explains to the students that they will be completing the SILL based on their own language learning experiences and explains how they are to take the survey. After the completion, the teacher has the students compare their results in small groups so that the students can share their personal strategy use profiles, and then provides them with the results of the teacher's assessment. From the survey, it can be seen that compared with LHAs, LLAs exhibit much lower strategy use in terms of the metacognitive strategies.

After the assessment, the teacher goes on with awareness training which will focus on improving language low achievers' metacognitive ability to plan, monitor and evaluate their studies (Tang, 2015). In this training, two forms of awareness training are introduced into the program and carried out at two different stages. In the first stage, the awareness training is conducted in a general way, that is, learners do not have to use metacognitive strategies in on-the-spot language tasks. Then let them compare the outcomes before and after using the metacognitive strategies. Such kind of training is very important because it is the learners' introduction to the concept of metacognitive strategies. In the second stage, self-evaluation and discussions are respectively employed. Self-evaluation activities are conducted on order to enhance students' knowledge of one's own present language proficiency; and discussions are held to provide students with knowledge of metacognitive strategies. Students are asked to discuss study goals and make study plans. Such an explicit instruction on how to apply language learning strategies as part of the foreign language curriculum is the most effective way to heighten learners' strategy awareness.

C. *Overall Program Design*

Following Oxford's eight-step model, and taking the actual condition of subjects into account, the overall program design for the present research is now presented, with some steps being stressed while some others briefed (Wenden, 2002). The first five steps are for planning and preparation, with the responsibility mainly on the teacher's side. The middle two steps involve conducting and evaluating, requiring the participation of both the teacher and the students. The last step is for revising the training program, which is the teacher's responsibility.

Step 1: Find out the students' needs and the time available

The learners who receive training in the research are second-year college students (Wenden, 2015). They failed in their CEE and CET-4 in January 2005, and have to attend the remedial English course for a whole term. They are anxious about their learning performance and eager to make progress and pass the required exam, yet they do not work hard enough and do not know how to improve their study methods. Even some of them expect some miracles to occur.

They are using all the metacognitive strategies, but their frequency is very low. As for the time span, the training program lasts a whole semester of 43 hours (Wenden, 2015).

Step 2: Select strategies well.

According to the results of the study, the teacher selects the metacognitive strategies related to the needs and characteristics of the learners, that is, strategies in which the language low achievers are deficient (Wenden, 2015). Identifying the strategies to be trained is not an easy job. The strategies selected must be appropriate to the characteristics of low achievers and be of potential value to the completion of language tasks at educational settings. After the selection, the teacher decides to center on the training of these strategies.

Step 3: Consider integrations of strategy training

In order to make the learners better understand how the strategies can be used in a meaningful context, the teacher integrates strategy training into concrete learning tasks and materials concerning listening, reading, speaking and writing. SBI provides hands-on practice with and reinforcement of the strategies during authentic language learning tasks (Wenden, 2015).

Step 4: Consider motivational issues

These low achievers' motivation is heightened because, on the one hand, they want to be higher achievers and, on other hand, they are interested in participating in the training (Wenden, 2015).

Step 5: Prepare materials and activities

In the training, the teacher designs the strategies-based instructional materials. All these materials reflect the typical kinds of learning tasks that are included in the program. In addition, these materials include awareness-raising, as well as strategy training, practice and reinforcement activities (Wenden, 2015).

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. A Comparison of Metacognitive Strategy Use Frequency between Language High Achievers and Language Low Achievers

Table 1 gives us the details of the differences in metacognitive strategy use between language high and low achievers.

TABLE 1:
A COMPARISON OF METACOGNITIVE STRATEGY USE FREQUENCY BETWEEN LHAS AND LLAS: A T-TEST A T-TEST

Variables	Mean of H	SD of H	Mean of L	SD of L	t	p
Overall strategies	3.22	0.520	2.10	0.470	7.2439	0.0000
1	2.79	0.621	1.85	0.576	4.355	0.0000
2	2.5	1.061	1.52	0.918	4.2604	0.0000
3	2.70	0.811	1.72	0.684	3.7468	0.0002
4	3.21	1.170	2.52	1.114	0.8781	0.3794
5	3.47	0.441	2.21	0.556	6.3984	0.0000
6	3.15	0.487	2.11	0.571	6.411	0.001
7	3.10	1.031	2.52	1.086	1.224	0.3244
8	3.11	0.851	2.64	0.610	0.9861	0.3251
9	3.61	0.624	1.93	0.763	6.9432	0.0000
10	3.24	0.780	2.30	1.063	3.6447	0.0004
11	2.72	1.114	2.17	1.134	6.9437	0.0000
12	3.07	0.657	1.72	0.655	5.6447	0.0000
13	3.65	0.554	2.44	0.594	7.7445	0.0000
14	3.61	0.602	2.24	0.745	8.0662	0.0000
15	3.53	0.764	2.54	0.845	4.2094	0.0000
16	3.41	0.787	2.47	0.810	4.878	0.0000
17	3.75	0.741	2.40	0.772	4.795	0.0001
18	3.49	0.887	2.45	0.714	4.287	0.0000

Note: H represents LHAs (61 persons), U represents LLAs (105 persons)

As is shown in Table 1, language high achievers use the metacognitive strategies more frequently than language low achievers. There is a statistically significant difference between language high achievers and language low achievers ($p=0.0000$), with the mean value of the former much higher than that of the latter (Tang, 2015).

B. Metacognitive Strategy Use Frequency between the Experimental Group and Control Group before Training

TABLE 2:
COMPARISON OF METACOGNITIVE STRATEGY USE FREQUENCY BETWEEN THE
EXPERIMENTAL GROUP AND THE CONTROL GROUP: BEFORE TRAINING

Variables	Mean of E	SD of E	Mean of C	SD of C	t	p
Overall strategies	2.21	0.527	2.16	0.430	1.4675	0.1441
1	2.17	0.642	2.01	0.510	0.9893	0.3230
2	1.81	0.990	1.82	0.882	2.2558	0.7969
3	1.91	0.780	1.86	0.602	0.1064	0.9137
4	2.81	1.107	2.27	1.082	2.3183	0.0210
5	2.14	0.624	2.14	0.484	1.5645	0.1195
6	2.10	0.473	2.11	0.246	1.474	0.112
7	2.25	1.081	2.34	1.065	1.8613	0.0643
8	2.34	0.724	2.13	0.505	0.6161	0.5378
9	2.10	0.837	1.90	0.699	0.9820	0.3264
10	2.17	1.021	2.21	1.090	1.3551	0.1570
11	2.26	1.203	2.21	1.073	1.1386	0.2561
12	1.88	0.732	1.77	0.575	1.3300	0.1818
13	2.31	0.576	2.38	0.602	1.2341	0.2186
14	2.36	0.581	2.41	0.717	1.0639	0.2784
15	2.26	0.782	2.37	0.896	0.9902	0.3219
16	2.13	0.146	2.12	0.787	0.7879	0.1378
17	1.88	0.185	2.40	0.795	0.7732	0.2374
18	1.78	0.474	1.87	0.754	0.7214	0.1147

Note: E represents the experimental group, C represents the control group.

Before training, experimental group and the control group do not have statistically significant differences in the metacognitive strategies use. The two groups also show no statistically significant differences in all the strategy categories. All this shows that the strategy use frequencies between the two groups are very identical (Tang, 2015).

C. Metacognitive Strategy Use Frequency between the Experimental Group and Control Group after Training

TABLE 3:
COMPARISON OF METACOGNITIVE STRATEGY USE FREQUENCY BETWEEN THE
EXPERIMENTAL GROUP AND THE CONTROL GROUP AFTER TRAINING: AFTER TRAINING

Variables	Mean of E	SD of E	Mean of C	SD of C	t	p
Overall strategies	2.11	0.427	2.16	0.331	1.4575	0.1431
1	2.14	0.642	2.01	0.510	0.9892	0.3231
2	1.80	0.993	1.82	0.872	2.2457	0.7964
3	1.80	0.783	1.88	0.603	0.1064	0.9037
4	2.81	1.104	2.27	1.080	2.3184	0.0213
5	2.12	0.624	2.15	0.485	1.5635	0.1195
6	2.07	0.414	2.13	0.412	1.334	0.770
7	2.26	1.081	2.35	1.067	1.8603	0.0645
8	2.34	0.722	2.16	0.506	0.6161	0.5378
9	2.18	0.821	1.92	0.699	0.9830	0.3264
10	2.17	1.021	2.20	1.080	1.3451	0.1770
11	2.28	1.202	2.22	1.073	1.1386	0.2541
12	1.82	0.731	1.79	0.567	1.3400	0.1718
13	2.34	0.562	2.39	0.601	1.2341	0.2186
14	2.36	0.581	2.40	0.707	1.0639	0.2884
15	2.22	0.781	2.38	0.899	0.9822	0.3119
16	1.78	0.447	2.14	0.747	0.867	0.1271
17	2.45	0.757	2.17	0.741	0.757	0.2375
18	2.17	0.648	2.02	0.701	0.701	0.4544

Note: E stands for the experimental group; C stands for the control group

Table 3 shows the use differences in respect of the overall 18 strategies between the experimental group and the control group after training. From table 3 we can find that after the metacognitive strategy training there is an great increasing in low achievers' positive emotional factors in the experimental class. Low achievers have a correct learning motivation and confidence in learning English; the relationship between teachers and students increased. Their positive metacognitive factors increase significantly. Therefore, use of metacognitive strategies has a significant effect on English listening teaching in college; it can conduct an active atmosphere of classroom, and reduce anxiety and inhibition and then enhance the students' learning motivation. From the table four we can draw a conclusion, without the metacognitive teaching, the students' metacognitive factors of control class were stable, on the contrary, the whole experimental class' positive factors were raised. So we can see that metacognitive strategy could improve students' emotional factors and low achievers will benefit more from it.

D. The Language Proficiency between the Experimental Group and the Control Group after Training

TABLE4:
DIFFERENCES IN LISTENING COMPREHENSION IN CET-4 BEFORE AND AFTER TRAINING

Time	Mean of E	SD of E	Mean of C	SD of C	t	p
Before-training scores	75.58	7.109	45.31	6.512	0.4008	0.4024
After-training scores	149.54	5.153	40.40	6.024	3.3235	0.0005

Note: E stands for the experimental group; C stands for the control group

By table 4 it can be seen that, after the training, there appears statistically significant difference in CET-4 scores between the experimental group and the control group ($p=0.0006$), with the former's proficiency much higher than the latter's. However, there is no statistically significant difference between the two before the training. This improved proficiency can be correlated with the training of metacognitive strategies (Tang, 2015).

VI. CONCLUSION

In respect of the overall strategy use, there is a statistically significant difference between language high achievers and language low achievers. Language high achievers use the overall strategies more frequently than language low achievers with the mean value of the former much higher than that of the latter (Tang, 2015). So it has been concluded that strategy training can enhance the use of metacognitive strategies and academic progress of the language low achievers. After training, the experimental group exhibits statistically significant differences from the control group in the overall metacognitive strategies (Tang, 2015). Its strategy use frequencies including the three strategy group and eight of eleven strategy categories are much higher than the control group. After training there appears significant difference in proficiency between the experimental group and control group, and the training program has resulted in the increased use of metacognitive strategies and the improved proficiency (Tang, 2015).

In metacognitive strategy training, the teacher's role is expanded from the traditional instructional and managerial function (Wright, 1987) to the more demanding role of providing learners with more opportunities to make learning a life-long and autonomous process (Yang, 1998). Zhuang Zhilin (1999) notes four issues that teacher should demonstrate to learners: what, why, when and how. In explicit teaching of metacognitive strategies, teacher should first make known the content to be learned with explanation of purpose. Then, the potential benefits in learning should be clarified so as to ensure positive response and active involvement on the part of learner. In addition, the teacher should also exemplify the situation in which a given strategy is applicable, so that learners can be informed of when the strategy can be used. Lastly, the teacher should model the use of certain strategies in a given situation. To achieve effective training, the teacher is no longer merely an information provider. As we have mentioned in the section of teacher training, the teacher should be termed as a "strategic teacher" (Jones et al., 1987, cited in O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Wenden makes two general suggestions for the extension of teacher role in language training in her review on metacognitive knowledge and language learning: "(1) Teacher should try to gain an understanding of their learner's beliefs and acquired knowledge about language learning. (2) Teachers should also aim to help language learners develop a more reflective and self-directed approach to learning their new language" (1998). The first suggestion, gathering information about learners' metacognitive knowledge, is the preparation for the second suggestion, which concerns specific procedures to carry out awareness raising tasks with an aim at autonomous learning. In the first stage, the teacher should also assess learners' beliefs and attitudes towards language learning in addition to the traditional role that is focused on the diagnosis of students' linguistic proficiency. For example, what are students' views on some problematic tasks? Why don't some students take an active part in learning while others are highly motivated and learn independently? All these kinds of information can make up a profile of learners' metacognitive knowledge, and it is very important before any steps are taken in learner training. At the second stage, teacher role should not only include the provision of instruction that helps to improve learners' linguistic and communicative competence, but also include directions on enlarging knowledge about language learning. Careful and systematic task design is needed. Materials should also be well adapted to provide learners with opportunities to develop and improve their network of concepts about language learning.

REFERENCES

- [1] Cohen, A.D. (2000). *Strategies in learning and using a second language*. Harlow, Essex: Longman.
- [2] Gougey, A. (1999). *Metacognition in basic skills instruction*. Netherlands: Kluwer Academic publisher.
- [3] Hismanoglu, M. (2000). Language Learning Strategies in Foreign Language Learning and Teaching. *The Internet TESL Journal*, (Vol8.): 12-16.
- [4] Liu Runqing. (2010). What can we learn from the good language learner, *Foreign Language World*, 10(2): 34-37.
- [5] Nuttall.C. (2002). *Teaching Reading Skills In a Foreign Language*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Teaching Press.
- [6] Oxford, R.L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. Newbury House/Harper Collins, NY.
- [7] Rubin. (2000). Special Education for the Twenty-First Century. *TESOL Quarterly*, 9: 21-23.
- [8] Lihua, Tang. (2015). A Study of Metacognitive Strategy Training for College Language Low Achievers. *Studies in Literature and Language*, 10(6): 96-101
- [9] Vann, R.and Abraham, R. (1990). Strategies of unsuccessful language learners. *TESOL Quarterly*, 24(2): 45-49
- [10] Wenden, A. (2002). Learner development in language learning. *Applied Linguistics* 23:32-55.
- [11] Williams, M. and R. L. Burden. (2000). *Psychology for language teachers*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research

Press.

Lihua Tang was born in Sichuan, China in 1979. She received her B.A. degree in linguistics from China West Normal University, China in 2006. Her research interests include foreign language learning and teaching.

Identifying Young Learners' Learning Styles among Iranian EFL Learners

Noushin Asadipiran

Department of Foreign Language, Bandar Abbas Branch, Islamic Azad University, Bandar Abbas, Iran

Abstract—The purpose of this study was to identify preferred perceptual learning styles of Iranian young learners. To accomplish this aim, a Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire (PLSPQ) used to measure the students' preferred learning styles. The participants of the current study were 60 high school students. They were first-year high school male students studying in Tehran, Iran. The analysis of data revealed that the most preferred learning style was visual learning style (30% of the participants), and the less preferred one was group learning style (5%). The second to fifth place belonged to tactile (25%), auditory (20%), individual (15%) and kinesthetic (10%) learning style, respectively.

Index Terms—learning styles, Iranian young learners, PLSPQ, EFL

I. INTRODUCTION

There are many factors that affect students' learning that some of them are specified to individual learners. Different students have different preferred learning styles to perceive, process, take in and understand information. Being aware of students preferred learning style is lucrative for both teachers to decide on their teaching styles and students to decide on the learning strategies more suit their dominant learning style. Soo (1999) emphasized on practices that students prefer to do and corroborate this fact that "differences in learners' learning styles affect the learning environment by either supporting or inhibiting their intentional cognition and active engagement" (p. 289).

Each student has his/her own learning preferences, and as Brooks (1997) explained, all strategies do not work for all student and some of them are strength in a strategy but some may be weak in the same one (cited in Wade, 1990). These weaknesses and strengths are referred to as learning preferences or learning styles. Although learning styles just show their learning preferences, and it does not mean that it categorizes learners into separate categories, but the consideration of learning styles is important in professional teaching.

As different people possess different characteristics, so they learn in different ways that known as learning styles. Learning style defined as "A term that describes the variations among learners in using one or more senses to understand, organize, and retain experience" (Reid, 1987, p. 89). More deeply, Felder and Henriques (1995, p. 21) explained it as "the ways in which an individual characteristically acquires, retains and retrieves information".

Sensory or perceptual learning style depends on the physical environment in which learning occurs by using senses to perceive data and it is defined as a preference for auditory, visual or tactile learning modalities (Dunn, Dunn & Price, 1975; Jhaish, 2010). Sarasin (1998) claimed that perceptual perspective considers aspects of different learning style theories by synthesizing their characteristics into an approach based on behaviors and/or actions of classroom situation.

Some of the fundamental characteristics of different learning styles are proposed by Reid (1995). These fundamentals are stated below:

- Every person possess a learning style
- Learning styles are in wide continuums
- They are value-neutral
- Students must be encouraged to "stretch" their learning styles
- Often, students' strategies are linked to their learning styles;
- Students need to be aware of their learning strengths and weaknesses

Recognizing the learning style of non-native English speakers is also beneficial for a range of stakeholders who involve in EFL or ESL teaching and learning. Reid (1987), as one of the pioneer researchers of preferred learning style stated that "identifying the learning styles preferences of non-native speakers (NNSs) may have wide-ranging implications in the areas of curriculum design, materials development, student orientation, and teacher training" (p. 88).

So, the current paper attempts to identify the preferred perceptual learning styles (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile, individual and group learning styles) of Iranian young learners (first year high school male students).

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

There are many years that scholars search how mind function, how it process new information, and how is affected by any learner's perception. These studies eventuated to form the concept of individuals preferred learning style. Some

studies have already done to explore the learners' learning style preferences worldwide and in the EFL context of Iran. Some of them are mentioned below:

Witkin (1962) was the pioneer of learning style studies proposing that individuals may possess analytic (i.e., field independence) or global predisposition to information processing (i.e., field dependence). After that, many studies conducted to investigate different dimensions of learning style. Eight out of 20 style dimensions distinguished by Oxford and Anderson (1995) as important learning styles. Among these, (sensory or physiological) preferences figure prominently and are primarily related to how we take in information. They include visual, auditory, kinesthetic and tactile dimensions.

Karthigeyan and Nirmala (2013) conducted a study on learning style preference of English language learners through identifying the preferred learning style of higher secondary school learners considering some factors as gender, locality, nature of school board and class context. The participants of the study were 582 higher secondary school students composed of boy and girl, rural and urban students from state school board and matriculation school board. The instruments used in this study the PLSPQ developed by Joy Reid. The students' perceptual learning style preferences were categorized based on their demographic variables. Based on the calculated frequencies of the questionnaire, the most dominant preferred learning styles were visual, and auditory and the less dominant ones were kinesthetic and individual learning styles.

Naserieh and Anani Sarab (2013) was explored the frequency of learning style preferences of graduate participants and the role of gender, age, discipline, and proficiency level. The participants were selected randomly through two-stage sampling. The PLSPQ questionnaire was administered and slightly modified. The findings showed that they preferred kinesthetic and tactile learning styles and dispreferred group learning style. Gender, age, and field of study seemed to exert an influence on learning styles.

Pourhossein Gilakjani (2012) purposed to understand the effect of learning styles on the teaching process. The participants were 100 (40 male and 60 female) Iranian EFL university students of English majoring in Language Translation Department. They were aged 23 to 28. The participants were Iranian translation university students. A Lickert questionnaire was used to collect data. The results showed that about 50% preferred visual, 35% auditory, 15% kinaesthetic learning style.

Saylağ (2011) aimed to discover EFL participants' perceptual learning styles (visual, verbal, aural, physical, logical, social and solitary) through an inventory and interview. The results declared that 60% of the participants possess visual learning style as the majority, 20% of them possess audio learning styles and the rest 20% chose each three learning styles in equal proportion.

Shirani Bidabadi and Yamat (2010) conducted a study to find the students' learning styles preferences. The participants were 62 Iranian university students. The instrument used to collect data was a Learning Style Questionnaire. The results showed that the highest mean value belonged to "communicative learning style" while the lowest belonged to analytical type of learning.

Dunn and Dunn (1977) found that only 20-30% of school-age children appear to be auditory learners, that 40% are visual, and that the remaining 30-40% are tactile/kinesthetic, visual/tactile, or some other combinations (as cited in Saylağ, 2015).

III. METHOD

A. Participants

The participants of the current study were an intact group of students selected based on convenience sampling. The participants were first-year high school male students studying in North Khorasan schools of Iran who enrolled in a required English course, 'English for High School Students'. As for the course schedule, it was a semester-long course meeting four hours per week for 16 weeks. The compulsory textbook for them was 'English Book 1' by Birjandi, Norouzi and Mahmoodi (2014).

The participants prior to data collection were 60 high school EFL learners that all were male. Their ages ranged from 14 to 15. This course was the one that followed the English lessons they already had in guidance school, so they had the sufficient information that was needed to pass this semester, at least in terms of grammar. All of their conditions as their age range, the textbook in use, number of the sessions, and the course instructor were the same for all the participants. Moreover, the level of proficiency of all three groups was the same.

The participants in all three groups were completely aware that they were participating in a research study, and they were informed about the purpose and procedures of the research. They also knew that their tests' scores would neither be disclosed nor affect their course grades.

B. Instrumentation

The instrumentation used in this study included a PLSPQ (Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire). The mentioned questionnaire included 30 randomly ordered statements and its aim was to divide the students into six learning styles (Five statements on each learning style): Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic, Tactile, Individual, and Group. The Likert-type questionnaire including five-point questions, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Reid (1987) reported that the PLSPQ was normalized and the "validation of the questionnaire was done by the split-half

method. Correlation analysis of an original set of 60 statements (ten per learning style) determined which five statements should remain within each subset” (p. 92). The questionnaire was translated into Persian and piloted by Naserieh and Anani Sarab (2013). The validation of the questionnaire was calculated (73%). PLSPQ is presented in Appendix A.

C. Procedures

First, the translated version distributed among the participants of the current study and it took 20 minutes for them to complete the whole items. In analyzing the data of the questionnaire, the frequency and percentage of each item were calculated and then the frequency and the percentage for each item were given. Then, the students were divided into one of the six groups of perceptual learning styles (Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic, Tactile, Individual, and Group) based on the dominant frequency of answers.

IV. RESULTS

This section aims at providing an in-depth interpretation of the results as to how the collected data can help to answer the problem proposed in this study. It must be mentioned that in the questionnaire, the questions 16, 11, 14, 25, and 26 represent tactile learning style. The items 19, 2, 8, 22, and 15 represent kinesthetic learning style. The items 6, 10, 12, 24, and 29 represent visual learning style. The items 1, 9, 17, 20, and 7 represent auditory learning style. The items 13, 18, 27, 28, and 30 represent individual learning style. And finally, the questions 3, 4, 5, 21, and 23 represent group learning style. The following table (Table 1) shows the dispersion of the questionnaire’s questions related to their specific learning style:

TABLE 1.
DISPERSION OF QUESTIONS RELATED TO THEIR SPECIFIC LEARNING STYLE

Learning styles	Questions
Visual	6, 10, 12, 24, 29
Auditory	1, 9, 17, 20, 7
Kinesthetic	19, 2, 8, 22, 15
Tactile	16, 11, 14, 25, 26
Individual	13, 18, 27, 28, 30
Group	3, 4, 5, 21, 23

The data collected from the questionnaire was analyzed in relation to the purpose of the study using SPSS to conduct frequencies and percentages. The results are presented in Table 2. Below:

TABLE 2.
FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF PARTICIPANTS' ANSWERS TO PLSPQ (PERCEPTUAL LEARNING STYLE PREFERENCE QUESTIONNAIRE)

Participants' Responses										
Items	1_Never		2_Rarely		3_Sometimes		4_Usually		5_Always	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	20	%33.3	28	%46.6	1	%1.6	3	%5	8	%13.3
2	19	%31.6	23	%38.3	1	%1.6	2	%3.3	3	%5
3	22	%36.6	35	%58.3	0	0%	1	%1.6	2	%3.3
4	20	%33.3	37	%61.6	0	0%	0	0%	3	%5
5	19	%31.6	38	%63.3	1	%1.6	0	0%	2	%3.3
6	19	%31.6	20	%33.3	4	%6.6	6	%10	11	%18.3
7	18	%30	30	%50	2	%3.3	5	%8.3	5	%8.3
8	15	%25	27	%45	0	0%	3	%5	3	%5
9	15	%25	33	%55	1	%1.6	3	%5	8	%13.3
10	17	%28.3	22	%36.6	2	%3.3	5	%8.3	14	%23.3
11	22	%36.6	23	%38.3	2	%3.3	4	%6.6	9	%15
12	18	%30	21	%35	1	%1.6	4	%6.6	16	%26.6
13	26	%43.3	25	%41.6	2	%3.3	2	%3.3	5	%8.3
14	20	%33.3	25	%41.6	1	%1.6	6	%10	8	%13.3
15	20	%33.3	24	%40	1	%1.6	1	%1.6	4	%6.6
16	19	%31.6	26	%43.3	3	%5	4	%6.6	8	%13.3
17	16	%26.6	32	%53.3	3	%5	2	%3.3	7	%11.6
18	20	%33.3	31	%51.6	0	0%	1	%1.6	8	%13.3
19	19	%31.6	25	%41.6	0	0%	2	%3.3	4	%6.6
20	17	%28.3	31	%51.6	3	%5	3	%5	6	%10
21	28	%46.6	29	%48.3	1	%1.6	0	0%	2	%3.3
22	21	%35	23	%38.3	1	%1.6	1	%1.6	4	%6.6
23	20	%33.3	37	%61.6	1	%1.6	1	%1.6	1	%1.6
24	15	%25	24	%40	4	%6.6	6	%10	11	%18.3
25	21	%35	24	%40	1	%1.6	5	%8.3	9	%15
26	20	%33.3	25	%41.6	3	%5	2	%3.3	10	%16.6
27	22	%36.6	29	%48.3	1	%1.6	1	%1.6	7	%11.6
28	18	%30	33	%55	0	0%	0	0%	9	%15
29	12	%20	27	%45	6	%10	7	%11.6	8	%13.3
30	21	%35	30	%50	0	0%	2	%3.3	7	%11.6

The above table showed the frequencies and percentages of participants' answers in terms of Lickert answers (never, rarely, sometimes, usually, and always). Analyzing the results showed that higher number of participants answered the questions related to visual learning style (6, 10, 12, 24, and 29) positively. It means that about 30% of them answered: sometimes, usually, and always to these questions. The answers' to the questions related to tactile learning style (11, 14, 16, 25, and 26) showed that this kind of learning style is in favor of 25% of the participants. In the third place, the answers' to the questions related to auditory learning style (1, 7, 9, 17, and 20) showed that this kind of learning style is in favor of 20% of the participants. In the fourth place, the answers' to the questions related to individual learning style (13, 18, 27, 28, and 30) showed that this kind of learning style is in favor of 15% of the participants. In the fifth place, the answers' to the questions related to kinesthetic learning style (2, 8, 15, 19, and 22) showed that this kind of learning style is in favor of 10% of the participants. Finally, the lowest frequencies and percentages to the answers' to the questions related to group learning style (3, 4, 5, 21, and 23) showed that this kind of learning style is in favor of 5% of the participants. The data also analyzed through calculating means and standard deviations for each kind of learning style. The results are presented in following.

The means and standard deviations for each kind of learning style presented in the following table (Table 3):

TABLE 3.
PERCEPTUAL LEARNING STYLE PREFERENCE OF STUDENTS

Learning styles	Mean	Standard deviation
Visual	22.15	5.2
Auditory	20.13	6.1
Kinesthetic	18.13	3.5
Tactile	20.53	3.2
Individual	19.89	3.6
Group	16.67	6.6

When the responses that the participants gave to the questionnaire were analyzed, comparing the means (in the above table) showed that the most preferred learning style was visual learning style, and the less preferred one was group learning style. The second place belonged to tactile learning style, the third place to auditory learning style, the fourth learning style to individual learning style and the fifth place to kinesthetic learning style.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

As mentioned earlier, the current research was to identify preferred perceptual learning styles of Iranian young learners. Based on the results of the current study, some conclusions can be presented for each research question:

According to the findings of the current study, the frequency analysis, it was discovered that the most preferred learning style was visual one which is followed by tactile learning style and then auditory, individual and kinesthetic learning styles. The participants' least preferred learning style is group learning style. Theoretically, the findings of the present study generally provide positive support for the significant role of perceptual learning styles in teaching and learning process. Being compatible with students' learning styles helps to create purpose in the classroom situation that will heighten motivation and enhance students' and teachers' interest and performance.

In practice, it means by increasing students' and teachers' motivation and interest through providing stimulating and appealing tasks and materials that suit more to the way they perceive input, it can push students toward better, autonomous and self-regulated learning. In other words, knowing the learning style can also be very supportive in the individualized instruction of the students to plan and make better use of their study time and learning strategies.

The findings of the present research are in line with the results of the study conducted by Carbo (1983) and found visual and auditory as the most preferred learning styles. It is in line with Naserieh and Anani Sarab's (2013) study which found group learning style as the most disfavored one. It is also compatible with the findings of Karthigeyan and Nirmala (2013) that also used PLSPQ and found that the most dominant preferred learning style of their participants was visual. Saylağ (2011) also found that 60% of participants preferred visual learning style that is similar to our results. Pourhossein Gilakjani (2012) also reached 50% of participants prefer visual learning style and 15% prefer kinesthetic learning style that are similar to our findings. Our results are in contrast to the results of the study carried out by Shirani Bidabadi and Yamat (2010) and found communicative learning style as the dominant preferred learning style of their participants.

The findings of the current study will be helpful for teachers to fit their teaching styles to their students' learning styles; students to be aware of the role of their preferred learning style on their language learning; curriculum designers to consider changes of learning environments and its impact on teaching and learning pedagogy.

As already stated, this study was carried out among the male first-grade high school students. Further studies can be done among high school students studying in other grades, university students or foreign language institutes learners. Indeed, conducting a similar study with a greater number of students and containing both male and female participants is suggested.

APPENDIX

Translated Perceptual Learning Style Preference Questionnaire (PLSPQ)

پرسشنامه‌ی سبک‌های یادگیری زبان انگلیسی

1=هرگز

2=بندرت

3=گاهی

4=معمولاً

5=همیشه

1- وقتی معلم دستورالعمل فعالیتی را توضیح می‌دهد، بهتر می‌فهمم.
2- ترجیح می‌دهم با انجام فعالیت‌های عملی در کلاس مطالب را یاد بگیرم.
3- در کلاس وقتی به صورت گروهی کار می‌کنم، کار بیشتری انجام می‌دهم.
4- وقتی به صورت گروهی درس می‌خوانم، بیشتر یاد می‌گیرم.
5- در کلاس وقتی به صورت گروهی کار می‌کنم، مطالب را بهتر از همیشه یاد می‌گیرم.
6- وقتی معلم مطلبی را روی تخته می‌نویسد و من آن را می‌خوانم، آن مطلب را بهتر یاد می‌گیرم.
7- وقتی کسی (مثلاً معلم) به من می‌گوید که چگونه فعالیتی درسی را انجام بدهم، آن فعالیت را بهتر یاد می‌گیرم.
8- وقتی تدریس با کار عملی همراه باشد، بهتر یاد می‌گیرم.
9- آنچه را که در کلاس شنیده‌ام بهتر به خاطر می‌سپارم تا آنچه را که خوانده‌ام.
10- وقتی دستورالعمل فعالیت‌ها را می‌خوانم، آن‌ها را بهتر به خاطر می‌سپارم.
11- وقتی نکات آموزشی را به مدلی عملی تبدیل می‌کنم، آن‌ها را بیشتر یاد می‌گیرم.
12- وقتی دستورالعمل فعالیتی را می‌خوانم، آن فعالیت را بهتر می‌فهمم.
13- وقتی به تنهایی مطالعه می‌کنم، مطالب را بهتر به خاطر می‌سپارم.
14- وقتی پروژه‌ای کلاسی را انجام می‌دهم، بیشتر یاد می‌گیرم.
15- با انجام کارهای عملی در کلاس، از یادگیری لذت می‌برم.
16- هنگام مطالعه، وقتی مطالب را به صورت تصویری (مثلاً نمودار و جدول) منعکس می‌کنم، آن‌ها را بهتر یاد می‌گیرم.
17- وقتی معلم مطلبی را توضیح می‌دهد، بهتر یاد می‌گیرم.
18- وقتی فعالیتی را به تنهایی انجام می‌دهم، بهتر یاد می‌گیرم.
19- وقتی در یک مکالمه نقشی را بازی می‌کنم، مطالب را بهتر می‌فهمم.
20- وقتی در کلاس درس به کسی (مثلاً معلم) گوش می‌دهم، بهتر یاد می‌گیرم.
21- وقتی تکلیفی را با دو یا سه همکلاسی انجام می‌دهم، بیشتر از آن لذت می‌برم.
22- وقتی موارد کاربرد مطالب آموزشی را عملاً انجام می‌دهم، آنچه را که یاد گرفته‌ام بهتر به خاطر می‌سپارم.
23- ترجیح می‌دهم با دیگران درس بخوانم.
24- با خواندن مطالب، آن‌ها را بهتر یاد می‌گیرم تا با شنیدن آن‌ها.
25- از انجام پروژه‌های کلاسی لذت می‌برم.
26- وقتی در فعالیت‌های مرتبط با درس شرکت می‌کنم، بهتر از همیشه یاد می‌گیرم.
27- فعالیت‌های کلاسی را به تنهایی بهتر انجام می‌دهم.
28- ترجیح می‌دهم به تنهایی روی پروژه‌ها کار کنم.
29- با خواندن کتاب‌های درسی بیشتر یاد می‌گیرم تا اینکه به توضیحات معلم گوش دهم.
30- ترجیح می‌دهم به تنهایی کار کنم.

REFERENCES

- [1] Birjandy, P., Noroozi, M., & Mahmoodi, G. (2014). English Book 2. Tehran: Textbook Publishing Company of Iran.
- [2] Brooks, M., Hamann, L., & Vetter, M. (1997). Improving Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary Development in At-Risk Students. Unpublished Master's Thesis, Saint Xavier University.
- [3] Carbo, M. (1983). Research in reading and learning style: Implications for exceptional children. *Exceptional Children*, 49(6), 486-494.
- [4] Dunn, R., Dunn, K., & Price, G. E. (1977). Diagnosing learning styles: A prescription for avoiding malpractice suits. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 418-420.
- [5] Felder, R. M., & Henriques, E. R. (1995). Learning and teaching styles in foreign and second language education. *Foreign Language Annals*, 28(1), 21-31.
- [6] Jhaish, M. A. (2010). The Relationship among Learning Styles, Language Learning Strategies, and the Academic Achievement among the English Majors at Al-Aqsa University.
- [7] Karthigeyan, K., & Nirmala, K. (2013). Learning style preference of English language learners. *Educationia Confab*, 134.
- [8] Naserieh, F., & Anani Sarab, M. R. (2013). Perceptual learning style preferences among Iranian graduate students. *System*, 41(1), 122-133.

- [9] Oxford, R. L., & Anderson, N. J. (1995). A crosscultural view of learning styles. *Language teaching*, 28(04), 201-215.
- [10] Pourhossein Gilakjani, A. (2012). A match or mismatch between learning styles of the learners and teaching styles of the teachers. *International Journal of Modern Education and Computer Science (IJMECS)*, 4(11), 51.
- [11] Reid, J. (1987). The Learning Style Preferences of ESL Students. *TESOL Quarterly*, 21, 87-111.
- [12] Reid, J. M. (1995). *Learning Styles in the ESL/EFL Classroom*. Heinle & Heinle Publishers, International Thomson Publishing Book Distribution Center, 7625 Empire Drive, Florence, KY 41042.
- [13] Sarasin L.C., (1998). *Learning style perspectives: impact in the classroom*. Madison, WI: Atwood. Created by May Ying Chau at Oregon State University ©2008.
- [14] Saylağ, S. (2015). *Kentsel Ağlar Ve Kentsel Strüktür Üzerindeki Etkileri* (Doctoral dissertation, Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü).
- [15] Soo, K. (1999). Theory and Research: Learning Styles, Motivation, and the CALL Classroom. In Egbert, J and Hanson-Smith, E. (eds.). *CALL Environments: Research, Practice, and Critical Issues* (pp. 289-301). Alexandria: TESOL.
- [16] Saylağ, R. (2011). The Awareness and Preferences of EFL Students on their Perceptual Learning Styles. *Pilgrims Language Courses*.
- [17] Shirani Bidabadi, F., & Yamat, H. (2010). Learning style preferences by Iranian EFL Freshman University students. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 7, 219-226.
- [18] Wade, S. (1990). Using think aloud to assess comprehension. *The Reading Teacher*, 43(7), 442-451.
- [19] Witkin, H. (1962). *Psychological Differentiation*. Wiley: New York.

Noushin Asadipiran is a lecturer in Department of Foreign Language, Bandar Abbas Branch, Islamic Azad University, Bandar Abbas, Iran. Her areas of interest include language teaching, curriculum development, language testing, learning strategies and socio linguistics. She has published numerous articles both nationally and internationally.

Discourse Markers in Academic and Non-academic Writing of Iranian EFL Learners

Nasim Ghanbari

English Department, Persian Gulf University, Bushehr, Iran

Tahereh Dehghani

Islamic Azad University, Science and Research Branch of Bushehr, Iran

Mohammad Reza Shamsaddini

English Department, Persian Gulf University, Bushehr, Iran

Abstract—The present study investigated the type of discourse markers in academic and non-academic writing of Iranian EFL learners. It tried to find out the most frequent types and tokens of discourse markers and to determine a significant difference between discourse markers in academic and non-academic writing. The 60 participants of this study were selected from Safire Lian language institute. Thirty were chosen to write academic writing and 30 to write non-academic writing. Fraser's taxonomy was used as the main taxonomy but to fulfill the aims of the study, some other taxonomy was used such as Cowan (2008) and Schiffrine (1981). The Chi-Square statistical test was used to analyze data in order to find out the differences in the use of discourse markers between academic and non-academic writing. Different hierarchies of discourse markers were observed in the present study. Elaborative and inferential were the most frequent types in academic genre while in non-academic genre elaborative was only the most frequent type. Moreover, the quantitative analysis showed that there was a significant difference in the use of discourse markers in academic and non-academic writing. Furthermore, as the result revealed discourse markers were required more in academic than non-academic writing.

Index Terms—discourse markers, academic writing, non-academic writing, elaborative, inferential

I. INTRODUCTION

Although people have been writing for thousand years, writing is more significant these days and while millions of people cannot write and read; most of communication takes place through writing rather than speaking (Coulmas, 2003). As Chow (2007) said in Yunus and Haris (2014) writing is a necessary device in learning that it can help learners better in different ways such as comprehending the opinions and concepts. Actually writing is not only the process of putting words together, but the production of writing is also important. The purpose and place (its audience and genre) determine the process and product of writing (Nunan, 1991). As Longer and Applebee (1981) cited in Geisler (2013) each kind of writing has specific purposes and particular kinds of learning. In fact, aims and frameworks can produce different types of writing. Academic and non-academic are those kinds of writing that each one has its own style of learning. As Aroudet and Barrett (1984) cited in Hyland (2002) in academic writing, the writer tries to be objective in expressing their attitudes. First person pronouns avoid in academic writing. Writers aren't allowed to show their personal opinions. According to Hyland (2004) academic writing is a kind of means to discuss knowledge claims. Academic writing should be the most concrete social text; it should consider as collective social practices rather than concerning linguistic features as regularities of academic writing. The most goals of academic writing will be persuasive; to persuade an evaluation in a review, to accept a knowledge claim in a research paper and to acknowledge a schema in a text book. On the other hand, non-academic writing is a kind of individual text in which writers think, feel or believe something. It doesn't include literature, personal essays, articles, writing in popular magazine and newspapers.

Learners need to be familiar with different components of writing such as grammar, punctuation, spelling etc. to be able to write correct sentences. Awareness of discourse markers can help them a lot to write effectively. Discourse markers have a crucial role in written language. Conjunctions, adverbial phrases and prepositional phrases that link two sentences are called discourse markers (Fraser, 1999). As Schiffrin (2001) mentioned discourse markers try to make cohesion and coherence in a given text by connecting different thoughts.

Although discourse markers have been investigated a lot in recent years, some aspects of them have been unclear. Researchers pay attention much to discourse markers and writing of language, but they ignore roles of them in academic and non-academic writing. Several researchers have studied the use of discourse markers in academic writing, but none of them has paid attention to the difference of them with non-academic writing. English teachers in Iran usually ignore to teach their learners how to use discourse markers correctly in their writing. Discourse markers are one of the difficult

areas in writing of Iranian EFL learners. As Martize cited in Abdullah, et al., (2012) Iranian students have difficulty to organize a coherent text in English because they do not know how to use discourse markers. Iranian as foreign language learners has ignored discourse markers in their writing, so their texts do not have any coherence. Thus, they have low proficiency in their writing quality.

This research bases on difficulties of Iranian learners in using discourse markers in academic and non-academic writing. Learners need to be familiar with discourse markers and how to use them in different writing styles such as academic and non-academic writing. Hence, the purpose of the current study is to find the difference between discourse markers in academic and non-academic writing of Iranian EFL learners. It tries to investigate the most common sorts and tokens of discourse markers in both academic and non-academic writing of Iranian EFL learners. In addition, it aims to find the difference between using them in both styles of writing. This study will be beneficial for both teachers and learners. Teachers can be aware of the role of discourse markers in learners' writing in order to teach them effectively in EFL English classroom and how to improve the knowledge of their learners about significant role of discourse markers in their writing skill. It is supposed to help Iranian EFL learners in their writing skill to know how to use discourse markers in their academic and non-academic writing. Therefore, if the hypothesis of the study is confirmed, it will enhance the writing skill of Iranian EFL learners as well as teachers to inform the learners of any difference between discourse markers in different types of writing.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Numerous studies have been done about discourse markers in learner's writing and different aspects of discourse markers have been studied in the last several years. The present study tried to classify them into different groups. In fact, some studies investigated the impact of discourse markers in writing quality of the learners. Some investigated the similarities and differences of discourse markers in writing of native and non-native speakers. The other researchers studied discourse markers in different types of writing..... The current study reviewed different aspects of discourse markers in learner's writing in several researches.

Martinz (2004) worked on the impact of discourse markers in compositions of Spanish undergraduate. The learners studied in advanced level. Students used a variety of discourse markers and some types used more than the others. As the result of the study showed elaborative were the most frequency used then contrastive was used as the second group. A positive relationship was found between the use of discourse markers and writing quality of the learners. It also concluded that the number of discourse markers can affect the writing quality of the learners.

On the other hand, some researchers found that discourse markers do not have any effect on the writing quality of the learners. Therefore, they believed that there was not any relationship between them. Dastjerdi and Samian (2006) studied the use of cohesive devices in argumentative essays of Iranian graduate non-English majors. The 40 papers which were written by 40 learners presented that learners had sufficient knowledge of discourse markers and employed them in their writing. Lexical devices were the most frequent types of used cohesive devices, followed by reference devices and conjunction devices. There was no positive correlation between learner's total number of discourse markers and writing quality of the learners.

In spite of the previous groups of researchers that worked on the impact of discourse markers in writing, some researchers tried to study the role of discourse markers in different languages specially native and non-native speakers' writing. Ying selected three groups of university students which include: native English speaker, non-native Chinese students (CNNS) and non-native Japanese students (JNNS). He worked on the similarities and differences of discourse markers such as because, so, etc. According to the result, all three groups used discourse markers in their writing but the study investigated the differences in the use of discourse markers among three the groups as well. In the use of different types of discourse markers an obvious difference was found between three groups of learners. The big gap observed in the number of used discourse markers as CNNS used 65, JNNS 40 while native speakers used 86. Therefore, native speakers had capacity to use discourse markers more than the other groups.

Prommas (2011) studied the use of discourse connectors in writing of Thai EFL undergraduates and native English speakers. The study tried to research the similarities and differences of discourse connectors in type, functional and syntactic distribution. Moreover, it tried to find the problems of Thai learners in the use of discourse connectors. The 24 learners were selected randomly. The 44 compositions were gathered from native and non-native speakers. Findings revealed that discourse connectors were used by non-native speakers more than native speakers.

Some of the researchers have worked on discourse markers in different types of writing. Rahimi (2011) studied the frequency and type of discourse markers in argumentative and expository writing of Iranian undergraduate EFL learners. Based on the result elaborative markers were the most frequent discourse markers while conclusive discourse markers were the least used markers in both argumentative and expository writing. Discourse markers were utilized in argumentative compositions more than expository. On the other hand, Alghamdi (2014) selected two other types of writing: narrative and argumentative. 15 students were native speakers while 15 were non-native Arabic speakers. The findings revealed that there was no significant difference in the use of discourse markers in both types of writings. In this study, elaborative markers were the most frequent type in those types of writing. In addition, non-native speakers used discourse markers more in their writing than native speakers.

Romas (2010) worked on descriptive and argumentative genres. Students at the college of Liberal Art were chosen to write argumentative papers while students at the college of engineering were selected to write descriptive papers. Hyland and Tse's taxonomy of textual and interpersonal metadiscourse and Halliday and Hasan's cohesion framework were applied for this study. Students from college of engineering used more addition and connective devices than the other types of discourse markers in their description writing, while students from the college of Art employed more addition, contrast, and connective and sequence devices in their argumentative writing. Therefore, ESL students used discourse markers based on the type of writing.

The current study provided an overview of many studies on discourse markers in writing. Most of the researchers worked on the effect and the role of discourse markers in native and non-native but just a few attended to different genres and types of writing. Therefore, this part requires more studies and attentions. Moreover, most of the studies worked on the academic writing while the present study tries to compare both academic and non-academic writing. This study will examine these two genres and find differences in both academic and non-academic writings of Iranian EFL learners. Awareness of the academic and non-academic genre can also help learners to improve their writing quality and become a professionalized writer. In addition, Jalilifar (2008) worked on discourse markers in writing of Iranian EFL learners but he did not focus on genres while the current study considers genres of writing in Iranian EFL learners as well.

III. CURRENT STUDY

The current study aimed to analyze discourse markers in academic and non-academic writing of Iranian EFL learners. According to what has been said so far, the following questions were addressed in this study:

1. What are the most frequent types and tokens of discourse markers in academic and non-academic writing of Iranian EFL learners?
2. Is there a significant difference between discourse markers in academic and non-academic writing of Iranian EFL learners?

IV. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

Participants in this study were 60 male (24) and female (36) learners. A total of 60 male and female participants were selected from Safire Lian English language institute in Bushehr. Participants were studying English at advanced level. The reason for the selection of these participants was to pass several levels in English institute; therefore, they were able to write about their attitude and express themselves. Their ages ranged between 20 and 38. Their native language was Persian. None of the participants had an opportunity to speak English outside the classroom. Sixty learners with advanced level of proficiency from 72, according to OPT, were selected to write non-academic writing and academic writing. Thus, each group was forced to write different genres.

B. Instrumentation

The following instruments were used to fulfill the aims of the present study:

1. An Oxford placement Test (OPT) was selected consisting of listening and grammar to determine the homogeneity of the participants. OPT as a universally valid language test was used in this study. Participants were supposed to answer listening questions in 10 minutes and grammar questions in 50 minutes. The scoring of the compositions was between 142 to 150.
2. Academic writing: Thirty participants wrote one academic essay based on IELTS test. Academic papers were supposed to be the same as IELTS writing.
3. Non-academic writing: Thirty participants were supposed to write one text about their personal interest in non-academic writing.
4. Fraser's taxonomy of discourse markers (1999): According to Fraser's taxonomy, discourse markers contained several groups including contrastive markers, elaborative markers and inferential markers,.... Cowan (2008) and Schiffrine (1981) was also added for those discourse markers that ignored by Fraser's taxonomy.

C. Procedure

First, in order to have 60 homogeneous participants, an Oxford Placement Test (OPT) was held. Then, according to OPT test 60 learners were selected for this study from Safire Lian institute; 30 participants were selected to write academic text and 30 participants were selected to write non-academic text for the current study.

The next step, participants were supposed to write one academic and one non-academic texts. The academic writing should follow the style of IELTS exam. Advanced participants were expected to produce a written argument on a given topic and to organize the text clearly. They wrote 250 words in 40 minutes. They wrote their essays in response to a point of view, argument or problem; essays must be in a formal style. In non-academic writing, the advanced participants at Safire-Lian institute wrote one text about their personal interests. The topic of the compositions was taken from IELTS exam and for advanced learners from their textbook. Participants were expected to write 250 words

in non-academic genre. In this type of writing, the format and style were not concerned. In fact, both groups wrote one text but the nature and the kind of their writing were different. The time which participants would have to write was 40 minutes. None of the students were aware of the research and specifically crucial role of discourse markers in their writing. Finally, 60 papers were gathered for the data analysis.

As the last step, two experienced raters evaluated the writings of the participants. The teachers investigated discourse markers and its types based on Fraser's taxonomies in academic and non-academic writings. Then, discourse markers in academic and non-academic writings of the participants were compared. The teachers distinguished and counted each type of used discourse markers in each composition. The raters analyzed the discourse markers in learner's writing to determine the differences in both genres of writing.

D. Data Analysis

In order to analyze the data obtained in this study, the following statistical procedures were used:

Analysis NO.1: was analysis of the OPT test based on performance of the students. It was a descriptive analysis in order to have homogenous participants for this study.

Analysis NO.2: two experienced raters analyzed the texts based on Fraser's taxonomies of discourse markers. It evaluated discourse markers that were used in academic and non-academic writings of participants. Moreover, the professional teachers were selected to check the texts to estimate the consistency of the raters in identifying the discourse markers in academic and non-academic writing of Iranian EFL learners.

Analysis NO.3: The data was analyzed statistically. In order to determine the difference between academic and non-academic writing in the use of discourse markers, the SPSS software was applied. The qualitative analysis was used to determine the most common types and tokens of discourse markers based on Fraser's taxonomy.

The Chi-square statistical test was used to determine the quantitative aspect of the study in which the differences between discourse markers in academic and non-academic writing were investigated.

Therefore, the first research question was analyzed qualitatively and the second one was explained quantitatively.

V. RESULTS

For the current study the Fraser's taxonomy of discourse markers was used. Fraser's was the main taxonomy in this study. In order to achieve the aims of this study, some other taxonomy were used such as Cowan (2008) and Schiffrine (1981). The table 4.1 shows discourse markers' taxonomy and their definitions by Fraser and the other researchers. Therefore, a new model was presented for academic and non-academic writing.

TABLE 5.1.
TAXONOMY OF DISCOURSE MARKERS

a=Contrastive markers:	Show contrast between two sentences. Such as: but, however,
b=Elaborative Markers:	Are used to demonstrate similarity between sentences. Such as: and, moreover, in addition,.....
c=Inferential Markers:	Refers to conclusion which comes from the preceding sentence. Such as: so, therefore,.....
d=Conclusive Markers:	Shows a conclusion to what has been mentioned before. Such as: in sum, in conclusion, to sum up,....
e=Reason Markers:	Provide reasons for the content of preceding sentence. Such as: because, since,.....
f=Exemplifier Markers:	Provides the example for the content of preceding sentence. Such as: for example, for instance,....
h=Ordering markers:	Ordering the main points that speakers or writers want to make and indicating a sequence of step. Such as: first, firstly, second,....
g=Topic relating markers:	Relate the topic of second sentence to the first sentence. Such as: back to my original point, by the way, with regards to,....
i=Attitudinal markers:	Expressing the writer's attitude regarding the truth of preceding content and introducing content in support of cognitive stance. Such as: in fact, indeed,....
j=Transition markers:	Function as cues to direct the listener or reader's attention. I think, in my opinion,....

A. Results of Research Question one

The current study consisted of two research questions. The first research question that was propounded to investigate was:

1. What are the most frequent types and tokens of discourse markers in academic and non-academic writing of Iranian EFL learners?

This question was investigated in writings of 60 Iranian EFL learners in both academic and non-academic types of writing. According to the question, the following results were obtained.

The Figure 1 shows the frequency of discourse markers in percentage in academic writing:

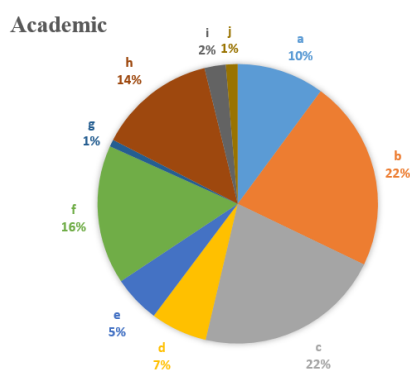


Figure5.1: Frequency of discourse markers in academic writing

As it is observed, the most frequent types of discourse markers in academic writing are elaborative and inferential markers that included 22%. Next, 16% of the whole markers referred to exemplifier markers, 14% to ordering markers, 10% to contrastive, 7% to conclusive markers, 5% to reason markers, 2% to attitudinal markers and 1% to topic relating markers and transition markers.

The Figure 2 presents the frequency of discourse markers in percentage in non-academic writing:

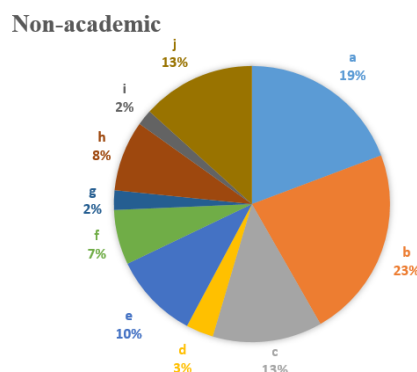


Figure5.2: Frequency of discourse markers in Non-academic writing

As the Figure 12 shows, elaborative marker that involved 23% is the most frequent type of discourse markers in non-academic writing. 19% of the whole discourse markers include contrastive, 13% to inferential markers and transition markers, 10% to reason markers, 8% to ordering markers, 7% to exemplifier markers, 3% to conclusive, 2% to attitudinal and topic relating markers.

B. Results of Research Question Two

The second research question that was brought up to investigate was:

2. Is there a significant difference between discourse markers in academic and non-academic writing of Iranian EFL learners?

In order to investigate the second research question, 60 papers of academic and non-academic were examined by Iranian EFL learners. Based on this investigation, the following results were obtained:

TABLE 5.2. RESULTS OF CHI-SQUARE FOR DISCOURSE MARKERS' TAXONOMY

Group	Academic		Non-academic		Chi-Square	p-value
	Mean ±sd	∑F ¹	Mean ±sd	∑F		
A	1.233 ±0.858	37	1.4 ±1.003	42	0.316456	0.574
B	2.700 ±2.037	81	1.633 ±1.402	49	7.87692	0.005 ^{**}
C	2.633 ±1.189	79	0.933 ±0.980	28	24.3084	0.001 ^{**}
D	0.800 ±0.407	24	0.233 ±0.430	7	9.32258	0.002 ^{**}
E	0.667 ±0.994	20	0.733 ±0.691	22	0.0952381	0.758 ^{ns}
F	2.067 ±1.081	59	0.467 ±0.629	14	27.7397	0.001 ^{**}
G	0.168 ±0.379	3	0.167 ±0.461	5	0.5	0.480 ^{ns}
H	1.733 ±0.583	50	0.600 ±0.855	18	15.0588	0.001 ^{**}
I	0.300 ±0.596	9	0.133 ±0.434	4	1.92308	0.166 ^{ns}
J	0.167 ±0.379	5	0.967 ±0.964	29	16.941	0.001 ^{**}
Total	12.2	367	7.26	218	37.9504	0.001 ^{**}

1- Σ F: Sum of frequency, The Measurement of Chi-square was based on sum of frequency of each marker, ** very significant ($p < 0.01$), * significant ($p < 0.05$), ns: non-significant.

Based on the table 2, discourse markers were used more in academic writing than non-academic writing. As we can see, on average, in non-academic writing the frequency was 218 that showed the mean of 7.26 while in academic writing the mean increases to 12.2. Therefore, there was a significant difference between academic and non-academic writing.

VI. DISCUSSION

A. Research Question One

The first question which the most frequent types and tokens of discourse markers were investigated was descriptive. Based on the results, both elaborative and inferential discourse markers were the most frequent types in academic writing but in non-academic writing just elaborative was the most frequent one. In academic, the second frequent discourse markers were exemplifier, then ordering, contrastive, conclusive, reason, attitudinal, topic relating and transition markers, respectively. In spite of academic writing, in non-academic genre the second group was contrastive, next inferential and transition with the same frequency, reason, ordering, exemplifier, conclusive, attitudinal and topic relating markers, respectively. The first finding of the data coexisted with Rahimi (2011), Martinez (2004) and Modhish (2012) that discovered only elaborative discourse markers (specially and) are the most frequently used discourse markers while in this study, both elaborative and inferential used with the same frequency in academic writing; in fact in the most previous studies, elaborative was the only one that used more than the other. Moreover, in this study both inferential and elaborative discourse markers were the most frequently used in academic while in non-academic only elaborative was the most common and frequent used type. The nature and style of writing can entail this finding. Furthermore, significant difference between the hierarchy of used discourse markers in academic and non-academic writing was discovered. Based on Rahimi (2011) Contrastive, inferential, reason, exemplifier, and conclusive markers, respectively, was the least frequently used connectors in both genres. But the current study found out the different hierarchy in each genre. The context of the study might be the reason of the difference in hierarchy of used discourse markers in these studies. Meanwhile, the current study was done in institute while that study was done in university of Shiraz. Proficiency level can be the other reason to show why learners with different proficiency level obtained different results as well.

B. Hypothesis One

H01: There is no significant difference between discourse markers in academic and non-academic writing of Iranian EFL learners.

The goal of this hypothesis was to determine the difference in the use of discourse markers in academic and non-academic genres of writing. In fact, different types of discourse markers in different types of writing were investigated in this study. Indeed, different genres of writing imposed significant difference in the use of discourse markers.

According to the result of the study, participants in both academic and non-academic writing used discourse markers but in the number of used discourse markers, a significant difference was discovered. Participants of academic genre who wrote an academic text performed better than those in non-academic writing who wrote non-academic genre. Better performance of the academic participants in using discourse markers maybe because of the nature and kind of tasks that expected from them. Academic genre can be considered as a good kind to involve learners deeper in the way they write their text and hence leading to different amounts of used discourse markers. For instance, ordering and inferential discourse markers were used more frequently in academic than non-academic because of the nature of the academic and the way that expected the learners to write in academic genre.

The result of the current study was different from Alghamdi (2014) that found that there was no significant difference in the use of discourse markers in narrative and argumentative writing. Elaborative, contrastive and reason markers were used more than the other categories of discourse markers in both types and both groups of native and non-native speakers. But in the current study there was a significant difference between genres of writing and it can be due to different topics. The dissimilar genres and topics cause different results and findings because different topic and genre make the learners to write in a different way, thus different results can be expected.

Ramos (2010) discovered that students from college of engineering applied more addition and contrast connective devices than the other types of discourse markers in their descriptive writing, while students from the college of Art employed more addition, contrast, connective and sequence devices in their argumentative writing. However, in this study in academic genre the exemplifier markers was the most frequent type after elaborative and inferential; different findings can be referred to context because the current study was done in EFL setting while Ramos' study was done in ESL setting. In addition, the difference in proficiency level can cause the difference, as the students at the college of Engineering wrote descriptive papers and students at the college of Liberal Art wrote argumentative papers but in the present study the English learners in language institute wrote the texts. Thus, different proficiency level might lead to different findings. Language background was possibly the other reason of the difference between the findings of the studies; studies with participants of different first language could come up with different results. Since language background can be the reason of transfer.

To sum up, the finding of the study indicated some intriguing results. In this study, a significant difference between academic and non-academic in the use of discourse markers was found. Academic learners used discourse markers more than non-academic; because participants in academic knew the style of academic and the importance of coherence and cohesion in their text, while non-academic text was a kind of personal text without any special style. Therefore, the nature of genres of writing could be the reason for the significant difference between them. Therefore, based on the result, the null hypothesis of the study which indicated no significant difference between academic and non-academic was rejected.

VII. CONCLUSION

Lots of language learning researchers worked on discourse markers. Discourse markers are those elements which join words in a clause, sentence or paragraph in order to indicate the connections like ordering, addition and contrast Cowan (2008). Discourse markers are linguistic devices which are used to bind sentences and expressions together. These linguistic devices are words or phrases that are used to join information and concept and show the relationship in conversation and in writing. Discourse markers join the present sentence or utterance with the next one (Redeker, 1991). Gerard (2010) said in Sharndama (2013) discourse markers function as the "glue" which hangs parts of the text together. The words such as 'however', 'although' and 'nevertheless' are belonged to 'linking words', 'linking phrases' or 'sentence connectors' which the relationship between sentences and paragraphs doesn't exist without them. Some studies have done on the types of discourse markers and most of the researchers discovered that elaborative markers are the most frequent and used type in writing of the learners.

The first finding of the study was referred to the new model of discourse markers in both academic and non-academic writing which they were based on Fraser (1999), Cowan (2008) and Schiffrine (1981) taxonomy. As the finding of the current study showed, different writing genres imposed different kinds of discourse markers and different amounts of used discourse markers. According to the findings, participants of both genres did not have the same tendency about using discourse markers. As the findings of the first question showed, different hierarchies of discourse markers were observed in this study, as in academic elaborative and inferential with the same amount of used were both the most frequent in this type of writing. The second frequent discourse markers was exemplifier, then ordering, contrastive, conclusive, reason, attitudinal, topic relating and transition markers, respectively. In contrast to academic writing, in non-academic genre elaborative discourse markers were the only most frequent type in this group. Then, the second group was contrastive, next inferential and transition with the same frequency, reason, ordering, exemplifier, conclusive, attitudinal and topic relating markers, respectively. As the results displayed, for example inferential discourse marker in academic genre was the most frequent type but in non-academic genre this marker was not used as much in academic genre. The variety of results may show the difference in structure, nature and purpose of each kind of writing because academic genre is a kind of formal writing; therefore, the way of writing is crucial. Due to these aspects of academic writing, inferential, exemplifier and ordering were used more. Compared to academic writing, non-academic writing is a kind of personal text in which learners can write without limitation or any special format. Based on this aspect, learners in non-academic writing used transition, contrastive more than the other types while in academic transition markers were the least used discourse markers. Since transition markers state personal opinion and attitude, thus it can be more common in non-academic than academic writing. Types and frequency of used discourse markers changed in each types of writing.

Another result of the study showed the superiority of discourse markers in academic writing over non-academic writing. Additionally, academic learners used more discourse markers. Therefore, there was a significant difference between academic and non-academic writing in the use of discourse markers based on the second research question. The mean for the use of discourse markers in academic was 12.2 and in non-academic it was 7.26. Therefore, it can be concluded that the participants in academic genre were more willing to use discourse markers than non-academic learners. Moreover, the mean in the use of each type of discourse markers was not the same; for example, the significance in the use of inferential markers in these genres was 0.001 that presented a significant various between them. Indeed, in the use of elaborative, inferential, conclusive, exemplifier, ordering and transition discourse markers a significant difference was found, while in the use of discourse markers such as contrastive, reason, topic relating and attitudinal no significant differences were found. In conclusion, the most frequent type and ordering were not the same in each genre. Based on the text different types and amount of discourse markers are required. A similar pattern was not observed in those types of writing. Moreover, a significant different between academic and non-academic writing was discovered. In fact, discourse markers were required more in the genre of academic than non-academic.

Regarding the findings of the present study, several theoretical and pedagogical implications can be mentioned. This study found a variety of types and frequency of discourse markers in academic and non-academic writing. Furthermore, the difference in using discourse markers was noticed in different types of writing. The findings of this study can help discourse markers and its types to be known as one of the important components of academic and non-academic writing. Discovering those varieties of discourse markers used by Iranian EFL learners can be a huge step to improve writing skill. The results can help the theory of discourse markers to be distinguished its type in academic and non-academic writing. Furthermore, variety of types and numbers in academic and non-academic writing will be more clarified. Therefore, regarding the importance of discourse markers and its types in writing, they should not be ignored in

academic and non-academic genres. In conclusion, the theory of discourse markers and its difference in two types of writing can be beneficial for the writing skill. Different writing genres affect using discourse markers in number, amount and types in each genres of writing. Because of the importance of discourse markers in writing, teachers should pay more attention to the genres which involve their students. The result can help teachers to be aware of academic and non-academic genre and teach discourse markers to their students in an efficient way and inform them about different structures of these genres and their purposes, so they become professionalized in their field. In addition, finding can help teachers to teach different genres differently and effectively. Teachers should clarify the difference between different types of writing and how they are used rightly. Moreover, it might be useful for material developers to design materials which are based on realistic illustration of the academic genre.

The present study also had some limitations such as participant, time, age of the learners and so on.. So doing such a study had its limitation that was impossible to conduct on them.

Considering the crucial role of writing and discourse markers, future research should be done. According to this study, the participants were Iranian EFL learners that they were studying English at advanced level of language proficiency. Further studies can be worked on the other nationalities and levels of language proficiency. This study did not consider age and gender. The future studies can investigate the relationship between age and gender of the learners and discourse markers in writing. In addition, the willingness and tendency of the learners and their relationship with each genres of writing were not important in this study, while in the other studies it can be the question and problem of the study. The tendency of the learners might be one of the issues in finding different results in each type. Another area of the research that can be investigated will be a comparative study of discourse markers in different types of writing between native and non-native speakers. Moreover, comparing discourse markers in first language and second language in their academic and non-academic might be the other issue of the future studies. It will be an interesting issue to investigate the difference between Persian and English in using discourse markers in academic and non-academic genre and it will be a beneficial research in English teaching to help Iranian EFL learners.

REFERENCES

- [1] Alghamdi, E. A. (2014). Discourse Markers in ESL Personal Narrative and Argumentative Papers: A Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 4(4), 294-305.
- [2] Arnaudet, M. L., & Barrett, M. E. (1984). Approaches to academic reading and writing. United Kingdom: Prentice-Hall.
- [3] Chow, T. V. F. (2007). The effects of the process-genre approach to writing instruction on the expository essays of ESL students in a Malaysian secondary school. PhD diss., Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia.
- [4] Cowan, R. (2008). *The Teacher's Grammar of English with Answers: A Course Book and Reference Guide*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [5] Coulmas, F. (2003). *Writing system: An ntroduction to their linguistic analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [6] Dastjerdi, H. V., & Samian, S. H. (2011). Quality of Iranian EFL learners' argumentative essays: Cohesive devices in focus. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 2(2), 65-76.
- [7] Fraser, B. (1999). What are discourse markers?. *Journal of pragmatics*, 31(7), 931-952.
- [8] Geisler, C. (2013). *Academic literacy and the nature of expertise: Reading, writing, and knowing in academic philosophy*. New York: Routledge.
- [9] Gerard, S. (2000) Discourse Markers. Center for Applied Linguistics. Learning English Online at Warwick.
- [10] Hyland, K. (2002). Authority and invisibility: Authorial identity in academic writing. *Journal of pragmatics*, 34(8), 1091-1112.
- [11] Hyland, K. (2004). *Disciplinary discourses: Social interactions in academic writing*. The United States: University of Michigan Press.
- [12] Jalilifar, A. (2008). Discourse markers in composition writings: The case of Iranian learners of English as a foreign language. *English Language Teaching*, 1 (2), P114-122.
- [13] Kalajahi, S., Abdullah, A. N. B., & Baki, R. (2012). Constructing an Organized and Coherent Text: How Discourse Markers Are Viewed by Iranian Post-Graduate Students?. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 2 (9). Page 196-202.
- [14] Langer, J. A., & Applebee, A. N. (1986). Reading and writing instruction: Toward a theory of teaching and learning. *Review of research in education*, 171-194.
- [15] Martínez, A. C. L. (2004). Discourse markers in the expository writing of Spanish university students. *Ibérica*, 8, 63-80.
- [16] Modhish, A. S. (2012). Use of Discourse Markers in the Composition Writings of Arab EFL Learners. *English Language Teaching*, 5(5), p56-61.
- [17] Nunan, D. (1991). *Language teaching methodology: A textbook for teachers (Vol. 128)*. United Kingdom: Prentice hall.
- [18] Prommas, P., & Sinwongsuwat, K. (2011). A comparative study of discourse connectors used in argumentative compositions produced by Thai EFL learners and English-native speakers. In *The 3rd International Conference on Humanities and Social Sciences*, Prince of Songkla University.
- [19] Rahimi, M. (2011). Discourse markers in argumentative and expository writing of Iranian EFL learners. *World Journal of English Language*, 1(2), p68-78.
- [20] Redeker, G. (1991). Linguistic markers of discourse structure. *Linguistics*, 29(6), 1139-1172.
- [21] Schiffrin, D. (1981). *Discourse markers (No. 5)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [22] Schiffrin, D., Tannen, D., & Hamilton, H. E. (Eds.). (2001). *The handbook of discourse analysis*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.
- [23] Sharndama, E. C. (2013). An analysis of discourse markers in academic report writing: pedagogical implications. *International Journal of Academic research and reflection*, 3(1), p15-24.

- [24] Tan-de Ramos, J. (2010). A Comparative Study of the Discourse Marker Types in the Body Section of the. *TESOL Journal*, 2, 62-73.
- [25] Yunus, M. M., & Haris, S. N. F. (2014). The Use of Discourse Markers among Form Four SLL Students in Essay Writing. *International Education Studies*, 7(2), p54-63.

Nasim Ghanbari holds a PhD in applied Linguistics. She is an assistant professor at English Department of Persian Gulf University in Bushehr, Iran. Her areas of interest include language assessment, academic writing and writing assessment. Currently, she teaches courses in language testing& assessment, essay writing and research methodology.

Tahereh Dehghani holds an M.A. in TEFL. She has been working as a teacher since 2012. The current paper was written based on her thesis. Her thesis was defended in September, 2015 in Islamic Azad University. Her main interests are writing assessment and teaching English as a Foreign/ Second Language.

Mohammad Reza Shamsaddini holds a PhD in Applied Linguistics. He is an assistant professor at the Department of English in Persian Gulf University, Bushehr, Iran. His areas of interests are teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), Discourse Analysis, Syllabus Designed and English for specific Purposes. He has published many articles in international journals.

Implications of Australia's Bilingual Education of Aboriginal People

Jie Li

Tongliao No.1 Senior Middle School, Tongliao, 028026, China

Abstract—Australia, as a multicultural and multilingual country, has been highly appraised by international linguists and statesmen for its formulation and implementation of language policies. Over the past years, linguists, statesmen, educators and residents have been devoting themselves to the further improvement of language education policies and laws, and the implementation of bilingual education for Aboriginal people. They have gradually resolved language problems, and most importantly, preserved linguistic and cultural diversity. This has set a successful example for China to follow. Under such circumstance, the proposed research, based on sociolinguistic theories concerning language policy and language planning, makes implications, suggesting how our country should proceed from the actual situations to take more practical measures and formulate better policies.

Index Terms—bilingual education, Australia, implications

I. INTRODUCTION

Bilingual education has been playing an increasingly important role in political stability and economic development in multi-ethnic countries. By developing it, governments can improve the overall quality of ethnic minorities, help develop their self-reliance and adapt them to social development.

Australia, a multi-ethnic country, is a pioneer nation. In the past decades, Australian governments of different levels, educators and linguists have been formulating and implementing various policies to promote the bilingual education of Aboriginal people. A good study of what Australia has done in this regard is not only academically significant but also useful for China's governments of different levels to learn from the successful experience and to develop and implement policies of ethnic bilingual education. So a large number of scholars at home have devoted themselves to relevant studies, such as Liu Fugen (1999), Meng Bingli (2005), Liang Junqing (2008), and Chen Xiaoyun (2008). However, studies at home focus on language and culture, language policy and language planning concerning bilingual education. Few research articles on the implications of Australia's bilingual education of Aboriginal people have been published yet. Thus, the proposed research will make efforts in this regard.

The author will base the proposed research on sociolinguistic theories concerning language planning and language policy and employ library research and descriptive method to briefly introduce the Aboriginal people's bilingual education in Australia and mainly make implications, suggesting how our country should proceed from the actual situations to take more practical measures and formulate better policies.

II. RESEARCH DESIGN

A. Theoretical Framework

Language policy is fundamental for any country. In the late 1950s and the early 1960s, the terms, language policy and language planning, have been defined in many ways. According to Grin, "language policy is a systematic, rational, theory-based effort at the societal level to modify the linguistic environment with a view to increasing aggregate welfare. It is typically conducted by official bodies or their surrogates aiming at part or all of the population living under their jurisdiction." (Grin, 2003, P.30) Language planning, as is stated by Weinstein, "is a government authorized, long-term, sustained, and conscious effort to alter a language's function in a society for the purpose of solving communication problems" (Weinstein, 1980, P.56).

It is obvious that language policy is an official policy of a society in the aspect of linguistic communication while language planning is a series of practical measures within the policy to resolve linguistic communication problems. They, therefore, can function as the theoretical framework in this study for they are quite suitable.

B. Research Questions

With research background and the thesis statement in mind, we can now put forward the following two questions:

Research question one: How does Australia implement the bilingual education for Aboriginal people?

Research question two: How should China proceed from the actual situations to take more practical measures and formulate better policies?

C. Research Methodology

In terms of research methodology, it refers to the combination of research methods. Zhang and Hao state that: “the task or purpose of research methodology is to describe or analyze research methods, define and clarify presupposes and results, and lead the research feasibility to success.” (Zhang and Hao, 2008, P. 62)

The methods used in the proposed research can be classified as library research, and descriptive method. Library research will be conducted to access the relevant literature and collect data for my writing. In addition, descriptive method will be used to deepen my understanding of the collected materials.

III. ABORIGINAL PEOPLE’S BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA

Australia is a multilingual and multicultural country. In order to develop its language education, governments have formulated a series of policies and laws which cover many aspects of bilingual education of Aboriginal people and have a long history of development. These policies include 1987 “National Policy on Languages” (NPL), the 1991 “Australia’s Language-The Australian Language and Literacy Policy” (ALLP), the 1996 “Language Teachers: the Pivot of Policy” and many laws enacted by governments of each level, addressing the issues of Aboriginal people’s bilingual education, like “Aboriginal Education (Supplementary Assistant) Act 1989” and “Aboriginal Education (Supplementary Assistant) Act 2000”. All these policies and laws acknowledge the history and special status of aboriginal languages as the product of cultural and historical identification of aboriginal people, and are of great importance to interpreting Australian environment and of inestimable value to their users. Apart from those influential policies and relevant laws, they, as well, take practical measures, including capital investment, teacher training, curriculum design and textbook compilation.

Generally speaking, Australia has achieved huge success in Aboriginal people’s bilingual education on the ground that governments of each level have formulated and implemented policies and laws which take the language rights of Aboriginal people into full consideration, and provide profound policy guarantee. Besides, the implementation for Aboriginal people in Australia not only gains all-side support, but also has sound theoretical basis. This has set a successful example for other multi-ethnic countries to follow, especially China. The following part will examine some implications.

IV. IMPLICATIONS OF AUSTRALIA’S BILINGUAL EDUCATION OF ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

In view of the outcomes of the bilingual education of Aboriginal people in Australia, it provides some implications for China.

A. *Improving Language Education Policies and Laws*

Australia’s huge success in ethnic language education lies in the formulation and implementation of policies and laws which take the language rights of all residents into full consideration. Apart from attaching importance to all Australian’s English literacy, they show respect for Aboriginal and community languages and cultures to help Aboriginal people and immigrants preserve and develop them.

Since the founding of new China, especially the reform and opening-up, the Party and the state have paid high attention to issues of ethnic language education. They have formulated a series of laws concerning ethnic language education. However, these laws are far from perfect. In particular, there has been no specific law on ethnic language education. As such, the long-term development of ethnic language education necessitates the improvement of relevant policies and laws, especially the formulation of a specific ethnic language education law. In formulating such a kind of law, attention should be paid to the following aspects.

To begin with, attention should be paid to the comprehensiveness. The current laws in China center on the special status of ethnic languages and the right and freedom of ethnic people to use and develop their own languages but not on the significances from the perspective of autonomy or on the part they are playing in inheriting and developing ethnic cultures. This, to a large degree, will hinder the development of ethnic language education. As a result, all these aspects should be taken into account in the specific ethnic language education law.

Then, attention should be paid to specificity. The future ethnic language education law is supposed to compromise specific rules as well as macroscopic contents. Specifically speaking, there should be a detailed description of purposes and objects of ethnic language education, curriculum design, teacher training, textbook compilation, and most of all, capital investment. Only in this way can we make such a kind of law into full play and reflect its legislative and social values.

Furthermore, attention should be paid to practicability. As is mentioned above, ethnic language education in Australia has profound policy guarantee. These policies are based on Australia’s specific history, culture, political systems, as well as social and language environments. Thus, China’s such a kind of law should be equipped with Chinese characteristics, and integrated with actual situations.

Finally, attention should be paid to ethnic independent capacity. Since the founding of new China, the central government has provided a large amount of support for ethnic language education, such as investing capital, training teachers, designing curricula and compiling textbooks. However, all these belong to external conditions, not enough to deal with essential issues. In essence, ethnic language education depends on the independent capacity of ethnic groups.

Therefore, importance should be attached to ethnic independent capacity in ethnic language education law. Only in this way can we make real improvement in the quality of ethnic language education.

B. Strengthening Curriculum Design and Textbook Compilation

Ethnic schools in China, under the guidance of state's regulation, set ethnic languages and Chinese courses for ethnic students. Some even set English ones due to the rapid development of globalization and the "English craze". Even so, there are still some problems mentioned above remaining to be solved. Therefore, curriculum design is supposed to take national conditions and practical situations of each ethnic group into consideration, as well as looking forward to the world and acting on the international conventions. Specifically speaking, the following measures should be taken.

Firstly, curriculum design should pay attention to the learning styles of ethnic students. Each ethnic area should base their courses on ethnic background, ethnic psychology, and specific features of ethnic languages to make the courses carry ethnic characteristics and cater for the development of education, economy and society in ethnic areas. Secondly, curriculum design should contain multinational and multicultural concepts to realize the diversity of courses and enhance its flexibility. It is not only our national condition but also our precious treasure that multi-nations co-exist and multi-cultures commonly develop. Thus, curricula in ethnic schools should include traditional cultures of each ethnic group and those of other ethnic minorities so as to enable ethnic students to have a good knowledge of their own cultures, gain a better understanding of others, participate in cross-cultural communication and cultivate a sense of national identity. Finally, curriculum design should look forward to the world and act on the international conventions. In addition to their own cultures, ethnic students are expected to be equipped with international knowledge and skills to cater for the rapid development of globalization.

Besides, the quality of textbooks, as is mentioned above, is far from perfect in spite of some achievements. The state and relevant departments should take actions to strengthen textbook compilation. First of all, capital for compiling textbooks ought to be invested; next, each area should organize a compiling group which is expected to comprise experts, ethnic education specialists, ethnic education researchers, ethnic language teachers and ethnic students as well; then, publishing and managing institutions ought to be established; finally, textbook types should be diversified; Chinese textbooks should be compiled specifically for ethnic students and multi-media ones had better be developed to cater for the need of selectivity and flexibility.

C. Emphasizing Teacher Training

Teacher training has been playing an important part in implementing and developing ethnic language education and improving teaching quality of ethnic areas. Ethnic language education in China is started late with underdeveloped foundation and teaching systems and even imperfect teacher training. Besides, ethnic schools are suffering from shortage of qualified teachers. Governments of each level are expected to take effective measures to improve such a kind of situation. The author supposes that they can embark on the following aspects.

In the first place, each area should make full use of current resources to improve their training systems. Education departments of each level can establish training bases and experiment centers in current Ethnic Normal Colleges and Normal Schools. In terms of ways of training, they can employ formal training, vocational training, amateur training and in-service training. This will more or less make teacher training systematic and scientific.

In the second place, each area should make specific rules on training contents. On one hand, the training of bilingual capacity and bicultural literacy should be attached importance to. Furthermore, the teachers' knowledge level and scientific research consciousness ought to be improved. On the other hand, their ability to use modern teaching instruments is supposed to be cultivated.

In the final place, each area should standardize the personnel management system. Governments of each level and local education departments should show their respect for knowledge and talents embodied in policies. Besides, they ought to show much concern for the teachers and improve their working conditions and wages. Most of all, they are supposed to give priority to their evaluation of professional titles and employment of their children to remove their worries.

D. Deepening Theoretical Researches

Researches on ethnic language education in China suggest that the theoretical basis is far from sound for the lack of empirical studies and systematic, extensive and comprehensive investigation into ethnic language use. As such, relevant people are expected to deepen theoretical researches under the guidance of scientific attitudes. The proposed research thinks that they can work on the following aspects.

Firstly, research institutions should be established. Ethnic language education is a long-term project, so it ought to be implemented under the guarantee of organizations. The state and each ethnic autonomous region can set up their own research institutions to carry out macro and micro studies respectively, and to provide basis for the formulation of ethnic language education law. In addition, ethnic universities and colleges can establish their own research laboratories and make full advantage of language majors, ethnic students and even high qualified professors to conduct relevant researches. Research institutions of each level can start their own research journals, providing conditions for researchers to publish and communicate their research outcomes.

Secondly, qualities of researchers should be cultivated. Researchers are the key to ethnic language education

researches so much so that their cultivated qualities are of great significance. For one, ethnic language education is a comprehensive and interdisciplinary subject which is concerned with linguistics, ethnology and pedagogy and whose researches are featured by bilingual and bicultural characters, ethnic and interdisciplinary nature. This requires researchers to improve themselves in bilingual or multilingual capacity, abundant knowledge of linguistics, ethnology and pedagogy, and capacity for scientific researches. For another, society has entered an information age with the widespread popularization of internet technology. Researchers therefore must learn and master such a kind of modern technology to carry out relevant researches. Finally, researchers are supposed to cooperate with each other for the reason that this complicated, comprehensive and interdisciplinary research can't be completed by an individual researcher. Besides, they should forecast development trends, and conduct prospective studies.

Finally, in-depth researches based on previous experience and outcomes should be carried out in order to establish a distinctive and comprehensive theoretical system for ethnic language education. The author suggests that the following aspects should be studied: historical background of ethnic language education, past and current policies on ethnic language education in China, the relationship between ethnic language education and society, ethnic language education types, ethnic language education systems of each level, teacher training, textbook compilation and teaching methodology, factors accounting for ethnic language education, comparative studies of ethnic languages and Chinese, international contrast studies of ethnic language education, introductions of researches on ethnic language education abroad, investigations into language use; and bilingual education experiments.

E. Establishing Ethnic Language Education with Chinese Characteristics

The implementation of ethnic language education must cater for the psychological and cultural characteristics of ethnic minorities. In order to establish a kind of ethnic language education with Chinese characteristics, the following aspects should be taken into account.

On one hand, the specificity of ethnic language education should be paid attention to. According to the discussion above, we come to realize that ethnic language-Chinese bilingual education or ethnic language-Chinese-English trilingual education has been being implemented in ethnic areas. This kind of language education is distinct from Australia's bilingual education in which the second language is used as a medium of teaching. Exactly speaking, it is a special type of ethnic education. Ethnic languages are essential for inheriting ethnic cultures and developing ethnic education; Chinese is necessary for ethnic minorities to gain competence in both languages and promote ethnic unity; English is inevitable for ethnic minorities to keep up with international and global trends.

On the other hand, practical measures should be attached importance to. In implementing language education, each ethnic area should set up their own education patterns in accordance with their distinct conditions. Besides, they should attract capital investment from social circles to strengthen infrastructure construction and make constant reforms and innovations. Furthermore, they ought to continue improving ethnic language textbooks and curriculum design to cater for national requirements and their own features. Finally, researchers are supposed to carry out case studies of primary and secondary ethnic schools in ethnic regions in order to gain a better understanding of ethnic situations. In a word, theories must be integrated with practice to establish a kind of ethnic language education with Chinese characteristics on the ground that only suitable language education is the best, and the key to progress and success.

All in all, if the Party and the state, under the guarantee and guidance of ethnic language education law, equip ethnic areas with qualified teachers, appropriate curricula and textbooks, Chinese characteristics, and at the same time, carry out scientific researches and academic discussion, ethnic language education in China will achieve brilliant success.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The discussion above is a systematic study of the implications of Aboriginal people's bilingual education in Australia. In general, Australia, in order to develop Aboriginal people's bilingual education, has formulated a series of policies and taken some practical measures. This has set a successful example for China in this regard on the ground that it has gradually solved language problems and preserved linguistic and cultural diversity by formulating language education policies and laws and implementing bilingual education for Aboriginal people. Governments of each level in China therefore should learn the successful experience so as to formulate better policies and take more practical measures. Exactly speaking, they are supposed to improve language education policies and laws, strengthen curriculum design and textbook compilation, emphasize teacher training, deepen theoretical researches and establish ethnic language education with Chinese characteristics.

With respect to the improvement of language education policies and laws, attention should be paid to comprehensiveness, specificity, practicability and ethnic independent capacity. In other words, the future ethnic language education law is supposed to compromise macroscopic contents, specific rules, Chinese characteristics, and attach importance to ethnic independent capacity to deal with essential issues.

With regard to the strengthening of curriculum design, the national conditions and practical situations of each ethnic group should be taken into account. In another word, curriculum design ought to pay attention to the learning styles of ethnic students, multinational and multicultural concepts and the traditional cultures of each ethnic group and those of other ethnic minorities. Besides, it should look forward to the world and act on international conventions. In view of the strengthening of textbook compilation, each state and relevant people are expected to attract capital investment,

organize a compiling group, establish publishing and managing institutions, and diversify textbook types.

In terms of the emphasis of teacher training, each area should make full advantage of current resources to improve their training systems, and make specific rules on training contents. Additionally, they should standardize the personnel management system. Governments of each level ought to show respect for talents and teachers, improve their working conditions and wages and, most importantly, remove their worries by giving priority to the evaluation of professional titles and the employment of their children.

As for the deepening of theoretical researches, relevant people, under the guidance of scientific attitudes, should establish research institutions to guarantee the implementation of ethnic language education. Besides, they should cultivate the qualities of researchers, like improving their bilingual or multilingual capacity, abundant knowledge of linguistics, ethnology and pedagogy and enabling them to master modern technology. Finally, they should carry out in-depth researches based on previous experience and outcomes.

As to the establishment of ethnic language education with Chinese characteristics, the psychological and cultural features of ethnic minorities should be taken into consideration. Specifically speaking, each area, when implementing ethnic language education, should pay attention to the specificity, namely, ethnic language-Chinese bilingual education or ethnic language-Chinese-English trilingual education in ethnic areas. Governments of each level should also take some practical measures, such as setting up their own education patterns, attracting capital investment from social circles, improving ethnic language textbooks and curriculum design, and calling on researchers to carry out case studies in ethnic regions to gain a better understanding of ethnic situations.

Finally, this proposed research has been finished with several limitations. It is conducted from the macro perspective and makes only a general description of the formulation and implementation of Aboriginal people's bilingual education in Australia. Though the author has made detailed implications of Aboriginal people's bilingual education for China, a much larger sample is needed so as to add color to the present study.

In working on the proposed research, the author has been inspired on some other aspects. First, a probe from a micro perspective is needed to enrich this regard. Second, an analysis of policies and practical measures can unfold a more colorful picture, which can include evolution of policies and relevant policies and laws, capital investment, teacher training, curriculum design and textbook compilation. Forth, there is no exaggeration to say that this is such an extensive field that any material about Aboriginal people's bilingual education in Australia could be discussed in details to form another article.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to give my sincere thanks to several people for their invaluable help in my academic studies over the past one year.

First and foremost, my heartfelt gratitude goes to my supervisor, Professor Duan Manfu for his kindness, encouragement, instructive suggestions and excellent guidance in my studies in Inner Mongolia University. Without his great help in various ways, this paper would have never been possible. What's more, his rigorous spirit will benefit me in all my life.

My thanks should also be extended to other professors, like Pro. Li, Pro. Liu, Pro. Zheng, Pro. Wei, and Pro. Bai. For the past one year, they have exerted great efforts to help me gain a full understanding of my academic areas.

My friend Fang Tonghui has shared her constructive ideas with me. I appreciate her enlightening suggestions and back-breaking jobs very much.

Last but not least, my parents have shown unremitting support and encouragement over the years by shouldering my tuition fees and living costs. To them, I owe a special gratitude.

REFERENCES

- [1] Chen Xiaoyun. (2008). Australian Language Education under Multicultural Circumstances. *Journal of Harbin Vocational & Technical College*, 4, 96-97.
- [2] Grin, F. (2003). Language Policy Evaluation and the European Charter for Regional of Minority Languages (1st edn). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- [3] Liang Junqing. (2008). Language Policy and Language Education in Australia. *Journal of language and Literature Studies*, 22, 159-160.
- [4] Liu Fugen. (1999). Australia's Language Planning. *Journal of Chinese Planning*, 5, 57-61.
- [5] Meng Bingli. (2005). Australian Ethnic Education Guided by Multicultural Policy. *Journal of Research on Education for Ethnic Minorities*, 6, 72-76.
- [6] Weinstein, B. (1980). Language planning in Francophone Africa. *Language Problems and Language Planning*, 4(1), 55-77.
- [7] Zhang Yanguo & Hao Shuzhuang. (2008). *The Theory and Practice of Research Methods in Sociolinguistics*. Beijing: Peking University Press.

Jie Li was born in Tong Liao, Inner Mongolia, China in 1991. She received her Bachelor degree in English Linguistics from Inner Mongolia University for Nationalities, China in 2012, and MA degree in linguistics abroad and linguistics applied from Inner

Mongolia University in 2015.

She is currently a teacher of English in Tongliao No.1 Senior Middle School and has published three research papers before. Her research interest includes sociolinguistics.

The Effect of Using Humor on High School Students' Grammar Performance and Motivation

Elham Kavandi

English Language Teaching Department, Farhangian University, Zanjan, Iran

Reza Kavandi

English Language Teaching Department, Farhangian University, Zanjan, Iran

Abstract—Teaching in high schools needs specific techniques, methods and skills in order to motivate the students (Ss) properly. In this study, the aim was to explore the effect of humor on students' grammar performance and their motivation. The study was designed as true-experimental research-randomized control experimental group, pre-test, post-test design. The participants were second grade high school students (120 students) in four classes. So, the researcher gave them a Nelson test in order to homogenize them. Out of 120 Ss, only 60 Ss who could get 50% percent of score were selected. Then, the Ss randomly were assigned one member of each pair to the experimental group and the other to the control group containing 30 Ss male in each cause-effect relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Then, the data analysis was done by SPSS version 21. The results indicated that there were statistically significant differences between the gained scores in the groups, namely experimental group in comparison to the control group. A questionnaire was also given to the participants to gather their opinions about humor and its effect on their motivation. The finding showed that a large number of students agree of using humor, because it is enjoyable and motivator. It can be concluded that there is significance relationship between using humor and the Ss grammar performance, and their motivations. . Then, through giving the treatment and placebo to the experimental and control groups, respectively, the researcher tried to observe the direct

Index Terms—motivation, intrinsic, extrinsic, humor, self esteem

I. INTRODUCTION

"Humor can help the shy and/or timid students to feel that they are a part of the class and to allow them to contribute or participate in class activities and assignment doing without feeling humiliated or vulnerable" (Chiasson, 2002). This can act as a means of enhancing students' motivation in learning as well as stimulating recall to the materials taught to them by the teachers; so, it is important for the teachers to motivate the students to be active and enthusiastic for learning. Also, Askilson (2005) states that we all learn more effectively and enthusiastically when we are enjoying the process. Humor sets a social context within which almost students feel comfortable and appreciate learning. As a teacher, if we use humorous techniques and methods in our instruction, we can attract the students' respect toward ourselves, and in that case it will be easy for the teacher to handle the classroom problems better. The nature of humor is that helps to create 'positive atmosphere which encourages the students to take part in desired participation and activities in class by decreasing anxiety and stress (Chiasson, 2002). Hence, the purpose of this research is to study the effect of using humor on students' grammar performance to see whether it yields positive effects in their scores.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

So far, no one has directly investigated the effect of humor on students' grammar performance and motivation. According to Tamblin (2003), you can and should create states of attention, curiosity, confidence, and more, as they are needed. One of the easiest ways to do this is through the appropriate use of humor. Neuliep's (1991) studied different types of humor and coded them. His findings indicated that humor can prepare the students for learning. The findings details include taxonomy and coded typology of humor. . Wandersee (1982) who is a biology professor suggests that since humor has appositive effect on the environment strengthens the relationship between students and teacher should be used as teaching strategy. He reasons that: "making learning more personal and enjoyable, and establishing a more efficient learning climate," and humor's main strength as producing a "classroom climate conducive to learning,"(p.213).Raeshide(1993) suggests that the students can benefit the humor if humor is used because the teachers are more comfortable in this case. He declares that: "Humor makes for a more relaxed atmosphere, which I am comfortable in. So, it helps the teacher, , as well as the students, when humor is incorporated into the lesson. His survey from fifth and six grade teachers shows that humor is an integral part of teaching. It is found in his guidelines that only one minute of humor can make the classroom a happier and comfortable place".

Michelli (1998) links humor to successful problem-solving. They agree that teachers can benefit of using humor from improving problem solving to increasing students' comprehension in the classroom. .. Wanzer and Frymier (1999)

regards about power of humor: “The theoretical explanation for the humor-learning relationship is explained by the attention-gaining and holding power of humor” (p. 49). Wanzer and Frymier(1999) studied about the relationship between instructors and their use of humor on student learning. They concur that the use of humor should “put students at ease, gain attention, and show that the teacher is human” (p.58). They relate in their study humor to the relationship of the student-teacher and the “immediacy as physical and or psychological closeness” (p.50). They note that as the teacher uses humor, he closes the perceived distance between himself and the students. They also (2007) report that immediacy that the teachers use whether verbal or nonverbal is useful to “reduce physical and psychological distance between themselves and their students to create more positive teacher-student relations” (p. 273). The main purpose is to decrease the perceived distance between students and teachers and establish a strong relationship. Additional findings from Frymier, Wanzer, and Wojtaszczyk (2006) supported their original work. Positive humor includes joking and playacting while sarcasm, racial, and sexual humor is labeled as negative and as detracting from the goal of the lesson. This study reports that utilizing of different types of humor will offer expected results.

Millard (1999) in her research suggests that laughing with your students about dumb things you have done is a good way to begin to strengthen the teacher –student relationship. She explains that laughter reminds a student: “teachers are human, too, , and this makes your room a safe place to make mistakes” (p. 9). Then, she explains how humor can create a better “feeling tone” in your class, affecting student comfort, learning, and potential achievement. Some courses particularly statistic courses are found to be “difficult to the point of being incomprehensible”

Gurtler (2002) says that humor is “rooted in a positive state of mind and extends to students appreciation” (p. 11). Lynch (2002) echoes this definition of humor. Humor provides a social function (e.g., communication) and is a reaction to ambiguity providing relief. Lynch adopts a psychological view of humor, intertwining it with motivational aspects. The teachers’ message should be encouraging, grade appropriate which could engage the students, and could assist in the goal of effective instruction.

In the current context of using humor in English classes of Iranian high schools (second grade students), we are facing an increasing level of accountability for the teachers to increase their students’ performances. Nearly, all the teachers try to utilize effective tricks to control their classrooms’ atmosphere, encourage the students to do their tasks well, help them to reduce effective barriers, motivate them to be effective and efficient by keeping a few simple rules of humor in mind which help them to be successful in their teaching and behaving with the students. So, the teachers try to utilize some techniques and methods which can facilitate teaching.

In fact, it is widely accepted that boring classes and anxiety atmosphere reduces the students’ performance; and, it is difficult for the teacher to run the classroom in this stressful situation since students cannot focus appropriately or be effective and efficient. So it may decline student’s self-esteem and make the class atmosphere to be hateful for them causing lots of problems both for the students and teachers.

Actually, much of the past researches have been conducted on the anxiety associated with oral production; so, as a teacher, it is important for us to know why the students’ grammar performance decreases in specific situations. Then we might what we can do to make the situation stress free in order to enhance students’ potential of learning and make the classroom atmosphere so enjoyable that everybody without any stress can enjoy the class and also enthusiastically take part in all sessions.

By using a few simple rules of humor such as, saying very short jokes, showing humor by our gestures, verbal activities and action, looking, role play, showing some funny things and pictures, or by telling very short stories, the teacher can help the students to do their tasks with their maximum potential of abilities in an enjoyable atmosphere. It also will hopefully help the teachers to encourage and motivate their students in doing given assignments and learning their lessons with high degree of interest and motivation.

This research tried to focus mainly on grammar performances and students’ motivation to know what factors affect students to achieve higher or lower scores in certain situations especially in their midterm or final exams, and how to increase the Iranian second grade high school students’ grammar performance and also motivate them by using humor.

The teacher expects that the students’ scores in grammar enhance in comparison to the control group’s score in midterm or final exam at least two times. The main reason that the researcher tries to measure students’ improvement in grammar is that it can help the teachers to teach grammar easier to their students in a friendly situation with their maximum capacity. Second, it can help the syllabus designers in preparing pedagogy materials in order to design and prepare the pedagogy materials easier by using humorous techniques and methods. Third, the benefit may also be for language teaching institutes to teach grammar consuming least energy with getting maximum efficiency. Forth, it is interesting for the teachers to motivate the students by creating friendly situation in order to increase their self-esteem and enhance their efficiency in learning. Finally it is expected that the students can be motivated by feeling relaxed because of the enjoying and relaxing atmosphere in the classroom. Hence, the research questions are:

1. Is there any relationship between using humor and students’ grammar performance?
2. Is there any significant relationship between using humor and increasing students’ motivation?

And the accompanying hypotheses are:

1. There is high relationship between using humor and students’ grammar performance.
2. There is a significant relationship between using humor and increasing motivation.

Null: There is no relationship between using humor and Ss grammar performance.

III. METHODOLOGY

The subjects in this study were 120 male students of second grade high school in Abhar's Ayatullah Khamenei School. Only 60 Ss, out of 120 were selected for the study with age range of 16 and 17. The students were aware that they are taking part in the study and were motivated by being informed in advance that they would receive extra awards for their participation.

For the purpose of the study and to investigate the hypotheses, some instruments were used. They were validated through a pilot study before being utilized in the research project. First, grammar test including 30 multiple-choice test items along with and answer sheet was used in order to homogenize the participants. In other words, the students were exposed to Nelson English language tests to be homogeneous. It means that, those students who could get more than 50% of the score were selected for the main purpose of the study. Then the participants were divided into two groups including experimental and control group. Each group consisted of thirty male subjects.

Second, before administering the tests, the researcher checked almost everything which would facilitate administering the tests whether there were adequate materials (pencil, paper ...) on hand, perhaps with a few extras of everything. All necessary devices were ready and checked to see if they had worked better. The next step was to make sure that there was a well-ventilated and quiet place to give the test with enough time in that space.

Third, the tests which were utilized in both groups were Nelson grammar Tests. They were employed three times after each treatment in both groups. They were standardized tests to determine the amount of grammar learning of the groups. In other words, they were utilized as achievement tests. In all, the test contained 20 items.

Fourth, a questionnaire including 14 items including 10 multiple-choose and 4 descriptive questions were prepared. That is a kind of eliciting surveys of students' opinions about the effect of humor on their motivation. Its aim was to collect enough information from Ss' motivation toward their course, English class, and teacher. There was no time limit, but generally took approximately 20 minutes for all. The items were prepared (appeared in Appendix B) in Farsi in order to be known for the participants and for ease of them in exams.

Fifth, the objectives, the instructional materials, and the criterion examination were taken from students' books (book 2). The tests were directly based on course objectives. They included the grammar materials equivalent to the second grade student's book.

Finally, the treatment was administered up to the third lesson of the book which had been taught. But, after the midterm exam humor was used as independent variables in experimental group; in other words, experimental group received treatments and the other group called control group, did not receive any treatment. It was run by traditional method of instruction or it got a kind of treatment called placebo. Both pre-test and post-test were defined considering the number of correct items. A correct item rated 1 and an incorrect answer corrected 0.

The study followed the true experimental design with the help of pre-test and some post tests during twelve weeks in target high school. As the table shows, the independent variable, in this case humor, is utilized in experimental group, but not in control group. It is the variable which is selected, manipulated, and measured by the researcher, so we can observe its effect on dependent variable. The dependent variable, on the other hand, is the variable which is observed and measured to determine the effect of the independent variable.

TABLE OF THE RANDOMIZED CONTROL EXPERIMENTAL GROUP, PRETEST-POSTTEST DESIGN

Group	Pre-test	Independent variable	Post test
Experimental	\bar{T}	X T2	X T3
control	\bar{T}	\bar{T} T1	\bar{T} T2

In this design T(exp) and (T con) are the tests before applying the treatment, and T2,T3, (exp), (con) are tests after each treatment, respectively, where X is the treatment. The difference between the mean of pre-test and post test of first group and the difference between pre-test and posttest of next group were tested for statistical significance. At the outset of the study, two groups were given pre-test containing 20 items about grammar materials, then the scores were calculated for statistical significance (by spss) after being recorded. Next, both groups received instruction through different method for twelve weeks (one session a week including 90 minutes). During this period the experimental group received humor, but control group received traditional method of instruction which will be shown graphically and statistically later.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In order to sort and display the data in meaningful way, the researcher went through three steps: coding the data, doing the numerical computations, and preparing a final display. Once the data were coded, descriptive statistics were used to help organize the data. The final data are displayed in graph form, table form, arithmetic form, or all three.

Out of 120 Ss, only 60 Ss who could get 50% percent of score were selected. Then, the Ss randomly were assigned one member of each pair to the experimental group and the other to the control group.

After collecting the data, the researcher’s first task was to organize and present the collected scores from 60 high school students in an understandable form.

TABLE OF STATISTICS

		exptest1	exptest2	exptest3	contest1	contest2	contest3
N	Valid	30	30	30	30	30	30
	Missing	1	1	1	1	1	1
Mean		14.2667	15.4333	16.1333	14.4000	13.3333	12.2333
Median		14.5000	15.5000	16.0000	15.0000	13.5000	12.0000
Mode		15.00	16.00	18.00	15.00	13.00	12.00
Std. Deviation		2.37346	1.94197	2.28539	2.30591	2.69525	3.13691
Variance		5.633	3.771	5.223	5.317	7.264	9.840
Skewness		-.450	.032	-.788	-.487	-.652	-.001
Std. Error of Skewness		.427	.427	.427	.427	.427	.427
Kurtosis		-.327	-.213	1.918	-.253	.584	-.729
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.833	.833	.833	.833	.833	.833
Range		9.00	7.00	11.00	9.00	12.00	12.00

As it is indicated in the following histogram chart, the scores are spread normally. It also represents that the scores are homogeneous, but after using humor it gradually becomes negatively skewed. This means that when the tail is pointing in the direction of the lower scores (-), the distribution is said to be negatively skewed. It shows that the scores become better gradually.

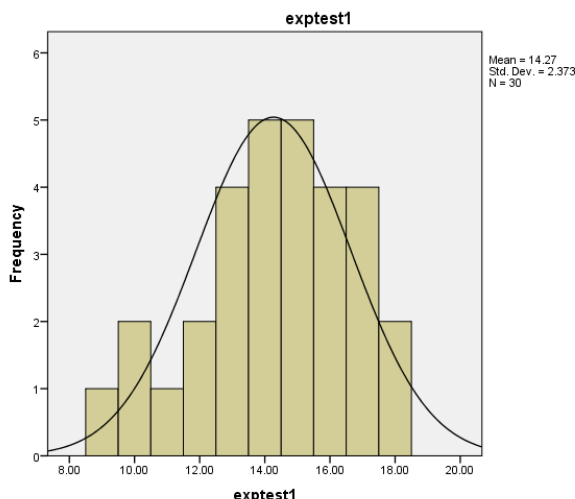


Figure4. 1 Approximate percentages under the normal distribution

In experimental group (test 2), it can be observed that the normal distribution becomes a little negatively skewed. By increasing the scores the mean becomes better than the previous test. Such improvement makes it possible that the scores spread to the right side of the central part of distribution. In fact, this chart shows that the treatment is effective and motivator too.

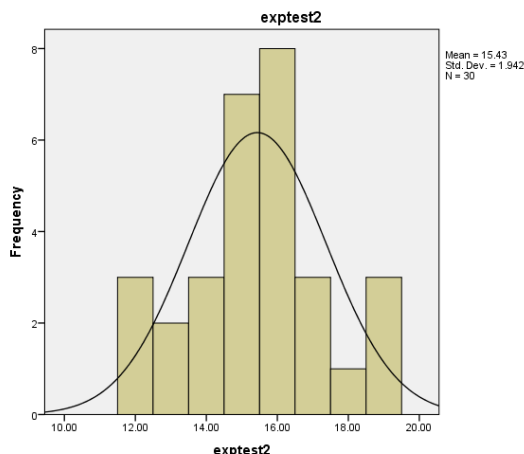


Figure4. 2 Positively-skewed distribution in experimental group

As it can be inferred from test 3 in experimental group the scores are scrunched up toward the higher end of the scale. It indicates that the treatment was effective and can be useful.

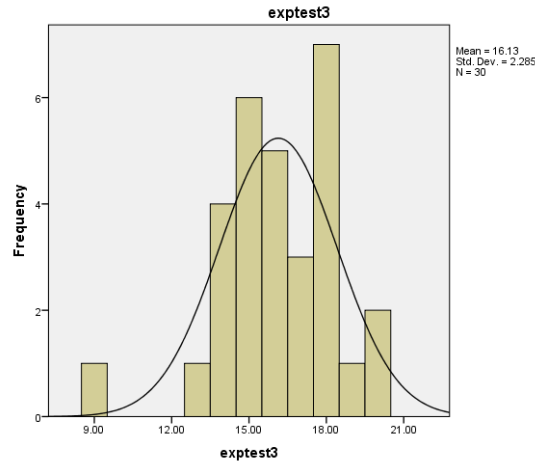


Figure4. 3 . More positively- skewed in experimental group

It can also be observed that the control groups' scores are distributed normally too. It means that the scores are distributed equally above and below the mean and symmetrically. Since the distribution of scores above central score is a mirror image of the distribution below the central score. We can see that scores range from a low of 9 to the high of 18.

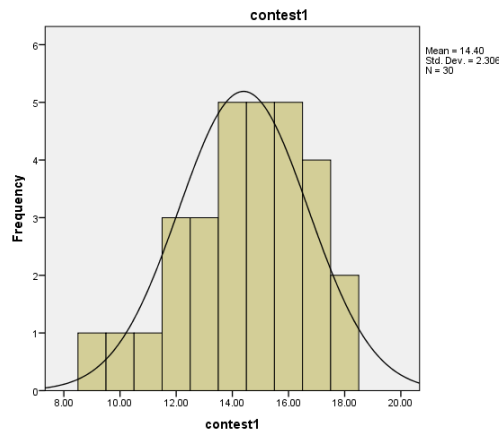


Figure4. 4 Approximate percentage under the normal distribution

In this case, the distribution shows that it becomes gradually positively skewed. It indicates that when the tail points toward the higher scores (+) the distribution is positively skewed. In other words the scores become worse by omitting the humor in this group.

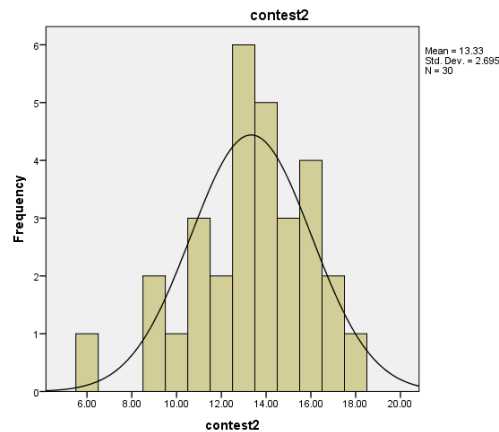


Figure4. 5 Negatively-skewed distribution in control group

In the following figure, it can obviously be observed that the distribution becomes positively skewed. It shows that by omitting humor some other factors may make it possible for them to become more tired of taking part in such classes and their motivation may be effected negatively without any flexibility, enjoyment, and humor.

It also clearly shows that the standard deviation increases in this case in comparison to test 3 in experimental group. This means that the average differences of scores from the mean in control group is more than experimental group. It still shows that the mean decreases in this group compared to experimental group (test 3).

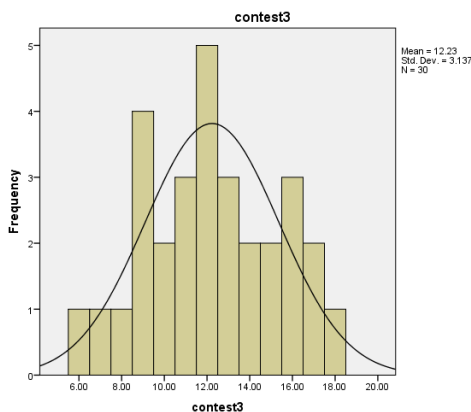


Figure4. 6 More negatively-skewed of scores in control group

Null hypothesis: There is no relationship between using humor and increasing student’s grammar performance.

Exp= mean=16.13 Sx=2.28 N=30

Con= mean= 12.23 Sx=3.13 N=30

$$T\text{- observed} = \frac{x_e - x_c}{s(x_e - x_c)}$$

Here is the formula of standard error of differences between means.

$$S(x_e - x_c) = \sqrt{\left(\frac{s_e}{\sqrt{n_1}}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{s_c}{\sqrt{n_2}}\right)^2}$$

$$= \sqrt{\left(\frac{2.28}{\sqrt{30}}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{3.13}{\sqrt{30}}\right)^2} = 0.7$$

As it is indicated in the following histogram chart, the scores are spread normally, it represents that the scores are homogeneous in this case, but after using humor it gradually becomes negatively skewed. It means that when the tail is pointing in the direction of the lower scores (-), the distribution is said to be negatively skewed. It shows that the Ss scores become better gradually.

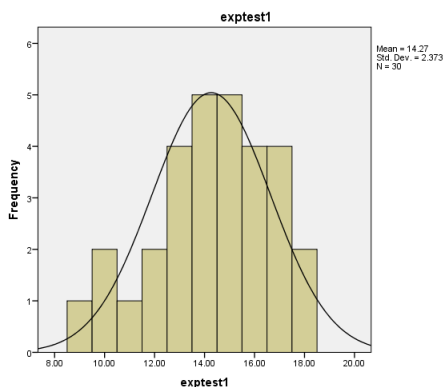


Figure4. 7 Approximate percentages under the normal distribution

In experimental group (test 2), it can be observed that the normal distribution becomes a little negatively skewed. By increasing the scores the mean becomes better than the previous test. Such improvement makes it possible that the scores spread to the right hand side of the central part of distribution. In fact, this chart shows that the treatment and motivator are effective.

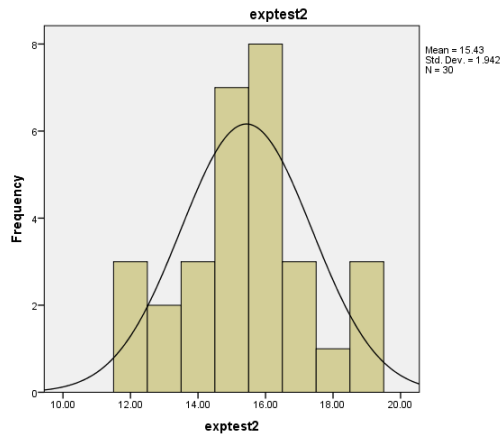


Figure4. 8 Positively-skewed distribution in experimental group

As it can be inferred from test 3 in experimental group, the scores are scrunched up toward the higher end of the scale as shown in the following histogram. This indicates that the treatment was effective and can be useful.

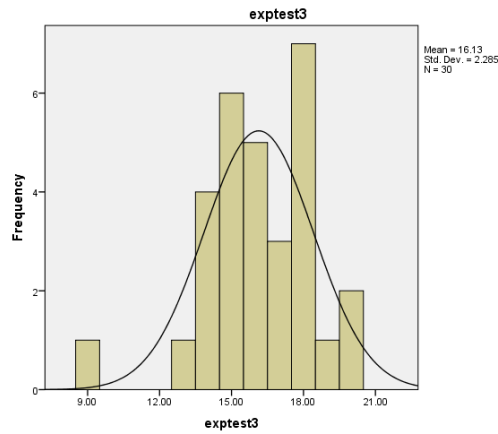


Figure4. 9 . More positively- skewed in experimental group

Looking at the graphic display in Figure 2.1 below, it can be observed that the control groups' score are distributed normally. It means that the scores are distributed equally above and below the mean and symmetrically. Since the distribution of scores above central score is a mirror image of the distribution below the central score. We can see that scores range from a low of 9 to the high of 18.

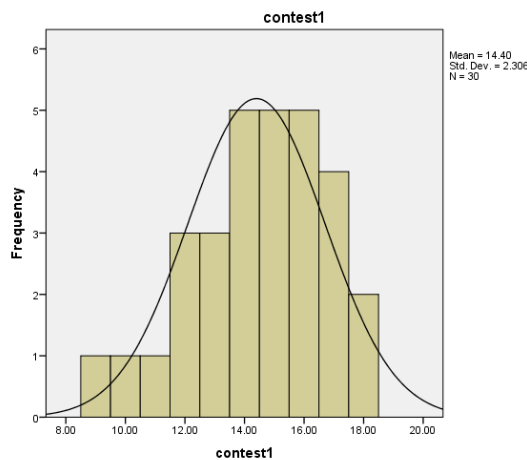


Figure4. 10 Approximate percentage under the normal distribution

In this case, the distribution shows that it becomes gradually positively skewed. The graph indicates that when the tail points toward the higher scores (+) the distribution is positively skewed. In other words, the scores become worse by omitting the humor in this group.

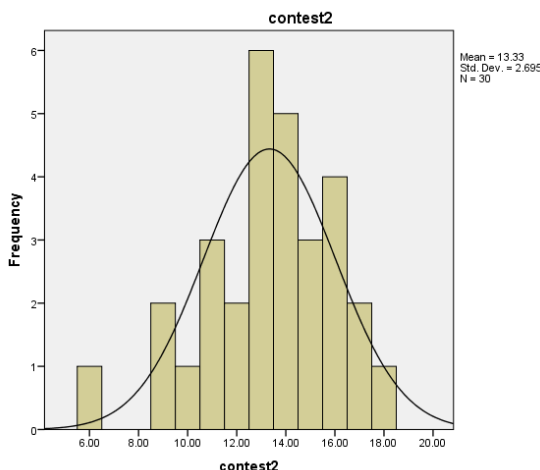


Figure4. 11 Negatively-skewed distribution in control group

In the following figure, it can obviously be observed that the distribution becomes positively skewed. It shows that by omitting humor some other factors may make it possible for the students to become more tired of taking part in such classes and their motivation may be effected negatively without any flexibility, enjoyment, and humor.

It also clearly shows that the standard deviation increases in this case compared to test 3 in experimental group. This means that the average differences of scores from the mean in control group is more than experimental group. It still shows that the mean decreases in this group compared to experimental group (test 3).

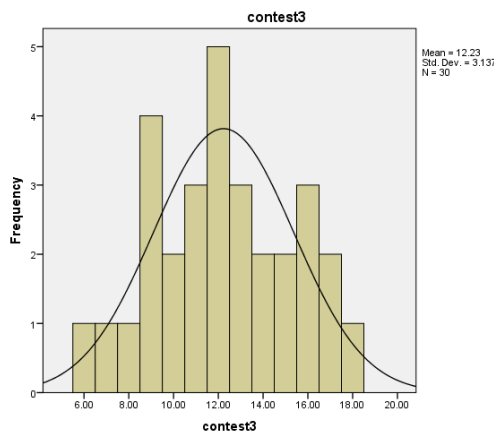


Figure4. 12 More negatively-skewed of scores in control group

Null hypothesis: There is no relationship between using humor and increasing student’s grammar performance.

Exp= mean=16.13 Sx=2.28 N=30

Con= mean= 12.23 Sx=3.13 N=30

$$T\text{- observed} = \frac{x_g - x_c}{S(x_g - x_c)}$$

Here is the formula of standard error of differences between means.

$$S_{(x_g - x_c)} = \sqrt{\left(\frac{S_g}{\sqrt{n_1}}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{S_c}{\sqrt{n_2}}\right)^2}$$

$$= \sqrt{\left(\frac{2.28}{\sqrt{30}}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{3.13}{\sqrt{30}}\right)^2} = 0.7$$

Now that we have the standard error of differences between the means, we can find the t value.

$$T\text{- Observed} = \frac{16.13 - 12.23}{0.7} = 5.57$$

At this point, all we need is the critical value for t when there are two groups having 30 students in each. So each group has 29 d.f. Since there are two groups, the total d.f. ($n_1 - 1 + n_2 - 1$) is 58. Now we can turn to the t-distribution table

to find out whether we are justified in rejecting the null hypothesis. It's understood that our number of d.f 58 falls between 40 and 60. Hence, we can choose 60 as being the more conservative estimate, and check across to the .05 column. The t value needed for our selected significance level of .05 is 2.000. Fortunately, our t value is enough above t critical that we are quite sure in rejecting the null hypothesis. Our experimental group scored more differently on final test of using humor. It shows that the experimental group who benefited from treatment, in this case humor, performed better than the control group. This indicates that our treatment was effective. So, we safely can reject the null hypothesis.

.t-observed=5.57, t-critical=2.00 so t-observed>t-critical.

The results of t-test analysis, indicate that the researcher has to reject the null hypothesis. The experimental group surpassed the control group. This means that the subjects in the experimental group surpassed the control group. It also means that the subjects in the experimental group benefited significantly from the instruction in using humor and hence this mode of training was significantly more beneficial than the traditional way of teaching without using humor.

Table-3 Independent samples t-test analysis of gain score differences in the grammar performance test.

TABLE4. 1
T-TEST

	Group	subject	Mean	Standard deviation	variance	T-observed	T- critical	Degree of freedom
Grammar performance-difference on post test	Experimen tal	30	16.13	2.28	5.22	5.57	2.00	58
	Control	30	12.23	3.13	9.84			

The t-distribution table allows us to compare our observed value of t with the appropriate family in the t-distribution table. The rows down the side of the table relate to the separate t-distribution, each with unique number of freedom.

1. Select the column with the probability that you want.
2. Select the row for degree of freedom.

For two values, number of degrees of freedom is $(n_1+n_2) - 2$

3. Compare the t-value in the cell with your t-value.
4. The results are significant if the t-value is greater that the value in the cell.(see table)

The following histogram chart below is representative of the differences between the mean scores in grammar performance in post-test.

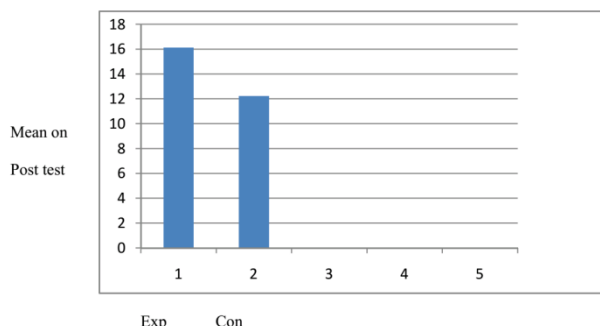


Figure4. 13 Comparison of mean scores in both groups on the final test

Where
Experimental=1
Control=2

TABLE4.2
STUDENTS' RESPONSES TO MOTIVATION QUESTIONNAIRE

items	Strongly disagree	disagree	No idea	agree	Strongly agree
1	3	7	10	5	2
2	1	4	6	13	4
3	1	2	10	6	8
4	-	1	4	10	11
5	1	-	1	17	8
6	1	-	4	10	12
7	1	1	4	9	12
8	2	1	4	9	11
9	3	2	5	13	5
10	-	1	1	6	19

V. RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

In this study, findings showed that teaching in even space without using humor is boring for the students to attend in the class. But, most of the students take part only out of fear of their parents or school authorities. The reason that teachers believe they should use humor in the classroom is that they think one of the best methods for keeping students focused on the class is using humor.

After administering humor oriented class, some interesting findings have been shown as follow:

1. Students showed enthusiasm to attend in the classroom and became more activated
2. Motivation improved in both over achievers and underachievers.
3. The rate of absentee decreased.
4. Performance showed high rate in experimental group.
5. Most of the students showed more respect toward their teacher.
6. Some parents demanded the teacher to teach their children privately.

The findings in this research support the idea that humor is a “worthwhile strategy” method in the context of vocabulary instruction. It also supports Rareshide’s (1994) research that the use of humor makes learning more enjoyable, which, in turn, leads to a more relaxed atmosphere, as well as positive attitudes about school.

There were also some negative results:

1. Few culturally poor students tried to make fun the teacher.
2. The students laughing with loud voices caused problem for other classes.
3. If humor is misused, the teacher may lose control of the class.
4. The teacher may be labeled as a buffoon.

REFERENCES

- [1] Askildson, L. (2005). Effects of humor in the language classroom: Humor as a Pedagogical tool in theory and practice. *Arizona Working Papers in Secondary Language Acquisition and Teaching*, 12, 45–61. Retrieved July 12, 2010 from Barbara Grass.
- [2] Chiasson. (2002) Using Humor in the Second Language. & iteslj.org /Techniques/Chiasson-Humor.Html by PE Chaiasson-cited by 26-Related articles. *The Internet TESL Journal*, Vol. VIII.No, 3, March 2002. <http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Chiasson-Humour.html>.
- [3] Gurtler, L. (2002). Humor in educational contexts. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.
- [4] Millard, E. N. (1999). Humor can be a serious strategy. *Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin*, 65(3), 9–14.
- [5] Neuliep, J. W. (1991). An examination of the content of high school teachers’ humor in the classroom and the development of an inductively derived taxonomy of classroom humor. *Communication Education*, 40(4), 343–355.
- [6] Lynch, O. (2002, November). Finding a place for humor in communication. *Communication Theory*, 12(4), 423–445.
- [7] Rareshide, S. W. (1993). Implications for teachers’ use of humor in the classroom.(Research/Technical Report). (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No.ED359165).
- [8] Tamblyn, D. (2003). *Laugh and learn*. New York: Amacom *College Teaching*, 52(1), 1–7.
- [9] Wandersee, J. H. (1982). Humor as a teaching strategy. *American Biology Teacher*, 44(4), 212–218.
- [10] Wanzer, M., & Frymier, A. (1999). The relationship between student perceptions of instructor humor and students’ reports of learning. *Communication Education*, 48(1), 48–62.
- [11] Wanzer, M., Frymier, A., Wojtaszczyk, A., & Smith, T. (2006). Appropriate and inappropriate uses of humor by teachers. *Communication Education*, 55(2), 178.



Elham Kavandi is a teacher trainer in Farhangian University. She was born in Zanjan, Iran. She has got her PhD degree in TEFL from Gazi University, Turkey in 2012. She took her B.A and M.A. degree all in Teaching English as a Foreign Language. Her interest areas are Applied Linguistics, CALL, and Teacher Training.



Reza Kavandi was born in Abhar, Iran in 1972. He got his B.A from Farhangian University, Tabriz, Iran in 1996. He also holds a degree of administrative of management from Peyam-e Noor university. He received his M.A in TEFL from Islamic Azad university, (science and research), Zanjen, Iran. Currently, he is a high school TEACHER in education office. He has been taught English for more than 20 years in different high schools of Abhar. His research interests are Teaching English as a Foreign Language, and psycholinguistic.

The Effect of Using Short Stories on Vocabulary Learning of Iranian EFL Learners

Fatemeh Parvareshbar

Department of English, Gorgan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Gorgan, Iran;
Department of English, Golestan Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Gorgan, Iran

Behrooz Ghoorchaei

Farhangian University, Tehran, Iran

Abstract—This study aimed at investigating the effect of using short stories on enhancing vocabulary learning of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. The purpose of the study was to come up with new methods of enhancing learners' vocabulary which enable both teachers and students to better cope with language learning and teaching. The design of the study is of quasi-experimental pretest-posttest. The participants were in two classes each of which had 25 students. One of the classes was considered as the control group and the other one was considered as the experimental group. The analysis of data using independent samples t-test showed that there was no significant difference between two groups at the outset of the study. After the treatment period, a posttest was given to both groups to see if there was a significant difference between the two groups. The magnitude of sig (2-tailed) on posttest was 0.01 that is lower than 0.05. Therefore, the difference is significant and the experimental group outperformed the control group. This can be attributed to the effect of using short stories on improving vocabulary performance of learners. The results have some implications for language teachers and materials developers.

Index Terms—vocabulary learning, short story, vocabulary retention, EFL learners

I. INTRODUCTION

Undeniably, vocabulary plays an important role in language teaching and learning without which learners will not be able to develop other skills successfully, since knowledge of vocabulary is the raw material for all thoughts and feelings to be expressed and conveyed through the medium of language. Harmer (1991) argues that “If language structures make up the skeleton of language, then it is vocabulary that provides the vital organs and the flesh” (p. 153). He overemphasizes the importance of acquiring vocabulary and states that very little can be expressed without grammar, while without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed. Hence, assisting learners to acquire a wide range of vocabulary knowledge seems to be indispensable for any language teaching program. Therefore, designing a structured and effective approach to enrich learners' knowledge of vocabulary has to be considered as the first priority. Most of EFL learners suffer from lack of sufficient knowledge of vocabulary and get frustrated by not knowing the meaning of key vocabulary items in a passage, consequently, they find the task of reading comprehension and other skills as tiresome, laborious and tedious job and soon give up the task. In order to help our learners not to get frustrated easily and assist them enjoy the language learning tasks we should find ways to enrich their knowledge of vocabulary, one of which is using authentic materials such as short stories that make it possible for the learners to widen their vocabulary and develop their competence and become more autonomous learners. To alleviate the problem, it seems to be of utmost importance for language educators and materials designers to provide learners with most interesting redundant materials that challenge learners and at the same time familiarize them with wider scope of vocabulary. To do so, researchers should take the first steps to pioneer new methods and techniques to make our learners as much competent to communicate in the foreign language as other EFL learners are. Having felt this necessity, the researchers have been motivated to probe into the issue and find out if implementing short stories can help learners enhance their vocabulary learning. The results of the current study can assist teachers to move in the direction of recognizing the importance of learning vocabulary and providing them with as much knowledge of vocabulary as they need to feel confident enough to take on the task of language learning more easily. Since in modern methods and approaches a greater weight has been given to vocabulary instruction than before, this research will be of great help for teachers and learners and our language teaching materials designers to incorporate more authentic sources into language teaching curriculum.

II. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study is to see whether using short stories can enhance EFL learners' vocabulary acquisition. Therefore, to help educational curriculum designers and policy makers to take the issue of using short stories into consideration more seriously and incorporate them into education programs.

In other words, the research sets out to answer the following question:

Does using short stories have any significant effect on improving vocabulary learning of Iranian intermediate EFL learners?

A. The Role of Short Stories in Vocabulary Development

Although there are many methods and strategies of teaching and enhancing vocabulary of EFL learners, the importance of extensive reading in the development of EFL learners' vocabulary is of great importance (Nagy & Anderson, 1984). And in this regard, implementing short stories can be the most efficient method to bring this goal to reality. This method has many merits for EFL teachers and learners. Panthan and Al-dersi (2013) and Pigada and Schmitt (2006) suggest a list of such benefits for making reading comprehension skill easy, interesting and enjoyable. Short stories also play crucial role in enhancing EFL learners' vocabularies. It is believed that the more students read, the wider their scope of their vocabulary knowledge becomes (Blachowicz & Fisher, 2004). In order to decrease the gap in vocabulary and comprehension, it seems to be imperative for the learners to discover and deepen comprehension of words during independent reading. Through short stories to enhance vocabulary of EFL learners, teachers have the advantage of teaching vocabulary in contextualized materials. This simply makes the learners to look for clues in the sentences that may tell them something about the meaning of the word in question. Researchers have pointed out the impact of visual and verbal clues on comprehending words in context. In this respect, Walters (2006) stated that enhanced reading comprehension became possible when students enrolled in an English language program where they were shown strategies of how to derive meanings of new vocabularies from contextual clues.

Researchers have also discovered that longer retention of vocabulary happens when they encountered them in numerous assignments. To make sure learners really learn the words, the learners must be able to use them in several different contexts, that is, they must use it in different occasions such as reading, speaking, writing, and listening (Rupley & Nicholas, 2005). The use of short stories provides the learners with the opportunities for integrating vocabulary instruction with other language skills. Many studies have also proven that contextualized vocabulary learning using short stories can lead to an increase in word usage compared with word-list instruction (Dixon-Krauss, 2002). Another advantage of using short stories is the cultural load in storytelling. Cultural load refers to the way language and culture are intertwined and the amount of cultural knowledge needed to understanding meaning to participate in an activity (Meyer, 2000). EFL learners have to learn words in context to comprehend the meaning. This can be possible with the use of selected short stories by the EFL teachers.

B. Ways, Methods and Strategies for Enhancing Vocabulary of EFL Learners

Many ELT teachers believe that learning vocabulary is equivalent to learning a list of words with meanings in their native language without any real context practice. Therefore, in most of EFL learning contexts, learners are often obliged to deal with unfamiliar vocabulary during their language acquisition experience. Each time the learners encounter a new word they have to look up the meaning of the word in a bilingual dictionary. Most of the time, the students write down a list of new words without knowing about their use in real contexts. This way of vocabulary learning is completely unsatisfactory because most EFL learners fail to understand and communicate the message in an appropriate way (Hunt & Beglar, 2005).

Many researchers have prevented the learners from memorizing new vocabulary items. According to Decarrico (2001), words should not be learned through memorization or separately without comprehending. This is because the words learned in this manner lead to overlooking of lexical features. It means that the learners only learn how to use the words in one specific form, but they do not get to know how the words are used in various contexts with some different shades of meanings in real life situations. As Nation (2000) and Smith (1985) express, learning new words is a matter of cumulative process through which word meanings are enriched and extended as the learners encounter them several times.

There are some other techniques and approaches for enhancing vocabularies of EFL learners by EFL teachers. One of these techniques is incidental vocabulary acquisition in which the items are learned through immersion in language tasks. Vocabularies can also be acquired through direct instruction in which the learners acquire words through a structured approach (Lituanas, Jacobs, & Renandya, 2001). Using dictionaries is another strategy to promote vocabularies. Teachers can also give their learners a vocabulary notebook in which they can be asked to keep a record of unfamiliar or newly discovered words until they need to use them in real contexts. Playing word games can also help learners to develop their vocabulary. Graves (2006) suggests a framework for successful vocabulary programs that facilitates effective teaching and learners' promotion of word knowledge. This program consists of four parts to develop robust vocabularies: first, providing rich and varied language experiences. Second, teaching individual vocabulary. Third, teaching word-learning strategies, fourth, fostering word consciousness.

More importantly, teachers can enhance and promote and extend learners' independent reading experiences and assist them to enrich and promote their vocabulary (Hulstijn, Hollander, & Greidanus, 1996). EFL teachers can persuade their fellow peers to talk about books, to ask questions and give suggestions. This strategy can effectively promote the learners' vocabulary by creating a language rich environment which boosts vocabulary acquisition. This can be attainable through providing learners with high quality texts that can sustain EFL learners' interest and motivation. In this concern, literary texts such as short stories can play a very significant role in enhancing and enriching the EFL learners' vocabulary. The idea of using short stories for promoting vocabulary of EFL learners has been suggested by

many ELT professionals (Wright, Betteridge & Bucky, 1989). They claim that using short stories is an effective way to learn vocabulary in EFL context. They argue that with the use of short stories teachers can create different contexts where students should use the language to communicate, exchange information and express their ideas. Similarly, Huang (1996) expresses that learning through short stories could encourage the operation of certain psychological and intellectual factors which can promote communication, enhance self-esteem, motivation and spontaneity boosting learning vocabulary. As a result, it seems to be important to explore and investigate if EFL learners can learn vocabulary efficiently through stories.

C. Studies on the Effect of Short Stories on Language Learning

Satitporn (1995) carried out a study on the effect of short stories on enhancing learners' ability to acquire vocabulary and influence the motivation of Thai EFL learners. In his experimental study he divided the subjects of the study into two groups, the experimental and control groups. The experimental group was taught using short stories while the control group was taught through traditional text books. The results showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group on the post test.

Tutwisoot (2003) conducted a study to see if short stories could enhance reading comprehension of EFL learners Thai learners. The results of the study showed after taking short story reading course, the mean score of the experimental group was considerably higher than that of the control group on reading comprehension test.

Bell (2001) carried out a study on the effect of using short stories on both reading speed and reading comprehension. Twenty-six elementary students participated in the study. They were divided into control and experimental groups. It was found that learners in the experimental group who used short stories made greater gains in reading speed than the control group.

Hopkins and Davis (1982) conducted a study on the effect of short stories on the Hispanic EFL learner's general English improvement. The results showed that short stories had a significant effect on improving the subjects' general English proficiency.

In the Iranian EFL context, Kharaghani (2013) carried out a study on the effect of using short stories on enhancing reading comprehension ability of Iranian EFL learners. The results of her study showed that the experimental group who were taught short stories considerably performed better than the control group.

In another study Ajideh (2013) investigated the effect of summarizing short stories on Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary learning. The results showed that the experimental group was considerably better than control group in terms of vocabulary learning.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The participants of the study consisted of 50 intermediate EFL learners who were studying at a language institutes named Iran National Language Institute in 2014.

These students were in two classes each of which had 25 students. One of them was considered as the control group and the other one was considered as the experimental group. They were tested for their vocabulary ability in order to make sure the homogeneity of the participants.

B. Instrumentation

a. An English vocabulary test

A test of vocabulary was used as the pre-test and post-test to gather data about the students' vocabulary ability. This test consisted of 25 multiple choice questions.

To evaluate the learners' vocabulary learning, a test of vocabulary was made based on Test Your Vocabulary by Watcyn Jones (2000). The vocabulary test consisted of 25 item with multiple choice options. The items which were in the content of the stories were included and very difficult words and very easy ones were excluded from the items in order to suit the learners' level of proficiency, that is, intermediate learners. It should be mentioned that the test underwent expert judgment for its validity.

b. Reading Materials

During the ten-session experiment, both the experimental and the control groups received the usual number of class with the reading materials. However, the experimental group was asked to read the following short stories: 'a body in the barrel', 'grab your umbrella', 'laundry day', 'a noisy neighbor', and 'fire alarm'. Each story was covered in two sessions. They contained about 200 words which were at intermediate level.

C. Design

This quantitative study concerns the impact of short stories on students' vocabulary development. The design of the study was quasi-experimental pretest-post test design.

D. Procedure

First of all, the participants were given a pretest of vocabulary to ascertain their homogeneity in terms of their knowledge of vocabulary. Then, the participants in the experimental group were taught the materials using short stories in a way that after presenting the reading material they were asked to underline the unfamiliar vocabulary items and then try to guess the meanings based on the context of the story. Then learners were given time to exchange views about the items they learned. At the end of each session during which a short story was presented, learners were given a quiz to evaluate their level of comprehension. Finally, at the end of the treatment period the participants were given a posttest of vocabulary to examine their vocabulary development.

The participants in the control group were taught vocabulary using traditional texts. They were presented the vocabulary items using word lists including synonyms and antonyms and dictionary definitions. The participants were taught the reading materials using the traditional approach. At the end of the term they were given a posttest of vocabulary to see how they perform on vocabulary test.

E. Conducting the Treatment

After the pilot study, the participants in the experimental group received the treatment. They were taught the selected short stories using the incidental vocabulary approach in a way that they were asked to try to guess the meaning of the unfamiliar words using the contextual story clues as well as sharing ideas with other peers.

In the control group, the participants were taught the reading materials using traditional dictionary definition through giving examples, synonyms and antonyms.

F. Administering the Pretest and Posttest

Pretest was administered to know students' prior knowledge. It was given to both groups (experimental and control group). After taking the pretest the students in the experimental group received the treatment while the control group received whole class teaching method (traditional method). In the end, the posttest was given to the groups to investigate if using short stories could improve students' vocabulary performance.

IV. RESULTS

A. The Results of Pretest

In order to make sure the two groups were homogeneous at the beginning of the study, the performance of the participants in both groups was compared through giving a pretest of vocabulary. Mean scores of the control and experimental groups were presented in Table 1. The Table shows that there was no significant difference between their mean scores.

TABLE 1
THE RESULTS OF THE MEAN COMPARISON OF THE VOCABULARY PRETEST

Mean	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Experimental group	25	21.0400	1.20692	.24138
Control group	25	20.6400	1.15036	.23007

The mean comparison of both groups using independent samples t-test showed that there is no significant difference between two groups. The mean score of the control group was 20.64 but the mean score of the experimental group was 21.04. To be more accurate and objective concerning the homogeneity of the two groups, an independent samples t-test was run between the scores of both groups on vocabulary pretest.

Figure 1 below displays the graphic representation of the mean scores of the groups in the pre-test.

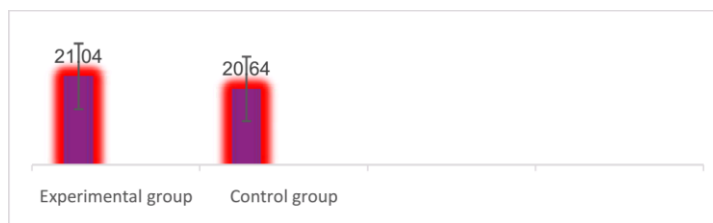


Figure 1 mean scores of two groups on pretest

The graph above clearly depicts that there was no significant difference between mean scores of both groups. In order to be more exact, an independent samples t-test was run to see if the difference was significant or not. Table 2 illustrates the point.

TABLE 2
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST ON PRETEST

	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
Equal variances assumed	.013	.908	-.455	48	.651	-.20000	.43970	-1.08407	.68407
Equal variances not assumed			-.455	47.492	.651	-.20000	.43970	-1.08431	.68431

The magnitude of sig (2tailed) was 0.23 which is higher than 0.05. This proved that both groups were homogeneous in terms of their knowledge of vocabulary. Next step was to analyze the results of posttest.

B. The Analysis of Research Question

The following null hypothesis was formed to be tested

Ho: Using short stories has no effect on Iranian EFL students' vocabulary learning. In order to investigate the hypothesis the following steps were taken. First, a posttest of vocabulary was given to both groups. The participants' performance in both groups was compared in table 3 below:

TABLE 3
MEAN SCORES OF BOTH GROUPS ON POSTTEST

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Control group	25	23.92	0.9092	1.18184
experimental group	25	22.08	1.2884	1.25768

Based on the statistics displayed in table 3, it can be argued that the mean score of experimental group was higher than mean score of the control group. The mean scores of the control and experimental groups were 22.08 and 23.92 respectively.

Figure 2 below shows the graphic representation of the mean scores.

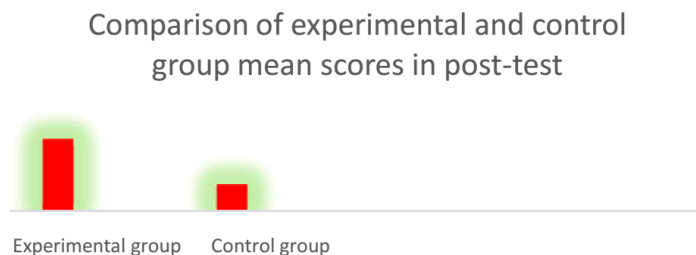


Figure 2 mean scores of two groups on posttest

In order to be more exact, an independent samples t-test was run between the posttest scores of control and experimental groups. Table 4 illustrates the results of independent samples t-test.

TABLE 4.
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST ON POSTTEST

	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
Equal variances assumed	4.055	0.050	2.663	48	0.010	1.840	.3153	.2058	1.4741
Equal variances not assumed			2.663	43.15	0.010	1.840	.31538	.2040	1.4759

According to Table 4, the magnitude of sig (2-tailed) is 0.01 that is lower than 0.05 therefore, the difference is significant and the experimental group outperformed the control group. This can be attributed to the positive effect of using short stories on developing vocabulary learning of learners. Consequently the null hypothesis for the research question was rejected.

V. DISCUSSION

The results of the data analysis showed that there was a significant difference between the two groups because of the treatment given to them. The findings of the study rejected the null hypothesis. It was concluded that there was significant evidence with regard to the impact of short stories on learning vocabulary.

The findings of this study are in line with the results of other studies carried out previously by other researchers who tried to investigate the effect of using short stories on different language skills such as Adeyemi (2008) who studied the impact of oral presentation of short stories on general language proficiency of learners. The results were in agreement with Sarigoz (2008), and Hişmanoğlu's (2005) findings who investigated the effect of short story reproduction on reading and writing skill of EFL learners. The findings are also in agreement with the findings of Adams (1995), Ghaith (2003), Stevens (2003) all of which confirm the positive effect of short stories on the performance of EFL learners in different language skills.

VI. CONCLUSION

The comparison of both groups' vocabulary improvement in the pretest and posttest has helped us find out the answer to the research question of the study. The pretest was designed for testing the subjects' English vocabulary knowledge to get some pre-examination of the two groups before the experiment. As mentioned previously, the control and experimental groups performed almost the same. However, the comparison of the posttest showed that there was a significant difference between the performance of control group and experimental groups. On the whole, the current study has brought out enough evidence to come to the conclusion that the use of short stories has positive effect on the learners' English vocabulary learning. In other words, learners who took part in the program were able to make more progress in their vocabulary acquisition than those who did not use short stories.

Concerning the previous studies in the literature, the current research confirms more value of short stories for learning vocabulary. In their investigation into L2 vocabulary acquisition, Woodinsky and Nation (1988) and Krashen (1989) claim that incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading short stories does occur. Also, there are those who believe that vocabulary acquisition through reading short stories is sufficient for L2 learners. For example, Nagy, Herman and Anderson (1985) argued that teachers must promote short story reading because it can lead to greater vocabulary growth than any explicit instruction alone ever could. Generally speaking, most practitioners of second language instruction seem to be resigned to the default argument that incidental L2 vocabulary learning through reading is sufficient. Based on Schmidt's (1990) and Ellis' (1994) theories that incidental L2 vocabulary acquisition should cover the right combination of implicit learning processes and explicit learning processes, the use of short stories was pedagogically successful in this study. In fact, during the experimental period, the learners in the experimental group were assisted with reading learning strategies, note-taking strategies. Explicit instruction was also offered to those who really met difficulties in comprehending the contents of language.

Under the light of Krashen's (1982) comprehensive input theory and Nation's (1991) theories of L2 vocabulary acquisition, the use of short stories was designed to be in the contents of comprehensible reading materials which were aimed to encourage learners to read a lot to acquire vocabulary and develop reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge. According to Nation (2001), the variety in meaning focused input helps vocabulary growth. Krashen (1989) also stated that reading short stories in an L2 is one of the main ways that language learners acquire new vocabulary knowledge. However, to achieve this, learners must be exposed to a large amount of comprehensible texts since many appearances of a word in the rich contexts helps students retain and reinforce its form and meanings. In this study, the results showed that the proper application of the short stories could bring about effectiveness to teaching and learning English vocabulary.

VII. IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

To make full use of the benefits of short story reading, students should be guided to choose appropriate reading materials, and to spend proper time on reading and to exploit effective reading strategies. According to Nation (1990) "for second language learners, direct teaching and learning of vocabulary is a feasible proposition" (p. 356). In order to get students to a vocabulary knowledge level where they can read texts with ease and acquire words by themselves, some form of explicit instruction should be offered. Concerning the role of reading texts, Hirsh and Nation (1992) also emphasize that most series of simplified short stories would play a vital part in developing L2 learners' vocabulary acquisition. Therefore, there is a need for more short stories which 'bridge' the gap between the monotonous reading and learning of vocabulary. Moreover, an effective short story reading program should engage the learners to get their sustained attention, should encourage large quantities of reading to get adequate vocabulary repetition, and should provide texts at the right coverage levels to allow unknown vocabulary to be adequately dealt with.

Since this study was just conducted on a small sample size with the experimental period of four months, it was impossible for the researchers to establish all the effects of short story reading on English language acquisition. Thus, it would have been better if further researches with the short story reading had been done on a larger sample size for a longer time. Also, more studies should be carried out to consider more impacts of short story reading on other aspects of vocabulary such as spelling, word-meanings, part of speech and grammatical characteristics. Further researches should be conducted on the students at other educational establishments so that the teacher would be able to employ the

program as an alternative way for teaching and learning English language effectively. Finally, in order to bring the present study to higher reliability and validity, it should be carried out under true experimental conditions in the future.

REFERENCES

- [1] Adams, D. (1995). Effective vocabulary instruction. Kirkland: Reading Recourses.
- [2] Adeyemi, D. A. (2008). The relationship between reading and English composition writing. Charlotte: Information Age Publishing.
- [3] Ajideh, P. (2013). The effect of summarizing short stories on Iranian EFL learners' vocabulary learning. *IJSELL*, 9(2), 100-113.
- [4] Bell, T. (2001). Extensive reading: Speed and comprehension. The Reading Matrix, Retrieved November 23, 2015, from <http://www.readingmatrix.com/articles/bell/>.
- [5] Blachowicz, C., & Fisher, P. (2004). Vocabulary lessons. *Educational Leadership*, 61(6), 66-69.
- [6] Decarrico, J. S. (2001). Vocabulary Learning and Teaching. Celce-Murcia, M. (ed.). *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language*, pp. 285-299. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
- [7] Dixon-Krauss, L. (2002). Using literature as a context for teaching vocabulary. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 45(4), 310-318.
- [8] Ellis, R. (1994). The study of second language acquisition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [9] Ghaith, M. G. (2003). The relationship between cooperative learning, perception of social support, and academic achievement. *System*, 30(3), 263-273.
- [10] Graves, M. F. (2006). The vocabulary book: Learning and instruction. New York: Teachers College Press.
- [11] Harmer, J. (1991). The practice of language teaching. London: Longman.
- [12] Hirsh, D., & Nation, I. S. P. (1992). What vocabulary size is needed to read unsimplified texts for pleasure? *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 8, 689-696.
- [13] Hişmanoğlu, M. (2005). Teaching English through Literature. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 1 (1) 53-66
- [14] Hopkins, W. & Davis, R. (1982). Reading instruction for English language learners. *The Journal for the National Association for Bilingual Education*, 13 (2), 161-180.
- [15] Huang, C.C. (1996). Senior High Students' vocabulary Knowledge, Content Knowledge, Reading Comprehension. *Proceedings of the Twelfth International Symposium on English Teaching*, pp. 391-402. Taipei: Crane.
- [16] Hulstijn, J., Hollander, M. & Greidanus, T. (1996). Incidental vocabulary learning by advanced foreign language students: The influence of marginal glosses, dictionary use, and reoccurrence of unknown words. *The Modern Language Journal*, 80 (12), 327-339.
- [17] Hunt, A. & Beglar, D. (2005). A framework for developing EFL reading vocabulary. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 17(1), 23-59.
- [18] Kharaghani, N. (2013). The effect of short stories on reading comprehension ability of Iranian EFL learners. *Proceeding of the Global Summit on Education*.
- [19] Krashen, S. (1982). Principles and practice in second language acquisition (pp. 16-32). Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- [20] Krashen, S. (1989). The input hypothesis: Issues and implications. New York: Longman.
- [21] Lituanas, P. M., Jacobs, G. M. & Renandya, W. A. (2001). An investigation of extensive reading with remedial students in a Philippines secondary school. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 35 (23), 217-225. Retrieved November 2, 2007, from <http://www.elsevier.com/locate/ijedures>.
- [22] Meyer, L. (2000). Barriers To Meaningful Instruction For English Learners. Theory into Practice. *Taylor Francis Online* 39(4), 228-236
- [23] Nagy, W., Anderson, R. (1984). Learning word meanings from context during normal reading. *American Educational Research Journal*, 24 (23), 237-270.
- [24] Nagy, W. E., Herman, P., & Anderson, R. C. (1985). Learning words from context. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 20, 233-253.
- [25] Nation, I. S. P. (2001). Learning vocabulary in another language. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- [26] Nation, I. S. P. (1990). Teaching and learning vocabulary. Boston, Mass: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
- [27] Nation, P. (1991). Teaching and learning vocabulary. New York: Newbury House.
- [28] Nation (2002). Best practice in vocabulary teaching and learning. In J. C. Richards & W. A. Renandya (Eds.) *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*, (pp.254-266), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [29] Panthan, M. M. Al-dersi, Z. E. (2013). Investigating the Role of Short-Stories in Overcoming the Problems Faced by the Libyan EFL Learners in Reading Comprehension Skill. *The Criterion*, 1(4), 1-8
- [30] Pigada, M. & Schmitt, N. (2006). Vocabulary acquisition from extensive reading: A case study. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 18(13), 1-21
- [31] Rupley, W. H. & Nichols, W. D. (2005). Vocabulary instruction in a balanced reading program. *The Reading Teacher*, 52(9), 336-346.
- [32] Sarigoz, H. A. (2008). Towards individual-centred foreign language teaching. *Journal of Language and Linguistics Studies*, 4 (6) 56-76.
- [33] Satitporn, N. (1995). An experimental study of the role of extensive reading on the ability to acquire vocabulary and motivation. *Journal of Language and Linguistics Studies*, 5 (6), 78-96
- [34] Schmidt, N. (1990). Vocabulary in language teaching. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- [35] Smith, F. (1985). Reading. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [36] Stevens, R. J. (2003). Student team reading and writing: A cooperative learning approach to middle school literacy instruction. *Educational Research and Evaluation*, 9(20), 136-160.
- [37] Tutwisoot, W. (2003). Use of the extensive reading program to develop reading comprehension, M.A. thesis, Khon Kean University, Thailand.
- [38] Watcyn-Jones, P. (2000). Test your Vocabulary. Edinburgh, Pearson Education Limited.

- [39] Walters, J. (2006). Methods of teaching inferring meaning from context. *Regional Language Centre Journal*, 37(2), 176-190.
- [40] Woodinsky, M., & Nation, I. S. P. (1988). Learning from graded readers. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 5(12), 155-161.
- [41] Wright A, Betteridge D, Buckly M. (1989). *Games for Language Learning* (new Ed.) Cambridge: CUP.

Fatemeh Parvareshbar has an M.A in TEFL from Islamic Azad University of Gorgan. Her main research interests are teaching and assessment of vocabulary.

Behrooz Ghoorchaei is an assistant professor of Applied Linguistics at Farhangian University. He has taught English courses in different institutes and universities in Iran. His main research interests are Language teaching and assessment, Sociolinguistics, and Teacher education.

Rhetorical Ways of Interpersonal Meaning and Translation Strategy

Xiufang Xia
Qingdao University of Science and Technology, China

Abstract—People use many rhetorical expressions to make the language vivid and expressive. Different languages may have different modes of rhetoric because of the different traditions and different modes of thinking. Whatever rhetoric speakers use, it shows kind of interpersonal meaning, so to transfer this interpersonal meaning of rhetoric appears very important. This paper examines the usual rhetorical expressions and their strategies of translation.

Index Terms—interpersonal meaning, rhetoric, equivalence

I. INTRODUCTION: RHETORIC AND TRANSLATION

A. *Rhetorical Ways in Communication*

Rhetoric began in ancient Greece two thousand years ago. It is a science in studying language. Rhetoric chooses the expressive ways in communication according to different situations. In daily interactions and all kinds of written texts, people use many sorts of rhetorical ways to express their meaning in a vivid way, which gives the listeners or the readers a deep impression. Rhetorical, to a great degree, determines whether the speaker is eloquent or the writer is versatile. Both English and Chinese have been researching and improving the art of using language, and each of them has a unique set of rhetoric. The rhetorical expressions in both languages share some similarities and also differences. Most of the expressions in English can find the similar or equivalent expressions in Chinese. But rhetorical expressions often show the features of source language which cannot easily be translated into the target language. Because of the different history, geography, tradition and living environment, people in different countries may choose different ways to express the same idea or concept. In translation, for these kinds of untranslatable expressions, translators have to translate in a flexible way. Sometimes, the forms of the original language cannot be retained in order to translate the meaning. In other words, it is quite difficult to translate meaning and form at the same time in the field of rhetorical usages.

B. *Translation and the Criteria of Translation Works*

Translation plays a very important role in cultural communication and international trade. It is also vital important in the spreading of religious beliefs. To decide whether it is an ideal translation, these factors are often considered. First, whether the translation is accurate. The meaning should be the same or as close as possible to the source language. Second, whether it is natural. The translation version should use the natural forms in the target language. Readers of the translation version can have the natural feeling as reading the works of its own language. The third is communicative. The translation version should express all aspects of the meaning in the source language (Bassnett, 1980).

Translation involves a lot of factors including the features of the two languages, the language competence of the translators and the situation in which the translation takes place. Translation can never be an easy transfer of words from the source language to the target language (Catford, 1965). The quite different language systems may add difficulty in the translation process. There are many kinds of translation modes, such as oral to oral translation, written to written translation, translation with pictures, etc. Whatever the mode, translation is always a dynamic process, and the translation products are different from different translators. For two thousand years, translation theory was concerned mostly with literary or religious works. No matter what kind of translation, a satisfactory translation is possible, but in most cases, an ideal translation is so hard to accomplish due to the extremely complicated factors of inter-lingual communication. For the last forty years, with the development of science of translation, theories about the translation of general language began to be emphasized (Hatim, 2000). The study of this paper is to summarize the rules of the rhetorical expressions in English and Chinese from the linguistic point of view, and then apply them in translation practice. In order to provide useful translation tips, some of the features that can be summarized should be declared in a definite way.

II. TRANSLATION OF RHETORICAL EXPRESSIONS

A. *Translation of Metaphor*

The study of metaphor has aroused the interest of many scholars, but the study of metaphor has been neglected in translation theory. In recent years, some scholars argue if metaphor could be translated due to the different thinking

modes of the two language systems. The biggest problem that hinders the translation of metaphor is that different cultures have concepts and symbols in varying ways, and so the metaphors are usually cultural-specific. Such as in the example "She is a cat", the sense is spiteful and evil in English, whereas in German, a cat is not associated with spitefulness or evil but with grace and elegance. So the literary translation from English to German would not communicate the metaphorical meaning. Another example shows that some metaphorical meaning in German cannot find the equivalence in English. "Sie ist eine alte Ziege" expresses a blend of stupidity and unpleasantness in German, however the negative meaning is not associated with goat nor cat in English. So the translation of metaphor, as Newmark puts it, "a new truth is created that requires a suspension of disbelief, a fusion of perception and imagination" (Newmark, 1985, P.296). The concept of "new" relies greatly on the metaphor itself. During the process of translation, it is often not so easy to keep the original form, that is to say, the formal equivalence is not easily maintained to transfer the same meaning. Otherwise it could provoke misunderstanding to the readers or audience of target language. Dynamic equivalence, which is defined as a translation principle that using various approaches to transfer the meaning instead of translating literally. Dynamic equivalence can obtain the same impact to the target readers that the one aroused in the source language. So dynamic equivalence has been favored by many translation theorists as the expressions are more understandable.

Another sense of metaphor that has to be mentioned is the fading metaphor, which is the result of lexicalization from the familiar quote. Some theorists argue that among the types of metaphors, the more bolder and more creative the metaphor, the easier it is to translate in other languages. Some severely criticize this, claiming that all metaphors should be translated literally. About whether a metaphor could be translated, Mary Snell-Hornby says "whether a metaphor is translatable means whether a literal translation could recreate identical dimension. How difficult it is to translate, how it can be translated and whether it should be translated at all cannot be decided by a set of abstract rules, but must depend on the structure and function of the particular metaphor within the text concerned." (Mary, 2001, P.58).

e.g. *She was born with a silver spoon in her mouth.*

The phrase "silver spoon" means that she was born into a rich family. The expression may be different in another language, but has the similar meaning. In this case, we can choose the public-accepted usages, instead of changing its form in order to get the equivalence with the source language. In Chinese, there is one expression "含着金钥匙出生" can equally describe this meaning. So the translation will be "她是含着金钥匙出生的。"

The problem of non-equivalence:

A great amount of factors including linguistic or extra-linguistic will influence the appropriate equivalence in a given context (Steiner, 2001).

On lexical level, the words and expressions in their situations are sometimes called lexical sets. Sometimes there is no direct equivalence for a term in the target language. Or the target language has the similar concept, but there is no such appropriate word. Or sometimes one language considers as the meaning may not have the same point of view in the target language.

Translators have to use strategies to solve the problem. One way that is frequently used is to translate the source language by a more general word. The opposite way is to translate the original language by a more neutral word with the less expressive meaning. In these two ways, the meaning is not transferred truthfully, so the translators need to have some notes to give some explanation.

In some cases, translators will choose to use a cultural-characteristic component or expression with a term in the target language which does not have the exact propositional meaning, but the term will probably cause a similar reaction in the target language.

Another way of solving this problem is to paraphrase using a related word. In the case when the idea expressed by the source language is lexicalized in the target language, but in a different way.

Using a loan word with some explanation can also solve the problem. This way is particularly common when translating culture-specific items. When a word in a text is repeated several times and there is no equivalent term in the target language, it is useful in using a loan word and it can be used later in the translation.

B. Translation of Simile

Simile uses the similarity between the object and the vehicle. In English, "like", "as" are often used to show this kind of rhetorical expression. Using some other easily-understood expressions to describe will create a vivid impression.

e.g. *Cool as a mountain stream! Cool as fresh Consulate.*

This is the advertisement of cigarette Consulate. This kind of cigarettes adds mint to tobacco, which makes a cool taste. So the advertisement uses a mountain stream to show the taste. When translate, translator can translate it literally:

凉如高山流水，爽似康斯丽特。

The Chinese version keeps the original simile "a mountain stream". The word "高山流水" gives consumers a cool and fresh sense. This kind of expression will arouse the interest of readers and the translation not only keeps the original meaning, but also expresses the meaning.

Another example is the sentence to talk about the comfort of shoes for children. It says, "They are as soft as mother's hands". It can be translated literally as "像妈妈的手一样柔软".

C. Translation of Parenthesis

Parenthesis is isolated from other grammatical elements, but it has the close relationship with the whole sentence. Parenthesis has the meaning of calculation, guessing or showing attitude of the speaker. Parenthesis is often put at the beginning or in the middle of the sentence. Between the parenthesis and other grammatical elements, there are usually prosodic pause. Usually parenthesis is used to stress or relax the intension, and sometimes, it may have very strong interpersonal meaning.

e.g. 你听我说, 我说这话绝对是为你好!

The parenthesis "你听我说" is put at the beginning of the sentence to show the leisure of the speaker, and it can also attract the attention of the listener. Parenthesis shows strong emotion of the speaker or writer. The interpersonal meaning in this kind of rhetoric is clear, and the translation version should express the same functional meaning.

e.g. The peasant woman receives nothing since whatever she earns is the property--as she herself is--of the husband who has brought her as his wife.

The parenthesis "as she herself is" emphasizes that the peasant woman has nothing, and even herself doesn't belong to her.

Translation strategy of parenthesis:

Usually the parenthesis in the original is also translated into the same kind of parenthesis in the target language.

D. Translation of Climax

When people arrange elements of language, they tend to be guided by their degree, that is, they will list their degrees from small to big, light to heavy, low to high, and slowly get to the climax. This arrangement can make the language well-balanced. The rhetorical method is often used in speech and argumentation, which can make the speech and the view of the argumentation powerful.

In climax, the choice of words is very important to show the degree, which makes the effect of rhetoric. The degree can arouse kind of emotion in listeners or readers.

Translation strategy: In order to express the original interpersonal meaning, translators have to understand the original meaning and keep the climax structure in the translation. Usually the climax shows the meaning is becoming stronger and stronger, so the translation version should keep the mood. In the way of choosing words in the target language becomes very important.

Anticlimax is the opposite side of climax, which can also create a rhetorical effect.

E. Translation of Antithesis

Antithesis is the rhetorical ways of putting the two quite opposite phrased in symmetrical structure.

In Antithesis, there is always an apparent contrast. By using contrast, the meaning that the speaker or writer wants to convey is more clear. And using the contrast, the interpersonal meaning that attached to the rhetoric is more easily grasped by the listener or writer. At the beginning of the long novel "A Tale of Two cities", the writer used many antithesis to show the contradiction of the city. And this paragraph is one of the most famous writing in the literature history, which is partly due to this kind of rhetoric. The antithesis shows the contradiction of the society and the author's disguise towards the dark society.

e.g. 横眉冷对千夫指, 俯首甘为孺子牛。

One attitude is the hatred to the enemy, and the other attitude is the broad love to the partners. When these two attitudes were put together, the interpersonal meaning is expressed more clearly. The translation strategy of antithesis is to keep the contrast in the original, and the contrast in the original can help us in our choosing suitable words.

The contrast makes the viewpoint of the original text stronger, and when translators do the translation work, they should keep the contrast in the original. But the target language may not have the similar form to express the contrast meaning, so translators have to deal with this kind of structure creatively. Translators have to bear in mind that antitheses use words in pair to express the strong mood, so it is better for the translators to use pair words in the target language.

F. Translation of Personification

Personification is a kind of rhetoric that uses human being to describe other objects, producing a more vivid picture. Personification is often used in commercials and advertisements. Consumers can have a sense of closeness and they can be more easily attracted by the artistic language.

e.g. *Whatever it hurts, we'll heal it.*

无论哪里有伤痛, 我们都会治愈。

This is one sentence from the advertisement of leather bag repair service. It uses the word "heal" to express the meaning of repair. Bags are treated as something like a person, so customers will be very happy to see that their bags are carefully taken care of. Translation can keep this personification.

G. Sentence Structure and Translation Strategy

Simple sentences have strong emphatic function. The short sentences have a strong rhythm, which may express a

series of action which happen in a short time, producing a feeling of anxiety and nervousness. The following example can show the effect that short sentences can produce.

In Ernest Hemingway's novel "*Big Two-Hearted River*", he used a lot of short sentences. These simple sentences can express the light feeling of the hero after he returns from the war.

Because the short sentences also have the function of expressing interpersonal meaning, translators should catch the meaning in their context and keep this sentence form in translation.

About language structure, there is another point that is very important and it needs to be paid attention in translation. English is characterized by hypotaxis, which means English gives more attention to the sentence structure, so formal cohesion is much emphasized, while Chinese is characterized by parataxis, which means that the sentence structure is not so close, and the relation between sentence parts is often loose and not clear. This is also the reason while there are more function words in English. Chinese clauses do not use so many function words and the sentence parts are related to each other through meaning. So it is said that Chinese sentence is like a bamboo, and the upper joint continues from a lower one, but the English is developed like a tree, with many branches extending from the stem. In translation, this kind of difference has to be paid more attention in order to present an ideal translation.

H. Translation of Repetition

To stress some kind of mood or sentiment, one particular word, phrase or sentence may be used again and again, which have a rhetorical meaning. Repetition can often be found in speech, poetry or other argumentation articles. It can attract the attention of the listener and give them more impressive impression.

e.g. In Tomas Hood's "*song of the shirt*", repetition is used as an important way to express the author's idea. In the poem, the word "*work*" is repeated six times. The repetition shows the hardship that the workers are enduring. By reading these repetitions, readers can sense the pressure in the worker's heart and their will to fight against the unfair treatment to them.

Generally speaking, if there is repetition in the original, we should also use repetition in the translation. Such as in the above example, "*song of the shirt*", in order to express the same interpersonal meaning, the same repetition should be used in the translation version. But there is some difference in this rhetorical usage. Some of the repetition in Chinese cannot have the same effect in English.

The translation doesn't use the same repetition, but it also can express the same meaning of the original. On the contrary, if translators use the same repetition with the original sentence, it would seem redundant.

In Chinese, there is always a repetition in the comparative structure. Such as the repetition in the following example.

这件事情条件成熟了的话可以去做，条件不成熟的话不要去做。

If the conditions were ripe it could be done, and not otherwise.

The repetition in Chinese is not translated into the same repetition in English. The only word "otherwise" can express the meaning of contrast with simple structure. In this case, translators can use the usages according to the features of the target language. In other words, keeping the form is not so important as the meaning. If the meaning can be expressed clearly without the repetition in the translation version, it can be dealt with flexibly.

On the contrary, sometimes in the translation, some elements that doesn't repeat in the original have to be repeated in the target language. So the strategies in the translation of repetition are various according to the different context. Translators can choose the suitable ways in the target language to convey the same meaning, without being confined to the repetition in the source language.

I. Translation of Parallelism

Putting phrases or sentences that have similar structure and corresponding mood in order makes parallelism. Because the sentence is composed by phrases or sentences with similar structures, this rhetorical means can create the effect of foregrounding, which in turn attract the attention of the readers. In argumentation articles, parallelism will make the article's orderliness and argument clearer to the readers.

e.g. And now, you who have so long been bound to the most narrow and material views, you who have denied the virtue of transcendental machine, you who have always derided your superior-behold!

诺，你这个一向目光短浅，见解鄙俗的人，你这个否认超常医学功能的人，你这个一贯嘲笑前辈的人，睁开眼睛瞧瞧吧！

J. Translation of Rhetorical Question

Using question to express the strong positive or negative meaning. It needs to answer of the speaker or reader. In rhetorical question, the positive form can express the strong negative meaning, and the negative form can express the strong positive meaning. Rhetorical questions can catch the attention of the listeners, and they even can make the listeners think, then the speaker and the listeners may reach the state of resonance.

In the speech made by Patrick Henry, *Give me Liberty or Give Me Death*, he used four continuous rhetorical questions. "*Why stand we here idle? What is that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery?*" The series of rhetorical questions attract the attention of the listeners and make the speech very powerful.

e.g. 在战争时期，工程质量这样事关紧要的问题，难道是可以争论的问题吗？

Is the quality of projects which is of vital importance the question that can be argued during war time?

The rhetorical question shows that the question is definitely not arguable, and this rhetorical usage makes the interpersonal meaning clearer to the readers.

Since the rhetorical questions show the strong feelings of speakers or writers, translators should keep this rhetorical expression. Such as in the speech made by Patrick Henry, the four rhetorical questions should use the same pattern in the Chinese version.

K. Translation of Continuous Tense

In English the interpersonal meaning can be expressed by the tense, especially the continuous tense, which can show the feeling of anger, surprise, affection or impatience etc.

e.g. Fifty-seven his hair is just beginning to go grey.

The present continuous tense shows the feeling of surprise.

There is no corresponding usages in Chinese, so translators have to transfer the meaning with some lexical usage.

他五十七了才开始头发变白呢。

Paper napkins were costing the school \$28.57 per case but were available at just \$8.76.

学校为购买餐巾，每盒竟付款 28.57 美元，而其他地方价格仅为 8.76 美元。

So, Chinese can use “竟”“竟然”，“居然”to express the feeling of surprise, use “确实”，“总算”，“倒是”to express the feeling of agreement, and use “就”“竟”“倒”“到底”to express the feeling of disgust or censure.

III. CONCLUSION

The analysis of this chapter shows that many grammatical ways of expressing interpersonal meaning sometimes do not have corresponding usages in Chinese, for example, the four types of moods, the modality, the subjunctive mood, the repetition and the tense, etc. In these cases they have to be changed into lexical ways to express the interpersonal meaning. For some of the rhetoric, it is important to keep the original rhetoric if the two languages have the same usage in that kind of rhetoric. Translators can deal with the different ways of translation according to the context.

REFERENCES

- [1] Bassnett, S. (1980). *Translation Studies*. London: Methuen.
- [2] Catford, J. C. (1965). *A Linguistic Theory of Translation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- [3] Hatim, B. (2000). *Communications Across Cultures: Theory and Contrastive Text Linguistics*. Exeter, UK: University of Exeter Press.
- [4] Mary Snell-Hornby. (2001). *Translation Studies: An Integrated Approach*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.
- [5] Newmark, P. (1985). *A Textbook of Translation*. London: Prentice Hall.
- [6] Steiner, G. (2001). *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

Xiufang Xia was born in Gaomi, China in 1975. She received her MA degree in linguistics from Ocean University of China in 2002.

She is currently a lecturer in Qingdao University of Science and technology, China. Her research interests include functional linguistics and translation theory. She has published more than ten articles about functionalism and language teaching in recent years.

The Effect of Cultural Transfer of Connotative Meaning of Vocabularies on Iranian EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension

Narjes Mabhoot

English Department, Islamic Azad University, Science and Research Branch, Neyshabour, Iran

Mitra Zeraatpishe

English Department, Islamic Azad University, Mashhad, Iran

Abstract—This research has been worked upon analyzing the effect of cultural transfer of connotative meaning of vocabularies on Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension. 100 participants took part in the study who were divided into 2 groups: experimental group in which the cultural transfer took place; and the control group in which the traditional teaching without mentioning cultural transfer occurred. It should be taken into consideration that both groups have been tested by the same text taken from TOEFL as a pre-test and a post-test. The obtained results were calculated and analyzed by statistical t-test, indicated that the learners had a better comprehensive performance in second language texts by using the cultural transfer of connotative meaning of vocabularies. Results indicated the outperformance of the experimental group.

Index Terms—connotative meaning, cultural transfer of connotative meaning, denotative meaning, reading comprehension

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Introduction

In second Language learning, first Language is a main factor affecting L2 learners' inter-language development. Findings involving the L1 transfer to L2 are very argumentative and contradictory. In recent years, there has been an agreement that language transfer involves cultural factors, such as thought patterns, cultural values, customs, habits and it is also a common phenomenon in L2 learning. Language transfer is regarded not only as a mechanical transference of first language structure but also as a cognitively complex mechanism involving many factors. It is important that some cultural factors be taken into consideration with the study of language transfer in development of sociolinguistics. In traditional English classroom teaching, learners and teachers spend quite a lot of time and energy on the expansion of learners' vocabulary' but they rarely combine word learning with the cultural background of target language (WU & DOU,2011). When talking to the people who used to be students in the years 1340s and 1350s, I found that the teachers used to teach a book which was called "Direct Method" and in this book the students had to learn a lot of difficult vocabularies and passages that had no relation with their cultural background. It was just a number of words that the students had to memorize just to pass the course without in aim. A word has the conceptual meaning, metaphorical meaning, and associative meaning. Such as the word "economy" which has different meanings and usage depends on where and how it is been used. It can refer to course of study and also the wealth obtained by a country or region from business and industry. Gamble (1996:77), believes that perception is the process of selecting, organizing, and interpreting sensory data to make us realize the sense of our world. Nanda gives the definition of religion which deals with the nature of life and death, the creation of the universe, the origin of society and groups within the society, the relationship of individuals and groups to one another, and the relation of humankind to nature. Nature refers to the air, water, land, geography, and all the other situations that influence the way in which people live, speak, and behave. History as a world view penetrates on people's perception, behavior, and thus is reflected in the languages (Nanda 1994: p.349). As a result in teaching vocabulary, the teachers and the learners should both see through the conceptual meaning and permeate the cultural meaning in the target language. Although teachers have had the agreement that cultural-loaded words affect text understanding, few experimental studies seem to have been conducted in this field to provide sufficient evidence to support the above statement in EFL context so far. However, understanding a word's cultural connotation is rather important and difficult, and it is an absolutely necessary part of what Read (1993) calls "depth" of vocabulary knowledge (how well they know particular words) and David D. Qian's (1998) finding produced empirical evidence that depth of vocabulary knowledge made a unique contribution to the prediction of reading comprehension scores. For this reason, passages, stories, novels, and etc. are all written by professional writers and actors for the people to convey their thoughts and opinions. As a result, they ought to use words that are applicable based on the subjects, situation, and titles of what they are writing. These vocabularies sometimes have denotative meanings which indicate

signs or symbols of something which in turns are necessary to be familiar with EFL learners who should be aware of them for comprehending what they are reading. Here, the role of the teacher is to make the learners be acquainted with these factors including: background knowledge and also cultural meanings of vocabularies in reading texts based on what the writer's opinion has been and for what purpose the reading is to be thought. Connotative meanings of vocabularies in rising EFL learners' reading comprehension could help only if the learner himself/herself has a widespread comprehensive knowledge and information relating to the subject which is dealt with. Imagine a person who is planning to travel to other countries, how much language should he know in order to be able to communicate and contact with people? It depends on for what purpose he is going to that particular place. Therefore, he must learn as many necessary words as possible to convey and transfer his thoughts. Learners' enthusiasm, motive, and interests are important factors in learning a foreign language. Therefore, improving, expanding, and having as much information and vocabulary as possible about a particular language would be essential in comprehending a passage and naturally increases the awareness of a learner. So, this study will explore some of the challenges in more details in which intermediate learners face when acquiring vocabulary and what strategies could help them in their process to reach a native like proficiency in comprehending L2 reading texts.

B. Statement of the Problem

Once I observed a class of 20 students who were taught how to deal with the passages that were in their course books. The teacher started to read the passages to the students through paraphrasing the paragraph without letting the students be aware of the new and key words and expressions of the target language and after the teaching was done the teacher tried to ask some comprehension questions but most of the students could not respond accordingly. As it was seen, in many cases, vocabulary was not teaching in advance, but testing the students without knowing the new words. It means that some teachers used to give the students some texts and asked them to have external reading and comprehend the texts. Here, the learners used bilingual dictionaries while reading texts to find the unknown words. In some other cases, the learners were asked to translate the reading texts sentence by sentence into their L1 to get the main ideas. It is obvious that transferring the cultural connotation of vocabularies is closely related to the learners' background knowledge and awareness with their second language cultures. As a result, if the learners are not fully aware of their L2 cultures, how could it be possible to do the transference correctly? If in intermediate levels, there is no treatment by the teachers, how can the learners comprehend the reading texts through extensive reading? And finally, how can the students deal with the collocations and expressions which have no equivalent meaning to their L1? How can they transfer them correctly? They may get confused or find the meanings irrelevant to those texts, and they won't also be able to understand the author's main ideas or the text's main points. These obstacles have intrigued the present study lessen the L2 learners' misunderstandings in translating cultural connotations of words into their first language.

C. Significance of and Justification for the Study

As it is obvious, learning another language involves fundamental knowledge of words. The above-mentioned concept leads this study in mind and presents the following aims: Revise theoretical literature that supports the importance of learners' awareness in vocabulary acquisition in reading texts, identify the challenges that L2 intermediate learners have in acquiring vocabularies in an EFL context based on a personal introspection and literature purpose, and describe solutions (vocabulary teaching strategies) for intermediate learners who want to reach most of their comprehension in reading texts. This is an important fact for the teachers, how to teach reading texts, and for the students, how to comprehend the texts and how much they get to the author's main opinions in the text. It seems that most teachers and learners, pay more attention to the denotative meaning of words in reading texts, so they may get confused in comprehending the main points. But using connotative meanings of vocabularies through transferring can help them understand the texts better. Mostly, EFL learners, always used to challenge themselves in comprehending reading texts without mentioning each word's dictionary meaning. The majority of learners want to guess the cultural meaning of unknown words while reading a text and also expect their teachers to do this while teaching them. Most of the time, they are used to asking them to look up the new words in their dictionaries and find denotative meanings of unknown words without mentioning their cultural meanings in that especial text. Sometimes, it made them confused because the denotative meaning isn't meaningful at all there. Consequently, the present study is an attempt to base on this vocabulary teaching strategy (cultural transfer of connotative meaning) to verify whether the reading texts could be more comprehensive.

II. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

A. Cultural Transfer and Cultural Connotation of Vocabulary

In 1989, Odlin gave an explicit definition of transfer after summarizing all the studies about the transfer in second language acquisition, believing that it is the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired (1989:27)". Based on this belief on the definition of language transfer, cultural transfer possibly refers to the cultural influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target culture and the culture that has been previously acquired. Dai and Zhang (2000) categorized cultural transfer into two layers: the surface- structure transfer which occurs at the exterior level. For

cultural meanings of vocabulary, the Russian linguists stated that there can be 5 categories of vocabulary: vacant words, words with strong cultural connotation, idioms, proverbs and polite formulas. These categories exist in all languages. Native speakers apprehend them unconsciously within the particularly cultural settings. L2 learners, however, are subject to understand and output L2 based on their own cultural background due to the lack of intercultural cultivation. Therefore surface- structure transfer occurs. Deep- structure transfer which occurs at the unconscious level, is considered as a dominant barrier in L2 learning and is closely related to the perception, attitude, beliefs, and values of a culture.

B. Analysis Approach to Cultural Transfer

Lado (1957), who was the first person conducted the study of cultural comparison, argued that there are 3 cases which would lead to cultural transfer: when the form has different meanings in two cultures; when the same meaning in two cultures is related to different forms; when a pattern that has the same meaning shows different distributions. However, Lado and other linguists did little research on this field. They just mentioned cultural transfer as early as language transfer.

C. Kellerman's Psychological Markedness Theory

Kellerman (1987) refers to the perception of L2 and the distance from the L1 as a "psychotypology". Kellerman (in Gass and Selinker, 1993) argues that there are constraints on language that go well over mere similarity and some differences of the two languages in question which ultimately involve the learner as a very active participant in the learning process, who decides exactly on what can and cannot be transferred. He suggests two interacting factors which are involved in language transfer. One of them is the learner's awareness of the nature of the L2 and the other one is the degree of markedness of the L1. According to Kellerman, there are parts of one's language which native speakers ponder irregular, infrequent or semantically obscure. These irregular items are more significant and less transferable comparing to frequent and regular forms. The former was language- specific; meanwhile, the later was language- natural. Language- specific elements are those which a learner views as a unique to his language, whereas language- natural elements are those which the learner believes to be common, at least to the native and the target language.

Kasper (1992) presents that learner's language proficiency and intercultural awareness are two factors which may influence the possible transfer. In his paper, he conducted an experimental study to justify how the factors influence transfer of cultural connotation of vocabulary and considers that transfer refers to the influence which previous pragmatic knowledge has on the use and acquisition of L2 pragmatic knowledge. As he mentioned, pragmatic transfer in interlanguage pragmatics shall refer to the influence exerted by learners' pragmatic knowledge of languages and cultures other than L2 on their comprehension, production and learning of L2 pragmatic information. We notice that, Kasper's approach is process-oriented and comprehensive; allowing the study of transfer in learning and in communication; and also in the sense that she talks of 'influence' without definite mention of the types of influence referred. Kasper (1995) defined pragmatic transfer as the influence exerted by learners' pragmatic knowledge of languages and cultures other than L2 on their comprehension, production, and acquisition of L2 pragmatic information. Wang (1998) in a research defines that major is an important factor that may influence the transfer. He argues that there is significant difference between English- major students and non English- major students in the learning of language vocabulary. Furthermore, Gass and Selinker (1993) mentioned that language transfer is in fact a real and central phenomenon that must be considered in any full account of the second language acquisition process. In recent years, there has been renewed interest in vocabulary research, however, there is a lot of uncertainty about teaching vocabulary, and the reason is not only the anti-teaching principles of Krashan and some other applied linguists and methodologists, but also the communicative approach, which has predominated in most countries in recent years, is focused on the message rather than code. Therefore, teachers have come to be rather discomposed about any activity that is directed at learning the code (Cowin 1992:11). The learner is expected to acquire the word meanings from context, preferably fortuitously. Lexical guessing and extensive reading are encouraged as conducive to good reaching strategies and vocabulary acquisition. Learning words fortuitously and guessing on the basis of context have their own problems. You cannot be sure that the learner has guessed correctly or the words he/she has acquired will be available for productive use. Consequently, learning words and word meaning from context must be supplemented by some activities. Chamell (1998) claims that vocabulary work doesn't necessarily have to be consolidated with general classroom communication, but it can be a separate learning activity. Learning words in language learning is a more conscious process than learning grammar. The process of vocabulary acquisition is slow and gradual. Corder (1973) believes that an item can be regarded as fully acquired when the learners mastered both the form and the meaning of the given item. This level of word knowledge is not always attained even in our native language, and very often we only have fragmentary knowledge of a considerable number of words. This fact, however, doesn't prevent us from using these words in specific contexts (Urdang 1997).

D. Vocabulary; Cinderella of the Second Language Acquisition Process

As earlier stated, teaching and learning vocabulary was less paid attention during a long period of time, making it the Cinderella among all the language components required. But what was the reason that this important aspect was ignored? Richards was one of the first scholars that apprehended this phenomenon (Coady, 1988). First, he suggested, that was a

consequent of the linguistic trends' effects. Ferdinand de Saussure's structuralism and subsequent Chomsky's universal grammar were mainly focused on grammar and second language. There was not much concern about the role of vocabulary because it was believed that words would take care of themselves during the learning process. It is obvious that linguists were absorbed in syntax matters since it seemed to be the most difficult component in terms of language learning. For this reason, it was seen as the key stone for L2 learners and teachers. Second, according to Sinclair and Renouf (1988) it is extremely difficult to design a syllabus based on grammar components and lexis (Coady, 1988). Because the grammatical components are narrower, so it seems that organizing the syllabi grammatically is much simpler. Third, Zimmerman (1997) concludes that old approaches and methods noticed vocabulary just as a complementary area. Forth, Zimmerman also claims that vocabulary has not been taught because teachers were not taught it. Here, He states that there are some factors which could affect the teacher's attitude toward the role of vocabulary in language acquisition:

- "What was the teacher's personal experience of learning a foreign language and how did the methods, the teacher experience, deal with?
- What is the teacher's metacognitive attitude toward vocabulary learning? Is it mostly effectively achieved through reading, speaking communication, memorizing words, and so on?
- What is the teacher's knowledge of the research done in this issue?
- What impact has the experiences achieved through teaching had on the teacher? (Coady, 273- 74)

The above questions are appropriate for a deeper analysis and reflection on the role of a teacher as a facilitator of vocabulary. Because teachers have beliefs and experiences that are reflected in the classroom, they are pivotal players in the learning game. If a teacher becomes more aware of the importance of teaching vocabulary, it could lead to big changes in the way L2 learners promote strategies to reach proficiency (Rojas, 2008).

Research Question

Does cultural transfer of connotative meanings of vocabularies have a significant effect on EFL learner's reading comprehension?

Definition of key terms

Connotative meaning what is communicated by virtue of what language refers to. It is the idea or quality that makes you think of. Connotative meaning of a word is what you guess during reading a text.

Cultural transfer of connotative meaning Lado (1957) argues that there are 3 cases which would lead to cultural transfer: when one form has different meanings in two cultures, when the same meaning in two cultures is related to different forms, when a pattern that has the same meaning shows different distribution. Following this argumentation, the present study considers cultural transfer in a similar way that is the teacher tries to find the similarities or differences in the habits, traditions, and beliefs of one nation into another nation for the learners to comprehend the reading passages thoroughly. Therefore, new key terms will be explained by the teacher focusing on these similarities and differences.

Denotative meaning is a formal or dictionary meaning of a word.

Reading comprehension refers to learners' performance on the reading passage which is selected from TOEFL and will be scored based on the scoring procedure of reading passage of TOEFL.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The population of the study consisted of 100 intermediate EFL students studying in ILI institute in Mashhad. All of these 100 students were female and each participant was assigned a number during the data analysis procedure because of ethical considerations. They were randomly assigned to two groups of experimental and control.

B. Instrument

In order to conduct this study, a test of reading passage from TOEFL was employed which tested the learners' level of comprehension at the onset and end of the courses as the pretest and the post test (see Appendix 1). Before the pretest, all the participants have been interviewed to make sure they were at the proper level (intermediate level). Then, the reading text, selected from TOEFL, was given to the both groups. They started to read the texts and after comprehending, answered the comprehension questions at the end of the text, which needed cultural transfer of the new vocabularies. During the semester, they were taught 5 more reading texts from their course books (The ILI English series, INTERMEDIATE 1). In the control group, the teacher used the regular teaching method, grammar translation method. It means that for explaining the meaning of the unknown words, he asked the students to look up their dictionaries and find denotative meanings or he himself explained the meanings of them. But in the experimental group, the treatment was done by the teacher. He explained that to understand the new vocabularies, dictionaries are not used here. For each new word, he brainstormed them to use their background knowledge. By using synonyms, antonyms and transferring to their L1 culture they could understand the connotative meanings of the unknown vocabularies. The following texts are the reading texts which were taught during the course in both experimental and control groups. After reading each text, the learners answered the comprehension questions following them.

C. Procedure

The participants were selected randomly from intermediate students of ILI institute. Then, they were randomly divided into two groups of 50 subjects: one experimental and one control. At the onset of the study, a test of reading passage from TOEFL was administered in both groups as the pre-test of the study. The experimental group got the treatment which was based on teaching each reading text through connotation transfer of words. In order to teach a passage, a warm up is vital and necessary for activating the students' mind cognitively and get the students' background knowledge about the subject which is going to be taught. This process could be done through either asking general questions or discussions. When this was done, the passage was read by the teacher paragraph by paragraph. At this stage, the teacher asked detailed questions to make the students understand the points and if there were any vocabularies which were not comprehensive and vague to the students, the teacher tried to make the students understand, either through defining the words by giving synonyms and examples or if it was necessary, through pantomime, facial and body language. For example, in one of the passages titled "Lost in the snow", which is for intermediate levels, in paragraph 2, "All agreed that a campfire would save us, and so we **set about** building it...", the word "set about" was a new word and the teacher tried to make the students understand by giving synonyms which means "start or begin an activity" and then an understandable example was given for the students to know why this word is used in this passage by the writer. The teacher transfers the word "set" into the students' L1, then she explains that when a preposition is added to the verbs in English, it turns into a phrasal verb, so the meaning is completely different from the base verb. Such changes do not exist in Farsi language. According to Lado's definition (1957) of cultural transfer of language, one form in a culture corresponds to several meanings in another culture like the word "woman" which has two meanings in Farsi: wife and woman. He also argued that two meanings in a culture correspond to one form in another culture like the forms "he" and "she" in English but in Farsi both of them have the same meaning as "او". Or when they get to the word "head" in a passage, it confuses them to different meanings like "body, organization, and phrase". Therefore, while teaching the readings, the teacher should mention these transference and differences and finds similarities in both cultures for the students not to get confused and comprehend more. So, the use of dictionary is not appropriate, for the teacher is a spoken dictionary himself. The control group won't get the treatment and the teacher will use a usual teaching by using both connotative meaning and denotative (dictionary) meaning of unknown words. At the end of the term, both groups are going to be tested by the same test of reading which was used as the pretest to verify any probable changes in both groups' performances.

IV. ANALYSIS OF DATA

Testing Assumptions

The present study focused on the effect of cultural transfer of connotative meaning of vocabularies on Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension. Two groups of subjects – experimental and control – took a pretest of reading comprehension followed by the administration of the cultural transfer of connotative meaning of vocabularies to the experimental group. Both groups took a posttest at the end of the treatment phase. The two groups were compared on the pretest and posttest through the independent t-test which has two main assumptions; homogeneity of variances and normality. The former will be discussed below when reporting the main results. The assumption of normality was met. As displayed in Table 4.1 the ratios of skewness and kurtosis were within the ranges of +/- 1.96.

TABLE 4.1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS; TESTING NORMALITY ASSUMPTION

Group	Statistic	N	Skewness			Kurtosis		
			Statistic	Std. Error	Ratio	Statistic	Std. Error	Ratio
Experimental	Pretest	50	.020	.337	0.06	-1.049	.662	-1.58
	Posttest	50	.153	.337	0.45	-.394	.662	-0.60
Control	Pretest	50	.437	.337	1.30	-.470	.662	-0.71
	Posttest	50	-.402	.337	-1.19	-.304	.662	-0.46

Pretest of Reading Comprehension

An independent t-test was run to compare the experimental and control groups' means on the pretest of reading comprehension in order to prove that the two groups enjoyed the same level of reading comprehension ability prior to the administration of the treatment to the former group. Based on these results (Table 4.1) it can be concluded that the experimental group (M = 6.70, SD = 2.33) showed a slightly higher mean than the control group (M = 6.45, SD = 1.99) on the pretest of reading comprehension.

TABLE 4.2
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS; PRETEST OF READING COMPREHENSION BY GROUPS

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	Experimental	50	6.70	2.330	.330
	Control	50	6.45	1.990	.281

The results of the independent t-test ($t(98) = .57, p > .05, R = .058$ representing a weak effect size) (Table 4.3) indicated that there was not any significant difference between the experimental and control groups' means on the pretest of reading comprehension. Thus it can be claimed that they were homogenous in terms of their reading ability prior to the administration of the treatment.

TABLE 4.3
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST, PRETEST OF READING COMPREHENSION BY GROUPS

	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
Equal variances assumed	1.693	.196	.577	98	.565	.250	.433	-.610	1.110
Equal variances not assumed			.577	95.666	.565	.250	.433	-.610	1.110

Note. The negative lower bound of 95% confidence interval indicated that the mean difference on pretest might be zero.

It should be noted that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met (Levene's $F = 1.69, p > .05$). That is why the first row of Table 4.3, i.e. "Equal variances assumed" was reported.

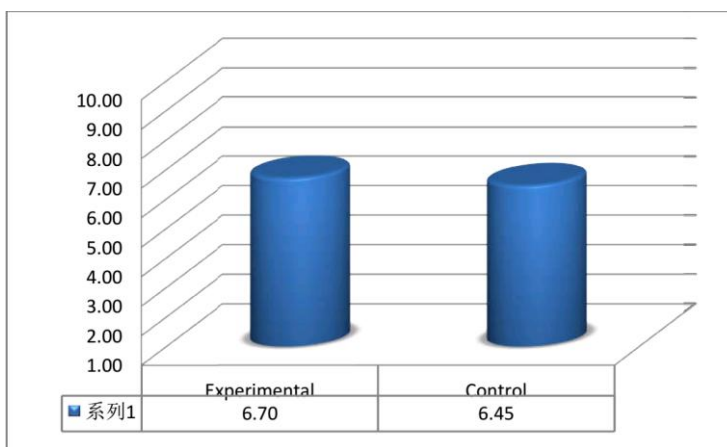


Figure 4.1: Pretest of Reading Comprehension by Groups

Research Question

Does cultural transfer of connotative meaning of vocabularies have any significant effect on the Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension?

An independent t-test was run to compare the experimental and control groups' means on the posttest of reading comprehension in order to investigate the effect of cultural transfer of connotative meaning of vocabularies on the enhancement of their reading ability. Based on these results (Table 4.3) it can be concluded that the experimental group ($M = 8.68, SD = 1.24$) after receiving cultural transfer of connotative meaning of vocabularies outperformed the control group ($M = 6.61, SD = 1.23$) on the posttest of reading comprehension.

TABLE 4.4
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS; POSTTEST OF READING COMPREHENSION BY GROUPS

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	Experimental	50	8.68	1.240	.175
	Control	50	6.61	1.230	.174

The results of the independent t-test ($t(98) = 8.37, p < .05, R = .64$ representing a large effect size) (Table 4.5) indicated that there was a significant difference between the experimental and control groups' means on the posttest of reading comprehension. Thus the null-hypothesis as cultural transfer of connotative meaning of vocabularies did not have any significant effect on the Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension **was rejected**.

TABLE 4.5
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST, POSTTEST OF READING COMPREHENSION BY GROUPS

	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
Equal variances assumed	.035	.852	8.379	98	.000	2.070	.247	1.580	2.560
Equal variances not assumed			8.379	97.993	.000	2.070	.247	1.580	2.560

It should be noted that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met (Levene's $F = .035$, $p > .05$). That is why the first row of Table 4.5, i.e. "Equal variances assumed" was reported.

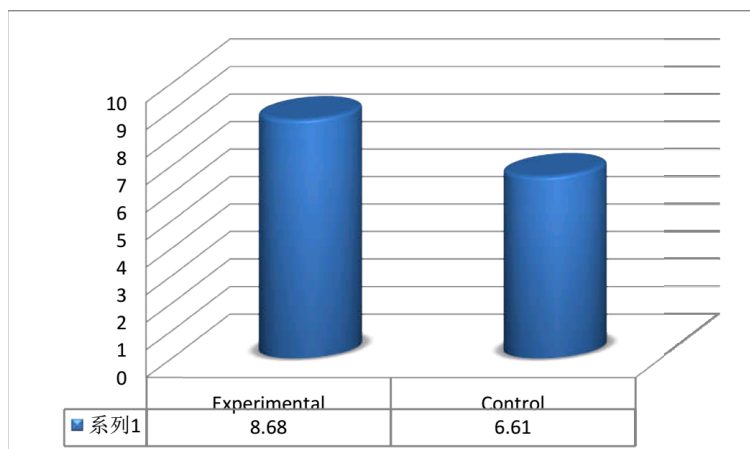


Figure 4.2: Posttest of Reading Comprehension by Groups

V. PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

As second language acquisition has always been a big problem for both teachers and learners, this research may help them to get the main goal during their educational process. The findings, if proven to be effective, may also contribute to syllabus designers in that they will better know how they design appropriate syllabi that take cultural factors into consideration which in turn may result in the improvements of the learners' awareness in learning L2.

VI. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

It is suggested that a researcher should consider and have in mind that in writing a passage, a learner should be able to comprehend the vocabularies, expressions, etc. through his connotative background and it goes the same when he/she is dealing with a listening text which knowing both cultural background and connotative meaning would be crucial and vital. Otherwise, it would be difficult and almost impossible to pick up the main ideas of the authors' point of view.

APPENDIX. SAMPLE OF READING TEST FROM TOEFL

Ketchup

The sauce that is today called ketchup (or catsup) in Western cultures is a tomato-based sauce that is quite distinct from the Eastern **ancestors** of this product. A sauce called *ke-tiap* was in use in China at least as early as the seventeenth century, but the Chinese version of the sauce was made of pickled fish, shellfish, and spices. The popularity of this Chinese sauce spread to Singapore and Malaysia, where it was called *kechap*. The Indonesian sauce *ketjab* derives its name from the same source as the Malaysian sauce but is made from very different ingredients. The Indonesian *ketjab* is made by cooking black soy beans, fermenting them, placing them in a salt brine for at least a week, cooking the resulting solution further, and sweetening it heavily; this process results in a dark, thick, and sweet variation of soy sauce.

Early in the eighteenth century, sailors from the British navy **came across** this exotic sauce on voyages to Malaysia and Singapore and brought samples of it back to England on return voyages. English chefs tried to recreate the sauce but were unable to do so exactly because key ingredients were unknown or unavailable in England; chefs ended up substituting ingredients such as mushrooms and walnuts in an attempt to recreate the special taste of the original Asian sauce. Variations of this sauce became quite the **rage** in eighteenth-century England, appearing in a number of recipe books and featured as an exotic addition to menus from the period.

The English version did not contain tomatoes, and it was not until the end of the eighteenth century that tomatoes became a main ingredient, in the ketchup of the newly created United States. It is quite notable that tomatoes were added to the sauce in that tomatoes had previously been considered quite dangerous to health. The tomato had been cultivated by the Aztecs, who had called it *tomatl*; however, early botanists had recognized that the tomato was a member of the *Solanaceae* family, which does include a number of poisonous plants. The leaves of the tomato plant are poisonous, though of course the fruit is not.

(*A) Thomas Jefferson, who cultivated the tomato in his gardens at Monticello and served dishes containing tomatoes at lavish feasts, often receives credit for changing the reputation of the tomato. (*B) Soon after Jefferson had introduced the tomato to American society, recipes combining the newly fashionable tomato with the equally and exotic sauce known as ketchup began to appear. (*C) By the middle of the nineteenth century, both the tomato and tomato ketchup were **staples** of the American kitchen. (*D)

Tomato ketchup, popular through it was, was quite time-consuming to appear. In 1876, the first mass-produced tomato ketchup, a product of German-American Henry Heinz, went on sale and achieved immediate success. From tomato ketchup, Heinz **branched out** into a number of other products, including various sauces, pickles, and relishes. By 1890, his company had expanded to include sixty-five different products but was in need of a marketing slogan. **Heinz settled on the slogan “57 varieties” because he liked the way that the digits 5 and 7 looked in print, in spite of the fact that this slogan understated the number of products that he had at the time.**

Questions

1. The word “ancestors” in paragraph 1 is closest in meaning to
 - a) Predecessors
 - b) Descendents
 - c) Creators
 - d) Ingredients
2. It is NOT stated in paragraph 1 that
 - a) The Chinese sauce was in existence in the seventeenth century
 - b) The Malaysian sauce was similar to the Chinese sauce
 - c) The Chinese sauce was made from seafood and spices
 - d) The Indonesian sauce was similar to the Chinese sauce
3. The word “it” in paragraph 1 refers to
 - a) A salt brine
 - b) A week
 - c) The resulting solution
 - d) This process
4. The expression “came across” in paragraph 2 could best be replaced by
 - a) Traversed
 - b) Discovered
 - c) Transported
 - d) Described
5. It can be inferred from paragraph 2 that mushrooms and walnuts were
 - a) Difficult to find in England
 - b) Not part of the original Asian recipe
 - b) Not native to England
 - d) Transported to England from Asia
6. The word “rage” in paragraph 2 could best be replaced by
 - a) Anger
 - b) Distinction
 - c) Misunderstanding
 - d) Fashion
7. The author mentions “The English version” at the beginning of paragraph 3 in order to
 - a) Indicate what will be discussed in the coming paragraph
 - b) Explain why tomatoes were considered dangerous
 - c) Make a reference to the topic of the previous paragraph
 - d) Provide an example of a sauce using tomatoes
8. According to paragraph 3, the tomato plant
 - a) Was considered poisonous by the Aztecs
 - b) Is related to some poisonous plants
 - c) Has edible leaves
 - d) Has fruit that is sometimes quite poisonous
9. The word “staples” in paragraph 4 could best be replaced by
 - a) Standard elements
 - b) Strong attachments
 - c) Necessary utensils
 - d) Rare alternatives
10. The expression “branched out” in paragraph 5 is closest in meaning to
 - a) Contracted
 - b) Stemmed
 - c) Converted
 - d) Expanded
11. Which of the sentences below best expresses the essential information in the highlighted sentence in paragraph 5? Incorrect choices change the meaning in important ways or leave out essential information.
 - a) Heinz selected a certain slogan even though it was inaccurate because he liked the look of it

- b) Heinz was eventually able to settle a dispute about which slogan would be the best for his company
- c) Heinz was unable to print out the actual number of varieties, so he printed out a different number
- d) Heinz's company actually had far fewer products than the slogan indicated that it did.

12. Look at the four stars (*) that indicate where the following sentences could be added to paragraph 4.

It turned from very bad to exceedingly good.

Where would the sentence best fit? Put check on the star (*) to add the sentence to the passage.

REFERENCES

- [1] DAI Wei-dong, ZHANG Hong-ling. (2000). Cultural Transfer in Foreign Language Communication and Implications in Foreign Language Educational Reform. *Foreign Languages World*, 78(2):2-8.
- [2] Dechert, H. W. & Raupach, M. (Eds) (1989). *Transfer in Language Production*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- [3] DONG Yan-chang, LIU Riu-qing. (2003). *Language and Culture*. Beijing: Language Education and Research Press.
- [4] Fries, C. (1945). *The Teaching and Learning English as a Foreign Language*. Ann Arbor: University of Chicago Press.
- [5] Gamble T. K. & M. Gamble. (1996). *Communication Works*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- [6] Gass, S. & Selinker, L. (1983). *Language Transfer in Language Learning*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- [7] Gass, S. & Selinker, L. (1993). *Language Transfer in Language Learning* (revised edition). Amsterdam: John Benjanmins.
- [8] HU Wen-zhong. (1999). *Culture and Communication*. Beijing: Foreign Language Education and Research Press.
- [9] Hu Zhuanglin. (2001). *Linguistics. A Course Book* (second edition). Beijing: Beijing University Press
- [10] James, C. (1980). *Contrastive Analysis*. London: Longman.
- [11] Kasper, G. (1992). Pragmatic transfer. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, (3): 203~231.
- [12] Kellerman, E. (1987). *Aspects of Transferability in Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford :Pergamon Press
- [13] Lado, R. (1957). *Linguistics across Cultures*. Ann Argbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- [14] Nanda, S. (1994). *Cultural Anthropology*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- [15] Odlin, T. (1989). *Language Transfer*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [16] Rod Ellis. (1994). *Understanding Second Language Acquisition*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Teaching Press.
- [17] Sandra, D. (1997). Morphological awareness and the second language learner. In L. Van Lier & D. Corson (Eds.). *Knowledge about Language*. Boston: Kluwer.
- [18] Shawna, B. (2000). *Vocabulary Influence on Successful Writing*, ERIC Digest D157. Department of Foreign Language, Jilin University.
- [19] YU Liming. (2004). *Language Transfer and Second Language Acquisition-Review, Reflection and Research*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.
- [20] ZHANG Li. (2006). *A Study of Cultural Connotation's Transfer of English and Chinese Vocabulary*. Unpublished MA Thesis. Department of Foreign Language, Jilin University.
- [21] ZHANGAn-de, YANG Yuan-gang. (2003). *A Comparative Study of English and Chinese Cultures in Word Expressions*. Wuhan: Hubei Education Press.
- [22] ZHOU Guo-hui. (2002). *Contrastive Linguistics*. Jinan: Jinan Publishing Press.

Narjes Mabhoot is an M.A holder in TEFL at Islamic Azad University of Neyshabor, Iran, Science and Research Branch. She has been teaching English since 2002 in different Institutes and schools in different levels of proficiencies and aspects of English. She has always been found of teaching since she was a child and took part in her father's classes as long as she remembers. . Her research interests include teaching methodologies, and teaching skills.

Mitra Zeraatpishe is an assistant professor at Islamic Azad University, Mashhad Branch, Iran. She received her Ph.D. in TEFL from Islamic Azad University, Tabriz branch. She has 10 years teaching experience and has published a number of articles in national and international journals and has presented papers in several conferences. Her research interests include SLA, linguistics, teaching methodologies, and teaching skills.

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

Abbas Moradan

Semnan University, Semnan, Iran

Nayereh Ahmadian

Semnan University, Semnan, Iran

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 ($M = 1572$, $SD = 1.10$) 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 ($p > .05$), 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		
Helped Group mates	292.172 ^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		
Asked for Help if Needed	1278.357 ^a	.000
12. Asked teammates for help 13. Asked teacher for help 14. Asked other classmates for help		
Receptive and expressive language Skills	1697.533 ^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		
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		
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		
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		
Inference and Comprehension Skills		
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		

* 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.

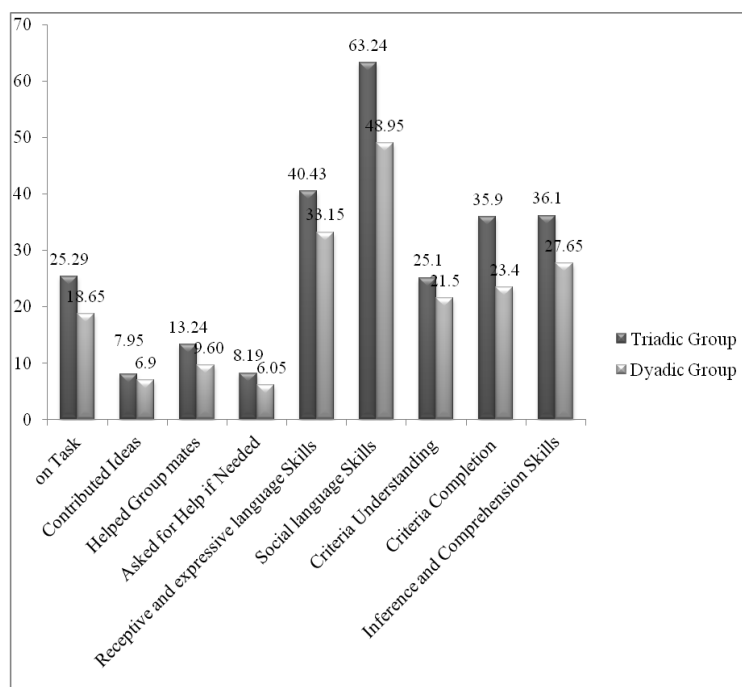
This result indicates that in triadic interaction the spirit of cooperation among participant is somehow more than in comparison with dyadic interaction. On the other word, in triadic interaction learners are more eager to help to their group mates. Do to the result, in triadic interaction whenever the 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:

REFERENCES

- [1] Achmad, D & Yusuf, Y. Q. (2014). Observing pair-work task in an English speaking class. *International Journal of Instruction*, 7.1.
- [2] Allwright, D. (1984). The importance of interaction in classroom language learning. *Applied linguistics* 5.2, 156-171.
- [3] Azadi, S. (2015). The role of classroom interaction on improvement of speaking among Iranian learners. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World (IJLLALW)* 8. 1, 126-135.
- [4] Bandura, A. (1977). *Social Learning Theory*. New York: general learning press. Retrieved January 22, 2015, from: <http://www.learning-theories.com/social-learning-theory-bandura.html>.
- [5] Bashir, M., Azeem, M & Dogar, A. H. (2011). Factors effecting students' English speaking skills. *British journal of arts and social sciences*, 2.1, 34-50.
- [6] Best, J. W. (2006). *Research in Education* (p.309). United State: Pearson Education Press.
- [7] Brockley, T. (2012). Triadic Interaction in Young Learner EFL Classrooms: Virtual Windows of Opportunity. Retrieved April 10, 2010, from <http://eslenglishclassroom.com/6-550-1.pdf>
- [8] Chen, L. (2006). Inferring protein interactions from experimental data by association probabilistic method. *Proteins: Structure, Function, and Bioinformatics*, 62.4, 833-837.
- [9] Choudhury, S. (2005). Interaction in second language classrooms. *BRAC University Journal*, 2.1, 77 – 82.
- [10] Crystal, D. (2003). *A dictionary of linguistics and phonetics*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- [11] Fogel, A. (1993). *Developing through relationships: Origins of communication, self and culture*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- [12] Hamzah, M. H & Ting, L. Y. (2010). Teaching speaking skills through group work activities: A case study in SMK Damai Jaya. Universiti Teknologi Malaysia. Retrieved January 05, 2013, from: http://eprints.utm.my/10255/2/Lu_Yee_Ting.pdf.
- [13] Khadidja, K. (2009-2010). The effect of classroom interaction on developing the learner's speaking skill. (Unpublished dissertation, Constantine University).
- [14] Knop, C. K. (2009). Increasing use of the target language in classroom interaction. Retrieved October 26, 2009, from: http://www.oomroom.ca/resources/knop_article.pdf.
- [15] Liao, G. (2009). Improvement of speaking ability through interrelated skills. *English language teaching*, 2.3, 11-14.
- [16] Long, M. (1996). The role of linguistic environment in second language acquisition. In W.C. Ritchie and T.K. Bhatia (Eds.), *Handbook of second language acquisition*, 413-468. Sand Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- [17] Lourdunathan, J & Menon, S. (2005). Developing speaking skills through interaction strategy training. *The English teacher*. 34, 1 – 18.
- [18] Macionis, J. (2006). *Society: The Basics* (8th ed.). Upper Saddle River: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- [19] Menegale, M. (2008). Expanding teacher-student interaction through more effective classroom questions: From traditional teacher-fronted lessons to student-centered lessons in CLIL. Retrieved November 2011 from: <http://lear.unive.it/bitstream/10278/1005/1/05Menegale.pdf>.
- [20] Mohammadi, H., Gorjian, B & Pazhakh, A. (2014). The effect of classroom structure on speaking skills of Iranian EFL learners: A comparative study. *International journal of language learning and applied linguistic world (IJLLALW)*. 5.1, 472 – 487.
- [21] Nunan, D. (2001). *Second language teaching and learning*. University of Hong Kong: Heinle & Heinle.

- [22] Patil, S & Karekatti, T. (2012). Study of Language Learning Strategies Used by Engineering Students. *English for Specific Purposes World*, ISSN 1682-3257, <http://www.esp-world.info>, 35, vol. 12.
- [23] Ramani, G. B. & Brownell, C. A. (2013). Preschoolers' cooperative problem solving: Integrating play and problem solving. *Journal of Early Childhood Research* 2014, Vol. 12(1) 92–10.
- [24] Richards, J. C. (2006). Developing classroom speaking activities: From theory to practice. *Guidelines-Singapore-Periodical for classroom language teachers then magazine for language teachers*, 28.2, 3-9.
- [25] Reiss, M.A. (1985). The good language learner: Another look. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 41, pp. 511–523.
- [26] Rogoff, B. (1998). *Cognition as a collaborative process*. In: Damon W (series ed.) Kuhn D and Siegler RS (vol. ed.) *Handbook of Child Psychology: Cognition, Perception, and Language*, vol. 2. 5th ed. New York: Wiley, pp. 679–744.
- [27] Rubin, K.H., Bukowski, W & Parker, J. (2006). *Peer interactions, relationships, and groups*. In: Damon W (series ed.) Eisenberg N (vol. ed.) *Handbook of Child Psychology: Social, Emotional, and Personality Development*, vol. 3. 6th ed. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, pp. 571–645.
- [28] Stern, D. N. (1985). *The interpersonal world of the infant*. New York: Basic Books.
- [29] Tamada, Y. (1996). The relationship between Japanese learners' personal factors and their choices of language learning strategies. *Modern Language Journal*, 80, pp. 120–131.
- [30] Ur, P. (2000). *A Course in Language Teaching: Practice and Theory*. Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- [31] Van Lier, L. (2002). An ecological-semiotic perspective on language and linguistics. In C. Kramsch (Ed.), *Language acquisition and language socialization: Ecological perspectives* (pp. 140-164). New York: Continuum.
- [32] Vygotsky, L.S. (1962). *Thought and Language*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- [33] Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Interaction between learning and development (M. Lopez-Morillas, Trans.). In M. Cole, V. John-Steiner, S. Scribner, & E. Soubberman (Eds.), *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes* (pp. 79-91). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- [34] Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological process*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [35] Wenden, A.L. (1991). *Learner strategies for learner autonomy*. New York: Prentice-Hall.
- [36] Yule, G. (2006). *The study of language*. Cambridge university press. New York. Third edition.
- [37] Zohrabi, M., Torabi, M, A & Baybourdiani, P. (2012). *Teacher-centered and/or Student-centered Learning*. University of Tabriz. Iran. Received June 22, 2012 from: URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ells.v2n3p18>.



Abbas Moradan is an associate professor in Semnan University. He received his M.A. and Ph D. from Allameh Tabatabai University in TEFL. He began his career as an English instructor at Semnan University in 1996. Since then, he has been teaching courses in Testing, Methods and principles of teaching, Research, Advanced writing, etc. From 1999 to 2003, he was the head of English department at Semnan University. His publications include two articles on the use of poetry in EFL classes, one article on the role of conjunctions in Iranian EFL students' writings, one article about the role of interaction on the oral abilities of the learners, two translated books and one ESP book. Currently his research interest is collaborative learning, teaching and testing.



Nayereh Ahmadian is a part time English teacher who holds a bachelor's degree in English Literature and is currently a MA student of TEFL at Semnan University of Iran. Ms. Ahmadian co-authored of a book with Dr. Moradan, on the title "A study of Islamic and literary Texts In English translation (I,II)". Currently her research interest is collaborative learning and teaching.

Absurdity and Postmodernism: An Analysis of Barthelme's *The Glass Mountain*

Lingeng Han

Changchun University, Changchun, China

Abstract—Barthelme's *Glass Mountain* is a masterpiece of postmodernism. As a leading author of his age, Barthelme makes use of techniques of postmodernism, such as parody, pastiche, fragments, and irony, to demonstrate a world of deconstruction and a theme of absurdity. However, the absurdity depicted by Barthelme actually has its profound social meaning, which reflects the author's real understanding to the reality.

Index Terms—*Glass Mountain*, postmodernism, absurdity

I. INTRODUCTION

Postmodernism started in the end of the 1950's and the beginning of the 1960's. It is well-accepted that the turbulence and change of the second world war has directly caused the rise of the postmodernist literature. The appalling violence of the Nazism as well as the atomic explosion had overturned the traditional mores and values, and caused great spiritual crisis and suspicious mood in the western world after the war. The confusion pervaded also to America, giving birth to a new trend of culture, the postmodernism, especially in literature. Donald Barthelme (1931 –1989) is called the father of the new generation of the postmodernist writers, whose celebrated masterpieces including *Snow White* (1967), *The Dead Father* (1975), *The Glass Mountain* (1979), *Paradise* (1986), and *The King* (1990). As an important writer of experimental fiction, Barthelme created stories that are untraditional by juxtaposing incongruous elements of contemporary language and culture. *Glass Mountain* is one of them. *Glass Mountain* is a parody creation based on a fairy tale that is well known in the western culture. The ironic parody reflects the absurdity of the modern world, and is a success of postmodernism.

II. ABSURDITY REFLECTED IN THE STORY

Glass Mountain was originally a Nordic fairy tale with a happy ending---in a fantastic golden castle lofting on a high glass mountain, a beautiful but bewitched princess lived. She was such a beauty as to attract all the brave romantic and legendary cavaliers to rescue her with their lives. The cavaliers fell over one another, mounting their steeds in splendid attires and charging up the glass mountain for the princess. A knight in golden armor was also attracted by the bewitched beauty and came to try. But he and his horse, without wonder, also fell to their deaths. Finally, a young man climbed the glass mountain with the claws of a lynx he killed attached to his feet and hands. When the eagle that guarded the castle flew down to eat him thinking he was carrion, the youth grabbed the eagle, and so the eagle carried him the rest of the way to the castle. When they arrived at the top of the room where the prince lived, the young man cut off the eagle's feet and fell into the apple tree. The peels of the apples were used to cure the young man's wounds, and the eagle's blood was used to bring everyone to life that had died trying to climb the mountain. Finally, like all the happy endings of the fairy tales, the princess was made his wife.

Barthelme tells us the story of *Glass Mountain* in another way. The whole story contains 100 sentences. The author intentionally numbers all these sentences, short or long, and makes each of them an independent paragraph. So there are 100 such paragraphs in the story and it goes like this: "I" was climbing the glass mountain located in the center of New York City. The mysterious mountain has a golden castle on top of it, and it is said there is an enchanted symbol living in the castle. Ignoring the sneer of the "acquaintances" as well as the failures of other knights', overcoming many difficulties, "I" kept climbing to the top with much struggling, and entered the castle, but only find the enchanted symbol is a cursed beautiful princess. In his great disappointment, "I" dropped the beautiful princess headfirst off the mountain.

Barthelme shows a modern world that is absurd. It is a despairing, ridiculous, and irrational. On the landscape of the modern city, people lead boring and despairing lives; we see them walking dogs, cursing, fighting, and even destroying. Such meaninglessness gives the readers a thought about life's significance. Camus, the French writer who is also a philosopher, pointed out the essence of insignificance and absurdity of human life. Human beings are helpless in front of nature and society; they cannot even control the psych and thoughts of his own. Not only the world is illogical, the individual's spiritual pursuits are affected by the "enchanted symbol". In Barthelme's story, the symbol has turned to a beauty at last, yet actually, no matter what it finally became, it is inevitable that the sense of absurdity would be felt.

The world is absurd, the enchanted symbol on the glass mountain, that is, the spiritual pursuit, is absurd too, but then

why our lives are worth living? What's the point that makes human beings continue living in this empty, frustrating, and absurd world? One cannot bear the meaningless life. Certainly, the world is absurd and human beings are bound to fail, but Camus told people that resistance is what they are living for. The image of "I" in this story is an exact representation of Camus's "resistant man" in his philosophy. The narrator rebels against the ridiculous and irrational reality through escaping it and pursuing a new world by climbing the glass mountain, and the narrator resisted the absurd ideal by throwing the enchanted symbol away. The narrator got his own significance of existence by resistance. In this way, *Glass Mountain* is to some extent a good explanation of Camus' philosophy.

People in this story live in a modern metropolis with a forest of tall buildings and crisscross wide roads. However, what's on the road? "A heap of corpses both of horses and riders ringed the bottom of the mountain, many dying men groaning there" (Barthelme, 1978, p.87). And "my acquaintances moved among the fallen knights." (ibid). On both sides of the road, "...someone had been apprehended cutting down trees, a row of elms broken-backed among the VWs and Valliant", "Otherwise what was I doing there, 206 feet above the power-sawed elms, whose white meat I could see from my height?" (ibid). And on the sidewalks, there are "... (full of) dogshit in brilliant colors..." (ibid). This is a highly developed society, as well as a place where people who makes desperate effort climbing gets wounded, falls down and soon dies. However, nonentities here are numb and cold-blooded, idling around and doing nothing. What modern industrial civilization brings about is severe destruction to nature and way of life, and the cities are nothing but burying ground or waste yard. Though "I" climbed high and could see everything, "I" am still helpless. So "It was cold there at 206 feet and when I looked down I was not encouraged." (ibid). However, "I" still has to live in such a reality. Though seemingly absurd, people would agree that this is a true reflection of the modern urban wasteland.

III. THE POSTMODERNIST THEME OF THE STORY

To the postmodernists, the world is not just a place of violence and blood, but one more affected in the pursuit of money and earthly materials, which is evidently revealed in *Glass Mountain*. In the conversation of "my acquaintances", there is a strong smell of money transactions like "Ten bucks you bust your ass in the next four minutes!" (Barthelme, 1978, p. 88) What they would like to do is to "move among the fallen knights, collecting rings, wallets, pocket watches, ladies' favors." and "prise out the gold teeth of not-yet dead knights." (ibid) Even animals are failed to get rid of money worship, like "a lean-headed eagle with blazing rubies for eyes." guarding the golden castle. And when "I" was climbing the glass mountain, "My acquaintances were debating the question, which of them would get my apartment?" (ibid) All these are extreme depictions of the monetary and material world in one way, but still a helpless manner of humor towards the cold postmodern society.

From these analyses above we can see that short as the story, it unfolds a real postmodern society, numb, cold, indifferent, dissimilated and anomic, which images its theme of absurdity. Barthelme combines realistic writing with exaggeration, reality with absurdity, seriousness with irony in a happy way, which helps reader to understand in a non-traditional way.

The postmodernist symbolism gives the objects in the story profound signified meanings. The key image in the story is the glass mountain located in the downtown of the city. What does it symbolize? Obviously, it is not a real mountain but quite possibly a skyscraper that is glittering under the sun. Barthelme changed the natural mountain in the story into an artificial high building. The hero in the story and other knights exerted themselves to climb the vicious mountain, but all fell down to their deaths except the hero. Thus, it is not a story of human conquest of nature, but a tale of a struggle between man and the man-made society. In this way, the theme of the story is not that of a traditional fairy tale, that is, a fight of man and nature or any other supernatural power, but a theme of postmodernism.

In a postmodern story, the glass mountain is a symbol of what modern people pursue for – an artistic ideal or loftiness –the spiritual pursuit above reality. "I" was attracted by it, just like many intellectuals are attracted by spiritual ideals. Then the hero climbed the mountain without any hesitation. It is easy to figure out that the hero is an intellectual, at least a cynic who is unsatisfied with the reality and has some certain spiritual pursuit. Barthelme intentionally repeated "I was new in the neighborhood" several times in the story. Readers may wonder how the hero can be "always new" in the neighborhood, yet at the same time he said he has got quite many acquaintances? The answer can be clearly seen through the Barthelme's mentioning of the neighborhood. The neighbors, the so-called acquaintances are unfriendly even hostile to the narrator – they cursed him, sneered at him, waiting to get some advantage from his death. The narrator was surrounded by greedy and cold-blooded watchers, as well as hypocritical and numb passers-by. As for the environment they lived in, that is just a world of chaos! There were gun-fighting streets with colorful dog shits and power-sawn woods. Getting tired of this ugly world, the narrator had chosen to escape. Climbing the glass mountain and getting to the top of it is a good try to flee away. The narrator was so determined that he ignored all the pains and difficulties on the way of his climbing. Seven times the author repeated "I unstuck the left hand/right hand plumber's friend...", which symbolized the difficulties that an brave "resistant" met in his struggling against the frustrating reality and in his spiritual pursuit. As for the knights who failed and fell in the halfway of their climbing, they should be the hero's comrades somehow. However, they were a different kind of intellectuals in the real world. They were less practical but more straightforward comparing with the hero in the story. The knights didn't know the armors they wore were their burdens and horses their murderers while climbing the slippery mountain. They were brave to challenge the cruel reality, yet were doomed to fail because of their pedantry.

Now that the reality in a postmodern world is unbearable, did Barthelme offer any way out for the people who were trapped in? To the readers' disappointment, no way out was shown in the story. Reaching the top of the mountain seemed to be the only way to set people free from this post-industrial and post-modern society. After a painstaking struggle, the narrator reached the castle, yet only found the enchanted symbol which he had been so long expecting was no more than a beautiful but cursed princess. He was so disappointed that he dropped it off the glass mountain. The princess was too vulgar and meta-narrative, and was clearly a symbol for the traditional value, which is typically material and outmoded in the postmodern time. What he had been expecting must be some symbol that can enlighten his current life, something that can bring some change or hope to the reality. However, in the end of the story it is known that there is no salvation above the real world; nobody can break away from the society. No matter how hard the narrator had tried, his ideal is still at the society's disposal. That is the reason why he dumped the princess headfirst down the mountain without hesitation. He finally realized absurdity of the reality, yet he was still unable to escape.

IV. POST-MODERNIST FEATURES IN GLASS MOUNTAIN

To express the absurdity of the reality, the author makes use of postmodern skills. Postmodernism criticizes and surpasses modernism by striking a strong blow to interpreting and governing the world with unitary logic, fixed regulations or universal rules and advocating innovation and originality, emphasizing openness and diversity. As a masterpiece of postmodern literature, *Glass Mountain* basically covers almost all the postmodern features.

A. Parody in *Glass Mountain*

Parody is a "literary or artistic work that imitates the characteristic style of an author or a work for comic effect or ridicule." (Yu, 2012, p. 226) As a specific way of intertextuality, parody means imitation in some way. However, imitation alone brings little charm to the works. It's the differences or the unlikeness from contrast by imitating that gives the effects. The contrast relies on putting the elegance and seriousness of the classic known-to-all allusions into its opposite---absurdness and vulgarness without losing the similarity in forms so as to let the readers to make a comparison between the two versions. Parodies of fairy tales always impress readers with strong senses of humor and irony. *Glass Mountain* is a typical postmodern work of deconstruction. On reading the subject, one will easily associate it with the old Nordic tale, and that is just the author's intention. In the well-known old fairy tale *The Prince on the Glass Mountain*, a poor young man who is brave and kindhearted climbs to the top of the glass mountain. Encouraged by the cheers of the onlookers, he rescues the enchanted and imprisoned prince and later not only marries her but gets half of the lands and treasure of her kingdom. In Barthelme's new story *Glass Mountain*, the main plot is basically retold in the frame of the old story though the protagonist's image is deformed in some way. The intentional imitation reminds the readers of the romantic fairy tale. The glass mountain is located in the center of a modern city. The young man who is climbing is a cynical westerner, who seems to be an intellectual incompatible with his surroundings. Instead of encouragement, he receives fleers from his acquaintances who are watching and hope to get benefits from his falling off. The ending is even more out of expectation of the readers—in the last moment when he finally reaches the top of the mountain and finds the prince, he dumps her head firstly off mountain instead of rescuing and cherishing her. The contrast is thought-provoking to the readers. In the seemingly absurdity, people see the post-industrialized society, based on modern techniques and information, has commercialized everything. By overthrowing the classic romance of the brave knight and beautiful prince, which symbolizes an everlasting meaning, Barthelme throws away the ultimate meaning of life and existence. In postmodernism, nothing exists, no center, no meanings, no values, no themes—all are vanished in the reality. Thus, nothingness is represented as the theme of the story. In this rewritten story, Barthelme also uses repetition, collage and pastiche to reveal the absurdity and unreality.

B. Pastiche and Fragment

In this story, Barthelme particularly focuses himself on creating ridiculous and absurd atmosphere by cutting and reforming the originally traditional stories with the techniques of pastiche and collage.

Pastiche is to "combine, or paste together, multiple elements. It can be seen as a representation of the chaotic, pluralistic, or information-drenched aspects of postmodern society. It can be a combination of multiple genres to create a unique narrative or to comment on situations in postmodernity." (Yu, 2012, p. 237)

Glass Mountain is a typical work of pastiche in spite of its length of only one hundred sentences. Barthelme discards the conventional rules of fiction writing by tearing all the elements such as time, space and language structure apart into fragments and then pastes them. The first impression of fragmentation is the 100 numbered paragraphs, some as long as 6 or 7 sentences and some as short as just one word. The logical relationship among each sentence disappears, instead of which is simply a combination of numbers. In addition to that, Barthelme pastes some symbolic famous sayings, quotations of imaginary characters, technical terms and excerpts from fairy tales, making a fuss of giving the references, which aggravates the fragmental sense by making a further destruction to the coherence of narration, such as the part from the 65th paragraph to the 68th paragraph.

We cannot find anything logical here. Barthelme interrupts the readers' expectation toward the story by using temporal distortion, shifting the viewpoint of narration, and sprinkling casually weird quotations of unknown origin, by which the sense of a fragmental world crept over the readers. However this is just the postmodern fictionists' intention,

for in their eyes, fragmental language is exactly the reflection of a irrational postmodern world.

The pastiche of intrasentential elements is also obviously employed besides the pastiche of sentences, such as the generic terms of color in the 30th paragraph, "The sidewalks were full of dog shits in brilliant colors: ocher, umber, Mars yellow, sienna, viridian, ivory black, rose madder." (Barthelme, 1978) Another example is the names of 19 knights who had failed to climb the mountain in the 63rd paragraph. These fragments, like the intentionally marked numbers before each paragraph, piece together a discontinuous and synchronic story. By various pastiches like this, Barthelme mocks at the conventional literary forms as well as the ridiculous and absurd western culture by creating a strong sense of chaos and absurdity, which gives a brand new taste to readers in both form and content.

C. Repetition

As a traditional technique of writing, repetition has found new application and connotation in Barthelme's *Glass Mountain*. Repetition employed in conventional works is for emphasizing and highlighting something special or different, while in this story, repetition is used to put more punch into the narrative discontinuity by cutting or blocking. "I was new in the neighborhood.", for instance, occurs 3 times in the 5th, 25th and 33rd paragraph respectively; and the movement of my climbing the mountain also runs through the whole story.

This kind of repetition that seriously breaks the conventional way of narration is rarely seen in story-writing, which perfectly exemplifies the postmodern aesthetic features as discontinuity and word expansion.

D. Irony, Playfulness and Black Humor

It's common for postmodernists to treat serious subjects in a playful and humorous way, so irony, playfulness and black humor are viewed as the dominant manner penetrating the postmodern literature, for in no other way can postmodernism be better expressed or interpreted.

There are ironies, playfulness and black humors in *Glass Mountain*, through which a disheartening, violent, bloody and filthy postmodern world is unfold before the readers. For example in the 10th paragraph it is mentioned that "My acquaintances had gathered at the bottom of the mountain to offer encouragement" while the means of offering "encouragement" is nothing but "Shithead", "Asshole", "Dumb motherfucker", "Better than a kick in the crotch." (Barthelme, 1978, p. 87) "Better than a poke in the eye with a sharp stick", (ibid) "Better than a slap in the belly with a wet fish", (ibid) "Better than a thump on the back wit a stone", (ibid) "Won't he make a splash when he falls, now?" (ibid) and "Fart-faced fool." (ibid) Exaggerations like these words show to the reader that it's indifferent and lacking of warmth among people in the postmodern society, despite that they are acquaintances. And postmodern world is full of insidious schemes, vicious gossips and bankrupt moral codes.

E. Deconstruction in *Glass Mountain*

The language in Barthelme's novel is self-referent, which counteracts the fictitious feature of the novel, and meanwhile, the language itself is also the rallying point of deconstruction and subversion. All these factors, with the parody in the fiction, deconstruct the story from three aspects.

1. Superficial deconstruction of the content and plot.

The original tale about the valiant rider saving the elegant princess is totally aberrant. The "rider" rides no horse, and while he finally fined the princess, he throws her headfirst down the mountain instead of living a happy life with her. Barthelme discards in his works the traditional techniques such as pellucid linearity in narration and clear allegory in intention, instead of which are discontinuity in time and logical sequence and uncertainty or disorderliness in plot.

2. Deeper deconstruction of the traditional values and moral ideals.

In Barthelme's *Glass Mountain*, the hero, a legendary cavalier in splendid attire, is turned into a somewhat cynic city young man, who makes light of all difficulties and totally neglects jeer and sneer of his acquaintances pursuing his dream----to rescue an enchanting symbol on the top of the glass mountain, a skyscraper. It's no longer a romantic save-the-damsel-in-distress and they-live-happily-ever-after story, instead of which is a disheartening and all-in-vain ending. Everything originally beautiful and fascinating turns seemingly absurd and stupid in his novel, just in the way that all good values and ideals being deconstructed into ugliness and nonentity, which unfold a picture of thoroughly meaningless modern life.

3. Ultimate deconstruction of the language.

The conventional view that language as the means of communication is totally subverted in Barthelme's works. Language, a game played under some certain rules, gradually losing its connections with reality and its connotations to the real world, has been reduced to a heap of hodgepodge and piece-together of stereotype. Barthelme is just good at employing quaint language and chaotic sentences to familiar circumstances. And not only did he hammer at displaying the fragmental reality of contemporary society by doing this but meanwhile, Barthelme also devoted himself in inventing new form and meaning by juxtaposition of these fragments. The textual arrangement of *Glass Mountain* of 100 paragraphs with each sentence as an independent and intentionally numbered paragraph precisely exemplifies Barthelme's innovative creation. Obviously Barthelme is playing on words like that. Another typical case is that a lot of postmodern devices such as repetition, pastiche and collage are frequently used, which shows the game play on words and reveals the fictitious feature of the story. For example, in the 30th paragraph "The sidewalks were full of dogs hit in brilliant colors: ocher, umber, Mars yellow, sienna, viridian, ivory black, rose madder" (Barthelme, 1978, p.89)

Barthelme tries to create a funny and ridiculous atmosphere with so many specialized terms about color piling up.

Deconstruction to the story in three aspects from the superficial part as form and content to a deeper one as values or moral ideals and then to the ultimate, the language itself shows that the postmodern world is, at long last, meaningless and all in vain.

V. CONCLUSION

Donald Barthelme is the father of postmodern literature, with his works to be the typical ones of postmodernism. *Glass Mountain* depicts a grotesque and absurd postmodern world, profoundly revealing the boredom of the postmodern life and the ugliness of human nature. It reflects most postmodernists' point of view that the world is absurd, and with no final goal. With his boldness in the innovation of language in both form and content, such as the techniques of parody, fragmentation, pastiche, repetition, irony, black humor, deconstruction and so on, Barthelme ironically reflects the modern western society of every aspect as being absurd. By doing this, he actually gives the readers a full understanding of the meaning of the reality.

REFERENCES

- [1] Barthelme, Donald. (1978). *City Life*. London: Pocket Books.
- [2] Derrida, Jacques. (1989). *The Penguin Book of American short Stories*. Beijing: Foreign Language Press.
- [3] Herzinger Kim. (1997). *Not Knowing: The Essays and Interviews of Donald Barthelme*. New York: Random House.
- [4] Joe David Bellamy. (2007). *The New Fiction: Interviews with Innovative American Writers*. London: University of Illinois press.
- [5] Maurice Couturier, Regis Durand. (1982). *Donald Barthelme*. London and New York: Routledge.
- [6] Nel, Philip. (2002). *The Avant-Garde and American Postmodernity*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.
- [7] Yu, Jianhua. (2012). *Dictionary of American Literature – Authors and Works*. Shanghai: Press of Fudan University.

Lingeng Han was born in Jilin province, China in October, 1979. She got her Master degree in English Languages and Literature from Jilin Normal University, China in 2006.

She is currently a lecturer in the School of International Education, Changchun University, China. Her research interests include American and British Literature, and cross-cultural communication.

Call for Papers and Special Issue Proposals

Aims and Scope

Theory and Practice in Language Studies (TPLS) is a peer-reviewed international journal dedicated to promoting scholarly exchange among teachers and researchers in the field of language studies. The journal is published monthly.

TPLS carries original, full-length articles and short research notes that reflect the latest developments and advances in both theoretical and practical aspects of language teaching and learning. We particularly encourage articles that share an interdisciplinary orientation, articles that bridge the gap between theory and practice, and articles in new and emerging areas of research that reflect the challenges faced today.

Areas of interest include: language education, language teaching methodologies, language acquisition, bilingualism, literacy, language representation, language assessment, language education policies, applied linguistics, as well as language studies and other related disciplines: psychology, linguistics, pragmatics, cognitive science, neuroscience, ethnography, sociolinguistics, sociology, and anthropology, literature, phonetics, phonology, and morphology.

Special Issue Guidelines

Special issues feature specifically aimed and targeted topics of interest contributed by authors responding to a particular Call for Papers or by invitation, edited by guest editor(s). We encourage you to submit proposals for creating special issues in areas that are of interest to the Journal. Preference will be given to proposals that cover some unique aspect of the technology and ones that include subjects that are timely and useful to the readers of the Journal. A Special Issue is typically made of 15 to 30 papers, with each paper 8 to 12 pages of length.

A special issue can also be proposed for selected top papers of a conference/workshop. In this case, the special issue is usually released in association with the committee members of the conference/workshop like general chairs and/or program chairs who are appointed as the Guest Editors of the Special Issue.

The following information should be included as part of the proposal:

- Proposed title for the Special Issue
- Description of the topic area to be focused upon and justification
- Review process for the selection and rejection of papers
- Name, contact, position, affiliation, and biography of the Guest Editor(s)
- List of potential reviewers if available
- Potential authors to the issue if available
- Estimated number of papers to accept to the special issue
- Tentative time-table for the call for papers and reviews, including
 - Submission of extended version
 - Notification of acceptance
 - Final submission due
 - Time to deliver final package to the publisher

If the proposal is for selected papers of a conference/workshop, the following information should be included as part of the proposal as well:

- The name of the conference/workshop, and the URL of the event.
- A brief description of the technical issues that the conference/workshop addresses, highlighting the relevance for the journal.
- A brief description of the event, including: number of submitted and accepted papers, and number of attendees. If these numbers are not yet available, please refer to previous events. First time conference/workshops, please report the estimated figures.
- Publisher and indexing of the conference proceedings.

If a proposal is accepted, the guest editor will be responsible for:

- Preparing the “Call for Papers” to be included on the Journal’s Web site.
- Distribution of the Call for Papers broadly to various mailing lists and sites.
- Getting submissions, arranging review process, making decisions, and carrying out all correspondence with the authors. Authors should be informed the Author Guide.
- Providing us the completed and approved final versions of the papers formatted in the Journal’s style, together with all authors’ contact information.
- Writing a one- or two-page introductory editorial to be published in the Special Issue.

More information is available on the web site at <http://www.academypublication.com/tpls/>

Development of a Questionnaire for the Assessment of Writing Problems <i>Amineh Danaee</i>	1396
The Impact of Portfolios and Journals on Iranian Pre-university Students' Vocabulary Learning <i>Abdolhossein Omid and Nahid Yarahmadzahi</i>	1403
An Investigation of Motivation in Children's Foreign Language Learning Process — A Case Study on the Basis of Needs Analysis <i>Na Wei</i>	1413
A Comparative Study of the Effects of Recasts and Scaffolded Feedback on the Grammatical Accuracy of Elementary EFL Learners <i>Fateme Saeb, Dariush Nejad Ansari Mahabadi, and Akbar Khazaei</i>	1420
The Impact of Cooperative Learning on Grammar Learning among Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners <i>Abdolvahed Zarifi and Azimeh Taghavi</i>	1429
On Metacognitive Strategy Use for College Students in English Listening Teaching <i>Lihua Tang</i>	1437
Identifying Young Learners' Learning Styles among Iranian EFL Learners <i>Noushin Asadipiran</i>	1444
Discourse Markers in Academic and Non-academic Writing of Iranian EFL Learners <i>Nasim Ghanbari, Tahereh Dehghani, and Mohammad Reza Shamsaddini</i>	1451
Implications of Australia's Bilingual Education of Aboriginal People <i>Jie Li</i>	1460
The Effect of Using Humor on High School Students' Grammar Performance and Motivation <i>Elham Kavandi and Reza Kavandi</i>	1466
The Effect of Using Short Stories on Vocabulary Learning of Iranian EFL Learners <i>Fatemeh Parvareshbar and Behrooz Ghoorchaei</i>	1476
Rhetorical Ways of Interpersonal Meaning and Translation Strategy <i>Xiufang Xia</i>	1484
The Effect of Cultural Transfer of Connotative Meaning of Vocabularies on Iranian EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension <i>Narjes Mabhoot and Mitra Zeraatpishe</i>	1489
The Effect of Dyadic and Triadic Interaction on Iranian EFL Learners' Oral Proficiency <i>Abbas Moradan and Nayereh Ahmadian</i>	1498
Absurdity and Postmodernism: An Analysis of Barthelme's <i>The Glass Mountain</i> <i>Lingeng Han</i>	1513
