

# The Effects of Collaborative and Individual Planning on Iranian Male and Female EFL Learners' Writing Ability

Sara Mirazi

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

Asgar Mahmoudi

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

**Abstract**—This article is concerned with the effects of planning type (individual vs. collaborative) and gender on EFL learners' writing quality. The interaction of these two types of variables is also investigated. In a quasi-experimental design, the performance of two collaborative-planning and two individual-planning groups were compared. In each of these planning situations there was a male group and a female group with 26 students of the same proficiency level. All four groups underwent 8 treatment sessions. Results of the Paired-samples T-tests revealed that both types of planning had been effective in improving the learners' writing performance. Moreover, based on the MANOVA results, there was no interaction between the two independent variables of the study and the main effect was significant only for the planning type. Findings of the study highlight the significance of planning, whether individually or collaboratively, before writing tasks.

**Index Terms**—writing skill, individual planning, collaborative planning

## I. INTRODUCTION

Writing is recognized as the most effective medium of conveying ideas and feelings to people who are away from us in place and time. Chastain (1988) envisions a strong link between writing ability on the one hand and language proficiency and education on the other. Beginning in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, writing has gained gradual but continuous importance in second and foreign language teaching. To improve learners' writing ability, models have emerged each providing teachers with a theory and a host of practical procedures to effectively teach this skill. According to Kellogg (1996), the presented models involve three basic systems: *Formulation*, *Execution* and *Monitoring*. Formulation involves *planning* and *translation*; execution involves *programming* and *executing*; and Monitoring involves *reading* and *editing*. Based on such models, learners are active and able to generate thoughts and ideas.

For the majority of EFL learners writing is a big challenge and they are reluctant to go through doing writing tasks. However, this skill needs to be given enough attention in EFL situations, because it is a key skill which displays learners' English language ability. Also as part of academic requirements, students should present their ideas through clear and well-organized texts.

Writing needs lots of time and lots of practice to develop; however, strategies that teachers employ might hasten the process and reduce the time that is needed to be an effective writer in an academic environment. One of the main strategies that can be adopted in language classes is giving students planning time to design the outline of their written texts and think of the content that needs to be included in them.

Studies have plainly revealed that pre-task planning can deeply affect the nature of the subsequent performance (e.g., Crookes, 1989; Ellis, 2005). Generally, it has become evident that planning is helpful for writing. Planning time provides students with an opportunity to enrich their writing and organize their ideas more effectively. When asked to write promptly, students are not sure how to start, how to develop the paragraph, how to organize the information and how to make the whole text a cohesive one even when they have enough vocabulary to use and know exactly what ideas they want to express. Therefore, it might be useful to give students planning time in which they can work on their own or in collaboration with their peers before embarking on the writing task.

The present study investigated the effects of providing opportunities for learners to plan before engaging in a writing task. Ortega (1999) defined the construct of planning as "the availability of a certain amount of time immediately before performing the experimental tasks" (p. 113). A planned condition, according to Foster and Skehan (2010), gives opportunities to prepare before the tasks and eases the subsequent attentional burden. This can also lower the workload of teachers and assist with their teaching process. According to Foster and Skehan, not many variables have been investigated in relation to planning and the majority of studies so far have been focused on individual planning to the disadvantage of collaborative planning. Additionally, gender identity might be one of the factors that leads to different outcomes with planning time, which is not investigated sufficiently. Gender studies are particularly important in

cultures that make a distinction between males and females in social and educational arenas, of which Iran is a good example.

Given that in many English language classes in Iran writing is taught superficially and without adequate attention to the details of the skill and with respect to the fact that in many classes no particular strategy is followed for effective writing, it was strongly felt that there is a need for these issues to be investigated. However, because of the time limit, the present research was aimed only at studying the effects of collaborative and individual planning on Iranian EFL learners' writing proficiency. At the same time, the effect of gender as a moderator variable was measured. The following null hypotheses are the ones that were formulated and tested:

**H0<sub>1</sub>.** Collaborative planning does not have any effect on EFL learners' writing ability.

**H0<sub>2</sub>.** Individual planning does not have any effect on EFL learners' writing ability.

**H0<sub>3</sub>.** There is no interaction between gender and planning type in relation to writing ability.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Planning

In order to attend to form and meaning equally, Willis (1991) suggested a task-based approach for instruction including pre-task, task cycle and post-task activities. Pre-task learning activities are usually inductive activities with certain aspects of task input made salient (Doughty, 1991); Examples of pre-task activities are consciousness-raising (Willis, 1996) and pre-task planning (Crookes, 1989). Pre-task planning gives learners an idea of how to go about the complete task and provides them with an opportunity to practice performing aspects of the task or a similar task before they are asked to do the main task.

Planning is believed to have a beneficial effect on learners' implicit acquisitional processes during the course of language development (Kowal & Swain, 1994; Storch, 2013), because a planned second language output will most possibly push learners to the extremes of their linguistic potential so that they may extend what they can do with language.

The two major types of planning are individual and collaborative planning. In individual planning participants are given time to plan in isolation. In collaborative planning, on the other hand, planning activity is completed by peers being engaged in the planning activity. Spoken and written activities are obviously susceptible to planning. Planning is essential for problem solving activities and involves coming up with linguistic devices that are needed for affecting the audience in the best possible way (Ellis, 2005).

In a study, Crookes (1989) investigated the results of giving learners a ten-minute planning time before the completion of two information-gap activities. The language that the learners in the planning condition produced was more complex and fluent than the language produced by other learners, but their production was not more accurate. His conclusion was that planners use their planning time to complexify the task by including more subordinate clauses with less accuracy.

Similar to Crookes' study, Foster and Skehan (1996) explored the impact of planning on variables as different as personal performance, narrative task, and decision-making task. For the first task, the participants had 10 minutes for individual planning by making notes but the notes were taken away from them at the end of the planning time. In the narrative task, the participants were given directions as to how they might use their planning time. This involved the discourse and suggestions about where to direct attention. The decision-making task involved content of the tasks that were required to be produced. Compared to the Crookes' study, Foster and Skehan reported that planning without guidance produced greater complexity and fluency of language.

The other research was conducted by Wigglesworth (1997) to investigate the effects of planning time in the context of language testing. Her findings revealed that participants' performance improved as a result of planning time but the difficulty of the task done and the proficiency level of the participants had also been exerting influence.

### B. Collaboration

Collaboration has also been the subject of many studies in L2 acquisition. Language development as demonstrated by Foster and Ohta (2005) is not limited to the interactive processes but encompasses strategies like negotiation of meaning, co-construction, other-correction, and continuers. Learners working in groups or pairs are more likely to use the L2 for a variety of functions which are usually performed by the teacher, including suggesting, questioning and providing feedback. Group and pair work, therefore, may bring about a shift in the roles of teachers and learners and provide learners with an enhanced quantity and quality of L2 practice.

One of the differences in planning type, as mentioned above, is whether it is done individually or collaboratively. The difference between collaborative planning and individual planning in EFL learners' writing is an area, which according to Storch (2005) and Storch and Wigglesworth (2007), is little investigated and the few research findings show mixed results.

Storch (2005) also points out that the majority of the studies on collaborative work in the L2 classroom in the past "have examined learners' attitudes to group/pair work in general, rather than to the activity of collaborative writing" (p. 155). Another group of the previous research on pair and group work in L2 writing have documented the beneficial effects of group feedback (e.g., Rollinson, 2005; Zhu, 2001), or matters relating to the dynamics of group, types of

group formations, groups' peer review tasks (e.g., Levine, Oded, Connor & Asons, 2002), rather than collaborative planning.

### C. Gender

Difference in gender also might affect students' performance in written tasks. Gender identity can be one of the reasons for collaboration avoidance in instructional settings. Differences in academic practices because of difference in the gender of students are well-attested in research. These differences are attributed to a combination of socialization patterns and physiology of the opposite sexes by Wharton (2000). A very well-known difference in this respect is strategy use. That females use more language strategies across different cultures, especially social strategies, is confirmed in several studies (e.g., Punithavalli, 2003; Zare, 2010).

Just as a case in point, Zare (2010) examined the likely differences between Iranian male and female language learners in relation to using language learning strategies. The findings showed that the use of language learning strategies was different between male and female EFL learners with female EFL learners performing much better in comparison with males in terms of using learning strategies.

Naveh, Kafipour and Soltani (2011) found gender as a fascinating variable in vocabulary learning and final achievement of EFL learners. They emphasized that females outdid males in terms of general proficiency and vocabulary size.

However, it must be admitted that in spite of the existence of studies pointing to the impact of gender on the EFL learners' of proficiency level, there are multiple studies rejecting any direct or indirect relationship between gender and language proficiency in general, and learning strategy in particular. Chou's (2002) study, for example, indicated that male and female EFL learners are not different when it comes to using language learning strategies. In a similar vein, Al Otaibi (2004) stated that gender did not result in any significant difference in using any of the six categories of strategies he studied.

## III. METHODOLOGY

The current study aimed at investigating the effects of two types of planning (individual and collaborative) and gender on EFL learners' writing performance. There was also an attempt to explore any possible interaction between these two variables.

### A. Participants

The study was conducted on 52 Iranian university students (26 males and 26 females) with the same mother tongue and an age range of 20 to 25 years old. Prior to taking part in the study, all of the participants had studied English for several years at different schools and had completed two or more English conversation books in private language schools.

### B. Instruments

A simplified version of Top Notch/Summit Placement Test A (Saslow & Asher, 2006), some topics for writing during the treatment sessions, and a picture strip were the instruments used in this study. The simplified version of the test consisted of listening, reading, vocabulary, and grammar sections. Listening was the first section and contained two conversation passages with a few multiple-choice and other comprehension check questions. The Reading section included one reading passage with eight true/false statements. The other two parts were intended to test the students' general knowledge of vocabulary and grammar through some items of mixed difficulty. The allotted time for this test was 50 minutes. The reliability of the test had already been established by applying it to a similar group of students and statistical analysis. The test was also considered to have content validity, because, in addition to its reliability, the items were all directed at measuring students' general English language proficiency.

In addition to this written test, a speaking test was administered using a picture strip and a series of questions in a 10-minutes time. Moreover, some writing topics were used as prompts for pretest, posttest and the treatment sessions. All of these topics were chosen from the book '*How to Prepare for the TOEFL Essay*', Edited by Abbas Zahedi (2002).

### C. Data Collection Procedure

The data collection procedure was conducted in four stages: administering the placement test, administering writing pretest, implementing the treatments, and administering the posttest.

Out of the 190 randomly chosen students 52 students whose scores fell somewhere between 35 and 50 in the proficiency test were included in the study. These students were then divided into two male and female groups each with 26 students. Each of these gender groups were randomly divided into two further groups each with 13 members. After dividing the participants into four groups, the pretest for writing was administered. In the pretest, the students were given two topics and were asked to write a text of about 100 to 150 words about one of them. In order to make sure that the groups were homogeneous in terms of their writing ability, the statistical test of One-way ANOVA was conducted on the pretest scores. The result was non-significant,  $P=.071 > .05$ . The result of the Leven's Test of Equality of Variances, which is produced as part of One-way ANOVA, also revealed that equal variances could be assumed among the groups,  $P=.65 > .05$ ,  $df=3, 48$ ,  $F=2.490$ . Normality of the distributions' of scores in all four groups was

likewise checked which confirmed their normality. Tables for this test, One-way ANOVA run on pretest scores, and Leven's Equality of Variances are given in the next section.

After the pretests, the learners in all four groups were exposed to 8 treatment sessions. What is more, students in two of the classes (one male and one female) were paired up with a partner they chose themselves. This was for providing them with collaborative planning opportunities. After planning in pairs, however, each learner wrote about the topic individually during the treatment and the posttest. In the other two classes, the learners planned and wrote about the given topic all on their own.

In each treatment session, all learners were given a topic and asked to plan (one group individually, the other in pairs) and produce a text on it. The treatments included providing students with information about the components of composition including *content*, *organization*, *vocabulary use*, *language use*, and *mechanics*. After the learners wrote their texts in each session, analytic feedback was provided based on the scoring profile of Jacobs et al. (1981) which takes into account all of the five writing components mentioned above. At the end of the treatment, the learners were asked to produce another passage about a new but very similar topic to the one given to them at the pretest stage as their posttest.

#### D. Scoring the Written Texts in Pretest and Posttest

Since assessing the written texts in terms of quantitative results seems to be a difficult task, scoring the participants' written texts in this study was based on the scoring profile of Jacob al. (1981). Based on the guidelines of this assessment profile, each text should be scored out of 100. Analytic scoring looks at different aspects of the text and measures learners' performance on each of the five components of *content*, *organization*, *vocabulary use*, *language use*, and *mechanics*. According to this scale, maximum credit given to the components are as follows: Content 30 points, Organization 20 points, Vocabulary use 20 points, Language use 25 points, and finally Mechanics 5 points.

### IV. DATA ANALYSIS

#### A. Overview of Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was utilized for statistical analysis. The reliability of the placement test (used in this study as the proficiency test) was established by running a Chronbach Alpha test on the proficiency scores. The pretest was given and a One-sample K-S test was run on its results to check for the normality of the distributions of scores in the groups. This was followed by a One-way ANOVA for rejecting significant initial difference(s) among the groups and assuring homogeneity of the groups' scores. Furthermore, two Paired-samples T-tests were run on the participants' pretest and posttest scores in order to investigate the first two research hypotheses of the study. To explore the interaction between gender and planning type in relation to writing ability, a Two-way between-groups ANOVA was used.

#### B. Results

First of all, the reliability of the proficiency test was calculated using Chronbach Alpha test. Table 4.1 shows the result of this test.

TABLE 4.1.  
RELIABILITY STATISTICS

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Subsections
.703	4

Normality of the scores' distributions, which is an important assumption of parametric tests, was checked by running a One-sample K-S test. The following table shows the results of this test for all four groups.

TABLE 4.2.  
TESTS OF NORMALITY OF SCORES' DISTRIBUTIONS AT PRETEST STAGE

<b>One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test</b>				
	Male individual pretest	Male collaborative pretest	Female individual pretest	Female collaborative pretest
N	13	13	13	13
Test Statistic	.135	.118	.133	.215
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.200 <sup>c,d</sup>	.200 <sup>c,d</sup>	.200 <sup>c,d</sup>	.102 <sup>c</sup>

a. Test distribution is Normal.

After obtaining non-significant results in One-Sample K-S test, a One-way ANOVA along with its accompanying Leven's Test of Equality of Variances were run in order to ascertain that the groups were not substantially different from each other or heterogeneous. Tables 4.3 and 4.4 show the results of these tests. According to table 4.3, there had been no significant difference among the groups of students' pretest scores at  $P=.07 > .05$  level.

TABLE 4.3.  
ANOVA TEST RUN ON PRETEST SCORES

pretest scores					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	961.135	3	320.378	2.490	.071
Within Groups	6175.846	48	128.663		
Total	7136.981	51			

Leven's Test of Equality of Variances or the homogeneity test that follows tells us that the groups in this study had been comparable with each other.

TABLE 4.4.  
LEVEN'S TEST OF EQUALITY OF VARIANCES

Levene's Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.554	3	48	.648

One of the main objectives of this study was to see if two types of planning, namely, individual and collaborative, had any effect on the EFL learners' writing ability. To test the related hypotheses, the participants' posttest scores were also entered into the statistical program for the purpose of comparing each group's pretest and posttest means. By running Paired-samples T-tests, each group's pretest mean was compared with the same group's posttest mean to see if the group members had made any significant gains. Table 4.5 shows the results of this test.

TABLE 4.5.  
PAIRED-SAMPLES T-TESTS SHOWING GROUPS' PROGRESS FROM PRETESTS TO POSTTESTS

		Paired Differences		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Male individual pretest - Male individual posttest	-17.61538	6.62745	-21.62031	-13.61046	-9.583	12	.000
Pair 2	Male collaborative pretest - Male collaborative posttest	-19.15385	10.05689	-25.23116	-13.07653	-6.867	12	.000
Pair 3	Female individual pretest - Female individual posttest	-19.30769	8.49887	-24.44351	-14.17188	-8.191	12	.000
Pair 4	Female collaborative pretest - Female collaborative posttest	-15.15385	7.50385	-19.68837	-10.61932	-7.281	12	.000

The *Sig.* values in Table 4.5 clearly show a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of each of the four groups ( $P < 0.001$ ). In other words, there had been statistically significant increases in participants' scores from the pretests to the posttests in all of the groups as a result of treatments. The effect sizes calculated for these *Sig* values using the formula  $Eta\ squared = t^2/t^2 + (N-1)$  are given below:

Eta squared for male-male individual planning = .88

Eta squared for male-male collaborative planning = .80

Eta squared for female-female individual planning = .85

Eta squared for female-female collaborative planning = .82

The effect sizes calculated are very strong effect sizes based on Cohen's classification of the strengths of effect sizes.

To find out whether there had been an interaction between gender and planning type in relation to writing ability, a Two-way between-groups ANOVA was run. This test is used when there are two categorical independent and one continuous dependent variables. The following tables indicate the results.

TABLE 4.6.  
BETWEEN-SUBJECTS FACTORS

	Value	Label	N
Planning type	1.00	individual	26
	2.00	collaborative	26
Gender	1.00	male	26
	2.00	female	26

TABLE 4.7.  
HOMOGENEITY OF THE GROUPS IN POSTTESTS  
**Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances<sup>a</sup>**

Dependent Variable: scores in posttest			
F	df1	df2	Sig.
.623	3	48	.603

TABLE 4.8.  
TESTS OF MAIN AND INTERACTION EFFECTS

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects						
Dependent Variable: scores in posttest						
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	609.288 <sup>a</sup>	3	203.096	5.947	.002	.271
Intercept	343606.327	1	343606.327	10060.546	.000	.995
Planning Type	510.942	1	510.942	14.960	.000	.238
Gender	86.327	1	86.327	2.528	.118	.050
Planning type * gender	12.019	1	12.019	.352	.556	.007
Error	1639.385	48	34.154			
Total	345855.000	52				
Corrected total	2248.673	51				

a. R Squared = .271 (Adjusted R Squared = .225)

Table 4.8 reveals that the interaction effect had been non-significant at  $P=.556>.05$  level. The main effect for gender had also been non-significant with  $P=.118>.05$ . But for planning type the  $P$  value had been equal to  $.000$ , which means that the only influencing factor, so far as the figures show, had been the kind of treatment that the students received. The Partial Eta Squared or the effect size value calculated for this variable is  $r=.238$ . This finding forces us to accept our third hypothesis and attribute the overall improvement in our participants' writing to the planning type that they received irrespective of whether the students were male or female.

## V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study was an attempt to investigate three research questions:

1. Does collaborative planning have any effect on EFL learners' writing ability?
2. Does individual planning have any effect on EFL learners' writing ability?
3. Is there an interaction between gender and planning type in relation to writing ability?

In brief, it was revealed that both types of planning had positive effects on EFL learners' writing performance. Therefore, the answers to the first two research questions were positive. In fact, the treatments had been effective regardless of the type of planning and the first two null hypotheses of the study were rejected. However, further analysis demonstrated that while both planning strategies had been significantly effective in improving students' writing ability, the individual planning groups had performed better compared to the collaborative planning groups. This finding is reflected in the effect sizes calculated for these two types of planning situations. Moreover, the findings indicated a lack of interaction between the two independent variables of gender and planning type.

The fact that the learners performed better in writing posttests suggests that planning before a writing activity is effective in leading the learners to produce linguistically more accurate and appropriate texts. This is in line with previous studies that report the benefits of planning (Foster and Skehan, 1996; Mehnert, 1998; Ojima, 2006). The effect of individual planning on the students' writing in this study proved to be slightly better than collaborative planning which goes against the findings of some researchers (e.g., Nixon, 2007; Wigglesworth & Storch, 2009; Elola & Oskoz, 2010), who found superior effect for collaborative planning. The overall finding of the study, however, highlights the importance of planning in facilitating writing process and enhancing written texts quality. Through planning EFL learners are able to create more organized passages with better content.

This study suggests a need for an emphasis on giving planning time to EFL learners before any writing task. The findings are beneficial to EFL learners as well as teachers. Learners should be encouraged to plan for their writings in terms of content and organization and teachers are advised to provide this opportunity for them.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Al-Otaibi, G. N. (2004). Language learning strategy use among Saudi EFL students and its relationship to language proficiency level, gender and motivation. Doctoral dissertation: Indiana University of Pennsylvania.
- [2] Chastain, K. (1988). Developing second language skills: Theory and practice. Orlando: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- [3] Chou, Y. (2002). An exploratory study of language learning strategies and the relationship of these strategies to motivation and language proficiency among EFL Taiwanese technological and vocational college learners. Doctoral dissertation: University of Iowa.
- [4] Crookes, G. (1989). Planning and interlanguage variation. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 11(4), 367–383.

- [5] Doughty, C. (1991). Second language instruction does make a difference. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 13(4), 431–469.
- [6] Ellis, R. (2005). Planning and task performance in a second language. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- [7] Elola, I., & Oskoz, A. (2010). Collaborative writing: Fostering foreign language and writing conventions development. *Language Learning & Technology*, 14(3), 51–71.
- [8] Foster, P., & Ohta, A. S. (2005). Negotiation for meaning and peer assistance in second language classrooms. *Applied Linguistics*, 26(3), 402–430.
- [9] Foster, P., & Skehan, P. (1996). The influence of planning and task type on second language performance. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 18(3), 299–323.
- [10] Jacobs, H. L., Zingraf, S. A. Wormuth, D. R., Hartfiel, V. F. & Hughey, J. B. (1981). Testing ESL Composition: A Practical Approach. Newbury House, Rowley, MA.
- [11] Kellogg, R. T. (1996). A model of working memory in writing. In A. Dillon (Ed.). *The science of writing: Theories, methods, individual differences, and applications* (pp. 57–71). Mahwah, USA: Lawrence Erlbaum Association.
- [12] Kowal, M., & Swain, M. (1994). Using collaborative language production tasks to promote students' language awareness 1. *Language Awareness*, 3(2), 73–93.
- [13] Levine, A., Oded, B., Connor, U., & Asons, I. (2002). Variation in EFL-ESL peer response. *TESL-EJ*, 6(3), 1–19.
- [14] Mehnert, U. (1998). The effects of different lengths of time for planning on second language performance. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 20(1), 83–108.
- [15] Naveh, M. H., Kafipour, R., & Soltani, R. (2011). The relationship among extraversion tendency, vocabulary learning strategies, and reading comprehension of EFL undergraduates in Kerman province. *Studies in Literature and Language*, 3(2), 104–110.
- [16] Nixon, R. M. (2007). Collaborative and independent writing among adult Thai EFL learners: Verbal interactions, compositions, and attitudes. ProQuest.
- [17] Ojima, M. (2006). Concept mapping as pre-task planning: A case study of three Japanese ESL writers. *System*, 34(4), 566–585.
- [18] Ortega, L. (1999). Planning and focus on form in L2 oral performance. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 21(1), 109–148.
- [19] Punithavalli, K. M. (2003). Strategi pembelajaran bahasa oleh pelajar-pelajar menengahrendah dalam mempelajari bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa kedua. MA thesis. University of Kebangsaan Malaysia.
- [20] Rollinson, P. (2005). Using peer feedback in the ESL writing class. *ELT Journal*, 59(1), 23–30.
- [21] Saslow, J., & Asher, A. (2006). Topnotch Placement Test. New York: Pearson Education, Inc.
- [22] Storch, N. (2005). Collaborative writing: Product, process, and students' reflections. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 14(3), 153–173.
- [23] Storch, N. (2013). Collaborative writing in L2 classrooms (Vol. 31). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- [24] Storch, N. & Wigglesworth, G. (2007). Writing tasks: The effects of collaboration. In M. Garcí'a Mayo (Ed.). *Investigating tasks in formal language learning* (pp. 157–177). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- [25] Wharton, G. (2000). Language learning strategy use of bilingual foreign language learners in Singapore. *Language Learning*, 50(2), 203–243.
- [26] Wigglesworth, G. (1997). An investigation of planning time and proficiency level on oral test discourse. *Language Testing*, 14(1), 85–106.
- [27] Wigglesworth, G., & Storch, N. (2009). Pair versus individual writing: Effects on fluency, complexity and accuracy. *Language Testing*, 26(3), 445–466.
- [28] Willis, D. (1991). The lexical syllabus: A new approach to language teaching. London: Harper Collins Publishers.
- [29] Willis, J., & Willis, D. (1996). Consciousness-raising activities in the language classroom. In D. Willis & J. Willis (Eds.). *Challenge and change in language teaching* (pp. 63–77). Portsmouth: Heinemann.
- [30] Zahedi, A. (2002). How to prepare for the TOEFL essay. Tehran: Zabankadeh.
- [31] Zare, P. (2010). An Investigation into Language Learning Strategy Use and Gender among Iranian Undergraduate Language Learners. *World Applied Sciences Journal*. 11(10), 1238–1247.
- [32] Zhu, W. (2001). Interaction and feedback in mixed peer response groups. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 10(4), 251–276.

**Sara Mirazi** is an MA graduate of ELT from IAU-Ahar Branch in Iran. She has been teaching general English for more than ten years in different English language institutes in Ardabil. Her areas of interest are second language acquisition, methodology, linguistics, and psycholinguistics.

**Asgar Mahmoudi** is an assistant professor of ELT at IAU-Ardabil Branch. He has been teaching different courses at this university for MA and PhD students for about eight years. His areas of interest are research methodology, theories of language learning and teaching, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and statistics.