

# Theory and Practice in Language Studies

ISSN 1799-2591

Volume 7, Number 1, January 2017

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# Mapping Asynchronous Forum-based Interaction Patterns between Second Language Educational Researchers and Practitioners

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**Abstract**—This paper presents a detailed mapping of the interaction patterns and level of cognitive processing that characterised online communication between educational researchers and L2 teachers during six weeks of asynchronous forum-based discussions of six research articles. The project was designed to investigate and ultimately bridge the linkage gap between researchers and practitioners, following the Graham et al (2006) knowledge to action framework. We used NodeXL to map the different types of interaction patterns (user-to-user and user-to-thread) and adapted the Hara et al (2000) framework to identify and describe the level of social cues used and cognitive processing mechanisms evident in the participants' texts. The findings showed little direct interaction between the two groups as evidenced by the low use of social clues and reluctance of practitioners to respond directly to the researchers. On the other hand, the mapping of the user-to-thread patterns showed clustering around some discussion topics that were raised by both researchers and practitioners, which suggests that the discussion was meaningful and co-constructed by members of both groups. The exchange of ideas in the forum space seemed to transcend issues of identity and conventional roles as it allowed both groups to be equal contributors to the dialogue. Moreover, there was clear evidence of in-depth cognitive processing in the messages of both groups. We propose that, in spite of the seeming guarded distance and practitioners' reluctance to address researchers directly, the forum facilitated knowledge exchange and meaningful discussion of issues of interest to both groups.

**Index Terms**—linkage gap, asynchronous communication, interaction mapping

## I. INTRODUCTION

The present paper reports on one aspect of a multi-stage project that aimed to investigate the linkage gap between L2 educational researchers and practitioners. The project was the result of a collaboration between the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT), the Canadian Modern Language Review and the second author, who partnered to facilitate the creation of a common virtual space where researchers and novice practitioners could 'meet' and discuss six research articles authored by the participating academics. To facilitate this knowledge mobilization effort, the project design was a step-by-step implementation of Graham et al's (2006) Knowledge to Action framework that also afforded data collection about the behaviours and ideational and linguistic choices of the two groups (see Knouzi & Mady, 2015). Previous analyses of the different aspects of the project data yielded mixed results. On the one hand, comparison of pre- and post- discussion interviews with the participating novice teachers showed the teachers gained some awareness of the main statements made in the articles that were discussed (Mady, 2013). However, we noted that both groups' participation in the forum discussions were limited and reserved (Mady, 2012; Mady & Knouzi, 2015). Therefore, in this paper we analyze the interaction patterns, the social cues, and the level of cognitive processing that was evident in the exchange of ideas between the two groups. Specifically, the paper aims to answer two questions: (a) What is the structure of communication between a group of researchers and a group of novice teachers who were tasked to discuss six published articles written by the participating researchers, and (b) what is the level of cognitive effort engaged during the discussions. We believe that the answers to these questions might help explain the mixed results we have obtained so far and, in so doing, pinpoint the cause of such discrepancies.

### A. Definition, Causes and Repercussions of the Linkage Gap

Several fields and disciplines have reported linkage gaps between their scholars and researchers on one hand and their practitioners on the other hand. A linkage gap can be defined as a lack or breakage of communication between researchers and practitioners which hinders or delays the exchange of information between the two groups to the detriment of the development of the discipline and the interests of the public. This has been a pressing concern for the fields of healthcare and medicine, for instance, where there is an obvious urgency to translate new empirical evidence into actionable messages that can, in turn, inform decision-making and transform practice for the benefit of patients

(e.g., Lavis et al (2003), refs). However, there is ample evidence that the knowledge-to-action process is hindered by different kinds of systemic obstacles.

The fields of education, in general, and second language education in particular have been the site of a linkage gap comparable to the one observed in the healthcare system (Davies, 2000; Hargreaves, 1997; Hemsley-Brown, 2004; Hess, 2007; Lagemann, 2002; Levin and Cooper, 2010; Mollica, Philips & Smith, 2005; Smylie and Corcoran, 2009). The causes of the gap have been described as conceptual, institutional, and attitudinal.

At the conceptual level, there is evidence that researchers and teachers read and assess the value of published work differently. Researchers measure the value of any work in terms of the contribution it makes to the field and how it augments, builds on or rectifies previous knowledge. Teachers, on the other hand, seek recommendations for best practices that are transparent and applicable (e.g., Bartels, 2003; Ellis, 2001).

The institutional and attitudinal obstacles are often related to what have been perceived as ‘typical’ roles and responsibilities associated with the two groups. It is not clear whether these roles were first imposed as institutional norms and then became internalised as attitudes or the other way around (cf., Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Herrenkohl, Kawasaki & Dewater, 2010). Allison and Carey (2007) speak of a hierarchy where the knowledge transfer process is unidirectional emanating from the research sphere to the field practitioners. Cooper (2010) and Davies (2000) speak of two different cultures characterized by the use of different registers and the pursuit of different agendas. Rickson (2005) explains that while, the two groups share the same fundamental concerns related to the understanding of learning processes and the identification and verification of best teaching practices, their problem-solving and knowledge dissemination processes divert considerably in accordance with their respective institutional expectations: researchers value data-driven investigation and prioritize publication while teachers are more likely to share insights gained from classroom experience within their community of practice.

The linkage gap can have detrimental consequences for both research and practice. It breaks the necessary feedback loop that connects and informs both spheres. Without this feedback loop researchers lose touch with the lived reality and immediate concerns of practitioners and teachers miss valuable current information that can revolutionize their practices. The present paper contributes to the ongoing debate about the causes and ways of closing the linkage gap between educational researchers and practitioners.

### B. The Project Rationale

The multi-staged project from which this paper is derived is based on the Knowledge-To-Action (KTA) conceptual framework developed by Graham et al. (2006) who defined the framework as a tool that “integrates the roles of knowledge creation and knowledge application.” (p. 13). The framework includes seven interrelated components, and evolves in a cyclic manner allowing mechanisms for assessment and revisions within and following each component. Figure 1 below illustrates how we operationalized each of the seven KTA components including the specific steps we took during this project to bridge the gap between educational researchers and practitioners with the view to facilitating knowledge exchange.

While the Figure itself seems linear, it is important to emphasize that the KTA framework depicts a cyclic continuous process that relies on the intervention and collaboration of several stakeholders and not a linear activity. Two principles guided our reading and implementation of the Graham et al. model. First, all project components and phases aimed to facilitate an *exchange* of knowledge between the researchers and the practitioners. A special attention was made not to suppose or consecrate a hierarchy between the two groups. While acknowledging that the two groups represented two distinct communities with different discourses and agendas, we believed that they both had knowledge capital to contribute, and therefore strove to create the necessary conditions for a balanced and rich *dialogue*.

Second, we conceptualised the project as both an attempt to implement the KTA framework in an education context and a research study and data collection strategy about the behaviours of the two groups. The KTA implementation part of the project included a phase of ‘barrier identification’ whereby we consulted both the literature and pertinent stakeholders to help define the barriers to knowledge exchange between researchers and practitioners in the field of education. This consultation helped us identify (a) the lack of a shared space, (b) the often obscure and exclusive language of published research, and (c) physical inaccessibility to relevant, high quality research as three main barriers that hinder the KTA process in education. This step led, in turn, to the creation of tools and artefacts to surmount these obstacles as described below (study guides, online forum). On the other hand, the research study part aimed to collect concrete thick data from the resulting interaction between researchers and teachers in order to analyze it and gain a better understanding of any further barriers that may not have been identified before.

As shown in Figure 1, for the first phase of the project, we consulted researchers, faculty, and administrators to identify six published research articles that subsequently became the common reference of the dialogue between researchers and practitioners. Our advisors were highly qualified and knowledgeable educators, which added validity to our selection of pertinent forms of knowledge. The six articles were also published in a prestigious peer-reviewed journal, and have therefore been through a rigorous vetting process of review and revision.

In the second phase of the project, we obtained the permission of the authors of the six articles to use their articles and their agreement to discuss their work with a group of teachers and teacher candidates that were also participants in the project. The journal also granted our teacher participants free access to the articles during the project.

The implementation phases (phases 3 and 4 in Figure 1), geared towards overcoming the three obstacles identified above, consisted in (a) granting the novice teachers free and direct access to quality relevant research and the authors behind it, (b) writing support guides that situated each article in the larger related literature, summarized, and explicated each article in more accessible language, and (c) creating a virtual space where practitioners and authors could interact freely for a week each time to discuss the article of the guest author of the week. In this regard, to use Graham et al.'s terms, we went beyond diffusion and aimed for dissemination as we made published material accessible and meaningful to the novice practitioners. During the project, the second author acted as moderator but limited her interventions to providing technical support when needed. For instance, during two weeks, she had to relay the researchers' responses to the forum because the researchers were unable to log in and post their messages directly to the forum.

The project design also facilitated the observation and monitoring of researcher-teacher interaction through the analysis of forum-log files, interaction patterns, and the texts created by the two groups while discussing the weekly articles. In previous papers, we explored different aspects of the interaction in an attempt to understand its scope and direction. In fact in Mady (2012), Google analytics data was used to measure the number and duration of participant visits to the forum and the kinds of resources most used (study guides, videos). In Knouzi and Mady (2015) we used a text analysis approach to examine the ideational and linguistic choices made by the two groups during their direct interactions. In this article, we further investigate the extent of knowledge exchange and uptake during the dialogue by mapping the interaction patterns across the six weeks, and analyzing the presence and type of cognitive skills and level of cognitive processing as exemplified in the conversations of weeks 3 and 4, the two most active weeks during the project.

Graham et al. consider the seventh phase part of a necessary 'feedback loop' that evaluates, improves, and builds on different actions to ensure sustainability of knowledge use. We consider that making our project data and findings available to the broader community contributes to the feedback loop as it may enhance and guide further efforts to bridge the linkage gap in the educational field.

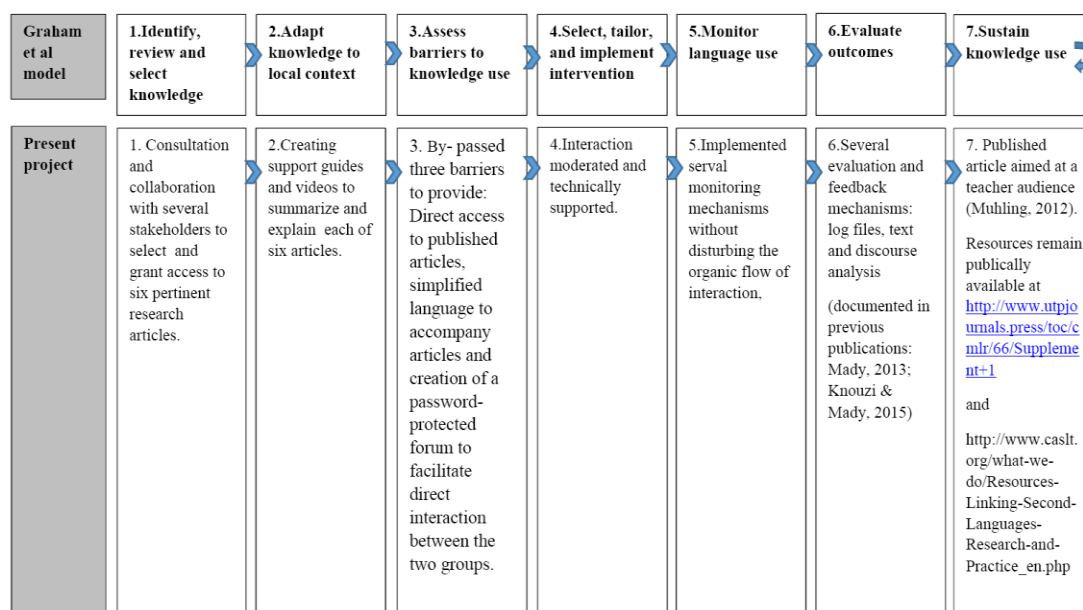


Figure 1: Project design and implementation of Graham et al. (2006) KTA framework

### C. The Forum as a Potential Social Network

Underlying the design and set up of the forum was the expectation that the creation of an open virtual space that brings the two groups in contact with each other will help transcend the differences in their discourses. In other words, one of the major intended aspects of the forum was the creation of 'social relationships' between members of the two groups, or a social network that can promote collaboration and a meaningful exchange of ideas. In this regard, Abbasi and Altmann (2010) argue that scientific collaborations 'emerge from, and are often perpetuated through, social networks' (p. 3). They acknowledge that, to a large extent, the success and failure of interaction within any given social network have a major impact on the success or failure of the broader communication situation. There is, therefore, a growing consensus on the value of mapping and analysing the social networks that underlie collaborative endeavours.

Blanchet and James (2012) define social network analysis as 'a distinctive set of methods for mapping, measuring and analysing the social relationship between people, groups and organizations' (p.439). The scale of the network can vary greatly ranging from a closed set of interactions to an open platform with unlimited boundaries. However, all attempts for analyzing such networks include a form of graphic representation of the relationships between the different

actors in a network, by representing a participant as a node and the relationship between entities as ties (Abbasi & Altmann, 2010; Blanchet & James, 2012).

Several mapping tools are being used in the field. For this study, given the limited number of participants and of the ties between them, we used NodeXL and entered the interaction data manually. This analysis allowed us to define and then visualise different types of ties between the participants.

## II. METHODS

### A. Context of the Study

CASLT invited the second author to design and conduct a research project that aims to bridge the gap between educational researchers and practitioners. As explained above, the proposed design was based on the Graham et al. framework which called for the intervention of several stakeholders. In fact, participants were recruited through calls for participation distributed on the CASLT website, at L2 teachers' conferences, and to teacher candidates in one Faculty of Education in Ontario. Several educators and researchers helped select the papers that eventually constituted the main reference for the forum discussions. The Canadian Modern Language Review granted free access to the selected articles to all participants for the duration of the project. The second author designed and moderated the online environment.

### B. Participants

The 8 researcher participants in this project were renowned researchers in the fields of second language acquisition, teaching, and learning. They were also teaching professors at the graduate and undergraduate levels in their countries (Canada, Hong Kong, New Zealand, and USA). They accepted to discuss their respective papers with the practitioner participants during the week in which the paper would be featured on the forum.

The practitioner group included teachers ( $n=9$ ) who were recruited through distribution of project information at conferences and teacher candidates ( $n=35$ ) who were enrolled in an FSL teacher education program. For these teacher candidates, participation in the forum discussions was part of their course assignments.

Eventually, in addition to the eight researchers, 52 teacher/teacher candidate (T/TC) participants had access to the password-protected forum: 34 contributed to the discussion forum, the majority ( $n=25$ ) of whom were TCs. The researchers posted 17 messages while the T/TCs posted 103 messages for a total of 122 messages posted over 6 weeks. The participants posted in French ( $n=107$ ) and English ( $n=15$ ).

### C. Research Questions

- 1- What is the structure of communication between the two groups?
- 2- What is the level of cognitive effort engaged during these discussions?

### D. Analysis Procedure

The data analysis proceeded in two stages. In the first stage, we used NodeXL Template for Microsoft Excel 2007 to map the pattern of interaction between researchers and T/TCs every week. NodeXL is an open access tool that can be used to map asynchronous threaded conversation. Typical threaded conversation forums allow users to respond directly to a particular message: a user can post her message in response to a previous message by clicking 'reply' or choose to start a new thread by posting an independent message. The implicit ties between thread and users or 'reply networks' can be represented graphically with NodeXL, which in turn reveals the structure and patterns of communication within the forum, the most active users, the most popular topics, where interaction was dense and where it failed.

The forum created for the project did not allow for direct replies. Messages were posted in sequence with each message bearing the electronic ID of the writer. Some users addressed their messages to specific recipients in the body of the message usually as a greeting form (e.g. Hi Steph, I agree [...]). Other messages did not indicate the name of specific recipients but were clearly intended as a contribution to an ongoing thread or a topic raised in previous messages. This configuration did not allow for the automatic tracking of 'reply networks'. We, therefore, entered all the available data manually.

We generated two maps for each week, a user-to-user map and a user-to-thread map. For the user-to-user map, we entered the names of the users (represented as nodes or vertices) and whether they addressed their message to a specific person in the forum, and if yes, we entered the name of the intended recipient. The resulting map showed (a) floating nodes that represented users who posted messages with no specific recipient and (b) connected nodes linked by pointed arrows that show the direction of the communication from the writer to the recipient of the message.

For the user-to-thread map, we linked the names of users to the themes they were addressing in their message, regardless of whether it was addressed to a recipient or not. The map shows the number of users who commented on any given topic. It is to be noted that the list of the themes or topics that constituted the threads were identified and coded in a first stage of the project and documented in a previous paper (Knouzi & Mady, 2015).

In the second stage, we analysed the forum messages qualitatively by looking at the level of cognitive processing and the types of cognitive skills used during the conversations of weeks 3 and 4 which were the most active weeks in terms of the number of total messages posted. The conversations in weeks 3 and 4 exemplified some of the most pertinent

findings from the interaction mapping stage. In fact, in both weeks, the interaction was characterized by a one-way dialogue from researcher to T/TC with no answers or feedback in the opposite direction. On the other side, there were some clusters around some themes or topics that were raised during those weeks. The qualitative analysis allowed us to look closely at these two conversations in terms of the social and cognitive mechanisms engaged by the two groups.

Specifically, we used Hara, Bond and Angeli's (2000) model to code forum messages in terms of social cues used, and the level of cognitive processing evident in each message. Hara et al. explain that their model includes both a numeric analysis and a targeted and detailed content analysis of an online discussion to provide a comprehensive picture of the richness, scope and content of the conversation. The model revises and improves the widely used model of Henri (1992) which, while comprehensive, was somewhat ambiguous and led to low scoring reliability because of ill-defined codes and coding procedures (Hara et al., 2000; Howell-Richardson & Mellar, 1996). Following Hara et al. (2000), we counted the total number of messages and the average length of messages posted by researchers and T/TC participants each week. We used the paragraph as our basic coding unit considering that, like Hara et al's participants, our participants were able to write well-structured paragraphs with a main idea unit per paragraph. We coded for 3 of the 5 dimensions of the Hara et al model.

**Social cues:** We adopted Henri's (1992)/Hara et al (2000) definition of social cues as "statement or part of a statement not related to formal content of subject matter" (p. 126) and thus coded instances of self-introduction, expressions of feelings, closures, jokes, and compliments to others as social cues. Within closure, we included name signature because we considered that in the case of the forum where writers are automatically identified by their sign-in names, the addition of a personal signature indicated a different level of social presence. We carried this analysis on all the data set, while the following analysis was only applied to weeks 3 and 4.

**Depth of cognitive processing:** Hara et al (2000) distinguish between surface-level processing which includes factors such as "making judgment without justification, stating that one shares ideas or opinions already stated, repeating what has been said, and asking irrelevant questions" and in-depth processing which includes linking facts and ideas, offering new elements of information, discussing advantages and disadvantages of a situation, and making judgements that were supported by examples and/or justification" (p.126). We followed Hara et al' recommendation to code whole messages (not individual paragraphs) at this level. Messages that included instance of both surface-level and in-depth processing were coded as both.

Table 1 shows the coding scheme we used.

TABLE I.  
CODING SCHEME ADAPTED FROM HARA ET AL. (2000)

Social cues
Self-introduction
Expression of feeling
Greeting
Closure/signature
Jokes
Emoticons
Compliments to others
Level of cognitive processing
Surface-level processing
Making judgment without justification
Stating that one shares ideas/opinions already stated
Repeating what has been said
Asking irrelevant questions
In-depth processing
Linking facts and ideas
Offering new elements
Discussing advantages and disadvantages
Supporting judgment with examples and justifications

Note: Adopted from Hara et al (2001) with some modifications.

### III. FINDINGS

#### A. Interaction Patterns

TABLE II.  
NUMBER AND LENGTH OF MESSAGES POSTED BY RESEARCHERS AND T/TC

	Researchers			T/TC				Total Number of messages	
	Number of messages	Shortest message	Longest message	Average message length	Number of TC messages	Shortest message	Longest message		Average message length
Week 1	2	28	132	80	4	172	348	282.5	6
Week 2	2	214	297	255.5	10	132	439	346.5	12
Week 3	6	37	433	249.5	25	156	598	309.5	31
Week 4	1	-	-	605	23	128	545	333.5	24
Week 5	5	83	243	237	16	106	653	316.5	21
Week 6	1	-	-	431	25	98	476	254	26
Total	17				103				120

Table 2 shows the number and average length of messages posted by the researchers and T/TC every week. It shows that the T/TC posted 103 messages in total while the researchers posted 17 messages only. The dominance of the T/TC presence was consistent from week to week. The T/TC messages were also considerably longer than those posted by the researchers- with the exception of the single message posted by the guest researcher on Week 6. It is also to be noted that each T/TC posted one single message per week. In fact, these participants were required to post at least one message per week as part of the course work.

Figure 2 represents the user-to-user interaction maps for the 6 weeks. Each dot on the maps represents a message posted by a T/TC. Triangles represent messages posted by a researcher. Arrows linking two messages indicate that a message was written as a response to another participant's message. For instance, in Week 1, one T/TC addressed the researcher in her message (arrow pointing from T/TC message to researcher) and there was an exchange between the researcher and one T/TC where the T/TC addressed the researcher who then responded to the T/TC (double-headed arrow). The floating dot indicates a message posted by a T/TC that was not addressed to anybody, and which did not receive any direct response.

Two key findings emerge from Figure 2. First, the interaction tended to be centred around T/TC messages. Most of the exchanges took place between T/TC. When a researcher initiated an exchange by addressing a T/TC by name, there was no reply. This is obvious, for instance in Week 3, where the researcher addressed seven different T/TCs but none of them wrote back or seemed interested in carrying the conversation further. There were only two exceptions to this observation: In Week 1, there was an exchange between a T/TC and the guest researcher. It is to be noted, however, that the researcher in that case, was also the course instructor and therefore, she was familiar to the T/TC.

The apparent reluctance to interact directly with peers and researchers was confirmed by the analysis of the social cues in the posted messages. Table 3 shows the number and type of social cues used in the forum messages by both researchers and T/TC. In fact, 13 researcher messages contained instances of social cues. Compliments and closures were the most common cues used. However, only 13 T/TC messages included social cues. The most common cues used by T/TCs were Expression of feelings and Closures. While it is not possible to draw any strong conclusions based on these low frequency numbers, it is clear (based on Figure 2 and Table 3) that both researchers and T/TC did not see the forum as a social space. They used it as a platform to post their messages, while almost discounting the other members, be they T/TC or researchers.

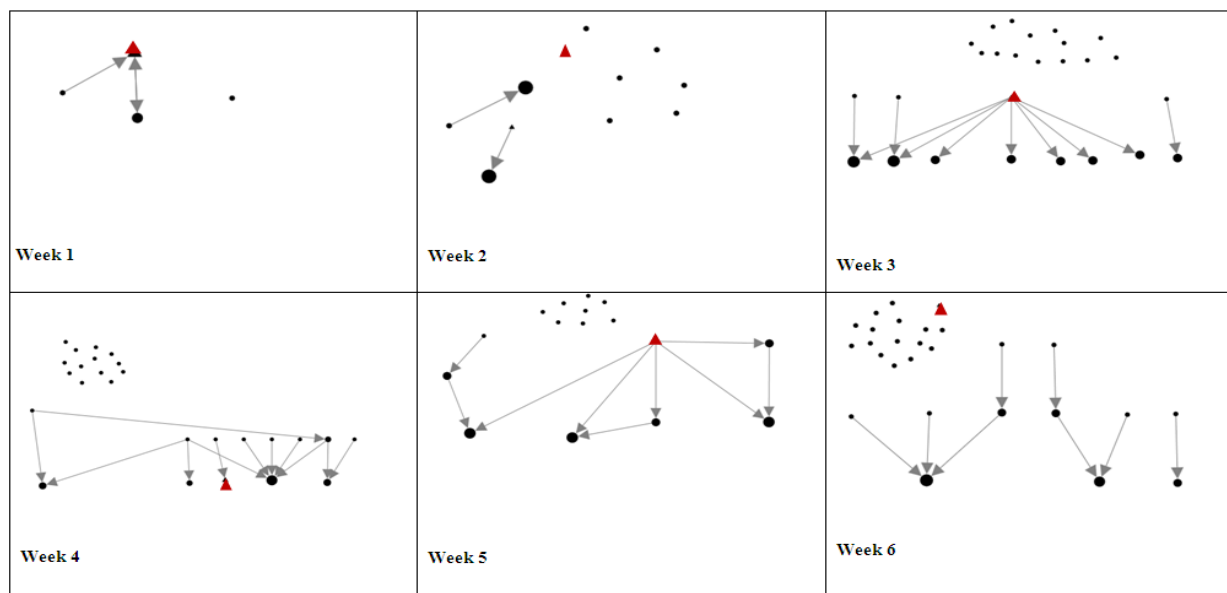


Figure 2: User-to-user interaction



TABLE III.  
NUMBER AND TYPE OF SOCIAL CUES IN FORUM MESSAGES

	Researchers				T/TC	
	Total	Number of messages	Type of Social cues used	Number of messages	Type of Social cues used	
Week 1	3	2	2 Compliments	1	1 Compliment	
Week 2	10	5	3 Compliments 2 Closure 1 Greeting 1 Expression of feeling	5	4 Closure 1 Greeting	
Week 3		0	0	0	0	
Week 4		0	0	0	0	
Week 5	4	2	2 Closure	2	2 Expression of feeling	
Week 6	9	4	2 Closure 1 Greeting 1 Compliment	5	3 Expression of feeling 2 Compliments 1 Closure	
	26	13		13		

Second, Figure 2 shows a considerable number of messages that appeared to be unrelated to the rest of the conversation. For instance, there were 14 and 13 floating messages in weeks 3 and 4, respectively. The authors of these messages did not address their messages directly (i.e., they did not name a specific addressee). However, our close reading of the data indicates that these messages were thematically coherent and related to the rest of the conversation. This was clearly reflected in the user-to-thread maps in Figure 3, which relates each message (represented as a dot for T/TC or a triangle for researcher) and the theme(s) it tackles. As mentioned above, the focal topics were identified and coded in the first stage of data analysis of this project (see Knouzi & Mady, 2015).

Figure 3 reveals three significant features of the *content* of the forum interaction. First, the first week exchange was limited and 'slow' in that only 5 topics were raised and only three topics were commented on by more than one forum member. This pattern changed in the following weeks as the number of the topics increased (e.g., 11 topics in Week 2, 8 topics in Weeks 2 and 5, 9 topics in Week 6), and the number of messages commenting on topics increased. Therefore, it seemed after an adjustment period where participants hesitated to tackle topics raised by other users, they began to 'pick up' threads of conversation, thus creating a seemingly coherent conversation.

Second, there was no difference in the pattern of interaction with the topics addressed by the researchers or the T/TC. In other words, the identity of the users discussing any given topic did not seem to influence the number or type of participants addressing the same topic. Therefore, the focus of interlocutors was on the content and discussion at hand, regardless of the identity of the contributors.

Third, almost every topic raised was taken up by at least another user (with very few exceptions), which denotes an important level of coherence and homogeneity in the resulting exchange. This finding is especially important for our discussion of distance and solidarity in the forum. While the lack of social clues and the interaction pattern mapped in Figure 2 seem to point towards some guarded distance or reluctance to engage in the forum space, the findings of the user-to-thread maps suggest that the identity was less important and that the participants did engage in discussion of common topics and concerns.

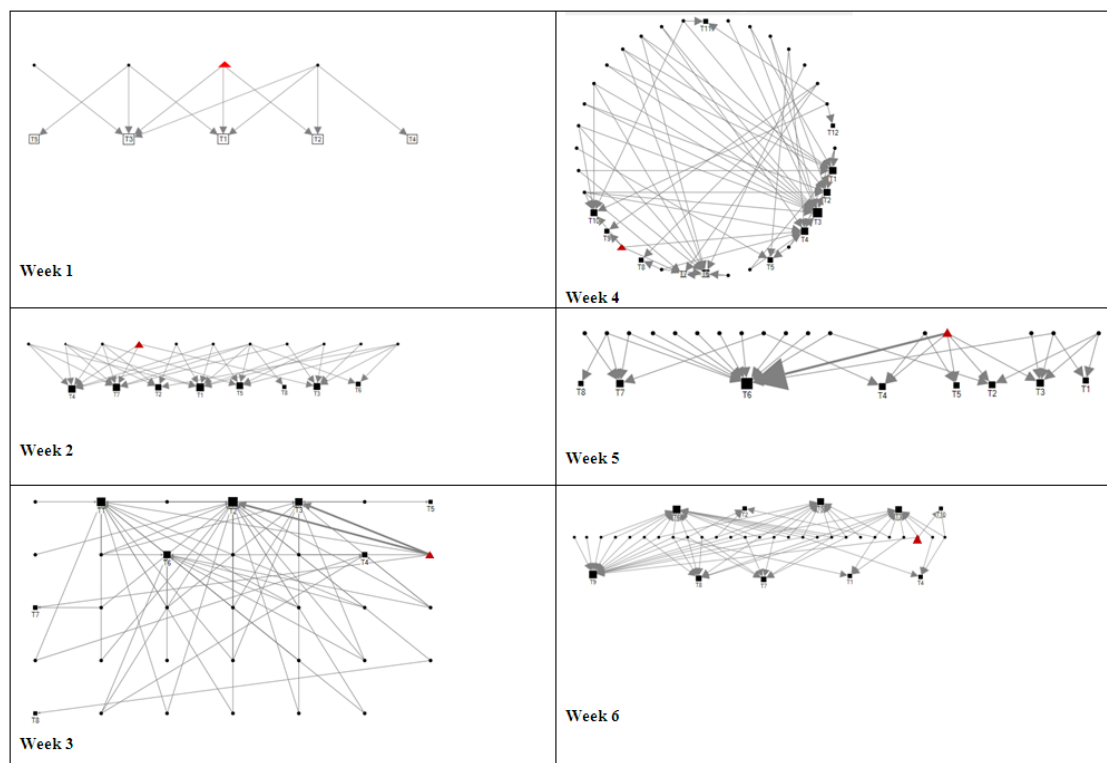


Figure 3: User to topic interaction

### B. Level of Cognitive Processing in Weeks 3 and 4

For this analysis, we coded each forum message posted on Weeks 3 and 4 for the occurrence of surface-level and in-depth level cognitive processing mechanisms. Unlike Hara et al. (2000), we coded for 8 sub-categories (see Table 4) in order to better understand the cognitive activity that the participants engaged in while interacting in the forum space. Messages that contained instances of both levels of cognitive processing were coded as such.

Table 4 reports the results of the analysis. It shows a similar pattern over the two weeks. This is especially clear in the behaviour of the T/TCs and less so in the behaviour of the researchers because of the limited contribution of the second guest researcher on Week 4. The researchers used more in-depth processing mechanisms, especially, ‘supporting judgment with examples and justifications’ and ‘offering new elements of information’. In fact, both researchers stated their opinions and provided examples and anecdotes to explain, support and justify their positions as illustrated in the following example from the data where the researcher explains (‘this means’) that effective content-based instruction requires that both content and language learning objectives be defined in advance. This distinction adds depth to the argument that was being discussed and clarifies aspects of the approach that may have not been stated explicitly before.

“It has been shown that merely teaching content through language will not lead to effective language learning (Lyster, 2007; Swain, 1996). This means we need both content learning objectives and language learning objectives for each lesson. The planning for content and language learning objectives can help to secure a better balance between the two.” [Researcher, Week 3]

Researchers also used the forum space to extend the arguments presented in their featured articles by ‘offering new elements’ such as connections to other research or theories. In the following quote, the researcher introduces the notion of content-obligatory language, and because a full definition of the concept was beyond the scope of the forum space, the researcher offered references for the readers who would like to learn more about it. By introducing this new concept, the researcher broadened the scope of the conversation and drew the readers’ attention to more sources of knowledge.

“Second, from the content teachers’ perspective, subject-related vocabulary is often content obligatory (see Snow, Met & Genesee (1989) for the concepts of content obligatory language and content compatible language.” [Researcher, Week 3]

The T/TCs used the two levels of processing equally, with no clear order. Often students started with restating the thesis of the week’s article or the opinion expressed in a previous message and then built on it by citing examples from their lived experiences as learners or novice practitioners. Table 4 shows that, within surface level processing, T/TC resorted mostly to showing agreement with previous messages by either mentioning the writer or the idea (‘Stating that one shares ideas already stated’) or quoting or paraphrasing the content of a previous message (‘Repeating what has been said’), as shown in the first and second quotes below, respectively.

“Je suis tout-à-fait d'accord avec les postes antérieures qui indiquent qu'un contenu engageant sert à mieux captiver et à motiver les étudiants de FLS.” [TC 28, Week 3]

[I agree completely with the previous messages that argue that an engaging content helps draw and motivate FSL students.]

“[Auteur de l’article de la semaine] est reconnaissante du fait qu’il est souvent difficile de renforcer la grammaire et un bon usage de la L2, surtout dans les niveaux junior ou intermédiaire, car la matière devient de plus en plus lourde pour les élèves, ce qui veut dire plus de terminologie difficile à apprendre.” [TC 07, Week 3]

[Author of the featured article] recognizes the fact that it is often difficult to reinforce grammar and L2 accuracy, especially in the junior and intermediate levels because the content becomes richer, which means that the jargon is harder to learn.]

These restatements helped create a sense of coherence and fluidity in the forum as they connected messages and themes explicitly. In other words, messages were not posted in a vacuum. They built on what was becoming shared knowledge.

In terms of in-depth processing, the T/TCs relied mostly on establishing connections between the theoretical discussions of the topic of the week’s article and pertinent aspects of their lived experiences as language learners and novice practitioners. In the following quote, for instance, a TC, recalled her experience as a volunteer in a French immersion class where the teacher applied some aspects of the content-based instruction approach that was discussed in the week’s article.

“Il y a quelques ans, j’étais bénévole dans une classe de huitième année immersion française. En lisant cet article, je me souviens de comment le professeur a combiné l’enseignement de l’histoire avec l’enseignement du français.” [TC 04, Week 3]

[A few years ago, I was a volunteer in a Grade 8 French immersion class. While reading this article, I recalled how the teacher combined history teaching with French language teaching.]

In the rest of her message, she connected what she observed in that class (the activities assigned to students, the level of engagement she observed) to the main argument of the article and offered her anecdote as an example to further support it.

TABLE IV.  
OCCURRENCE OF COGNITIVE PROCESSING MECHANISMS.

	Week 3			Week 4		
	Researchers	T/TC	Total	Researchers	T/TC	Total
Surface level processing	1	19	20	0	19	19
Making judgment without justification	0	1	1	0	0	0
Stating that one shares ideas already stated	1	11	12	0	12	12
repeating what has been said	0	10	10	0	11	11
Asking irrelevant questions	0	0	0	0	0	0
In-depth processing	7	23	30	1	19	20
Linking facts and ideas	3	17	20	0	13	13
Offering new elements of information	4	13	17	1	8	9
Discussing advantages and disadvantages	0	4	4	1	3	4
Supporting judgment with examples and justifications	7	10	17	1	7	8

The second most frequent type of in-depth processing in the T/TC messages was ‘offering new elements of information’ when T/TC expanded the topic at hand and introduced a new idea or highlighted a new aspect of the issue at hand. In the following quote, the TC introduced the idea of ‘teacher training and preparation’ as an important factor to consider in the process of implementation of content-based instruction. Teacher education was not raised explicitly in the article.

“Pour que la langue et le contenu soient intégrés de la meilleure façon possible, il se révèle essentiel de former les enseignants aux pédagogies associées à ces deux concepts.” [TC 02, Week 3]

[To be able to integrate language and content teaching in the best possible way, it is essential to train teachers in the pedagogies related to these two concepts.]

Third, the T/TC provided well-thought explanations and justifications to support their statements. In the following example, the TC started by restating the main argument of the week’s article and the previous messages. She then proposed a hypothetical scenario to illustrate how she projected to implement content-based instruction in her classes. The example denotes an in-depth cognitive processing because it shows the TC’s effort to appropriate the new information and integrate it in her understanding of best teaching practices. It also serves to illustrate her point to other readers and thus further explicate content-based learning in the context of FSL.

“Alors, il faut choisir du contenu engageant pour des étudiants. Puis, l’enseignant doit choisir le vocabulaire important associé au contenu. Par exemple, si je veux explorer la culture franco-africaine avec mes étudiants de 10e année, il faut que je décide sur le vocabulaire nécessaire pour qu’ils puissent apprendre le contenu.” [TC 01, Week 3]

[Therefore, one must choose an engaging content for the students. Then, the teacher has to choose important vocabulary related to the content. For example, if I want to explore Franco-African culture with my Grade 10 students, I must choose the necessary vocabulary so that they can learn the content.]

## IV. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The present study documented the implementation of the KTA model in a L2 education context, mapped the structure of the interaction between a group of L2 researchers and L2 novice practitioners in a virtual forum, and analyzed the level of cognitive processing evident in the contributions of both groups when posting messages on the forum. The design and the nature of the data collected and analysed for this paper helped make pertinent aspects of the interaction dynamics between the two groups visible, which, in turn helped highlight some of the advantages and the shortcomings of the KTA model as implemented in this case.

In terms of the structure of the interaction between the researchers and the T/TCs, the T/TC seemed reluctant to engage in direct communication with the researchers/authors of the weekly articles. In fact, the low number of individual T/TC participation (i.e., one message posted per week to meet the course requirement) and their tendency to respond and engage only other T/TC could be interpreted as a sign of disengagement or lack of interest in the dialogue taking place in the forum. However, this was disproved by the mapping of the user-to-thread pattern and the analysis of the level of cognitive processing in posted messages which revealed that T/TC and researchers discussed a variety of related topics that were raised by either parties. This analysis showed that the restatement of previous messages or topics helped create a sense of coherence and fluidity in the forum discussion. It also revealed that participants drew on a number of personal resources to enrich the dialogue and expand the debate in pertinent ways. The T/TCs used anecdotes from their previous experiences as learners or novice teachers to lend support to the arguments made in the published articles. The examples and justifications offered by both groups helped further clarify the concepts being discussed and make them more transparent and thus more actionable. Consequently, the forum became a site for the co-construction of new knowledge that built on but also expanded the knowledge conveyed in the published articles. It is important to underline that in this act of co-construction, the roles and identities of the participants became less defined/more fluid. In other words, while there were several indications of both groups' preference to maintain and operate exclusively in their respective discourse (low participation, low use of social clues), the quality of the dialogue and the cognitive effort demonstrated by both groups points towards a certain level of boundary-crossing. For instance, T/TC proposed new ideas and offered justification and examples to support the arguments of the weekly articles. In so doing, they created new forms of knowledge, a role conventionally attributed to researchers. This is in line with the results of other analyses we conducted on the same messages. Analysis of the linguistic and ideational choices of researchers and T/TC's messages revealed that they did address the same topics, albeit adopting different, sometimes divergent views and foci (Knouzi & Mady, 2015). However, in spite of the apparent differences, we found that the T/TC engaged meaningfully with the research, even if not necessarily with the researchers.

The above findings offer potential avenues to inform future research and practical applications. As it pertains to future research, use of multiple mapping analyses may provide for greater understanding of communication patterns. Further, given the one-week participation of multiple researchers over the duration of this project, it would be worth exploring whether interaction patterns would differ if one researcher were to participate over a longer period of time. Practically, this study highlights the potential for shared space and themes of common interest to allow for practitioners and researchers to share in knowledge construction.

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# A Foucauldian Reading of Huxley's *Brave New World*

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**Abstract**—Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932) is a nightmarish depiction of a post-human world where human beings are mass-produced to serve production and consumption. In this paper, I discuss the manipulations of minds and bodies with reference to Foucault's biopower and disciplinary systems that make the citizens of the world state more profitable and productive. I argue that *Brave New World* depicts a dystopian systematic control of mind and body through eugenic engineering, biological conditioning, hypnopaedia, sexual satisfaction, and drugs so as to keep the worldians completely controlled, collectivized and contented in a totalitarian society. The world state eradicates love, religion, art and history and deploys language devoid of any emotions and thoughts to control the mind that judges and decides. I argue that *Brave New World* anticipates the Foucauldian paradigm of resistance, subversion and containment, ending in eliminating the forces that pose a challenge to the ideology of the world state.

**Index Terms**—science fiction, discipline, biopower, dehumanization, consumption, suppression

## I. INTRODUCTION

Huxley's *Brave New World* is the archetype of science fiction defined as 'a genre of fiction dealing with the impact of imagined innovations in science or technology, often in a futuristic setting' (Yeoman et al, 2012, p. 509). In the widest sense of the word, science fiction is a grave portrait of posthumanism, 'an international intellectual and cultural movement supporting the use of science and technology to improve human mental and physical characteristics and capacities' (Noyce, 2010, p. 43). *Brave New World* has been extensively analyzed from the critical lines of feminism, psychoanalysis and cultural materialism. In this article, I will analyze *Brave New World*, deploying Foucault's theory of docile bodies and discipline and punishment. I argue that *Brave New World* is a representation of man's dystopia ruled by the utilitarian World State which strips humans of love, freedom, family, religion and art 'to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power' (Foucault, 1979, p. 201). *Brave New World* represents a world where 'the attempt to recreate human beings in the likeness of termites has been pushed almost to the limits of the possible' (Huxley, 1959, p. 24). I argue the controllers of the world state suppress emotions and thoughts to condition the citizens mentally and physically and to turn them into instruments of stability for the benefits of the state.

## II. DISCUSSION

In the world state, the citizens' bodies and minds are regarded as the possession of the government. Children are not born out of sexual intercourse between a couple, but they are scientifically manufactured in the same manner Henry Ford manufactured model T cars. Huxley states that a biologically superior ovum fertilized by a biologically superior sperm is, given the best prenatal treatment, decanted as Alpha pluses, Alphas and Betas. Another biologically inferior ovum, fertilized by a biologically inferior semen is exposed to 'Bokanovsky's Process' in which ninety six twins made out of one egg are, after being treated prenatally with alcohol, decanted into Grammas, Deltas and Epsilons. Mond, one of the world state controllers, maintains that these groups 'are the foundation on which everything else is built' (p.195).

The pillars of mankind, love, marriage, motherhood and parenthood, vanish from the landscape of the world state because they date back to the decadent social scale and because these human states of being with what they spawn of 'endless isolating pain, [...], uncertainties and poverty', Mond asserts, force people 'to feel strongly. And feeling strongly, [...] how could they be stable?' (p. 35). Mond eliminates language that expresses thoughts and emotions, the sources of instability.

The world state, learning from the examples of previous civilizations, asserts that physical punishment for mass regulation is devoid of advantages and a fertile soil for the nourishment of instability. Instead of coercive mechanisms of control such as military force, Foucault (2003) focuses on the 'disciplinary power' which is based on surveillance, moving away from the 'absolute expenditure of [sovereign] power' to that which entails 'minimum expenditure and maximum efficiency' (p. 36). Foucault (1980) outlines the

new methods of power whose operation is not ensured by right but by technique, not by law but by normalization, not by punishment but by control, methods that are employed on all levels and in forms that go beyond the state and its apparatus. (p. 89)

Thus, the world state, in the name of absolute stability, deindividualizes its citizens and pushes them down to become machine-slaves by ‘methods of ectogenesis, neo-Pavlovian conditioning and hypnopaedia’ (p.43), guaranteed, non-violent means for the establishment of civilization. Mond maintains that ‘government’s an affair of sitting, not hitting, you rule with the brains and the buttocks, never with the fists’ (p. 42). The world state aims at stabilizing the individuals, as there is ‘no civilization without social stability. No social stability without individual stability’ (p. 36). Thus, individual stability, achieved by the eradication of individuality, is the cornerstone upon which the world state builds its production-consumption system.

Hypnopaedia, the “greatest moralizing and socializing force of all time” (p. 23), is a form of disciplinary power that controls the inhabitants’ minds and prevents them from thinking about themselves. The children are exposed to an overflow of consumption-idealization lessons that hold them captive to the service of the world state’s consumption system. Nicholas Murray (2003) argues that *Brave New World* focuses on ‘the manipulation of the citizen by mass media and modern consumer capitalism’ (p. 256). As consumption is the noble end of the world state, mending old goods rather than buying new ones is considered highly antisocial. Huxley modifies well-known proverbs to create stylistic effects that highlight his criticism of an excessively technological society. The modified proverbs strengthen the importance of drugs and mental escape, on the one hand, and extreme capitalistic consumerism, on the other. After ‘Elementary Class Consciousness’, the children untiringly and joyfully repeat: ‘I love flying, I do love having new clothes’ [...], ending is better than mending [...], and ‘the more stitches, the less riches’ (pp. 41-42), which is a denunciation of ours, a stitch in time saves nine. The implication of these dull slogans is two-fold. First, these consumption-inspiring proverbs are inculcated in the minds of children and become their ideals. Second, the children’s mental and thinking powers are curbed as the sleep-teaching lessons form the constitutions of their minds. Director of Hatchery and Conditioning centers tells his mechanized students that:

Wordless conditioning is crude and wholesale; cannot bring home the finer distinctions, cannot inculcate the more complex courses of behaviour. For that there must be words, but words without reason. In brief, hypnopaedia[...]. ‘Till at last the child’s mind is these suggestions, and the sum of the *suggestions* is the child’s mind. And not the child’s mind only. The adult’s mind too-all his life long. The mind that judges and desires and decides-made up of these suggestions. But all these suggestions are *our* suggestions!’ (p. 23, original emphasis)

These lines imply that the citizens are the property of the world state. The absolute dispossession of mankind of itself is encapsulated in the italicized pronoun ‘*our*’ which is used only in this context over the course of the novel. The use of this pronoun is ideological; it shows that these reasonless and meaningless suggestions form the linguistic, social, political and historical constitutions of the children’s minds. Such mind manipulation anticipates Althusser’s argument that ‘it is in the forms and under the forms of ideological subjection that provision is made for the reproduction of the skills of labour power’ (Althusser, 1971, p. 128). Althusser argues that ‘all ideology hails or interrelates concrete individuals as concrete subjects’ who subjugate themselves to the ideology of the dominant power by acting according to the indoctrinated ideas they received (pp. 175, 162). The manipulation of language through hypnopaedia constructs social reality according to the dictates of the world state:

‘But every one belongs to every one else’, he concluded, citing the hypnopaedic proverb. The students nodded, emphatically agreeing with a statement which upwards of sixty-two thousand repetitions in the dark had made them accept, not merely as true, but as axiomatic, self evident, utterly indisputable’ (p. 34).

Thus, language is manipulated by the repetition of certain slogans through hypnopaedia, which convinces the members of this state to believe that these slogans are axiomatic, self evident, utterly indisputable. As a result of conditioning, when the worldians become adults, they perform their social function efficiently.

The world state reigns over its citizens in the cradle of consumption where it feeds on them by leaving them ‘no leisure from pleasure, not a moment to sit down and think’ (p. 47). The world state closes the doors of solitary amusements that impoverish consumption. Mond maintains that: “We condition the masses to hate the country, [...]. But simultaneously we condition them to love all country sports. At the same time, we see to it that all country sports shall entail the use of elaborate apparatus” (p. 18). The individuals are also conditioned to hate books and nature through ‘books’ coupled with ‘loud noises’, and ‘flowers’ with ‘electric shocks’ thus the children of the world state will, therefore, “grow up with what the psychologists used to call an “instinctive” hatred of books and flowers” (p. 17). In Foucauldian terms, the world state works ‘to discipline the body, optimize its capabilities, exhort its forces, increase its usefulness and docility, integrate it into systems of efficient and economic controls’ (Foucault 1980, p. 139), and thus produce the docile bodies that follow the dictates of the world state. Book-and flower-hatred conditioning stems from the awareness of the impact of reading books and enjoying nature. First, reading books and enjoying nature arouse the individuals’ imagination and curiosity that lead them to the den of truth and spiritual awareness. This awareness will spur them on to question the ideology of the world state. Second, reading books and enjoying nature requires solitude; therefore, they will drive the state worldians away from their roles as a means to satisfy the insatiable hunger of the profit market. Huxley suggests that solitude is inimical to totalizing utilitarian schemes of governance, because when the worldians are alone they are more apt to have wayward thoughts about the world state. Furthermore, the worldians

'can't consume much' 'and [...] can't tend the wheels' of the profit system if they 'sit still and read books' (pp. 36, 42), says the Controller, showing that maximising the efficiency of performance is based on suppressing the potential usefulness of intellectual self-development.

The world state rules over humans and dehumanizes them to assimilate them in the social body of the world state where 'everyone belongs to everyone else' (p. 37) is a manifesto of the collapse of individualism and its eternal shackle in the social body of the world state. Huxley's gloomy description of the world state where 'the light was frozen, dead, a ghost' and the citizens are like 'rams', lambs', 'chickens', and 'dogs' (pp. 3, 8, 105) suggests that the utopian aspirations of the world state lead to dehumanization. In the world state, to use Foucault's terms, 'the subject is not one but split, not sovereign but dependent, not an absolute origin but a function ceaselessly modified' (1989, p. 67). The world state deploys socialization programs designed to assimilate the worldians into the ideology of the world state. In the Solidarity Service, the worldians burst into meaningless songs that reflect their melting into the social body and their mechanized minds following the assembly line of Ford's machines where there is no place for individuality and deviation from the set code of behaviours:

Ford, we are twelve; oh *make* us one,  
Like drops within the Social River;  
Oh, make us now together run  
As swiftly as thy shining Flivver (p. 70, my emphasis).

These lines encapsulate the smooth overflow of the social river that is put into motion by overcoming the whirlpool of individualism. Metaphorically speaking, the state worldians to the state are as rhyme to the poem in the sense that both of them are used to achieve harmony. The harmony of the world state is achieved by the annihilation of individualism and plucking the worldians' wills. The repetition of the verb 'make' indicates the loss of the worldians' individualities in the sense that they cannot make anything, but they are objects to be formed. The worldians are instruments in the hands of the world state where everyone mingles with the other to achieve the wholeness of the state.

The world state eradicates class conflict that is based on social inequality, greed and egoism since class conflict disrupts their socio-political-economic structure. Foucault argues that 'continuous regulatory and corrective mechanisms' are essential for the dominant power structure. Foucault (1990) argues that 'Such a power has to qualify, measure, appraise, and hierarchize, rather than display itself in its murderous splendor; it does not have to draw the line that separates the enemies of the sovereign from his obedient subjects; it effects distributions around the norm' (p. 114). The worldians' subjugated minds and bodies are conceived according to Foucault's doctrine of genealogy that 'carefully exposes the tiny influences on bodies that, over time, produce subjects defined by what they take to be knowledge about themselves and their world' (Prado, 2000, p. 36). By such corporeal manipulation, the World State creates 'a population of slaves who love their servitude' and 'come under the illusion that they are individually substantial, autonomous unities' (Prado, 2000, p. 36). The world state creates docile bodies 'that serves as the physical expression of subjection and conformity' (Foucault, 1979, p. 138). The world controllers, therefore, dedicate lessons to make the worldians happy with their position in the world state; 'the secret of happiness and virtue' is to be satisfied with your position to like what you are required to do. Mond states that "all conditioning aims at that: making people like their unescapable [sic] social destiny" (p. 12). The following dialogue between Lenina and Henry stretches this point further: "I suppose Epilsons don't really mind being Epilsons," she said a loud. "Of course they don't. How can they? They don't know what it's like being anything else" (p. 64). The state worldians, divided into 'Alphas [...], Betas [...], Gammas, Deltas, and Epsilons' (p. 3), are manufactured to fulfill preordained vacancies which are essential for the manifestation of the World State's motto—'Community, Identity, Stability' (p. 3). Thus, children are conditioned to follow the ideology of the world state and they are predestined through conditioning systems: "We also predestine and condition. We decant our babies as socialized human beings, as Alphas or Epsilons, as future sewage workers or future [...] World Controllers" (p. 21).

The use of the term 'Predestination', a theological belief which means that man is predestined to go to hell or heaven before birth, underlines the world state's mocking of the invisible world and playing the role of God by their act of conditioning and predestination, believing that 'what man has joined, nature is powerless to put asunder' (p. 17). This idea of conditioning and predestination is based on John Locke's concept of the *tabula rasa* in the view that the mind of a human being is like a blank sheet at the time of birth and on which everything is written through experience. Locke argues that 'humanity no longer ought to be understood as the bearers of some divine image or, more importantly, handicapped by any notion of original sin which establishes human beings as essentially dysfunctional' (Alsford, 2000, p. 11). Huxley criticizes Locke's enthusiastic embrace of man's ability to create his own paradise through biological engineering since *Brave New World* bears witness to a nightmarish fear of ideology and minority that pushes mankind down and crushes its humanity.

The world state eradicates cultural, aesthetic and religious contemplative experiences, which impede materialist welfare. Religion is replaced by a kind of worship of Henry Ford, whom the worldians perceive as the lord of their civilization. The year calendar of the world state begins in A.F 632, 'this year of stability' (p. 2), after Ford's introduction of the Model T. Thus, our previous calendar A.D beginning with the birth of Christ is erased from the world state and Ford becomes the lord of stability. The elimination of religion emanates from the view that spiritual values, which cover all the intellectual and emotional ground and provide their devotees with uplifting rites, are



contrary to machinery, happiness and scientific progress. Huxley (1959) states that Soma, an euphoric drug that enables the world state 'to give their subjects the direct experience of mysteries and Miracles—to transform faith into ecstatic knowledge' (pp. 163-64), is a substitute for religion used by the world state as a guarantee against any disruptive ideas. Huxley (1959) argues that 'Religion, Karl Marx declared, is the opium of the People. In the *Brave New World* this situation was reversed. Opium or rather Soma was the people's religion' (p. 100). Religion, from the world state controllers' point of view, is sought by the inflicted people who crawl to find solace in the laps of religion where they can feel the benevolence and solace of God. But, in the World State, there is no need for the "individuals" to embrace religion or be dependent on God as they do not experience the phases of life. The worldians are themselves immortal youths of absolute happiness. Mond, in his speech to John, states:

"You can only be independent of God while you've got youth and prosperity; independence won't take you safely to the end". Well. We've now got youth and prosperity right up to the end.' What follows? Evidently, that we can be independent of God. "The religious sentiment will compensate us for all our losses." But there aren't any losses for us to compensate" (p. 206).

This quotation implies that the world state is embracing nihilism; God 'manifests himself as an absence' as he is not 'compatible with machinery and scientific medicine and universal happiness' (pp. 206-07). Religion manifests itself as absence in the minds of the worldians because religion is in the mind of the conscious individual not in the "mind" of the mindless collective.

The World State legalises sexual freedom as a precautionary act against any form of destructive emotional tension that threatens the stability of the community. *Brave New World* is, in Foucault's words, a 'wholly secular culture, dominated by economics, supported by technology, and dedicated to the—within carefully set limits—Freudian pleasure principle with its emphasis on libidinal appetite' (Baker, 1982, p. 97). Mond asserts the importance of satisfying passions because their suppression threatens the stability of the state; "chastity means passion, chastity means neurasthenia. And passion and neurasthenia mean instability. And instability means the end of civilization. You can't have a lasting civilization without plenty of pleasant vices" (p. 209). The on-the-spot satisfaction of desires is embodied in the use of 'zippers' (p. 31) where there is no 'interval between the consciousness of a desire and its fulfilment' (p. 38). Women in the world state are indoctrinated to be promiscuous and they have 'Pregnancy Substitute' and wear 'surrogate cartridge belt' (pp. 33, 43) to keep their fitness. 'Everyone says I'm awfully pneumatic, said Lenina reflectively. Perfect, Bernard said aloud. And inwardly, she thinks of herself that way. She doesn't mind being meat' (p. 80). In another context, the word 'pneumatic' is used as a descriptive adjective of chair, 'pneumatic chair' (p. 208), which suggests that the world state reduces women to commodities to be devoured and consumed.

The inability to express thoughts and emotions creates problems in the characters' love relationships. In seducing John the savage, Lenina recites lines from the Community Songs:

Orgy-porgy, Ford and fun,  
Kiss the girls and make them One.  
Boys at one with girls at peace;  
Orgy-porgy gives release' (p. 73).

While John delivers a poetic line from Shakespeare to Lenina, she gets perplexed, saying: "For Ford's sake, John, talk sense. I can't understand a word you say" (p. 168). While John clings to Elizabethan notions of romantic love as found in Shakespeare, Lenina perceives herself as a piece of "meat" (p. 45), seductively saying, "Hug me till you drug me, honey" (p. 176). Huxley (1929) maintains that 'love is the product of two opposed forces—of an instinctive impulsion and a social resistance acting on the individual by means of ethical imperatives justified by philosophical or religious myths' (p. 295). The abortion of John's love due to the absence of its foundations, chastity and 'social resistance' shaped by 'philosophical or religious myths', is a metaphorical representation of the divorce between science fiction, lacking 'historical situatedness', and pre-modern arts. The abortion of such a marriage is an absolute metaphor for the deformed form of life that science delivers.

In addition to suppressing religion and passions, the world state vanquish literature for it provides a critical understanding of humanity: "There were some things called the pyramids, for example [...] And a man called Shakespeare. You've never heard of them of course [...]. Such are the advantages of a really scientific education" (p. 44), says the Controller. The novel's title, taken from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, suggests that Huxley dramatizes a confrontation between the values represented by this future dystopia and those represented by the traditional past, personified by Shakespeare (Grushow, 1962, 45). Firchow (2007) suggests that 'Huxley's satire of the future Fordian utopia is based on a deliberate impoverishment of human nature when contrasted with the wealth of human experience as displayed in the great literature of the past (i.e. John Savage's Shakespeare)' (p. 15). Through the juxtaposition of past and present narratives, *Brave New World* creates a future society full of void. John asks Mustapha Mond: "Why don't you let them see *Othello* instead [of the feelies]?" (p. 193). Mond claims that the idea of stability and "human progress" makes *Othello* incompatible with the modern world. This "world is not the same as Othello's [because] the world's stable now" (p. 193). Furthermore, the world state bans Shakespeare because it is old and beautiful. "Beauty's attractive", Mond explains, "and we don't want people to be attracted by old things. We want them to like the new ones" (p. 193). John the Savage's acquaintance with Shakespeare, which enables John to formulate potentially

disruptive thoughts and emotions, discloses the reason behind the controllers' attempt to erase Shakespeare and other literary works from the landscape of the world state.

The world state wages a propaganda against "the past; by the closing of museums, the blowing up of historical monuments by the suppression of all books published before A. F 150" (pp. 43-4). Teaching history is obsolete, for history stimulates free thinking, which will, in turn, allow individuals to contemplate human flaws, diminishing their feelings of happiness. 'Most historical facts *are* unpleasant' (p.19), Mond says, justifying his introduction of the sleep-teaching phrase, 'History is a bunk' (p.29), to the mass conditioning process. Mond's list of the great civilizations, 'Jerusalem, Rome, and Thebes' and the mythical figures, 'Odysseus and King Lear, Jesus and Pascal' (p. 29) is a historicization and rationalization of their inferiority; they are "a whole collection of pornographic old books" (p. 204) and out-of-date tales of humanism lodged in Mond's safe to be gnawed by dust. Foucault (1980) calls this 'a form of history that can account for the constitution of knowledges, discourses, domains of objects, and so on, without having to make reference to a subject that is either transcendental in relation to the field of events or runs in its empty sameness throughout the course of history' (p. 117). The obliteration of the past and future suggests that the worldians live in an eternal present which makes interest in history meaningless. As manipulation of history can be considered as a means for achieving stability and preserving the *status quo*, Huxley suggests that an access to the records of the past is vital to the mental health of any society. 'It is only through our historical 'situatedness'—with all that this entails in terms of our hopes and fears—that we come to terms with our condition as human beings and seek an authentic mode of existence in the world in which we find ourselves' (Alsford, 2000, p. 3). The worldians lack historical awareness because of the absence of the 'I' which is melted in the 'social river' that is put into motion by overcoming the whirlpool of individualism.

*Brave New World* prefigures Foucault's paradigm of resistance, subversion and containment as it ends in eliminating the opposing voices and asserting the power of the hegemonic ideology. Foucault (1979) asserts:

Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power.

Should it be said that one is always 'inside' power, there is no escaping it, there is no absolute outside where it is concerned, because one is subject to the law in any case? Or that, history being the ruse of reason, power is the ruse of history, always emerging the winner (p. 95).

To protect the collective social body of the world state from the plague of individualism, the non-conformists are exiled to Iceland. To remain in control over 'the unsettled minds of the higher castes', Mond must subdue these "new" and "ingenious" ideas that pose a challenge to the ideology of the world state (p. 154). Bernard, a physically deformed yet extraordinarily intelligent psychologist, is an outsider whose awareness of his conditioning, his desire to know and experience passion and his criticism of the world state compel the world state controllers to exile him to Iceland. According to the Director, Bernard, who is perceived as 'a conspirator against Civilization itself' (pp. 129-30), puts "The security and stability of society in danger [...] by his heretical views on sport and soma, by the scandalous unorthodoxy of his sex-life, by his refusal to obey the teachings of Our Ford and behave out of office hours [...]. "[H]e has proved himself an enemy of society" [...]. For this reason I propose to dismiss him" (pp. 129 130).

Helmholtz has 'the happiest knack for slogans and hypnopaedic rhymes' (p. 57), which lead the world controllers to consider him "a little too able" (p. 78). While Helmholtz wishes to invent words that 'can be like X-rays, if you use them properly-they'll go through anything', [...] 'Hush' said Bernard suddenly, and lifted a warning finger; they listened' (p. 60). Bernard's and Helmholtz's excess of senses suggests that they are 'suspicious with' the world state as the world state is 'suspicious with' (p. 60) them. In the disciplinary world state, the effects of power are felt on every member of the world state to the extent that 'each person will exercise this surveillance over and against himself' (Foucault, cited in Farrell 2005, p. 104). Huxley asserts that 'what the two men shared was the knowledge that they were individuals' (p. 58). And their awareness and consciousness of their individualities will, of course, spur on the world state to exile them to Iceland where they can no more threaten the security and stability of the world state.

The failure of the world state to secure its civilization completely by eradicating all "savage" reservations causes the narrative's conflict. John's rebellious presence contains a hope for a potential utopia. John's cry "O brave new world that has such people in it" (p. 121) suggests the possibility of transforming the nightmarish existence into a utopia. However, John's knowledge of Shakespeare makes him worse off because he transcends reality and lives in the fictional world of Shakespeare's protagonists. Booker (1994) explains that 'Literature for Huxley can be a powerful humanizing force, but it can be a negative one as well, especially if its readers lose the ability properly to distinguish fiction and reality' (p. 59). John uses literature to create a utopia, playing the role of the rebellious hero. He borrows a line from Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* to talk to the mindless citizens of the world state: "Listen, I beg of you," cried the Savage earnestly. 'Lend me your ears ...' [but John] had never spoken in public before, and found it very difficult to express what he wanted to say" (p. 185). The worldians cannot grasp anything John says, for sleep-teaching lessons constitute their linguistic competency. In the end, "[r]age was making him fluent; the words came easily, in a rush" (p. 187). Forced to choose between conformity or death, John chooses to hang himself rather than lose his individuality and personal values. He ends his existence without offering the worldians any catharsis or any possibility of freedom from the confines of conditioning. Thus, *Brave New World* ends in containing the opposing voices and consolidating the

ideology of the world state.

### III. CONCLUSION

This article deployed Foucault's theory of docile bodies and disciplinary systems to analyze the world state controllers' mechanization of the subjects' bodies, perception and ideology. *Brave New World*, a monstrous anti-Bildungsroman, is a nightmarish depiction of a society controlled by technology and artificial fertilization and an attack upon man's trust in progress through science and mechanization. The ideology of the world state, which depends on mass production and consumption, eliminates religion, history and individuality to produce subjected bodies for the benefit of the state.

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# Language Learning Strategies Use by Saudi EFL Students: The Effect of Duration of English Language Study and Gender

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**Abstract**—This paper reports findings from a study that investigated language learning strategies (LLS) used by Saudi EFL students at Aljouf University. A total of 134 students (66 males, 68 females) completed a questionnaire adapted from Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). The aim of the study was to better understand the relationship between the use of LLS and gender and duration of English language study. The results showed that the average of strategy use was in the low to medium range. Cognitive, metacognitive and compensation strategies were used most frequently, while memory and affective strategies were reported to be least frequently used. The results also showed that female students used more LLS than male students, although the difference was not significant. No significant difference was found in relation to duration of studying English, although students with long duration reported using LLS most frequently. Pedagogical implications of these findings are discussed in relation to Saudi EFL context.

**Index Terms**—cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, English as a foreign language, intensive English learning, learning strategies, strategy inventory for language learning (SILL)

## I. INTRODUCTION

Research into LLS has attracted the attention of many researchers and educators, who are gradually shifting their focus from teachers and teaching to learners and learning. In other words, efforts to improve language teaching methodology have moved from the domain of language teaching to language learning. According to Corder (1981), the cognitive view of learning, which regards language learning as a dynamic, original process and learners as active strategy users and knowledge constructors had a great influence on this shift.

Since the 1970s, according to Chang (2011), learning strategies (LSs) have received increasing attention from researchers and educators in the fields of English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as Foreign Language (EFL) in relation to how languages are learned differently by individual learners (Chang, 1999; Cohen, 1998). The importance of language learning strategy use (LLSU) was reported by other research and identified the range and nature of LLSU among good or effective language learners (Ehrman, Leaver, and Oxford, 2003; Green and Oxford, 1995). According to Chamot (2001), "applied research on LS has two main goals: the first one is to identify and compare the learning strategies used by more and less successful language learners, and the second goal is to provide instruction to help less successful learners become more proficient in their language study" (pp.25-26). O'Malley and Chamot (1990) considered strategies as tools for active, self-directed involvement that are necessary for the development of SL/FL communicative ability. In recent years, researchers have identified key areas of individual difference that can influence the choice of LLS and the frequency of their use (Chang, 2003; Griffiths, 2003; Lan, 2005). Factors that have been found to influence learning strategies use are language proficiency level, learning duration, gender, age, cultural background, motivation, and language being learned.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Researchers in several countries have investigated LLS and factors that affect their use LLS. Most studies have employed the SILL questionnaire developed by Oxford (1990). The present study examines two factors that have been found to affect the use of LLS: gender, and duration of studying English.

### A. Language Learning Strategies

LLS have been used for thousands of years, although they have been formally identified only recently. Research on LLS has increased significantly since the 1970s. Areas of research interest include how learners go about learning something, what makes learners successful at learning something, and why some people are more effective at learning than others. LLSAs Williams and Burden (1997) point out, investigating learning strategies (LSs) will answer these questions. Research suggests that training learners to use LLS can help them to become successful language learners and that is what make LLS are important. LLS enable learners to take more responsibility and to improve their progress in developing L2 skills. In other words, LSs are procedures that facilitate learning tasks (Chamot, 2005). They also

enable learners to become autonomous, lifelong learners and independent, (Little, 1991). LLS represent steps that learners take to manage their learning and achieve their goals. They LLS are important for SL/FL learning and teaching because they develop learning autonomy and language competence and are tools for active, self-directed involvement. Effective LLS can also help “unsuccessful” learners to realise why they are “unsuccessful”, and assist learners to plan their learning (Brown, 1994; Chamot, 1999; Gregersent, 2001). They also help teachers plan their teaching (Oxford, 1990; Cohen, 1998; Murat, 2000; Kumaravadivelu, 2003). According to Murat (2000), the ultimate goal of empirical research in this area is to develop knowledge that is useful for improving language learning and teaching in ESL and EFL classrooms.

According to (Oxford, 1990, p. 9), LLS have the following features:

- “contribute to the main goal - communicative competence;
- allow learners to become more self-directed;
- expand the role of teachers;
- are problem-oriented;
- are specific actions taken by the learner;
- involve many aspects of the learner, not just the cognitive;
- support learning both directly and indirectly;
- are not always observable;
- are often conscious;
- can be taught;
- are flexible;
- are influenced by a variety of factors”

In summary, LLS are applied by language learners as a means of acquiring and using information for storage and recall. According to Oxford, et al. (2014, “If the field of language learning strategies has sometimes been criticized for a degree of inconsistency in definitions, categorization, and invention outcomes [.....], one reason might be the different theoretical perspectives that have been allowed to bloom the grow within this field” (p.46). These issues are discussed in the following sections.

### *B. Definitions of Language Learning Strategies*

LLSs have been defined in various ways since they became an area of research interest in second language acquisition (SLA). In general and according to Rigney, (1978), LLS refers to specific steps or actions taken by the learner to facilitate acquisition, retention, retrieval and performance. According to Wenden (1987), LLS can be defined in relation to language learning behaviours (such as learning and regulating the meaning of a second or foreign language), cognitive theory (such as learners’ strategic knowledge of language learning), and their affective aspects (such as learners’ motivation and attitudes). Wenden (1991) and Rubin (1994) suggested that LLS are plans, routines and operations used by the learner to facilitate the acquisition, storage, retrieval and use of information. According to these authors, the objective in using LLS is to memorize language information, recall that information and use it in a different situation. In other words, LLS refer to what students do to learn and to regulate their learning. Similarly, Richard and Platt (1992) defined LLS as an intentional behaviour that helps learners understand, learn and remember new information. Oxford (1990) broadens the scope of this definition, proposing that the objective of using LLS is to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, self-directed, effective and transferrable to new situations.

Cohen (1998) argues that LLS are consciously selected by the learner. LLS can therefore be defined as conscious, selected behaviours, used to overcome certain educational challenges, which vary depending on the nature of the problem. They are used to memorize information, to synthesize it, or to use that information in speaking or writing. Tudor (1996) described LLS as the purposeful actions learners engage in consciously or unconsciously in order to enhance skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing of a foreign or second language. Further, Learners develop an awareness of their own metacognition and thus control their own learning through LLS. When learners have awareness of their own learning processes, strategies and preferences, they will be able to regulate their learning endeavours to meet their ultimate goals; they become increasingly independent and self-directed learners (Chamot, Barnhardt, El-Dinary, & Rubbin, 1999). According to Chamot (2004), defines LLS as “the conscious thoughts and actions that learners take in order to achieve learning goals” (p. 14). Recently, LLS have been defined as the learner’s consciously chosen tools for active, self-regulated improvement of language learning (Griffiths, 2008b; Oxford, 2011b). In the present paper, LLS is defined as actions taken by learners to enhance their language skills.

### *C. Classification of Language Learning Strategies*

A taxonomy, according to Richard Platt and Platt (1992), is the classification of items into classes and sub-classes. Classification systems of LLS vary according to the different criteria on which they are based (Rubin, 1981; O’Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990a; Cohen, 1998). Every classification system involves an implicit theory about the nature of L2 learning strategies and even, to some extent, about L2 learning in general. Oxford’s (1990) work will be discussed in detail because her Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) is the most influential instrument in the area of LLS and lays out the most exhaustive hierarchy of learning strategies to date. Oxford’s (1990a) taxonomy of LLS was used in the present study. This taxonomy systematically links individual strategies and strategy groups with each of the

four language skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing) that are incrementally acquired during the language development process (Oxford, 1990).

#### *D. Oxford's Taxonomy*

Based on earlier research into learning strategies, Oxford (1990) cited in (Paredes, 2010) developed a new language learning strategy system based on earlier research into learning strategies. She classified LLS into two groups: direct and indirect learning strategies. Direct learning strategies involve the specific use of language and are classified into memory, cognitive and compensation strategies. Indirect learning strategies do not use language directly but support and manage language learning; they are categorised into metacognitive, affective and social strategies (Oxford, 1990a).

#### *E. Direct Strategies*

Direct learning strategies can be categorized as memory strategies, cognitive strategies and compensation strategies. Memory strategies help learners to link one L2 item or concept with another but do not necessarily involve deep understanding (Oxford, 2003, p.13). Various memory-related strategies enable learners to learn and retrieve information in an orderly string (e.g., acronyms), while other techniques create learning and retrieval via sounds (e.g., rhyming), images (e.g., a mental picture of the word itself or the meaning of the word), a combination of sounds and images (e.g., the keyword method), body movement (e.g., total physical response), mechanical means (e.g., flashcards), or location (e.g., on a page or blackboard) (Oxford, 2003). Cognitive strategies help the learner to use the language material in direct ways through note-taking, reasoning, outlining synthesizing, reorganizing information to develop stronger schemas, summarizing, practicing structures and sounds formally and practicing in naturalistic settings (Oxford, 2003). Compensation strategies enable learners to use the language either in speaking or writing despite knowledge gaps. These strategies are divided into two sets which are guessing intelligently and overcoming limitations in speaking and writing (Zare, 2012). Cohen (1998) cited in Oxford (2003) asserted that compensation strategies that are used for speaking and writing (often known as a form of communication strategies) are intended only for language use and must not be considered to be language learning strategies.

#### *F. Indirect Strategies*

As discussed earlier, Oxford's (1990a) indirect learning strategies can be categorized as social, affective and metacognitive. Indirect strategies manage and support language learning, often without involving the target language directly. Social strategies provide increased interaction and more empathetic understanding, since they occur among and between people (Canale, 1983) cited in (Paredes, 2010). An example of a social strategy is asking the speaker to repeat, paraphrase, and slow down, and so forth to aid comprehension. Affective strategies are concerned with the learner's emotional requirements such as confidence and perseverance needed for learners to involve themselves actively in language learning, for example, lowering anxiety levels by laughing at their own mistakes ( Vlckova, et al, 2013).

Metacognitive strategies are aspects associated with planning, monitoring, and evaluating the language learning process (Fewell, 2010). Learners seek out or create opportunities to practice the new language in naturalistic situations (e.g. joining a conversation club) (Paredes, 2010). Despite disagreements about the classification of LLS, these strategies help language learners take control of their learning, become more competent and, most importantly, become autonomous (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Vandergrift, 2002; Paredes, 2010).

According to Ellis (1994) Oxford's SILL is considered as the most comprehensive classification of LLS and has been used extensively for collecting data on large numbers of language learners across the globe (Green & Oxford, 1995; Wharton, 2000; Hsiao & Oxford, 2002; Lan & Oxford, 2003). This standardised instrument has been translated to many languages. Researchers used it extensively to collect data on large numbers of mostly foreign language learners, and has also been employed in studies that correlate strategy use with variables such as gender, proficiency level, learning styles, culture and years of studying the language (Green & Oxford, 1995; Bedell & Oxford, 1996; Wharton, 2000; Bruen, 2001). Since this study explores the effects of gender, year of study in the university, and duration of studying English on strategy preferences.

#### *G. Gender*

Several studies have established the existence of gender differences in the use of LLS. Politzer (1983) found that female students used more social strategies than their male students. Oxford & Nyikos, 1989 found that, in their study about the use of LLS by undergraduate learners of foreign languages that females reported to use cognitive, metacognitive and social strategies more frequently than males. (Nyikos, 1990; Tran, 1988), found in their study that males used particular strategies greater than females. Tran (1988) explored the level of acculturation of immigrant Vietnamese, aged 40-92 years, in the U.S. findings revealed that males reported to use more strategies to learn and to improve their English language skills. Moreover, Nyikos (1990) found that males made greater use of specific strategies in an investigation into possible test type bias in tests of recall among university level beginner learners of German.

Ehrman and Oxford (1989) found that female learners used strategies for searching, functional practice strategies, self-management strategies and communicating meaning more than females. Gender differences in LLS use were also reported in some early studies in Taiwan by Yang (1993) and Sy (1994, 1995). Furthermore, Green and Oxford (1995) found that females use strategies greater than males. However, Wharton, (2000) found that Singaporean university male

students reported using more strategies than females. Lou (1998) and Peng (2001) found that there was no significant gender differences. Gender differences are also reflected in the type of strategy used by males and females. Female learners found to use more conversational and input strategies (Oxford & Nyikos, 1989), more social learning strategies (Ehrman & Oxford, 1989), and more memory and metacognitive strategies (Khalil, 2005) than their male learners. In contrast to these findings, Shmais (2003) did not find any differences between males and females in strategy use among university-level students. This might be because the sample in this study comprised university English majors, who are typically more aware than other groups of the process of learning a foreign language and of the strategies required to obtain proficiency. Similarly, Wharton (2000) did not find any gender effects in either the number or type of strategy used by bilingual foreign language learners in Singapore. Again, this might be attributed to the language learning abilities of bilingual learners, which may have nullified any gender differences.

Mat Teh and et al. (2009) investigated LLS use by Arabic students. Compensation and affective strategies were reported to be used most frequently, and social and cognitive strategies were used least. The findings also showed significant gender differences in the overall use of LLS, with overall female students tending to use them more often than males.

Abu Radwan (2011) conducted a study to examine the relationship between the use of language learning strategies and the variables of gender, English proficiency and duration of studying English. 128 students majoring in English at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) in Oman participated in the study. Results revealed that students metacognitive strategies is reported to be used significantly more than any other category of strategies, and memory strategies reported the least used strategies by the subjects. Moreover, social strategies were reported to be used more by male students than female students, thus creating the only difference between the two groups in terms of their strategic preferences. Chang (2011) conducted a preliminary study to profile foreign LLS use by 360 universality undergraduate English major students in Taiwan. Four variables - gender, students' major, fondness of the English language and previous experience in a English speaking countries were used to analyze the relationships with the participants' LLS use. Overall, the most used category was compensation. Social strategies ranked second, while the memory strategy category was the least used. There were significant gender differences in most of the strategy items, with males using them more frequently than females.

#### *H. Duration of English Study*

LLS research has consistently established a positive relationship between the duration of English study and strategy use. Griffith (2003) reported in her study a positive relationship between the frequency of LLS use and students' level. Similarly, Oxford and Nyikos (1989) found that years of study have a significant effect on the use of learning strategies. Ramirez (1986) reported similar results in his study of adolescent learners of French L2. He compared university students with high school students, Khalil (2005) found that university students used more strategies than high school students. This might be a result of the increased demands that proficient learners encounter while communicating in the target language. A study by Magno (2010) invited 302 Korean students to complete the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning. The results showed that, overall, the social and compensation categories were used most frequently, while the memory and cognitive categories were used least frequently. Further, the duration of studying English significantly affected the use of LLS, with those who been learning English for a long time using these strategies most frequently. Another study by Al-Buainain (2010) investigated the type and frequency of LLS usage among English majors in Qatar University. The participants were 120 Arabs enrolled in the Department of Foreign Languages representing different learning levels (Years 1-4). The results indicated that the students used learning strategies with high to medium frequency. They preferred using metacognitive strategies and showed least use of affective strategies. In general, the results suggest that there is a positive relationship between language learning strategy use and learning level (years of studying English). The greater the number of years spent learning English, the greater the strategy use. Differences were not significant.

A study of 502 students from three secondary schools in Hong Kong used an adapted version of the SILL survey instrument (Leung & Hui, 2011). The findings showed that the average of strategy use fell in the medium range. The three most frequently used categorical strategies were compensative, metacognitive and affective. Although there was a positive relationship between duration of language exposure and LLS use, the differences were not significant. These findings are consistent with those of Tse (2011). In Oxford's framework, it is possible to differentiate one factor from another, but the time spent in learning the English language is not included. Yet the acquisition of a new language may vary depending on the length of exposure to formal education. Hence the present study includes the duration of formal English language study as a variable in the investigation of LLS usage.

One can conclude that, although some progress has been made in the conceptualization of strategies and their benefits, more empirical grounding and theoretical work is needed. This review of extant studies highlights the paucity LLS of knowledge about Arabic LLS in particular. This study will investigate the overall LLS use and the factors (gender, duration of studying English) that affect learning strategy choice.

#### *I. Research Questions*

1. What are the most frequently used LLS among Saudi students majoring in English at JU?
2. Does learner gender influence Saudi university EFL learners' use of LLS?

### 3. Are there any differences among learners in strategy use due to duration of studying English?

#### J. Purpose of the Study

Most LLS research studies have been undertaken in the target language setting. Only a handful have focused specifically on the LLS of students learning English in a foreign environment, mainly in the Arabic setting (Shmais, 2003; El-Dib, 2004; Al-Otaibi, 2004; Khalil, 2005; Al-Buainain, 2010; Abu-Radwan, 2011). This study investigates the overall LLS use by English major university students University at Aljouf University n Aljouf. More specifically, it investigates the effects of gender and duration of English language study.

### III. METHODS

#### A. Participants

The participants were 134 (66 males, 68 females) majoring in English at Aljouf University in Saudi Arabia. Their age ranged between 23-27 years old. They were selected randomly to participate in the study and upon their willingness. All the subjects had studied English for at least nine years. The vast majority (98%) reported that they had never visited an English-speaking country.

#### B. Instruments

Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), version 7 to explore the types and frequency of use LLS with some modifications. The SILL has been used as a key instrument for LLS research since 1990 till date. Reliability coefficients for the SILL was reported by many studies to range from .85 to .98. This made it a trusted measure for judging students' reported LLS use (Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995; Park, 1997; Bremner, 1998; Sheorey, 1999; Wharton, 2000; Griffiths, 2007; Paredes, 2010; Leung & Hui, 2011). The internal consistency of the revised SILL for the study was proven to be acceptable. The reliability coefficient ( $\alpha = .89$ ) ensured the general reliability of the study (see Glass & Hopkins, 1996). In the SILL, LLS are classified into six categories for assessment: cognitive, metacognitive, memory, affective, compensation, and social strategies. The questionnaire was translated into Arabic and all explanations and instructions to follow were given in the subjects' first language (Arabic) to avoid any possible confusion or misunderstanding. The questionnaire comprised of 54 items. The students were asked to respond on a 5-point Likert scale. According to Oxford (1999), range of 3.5-5 is thought to reflect high use of that strategy, 2.5-3.4 medium use, and 1.0-2.4 low use.

#### C. Data Collection and Analysis

The questionnaire was administered to 134 students in the second semester of the academic year 2015–2016. The administration was conducted in their classrooms with the help of class teachers. The researcher was present to answer questions that might be raised by the subjects. The students were told that there were no right or wrong answers to the questions and their responses would be used for research purposes only. They were also informed that they have the right not to participate. The questionnaire results were analysed using SPSS 19 to obtain descriptive and inferential statistics.

### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section first provides a description and analysis of the findings from the study of strategy use among Saudi EFL students majoring in English at Aljouf University. The following discussion focuses on the interpretation of the relationship between strategy use and gender and duration of studying English. The .05 level of statistical significance was set to all statistical tests in this study. The statistical data are presented according to the three research questions.

#### A. Overall Strategy Use

TABLE 1  
DESCRIPTIVE AND INFERENTIAL STATISTICS FOR LLS USE BY GENDER AND DURATION OF STUDY

Categories	Descriptive statistics				Inferential statistics			
	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Gender		Duration	
					t	p	r	p
Cognitive	1.22	4.89	3.25	.603	1.613	.110	.119	.252
Metacognitive	1.75	5	3.06	.759	-1.572	.114	.098	.034
Compensation	2.40	3.06	2.88	.168	-.927	.356	.088	.401
Social	1.71	5	2.84	.779	-.229	.820	.132	.203
Memory	2.08	3.45	2.67	.311	-1.740	.085	.077	.464
Affective	2.36	2.93	2.63	1.89	-1.404	.164	.082	.434

The participants were found to be medium and low level strategy users in EFL learning, which suggests that they were relatively less sophisticated LLS users. There are two possible reasons for this. First, they were studying English in an EFL setting and did not need it for daily survival. Thus, it was not as urgent for them to use a wide range of strategies as it was for learners in an ESL setting. Second, it might indicate that these language learners were less



sophisticated than groups in other contexts, partly due perhaps to the absence of an input-rich environment. Such a finding is consistent with those from other strategy studies (Han & Lin, 2000; Nisbet, 2002; Yu, 2003; Al-Otaibi, 2004). As can be seen in Table 1, cognitive strategies ranked as the most frequently used strategy (mean=3.25, SD=.603), followed by metacognitive strategies (mean=3.06, SD=.759), compensation strategies (mean=2.88, SD=.168) and social strategies (mean=2.84, SD=.779); memory strategies and affective strategies were ranked as the least frequently used strategies (mean=2.67, SD=.311; mean=2.63, SD=1.89; respectively). This is consistent with Shamis (2003) and Al-Buainain (2010). The differences in frequency of use of each strategy were not great.

Cognitive strategies, which were most frequently used by study participants, are important in learning a new language because they work directly on incoming information (Oxford, 1990). The most frequently used of these were “writing and saying a new word many times in order to learn it”, “watching movies in English” and “consciously learning new vocabulary”. This is consistent with findings by Al-Otaibi (2004) and Hong-Nam and Leavell (2006). The least frequently used cognitive strategies were “writing diary in English” and “listening to the radio in English”. Cognitive strategies were found in LLS research as the most popular strategies among L2 learners (Oxford, 1990).

The second most frequently used category of strategy among this study’s participants were metacognitive strategies. These include exercising “executive control” over one’s language learning through planning, organising, monitoring and evaluating, which helps learners to gain control over emotions and motivations related to language learning through self-monitoring. Thus, metacognitive learning strategies keep learners on the right track for learning, which is crucial in a foreign language input environment such as Saudi Arabia. In the current study, participants appeared to be familiar with the need to manage their learning processes and they adopted a number of metacognitive strategies to do so. “Learning from mistakes” and “using a self-study centre” were the most frequently reported metacognitive strategies, while “reading newspaper” and “noting language in the environment” were the least frequently used. This is likely because they live in a country in which English is not commonly used in the environment.

According to O’Malley and Chamot (1990), cognitive (translating, analysing) and metacognitive (planning, organising) strategies are often used together, to support each other. In fact, using a combination of strategies often has more impact than single strategies. In the present study, students majoring in English are in an intensive learning environment, and this could contribute in various ways to their preference for using both cognitive and metacognitive strategies. Learners majoring in English typically have a strong instrumental motivation to learn English. Griffiths and Oxford (2014) argue that there should be a coming together of researchers and theorists around the central cognitive and metacognitive aspects of LLS. The findings of high-frequency use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies in the present study are consistent with those from previous research (Sheorey, 1999; Abu Shamis, 2003; Liu, 2004; Khalil, 2005; Riazi, 2007; Al-Buainain, 2010; Chang, 2011).

Compensation strategies, which ranked third, enable students to make up for missing knowledge in the process of understanding or producing target language (Al-Otaibi, 2004; Al-Buainain, 2010). Language learners use compensation strategies such as guessing the meaning of new words, using a word or phrase that means the same thing if they cannot think of a word, and making up new words if they don’t know the right ones in English in order to maintain good communication even though they do not have sufficient knowledge Grammar, vocabulary and other language components. Such findings are supported in other studies (e.g. Al-Otaibi, 2004; Riazi, 2007; Al-Buainain, 2010; Chang, 2011).

Social strategies were the fourth most frequently used strategies in this study. Participants showed a strong preference for learning with others by learning from the teacher, asking the other speaker to repeat and to speak slowly. In other words, they asked questions and cooperated with others. The curriculum in the Department of English is (to a certain extent) underpinned by a student-oriented philosophy. The recent development in the Saudi society and the importance of learning English in Saudi Arabia over the past few years, in both instruction and methodology, support and encourage the role of interactive learning in the development of greater linguistic fluency. These findings are consistent with those in the literature (e.g. Phillip, 1999; Al-Buainain, 2010; Tse, 2011; Chang, 2011).

The least favoured strategies reported by the subjects in this study were memory strategies and affective strategies, respectively. The low use of memory strategies was a surprising results. Such strategies are largely in keeping with instructional delivery systems typically used by many Arab countries, which are frequently didactic and emphasised rote memorisation. Effective memory strategies are believed to involve an imaginative component as well as memory. It is possible that the subjects in this study were not familiar with the use of mnemonics (specific techniques to enhance memory) and therefore used fewer memory strategies. Lee and Oxford (2008) pointed out that the construction of memory items in the SILL includes a range of memory strategies based on visual, auditory and kinaesthetic modalities that might not be applicable to Saudi students. The most frequently reported memory strategies in the present study were connecting words with mental pictures and using new words in sentences to remember them. The low use of affective strategies might be due to the lack of opportunities to practise English with native speakers outside the classroom. Students in this population seem to experience a high level of language learning anxiety and, for this reason, they may not be willing to reflect on their emotional reaction to language learning. They reported that, despite efforts to relax when they were uncertain about speaking English, their fear of making a mistake often kept them from trying. Nonetheless, the most frequently used affective strategy was to encourage themselves to speak English even when they were afraid of making mistakes. These findings are consistent with those from previous studies (Oxford, 1990; Oh,

1992; Yang, 1993; Griffiths & Parr, 1999; Han & Lin, 2000; Nisbet, 2002; Yu, 2003; Griffiths, 2003; Lan & Oxford, 2003; Al-Otaibi, 2004; Chen, 2005; Yang, 2007; Al-Buainain, 2010; Chang, 2011).

### *B. Gender*

The second research question deals with the relationship between gender and the use of LLS. The strategies preferred by female students were almost the same as those preferred by male students. Therefore, the difference in overall strategy use between male and female students was not statistically significant. Means differences showed that females seemed to use LLS more frequently than males. Much research has shown that females tend to use more learning strategies than males (Politzer, 1983; Oxford & Nyikos, 1989; Ehrman & Oxford, 1989; Oxford, 1990; Oxford & Ehrman, 1995; Green & Oxford, 1995; Lou, 1998; Cajkler & Thornton, 1999; Sheorey, 1999; Peng, 2001; Ching-Yi, Shu-Chen, & Yi-Nian, 2007; Mat The et al., 2009; Ghee et al., 2010; Anugakul, 2011). The absence of a gender effect on strategy use was unexpected. It should be mentioned here that similar findings found in some of previous studies such as Lou (1998) and Peng (2001).

### *C. Duration of Studying English*

There were no significant differences among the subjects of this study according to duration of studying English. There was, however, a positive relationship between strategy use and study duration. In other words, those who spent many years studying the English language reported higher use of all strategy categories than those with fewer years of studying English. Research shows that it requires four to nine years to develop academic language skills and about two years to develop communicative skills in the target language. The years spent studying English is important because, in a formal education setting, the Saudi EFL learners communicate and interact with teachers and students who are more knowledgeable in English and are thus likely to influence their use of LLS. The longer the time spent in formal study of the English language, the more likely it is that the skills needed to succeed in using LLS will develop. Over time, the learner can evaluate his/her learning style to select the best possible LLS. Thus, the learner can maximise the use of LLS due to the communicative demands of the environment. This finding supports those from other studies (Cummins, 1981; Phillips, 1991; Lan & Oxford, 2003; Khalil, 2005; Magno, 2010).

## V. CONCLUSION

This study explored the use of LLS among a group of Saudi English-major students at Aljuf University to investigate factors that have been found to affect strategy use, namely, gender and duration of studying English. The results showed that these students were low to moderate users of strategies. No significant differences by language performance in the respondents' use of all the strategy categories were noted. Moreover, the results revealed a high preference for cognitive and metacognitive strategies, which help students in planning and organising their language learning. Such findings are consistent with those from previous research (e.g. Shmais, 2003; Hong-Nam and Leavell, 2006; Al-Buainain, 2010; and Abu-Radwan, 2011). Further, the results indicated low preference to memory and affective strategies. Also, some previous results had found the same finding (Griffiths, 2003; Lan and Oxford, 2003; Al-Otaibi, 2004; Chen, 2005; Yang, 2007; Al-Buainain, 2010; Chang, 2011). In addition, the statistical tests showed no significant differences for gender which found the same in previous studies (i.e. Sheorey, 1999; Peng, 2001; Ching-Yi, Shu-Chen, and Yi-Nian, 2007; Mat The et al., 2009; Ghee et al., 2010; Anugakul, 2011). There were no significant differences in overall strategy use according to duration of studying English (see, Lan & Oxford, 2003; Khalil, 2005; Magno, 2010).

### *A. Implications*

The findings of this study have a number of implications for EFL instruction in the education system in Saudi Arabia.

1. The finding of a low to moderate mean of strategy use in this study indicates that the Saudi EFL students were not sufficiently aware of the available strategies and, hence, were not applying the full range of appropriate strategies. It is important, therefore, for teachers to raise students' awareness of the broad range of strategy options available to them. Greater strategy use may improve students' motivation and help them to improve their language learning. Language teachers should also consider how to enhance autonomous learning in students.

2. The results showed that female students and those who have spent a long time studying English reported using language learning strategies more than male students and students with less exposure to formal English study, although the differences were not significant. Therefore, language teachers should review their teaching methods, overall classroom style and individual preferences. Through evaluating their lesson plans, language teachers can determine whether these provide learners with opportunities to use a variety of learning style and strategies. Teachers also need to provide all students with opportunities to use LLS more frequently and to recognise the importance of LLS for all learners, regardless of their age, gender or duration of studying English. Learners are different in terms of ability and intelligence. Language teachers should recognize and make use of these differences to help language instruction.

3. Strategy training should be integrated into the language curriculum, as several researchers have recommended (see e.g. Oxford, 1990; Tyacke, 1991; Khalil, 2005; Abu Radwan, 2011). Learning plans and materials should incorporate a

variety of tasks and activities that target strategies considered to be critical for success in learning a second language. Chamot and O'Malley (1996) have developed instructional materials that include such instruction.

### B. Limitations of the Study

Like all research, the current study has some limitations which do not, however, compromise the validity of the findings. These limitations, which suggest avenues for future research, were as follows:

1. Because the data in this study were based on self-report, it is possible that respondents to the questionnaire overestimated or underestimated the frequency with which they use certain strategies (Cohen, 1998).
2. The participants in this study were Saudi EFL students majoring in English. Hence undergraduate students in different majors were excluded. Furthermore, because participation was voluntary, findings could be affected by motivation bias.
3. Saudi students' use of learning strategies was assessed in relation to only two variables (gender and duration of studying English). Hence, the present study does not take account of all the possible factors that affect LLS usage.
4. There was no attempt to measure the effectiveness/success of strategy use, only the frequency of use. It is not possible, for example, to determine if male and female students who use the same strategy do so equally effectively.

### C. Recommendations for Further Research

1. The literature review revealed a paucity of research on Arab EFL in general and Saudi EFL in particular. Further research, involving descriptive, experimental and cross-sectional studies, is therefore recommended to enhance understanding of Arab and Saudi EFL LLS use.
2. Such studies should investigate the LLS use of Saudi students at different ages and educational levels (i.e., intermediate, high school, university).
3. According to Griffiths (2007), teacher variables have not attracted the same degree of research attention as learner variables. It is important to investigate, for example, ESL/EFL teachers' perceptions and awareness of LLS.
4. The effect of training on LLS use and the effectiveness of LLS are important areas for future investigation.
5. Multiple-method approaches should be considered in future studies. The use of questionnaires could be supplemented with other research methods such as think-aloud protocols in conjunction with a specific learning task, written diaries, stimulated recall interviews and other techniques to provide richer and more sample-specific data.
6. More research on factors that affect strategy choice would be helpful. While the variables included in the current study may explain some of the discrepancies in reported strategy use among various group of learners, other factors might also play a role, including language proficiency, beliefs, social and cultural background, motivation, attitude, and personality.

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# Pedagogical Functions of Sequences Organization of Talk in the EFL Classroom

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**Abstract**—Conversational sequences appear to be basically built around a basic pair of adjacent interactional actions; such as a question which makes an answer become relevant next. However, in contexts other than ordinary conversation, there are more complex features of sequential organization needed to be investigated especially those occurred in institutional contexts. This study applied CA to examine the interactional activities of teaching and learning in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom in Thailand. The results show that teaching and learning are not planned but contingent activities, and that the pedagogical goal of developing language knowledge is mutually achieved in a micro-context of interaction between the teacher and students mostly in a form of coherent successive and extended elicitation and response sequences rather than series of separated courses of random action sequences. Furthermore, detailed pedagogical implications which manifest itself in the developing of these sequences of talk are uncovered in a turn-by-turn basis. This empirical study provides evidence that inform the teaching practices about how classroom talk should be managed successively in order to achieve pedagogical effectiveness.

**Index Terms**—conversation analysis, classroom interaction, teacher talk, interactional sequence

## I. INTRODUCTION

Talks in general conversation have been conceptualized based on Conversation Analysis (CA) as sequences of actions that have some complex trajectories to them. The *sequence organization* of a general conversation is seen and described in detail by Schegloff (2007), who observes that turns-at-talk in conversation do not occur as series-of-turns hanging together like “identical beads on a string”. Actually, turns-at-talk in an interactional sequence are produced by the interlocutors as parts of a course of coherent actions. This theory of sequence organization is revealed through practices; for example when an act of responding is normatively projected by an interlocutor not only as a retrospective understanding of a previous act of questioning, but also a basis for a prospective relevance of the following act of assessment, and a basis for keeping the sequences going. The pioneer CA studies of sequence organization in a general kind of conversation; such as Schegloff, 1986; Heritage and Sorjonen, 1994, provides valuable ideas for this present research to apply CA to examine the activities of teaching and learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in a classroom context, and to uncover how the pedagogical activities are accomplished through sequences of interaction. An organization of sequences can be tracked to uncover what is being done, and why it is being done in that way (Seedhouse, 2004) in the language classroom from an *emic*<sup>1</sup> perspective.

Previous studies on classroom interaction, most of them have narrowed their focuses down to the studies of particular action types (see for example Brown, 1994; Markee, 1995; Suter, 2001; Morell, 2007), and particular sequences structures in the classrooms (e.g. McHoul, 1990; Lee, 2007, 2008). What new and interesting for this field of classroom interactional research is an understanding of the more complex processes through which a teacher and students conjointly produce, interpret and negotiate meanings of actions being done, which manifests itself in the extended structures of interactional sequences or sequences of sequences rather than a building block of initiation–response–evaluation (IRE) sequences. The use of IRE framework to prescribe any classroom interaction would hamper the opportunities to explore complex forms and functions of teacher and student's talk in authentic classrooms, since modern teachers no longer ask overly simple display questions or provide over-scaffold feedbacks all the time (Kibler, 2011). In addition, students sometimes initiate departure that turn classroom talk to ordinary conversation amid classroom teaching process which leads the teachers to constantly endeavor to maintain classroom control (Waring et al., 2016).

To capture classroom talk complexities, this research applies CA to examine the pedagogical relevance of the contingently developed sequence organizations in a Thai EFL classroom. It provides a critical analysis of the ways through which the organization of talk are co-constructed by the Thai EFL teacher and learners in a coherent and meaningful ordering, particularly in a form of teacher elicitation–student response, to achieve pedagogical goals. The results will provide empirical evidence that broaden our knowledge of the sequence organization in an EFL classroom

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<sup>1</sup> Emic analysis is based on an examination of the understandings and orientations of the participants themselves. The *emic* is perceived by a number of educational scholars as being more relevant in the interpretation of social realities, while the *etic* perspective (external view) can never fully capture what it really means to be part of the society (Olive, 2014).

which are pedagogically developed in such a way that students' initiated acts which show their knowledge state are acted on, and incorporated into the flow of successively developed sequences of teacher's elicitations.

In the sections to come, I begin with a review of the theory and studies on classroom sequence organization followed by the main findings of this study including demonstrations of micro-analysis of data and discussion. Finally, the significances of the study are concluded, and some suggestions for further research are presented.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

While sequential organization is used as a general term to refer to any kind of sequential positioning of utterances or actions in an interaction such as turn taking, adjacency pair, and the overall structural organization of talk, *sequence organization* is a term which is used to describe the ways in which turns-at-talk are shaped or structured to make courses of action take place in sequences of conversation (Schegloff, 2007). In other words, conversational sequence organization describes the process through which turns and also sequences of talk are being organized to be coherent with the prior ones to get some courses of action accomplished, such as actions of request, offer, telling, and announcement. He further analyzes many examples of talk from general conversation and finds some general patterns of sequence organization which people use in order to organize stretches of talk and produce courses of actions. First, the expanded sequence is manifested in a pattern of a single base sequence of adjacency pair, and additional turns which are generally placed in three different positions: (1) before the first pair part as pre-expansions; (2) between the first and the second pair part as insert-expansions; and (3) after the second pair part as post-expansions. The other pattern concerns several sequences which have some ties of relevance, coherence, and organizational relatedness of a stretch of talk beyond the boundaries of a single base sequence and its expansions. To look closely at these connected action sequences in a general conversation, there are two main types of relationship that exist among them. The first takes the form of a series of sequence, that is, two or more sequences of action are connected as reciprocal sequences or as action-types series. The other type takes the form of successive sequences of action which the second initiated sequence seeks to act on the outcome achieved from the prior sequence and to develop extended sequences of interaction.

Apart from the work of Schegloff (ibid), there are a few studies which helps reveal that principles of sequence organization are more complex than just those centered on the notions of adjacency pair per se. Among the few studies, Heritage (2012) uncovers the role of *territories of knowledge* as the factor that underpin the sequence organization in general conversation. He describes about the role of territories of knowledge in a sequence organization as follows:

“First, speakers can position themselves in a relatively unknowing (K-) position relative to others concerning the matter at hand, thereby initiating sequences by inviting or eliciting information a projectedly more knowing (K+) recipient. Alternatively, knowing (K+) speakers can simply initiate talk concerning the matter at hand, thus launching a sequence, finding a warrant for this conduct by projecting their recipients to be in a relatively unknowing (K-) position.” (Heritage, 2012, p. 33)

The imbalance territories of information or knowledge state (K+ and K-) was also noticed by McHoul (1990) as a key driving element that motivate sequence organizations in a classroom. In McHoul's study, the focus is on the analysis of how teachers organize repair trajectories to achieve a pedagogical goal of initiating students' self-correction. The results show that the elicitation sequences are developed in a distinctive ways comparing to those occurred in ordinary conversation. That is, the teacher who initiates the elicitation most of the times does not take the unknowing position. Instead, the teacher, as presumably a more knowledgeable person comparing to the students, is found regularly withhold giving information while initiating students' self-correction through various methods of talk. These methods including clueing, question redirecting, question reformulations, and tentative corrections are used to mark the students as knowing recipient (Goodwin, 1979; as cited in Netz, 2016) and to pursue the sequence(s) of elicitation. The elicitation sequences are terminated through the provisions of responses which show a knowledge state of the student, and an assessment from a teacher as a “sequence closing third” (Schegloff, 2007, p. 123) which shows that the teacher has the information of a matter at hand (K+) while she is eliciting information from the student. In fact, a sequence can be expanded beginning from this third turn position.

The other research which considers the organization of successive sequences of elicitation is Lee's (2007) study on third turn position in teacher talk. What he suggests is that, during the successive sequences of elicitation, students are initiated to provide bits of information related to the same topic focus. This information is subject to evaluation and reflection by the teacher and by other students. Successive sequences and their trajectories are thus the record of the trajectories of bits of related information provided by students which can be used as information sources for student cohorts and for the teacher to proceed from one elicitation sequence to the next related sequences. This organization of elicitation sequence is similar to Schegloff's (2007, p. 213) description of “successive parts of a course of action” in that knowledge information gained from the students is the key element that drive classroom interactional sequences. Similarly, Netz's (2016) study of *Designedly Incomplete Utterances* (DIUs) used in ESL classes of gifted students in USA, found that the teachers embedded the recent given information into the DIU turn design in order to provide a clue that urge the students to give the answer that meet the teacher's expectation, and to restore elicitation sequence when there was a problem in interaction.

Among the few studies which have been conducted to provide analyzes of how interactional sequences are developed pedagogically in an EFL classroom, they focus on finding out the reason that drive the interaction and identifying



functions of the teacher's third-turn position which tend to extend the sequence of interaction. None of them use Schegloff's (2007) theory of sequence organization to examine the courses of successive structures of action sequences in the EFL classroom. Comparing to the studies which only describe the normative pattern of classroom interaction (such as IRF pattern), or identify functions of third-turn position, this study on sequence organization will provide extensive understanding of the discursive works that the teacher and students collaboratively do through talk to develop courses of pedagogical actions in the classroom, and to develop shared knowledge of classroom instruction.

### III. THE STUDY

In the present research CA approach is used as a tool to: (1) to characterize classroom interaction from an emic perspective; and (2) to trace the developing process of sequence organizations, that is, how they are organized and accomplished. The data presented in this research are drawn from naturally occurring classroom interaction co-constructed by a Thai teacher and learners in a mainstream English class at a public secondary school in the Northern Province of Thailand. The main focus of this English course is to teach general English, particularly grammar, to beginners. The teacher is a female Thai teacher of English who has an undergraduate degree in Education from a university in Thailand. She has more than 10 years' experience in teaching English to students at primary and secondary school levels. The students were 37 Thai students in Mattayom 2<sup>2</sup>. There were 25 female and 12 male students, all around 14 to 15 years old. The participants were informed of the purpose of the study, the video recording, and they were asked to ignore the camera and to perform as usual. The English lessons from this class were observed and videotaped for further analysis inductively based on the framework of CA and language classroom ethnographic research. The corpus of 16 classroom lessons (approximately 16 hours of interaction) is transcribed using transcription convention (Atkinson and Heritage, 1984) (Appendix). It is then analyzed in detail to describe the sequence organizations of teacher elicitation and the process through which these organizations were accomplished.

### IV. RESULTS A DISCUSSION

To overcome constitutive presuppositions of teaching activities, CA reveal knowledge constructing on a turn-by-turn basis rather than merely describing recurrent patterns. After several times reviewing the videos and transcripts, it is clearly observable that the instructional processes which are achieved in different patterns of successive and extended elicitation which are analyzed and discussed in detail in the following sections. These patterns of sequence organization are found, more than 50 occurrences in 16 lessons.

#### A. Successive Sequences of Elicitations and Responses

This section examines sequences of elicitation successively connected or interlocked as parts of a course of language instruction through the language pedagogical topics of vocabulary and meaning, and grammar. These successive structures are constructed when one elicitation sequence is completed, the teacher then makes use of the language knowledge which is shared with the students in this sequence of interaction to produce and make a connection to the next elicitation.

In Extract 1 the teacher uses "a question with known answer" (Macbeth, 2004) or a display question to begin sequences of teaching and learning about *Wh*-question.

#### Extract 1:

1. T: *Ē:w àrəj i:k*  
(What else?)
2. S1: [Why
3. Ss: [Who::=
4. T: =Who
5. (2.0)
6. T: → Who *pĕe: wā:*  
(Who means-)
7. Ss: [*k'raj*  
(who)
8. T: → [*k'raj* (.) *tə'én* who is your English teacher?  
(Who, for example who is your English teacher?)
9. Ss: Miss Pat Parasri=
10. T: =*tə'ə hāj k'ru: pən na tsá:w tə'áj māj tə'áj* Miss *ní:a*  
(So you want me to be miss, using Miss do you?)
11. Ss: Mr[s.
12. Ss: [Mrs.
13. T: Mrs. Pat Parasri

<sup>2</sup> Mattayom 2 is the Thai system of standard education which is equal to Grade 7 in the Western educational system.

In line 1 the teacher continues eliciting and assessing the students' knowledge of examples of *wh-questions* by designing a question turn, "What else?". Although two possible answers "why" and "who", are provided by S1 in line 2, and by some other students in line 3, the teacher initiates an assessment turn to complete the first sequence. The assessment turn unit starts with a repetition of only the answer "who", and a confirmation "yes" which shows that this is the teacher's preferred answer. She then uses this answer as an input resource to start a new elicitation sequence. The new sequence is designed by the teacher to be incomplete or DIU (Koshik, 2002; Netz, 2016). She forms it by echoing the students' response "who", and providing an incomplete elicitation turn unit in the first language (L1) before stopping and initiating the remainder from the students. The students complete this turn by giving the meaning of "who" in L1 in line 7. In line 8, this multi-unit turn is composed of one turn construction unit (TCU) which repeats the answer from the previous sequence to confirm receipt of the answer, and the other TCU which starts a new sequence and gives an example of using "who" in a question sentence in English. The students' answer, giving the name of the teacher, in line 9 implies that they perceive the teacher's previous turn as an act of elicitation which is used to ask for teacher-known information, that is, the teacher's own name. The feedbacks in lines 10 and 13 which focus on the students' knowledge of English rule of the use of Ms. and Mrs. show the teacher's orientation to this question as a resource for assessing language knowledge rather than an authentic question which ask for knowledge of her name.

It seems that the three consecutive sequences are positioned serially (Schegloff, 2007, p. 197), that is the next sequence beginning in the turn after the previous sequence is closed. However, the three questions, though perform different functions by initiating different types of response, are not merely new questions in a question series. Instead, they are successively developed as parts of a course of elicitations because the teacher uses the student's answers to initiate a new elicitation sequences.

The following extract also provides an example of the organization of successive questions with known answer sequences. The difference is that in this extract the students' knowledge of one grammatical form is used as a resource for the teacher to start a new elicitation which calls for knowledge of the next related grammatical form. Extract 2 shows the teacher teaching how to answer yes/no questions, and about subject-verb agreement in English.

Extract 2:

1. T: → *tæ: māj tɔ'ɔj yes I am (.) tɔ'ɔj māj k'á pen yes áraj*  
(It's not yes I am, is it? It should be yes what?)
2. Ss: I do=
3. T: → =Yes I do (.) yes they do f'á: pen yes he tɔj pen yes he áraj  
(Yes I do, yes they do. For yes he, it should be yes he what?)
4. S1: He does=
5. T: =Yes he does á:: ná  
(Yes he does that's right.)

The first elicitation in line 1 is composed of a question series on how to answer yes/no questions. The teacher designs the turn unit as a question tag to first give the information that the answer is not "yes I am", and then asks "is it?". She initiates the new elicitation to elicit the students' knowledge about the format of the yes/no answer "it should be yes what?". The students reply "I do" in line 2 shows how they orient to the second question as a real question, whereas the first one is oriented to as a clue giving resource. In line 3 the teacher recasts the students' response "Yes, I do". This practice shows that the answer is correct but incomplete since, in the same turn, she provides an example of another subject-verb agreement "yes, they do" then successively elicit the students' knowledge about verb agreement with "he". This elicitation in line 3 shows how the teacher provide an example of a similar form of verb agreement (they do), but eliciting knowledge of the different forms of verb agreement "For yes he, it should be yes he what?".

This practice of providing additional turn constructional unit and starting a new question to call for the different form of verb agreement demonstrates how successive sequence of action are used pedagogically in this occasion to give hints to students while asking them for a knowledge of the language form. The more units added, the more resources the students have in order to make sense of relevant responses. Through the structuring of successive sequences of elicitation, the students' knowledge is also developed successively. The students are led to construct knowledge of the first question before they are asked to provide the answers to the questions in the subsequent elicitation sequences. The students' knowledge of vocabulary and meaning, and grammar becomes a resource for the teacher to deliver the next elicitations and for the students to provide answers to the new elicitations.

### B. Extended Sequences of Reformed Elicitation

This section discusses sequence organization of teacher's reformed elicitations. When there is evidence of a delay on the turn of the students, the teacher reformulates and reworks the elicitation to initiate the students' provision of the answers. The teacher's reformulations are in the forms of: (1) changing elicitation types; (2) providing clues; and (3) revising the language of the elicitation. By constructing different turn designs, the same reply is still relevant but more interactional resources are given based on the students' delayed in responding. The first example is shown in Extract 3. It is taken from the activity of answering question in the worksheet.

## Extract 3:

1. T: → What does your mother want you to be now? *mǎj k'wəm wǎ:*  
(It means-)
2. Ss: (5.0)
3. T: → *plɛːsɪ məɛk'ɔːŋ k'un (1.0) tɪŋ ka:n hǎj k'un*  
(Translate it. What does your mother want you to-)
4. S1: → *t'am ərəj*  
(To do)
5. T: *Pen ərəj* yes that's right  
(To be)

After the students' silence in line 2 which implies that they may have difficulty giving the L1 meaning of "What does your mother want you to be now?" the teacher re-elicits. However, the elicitation is changed into a form of DIU that invites completion by the students, that is, the teacher provides parts of the answer "your mother wants you to-", and S1 fills in the rest of the answer "to be". According to Nerz (2016, p. 65), silence is a deviant act that departure from pedagogical trajectory which is normatively re-acted by the teacher using DIU to restore classroom talk and to urge students to respond.

There is another technique used to handle the silence, Extract 4 is taken from the teaching of "have, has" and how to use these words in interrogative and informative sentences. The extract shows evidence of the teacher's reformulation of the elicitation by switching language and extending the turn-constructural unit to include an unfinished list construction in order to deal with delayed response.

## Extract 4:

1. T: Have dinner
2. Ss: Have dinner
3. T: → *mǎj k'wəm wǎ: ərəj* what does it mean?  
(What does it mean? What does it mean?)
4. Ss: (3.0)
5. T: → Have dinner *plɛː wǎ: ərəj (.) mʉːan kǎp* have breakfast have lunch *plɛː wǎ:*  
(Have dinner what does it mean? It is similar to have breakfast, have lunch. It means-)
6. (2.0)
7. T: → *a.thǎ:n*  
(Meal)
8. Ss: *Jen=*  
(Evening)
9. T: *=a.thǎ:n jen* that's right  
(Evening meal, that's right)

In line 3, the teacher elicits the students' knowledge about the equivalent L1 meaning of "have dinner". The elicitation is conducted in Thai, followed by the equivalent meaning in second language (L2). After three seconds of silence, the teacher elicits the students' knowledge of the meaning again. However, the elicitation in line 5 is reformulated by using L1 as the language of communication, while L2 is embedded in the Thai sentence. This new elicitation in line 5 is successively produced by referring to the phrase in line 1 (have dinner), and giving some examples of similar phrases (have breakfast, have lunch) before eliciting for the meaning of "have dinner".

The elicitation is not in the form of a question, but the teacher provides "incomplete list construction" (Jefferson, 1990; Lerner, 1995) which initiate a word search from the students. "A list in progress furnishes recipients with the characteristics and form of a proper list item and a site for it to be issued" (Lerner, 1995, p. 118). However, as it is shown in line 7, the students still keep silent. In line 8 the teacher adds more information "meal" and gives turn to the students to provide the remainder of the phrase, which may be the part of the answer she wants to elicit from the students the most. The students realize that the word "meal" is provided to prompt them to answer with the rest of the expression, which is "evening" in line 9, and this answer is followed by the teacher's positive feedback in line 10. The data also reveal that the teacher reformulates the elicitations in a form of switching between L1 and L2, and gives parts of the answer, until almost all the information needed is given. She provides the answer that "dinner" is a meal, and the only information the students have to add is that it is the meal "in the evening".

The extracts presented in this section illustrate the contingent process of developing reformed elicitations to serve as an instructional tool. The teacher's designs of elicitation further reveal the opportunity given for the students to search for semantically and syntactically tying subsequent utterances to a prior turn as an extension of it. To be more specific, the structures in extracts 3 and 4 provide examples of sequentially achieved process of "scaffold" (Ellis, 1999) in the language classroom. Instead of giving the answer directly, the teacher keeps prompting the students to provide the answer that meets her expectation. Although the students are able to respond with the correct answer, it is not clear whether they have the content knowledge, or they actually are able to guess the teacher's expected answer from the kind of "cue elicitation" (Edwards and Mercer, 1987) initiated by the teacher.

### C. Successive Sequences of Elicitation and Students' Self-correction

This section describes features of elicitation sequences which the new elicitation is successively initiated by the teacher based on a problem in the students' answer to the previous question. Similar to the way the teacher reacts to the students' silence, she also uses the second initiated elicitation to prompt students' self-correction by helping the students to notice the problem in a response and to find out what is correct or incorrect about it. As shown in Extract 5, the teacher is instructing on the formats of questioning and answering in English. While withholding her feedback, the teacher gives the students the opportunity to provide answers in more than one turn in lines 2 to 4, before a feedback is provided in line 5.

Extract 5:

1. T: Verb to can *š'én* (.) can you speak English?  
(The verb can for example can you speak English?)
2. S1: Ye[s]
3. S2: [Y[ə]
4. S3: [Ye[s]
5. T: → [Yes *əraj lā t̪ip* Yes *hú:an r̪i:* Yes *əraj k'ā* Yes I (1.0) [can  
(Yes what? Yes only? Yes what? Yes I can)
6. Ss: [can
7. T: Yes I can.

In line 1 the teacher gives an example of a question starting with a helping verb “can”. At the same time this question is perceived as a question which performs the function of eliciting the students' response. Although the “Yes” answers given in lines 2 to 4 are correct, they are not in the correct form of language the teacher expects. This can be proved in line 5, when the teacher repeats the students' responses and accounts for what is missing. In one turn, she provides three different types of verbal prompt. One is a yes–no question “Yes only?” which gives the students a hint to notice whether only “yes” is a correct answer or not. Then she repairs the question “Yes what?” that prompts the students to produce the missing parts which should follow “yes”. Finally she provides a designedly incomplete turn “Yes I”, followed by a one-second pause to prompt the students to complete it. The students fill in the word “can” at the overlap with the teacher's turn. The teacher confirms the complete form of the answer “Yes I can” in line 7. The elicitation series in line 5 are constructed to extend the students' previous answer without correcting it, and to elicit a further correction of that answer from the students. This finding is parallel to Netz's (2016) finding that “DIU is used a last resort after all other elicitation forms have failed. It provide so much information that the missing item becomes completely transparent” (p.66). Although DIU may neither authentic in nature nor successfully engage students in learning (Mercer, 1995), the reason that it is used here maybe because it is a subtle way to let students notice their mistake without discouraging to further respond.

Extract 6 shows another form of how the teacher initiates new elicitation in the third turn to successively prompt the students' self-correction. It is taken from the textbook-based questions and answer activity.

Extract 6:

1. T: *ā: k'ā: s̪ɔ̃ŋ*  
(Number two)
2. Ss: *Di:d Mary buy ((unintelligible)) ((reading))*
3. T: *t̪ip wā: əraj=*  
(What is the answer?)
4. Ss: =No↑ he does
5. T: → No↑ he *r̪i:* she=  
(No he or she?)
6. Ss: =she
7. T: she *Nā k'ā Mary pen p'ū: j̪iŋ* no she didn't  
(She that's right. Mary is a woman. No she didn't)

In line 3 the teacher elicits the students' knowledge of the response to the question “Did Mary buy a blue shirt?” in the textbook. After the students' response in line 4 “No he does”, the teacher initiates a correction of it using a new elicitation in line 5. The elicitation includes the students' response (“no, he”) and the teacher's choice of response (“or she”). The elicitation functions as not only calling for information, but also pinpointing what is not correct in the students' reply in the previous turn. In line 6, the students select the response, “she”, from the choice given. In line 7, the teacher repeats the response and offers an explanation that *she* is used because Mary is a woman. The data shows that, unlike natural conversation, classroom correction is routinely other- (or teacher-) initiated and students' self-correction. The teacher, having a professional identity comparing to the students, often provides prompts to help learners develop their knowledge state by themselves (McHoul, 1990).

## V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this article has examined the processes through which elicitation sequences were organized in the Thai EFL classroom. Structures of successive and extended elicitation sequences have been identified and described in detail. The proposal to make here is that the sequences are not simply constructed as a series of connected elicitations. Instead, different features in elicitations are creatively designed to act on or implement the outcome from the prior sequence and to elaborate language knowledge co-constructed in teacher and students interaction. Even students' silence and mistake were acted on to control pedagogical goal of language classroom. According to Waring et al., (2016), the problems in classroom talk should rather be treated in such a way that conductive participation can still be encouraged. In the result and discussion section, I have discussed that the structures of successive and extended sequences of elicitation are pedagogically and interactionally developed as a process through which the teacher uses questions, each one is designed in a specific way, to steer the sequences of interaction as well as to develop language knowledge among learners in a particular direction.

The sequence directions or organizations have been shown to be motivated by the imbalance of information as suggested by Heritage (2012). However, the distinctive features are revealed in a form of the teacher, who is in a more knowledgeable position comparing to the students, uses display and cued elicitations to help students construct their own knowledge. The findings challenge the belief that the extensive use of questions with known answers could be a waste of time (Brock, 1986; Nunan, 1991; Brown, 1994; Suter, 2001; Morell, 2007). Instruction is actually accomplished through the successive sequences of questions with known answers. However, what teachers should concern is that when a designedly incomplete turn and an elicitation with choices of response is initiated to prompt students' self-correction, additional information is given as a prompt to obtain a correct reply. The use of elicitation with choice of response and added information may result in students correcting their answers from the information or choices given, rather than from their content knowledge.

According to this limitation, Cristoph and Nystrand (2001) suggest that teachers and students should engage more in authentic discussion and learning. The use of elicitation with no choice provided may encourage students' higher-order thinking to provide their personal opinions since there is no choice provided and they have to find out the answer by themselves. It could also be effective to prompt the students to answer in different ways, such as asking them to go through textbooks and find the answer by themselves, instead of providing parts of the answer and leaving them to fill in the remaining parts.

In sum, the distinctive organizations of successive sequences of elicitation have been studied to make understanding of what is being done in this Thai EFL classroom, and to inform teaching practice, teacher training, and research on the effectiveness of teacher talk, particularly the teacher practice of elicitation. This study is not an end in itself. Rather, it paves the way for a study of more complex successive sequences of different action types in language classrooms. In addition, most previous research on teacher elicitation has not considered how teachers structure elicitations in terms of code-switching in the language classroom. The data obtained from this classroom context provide evidence of the teacher using L1 as an interactional resource for constructing meanings and to prompt responses from the students. This feature could be valuable data of analysis for further research which aim to gain insight into EFL classroom interaction and learning.

## APPENDIX. TRANSCRIPT NOTATION

T	Teacher
Ss	More than one student
S1	Single student
::	lengthening of the preceding sound.
↑	higher pitch in the utterance
◦	utterance quieter than surrounding talk
(Unintelligible)	indicates unintelligible utterances
(.)	micro-pause
(2.0)	number in parentheses indicates seconds of silence
((Gesture))	non-verbal actions
?	rising intonation
<u>Underline</u>	speaker emphasis
=	the second speaker followed the first speaker without discernible silence between them
-	Abrupt cut-off
[ ]	point of overlap
→	A line of a particular interest in the discussion
<i>Translations</i>	
<i>English</i>	English translation of Thai speaking
English	English speaking
<sup>th</sup> əj	International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) with Phonemic Tones
( <i>Thai</i> )	English Translations

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# Developing EFL Students' Reading Comprehension and Reading Engagement: Effects of a Proposed Instructional Strategy

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**Abstract**—This study investigates the effectiveness of a proposed instructional strategy based on habits of mind and shared inquiry in developing reading comprehension and reading engagement among EFL learners at a KSA university. Integral to the study was the use of two main instruments: reading comprehension test and reading engagement survey. The experimental group received reading strategy and reading engagement training activities in addition to general reading practice, while the control group focused only on developing general reading comprehension skills. The data, coded in terms of a range of measures of literal, inferential, and critical reading skills as well as reading engagement, were subjected to t-tests. The results indicate that after the intervention, although some reading comprehension gains were achieved by the CG, the EG achieved higher levels in reading comprehension skills and engagement. Thus, findings revealed support for the proposed strategy. The findings have significant implications for EFL pedagogy, highlighting the effective impact of strategy based instruction on development of reading comprehension.

**Index Terms**—habits of mind, shared inquiry, reading comprehension, reading engagement

## I. INTRODUCTION

Comprehension as the essence of reading involves “the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning” (Sweet & Snow, 2003, p. 1). Blau (2003) states that with the changing historical and educational contexts, definitions of literacy have changed. The latest form of literacy, which has been called ‘critical literacy’, requires students to become strategic readers, who self-manage, self-monitor, and self-modify. Readers who are able to select texts they will read, engage in higher-order thinking as they read, move from stage of just summarizing or retelling of a text to the stage of construction and critical reflection on a text. To achieve such a target, learners should be exposed to a wide range of written texts and taught effective reading comprehension strategies (Kirmizi 2009, Billmeyer, 2006).

Grabe (2009, cited in Hamidreza & Hashemi, 2016) stresses the importance of reading comprehension strategies clearly: "Acquisition of better reading strategies is apparently needed to crack the illusion of comprehension in readers who are settling for low standards of comprehension; They need to acquire and implement strategies to facilitate deeper levels of comprehension" (p. 449). Thus, support students' reading comprehension through training on appropriate reading strategies has been a main focus for language instructors. It has often been argued in reading literature that due to the complex and complicated factors involved in reading comprehension in general and in EFL reading in particular i.e., linguistic, cognitive and socio-cultural variables, designing an effective reading instructional strategy is not an easy task (Hudson, 2007).

Billmeyer (2004, cited in Costa & Bena, 2008) assure that although reading strategies are helpful, “the engagement in reading is not the product of strategies alone but a fusion of strategies with mental dispositions”(P.1). These intellectual processes or dispositions frequently referred to as “Habits of Mind’ (HoM). Scholars have offered many congruous definitions for HoM. Costa and Kallick(2008) believe that there are at least 16 Habits of Mind (HoM), such as persisting, managing impulsivity, listening with understanding and empathy, thinking flexibly, thinking about thinking, that are indicative of effective and efficient problem solvers who display intelligence when faced with a problem. Costa and Kallick (2008) declare that these HoM are performed in clusters of behaviors rather than in isolation. Billmeyer (2004) adds that HoM are alterable; students can learn to question, reflect, and think interdependently.

When it comes to reading comprehension, Moore and Hall (2012) state that when used intentionally, HoM help students interact with texts in active and purposeful ways. Therefore, Billmeyer (2004) stresses that a major goal of reading instruction must be to support students in developing and habituating these HoM in their reading practices until they become one interdependent unit. Burgess (2012) and Jones (2014) suggest that out of the 16 Habits of Mind explained by Costa and Kallick (2008), the following specific habits apply directly to developing the reading comprehension skills: Persisting, Managing impulsivity, Applying past knowledge to new situations, Listening with understanding and empathy, Thinking flexibly, Communicating with clarity and precision, Striving for accuracy, and Taking responsible risks.

Moreover, practitioners, with an emphasis on collaborative reading practices, have increasingly favored approaches to reading centered on discussion, such as literature circles (Daniels, 2002), book clubs (McComb, 2009), reading apprenticeship (Creech & Hale, 2006), and Questioning the Author (Beck & McKeown, 2006). Shared inquiry as a discussion-based model of reading, developed by the Junior Great Books Foundations (2014), promotes an intellectually stimulating interpretative discussion of difficult questions in complex text (Whitfield, 2013). It is based on the conviction that participants can gain a deeper understanding of a text when they work together and are prompted by a leader's skilled questioning ([www.oauifealumni.org](http://www.oauifealumni.org)).

Research on the motivational aspects of reading has reached that there is a strong and positive correlation between reading engagement, keeping students attentive and involved for extended periods of time, and higher student achievement in reading comprehension (Connor, Jakobsons, Crowe, & Meadows, 2009; Klauda & Guthrie, 2015). According to V. Vaish (2016) and Wigfield et al. (2008) the term 'engagement' as a goal of teaching reading is consistent with a multi-dimensional approach in that it includes behavioral, emotional/motivational, and cognitive aspects. Thus, the engaged reader is assumed to be behaviorally active (reading frequently), internally motivated (liking to read), and cognitively active (uses strategies in reading). In the present study, reading engagement will be operationalized as "a meta-construct subsuming all aspects of reading: not just motivation but a balance of interests, attitudes, motivation, self-regulation, and the ability to use cognitive abilities while reading to become deeply involved with a text."

In a longitudinal study, Klauda and Guthrie (2015) examined the development of reading motivation, engagement, and achievement in early adolescence by comparing interrelations of these variables in struggling and advanced readers. Findings showed that advanced readers showed stronger relations of motivation and engagement with achievement than struggling readers. However, motivation predicted concurrent engagement and growth in engagement similarly for struggling and advanced readers. These results supported the hypothesis that cognitive challenges limit the relations of motivation and engagement to achievement for struggling readers.

As demonstrated from this review of literature, numerous studies provide evidence for the importance of reading comprehension instruction and reading engagement, however, the field lacks insight garnered from in-depth investigation into strategy that integrates cognitive and collaborative aspects in the EFL context of teaching reading comprehension and how teachers can apply those strategies. Therefore, the present study tries to link reading comprehension to research results, in this case the effectiveness of a proposed strategy based on Habits of Mind and shared inquiry in developing EFL students' reading comprehension skills and reading engagement. As such, this article provides a developmental perspective on reading comprehension and attempts to answer the question of whether the reading comprehension skills and reading engagement of EFL learners can be enhanced over a short period of time by adopting a strategy based on habits of mind and shared inquiry.

## II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Reading comprehension is an active cognitive process which involves reasoning to construct meaning from a written text and understanding it effectively and comprehensively (Nakamoto, Lindsey, & Manis, 2008). Enabling EFL learners to deeply and adequately understand the written language, necessitate teaching them the reading comprehension skills that comprises reading proficiency.

Scholars have made attempts to classify these skills incorporating various parameters for their classification. An analysis of the various taxonomies tackling reading comprehension skills (Koda, 2005; Hudson, 2007) reveals three underlying categories: Literal comprehension, Inferential/ interpretive comprehension and Critical comprehension. According to these taxonomies, while literal comprehension focus on decoding explicit information from the text through recognition or recall of its details, interpretive/inferential skills include the use of these details for the analysis, synthesis and classification of the text-based information, enabling the reader to access additional information by mapping the text. At the higher levels of cognitive processes (critical comprehension), anticipations and hypotheses are inferred by the reader beyond the explicit meaning, opinions are formed about the quality and accuracy of the text (Ismail, Yusof, Abdul Rashid & Lin, 2015).

In view of the above discussion, the three skills stated in the afore-mentioned taxonomies were taken into consideration for developing the reading comprehension skills checklist in the present study (see appendix A), since it is helpful for selecting the reading texts and constructing comprehension questions.

### A. Reading Strategy Training Research

Several studies have been carried out to investigate the effects of reading strategy training on reading comprehension extending the predictive power of this variable on comprehension. The findings of these studies also indicate that strategy instruction with a focus on comprehension monitoring can help less skilled EFL readers overcome their difficulties in reading (Kalua, 2011). Kazemi, Mohsen & Mohammadreza (2013) highlight that Cognitive views of reading comprehension indicate that reading is an interactive process while comprehension is a constructive process; recommending that comprehension instruction should emphasize teaching students how to use a set of text comprehension strategies and empowering them with a sense of conscious control, or metacognitive awareness.



In their study, Aghaie and Zhang (2012) explored the impact of teaching of some reading strategies on EFL students' reading performance in Iran. The study employed a questionnaire adapted from Chamot and O'Malley's (1994) cognitive and metacognitive strategies framework. Findings revealed that reading comprehension and reading strategy use improved with strategy instruction. Results also showed that strategy instruction contributed to autonomous reading behaviors.

Another Study by Khonamri and Karimabadi (2015) aimed at determining how collaborative strategic reading (CSR) may increase critical reading of EFL students at the intermediate level. Study sample consisted of forty students majoring in English language literature at the University of Mazandaran. The treatment lasted for 10 sessions and every session continued for 90 minutes. Result indicated that students in the experimental group outperformed the students in the control group.

In their study, Al-Qahtani and Lin (2016) investigated the impact of Creative Circles in developing Saudi EFL middle school learners' reading comprehension over the period of a school term. The study sample involved three intact third grade Saudi middle school classes. Researchers used multiple instruments- reading comprehension test, reflective journals and semi-structured interviews. Results indicated an improvement in the experimental group's reading comprehension skills. They attributed the success of Creative Circles to its nature as a collaborative based reading approach, and its focus on direct teaching of reading skills, as well as attention to both low- and high- level reading processes and metacognitive awareness.

The aim of the current study is to examine whether pedagogic intervention can help enhance learner reading comprehension and engagement over a limited period of time by raising learners' awareness about reading comprehension skills and training them on engaging habits of mind and shared inquiry in their reading process. Ellis and Shintani (2014) highlight that combining strategy training and awareness raising is often the preferred approach to learner training.

### B. *Habits of Mind and Reading Comprehension*

Billmeyer (2004) states that there are three broad reading comprehension habits that all readers must develop: self-managing, self-monitoring, and self-modifying. Costa and Bena (2008) point out that there are key habits of mind that help readers in each comprehension habit as follows: Key HoM that help readers self-manage are *applying past knowledge to new situations* and *questioning and posing problems*; while HoM that help readers self-monitor are *thinking about thinking* and *thinking and communicating with clarity and precision*. Finally, HoM that help readers self-modify are *thinking interdependently* and *remaining open to continuous learning*.

Fletcher (2013) considers that along with attitudes and perceptions conducive to learning, HoM form the backdrop for all learning and must always be carefully considered in the learning process. He indicates that one way to make procedural knowledge (i.e., the *how*) visible to more students is by explicitly teaching habits of mind.

Anderson (2010) and Ritchhart and Perkins (2005, cited in Burgess 2012) identified six key principles that are evident in using the HoM in teaching and learning. These principles include an understanding that: (1) thinking skills alone are not enough, students must also have a disposition to utilize these skills; (2) the development of thinking and understanding is a constant interplay of sharing and communication between the group and the individual; (3) it is the culture of the classroom that teaches, sets the tone for learning and communicates to students what it actually means to think and learn well; (4) educators need to strive to make students' thinking more visible and foster better learning and thinking through using the right approach (including routines and structures, probing questions and careful documentation) (5) a variety of resources are also needed to 'free the mind' to engage in new and deeper thinking; (6) the need for the development of professional communities.

In their study, Hinton, Suh, and Colón-Brown (2016) argue that teachers can improve students' disciplinary literacy skills within the context of studying historical nonfiction by using additional guidance concerning fostering disciplinary habits of mind. They offer a three-part framework highlighting disciplinary practices such as contextualizing/building context, corroborating/intertextuality, and sourcing/ biographical criticism that ELA and social studies teachers can use when fostering students' responses to historical nonfiction. The framework invites students to begin to experience habits of mind that historians exercise while they inquire about the past, while discovering that the practices are vital to other disciplines as well. They highlighted that the suggested framework can be modified for use in various middle grades and with multiple historical nonfiction selections.

The limited research into HoM and reading comprehension instruction may indicate, on a broader level, a neglect of HoM in classroom-oriented research. Baker (2013) assured that this is unexpected, taking into account the essential role that cognitive based strategies play in reading instruction to EFL learners.

### C. *Shared Inquiry and Reading Comprehension*

Shared inquiry, as a collaborative-based strategy, presents a pedagogically vibrant platform for developing reading comprehension in EFL classrooms. It provides a format of reading instruction that supports cooperation between learners' strategic reading and active engagement with what they read. It uses some principles of other effective teaching methods such as Communicative Approach (CLT) and Task Based Learning (TBL), concerning the development of EFL learners' linguistic fluency, through encouraging peer reading and collaboration in negotiating meaning.

Whitfield (2013) presents some methods and practices of shared inquiry that distinguish it from other ways of conducting text-based classroom discussions, such as: how to manage the interpersonal dynamics of a discussion group; how to instill the habit of careful listening; encouraging good preparation for classroom discussion through reading and note taking; and setting guidelines for close textual analysis of argumentative strategies. He also identifies the following procedures for using shared inquiry in reading class: Reading the text twice, Practicing Active Reading, using factual questions, and then using interpretive questions, followed by evaluative questions. In this last step, the reader examines whether or not the author's point of view is in agreement with his or her own beliefs, values, and experiences.

### III. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

1. There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group students exposed to the proposed strategy and the control group who received regular instruction on the posttest in favor of the experimental group in overall reading comprehension and in each reading comprehension sub-skill.
2. There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group students and the control group on the post administration of the reading engagement scale in favor of the experimental group in overall reading engagement performance and in each reading engagement dimension.
3. There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group students on the pre-test and the post post-test in favor of the posttest in overall reading comprehension and on its sub skills.
4. There are statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group students on the pre administration VS the post administration of the reading engagement scale in favor of the post administration in overall reading engagement and in each reading engagement dimension.

### IV. METHOD

#### **Design**

The quasi-experimental design called the non-equivalent group design was used. This technique is identical to the pretest-posttest control group design. However, two intact groups were selected instead of the random sampling method adopted in experimental methods. Random assignment of subjects was not possible because the classes used in the study were intact groups administratively defined in terms of levels, teachers and classes. Since one cannot fully insure random selection of subjects, a control problem might emerge which necessitates the use of a pre-test. The treatment consisted of 10 lessons. Each lesson took two sessions per week lasting (100 minutes). The treatment lasted about 12 weeks (three months).

#### **Participants**

Participants were a group of 50 first year female students pursuing a two year English diploma certification, at Deanship of Community Service and Continuous Education Center, Imam University, KSA, during the 2015/2016 academic year. The sample consisted of 44 graduate students who finished their secondary school four or five years ago and did not have the chance to join the university, mostly, mostly due to social reasons, so they joined the university center to study for 2 years (4 semesters) to get a diploma in English language and 6 students (3 in each group) are university graduates in specializations other than English. It is expected that this English diploma will qualify them to join University later and/or find better job in the future. Students' age in both groups ranged from twenty-two to twenty-four years. They are at the pre- intermediate level of proficiency in English Language according to the placement test of the university. The research sample included two intact classes; one class (25 students) was exposed to the proposed strategy, whereas the other class (25 students) was exposed to the regular teaching.

#### **The proposed strategy**

This strategy emphasizes task based learning and reflection. Accordingly, explanation of concepts is kept to a minimum and is embedded in guided group discussion. Participants are encouraged to learn through practice first and then followed by discussion and reflection.

#### **Procedures and tasks**

##### **Introductory sessions**

The first two classes were introductory sessions. The first one was to clarify to the students what are habits of mind. ; develop a broad understanding of each habit and familiarize students with shared inquiry as a discussion based reading model. The second session was to explain what is meant by reading comprehension, its sub- skills and introduce the proposed strategy: its objectives, duration, and teaching procedures.

##### **Procedure of the main lessons**

According to the suggested strategy, the main lessons were divided each to six consecutive stages, each of which consists of activities meant to engage and aid students in comprehending a given text (see figure 1).

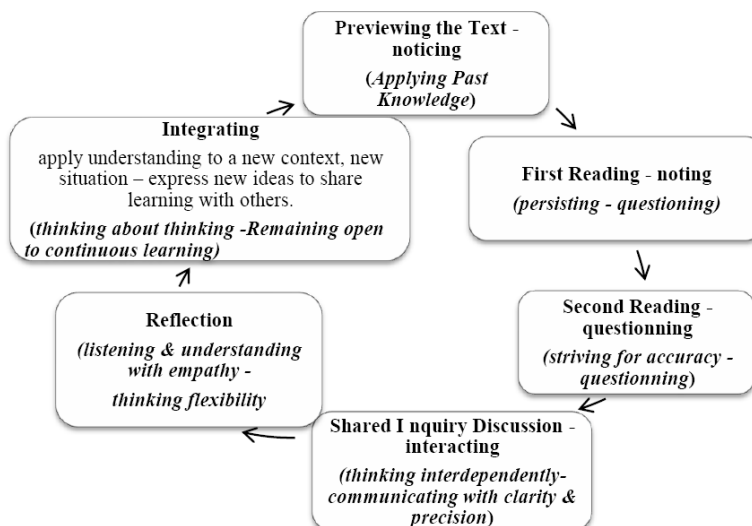


Fig. 1 the teaching procedures of the proposed strategy

**Stage (1) Previewing the text (noticing):** (habit of applying past knowledge). This stage is an opportunity to give students a purpose for reading, to create interest, and to arouse curiosity. Students scan the text individually and get a basic idea of what it is about. The teacher elicits students’ predictions saying: “What questions would you like to ask about this topic?” Then, direct them to activate prior knowledge related to the text, through using “anticipation guide” worksheet and/or completing the first two columns of a KWLQ chart. Students then turn to a partner and discuss their responses.

**Stage (2) First Reading (noting):** (habits of persisting and questioning). During this stage, students monitor their level of comprehension, take notes, and form questions as they read. Students work individually to read silently the assigned text using active reading and monitoring strategies including: (1) recognizing key words, (2) jot down new words (3) predicting, (4) visualizing (using graphic organizers/ mind maps). They apply ‘Text coding’ to reflect how they interact with the reading text. The main activities employed during this stage were:

a. Text coding: Initially, students were given one session, spanning 20 minutes, to introduce the coding chart to be used during reading along with a brief explanation for each code. The codes were as follows:

✓ Signaling understanding	X Disagreement	👁 visualizing
🔗 Making connection	★ Main idea	⊗ Signaling lack of comprehension
? Asking questions	↔ inferring	

b. Chart of text/ questions: After each section, the teacher asks students to write the main ideas of each on the left side of the chart and questions about specific ideas on the right. They started with -factual questions. Then, they created interpretive and evaluation questions.

**Stage (3) Second Reading- questioning:** (Habits of striving for accuracy & questioning). During this stage, students are directed to work in pairs following three steps: oral reading, clarify ideas, and summarizing. Students in pairs try to find the answers to the questions they noted during the previous reading stage and discuss specific portions of the text that interest or puzzle them, analyzing and relating them to its argument. Then, in preparing for the next stage “Shared Inquiry discussion”, students individually use a two-column note-taking format. In the first column, they record their understanding of the text. In the second column, they take notes of the main ideas stated in the text. Students support their notes by examples, record interpretive and evaluation questions (The Great Books Foundation, 2014).

**Stage (4) Shared Inquiry Discussion- interacting:** (habits of thinking interdependently and communicating with clarity & precision). Students work in groups of four or five, each group chose a name for itself and its own leader (the leader role is rotated each lesson). The leader of a shared inquiry discussion prepares the interpretive questions to initiate the discussion, pose them in logical order; builds up on participants’ answers through asking for evidence; and inviting additional responses (The Great Books Foundation, 2014). During the group discussion, first, each member of the group shares one entry from the notes of the previous stage (second reading); there is no discussion at this time. Second, each student shares one entry that he would like the group to discuss. Third, the leader of the group wrap up the discussion by asking this overall question: What have we learned based on this analysis of the text? All students are responsible for helping group members experience success with the assigned task.

**Stage (5) Reflecting /constructing new knowledge:** (habits of listening & understanding with empathy and thinking flexibility). At this stage, Students begin a whole-class discussion in which they brainstorm ideas and opinions about the selected reading. Students are given time to complete “Building Your Answer” worksheet. They should write their new answer to the questions, they posed during the second reading stage, after the discussion. Students then can use self reflective to establish personal meaning of the text and establish an image of themselves as readers. Sometimes teacher provide students with a guiding question to activate their reflective thinking.

**Stage (6) Integrating** (*habits of thinking about thinking -Remaining open to continuous learning*): Students apply understanding to a new context, new situation – express new ideas to share learning with others. Transferring and applying the reading skills to other settings and situations is cued through well-constructed questions. Also, as a kind of self-evaluation, Students had to think back about their reading performance and answer questions on the self evaluation worksheet to assess how well they performed and reflect more explicitly on their experiences with the suggested reading strategy.

**Procedure followed with the control group:**

Students in the control group received regular instruction by the researcher, which comprises pre-teaching vocabulary, silent reading, teaching word forms, and idiomatic expressions. Students read the text complying with the rules of silent reading within the framework of reading comprehension exercises. Following this, two-three students were asked to read the text out loud. Subsequently, the teacher had the students do activities like finding out the associations of words, commenting on visual material, recognizing words, completing the text, finding out keywords, and answer MCQ questions.

**Data Gathering Instruments**

**A. The reading Comprehension Test**

On the whole, the test subsumed two texts (each 400-460 words in length) that have quite the same readability level of the texts included in the students' text book, followed by multiple choices (M.C.Q.), true/false and short answer questions. The test comprised 40 items measuring the specified reading comprehension skills three times at least for each. Students were demanded to answer the questions in a separate answer sheet.

*- Test validity and reliability:*

To measure the test content validity, the first version of the test was given to 8 TEFL specialists to evaluate it in terms of content appropriateness, number of items and suitability of the test to the students' level. In order to establish the test reliability, the test-retest method was employed with an interval of two weeks. The reliability coefficient was 0.84, which is relatively high.

*- Scoring of the test*

Scoring did not require another rater for all test items were objective. For multiple choices, or true/false, one score was given for each correct answer; zero for left or wrong answers. For short answer questions, was scored as correct (1 point), partially correct (0.5) or incorrect (0 point). For test specification, see table (1).

**B. The Reading Engagement scale (RES)**

This scale aimed at assessing student's reading engagement level and the extent to which the adopted treatment influenced this level. The reading engagement 40-item scale was adapted from Mango's (2015) student engagement questionnaire, Martin's Motivation and Engagement Scale (2003), Whitaker's (2009) reading engagement survey (RES), Black's (2013) reading engagement survey, Wigfield et al. (2008) reading engagement index (REI).

A four-point Likert-scale was used in correcting the survey's items. Participants were instructed to state their level of agreement with each survey item ranging from 4= Strongly Agree (SA) to 1= Strongly Disagree (SD). For the purpose of the current study, the scale was translated to Arabic to eliminate the language barrier.

The first version of the scale was given to TEFL and educational psychology specialists to make sure that the scale actually measured what it claimed to measure and hence some items were modified. The reliability coefficient of the scale was 0.89 according to Cronbach's alpha, which indicates a high level of internal consistency and reliability. The number of items and average scores of each section is shown in table (2).

**C. Focused Group Interview**

Focused group interview was conducted individually with 10 students of the experimental group at the end of the study period. The interview focused on students' answers to two open ended questions relating to each variable investigated. The interview data was scribed and used to support and extend the findings on the study

## V. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

### A. Pre-implementation of the Study Tools

First, the results of the pretests were subjected to statistical treatment to find whether there were statistically significant differences in reading comprehension and reading engagement between the control and the experimental groups prior to the treatment, to control variables before implementing the treatment. T-test for independent samples was thus applied. The differences between the means of the two groups are shown in tables (3) and (4) as follows:

Tables (3) and (4) show that there was no statistically significant difference between the experimental group and control one on the pretest in overall reading comprehension performance as well as in all sub-skills and the two groups were almost at the same level regarding their reading engagement level prior to the treatment. This implies that any variance after the treatment might be attributed to the treatment.

### B. Comparing the Experimental and Control Groups on the Post- test

**The First Hypothesis.** In order to verify the validity of this hypothesis, t- tests for independent samples was used to compare the mean scores of the two groups on the post administration of the reading comprehension test with respect to

overall reading comprehension and in each reading sub-skill. Results of the t- tests proved to be statistically consistent with the hypothesis. See table 5.

Moreover, in order to make sure of the effect of the strategy on students' performance in reading comprehension, the effect size of the implemented strategy on students' overall reading comprehension performance as well as in each reading comprehension sub-skill was calculated.

Table (5) shows that the estimated t-values were statistically significant at 0.01 level. Thus, it can be safely said that there was a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups on the post- test in overall reading comprehension as well as in all reading comprehension sub- skills in favor of the experimental group. In addition, the effect size values shown reveal that the implemented strategy had a large effect on the performance of the experimental group students in overall reading comprehension performance and in each reading sub skill as compared to those of the control group who received the regular instruction.

**The Second Hypothesis.** To examine the differences between the experimental group and control one regarding overall reading engagement performance and in each reading engagement dimension, a number of t-tests for independent samples were conducted. Results of the t- tests proved to be statistically consistent with the hypothesis. See table 6.

Table (6) shows that there was a statistically significant difference at 0.01 level between the mean scores of the control and experimental groups in overall reading engagement and in each reading engagement dimension in favor of the experimental group. In addition, the effect size values shown reveal that the implemented strategy had a large effect on the performance of the experimental group students in overall engagement level and in each dimension as compared to those of the control group who received the regular instruction.

### C. Comparing the Pre/ Post Performance of the Experimental Group

**The Third Hypothesis.** To compare pre- and post performance of the experimental group on the reading comprehension test, paired sample t- test was used. See table 7.

Table (7) indicates that there is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 level in overall reading comprehension and in each reading sub-skill between the mean scores of the experimental group on the pre- post test. In addition, the estimated effect size values, indicate that the implemented strategy had large effect on students' mastery of overall reading comprehension as well as its sub-skills. The largest effect size was for "Inferring implicit cause and effect", followed by "Identifying specific details", yet the lowest was for "drawing conclusions". Therefore, the third hypothesis was supported.

**The Fourth Hypothesis.** To compare the pre- and post performance of the experimental group on the reading engagement scale, paired sample t- test was used. See table 8.

Table (8) indicates that there is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 level between the pre- test vs. post- test means of the experimental group in overall reading engagement level and in each reading engagement dimension. In addition, the estimated effect size values shown indicates that the implemented strategy had a large effect on the experimental group students' overall reading engagement as well as in each of its dimensions on the post –test as compared to the pre- test. It is also clear that the treatment has the largest effect size on "emotional dimension" (0.99), followed by "cognitive dimension" (0.95); while the smallest effect was on "Behavioral dimension" (0.92).

## VI. DISCUSSION

Results of the study showed that the experimental group students significantly outperformed the control group students on the post administration of the reading comprehension test and reading engagement scale in over all reading comprehension and reading engagement as well as in each sub – skill and dimension. The proposed strategy provided a means for experimental group students to think collaboratively and effectively. The collaborative act of reading was like a problem solving task in which students were engaged in, using different habits of mind (HoM).

Throughout the six consecutive stages of the suggested strategy, students had to reread the texts, pause to think, restate their understanding of certain points explicitly, ask for explanation or illustration and give the most suitable answer to the posed questions. These behaviors are indications of employing two main HoMs i.e. "Thinking flexibly", "Persisting" and "Thinking and communicating with clarity and precision". This is consistent with Burgess (2012) and Costa (2008) who posited that, HoM are intelligent thinking behaviors used in solving problems. Also, every student felt that she had a role in the classroom, and the opportunity to share her ideas and information.

Moreover, students' participation in shared inquiry discussions and their question generation increased as time passed. By the last session, they were creating questions and predicting answers that were not addressed in the reading text. In the fourth stage of the proposed strategy, students were compelled to work in groups and answer others' questions which they didn't have any idea about thus enhancing their cognitive processing of the material. This is in consistence with the results of Lee's (2000) qualitative research case study which proved that experiencing shared inquiry enfolded two main movements: stimulating thinking through dialogue process and drawing upon the resources of the learning community. This finding is also in line with the findings of the studies done by Khonamri and Karimabadi (2015), and Pan and Wu (2013) which highlight that group discussion and information sharing facilitate students' reading comprehension by establishing supportive learning atmosphere, which encourages interpretations, logical inferences,

and evaluation of the reading material, and eliminating threatening factors such as inhibition, and anxiety. Noticeably, by the end of the treatment and through teacher's ongoing corrective feedback, students could think behind the text and could cater for lack of comprehension by utilizing whatever knowledge they possessed.

In addition, raising students' awareness of the reading comprehension skills from the beginning and throughout the treatment was highly effective. This awareness became part of students' prior knowledge and was activated in every given reading text. As far as literal comprehension skills are concerned, students had noticeably achieved progress in all identified skills. Throughout Previewing stage which includes habit of 'applying past knowledge', throughout first reading and second reading stages, students were told to identify the main idea of each paragraph and pose relevant questions which enhanced their ability to recognize how main ideas are further supported by illustrative details, examples and arguments. This result is consistent with the findings of Zhang, Gu & Hu's (2008) and Zhang's (2010) studies.

As for inferential and critical comprehension skills, students had relatively achieved progress in the identified skills. First of all, students' were trained to realize that raising and responding to questions of this type (inferential and critical) require making use of details stated in the reading texts along with prior knowledge of every kind. Throughout the second reading stage of the suggested strategy, which incorporates two mind habits (striving for accuracy and questioning), students were encouraged to generate and respond to questions (in four categories: factual questions, interpretive questions, evaluative questions, and thinking beyond). It may be said that students' generated questions helped be actively engaged with the reading text.

Also, the questions posed by the group members, during the fourth stage, helped students to develop understanding as they employed higher-order thinking in resolving any ambiguity. This result is consistent with Harvey and Goudvis (2000, cited in Bee, Goh and Kamaruzaman, 2013) who suggest that comprehension and thinking skills can flourish when "students are given a voice - a voice to question, to challenge, to construct and co-construct the meanings around them"(p.38). This echoes also the findings of Lan and Lin's (2011) study, in that these processes served as the stimulus for students to engage in reading collaboratively.

However, the reading sub-skill of "drawing conclusion" got the least effect size as shown in the results which could be attributed to some reasons/ might be due to the fact that students were not used to making judgments based on their intuition. Also, students being totally engaged in grasping the text whole meaning as well as details, felt pressured.

Furthermore, students' progress as far as reading engagement dimensions are concerned was evident. Obviously, progress in some dimensions has exceeded progress in others. Substantially, students had achieved a significant progress with respect to the behavioral, cognitive and emotional dimensions. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that the behavioral dimension has not undergone the same degree of progress. The development of behavioral dimension can be considered a lifelong learning goal that can hardly be achieved in such a short-time. In other words, it should be addressed from an ongoing cumulative learning perspective.

#### **Qualitative findings**

Changes in the participants' reading comprehension performance and reading engagement were evidenced and evaluated through focused group interview. In fact, all of the participants in the focus group session mentioned how they experienced development in their reading comprehension skills. In particular, they reported their passive role during reading classes and limited communication between their teacher and other peers prior to the treatment.

Asking students to what extent have they found the suggested reading strategy beneficial? All students agreed that shared inquiry discussions "broadened" their experiences. One of the students commented, "I really liked shared inquiry discussion because more students have more ideas." Another student commented that "students in my group ask questions that make me recognize ideas that I didn't before." In addition, Students highlighted that they learnt how to practice active listening and considering their classmates points of view as a main part in the process of co-construction of meaning.

Asking students about their perceptions of their engagement and involvement with reading process, they reported that through collaboration with others, practicing habits of mind through different stages of the reading process and using various reading techniques enhanced their engagement level in reading outside the class as well as in class. They added that they have become more able to monitor, manage and modify their reading comprehension performance more frequently.

### **VII. IMPLICATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH**

In the light of the discussion above about the positive effect of the proposed strategy on EFL learners' reading comprehension, the following recommendations can be suggested:

1. EFL teachers need to provide students with safe and supportive learning environment where they can pose questions and interact freely in the reading class.
2. EFL teachers need to be aware of HoMs and how to integrate them in the reading classes through providing appropriate activities to support inquiring minds and propensity for learning in their students.
3. EFL Teachers are recommended to make use of varied question generation techniques to foster reading comprehension skills.

In light of the present study results, the following studies can be suggested:

1. Further research is necessary to explore the effectiveness of other treatments based on habits of mind in developing listening and speaking skills.
2. More studies are needed with different student populations to investigate the effectiveness of similar treatment in developing reading comprehension.
3. Further research could look into the infusion of habits of mind in different groups of students such as at risk readers in EFL classroom.

## APPENDIX. TABLES

TABLE 1  
THE READING COMPREHENSION TEST TABLE OF SPECIFICATION

Items	Reading Comprehension Skills	Question Types			Number of items for each skill	Scores assigned to each skill
		M.C.Q	True/false	Short answer		
Literal Comprehension	1. Identifying the main idea of a text.	7, 28, 34		21	4	4
	2. Identifying specific stated information or details	11	3,4,5,6,23,24,25,26	14, 15	11	11
Inferential Comprehension	3. inferring specific details	8, 9	2, 22	16, 17	6	6
	4. Guessing the meaning of unknown words	10, 13, 29, 32			4	4
	5. inferring implicit cause-effect relationships	12, 30, 35	1, 27	18	6	6
Critical comprehension	6. Distinguishing between facts and opinions			19, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40	6	6
	7. Drawing conclusions	31, 33		20	3	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>

TABLE 2  
SPECIFICATION OF THE SELF-REGULATED LEARNING SCALE

Learning engagement dimensions	Number of items	Total Score	Mean score
1- Behavioral	14	56	4
2- Cognitive	10	40	4
3- Emotional	16	64	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>20</b>

TABLE 3  
T-TEST RESULTS COMPARING THE PRE- READING COMPREHENSION TEST MEAN SCORES FOR THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP AND THE CONTROL GROUP

Skills	Group	M	SD	t-Value	Sig. Level
1. Identifying main idea	Exp	1.84	0.75	0.39	.702
	Control	1.76	0.72		
2. Identifying details	Exp	6.16	1.31	0.109	.914
	Control	6.20	1.29		
3. Identifying specific details	Exp	2.28	1.14	0.251	.803
	Control	2.20	1.12		
4. Guessing unknown words	Exp	.96	0.84	0.171	.865
	Control	.92	0.81		
5. Inferring implicit cause and effect	Exp	1.40	1.04	0.134	.894
	Control	1.36	1.08		
6. Distinguish facts & opinions	Exp	3.56	1.08	0.266	.792
	Control	3.48	1.05		
7. Drawing conclusions	Exp	1.12	0.78	0.184	.855
	Control	1.08	0.76		
<b>Total</b>	Exp	17.32	6.02	0.188	.852
	Control	17.00	6.05		

TABLE 4  
T-TEST RESULTS COMPARING THE PRE-ADMINISTRATION OF THE READING ENGAGEMENT SCALE MEAN SCORES FOR THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP AND THE CONTROL GROUP

Variable	Group	M	SD	t-Value	Sig. Level
1. Behavioral	Exp	19.40	4.60	0.411	.683
	Control	19.96	5.03		
2. Cognitive	Exp	14.16	5.14	0.876	.386
	Control	15.48	5.52		
3. Emotional	Exp	24.12	4.48	0.063	.950
	Control	24.20	4.56		
<b>Total</b>	Exp	57.00	12.66	0.687	.495
	Control	59.64	14.46		

TABLE 5

T-TEST RESULTS COMPARING THE POST- READING TEST MEAN SCORES FOR THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP AND THE CONTROL GROUP IN OVERALL READING COMPREHENSION AND IN EACH READING COMPREHENSION SUB-SKILL

Skills	Group	M	SD	t-Value	Sig. Level	Effect size ( $\eta^2$ )
1. Identifying main idea	Exp	3.44	0.71	3.212**	.002	0.18
	Control	2.68	0.95			
2. Identifying details	Exp	9.60	1.19	6.904**	.000	0.50
	Control	7.32	1.15			
3. Identifying specific details	Exp	5.36	0.76	6.390**	.000	0.46
	Control	3.80	0.96			
4. Guessing unknown words	Exp	3.56	0.51	4.869**	.000	0.33
	Control	2.68	0.75			
5. Inferring implicit cause and effect	Exp	5.36	0.76	7.365**	.000	0.53
	Control	3.76	0.78			
6. Distinguish facts & opinions	Exp	5.48	0.77	4.233**	.000	0.27
	Control	4.36	1.08			
7. Drawing conclusions	Exp	2.64	0.49	2.969**	.005	0.16
	Control	2.12	0.73			
Total	Exp	35.40	4.39	6.247**	.000	0.45
	Control	26.64	5.47			

(\*\*) significant at 0.01

TABLE 6

T-TEST RESULTS COMPARING THE POST ADMINISTRATION OF THE READING ENGAGEMENT SCALE MEAN SCORES FOR THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP AND THE CONTROL GROUP

Variable	Group	M	SD	t-Value	Sig. Level	Effect size ( $\eta^2$ )
1. Behavioral	Exp	39.36	4.73	10.560**	.000	0.70
	Control	23.52	5.82			
2. Cognitive	Exp	38.80	4.17	18.310**	.000	0.87
	Control	19.84	3.06			
3. Emotional	Exp	59.80	2.26	43.754**	.000	0.98
	Control	30.72	2.44			
Total	Exp	137.96	8.24	26.537**	.000	0.94
	Control	74.08	8.78			

(\*\*) significant at 0.01

TABLE 7

T-TEST RESULTS COMPARING MEAN SCORES OF THE PRE- AND POST- ADMINISTRATIONS OF THE READING COMPREHENSION TEST FOR THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP IN OVERALL READING COMPREHENSION AND IN EACH READING COMPREHENSION SUB-SKILL (N=25, DF=24)

Skills	Administration	M	SD	MD	t-Value	Sig. Level	Effect size ( $\eta^2$ )
1. Identifying main idea	Pre	1.84	0.75	1.60	16.000**	.000	0.91
	Post	3.44	0.71				
2. Identifying details	Pre	6.16	1.31	3.44	18.767**	.000	0.94
	Post	9.60	1.19				
3. Identifying specific details	Pre	2.28	1.14	3.08	21.926**	.000	0.95
	Post	5.36	0.76				
4. Guessing unknown words	Pre	.96	0.84	2.60	18.385**	.000	0.93
	Post	3.56	0.51				
5. Inferring implicit cause and effect	Pre	1.40	1.04	3.96	36.768**	.000	0.98
	Post	5.36	0.76				
6. Distinguish facts & opinions	Pre	3.56	1.08	1.92	14.999**	.000	0.91
	Post	5.48	0.77				
7. Drawing conclusions	Pre	1.12	0.78	1.52	14.902**	.000	0.90
	Post	2.64	0.49				
Total	Pre	17.32	6.02	18.08	36.926**	.000	0.98
	Post	35.40	4.39				

(\*\*) significant at 0.01



TABLE 8  
T-TEST RESULTS COMPARING MEAN SCORES OF THE PRE ADMINISTRATION VS THE POST ADMINISTRATION OF THE READING ENGAGEMENT SCALE FOR THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP (N=25, DF=24)

Variable	Administration	M	SD	MD	t-Value	Sig. Level	Effect size ( $\eta^2$ )
1. Behavioral	Pre	19.40	4.60	19.96	17.043**	.000	0.92
	Post	39.36	4.73				
2. Cognitive	Pre	14.16	5.14	24.64	21.531**	.000	0.95
	Post	38.80	4.17				
3. Emotional	Pre	24.12	4.48	35.68	40.953**	.000	0.99
	Post	59.80	2.26				
Total	Pre	57.00	12.66	80.96	31.074**	.000	0.98
	Post	137.96	8.24				

(\*\*) significant at 0.01

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# Howard Goldblatt's Three Treaties or Treatments of Translation

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**Abstract**—The paper is an introduction and discussion of Howard Goldblatt's three treaties or treatments of translations, i.e. 1. The translation is faithful to the original as an organic unity, 2. the translation is supposed to faithfully convey the images of the original, 3. Above all, he always takes the readers of his translation into first consideration. The first clause refers to Howard Goldblatt's rewriting of the original, to some extent, following western Poetics, which is loyal to the original as a whole; the second means to focus on rendering the original images to incarnate the original spirit, whose ultimate goal is to ensure the literariness of a translation; and the third one requires a translator, first of all, should put the readers of the translation in the first place, that is to say, reader-oriented, such as their aesthetic intent and interest, to arouse their resonance emotionally. By adopting the fore-mentioned principles, Howard Goldblatt's translations are recognized and acclaimed over the stage of world literature.

**Index Terms**—Howard Goldblatt, translating, organic unity, image, reader-oriented

## I. INTRODUCTION

How do China's literary classics go to global stage of world literature and become the commonly shared fortune by literary enthusiasts over the world? It is the ultimate goal for translators of China's classics, who have been laboriously questing for all the time? Of course, the translation of the classics toward overseas world is far from satisfaction, either in quantity or quality, compared with the works absorbed or introduced to China from the overseas world, we translators have to admit that it is an embarrassing fact. In the last century, there are more foreign translators than native Chinese, who are devoted to translating the classics to the world. And now, it is a different story about the translation of the classics. Among them, there are both Chinese and foreigners to contribute to it. Even so, the introduction and translation of modern and contemporary classics of China need more contributors. Faced with the dilemma, we have to say the work to translate and introduce the China's literary classics is a toil and trouble mentally and physically. However, in 2012, a piece of good news, which Mo Yan was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, spread over the world. That is to say, modern and contemporary literature of China is recognized and has gained its foothold in the international arena of literature.

Obviously, Mo Yan's award indicates that his translators are amazing and earth-breaking. For among the committee of Nobel Prize for Literature, nobody but Goran Malmqvist can understand Chinese, they can only study and judge a writer according to corresponding translations. No wonder, there is a rising voice that the translators are the winners hiding behind the Prize indeed. And, Howard Goldblatt, an American translator of Mo Yan, is regarded as the most outstanding and influential, and has kept the longest cooperation with Mo Yan. He began to pay attention to Mo Yan in 1985, and co-working in 1988, translating Mo's work into English since 1993, such as *Red Sorghum: A Novel of China*. Up to now, he has translated 10 of Mo Yan's works, totaling to 50 at least. Not only has he had large output of translation, but also spread his popularity among readers at home and abroad. Even some of his translations are adopted by other fellow translators, and used as chief sources in translating Mo Yan. His three translations, *Red Sorghum: A Novel of China*, *The Garlic Ballads*, *Life and Death Are Wearing Me out*, are finally taken as samples to understand and judge Mo Yan by the committee members of Nobel Prize for Literature; it is not only a fact, but a fame or fortune to Howard Goldblatt. Of course, also, there are other versions of translations in various languages, which help Mo Yan to gain the Prize, but, needless to say, Howard Goldblatt is the greatest contributor, who helps Mo Yan's successful approach to the world, global acclaim from fellow writers, and wide spread of China's modern and contemporary literature. We have no doubt to admire Howard Goldblatt's translations, but can't refrain from asking ourselves, what special are there in his translations? Motivated by the question, we intend to explore it in detail.

## II. ORGANIC UNITY

Broadly speaking, we hold that the treaty or treat in Howard Goldblatt's translation, first and foremost, is characterized by organic unity as a whole. The organic unity refers to that, Howard Goldblatt always takes his

translation as an organic unity, which he views the structure of the translation as a whole to secure the structural faith of the translation to the original. His kind of faith is to adjust the translation's structure, and to make the translation be loyal to the original as a whole, but not the traditional loyalty or equivalence of word-for-word. We may take *Red Sorghum: A Novel of China* as an example to illustrate. From the structures of both the translation and the original to consider, we find that there are giant gaps between the two. The original is composed of 9 chapters, which each chapter has no topic. There is only one title "Red Sorghum" capitalized from Chapter 1 to Chapter 9 throughout the original. As to the translation, *Red Sorghum: A Novel of China*, it consists of 5 chapters, in which each chapter has a sub-topic of its own; they are listed as the subsequent, Chapter 1 Red Sorghum, Chapter 2 Sorghum Wine, Chapter 3 Dog Ways, Chapter 4 Sorghum Funeral, and Chapter 5 Strange Death. Apart from the curtailment and adjustment of Chapters, Howard Goldblatt has made combinations, changes, revisions and additions to some of the original chapters. He deleted some grotesque narration, which seems odd to some extent at one's first glance, cut off the length of Chapter 4, and rewrote the end of the original, etc. Though the translation of *Red Sorghum: A Novel of China* has changed much here and there, compared with the original, we readers of the translation can hardly feel the changes and gaps. On the contrary, we think that the translation is structurally loyal to the original; furthermore, the plots of the translation read smoother, the whole structure links more closely to each chapter, than the original ones. From the stance of the translation, the structure and thesis are more outstanding at first reading, the content more distinctive. Thus, the translation is objectively easier for those interested to make a final choice to buy. Here, the translator has not tried his great efforts to be faithful to word, clause, and paragraph, but structurally faithful to the text, i.e. a kind of textual loyalty. Robert de Beaugrande, an American linguist, has claimed that, the basic unit in translating is not word, not single clause, but text, which has solved the problem of the unit in translating; it is the text that are accepted as the unit to represent the meaning, theme and style of the original. (Wang, 2015) What Howard Goldblatt has dedicated himself to translating is identified with Beaugrande's theory. And then, anyone, who is keen to him, wants to know why he makes the changes. There are two possible reasons. First, what he made is to compose a better structure of the translation; second, he has to give in to readers' aesthetic intent and interest. The former refers to Howard Goldblatt attaches primary importance to whole structure of the translation. As to what are the rule and regulation to judge the structure are literariness, aesthetics and Poetics. If there is something impairing the literariness, absolutely, he would cut, curtail or rewrite it. Let's take *Red Sorghum: A Novel of China* as an instance, in Howard's eyes, the flashbacks, reminiscences and reviews in the original would hold up the plot fluency if he conveyed them in translation; besides that, there are also sub-plots conflicting against the main one, expressing the theme or delineating the characters loosely or insignificantly; and the end of the original would not be perfect, if it were evaluated by the western Poetics or paradigm. The entire phenomenon above listed are subjected to his changes; and that's why the translation is apparently different from the original. So far as to the rewriting or revision, Howard had remarks about them, "...without careful selections, some novelists have composed stories with raw materials. He has to check and correct his errors for all, but he is not always qualified to be an editor. Whoever is a literary talent or a renowned writer, he or she can't see his or her works in a fair and square way. Then, another pair of eyes is necessary, which can both find self-conflicting angle and roughly provide a new point of view. Habitually, an editor in China's press isn't entrusted the right to revise a piece of work, for which leaves the heavy hard load with translators or foreign editors." (Goldblatt, 2011, p.248) That is to say, in his eyes, some novels are imperfect with defects, which are not able to meet the needs of the western Poetics or literariness. He said he just acts as an editor. Surely, we find out either his deletion or change is a sort of western paradigm in the Poetics and literariness-oriented; the structural unity of his translation merely follows the suit of the Poetics. So, till here, we probably have better understanding of Howard's changes in translations. If we are familiar to Jean Piaget, a Swiss Psychologist, his claim of structure, i.e. every structure has a unity, the ability to shift and adjust to adopt itself, is a kind of good theory to help illustrate Howard. The unity refers to there are dynamic, organic connections among various parts in a structure as a whole; shift means the internal parts can be changed or moved to construct the structure; the last means the structure can adjust itself to adopt to the other, the structure has a set of self-regulations independent of other structure. (Zhu, 2009) So the translation with the changes can regulate itself in a new reader group dynamically, independently.

### III. IMAGERY

The second treaty or treatment in Howard is to retain and render the original imagery faithfully. To fulfill the purpose efficiently, Howard Goldblatt has done bunch of works; among them there are four dimensions to be attentively focused on. 1. Name-translating, especially these names which indicate character's nature and plot's development, such as characters or places with something unique and projecting; 2. Setting-rendering, it refers to keep the original background faithfully; 3.Character image-rendering, it means to convey the character image vividly; 4. Rhyme or rhythm rendering, it refers to retain or represent the original beauty in acoustic sense. Broadly speaking, the imagery is a kind of mental picture occurring to a reader's mind in text-reading;(Zhang, 2012) strictly, it covers those uses of language in a literary work that evoke sense-impressions by literal or figurative reference to perceptible or concrete objects, scenes, actions, or states, as distinct from the language of abstract argument or exposition.(Baldic, 2000) And so, the image is an essential element to a literary text; without it, the text loses its ground to construct. In a way, the literary image is a rule to judge a piece of work. If the work is composed of life-like image, we say it's a great work, otherwise

it's not. Hence, a writer at all times and in all lands, highly stresses the importance of the imagery. Here, we find that Howard is no exceptional at all in translation as well, in which he tries to make them tangible, visible and discernible, including the imagery, setting, and characterization, as the original has done them well. In other words, with the similar sense in reading the original, his translations have rendered all types of imagery efficiently. The imagery in his renditions are performed successfully in the above-mentioned four aspects.

It's known to us that a character's name is more like the key touch in paint that brings a character to life, and a place name is like the paint clouds, which can set off the moon. That is to say, the name in literature is a big star of the players as well; so name-rendering is no small work at least. Fu Lei, a Chinese master of translation, once remarked, "Generally speaking, we can judge a translator is a new or old hand at translating from his rendering of character name or place name. In fact, the translation of proper term is a key link of literary translation....It is debatable for us that the literary terms should be turned into the same suit regardless of the atmosphere created and covered over the background, characterization and the portrayal of a role's image, and something significant alike." (Fu, 2006, p.96) Other translators probably will refute that what Fu Lei is talking about refers to the translation from foreign works into Chinese; but clearly, vice versa from Chinese into foreign works. Here are good examples of name-rendering given by Howard in *Red Sorghum: A Novel of China*.

Name	Translation	Remarks
罗汉大叔	Uncle Arhat	The translation represents a broad-minded, enduring character.
花脖子	Spotted Neck	The translation offers a ugly enough, tyrant rascal with ferocious feature..
曹梦九	Nine Dreams Cao	The translation is a good portrayal of very calculating image with wisdom.
曹二鞋底	Shoe Sole Cao the Second	Nine Dreams Cao's nickname stands out his eccentric instrument of torture--shoe sole.
美丽	Beauty	The translation is a sketch of charming wanton woman.
单五猴	Five Monkeys Shan	The translation is an outline of sketch of a shrewd fellow with a bag of bones.
余大牙	Big Tooth Yu	The translation offers a ugly, brutal bandit.
小白羊	Little White Lamb	The translation is a sketch of an attractive, timid, merry maiden
刘大号	Bugler Liu	The translation stands out a brave role's post and physique.
墨水河	The Black Water River	The translation stands out the feature of the River--background.
东北高密乡	Northeast Gaomi Township	The translation is a clear mark of the setting--the main battle field--and its size.

At first glance over the table, we can see the corresponding rendering of the names is literal translation, which shares with the original the same or similar mode of the signifier; the images and the nature of characters are both rendered and depicted fully, the features of the setting as well. (Chen, 2005) The mode is a conducive to a reader to get the images of the characters. Howard Goldblatt is a path-finder and his mode confirmed us that he is successful in name-rendering for he has retained the literariness to the most.

Apart from the full retain of the literariness in name-rendering, Howard Goldblatt has done a very admirable job in setting translation as well, which has vividly reproduced pictures and concrete images as the original. Here is the evidence.

Eg. 1 父亲知道，墨水河底淤泥乌黑发亮，柔软得像油脂一样。河边潮湿的滩涂上，丛生着灰绿色的芦苇和鹅绿色车前草，还有贴地爬生的野葛蔓，支支直立的接骨草。（《红高粱家族》，p.5）

*He knew that the muddy riverbed was black and shiny, and was spongy as soft tallow, and that the banks were covered with pale-green reeds and plantain the colour of goose-down; coiling vines and stiff bones grass hugged the muddy ground, which was crisscrossed with tracks of skittering crabs. (Red Sorghum: A Novel of China, p.41 )*

Here there are various clear images in the translation, in which a reader feels the sense of the original images. For instance, visual images are rich colors like "black and shiny, pale-green, the color of goose-down", sensory image like "spongy as soft", dynamic images like "covered, coiling, hugged, crisscrossed, skittering"; besides there are concrete clear substance like "muddy riverbed, tallow, reeds and plantain, vines, grass, tracks". By making use of all the above-listed means, the translation has conveyed the setting images faithfully.

It is known to us that characterization is the most challengeable in creating a work. A writer must be familiar with the character, i.e. typical speech, action, to represent the life-like image. However, Howard's translation is just equivalent to the original in sense and in effect to characterize. Let us see the subsequent.

E.g.2 咪咪咪咪，未曾开言道，先学小猫叫。

俺娘说，老虎满嘴胡须，其中一根最长的，是宝。谁要是得了这根宝须，就能看到人的本相。娘说，世上的人，都是畜生投胎转世。谁如果得了宝须，在他眼里，就没有人啦。大街上，小巷里，酒馆里，澡堂里，都是牛呀，狗啦什么的。咪咪咪咪。娘说，有那么一个人，闯关东时，打死一只老虎，得了一件宝须.....（《檀香刑》，p.73）

The excerpt in Chinese is a discourse in the original, addressed by Zhao Jia, Junior, who is the son of Zhao Jia, an executioner in Qing Dynasty (1616-1911). When he got to know the story of tiger's whisker, he expected to get a whisker on a tiger so earnestly that he should have had one in his dream to see clearly the nature of human being. In the extract there is an expression "娘说(niang shuo)"---which means my mummy said---quoted for three times; the modes of Zhao Jia, the Junior's discourse, denotes he always relies on his mom and is childish though he is grown-up; and his

short, naive, simple dictions show he is mentally simplistic, for all which he tells us indicates he has very low IQ of a stupid boy. By reading the description, the original offers us an image of strong but stupid character life-like. And, we may wonder that, whether the translation is also a good equivalent one to the original to represent the stupidity as well. Here is the translation in the following.

*Meow, Meow, I learned how to sound like a cat before I could talk. My niang said that the longest whisker on a tiger is precious, and anyone who owns one can carry it on his body and see a person's true form. All living humans, she said, are reincarnations of animals. If a person gets one of those precious whiskers, what he sees are oxen, horses, dogs, cats, and the like. Meow Meow. There was once a man, Niang said, who traveled east of the Shanhai Pass where he killed a tiger to get one of those whiskers.*

(*Sandalwood Death*, p.56)

Let's make a contrast and comparison between the translation and the original. First, both share similar sentences. The source text has 8 sentences, the expression “娘说(niang shuo)” 3 times; Correspondingly, the translation has 6 sentences, and “My niang said” twice and one “she said”; the original sentences are relatively longer than those of the translation, for which are subjected to English grammar and usage. Second, both have similar tone and way of story-telling; it is easy for an English speaker to distinguish from the sentence pattern “There was once a man...who”. Furthermore, Howard adopted literal rendering of “Niang”, i.e. transliteration, to keep the original style, which has not affected or impeded upon a reader's understanding in the least. And onomatopoeic words “*Meow, Meow*” are vivid imitations of a cat's sounding, too. In short, we find that the sentence constructions, figures of speech, the way of story-telling in the translation are faithful to the original like an organic unity as whole; not only are the contents conveyed accurately but also the image of the character.

The most challengeable work to keep the literariness, for a translator, is how to render the beauty of the original rhythms, because two different language systems have distinctive rhyme. But, if he can convey the rhythmic beauty, his work is bound to shine the similar beauty as the original. Let's see how Howard has tried his best efforts to make it.

E.g. 3 太阳一出红彤彤，（好似大火烧天冬）胶州湾发来了德国的兵。（都是红毛绿眼睛）庄稼地里修铁路，扒了俺祖先的老坟茔。（真真把人气煞也！）俺爹领人去抗德，咕咚咚的大炮放连声。（震得耳朵聋）但只见，仇人相见眼睛红，刀砍斧劈叉子捅。血仗打了一天整，遍地的死人数不清。（吓煞奴家也！）到后来，俺爹爹被抓进南牢，俺爹爹给他上了檀香刑。（俺的个亲爹呀！）——猫腔《檀香刑·大悲调》（《檀香刑》，p.4）

The above-quoted Chinese extract is a short piece of *maoqiang*, a special opera in Gaomi County Shandong Province. Here are the song characters of the unique opera. There are rhymed characters, such as “彤(tong)—东(dong)—聋(long)—红(hong)—捅(tong)”, “兵(bing)—睛(jing)—茔(ying)—清(qing)—刑(xing)” “声(sheng)—整(zheng)”, so the original is pretty beautiful with the rhymed characters and rhythms. And so, the key point to render the piece is how to make sure the similar rhymed effect, which is a challenge to every translator, particularly between Chinese and English. We know that there are 23 rhymed syllables in English, less than 106 equivalents in Chinese. Therefore, it is almost an impossible work to preserve the original rhythmic beauty. To our amazement, Howard has done it well. The following translation is good evidence.

*The sun rose, a bright red ball (the east sky a flaming pall), from Qingdao a contingent looms. (Red hair, green eyes.) To build a rail line they defiled our ancestral tombs. (The people are up in arms!) My dieh led the resistance against the invaders, who responded with cannon booms.(A deafening noise.) Enemies met, anger boiled red in their eyes. Swords chopped, axes hewed, spears jabbed. The bloody battle lasted all day, leaving corpses and deathly fumes. (I was scared witless!) In the end, my dieh was taken to South Prison, where my gongdieh's sandalwood death sealed his doom. (My dieh, who gave me life!)------Maoqiang, Sandalwood Death, A mourning aria*

(*Sandalwood Death*, p. 3)

In the above rendition there are rhythmic words, like “ball—pall”, “looms—tombs—booms—doom”, besides that, “chopped, hewed, jabbed” share the same consonant /id/, which also produce a kind of beauty of unity. As a whole, the rendition is well done enough to convey the meaning, but also rhymed cleverly with rhythm, which can be regarded as a tie with the original both in meaning and in rhythm, if we say it is a game between the original and the translation. As to the problem to render the rhyme, Howard Goldblatt (2013) remarked, “Chinese rhyme is easier than English. For example, in China's drama-performing, almost every line, short or long, is rhymed. In the course of my rendering the tunes of dramas, to find right rhymed words, I am really racked my brains and exhausted all my efforts to retain the essential element of the original meaning.” (p.9) The remark clearly indicates the rhyme-rendering is harsh hard indeed. What Howard made in the rhyme-rendering is a good lesson for fellow translators to follow, i.e. he has to have a great number of rhymed words first, and then he tries to rhyme on the condition of conveying the original meaning. To fulfill the goal, he may add some words, which just help add the fluency and beauty of the translation.

In a word, Howard Goldblatt concentrates on continuing the original signifying, sentence style, rhyme and rhetoric strategies to keep the original image.

#### IV. READER-ORIENTEDNESS

As to the reader-orientedness, it refers to that Howard's translation is directed by his readers, i.e. the readers' aesthetics is a primary dimension for him to fit or suit. If anything in the original doesn't meet the aesthetics, he would

rewrite or revise it. Like *The Garlic Ballads*, *Big Breasts and Wide Hips*, *Wolf Totem*, Howard made revisions in them. Huijun Sun, professor of Howard Goldblatt studies, explains about the revisions, “Howard made some adjustments and revisions in translating Mo Yan because he knows more about his readers’ intent and aesthetics than Mo Yan does, and is clear to represent Mo’s novels to attract the readers.”(Sun, 2016, p.40)Sun’s remarks help us learn more about Howard’s revisions. And Howard Goldblatt has made his ideas clear as well, “What the most significant to a translation is worthy of its readers, but not the author.”(Goldblatt, 2009, p.220) In short, his organic unity in translation is reader-oriented. For he knows it well, his translation would be meaningless without readers’ recognition. These remarks partially justify his popularity among the western readers, response and echoes. From the reader-oriented concept, we see Howard is different from traditional translators; for he thinks that the translation is supposed to face its readers first, is a cross-cultural communication. Because, he knows that, if no reader is willing to read his works, his translation will have no chance to communicate with others over the world, no chance to influence upon them at all. Let alone spreading China’s culture among them. Thus, not only has he exhausted his wits and wisdom to render the original, but also paid great attention to the readers’ interests. First, what he picks up to translate is what he and readers like most. (Sun, 2016) Second, his rewriting is based on what the western Poetics demands; the redundant content, loosen plot and unnecessary image are cut or revised in translation. For example, *The Garlic Ballads*, *Turbulence*, *Red Sorghum: A Novel of China*, *Wolf Totem*, *Life and Death Are Wearing Me out*, *Three Sisters*, are made changes in respective translation. What’s more, the translations are even bestowed with prizes over the world. His practice of translation is the best approval of his theory; for him, the translation, which is accepted only by readers, is good. And it reminds us that the traditional idea of translation, source-text-centered or author-centered, is a sort of incomplete. At present, we translators of China can learn something from Howard’s treatments or treaties in spreading China’s culture to foreign nations.

#### V. CONCLUDING REMARKS

What Howard Goldblatt gives us is versatile. The organic unity as whole to be faithful to the original, refers to translating is a rewriting or creating based on the original; retaining the image is to keep the original image, which is essential to literature, and “to arouse the reader’s emotional resonance.” (Goldblatt, 2016, p.14) Actually, the resonance is an echo to what Walt Benjamin has remarked, “the sympathy of the source text and the target text”; (Cheng, 2005) his reader-orientedness stresses that translation is a crossing cultural communication, as Howard remarked, “a translator is creating a communication among foreigners in his own tongue; when he sets up fancy and fantasy, he should not destroy and disrupt the words or sentences, which are easy for readers to accept, otherwise the imagination will be shattered easily as well. ” (Goldblatt, 2016, p.14)According to him, a translator is taking important responsibilities on his shoulders among global communication and contact of cultures, “he is a disseminator, an interpreter, a key link of the chain of international contacts.” (Goldblatt, 2016, p.15) Therefore, if we want to tell China’s stories to the world, to spread China’s great culture to benefit the world, we must follow the aesthetics, discursive modes of the others first, only by doing so can China’s classics be accepted by the others over the world and go to global.

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# A Stylometric Analysis of Iranian Poets

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**Abstract**—This paper presents an investigation into the extent to which the lexical choices made by different poets are distinctive. When a writer, writes, s/he makes lexical choices that make them different from other writers and the writing to some extent can be considered as their fingerprint or in the other word their signature. Authorship analysis by means of textual measurements has been the interest of so many linguists. Authors have their own styles and the stylometrist is interested in finding units which can distinct authors from each other. Statistical analysis has provided different tools for this attempt, by different scholars. Over the past 3 centuries many types of textual tools has been introduced to discriminate different authors objectively that developing in computer programing has played the important role for using these models. In this study by writing a computer program, the styles of different Iranian poets, Attar and Molavi, and Nezami, are investigated in terms of their word length and word richness. Result shows differences between their styles in terms of these parameters. This way of analyzing writing of different authors has some implications in different field of sociolinguistic and TOEFL.

**Index Terms**—computational programing, vocabulary, authorship attribution, stylometry, statistical analysis

## I. INTRODUCTION

According to Amuchi, Faith, Al-Nemrat, Alazab and Layton (2012) the statistical analysis of a literary text has been the interest of many scholars since 1851 when mathematician Augustus de Morgan suggested applying average word length to objectively characterize authorship style. Thomas Mendenhall (1887), a physicist, found an author has a “characteristic curve of composition”. These curves are determined by how frequently an author uses words of different lengths. By this method he compared the works of Shakespeare and Francis Bacon. In 1888 William Benjamin Smith, a mathematician, investigated the curve of style based on average sentence lengths to discriminate the authorial style.

The stylometrist is interested in a unit of measuring; it could be a number or a curve, which is unique to the style of each writer. On the other words, the stylometrist is looking for attributing a number or a curve to a text which by that number or curve the author can be identified.

Statistical analysis has been use to find the writer of anonymous writing, solve the problem of plagiarism, and end to the controversies about the authorship of texts and these issues have a long history, perhaps extending back to the advent of writing. As an instance, for many years there was a controversy over who is the writer of the book Mormon. By the technique of stylometry, researchers were interested to find the writer of the book (Roper, Fields, & Schaalje 2012).

Investigators of authorship have proposed many textual measurements over the past three centuries. There have been introduced over 40 textual measurements that each has its advantages and disadvantages.

In his article Holmes, 1994, classified and defined different textual measurements which have been introduced and used by different scholars. word length, syllables, sentence length, distribution of part of speech, function words, the type token ratio, simpson’s index (D), Yule’s characteristics (K), Entropy, Vocabulary distributions, word frequency, Hapax legomena, are among textual measurements which were introduced by Holmes in that article.

Recently the complex networks theory appears as the suitable approach for studying authorship analysis. Mehri, Darooneh and Shariati (2011) employed complex networks theory to tackle authorship analysis; they focused on some measurable quantities of word co-occurrence network of each for authorship characterization.

As limitations of stylometry, it must be noted here that although stylometry is sometimes referred to as wordprint analogues to fingerprint, it is not that much unique to each author as figureprint. The description of the stylometry as verbal DNA is an even less applicable overstatement (Roper, M., Fields, P. & Schaallje, B., 2012). Writing style is not singularly unique to a person. A writer may adapt his or her style to a particular topic, audience, and genre; sometimes they imitate other’s style. These styles may change through the passage of time. Stylometry can judge about the similarity and differences between texts but it cannot prove personal identification as fingerprints do. However, recently attempts have been made to increase the approximation along with the improvement in statistical method and computational programming.

This paper investigates the differences between poems of different Persian poets, Molavi, Nezami, and Attar from the word length frequency, entropy, and type token ratio view. In this approach we can see their similarity and differences with the lens of word length frequency, entropy.

## II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Traditionally stylometry or statistical analysis has been used as a quantitative method to find the author of unanimous text. When reading a unanimous text, a reader may often guess who the writer of text is by using his or her memory and attribution the familiar phrase or words to a familiar author. But this is a very subjective judgment. The statistical analysis of texts not alone be used for authorship analysis but also it has application in plagiarism and autoscoring, and also it can be used by a sociolinguist to compare different style of authors within a period of time or through the passage of time and see the differences in different genres.

In order to analyze a text, there have been introduced thousands of stylistic markers and all are potentially useful for textual discrimination. Among these we refer to word length and word richness or word diversity. For a comprehensive review we direct the reader to Holmes (1985).

### A. Word Length

The first tool was used in this study is a word length distribution. This measurement “consists of the relative frequency of 1-character words, 2 character words, etc. In a text, the relative frequency of each word-length is calculated by dividing the total number of words of that length in the text by the total number of words” (Grieve, 2007, p.252).

In 1901, Mendenhall reduced the concordances of Shakespeare and Bacon to distributions of word lengths and plotted these distributions as graphs. His “characteristic curves” serve as an early example of the use of graphics in distinguishing authorship. By comparing the curves he concluded that Bacon probably did not write any of Shakespeare’s work. Brinegar (1963) also applied word length distributions to find if Mark Twain had written the Quintus Curtius Snodgrass (QCS) letters. He used  $\chi^2$  tests and two-sample t-tests on the counts of 2, 3, and 4 letter words to test the agreement of the QCS letters with Twain’s known writings. A second series of studies was done by the German physicist Wilhem Fucks ( Fucks 1952, Fucks 1954, Fucks & Lauter 1965), the syllable based word length distribution were examined and they concluded that word length could be the best indicators. Although such markers seems to work well in some cases but they become failure for their lack of generalization (Smith 1983, 1985).

### B. Vocabulary Richness

To find the vocabulary richness a lot of tools have introduced in the literature. 10n formulate were introduced by Grieve which is presented as following:

The formulate for ten of these measurements are presented below, where N is the total number of words in a text (i.e. word tokens), V is total number of vocabulary items in a text (i.e. word types),  $V_i$  is the total number of vocabulary items that occur exactly i-times in a text,  $P_i$  is the relative frequency of the v-th most frequent vocabulary item in a text, and a is an arbitrary constant.

$$(1) \text{TTR} = \text{Type-Token Ratio} = V/N$$

$$(2) K = 104 (\sum i^2 V_i - N) / N^2$$

$$(3) R = V / \sqrt{N}$$

$$(4) C = \log V / \log N$$

$$(5) H = (100 \log N) / (1 - V_1 / V)$$

$$(6) S = V^2 / V$$

$$(7) K = \log V / \log (\log N)$$

$$(8) LN = (1 - V_2) / (V_2 \log N)$$

$$(9) \text{Entropy} = -100 \sum p_v \log p_v / \log N$$

$$(10) W = N v - a. \text{ (Grive, 2007, pp.252-253)}$$

### C. Type Token Ratio

As the Type token is sensitive to the length of the text, the type token is limited to the first n-number of words in the shortest writing sample.

Tallentire (1973) asserts lexical markers are the obvious method to initiate stylistic investigations, since more documents lie at the lexical level than at any other in the structure of computed concordances. Richness or diversity of an author’s vocabulary is one of the important notions in stylometry analyses. The basic idea is that each writer has specific range of vocabularies which favors most and chooses more in his or her writing. This feature which is approximately unique to each individual may best discriminated authors from each other. Kjsetsaa (1979) studied the behavior of E in formula 1 and restricted his study to N= 500. Kjsetsaa in his study found an close regular distribution of types per 500 tokens in texts investigated.

According to Holmes (1994), Baker (1988) introduces the inverted of the TTR as “pace” i.e. the degree at which new vocabularies are produced by an writer. In a research of the research projects of Marlowe and Shakespeare, Baker investigated that the pace of a text is “extremely characteristic of an author’s style” and also it is separate of text length and genre. In addition, he suggests the pace contribute to the sophistication and improvement of an author. Chaski (2001) in his study to evaluate author identification techniques, found out that Tape Token Ratio, and Pace are not good technique for discriminating.

#### D. Entropy

The formula for the entropy introduced and used in this study was extract from the work of Holmes (1994):

$$\text{Entropy} = - \sum p_v \log p_v$$

where  $p_v$  is the likelihood of occurrence of the  $v$ th word (found by dividing the number of occurrence of the vocabulary by the total number of the vocabularies in the document).

This variable is based on a thermodynamic concept of a literary text, namely, that with an increase in internal structure entropy decreases and with an increase in disorder or randomness the measure of entropy increases. Since the value will change according to how much text is analyzed, the formula may be refined in order that works of different length may be compared. Using

$$\text{Entropy} = -100 \sum p_v \log p_v / \log N$$

Absolute diversity for any length text is measured as 100 while absolute uniformity remains zero (Holmes, 1994, p.93).

Johnson (1979) says:

There seems to me no doubt of the measures which have been seriously considered in the literature the most satisfactory indexes of diversity for vocabulary studies are those based on estimates of the repeat rate. The claim has already been made in their favor that, on empirical evidence, they are extremely robust with respect to variation in the sample size. The knowledge that they are also unbiased estimates of an easily interpreted population value, together with the added bonus of some associated sampling theory, in my opinion can only enhance their usefulness to those scholars who are concerned with the measurement of style and vocabulary (Johnson, 1979).

### III. METHOD

In this attempt we compare poems of different poets each belongs to different period of time. The significant of this study is that we analysed the whole poems of these poets. The stylistic measurement that we used here was using the word length relative frequency, type token ratio (TTR), and the entropy.

#### Subjects

We chose our subjects from the poets belong to different period of time brief biography of these famous poets are extract from the 'en.wikipedia.org' and 'preprints.stat.ucla.edu':

1. Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī (جلال الدين محمد رومی), also known as Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Balkhī (جلال الدين محمد بلخي), Mawlānā (مولانا, "our master"), Mevlânâ Mevlevî (مولوی Mawlawī, "my master"), and more popularly simply as Rūmī (1207 – 17 December 1273), was a 13th-century Persian poet, jurist, Islamic scholar, theologian, and Sufi mystic. Rumi's influence transcends national borders and ethnic divisions: Iranians, Tajiks, Turks, Greeks, Pashtuns, other Central Asian Muslims, and the Muslims of South Asia have greatly appreciated his spiritual legacy for the past seven centuries. Rumi's poetry is often divided into various categories: the quatrains (*rubayāt*) and odes (*ghazal*) of the *Divan*, the six books of the *Masnawi*. The prose works are divided into The Discourses, The Letters, and the *Seven Sermons* (en.wikipedia.org).

2. Nizami Ganjavi (Persian: نظامی گنجوی) (1141 to 1209) (6th Hejri century), whose formal name was *Jamal ad-Dīn Abū Muḥammad Ilyās ibn-Yūsuf ibn-Zakkī*, was a 12th-century Persian poet. Nezāmi is considered the greatest romantic epic poet in Persian literature, who brought a colloquial and realistic style to the Persian epic. His heritage is widely appreciated and shared by Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kurdistan region and Tajikistan. His work consist of: The Story of the Seven Princesses, The Fire of Love: The Love Story of Layla and Majnum, Haft Paikar (preprints.stat.ucla.edu).

3. Abū Ḥamīd bin Abū Bakr Ibrāhīm (c. 1110 – c. 1221; ابو حامد بن ابوبکر ابراهيم), better known by his pen-names Farīd ud-Dīn (فرید الدین) and 'Aṭṭār (عطّار, "the perfumer"), was a Persian<sup>[2][3][4]</sup> Muslim poet, theoretician of Sufism, and hagiographer from Nishapur who had an immense and lasting influence on Persian poetry and Sufism. The question whether all the works that have been ascribed to him are really from his pen has not been resolved. This is due to two facts that have been observed in his works:<sup>[3]</sup> There are considerable differences of style among these works. Some of them suggest the author's allegiance is to Sunni Islam; others, to Shia Islam. Classification of the various works by these two criteria yields virtually identical results. The German orientalist Hellmut Ritter at first thought that the problem could be explained by a spiritual evolution of the poet (en.wikipedia.org).

#### 4. Materials

The books were gathered from the <http://ganjoor.net/> in the HTML format, and then by writing a program changed the format of the HTML format to the text format to be understandable by our next computer program. We wrote a code using Python for parsing analyze.

### IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. similarity and differences between poems of different Persian poets with the lens of word length frequency

1.1 Molavi

Figure.1 exhibits the curves of five groups' words, each of one thousand words in raw, from Masnavi-e-Manavi, and it is presented to see the variation among groups of the same author within the same book based on a relative small number of words, the numerical analysis of which is shown in table1.

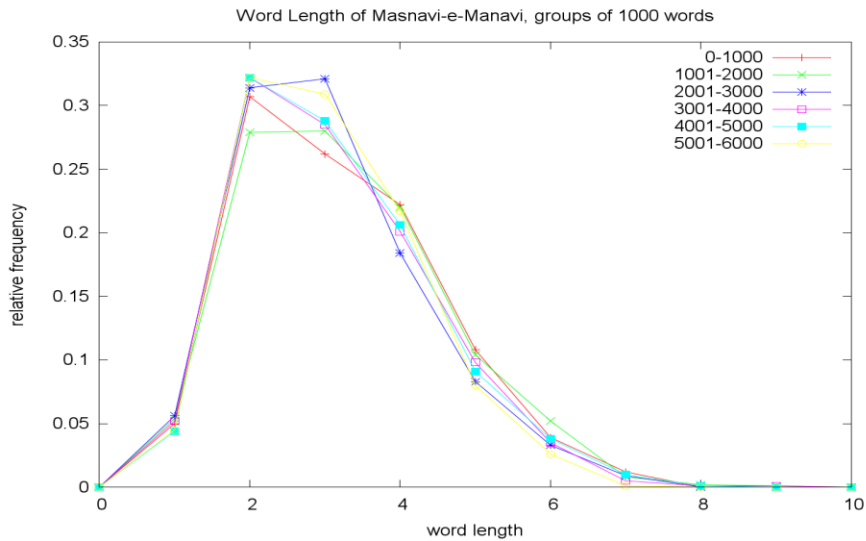


Figure 1 frequency word distribution of five groups of one thousand words each from Masnavi-e-Manavi

In order to decrease the accidental irregularities we increased the number of words in each groups from one thousand to five thousand, total number of words thirty thousand words. For each group we drew the curves of word length distribution as it is shown in figure2.

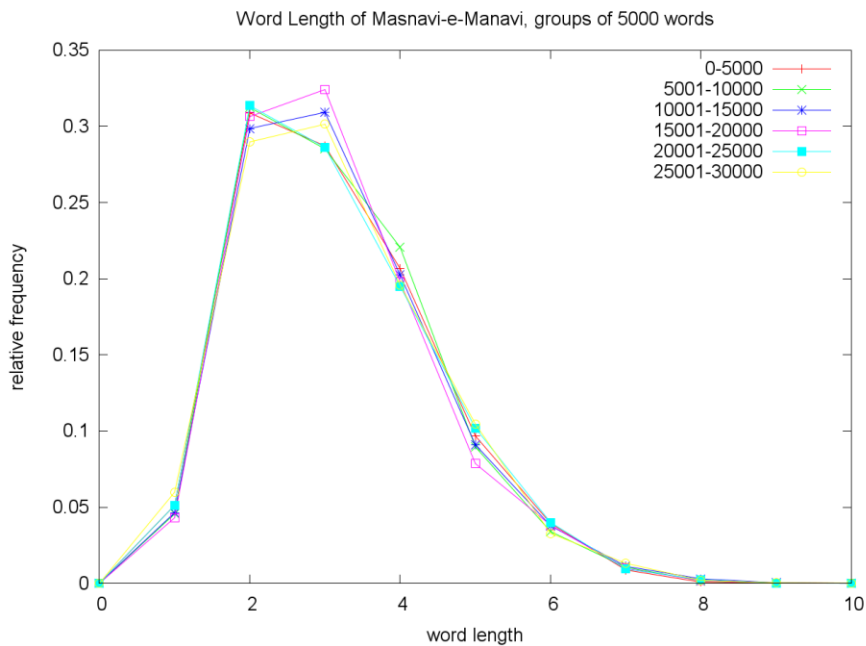


Figure 2 frequency word distribution of five groups of five thousand words each from Masnavi-e-Manavi

We could see from the figure2 that this time while the curves differ considerably, in a general way, they get closer to each other more than one thousand groups which we had before. Although all the groups of words belong to the same book of one single writer but the curves are different and the most surprising part is that these curves follow only two distinctive shapes not more. We could conclude from this figure that we cannot attribute a single specific curve to a specific author. At this stage the odd things we are dealing is that why these curves follow two specific shapes? We would expect all the curves have the same pattern because they belong to the same book or genre and the same author.

In order to attribute a single curve to Molavi we averaged the word length of those previous five groups of five thousand words from the book Masnavi-e-Manavi and attribute one single curve to the book. And also we did this work for other books of Molavi Ghazalyaat, and Robaeyaata and the result for these three books is illustrated in figure 4.

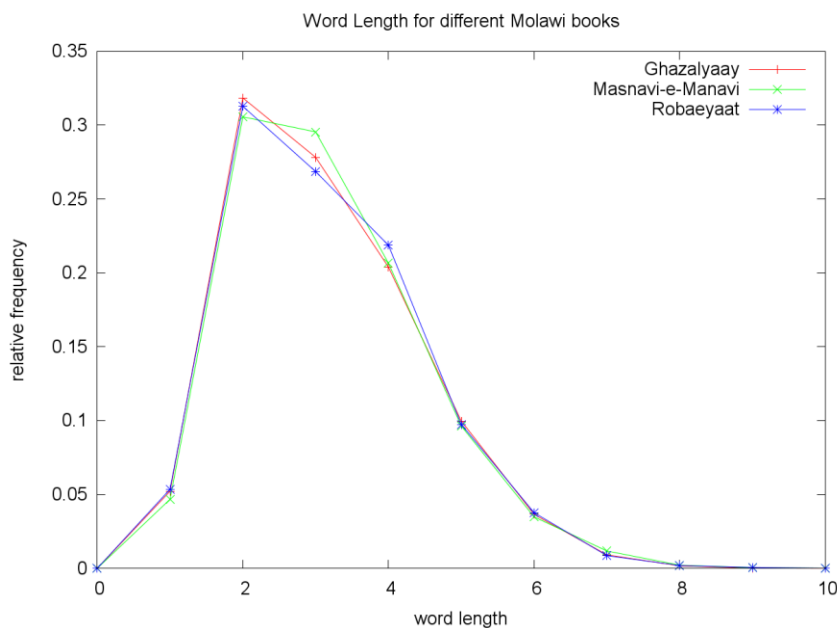


Figure 3 word length distribution of Molave’s book, Ghazalyaat, Masnavi-e-Manavi, and Robaeyaayt

Interestingly, it is obviously seen that there is a big differences between the distribution curve of these three book, Ghazalyaat, and Robaeyaayt are approximately the same but the Masnavi-e-Manavi has different distribution, the differences could be the result of different source, it could be the result of passage of time, or could be result of different genres of each book etc.

1.2 Nezami

In the manner very similar to Molavi, we analyzed the six book of Nezami, Haft Peykar, Khosro-va-Shirin,, Makhzan-ol-Asraar, Leili-o-Majnoon, sharaph nameh, and Kherad Nameh. Result is represented in figure4, which each curve belongs to different books of this poet.

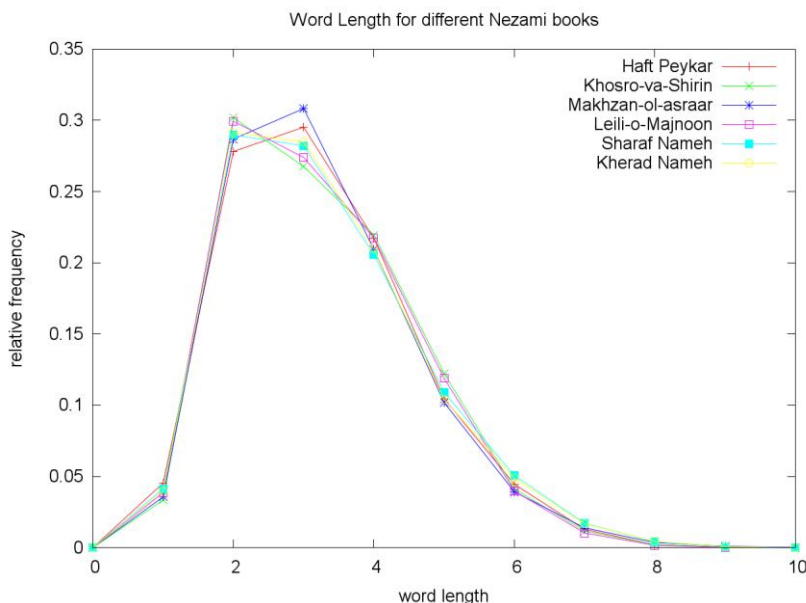


Figure 4 the average word length distribution of Nezami’s book, Haft Peykar, Khosro-va-Shirin,, Makhzan-ol-Asraar, Leili-o-Majnoon, sharaph nameh, and Kherad Nameh.

Although figure 4 and figure3 shows different information numerically but it is seen the same pattern like we had in Molavi’s curves which is that curves follow only two distinctive curves. One with the high frequency in two-letter words and the other high frequency with three-letter words. In other words Leili-o-Majnoon, Sharaf Nameh, and Kherad Nameh are high in two word frequency and the others high in three- letter words.

1.3 Attar

The next poet that we are interested in is Attar. The curves of his books are illustrated in figure5. Here again each curve belongs to each book of him, Ghazalyaat, Ghasaayed, Mantegh-o-teir, and Pand Nameh.

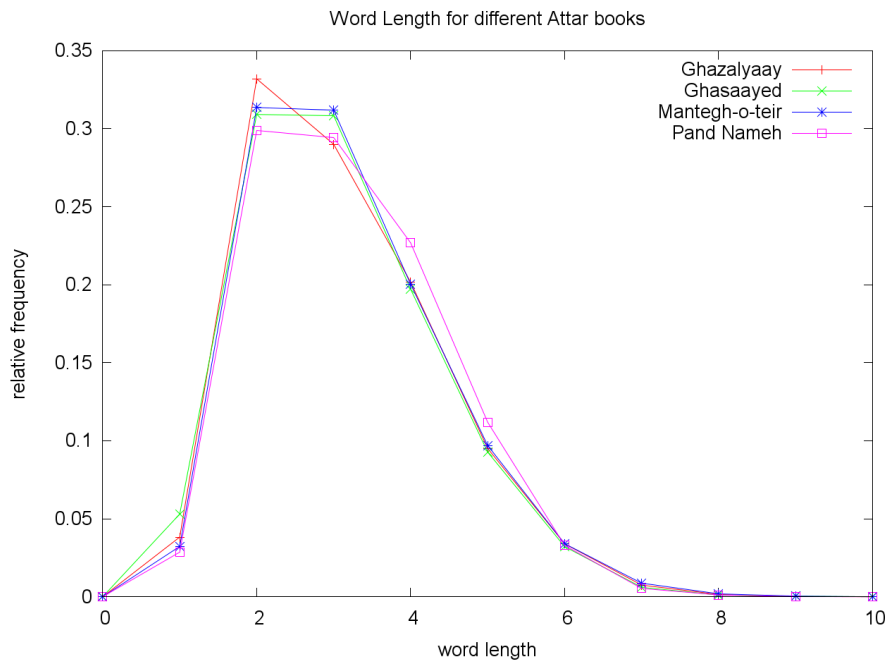


Figure 5 the average word length distribution of Attar’s book, Ghazalyaat, Ghasaayed, Mantegh-o-teir, and Pand Nameh.

The relative distribution of words for Ghasaayed, Mantegh-o-teir, and Pand Nameh are the same, One letter words and three-letter words have the same relative frequency. But the book Ghazalyaat has different characteristic which is high in one-letter frequency.

In our final investigation of word length distribution we made average of curves of each poet’s, books separately and at the end we put these three curves in the same coordinator so that to have the vivid picture of their similarities and differences. Figure 6

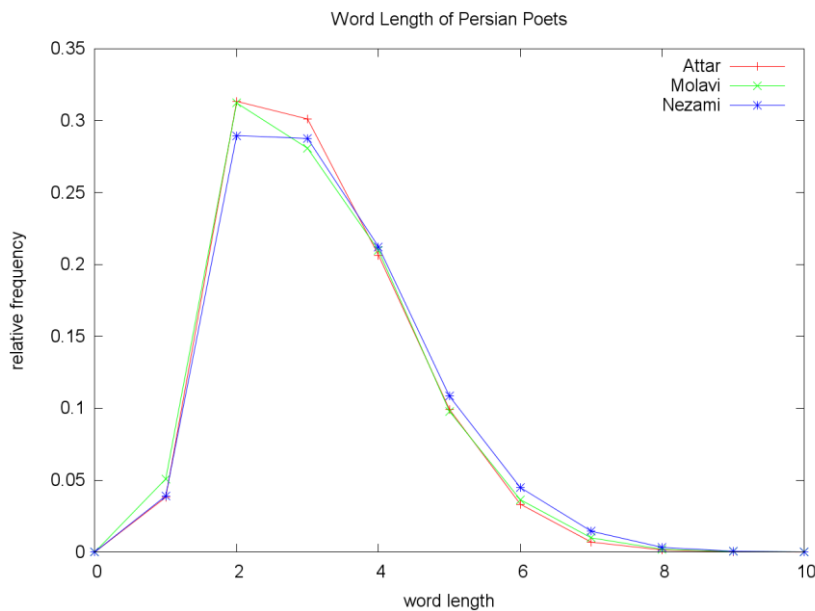


Figure 6 the average word length distribution of Attar, Nezami and Molavi.

It will be seen that the average word length distribution graph from his books for Molavi is high at two-letter words as the same as Attar but with this difference that attar in three-letter word relative frequency has higher rank than Molavi, Nezam has different distribution, Nezami approximately has the same relative frequency in two and three-letter word.

2. similarity and differences between poems of different Persian poets with the lens of Entropy

This part is devoted to the analysis of all the books of all poets from the word richness or word diversity view. If the variety of words which is used by an author increases in the text the entropy of that text, which is derived from the

formula of entropy, become larger. It is hypothesized that if a writer have great lexicon, the entropy of his/her text become higher than the one with the less entropy.

2.1 Nezami

The entropy of words of Nezami’s books named Haft Peykar, Khosro-va-Shirin,, Makhzan-ol-Asraar, Leili-o-Majnoon, sharaph nameh, and Kherad Nameh. is represented in figure7.

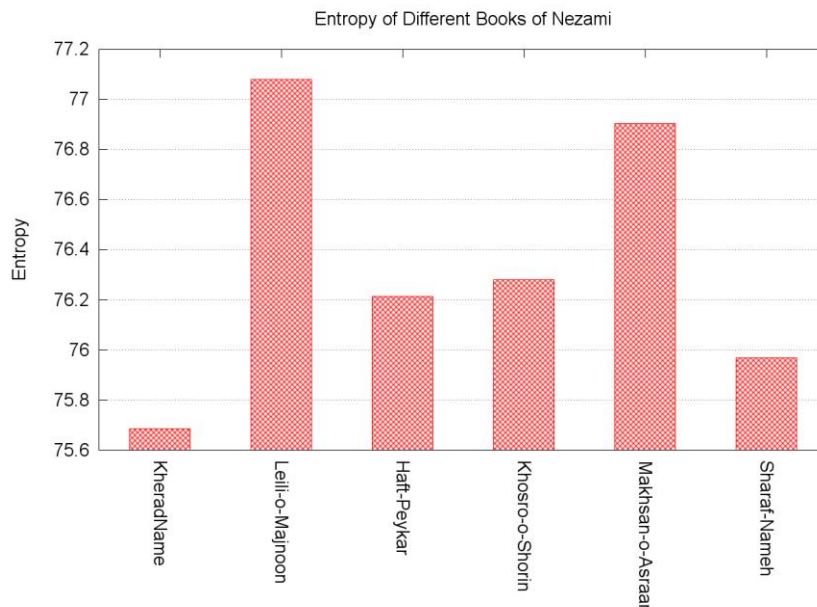


Figure 7 Entropy of the books, Haft Peykar, Khosro-va-Shirin,, Makhzan-ol-Asraar, Leili-o-Majnoon, sharaph nameh, and Kherad Nameh.

Entropies of these different books have the range between 71.7 to 74.4; the differences between them are not significantly different. the maximum difference approximately is 2.7. Result of this analyze is illustrated in figure7.

2.2 Attar

Figure8 present the entropy attribute to the Attar’s different book, Ghazalyaat, Ghasaayed, Mantegh-o-teir, and Pand Nameh.

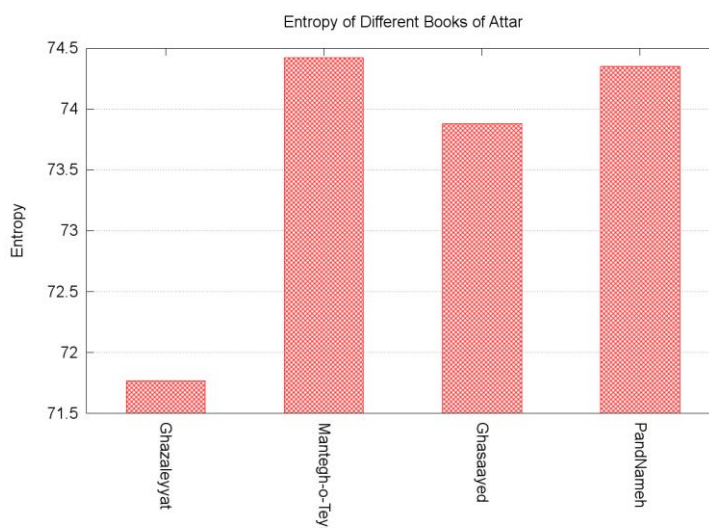


Figure 8 Entropy of the books, Ghazalyaat, Ghasaayed, Mantegh-o-teir, and Pand Nameh.

Information from the figure8 shows the range of Entropy change from 71.6 to 74.3. This time again the differences show no significant difference among the books of Attar.

2.3 Molavi

Figure9 represent the entropy related to the books of Molavi, Ghazalyaat, Masnavi-e-Manavi, and Robaeyaat. This entropy is derived from thousands number of words. The differences change from 74.1 to 76.5. the difference, here again is not that much significant. the maximum difference approximately is 2.4.

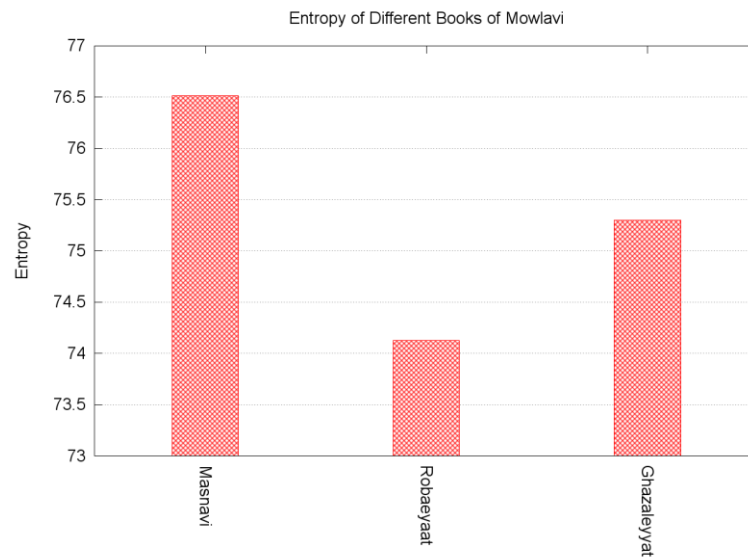


Figure 9 Entropy of the books, Ghazalyaat, Masnavi-e-Manavi, and Robaeya

Now let's compare the differences of entropies between Nezami, Attar, and Molavi, Figure10 shows the entropy diagram of these poets. The differences between these poets range from 74.1 to 76.5. In the other word the maximum difference approximately is 2.4. As this difference ranks the same as the maximum different entropy within each poet the entropy could not be considered as a tool to discriminate poets from each other and for doing so we must find the other way around.

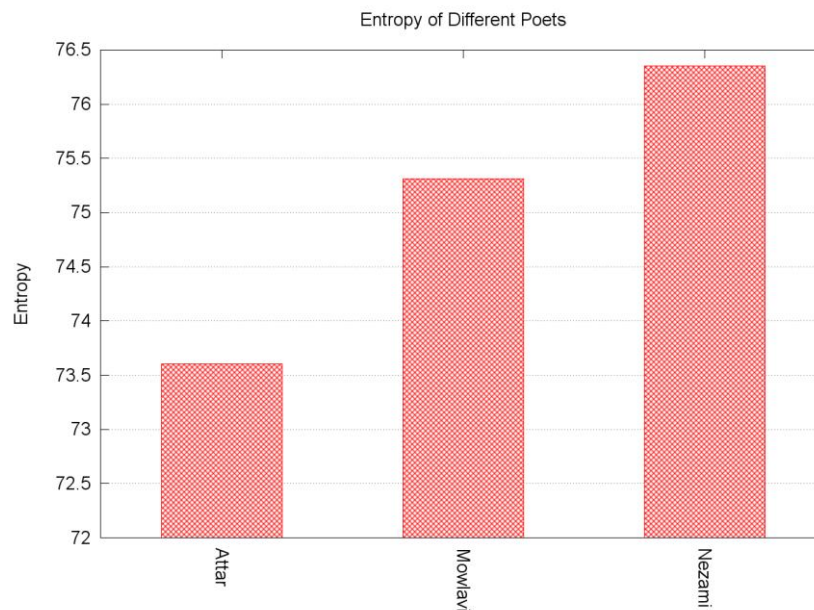


Figure 10 the average entropy of Nezami, Molavi, and Attar

## V. CONCLUSION

The statistical analysis of a literary text has been the interest of many scholars during the last three centuries. Investigators of authorship have proposed many textual measurements over the past three centuries. There have been introduced over thousands textual measurements that each has its advantages and disadvantages.

In this study we aimed to find the characteristics of the books of Nezami, Molavi, and Attar, and find their differences. This paper investigates the differences between poems of different Persian poets, Molavi, Nezami, and Attar, from the word length frequency, entropy view. The computer codes was writtern and was used to analyze huge number of words of their book, Results gave us quantitative characteristics of their relative frequency of word length and entropy. Not only authors had differences in terms of their relative frequency of word length and entropy these measurements also were different within each authors. As these differences had approximately the same magnitude, it



was induced that the entropy and word length frequency could not be as a good indicator of discriminating these poets from each other. The new methods have been introduced in literature to compensate this lack of measurement. Even though an author's style may be different, it is not different enough to be considered unique to that author to the exclusion of all other authors in the world. Stylometric characteristics can provide us a comparative description of an author's style, but the writing style exhibited in a text is an indirect and uncertain measure of an author's identity.

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- Paper presentation in the 2th conference in interdisciplinary Approaches to Language teaching, Literature and Translation studies, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran.

- Workshop participation on applications of the appraisal Framework, 28-29, 2016. The University of Shahid Chamran University of AHVAZ, Iran.

# A Study on College English Majors' Writings from the Perspective of Appraisal Theory

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Shanxi Normal University, China

**Abstract**—This paper explores the features of the top 30 appraisal words in students' essays from the perspective of Appraisal Theory. The distributions of the Appraisal words are not even in the writings. Attitude system comes first followed by Graduation system and Engagement system. With the analysis of the features and distributions of the top 30 appraisal words, it reveals some problems related to usage of appraisal resources in the writings and based on which the paper tries to give some suggestions both for students and teachers.

**Index Terms**—Appraisal Theory, appraisal words, English writing

## I. INTRODUCTION

English writing ability is an important part among the four basic skills in language learning and also a method to measure the output of language. (Nie, 2005). In any kinds of exams, there are specific requirements for English writing. For example, one of the most important English exams, TEM-8. The requirements about it going as “*students can write essays of different topics, what's more, the essay should be informative with right vocabularies and phrases and well expressed.*” Its' requirements emphasizes that the content of senior English major student should be enriched with some deep thoughts.

Appraisal theory aims at discussing how vocabulary conveys meaning and offers information that are the basic function of writing. Therefore, it is reasonable and applicable to analyze the vocabularies in essays under the framework of Appraisal system which can provide a new tool and perspective to study writing. The thesis collects 71 pieces of English essays from senior English students of a college and explores the features of the top 30 Appraisal words in the essays hoping to give some suggestions both for students and teachers.

## II. APPRAISAL THEORY AND COLLEGE ENGLISH WRITING

Appraisal Theory is put forward by some linguists leading by Martin in 1990s. It is a new breakthrough to the study of interpersonal meaning within the framework of System Functional Linguistics. The origin of theory comes from one of the practices in the secondary schools and workplace of New South Wales, Australia, which fundamentally decides the practicability of the theory itself. (Wang, 2001). Appraisal Theory is consisted of three subsystems namely Attitude, Engagement and Graduation.

Attitude is concerned with our feelings, including emotional reactions, judgment of behavior and evaluation of things (Martin & White, 2008). At the same time, Attitude, as the core and basic part of Appraisal Theory, can be further divided into three subtle systems called Affect, Judgment and Appreciation which are traditionally referred as emotion, ethics and aesthetics. In all, Attitude is a framework for mapping feelings as they are constructed in English texts. (Martin & White, 2008).

Engagement is the second part within the framework of Appraisal Theory. It concerns with how people employ strategies to express their points, positions, and feelings towards people, product and phenomena. What's more, it deals with meaning in context rather than grammatical forms.

Graduation is achieved in terms of focus and force. Focus is applied into the categories which “from an experiential perspective are not scalable. For instance, *He is a true friend*. When “friend” seen as a whole, the definition of it is clear and distinct. Force covers assessments as to degree of intensity and as to amount. It can be realized through deploying adverbs of degree and adjectives and so on. For example, *slight* sad, *greatly* encouraged, *large* amount, *many* people and so on.

It is common to find that students are required to write argumentation or description in writing part of English exam. As a matter of fact, any kinds of discourses are of dialogism. According to the perspective of SFL linguists whether personal monologue or written texts, they are not isolated instead the dialogue and interaction between writer and reader. (Halliday, 2004). This can be interpreted from the view of Appraisal Theory that the writer shows his/her point through various methods whether implicit or explicit ways due to stimulation to feelings that have different levels. Appraisal Theory mainly explores how lexical resources convey meanings and provide information especially the evaluative meaning of adjectives, verbs, nouns and adverb. (Li, 2004).

Therefore, by analyzing the top 30 appraisal words in students' essays has important instructions for writing.

### III. THE TOP 30 APPRAISAL WORDS IN STUDENTS' ESSAYS

The data of this thesis collects from senior English writing course test of English major students of a university. All the papers have been marked by at least two teachers in order to make sure fair and square. The students are in the third years of English major. With the aid of Antconc 3.35, key word list will be generated and this study will focus on adjectives, adverbs, verb and nouns containing evaluative meanings. Based on the statistic output by Antconc 3.35 and combined with manual work, the top 30 appraisal words are listed as following.

THE TOP 30 APPRAISAL WORDS

Word	Frequency	Word.	Frequency
will	549	highest	50
more	335	better	49
can	264	help	45
not	166	importance	45
many	116	great	42
but	104	less	39
however	104	therefore	36
so	103	poor	32
may	82	advantages	29
good	77	could	29
burden	70	most	29
pressure	67	stress	26
much	64	well	26
should	61	higher	25
important	52	would	24

The number of the top 30 Appraisal words is 2740 which takes up about 72.5% of total Appraisal words which surely reveals the features of Appraisal resources in students' essays and gives some thoughts for both students and teachers in English writing. In order to make it clear, the distribution of the top 30 Appraisal words among three-subsystem of Appraisal Theory is presented as the following table:

Three-subsystem	Frequency of the words	Percentage in the top 30 Appraisal words
Attitude	1367	49.89%
Engagement	513	18.72%
Graduation	860	31.39%

#### A. Distribution of Attitude System in Top 30 Appraisal Words.

In the top 30 Appraisal words there are 14 Attitude words whose frequency is 1367 which takes up 49.89% of all the top 30 Appraisal words. These words are: *will, can, good, burden, pressure, should, important, help, importance, poor, advantages, stress, well and would* among the top 30. The following examples will explain and confirm the correctness. It is impossible to show all the examples thus some typical examples will be presented.

*will* counted 549 ranks the first of all the Appraisal words in the 71 pieces of essays. On average, each essay has at least 7 *will*. As a matter of fact the word *will* belongs to the Judgment, the subsystem of Attitude. The direction of essay is to talk about an English reform. They had to assess the effects and results of the English reform from different perspective. The examples are given as following:

(1). If English withdraws, the CET-4 and CET-6 *will be influenced*, too. Without the long-time and continuous learning of English, students *will spend* more time in passing these exams.

(2). Mastering English still *will be* a advantage for students in hunting for jobs and this reform *will* have a bad effect on the cultivation of English talents definitely.

(3). Another benefit is that it *will* strengthen students' comprehensive ability. If exams in the future *will* focus more on application skills instead of useless content as the minister of education announced students' attitude towards English language learning *will* change accordingly.

*will* in above examples chose by writers to show their attitudes towards English reform in an indirect way in the essays. The suitable usage of *will* conveys writer's stance and judgment of a thing and builds good inter-personal relationship while too many of it has a side effect on expressions. It seems to be a common problem in both low and high mark group of the essays. Just as, Xiang ping in 2009 found that the usage frequency of *will, must should and can* in corpus of Chinese students was much higher than American students. When *will* seen as verb, it can be "used for stating what you think is probably true" which is exactly the meaning appearing in the above examples. Thus, too many *will* in the essays certainly decrease the credibility of the essays. Under the aid of software, an essay by student with the highest frequency of *will* is noticed by the author. There are together 25 *will* occurring in the essay. Here is a paragraph from the essay:

*First of all, students will benefit the most from the reform. Firstly the situation of one exams decides everything will be changed. A small mistake in the exam might deprive a student of the only chance of entering a college. Once the reform is carried out. The highest score of English tests held during the three years in high school will be recorded as a*

student's final grade and students **will** have more chance to get a better grade. Secondly, students who have achieved their ideal English level can spare their time to other subjects such as Chinese and Math. This **will** help them to improve their grades of weak subjects. Thirdly, students who are weak at English **will** have more opportunities to refresh their records of English test. This **will** help to reduce their study burden and psychological burden to a large extent. It is not an exaggeration to say that the reform **will** make students' future brighter.

It is easy to see that the idea of this paragraph is quite subjective without specific details to support the main idea. In the first sentence, the student clearly presents his/her opinions about the English reform then with three reasons to support his/her opinions. However, the three reasons are not persuasive enough to back the argument instead they are related with each other which makes them doubtful. The student states too much what he/she thinks is probably true without providing enough proofs and examples to confirm what he/she says. This leads to the essay less convincing and sound like preaching without any vividness.

Among the listed 14 Attitude words, the word *good* is a typical one falling the subsystem of Affect that lays in the central subsystem of Attitude system. Affect refers to people's emotional reactions to behaviors which is more subjective and directive. The word *good* is a positive assessment of manners. There are also negative Affect words showing bad emotions. In the corpus, the word *good* appears 77 times, ranking 9<sup>th</sup> of the top 30 Appraisal words. The examples are given as following:

(1). In the past many students, especially boys, have a *good* performance in science, but they are weak in English. Most of them fail to be admitted into their ideal colleges because of their lower English grades.

(2). Passing the English exam ahead of time is a *good* way to relax while students are all under the pressure of the national college entrance exam.

(3). To sum up, I'm in favor of the reform because there are many advantage of it, such as reducing pressure for students, doing *good* to the study of Chinese and sparing more free time.

The word *good* in example (1) presents writer's support for English reform by giving fact that many students, even talented in science, due to lower English grades, miss the chance to get into their ideal colleges. In (2), the student explicitly shows his/her favor of English reform by describing it as "a *good* way to relax". Example (3) is the conclusion of the student's stance as well as his/her reasons for it. One of the reasons is that the reform will bring benefits to the study of Chinese. Most of Affect words are related with emotions and moods which will directly affect readers' feelings. They are more emotional and less reasonable which influence the objectivity of argumentation. When it comes to positive feelings, students think of the word *good* at first that is the reason contributing to *good* appearing many times in the corpus. The author looks through the corpus and finds out the some collocations of the word *good* in an essay with the highest frequency. For examples:

- ① look forward to getting *good grades*
- ② students who are not *good* at English can't be admitted by some *good universities*
- ③ provide them with *good English teachers and facilities*
- ④ these students who are *good at English*
- ⑤ for their *good English*
- ⑥ don't require so *good English*
- ⑦ not so *good* as before

With careful manual operation and the aid of software, the author finds that above examples related with collocation of the word *good* actually include most phrases of it in the corpus which reflect students' weak at vocabulary usage. They do not have rich vocabularies to freely refer to what they want to convey which to some degree limits their express ability and affect the quality of the essays like the word *good* occurring so many times in the essay. Some words have the same positive meaning as *good*, eg:

- ① look forward to getting *ideal grades*.
- ② students who are not *good* at English can't be admitted by some *prestigious universities*.
- ③ provide them with *high-quality English teachers and facilities*
- ④ these students who *have strengths in English*
- ⑤ for their *excellent English*
- ⑥ don't require so *well English*
- ⑦ not so *wonderful* as before

According to the statistics and analysis, the author finds some advanced Affect words occurring only once in the 71 pieces of the essays, such as *profound, aspired, conductive, critical persevered* and so on. This manifests students' weakness at vocabularies both in amount and usage.

As for the last subsystem of Attitude, appreciation, is about the evaluation of events and products. To be more specific, it is about people's reactions to them whether they are good or not. Among the top 30 Appraisal words, the word *important* is a representative one which appears 52 times in the corpus. Here offers some examples:

(1). First of all, needless to say, in the education system of our country, English occupies a most *important* position and consumes a large variety of education resources.

(2). In conclusion, English is very *important* in today's world. It is better to retain English in college entrance examination.

(3). Though most students have made full preparations for the exam, they will still feel nervous during the test and miss the important things of hearing part.

(4). Once they get favorable marks in one of six exam according to their own desire, they can focus less on English and spare more time to study subjects *important* for individual's career.

In above example, students all want to present their assessments of objects. The first two are the evaluation of the role of English. There are some alternative words can convey the same meanings, such as *significant*, *vital crucial* and *far-reaching* so on.

The author searches the word *significant* in the corpus which turns out only 6 times.

In example (3), similar expression can be used like "key points in hearing part" instead of "the important things" which looks too informal in writing. In example (4), one exact word like *conductive* is better than the word *important* to embodies the idea the student want to express. It is easy to find out that students can not use alternative words to make their expressions more vivid which affect the quality of the essay.

#### B. Distribution of Engagement System in Top 30 Appraisal Words.

Engagement is about writer/speaker how to affect readers/ listeners by adopting different ways to present their stances. The usage of language is a kind interactive behavior instead of just self-expressions. Whatever people write or say, they all want to convey their voices and want to influence others. In the Engagement system, there are 5 words which are *not*, *but*, *however*, *so* and *therefore* among which *but* and *however* have the same frequencies in the corpus. The word *no* belongs to Disclaim among the four subcategories of Engagement. It ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in the top 30 Appraisal words and appears 166 times in the corpus. What's more, it is a deny word used by writer showing his/her attitude against existing opinion. At the same time, it also contracts the space for different voices and makes the conversation between writer and reader less negotiable. The following are some examples from the essays:

(1) Nevertheless, the reality is *not* so optimistic. Students almost have no extra time or energy to elaborately design an excellent learning plan by themselves unless with the help of experienced teachers while the reform will inevitably urge them to compress their teaching programs

(2) Few of them learn the Chinese grammar because most people take it for granted that it is *not* necessary for Chinese people to learn the Chinese grammar.

(3) The advantage of the new policy is that students can choose when and how often they take the test according to their ability. That is to say, students do *not* have to spend so much time preparing for the English test, which is a big relief for them.

In example (1), the write resorts to deny word *not* against the current view that some people are optimistic about the reality and puts the reasons right after his/her opinion which makes his/her opinion sound more reasonable. In example (2), the writer employs negative word to emphasize his/her agreement with the idea that Chinese people can learn Chinese well without learning Chinese grammar. In example (3), the writer shows hi/her support for the new policy by citing the current fact that students have to spend too much time preparing for the English test.

It is obviously to see that by using deny words to challenge the current standpoints or facts and explaining the reasons makes the writers' voice more definite and natural for others to accept.

On average, each essay has 2 deny word *not*. As a matter of fact, the word *not* comes the first among all the Engagement words which reflects students prefer to use it to make their views more reasonable and reliable. However, it must be mentioned that this does not means that the more the deny words, the better. Without supported details and reasons, it only makes the essay subjective and narrows the space for more voices. An essay with 8 deny words *not* is noticed by the author. Here is one small paragraph from the essay:

*This reform put English in a position that is **not** that important, which cause our parents, teachers **not** paying much attention to this lesson. Therefore, school will **not** arrange many English lessons for students and parents will **not** force their children to take part in a variety of English clubs during weekends, which will win a lot of time for students to do something they like and relax.*

The usage of deny word *not* in this paragraph makes it less logical because too many of them leads to people's doubts about the truth. The student expresses what he/she believes is true without citing any examples or giving any details which is not convincing instead subjective.

#### C. Distribution of Graduation System in Top 30 Appraisal Words

There are 11 words in Graduation system which accounts for about 36% in the top 30 Appraisal words. The words are: *more*, *many*, *may*, *much*, *highest*, *better*, *great*, *less*, *could*, *most* and *higher*. It is easily to find out that among the 11 Graduation more than half of them are related with comparative or superlative words

By employing Graduation words can help build interpersonal relationship in the context. There are two subcategories under Graduation named Focus and Force. Focus is mainly about the sharpening or softening of categories that are not scalable from experiential perspective. There is no Focus word among the top 30 Appraisal words and the number of the Focus words is small in the whole corpus. The most common expressions of it are *truly*, *real*, *kind of* and so on. The realization of Force covers quantification and intensification. The word *more*, a comparative word, comes second among the top 30 Appraisal words and appears 335 times in the corpus that is a typical realization of quantification which involves scaling with respect to amount(eg, size, weight,number), and with respect to extent, with extent

covering scope in time and space and proximity in time and space (Martin & White, 2005). The following are some examples from the essays:

- (1). The aim of the reform is to ease students' burden and make them have *more* free time for their own.
- (2). Hence, we can put *more* emphases on listening and speaking in the reform to improve students' abilities of English application. In a word, the reform is still a long way to go.
- (3). Because now they have *more* changes and choices to demonstrate their strength or to improve themselves if they won't get their ideal scores.

Through the usage of the word *more*, the writer tries to make his/her opinion clearer and give others' deeper impression. Example (1) talks about the aim of the reform "making students have *more* free time", which indicates that students do not have much free time now. Thus, forming a contrast contributes the vividness of the statement. In example (2), in fact, the writer use the word *more* to point out drawbacks of the reform which makes alliance with most people unconsciously because the writer has considered different voices. In example (3), the writer deploys comparative words to express his/her strong support for the English reform.

With the assistance of AntConc.3.35 and careful manual work, the author finds that students of high mark group prefer employing the word *more* to stress attitudes and opinions of theirs and further convince others which is also a skill used in argumentation.

In conclusion, the distributions of different Appraisal words are not even in the top 30 Appraisal words. However, by listing the top 30 Appraisal words and giving representative examples, how students resort to different Appraisal words to construct interpersonal relationship and the main features of Appraisal words in the essays by students can be analyzed. At the same time, some problems can also be detected in the essays.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The study of students' essays from the perspective of Appraisal Theory has practical meaning both for students and teachers. Through this tentative analysis of students' essays, it is easily to see the distributions and features of students' Appraisal words, especially what problems they have in deploying Appraisal resources in the essays.

Students need to rich expressions instead of repeating the same Attitude words and phrases in the essays many times which indicates the poor language ability. The basic unit of an essay is word that is an important part of an essay. Students having problems in vocabularies can not express their ideas well in English. Therefore, students should pay more attention to some similar expressions to flexibly transform and increase the diversities of language in essays.

Teachers can instruct students to writer simple paragraph centering around some Appraisal words. (Liao, 2011). Some Appraisal words or key words suggest the main idea of the paragraph then students are required to provide enough proofs to confirm it. Through this exercises together with the instructions from teachers, students can learn how to use Appraisal resources in the writing little by little and understand the meaning of evaluation. Appraisal resources can be used across the whole essay and it had better step by step make sure the opinion logical and reasonable.

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# The Effect of Podcasting on Iranian EFL Learners' Motivation and Attitude

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**Abstract**—The objective of this study was to identify the effect of podcasting on Iranian learner's motivation and attitude. The participants consisted of 60 male students including 30 participants for the experimental group and 30 for the control group. All of them were studying in the second junior high school in Shahed school in Semnan, Iran. Their age ranged from 13 to 14. The researchers randomly selected Shahed school from a list of all junior high schools in Semnan province. In addition, data were collected by using a questionnaire and an interview. In the present study, the researchers used Nelson's proficiency test for homogenizing the learners. Moreover, the researchers collected the data through one questionnaire and an interview as data gathering instruments and podcasts and 'Prospect 2' book as instructional materials. A 46-item motivation questionnaire focused on evaluating English learners' beliefs and attitudes in Iran. A 7-item researcher-made interview was conducted with 10 participants. The main purpose of this interview was to investigate the effect of podcasting on the learners' attitude. The results of data analysis revealed that the application of podcasts as a motivational teaching strategy significantly benefited the experimental group to show a higher mean on classroom motivation. It also revealed that the application of podcast changes the learners' motivation positively.

**Index Terms**—podcast, motivation, attitude, EFL learners

## I. INTRODUCTION

Podcasting's soul is about creating audio content for those that want to listen where they want, when they want, and how they want. Instead of a central audio stream from a web site, podcasting sends audio content directly to an iPod or MP3 player. Podcast is considered to be digital media file which has been distributed over personal computers and the internet. According to Fetaji and Fetaji (2008), a podcast is a specific type of webcast which can mean either the content itself or the method by which it is syndicated; the latter is also termed podcasting.

As Kaplan-Leiserson (2005), indicate the term 'podcast' is a composition of the name of Apple's portable music player, the iPod, and broadcast; a pod adverts to a receptacle of some sort and the idea of broadcasting to a container. A podcast is identified from other digital media formats by its ability to be downloaded automatically, using software such as RSS or Atom. In addition, there is a need for more reachable classroom syllabus for students absent from the classroom setting. During the school year many students miss classes due to extra-curricular activities, illness, or family events. Podcasting can give students the opportunity to stay current in their classes, even when they are not present. Moreover, the districts look for cost effective ways to implement technology into the content curriculum.

According to Abdous, Facer, and Yen (2012), the convergence of telecommunications and hardware technologies is reshaping the higher education information technology landscape. Indeed, the proliferation of the so-called mobile supercomputers powerful of performing drastic computational programs such as real time speech recognition and augmented reality, while providing high-bandwidth access to social networking sites, is transforming students' ownership and use of technology. Second and foreign language motivation, based on Kormos and Csizér (2008), has been researched in different language learning grounds in the past decades.

Fernandez, Simo, and Sallan (2009) consider video podcasts and enhanced podcasts as two frequent types. The enhanced podcast is similar to traditional podcasts. Actually this podcast contains multimedia information such as images, slides, short videos, pictures, and photographs that help users increase their perception about the topic.



On the other hand, recent works on motivation theory includes the process model of motivation (Dörnyei, 2000, 2001; Dörnyei & Ottó, 1998), which counting for the dynamic and temporally changing nature of L2 motivation and Dörnyei's (2005) theory of the motivational self-system. This theory endeavors to argue about the challenge that the changing world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century alleges for the Gardnerian concept of integrativeness, the notion of the native speaker, and learners' identification with native speakers. Dörnyei's theory of the motivational self-system is about the psychological theory of self-discrepancy and carries out important contents such as learning experiences and intrinsic and extrinsic language learning goals previously identified in the L2 field by Ushioda (2001) and Noels (2003).

As Dörnyei (2001) argues, the teachers' use of motivational strategies is generally believed to enhance student motivation. Research on 19 motivational strategies held in Madrid in 2002, used by teachers in different classrooms in Spain revealed that the use of audiovisual resources and new technologies is one of the most influential motivational tools available for teachers to motivate English learners. The teacher of English language, therefore, needs to utilize different motivational strategies. Podcasting as a new technology in the realm of computer- and mobile-assisted language learning can provide a great tool to motivate language learners in the classrooms.

If we want our students to develop educational motivation needed for learning and mastering English as a foreign language, we need to find appropriate ways of teaching so that students sustain the lengthy process of learning a foreign language (Dörnyei, 2001). For sure, learners come to the classroom with varying degrees of motivation; however, the teacher, having different motivational strategies available, can make sure learners get motivated more and more. Considering the significance of motivation and motivational strategies, however, few studies have been conducted to investigate whether the strategies are actually working. Even in these few studies, the researchers have investigated a host of different strategies altogether (an exceptional study, for example is Madrid in 2002). However, the current study tried to find out whether one single strategy, namely using audiovisual resources and new technologies, specifically using podcasts could motivate Iranian EFL learners of English or not. Yet, a further significance of the current study is an investigation of the learners' attitude towards the adaptation of such a recent CALL phenomenon, podcasting, in Iranian context of language learning.

### **Review of the Literature**

Combining computer networks and telecommunication had inspired a new application class focused on group activities support. William and McMinn (2008), such an application may be used by individuals in order to mediate their interactions in performing collaborative actions. Designers are faced with new challenges: no space borders, teams' activities coordination, providing common view of shared sensitive information for an entire team. As a lot of these requirements are generic to any collaborative activity, it is natural to define basic generic services and building blocks in order to quickly develop specific solutions covering a given area. Stanley (2005) asserts that the main feature of a collaborative aspiration consists of many players who commit a suit of transactions in order to perform some common objectives. In this kind of approach, each player shares its own experience, information, documents, databases, different computer application and so on (Stanley, 2005).

### **Podcasting**

As Mack and Ratcliffe (2007) argue that a podcast is an audio recording delivered via a static URL containing a Real Simple Syndication (RSS) feed. Podcast users can easily and lightly download and install the iTunes software program on their computers or smart phones in order to access and download podcasts through internet or portable devices such as MP3 players or iPods. Three types of podcasts being produced and used: audio-podcast, enhanced podcasts, and video podcasts. Audio-podcasts include audio only and need a relatively small storage space (Mack & Ratcliffe, 2007).

### **Motivation**

Second language motivation research was known by a well-articulated and theoretically explicit position right from the start, as represented by the influential work of Lambert, Gardner, Clement, and their associates in Canada. According to Dörnyei (1998), this position was hugely grounded in social psychology, which licensed the researchers to track a range of well-researched terms and metaphors to describe L2 motivation, and to reconcile the mature quantitative research collection of social psychological measurement to the needs of L2 motivation testing. As a result, L2 motivation research soon protected a special data-based research tradition in which the various theoretical offers were explicitly operationalized and empirically tested.

### **Attitude**

Baker (1992, p.10) defines attitudes as "a hypothetical construct used to explain the direction and persistence of human behavior". Ajzen (1988, p.4) considers attitudes as "a disposition to respond favorably or unfavorably to an object, person, institution, or event".

Gardner (as cited in Baker, 1992) defines attitudes as elements of motivation in language learning. According to Gardner, "motivation ... refers to the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favorable attitudes toward learning the language" (p. 10). However, Wenden (1987) offered a wider definition of the concept 'attitudes'. He argues that the term attitude includes three components namely, cognitive, affective and behavioral. A cognitive component is made up of the beliefs and opinions or ideas about the object of the attitude. The affective one refers to the feeling and emotions that one has towards an object, 'likes' or 'dislikes', 'with' or 'against'. At the end, the behavioral component refers to one's consisting actions or behavioral attempts towards the object (Khodashenas et.al, 2013). From another portion, McGuire (as cited in Al-Tamimi and Shuib, 2009) argues that it is

possible that the three components are so closely interrelated, that theorists who insist on distinguishing them should bear the burden of providing that the distinction is worthwhile.

### **Research Questions**

Considering the aforesaid problems, the current study is an attempt to provide plausible answers to the following research questions:

- 1) Does the application of podcasts as a motivational teaching strategy affect the students' classroom motivation?
- 2) Does podcasting affect the attitudes of Iranian EFL learners?

### **Research Hypotheses**

Regarding the research questions, the following hypotheses can be formulated:

- 1) The application of podcasts as a motivational teaching strategy does not affect the students' speaking motivation.
- 2) Podcasting does not affect the attitudes of Iranian EFL learners.

## II. METHODOLOGY

### **Participants**

The participants of this study consisted of 60 male students including 30 participants for the experimental and 30 for the control groups. All of them were studying in the second junior high school in Shahed school in Semnan, Iran. Their age ranged from 13 to 14. The researchers selected Shahed school randomly from a list of all junior high schools in Semnan, Iran. In this study, the researchers used Nelson's proficiency test for homogenizing the learners. And two classes were selected according to Nelson's proficiency test.

### **Instrumentation**

The instruments used to collect the data were one questionnaire and an interview as data gathering instruments and podcasts and the book 'Prospect2' as instructional materials.

### **Nelson's Proficiency Test**

This test had fifty items and was used in order to select the participants as the first section of the battery for homogenizing the students regarding their proficiency level prior to the treatment. The test was administered to the participants so as to decide their overall English language proficiency. The test was administered to a pilot group. The reliability of the test was numerated using KR-21 formula as 0.82. Scores within the range of +/-1 SD above and below the mean were considered mid-level. Scores ranged below and above mid-level were considered low and advanced, respectively.

### **Questionnaire**

A 46-item motivation questionnaire focused on evaluating English learners' beliefs and attitudes in Iran. It is originated from Dörnyei (2009). It included items about their personal information, age, gender, previous experience, too. The items in this questionnaire were divided into different parts. The questionnaire included six items for criterion measures, five items about ideal L2 self, seven items for ought to L2 self, five items for family influence, seven items for instrumentality (promotion), five items for instrumentality (prevention), four items about attitude to learning English, three items related to cultural interest, and four items about attitudes to L2 community. The items included 6 point Likert scale, ranging from very completely disagrees to completely agree. A questionnaire translated before by Azarnoosh (2014), was used for the current study by the researchers. For ensuring the reliability and validity of the test and the questionnaire, the researchers ran a pilot test on 25 students. Cronbach alpha for the questionnaire showed that the questionnaire was reliable because alpha was 0.867.

### **Interview**

A 7-item researcher-made interview was conducted with 10 participants. The time of this interview was about five minutes. The main purpose of this interview was to investigate the effects of podcasting on their attitude. The interview was recorded and transcribed. Then the answers were coded. Moreover, an MP3 and a notebook were used to record the interviewees while paying attention to the ethical issues.

### **Piloting Procedure**

First of all, piloting was done to ensure the reliability and validity of the questionnaire, and to understand the time of the study and reliability and validity of the procedure. For ensuring about the reliability and validity of procedure in piloting, podcasting was applied on 25 students asking them to give feedback about this treatment. Twenty five students were chosen randomly for administering the questionnaire and ten students for administering the interview. In order to collect data for the study, at first, the questionnaire was administered among the experimental and control groups. The researchers asked them to complete these questionnaires in appropriate time. To ensure the content validity of the instruments, the researchers asked the pilot samples to underline any ambiguous part and to write their comments on the questionnaire. To further ensure the validity, the researchers asked two university professors to review the content of the questionnaire. After collecting all these comments from those professors, some items of questionnaire were modified, and in some cases changes were made to fit the purpose of the study. For ensuring the reliability and validity of the questionnaire, the researchers ran a pilot on 25 students. The Cronbach's alpha reliability index for the classroom motivation questionnaire was .93.

### **Main Procedure**

A Nelson's proficiency test (Fowler & Coe, 1976) was administrated to ensure the learners' homogeneity in the two groups. The scores which ranged below and above mid-level were regarded as low and advanced proficiency level, respectively.

Then, the researchers provided the motivation questionnaire and asked the students to fill it out personally. In the experimental group in each two sessions the teacher asked the learners to speak 5 sentences for each point which he taught during the two previous sessions in the classroom in isolation according to podcast. Then the learners presented their opinions about podcasts and their opinions were collected and brought back to the teacher in order to be corrected indirectly. In the following sessions the teacher played recording tapes and asked students to correct their mistakes by themselves. At the beginning of the third, fifth, seventh, ninth, eleventh sessions, the teacher brought back the corrected speeches and explained their errors explicitly or implicitly. The learners' second speaking was done based on the new taught points in the third and the fourth sessions. Again they had to speak five sentences for each specific point according to previous podcast. This procedure was repeated for the experimental group in the mentioned sessions. But the procedure for the control group was different from the experimental group. All the activities were based on the book. The teacher only taught according to book activities and specified students' errors. Finally, few days later after the last session, the teacher conducted the posttest for the two groups to measure their differences in their scores. But the important point is that podcasting was replaced with normal activities in 'Prospect 2' in the experimental group. Actually in the control group the teacher worked on activities according to the guide book but in the experimental group the teacher worked on podcasts that were downloaded based on the topics and syllabus of 'Prospect 2'.

Last, the researchers gave the questionnaire to students to fill it in. Then the interview was held with students. Their answers were recorded and transcribed. The researchers investigated the changes of students' attitudes about the effect of podcasting in English language learning.

**Data analysis**

The data were analyzed through independent t-test for the questionnaire and ANCOVA for pre-test and post-test by using SPSS software.

**III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

With regard to the first research question, "Does the application of podcasts as a motivational teaching strategy significantly affect the students' classroom motivation?", An independent t-test was run to compare the experimental and control groups' means on the classroom motivation in order to probe the effect of podcast on the improvement of their motivation. As displayed in Table 1, the experimental (M=245.97, SD=18.72) had a higher mean on the classroom motivation than the control group (M=196.60, SD=26.72).

TABLE 1:  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF TESTING NORMALITY ASSUMPTION

Group		N	Skewness			Kurtosis		
			Statistic	Std. Error	Ratio	Statistic	Std. Error	Ratio
Experimental	Motivation	30	-.764	.427	-1.79	-.302	.833	-0.36
	Pre	30	-.809	.427	-1.89	-.134	.833	-0.16
	Post	30	-.622	.427	-1.46	-.530	.833	-0.64
Control	Motivation	30	-.595	.427	-1.39	.506	.833	0.61
	Pre	30	.092	.427	0.22	-.764	.833	-0.92
	Post	30	.177	.427	0.41	-1.032	.833	-1.24

The results of independent t-test ( $t(58)=8.28, p<.05, r=.73$  representing a large effect size) indicated that there was a significant difference between the experimental and control groups' means on the classroom motivation. Thus the first null-hypothesis was rejected. That is to say that the application of podcasts as a motivational teaching strategy significantly benefited the experimental group to show a higher mean on classroom motivation.

TABLE 2:  
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES TEST OF CLASSROOM MOTIVATION BY GROUPS

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
Equal variances assumed	2.751	.103	8.287	58	.000	49.367	5.957	37.443	61.291
Equal variances not assumed			8.287	51.943	.000	49.367	5.957	37.413	61.320

It should be mentioned that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met (Levene's  $F=2.75, p>.05$ ). That is why the first row of Table 2, i.e. "Equal variances assumed" was reported.

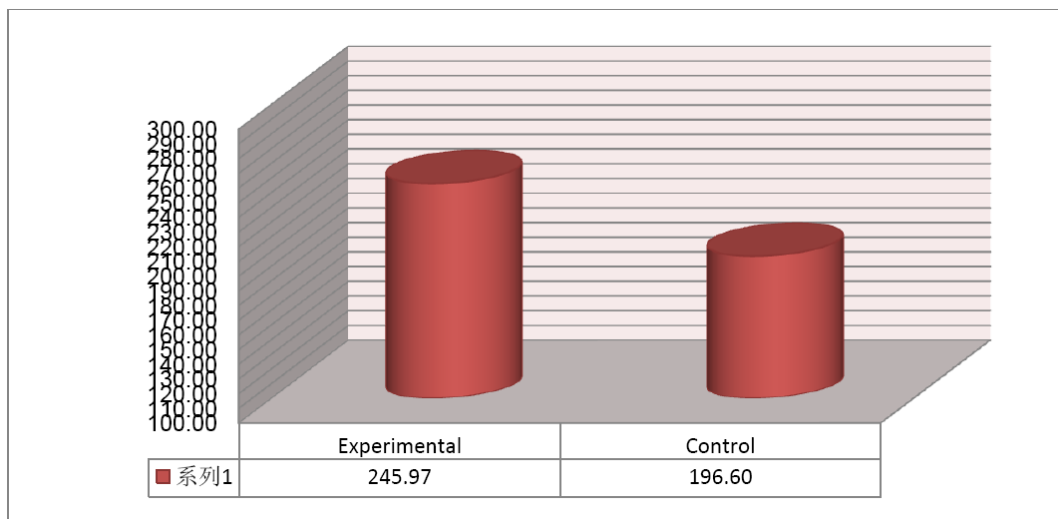


Figure 1: Classroom Motivation by Groups

Considering the aforementioned results, it is now possible to consider the first research question in light of empirical evidence and compare or contrast the present study in this phase with the similar ones to make the results more meaningful. Regarding the first research question, analysis of the data revealed the significant role of podcasts as a motivational teaching strategy in the students' speaking motivation. This finding can be closely related to Dörnyei (2001). His study on 19 motivational strategies used by the teacher in the different classrooms in Spain revealed that the use of audiovisual resources and new technologies is one of the most influential motivational tools available for teachers to motivate English learners. Although his study concentrated on motivational strategies, it was also revealed that audiovisual resources can motivate students.

Oliver's (2005) findings can also be comparable to this study. He asserts that podcasting leads to student learning by increasing student motivation and engagement. This perspective is confirming by the findings of Fernandez, Simo, and Sallan (2009) who suggest that podcasting contributes to students' motivation. Actually, these authors note that motivation was students' most highlighted appearance of their podcasting use.

It needs to be added that higher motivation of students can be a function of the newness of podcasts. As Heilesen (2010) truly states that podcasting has a "positive impact on the academic environment." According to Heilsen, podcasting opens up chances for faculty to experiment with new forms of teaching while it provides students with a new tool to use in order to complement their study activities.

With regards to the second Research question, "Does podcasting affect the attitudes of Iranian EFL learners?", according to collecting data, tables, and samples' answers in interview as an instrument, Table 3 represents that 70% enjoyed learning English very much and 30% enjoyed it moderately. Moreover, based on the Table 3, about 80% of learners wanted to learn English in institutes and 20% wanted to learn English at their schools.

TABLE 3:  
LEARNERS' ATTITUDE ABOUT LEARNING ENGLISH

	Answers	Frequency	Percent
Enjoyed learning English	Very much	7	70
	Moderately	3	30
Interested in further English study in...	institute	8	80
	school	2	20

On the other hand, according to the Table 4, about 50% of learners did not worry about making mistakes in speaking English and 30% of learners had a little fear and 20% of them were worried about making mistakes in speaking English. And about self-confidence, 50% of learners had much confidence, 30% of them had moderate confidence and 20% of them have not enough.

TABLE 4:  
FEARING AND SELF CONFIDENCE

	Answers	Frequency	Percent
Fear about making mistakes	No worry	5	50
	A little	3	30
	Worry	2	20
Self confidence	Moderate	3	30
	A little	2	20

Fortunately, on the other hand, according to the Table 5, 80% of learners believed that podcasting change their attitude to learning English positively. According to the participants' answers to sixth question in the interview, 80% wanted to know about culture of English-speaking countries. On the other hand, 80% of learners believed that becoming professional in English has a positive influence on their social class. The findings indicated that podcasts changed student's attitude positively. Thus the second null-hypothesis was rejected.

TABLE 5:  
INTEREST IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE CULTURE AND SOCIAL CLASS

	Answers	Frequency	Percent
Interest in learning more about English culture	Very much	8	80
	Moderately	1	10
	A little	1	10
Increase social class	Yes	8	80
	No	2	20

The role of motivation in students' academic achievement has been emphasized in all educational fields; however, more specifically in the thread of foreign and second language (L2) learning, motivation has long been recognized as one of the main perspectives that determine L2 achievement and attainment. As Khatib, Najafi, and Hamidi (2012) finely confirm the claim, motivation serves as the primary drive to generate learning and later functions as an ongoing driving force that helps to sustain the extensive and usually painstaking journey of acquiring a foreign language.

Motivated students' better performance in this study may be the result of better use of strategies. As Boulos, Maramba, and Wheeler (2006) claim, podcasting may also embed a wide variety of learning strategies for students. While some students learn most effectively by taking notes during reviewing and a lecture in their own study time, others learn more effectively by active listening without taking notes.

Regarding the role of motivation in students' performance, one point needs to be born in mind. As Gardner (2000) suggest, better performance of the students might be achieved when motivation is accompanied by good attitudes. This means that motivated students' better performance may not be the direct result of motivation, but the result of collaboration between attitude and motivation.

Considering the aforementioned results, it is now possible to consider the second research question in light of empirical evidence and compare or contrast the present study in this phase with the similar ones to make the results more meaningful. Regarding the second research question, analysis of the data revealed the important role of podcasting on students' attitudes. The participants in the study found that podcasts improved both their results and their feelings (attitudes) about their learning. This means that podcasts influenced students' attitudes. This finding of the present study is closely comparable to Francom, Ryan, and Kariuki (2011) who after giving podcasts to students concluded that students' attitude changed and improved. The more important point about similarity of the two studies is that they used the same instruments as the present study, namely a questionnaire and an interview.

This finding supports the work of Mount and Chambers (2008) who found that podcasting improves learner cognition. In Lyles, Robertson, Mangino, and Cox's (2007) study the participants said things such as "the availability of the audio podcasts and lecture notes fit my personal learning style". This shows that in their study too, the participants' attitude was influenced by podcasts. However, it needs to be added that opposite to the present study in which the participants were mostly teenagers, their study recruited university students. Age differences might have its own effect.

Another study which was similar to the present study in terms of participants' age, was conducted by Wilczak (2013). However, there were some conceptual differences between the two studies. Unlike the present study which investigated the effects of podcasting on participants' attitude, his study investigated the effects of podcasting, as well as blogging on participants' attitudes. His research indicated that blogging and podcasting foster a positive student attitude.

Findings of this study support Gardner (1985, 2001), who described integrativeness of motivation as a bosomed construct made up of the following variables: interest in integrative orientation, foreign languages, and attitudes toward the learning situation. In other words, this means that motivation is a function of three factors from which one is *attitude*. Based on this claim, motivation and attitude must support each other and be in parallel. Our findings support this point.

Computer technology holds promise for improving students' achievement in any educational programs at all levels. The extent to which foreign language vocabulary instruction using computer-assisted language learning software as a tool can facilitate vocabulary learning. Several studies have emphasized the important role of podcasting for second language students to make them pay attention to listening. All of these researchers asserted that podcasting has an effect directly on learner's listening. However, the researchers had paid scarce attention to students' attitude and motivation since motivation and attitude are the element which students need to sustain in the lengthy process of learning a foreign language (Dornyei, 2001). This gap in the literature compelled the researcher to conduct the study.

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The results of this study indicated that podcasting as a new technology in the realm of computer- and mobile-assisted language learning provides a great tool to motivate language learners in the classrooms. Based on the results reported

above and the conclusions drawn from the results, some pedagogical implications can be made for material developers, curriculum developers, and teachers as the following:

- Curriculum developers and teachers can incorporate podcasts as a tool into the books and curriculums in order to make students more motivated, confident, cooperative, and autonomous. The students may not have a good attitude toward peer assessment tasks right from the beginning; however, they gradually would grow more optimistic views towards it.

- Material developers can also make use of podcasts as a task to improve students' learning. Podcasts can be provided at the beginning, in the center, or at the end of units, in the electronic version of the books, in order to make the students more motivated about the topic and language learning and a learning task by itself. However, in the early sessions students may feel uncertain about it.

- Studies have indicated that the use of technology in educational context may result in their isolation from peers. In order for the learners to connect with peers, instructors may consider providing an option for students to communicate with classmates by producing and sharing their own podcasts with groups of students or the entire class (Bolliger, Supanakorn, & Boggs, 2010).

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# Improving Active Classroom Participation of ESL Students: Applying Culturally Responsive Teaching Strategies

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**Abstract**—The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of implementing culturally responsive teaching strategies in an adult ESL classroom. Prior research indicated that ESL students were not interested in instructions that ignore or isolate their home culture or targeted language culture. Three adult students from Asian countries with intentions to improve their English learning participated in the study. Using an ABAB design, students' participations in the class discussions were recorded and counted. The results showed that the implementation of culturally responsive teaching strategies increased the frequency of students' classroom participations. The instructions employing culturally responsive teaching strategies were more likely to increase students' involvement in communication and enhance their communication skills.

**Index Terms**—ESL, culturally responsive teaching, instructional strategies, single subject research

## I. INTRODUCTION

“Culture is all knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs, values and emotions that we, as human beings, have added to our biological base. Culture is a social phenomenon; it is what we as a society, or a people, share and which enables us to live as a society in order for humanity to survive, it is necessary that we learn our culture” (Jarvis, 2006, p.56). Consequently, as instructors, we need to know, understand, and value different culture to better help students achieve and grow; as adult learners, they need to know and respect the diversified backgrounds of their peers or their students if they are teachers. Culture can serve as a way to enhance the motivation of learners because it can create culturally responsive teaching, which is characterized by respect for diversity; engagement of the motivation of all learners; creation of a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environment; teaching practices that cross disciplines and cultures; integration of culturally responsive practice into all subject areas (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995), and the promotion of justice and equity in society (Phuntsog, 1998). Also, as Tomal (2007) argued, one of the bases for understanding student motivation may rest with a student's personal cultural value system. By understanding student culture, teachers can develop a classroom culture that provides incentives for good motivation that may be the foundation for academic success. Moreover, it is clear that globalization and rapid social change have affected the nature of society. The socioeconomic and cultural diversity of today's adult population and nontraditional classroom settings presents special cultural challenges to adult educators. Therefore, culturally responsive strategies are important for any instructors who intend to pursue the ways of teaching adult learners in a motivating and effective way in their ESL teaching setting.

The goal of applying culturally responsive teaching strategies in adult ESL (English as Second Language) classrooms is to provide a way to create an inclusive, safe, and interacting learning setting to engage ESL students in meaningful communication exchanges by recognizing and weaving students' cultures into classroom learning and teaching. Since most adult students in the ESL classroom have experienced isolation, discomfort, and insecurity in a new learning setting that is different from his or her mother culture, culture can be applied to motivate these students (Tomal, 2007). Instructors, by recognizing students' culture, can integrate the teaching materials with students' cultural experience and respect their cultural diversity to enhance their positive participations in the class and to motivate them to learn.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Numerous studies and strategies have investigated effective ways to teach ESL students from rich cultural backgrounds (Marria, 1998; Thmpson, 2004; Zhang, 1992). In the field of ESL teaching, Zhang (1992) investigated the effects of four different strategies on the English reading comprehension of 29 ESL students of varying language backgrounds from eight countries in an academic English program. The strategies involved cognitive, memory, compensation, and test-taking strategies. The results showed that the introduction of reading strategies, particularly memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies, helped students make gains in reading comprehension. Instructions in test-taking strategies did not improve comprehension. Zhang's study contributed to ESL teaching by suggesting the

failure of test-oriented instruction. However, Zhang's study also showed that effects between the strategy and language proficiency level were not statistically significant, which indicated that when instructing students with cultural backgrounds, new instructional procedures needed to be created.

Historically, researchers and scholars have been working on new instructional strategies to enhance the ESL learning abilities of students from rich cultural backgrounds. Thompson (2004) recommended "colortalk" which suggested that all the teachers in classroom settings be aware of students' cultural diversity and develop a curriculum to address these students' cultural needs. Besides "colortalk" recommendation, he also recommended the use of *culturally responsive caring-in-action*. This type of instruction enabled ethnically and culturally diverse students to be open and flexible in expressing their thoughts, feelings, and emotions, as well as being receptive to new ideas and information. The features of caring-in-action instruction were patience, persistence, facilitation, validation, and empowerment for the participants. Uncaring instructions were distinguished by impatience, intolerance, dictations, and control. The results showed that teachers who genuinely cared for students generate higher levels of all kinds of success than those who did not. This type of instruction contributed to the culturally responsive teaching literature by claiming that educator must care "enough to abandon our willed ignorance and political blindness" (p. 37). But this justice-based and authentic caring must be an integral part of all students' entire educational careers, starting from their learning in kindergarten classrooms all the way to their life and learning in colleges and universities. Therefore, it needs consistent collaborative efforts from all educators and practitioners at all educational levels, which usually is not done easily.

In addition, the research conducted by Su (2011) examined the effects of a cultural portfolio project on (1) students' specific opinions of development of cultural knowledge and change in understanding of native English speakers and their cultures; (2) students' self-awareness, recognitions, assessment, and adjustment of stereotypes toward the English cultures; and (3) students' change in perception and outlook toward cultural learning. The findings showed an understanding of how cultural portfolio projects help students develop greater awareness and understanding of the English culture, what specific cultural knowledge they developed and modified, and how their perceptions of target cultures and people and cultural learning changed. It contributed to the field of culturally responsive teaching in EFL and ESL teaching instructions by providing an effective model of project.

Moreover, Marria (1998) conducted an experimental study to investigate the effects of regular use of communication games in monolingual EFL classrooms and observed where and how these games fostered language learning. The results suggested that communication games fostered students' language learning: "I have found this game extremely relevant to everyday situations the language learner is likely to face, and highly adaptable to numerous speech situations. It has always encouraged them to use structures and vocabulary they have learned in other contents" (p.15).

More importantly, a study conducted by Collier (1992) and a collective research study from Garcia-Vasquez, Vasquez, and Lopez (1997) suggested that proficiency in heritage or indigenous languages correlates positively with higher academic English performance, especially when the former is used as a vehicle to facilitate the latter. The findings suggested that the effects of bilingual education can be attributed to the strong interactive relationship that exists among language, culture, and learning, rather than language alone. These findings suggested that culturally responsive teaching strategies should be applied in the ESL classroom.

Considering the increasing application of different culturally responsive teaching strategies in the ESL classroom, more research needs to be conducted on the efficacy of the strategies in improving adult students' active participations in the classroom. Most of the current research is being conducted with participants at lower grades (Collier, 1992; Garcia-Vasquez, Vasquez, & Lopez, 1997). There is a need to see the effectiveness of the strategies with adult learners. The purpose of this study was to look at the effects of culturally responsive teaching strategies with adult learners in the ESL classroom setting from different countries such as China and Korea. The primary goal of using culturally responsive teaching strategies was to increase students' positive participation in class to enhance their skills to pass the required university entrance test (Iowa ESL Placement Test).

### III. METHOD

The purpose of this study is to provide practical experiences where language instructors can actually get useful strategies and lead to better evidence-based models and tools to be replicated in future experience. Single subject research fits the intentions of this study well. First, single subject research is experimental rather than correlative and descriptive, and its purpose is to document causal or functional relationships between independent and dependent variables which has a good control of major threats to internal and external validity (Martella, Nelson, & Marchand-Martella, 1999). Second, single subject research is a rigorous, scientific methodology used to define principle of behaviors and establish evidence-based practices, therefore, educators can establish individualized educational and supportive strategies benefited from the systematic form of experimental analysis that single subject research allows (Shavelson & Towne, 2002). Third, single subject research allows replication to examine whether the same phenomenon that the researchers observed will happen when others enter the same situation (O'neill, McDonnell, Billingsley, and Jenson, 2011).

#### *Participants*

There were three participants in this study. Two of the participants were from China and the other one was from Korea. They were all adult precollege students who were in the program to prepare for the required university entrance test (Iowa ESL Placement Test).

King was the first student in the study. He was from Korea and was struggling to pass the test in order to study at the university level. He thought the class was boring because the instructor lectured them about grammar and vocabulary. He ignored the lectures and talked to the other students during the class.

Li was a Chinese female in her second month in the program. She showed great interest when the instructor talked about something that related to her culture. However, since the class was mostly about grammar and vocabulary, she usually fell asleep at her desk. When the researchers visited the classroom the first time, she thought they were the program supervisors and complained to the researchers.

Zhang was a Chinese male in his first university year. He was older than other students in the class because he completed the training in the ESL program. He had to repeat the program because he did not meet the university academic standards. He was frustrated because he paid the money to go through all the requirements and tests in the program, but his communication and writing levels did not meet university professors' requirements. In classroom, he always sat in the back row and was reluctant to read even when his instructor asked him to read the given materials. One time he just stood up and told the instructor that the session was over.

The researchers chose those three individuals for this study for two reasons. First, based on literature, the researchers believed that a culturally responsive teaching strategy could help the instructor make the classroom more active and inclusive to the students. Second, the researchers chose the three students because they were all from Asia, and two of them were actually from the same country as the researchers. Therefore, the researchers had enough knowledge base in their culture.

#### ***Setting***

The study was conducted in a regular classroom. The introduction of culturally responsive teaching strategies was carried out in the hallway outside the teacher's office. All the 10 students in the classroom were from three different countries and were required to attend the class from 8:00 to 9:20 in the morning. The ESL center was located in a less diverse state where people were relatively conservative and not open to outside culture.

#### ***Dependent Variables***

The student's dependent target behavior was his/her active participation in the class activities. The frequency of student's responses was measured during different class sessions. Since all the participants showed up for class every day but were not involved themselves into class activities, the instructor intervened with culturally responsive teaching strategies to motivate them to participate in class.

#### ***Data Collection***

The observations of on-task behavior occurred before and after the culturally responsive teaching strategies were implemented during the ESL class sessions. Two types of recorded forms were developed to monitor the frequency of instructor's implementation of the strategies and its effects on students' active classroom participations before and after the introduction of the culturally responsive teaching strategies.

To collect data, observations were conducted in the classroom two times every week for five weeks with self-designed forms. There were two sessions, and each lasted 30 minutes. There were seven columns in the form. The first two columns were the date and session time. The third column "what the instructor will do" provided room to indicate what the instructor would do during each 30 minute class session before the intervention. The fourth column, "is it a desired behavior – Instructor" indicated that the skills used by the instructor belonged to the culturally responsive strategy. The fifth column "is it a desired behavior- students" indicated the actual occurrence of the targeted behaviors to prove the effects of the implementations of culturally responsive teaching strategies. Then columns of "percentage of responses" followed to indicate the quantities of the behaviors.

#### ***Observer Training***

Two observers visited the classroom. Both observers had been trained on data collection prior to the implementation of the study to establish the reliability of the data.

Observers was first trained and agreed on what activities identified as culturally responsive teaching strategies and what were the effects of the implementation. Then, they were trained to how to read and fill in the forms with correct information. Thirdly, observers then assessed during practice sessions using role-plays to see if the correct numbers were placed in the related columns based upon the agreements and to see if they could identify the target behaviors. Moreover, the researcher calculated the agreement, which was 91%. Lastly, the consistency of observers' data recording was regularly assessed using interobserver agreement procedure (O'Neill, McDonnell, Billingsley & Jensen, 2011).

#### ***Interobserver Agreement***

Since there were multiple observers in the study, the researchers collected interobserver agreement to determine agreement. Following practice sessions, the observers compared results for each and every occurrence or measurement of the target behavior (dependent variable). A point-by-point agreement ratio was used to establish the concordance between the observers. Point-by-point agreement was established by dividing the number of agreements by the number of agreements added to the disagreements and multiplied by 100. The agreement was across all training and independent work sessions.

### *Experimental Design and Conditions*

The experimental design used for the current study was an ABAB withdrawal design. The design had four conditions: Baseline (A), Intervention (B), a second Baseline (A), and a second Intervention (B).

The researcher chose this design for several reasons. First, this withdrawal design allowed for two replications and thus provided clear evidence of experimental control and showed a systematic evaluation of the effectiveness of the intervention. Second, only one variable was changed at a time. Third, the ABAB design is a more powerful and convincing design than just the ABA design because it allowed the study to end with the intervention condition proven to be the most beneficial for changing the target behavior. Fourth, this design suggested a simple but strong investigation of causality. This control helped establish that the behavior change occurred because of the dependent variable and not another variable.

The study lasted a total of five weeks, with two times and four sessions per week. Two weeks of observation took place to collect data for the initial baseline, one week of intervention data collection, one week of second baseline data collection, and another week of second intervention.

### *Experimental procedures*

**Baseline-** The purpose of baseline was to observe the ESL students' typical classroom participation behaviors without introducing any interventions. Initial baseline consisted of two instruction sessions. Each session lasted 30 minutes. The classroom procedures were typical with ESL instructor's lectures on grammar and vocabulary which was the same as the rest of the semester. During each session, students were involved in their regular textbook reading and classroom notes-taking. The researcher used frequency counts to tally the target behaviors- active classroom participations- by using the four column forms mentioned in the above recording procedure part. The instructor and students were not given any information to prevent changes in their normal classroom behaviors.

**Intervention-** This condition lasted for one week. Monday and Tuesday were dedicated to introducing cultural responsive teaching strategies to the instructor and then designing a class with the strategies. Wednesday was for collecting data on the intervention.

Prior to the intervention, researchers met individually with the instructor to explain the study. The instructor was told what the two clusters on culturally responsive teaching strategies would be and was asked to use the strategies as many times as she could. Together with the instructor, a class session was planned for implementing the culturally responsive teaching strategy. The frequency of the instructor's implementation of culturally responsive teaching strategy was observed in a class period based on the strategy clusters developed from the review of different resources (See Table 1), and the frequency of students' responds (active participations) to the implementation were recorded. Students needed to show active participations such as frequency of showing eagerness for answering the questions, pay attention to instructor's explanations, being respectful when someone is talking, and actively involved in the classroom activities, etc.

TABLE 1  
CLUSTERS OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING STRATEGIES

Clusters	Instructor's role and activities	Student's role and activities	Supporting resources
<b>Cluster A: Knowing student culture</b>	Be aware of students' culture, its value, and beliefs by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asking students to share their culture and beliefs on the discussion topics</li> <li>• Accepting all answers without judgments</li> <li>• Charting student ideas</li> </ul>	Sharing their ideas related to their culture by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-introduction</li> <li>• Poem writing</li> <li>• Drawing pictures</li> </ul>	Phuntsog (1998), Geneva Gay (2000)
<b>Cluster B: Creating inclusive, safe, and supportive learning settings</b>	Incorporating culture into classroom by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Related cultural stories, concept, and vocabulary to past or future experience.</li> <li>• Use culture appropriate activities to emphasize sentence structures.</li> <li>• Show the academic differences among cultures.</li> <li>• Encourage sharing and communication</li> </ul>	Sharing their understanding and confusions by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group discussion activities</li> <li>• Presentations</li> <li>• Weekly Journals</li> </ul>	Garcia-Vasquez, Vasquez, & Lopez (1997), Włodkowski & Ginsberg (1995)
<b>Cluster C: Go beyond</b>	Stimulating students to expand their learning and thinking beyond the scope of the lesson and their own culture by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asking students if they have new questions or ideas on how to use what they learned to explore in a real practice</li> </ul>	Continue assessing how new information relates to further English learning and exploring by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Putting the new sentence structures and essay writing skills in the future learning</li> </ul>	Schmidt, Siago, Stephan (2011), Sleeter & Cornbleth (2011)

During the first session, the instructor was asked to teach with the designed class using culturally responsive strategies. The instructor first introduced the session. After the introduction, instead of lecturing on the grammar, she asked the students to introduce the current situation in their own country about the pollution by using one or two sentences they learned from the textbook. If there were more active participations from the students, then it showed that the strategies worked. Also, the instructor invited the students to compare the different policies and stories they heard or experienced on pollution and environment protection. The application of different culturally responsive teaching

strategies were designed and practiced on Monday and Tuesday for the four sessions. It showed that students' attention was aroused and there were more active participation from the observed three students. No data were collected during the training on the dependent variable. During the intervention session data were collected.

**Second Baseline (withdrawal)** - A return to baseline was carried out for two sessions after two weeks of the intervention phase. The purpose of this condition was to establish control and analyze the effects of withdrawing the intervention. In this session, the instructor was no longer asked to applying the culturally responsive teaching strategies. Actually, the instructor went back to the grammar and vocabulary lecturing. Frequency counts were recorded in the same manner as the previous baseline session. Data were collected without any intervention.

**Second Intervention-** A final return to the intervention was conducted for one week with four consecutive sessions. Again each session lasted 30 minutes. The intervention started up again and data were recorded on the first day. The instructor was again encouraged to implement the culturally responsive teaching strategies in her explanations of the smoking phenomenon. Students' active participations were recorded and counted. Data were again collected on the effects of the intervention.

IV. RESULTS

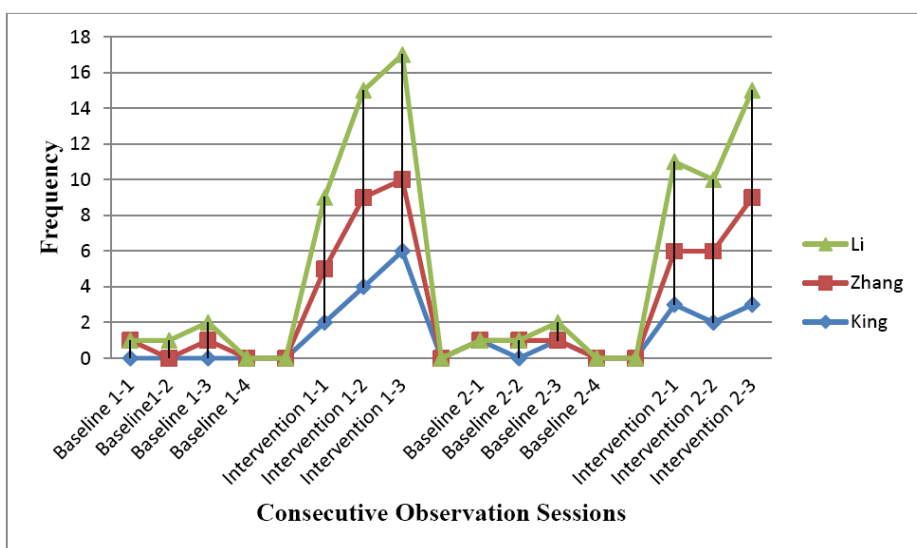


Table 2 Graph Generated from the Data

The graph (See Table 2) showed that there was a significant change in level and slope across three students, and the implementation of culturally responsive teaching strategies increased the frequencies of participants' classroom participation (See Table 2). A stable baseline was established for each student. Baseline data showed that the average number of times that each student participated was 0 (King), 0.5 (Zhang), and 0.5 (Li). These data supported the assumption that the students needed new teaching strategies to modify their behavior to enhance their learning. The intervention of CRT was introduced in week three, and it lasted for a week. During the intervention, the average number of times the students actively participated in the class activities increased from 0 to 4 (King), 0.5 to 4 (Zhang), and 0.5 to 5.3 (Li). At the beginning of week four, the intervention was withdrawn, and data were collected for one more week. During this condition, the average number of the student's participation decreases back to 0.5 (King), 0.25 (Zhang), and 0.25 (Li). The number of participation was eight times (King), 16 times (Zhang), and 21 times (Li) lower than the average during the intervention. When a second stable baseline was established as shown in the graph, the average participation was 0.5 (King), 0.25 (Zhang), and 0.25 (Li). Then a second intervention was introduced. Again, the three participants displayed a significant increase in participating in class activities: the students increased their performance from an average 33% to 90 % or above.

Based upon the data (See Table 2) obtained in this study, experimental control was established between the independent interventions and the dependent variable. The data showed that culturally responsive teaching strategy interventions resulted in significant changes in the three students' classroom participation behaviors. When the culturally responsive teaching strategies intervention was removed, all students' behaviors returned to a pre-intervention level.

V. DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to show that adult students in the ESL classroom can benefit from the implementation of culturally responsive teaching strategies. The data collected from the study confirmed that culturally responsive teaching strategies are effective which was echoed by the literature that culturally responsive education can enhance

student's learning and academic achievement through strengthening student connectedness with school and reducing behavior problems in classroom community (Gay, 2000; Kalyanpur, 2003). Instructors who have students fall into this category (ESL or EFL students) can apply the strategies in their ESL teaching.

In this study two types of instructors appeared in classroom observations before and after the training of culturally responsive teaching strategies: (a) instructors who do not recognize the culture of learners, and (b) instructors who do recognize the culture of learners but do not have it reflected in their teaching. After the training one instructor differentiated her teaching strategies by adopting culturally responsive teaching strategies and started to be aware of her students' culture background. This result means that understanding a learner's culture to become culturally competent is not a skill that comes naturally to some instructors. Instead, many instructors need professional development opportunities and training to enhance their ability and awareness.

Moreover, the study showed that a new strategy in ESL teaching needs support from educational leaders. Although the above instructor understood and observed the benefits that her students gained from culturally responsive teaching strategies, she as an instructor could not reform and change the traditional, test-oriented teaching methods because she had no other choice than to follow the current non-culturally-responsive curriculum at the ESL center. Thus, lack of support from current curriculum leaders and test-oriented instruction are the primary obstacles that have inhibited teachers to adopt cultural responsive teaching strategies.

Additionally, as Tomal (2007) argued based on Maslow's theory (1943) and Alderfer's needs models (1969), leaders and instructors in education must recognize that the degree of satisfying a need may vary from one person to another and take cultural differences among students into account. In this study, it showed that culturally responsive teaching strategies embedded student's culture into the teaching instruction and therefore, created a safe and inclusive learning setting to motivate students and help further the academic performance of the students.

Culturally responsive teaching strategies are proactive. They provide motivating tools that can enhance students' motivation and behaviors in the ESL classroom through recognizing and weaving students' unique culture into classroom instructional practice. The following recommendations are provided to help instructors develop their skills and strategies in being culturally responsive:

1. Being culturally competent through knowing students

Cultural competence, also referred to as cultural sensitivity or cultural proficiency, means a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals that enable them to work effectively in cross-cultural situations and has been recognized as the most important characteristic of working with students from different racial, ethnic, religious, or social groups (Brown, 2004; Gay, 2000; Guerra & Nelson, 2007; Ladson-Billings, 1995). The basic assumption of cultural responsiveness is that instructors cannot teach or lead what or who they do not know.

Based on the researchers' experience, there are three ways to know a student's culture as shown in the clusters in Table 1. First, instructors can encourage students to introduce themselves through self-introduction essay, poem writing, and picture-drawing. Also, to be culturally competent, instructors should allow students to share their culture and beliefs in the various classroom discussion topics. Third, instructors should be active in incorporating culture into classroom activities by relating cultural stories, concepts, and vocabulary to students' past or future learning experience.

2. Stimulating students to expand their learning and thinking patterns beyond the scope of the lessons and their own culture

Good instructors will not be satisfied by just knowing their students' cultural backgrounds. Instead, they will facilitate and challenge students to expand their learning and thinking patterns beyond the classroom and their own culture. In this way, students will easily cross cultural barriers and recognize the differences among cultures. Since language is the carrier of culture, English learning will be a fun and satisfying experience both for instructors and students.

ESL instructors can facilitate students to be aware of other languages and cultures through continuing to assess how students' cultures relate to further English learning and exploring. Also, this thinking-beyond approach will help students to learn about other languages and cultures, learn about other people -- how they see life, what they have to cope with, what they think is important. It gives students a better perspective on their own life. It teaches them more tolerance for ways not their own, and the ability to be friendlier to many different kinds of people. Eventually, this culturally responsive teaching approach will benefit society because it produces citizens with multicultural perspectives and appreciation.

3. Participating in professional development to enhance culturally responsive teaching approaches

As Guskey (2009) argued, "It is probably safe to say, in fact, that no improvement effort in the history of education has ever succeeded without thoughtfully planned and well-implemented professional development activities designed to enhance educators' knowledge and skills" ( p. 226). The results and discussion sections of this study have revealed that to implement successful culturally responsive teaching strategies, both instructors and education leaders need to develop their awareness and skills through professional development. To this end, the educational leaders should skillfully guide their institutions' development towards a culturally responsiveness approach. When leaders consistently communicate a commitment to academic achievement through culturally responsive teaching approaches for all students and maintain a

similar commitment to continuous, life-long learning for themselves and their schools' faculty and staff, English learning will no longer a painful experience for students from other cultures.

## VI. CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

The findings of this study should be of interest to both practitioners and researchers. The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of implementing culturally responsive teaching strategies in an adult ESL classroom. The results showed that the implementation of culturally responsive teaching strategies increased the frequency of students' classroom participations. Teacher instructions incorporating culturally responsive teaching strategies were more likely to increase students' involvement in communication and enhance their communication skills.

While this study contributes to the literature in ESL teaching, specifically culturally responsive teaching approaches, this study has its limitations as with any research. The first limitation lies in the fact that only three participants were involved in the study. Future research should replicate this experimental study with more individuals. Also, this study was conducted in a short period of time due to the fact that the instructor did not have enough time to interrupt course schedule. Future researchers need to expand the study for a longer period of time to increase data collection. Finally, this study was carried out in an ESL language learning context; future research should seek additional data from Foreign Language (FL) learning contexts that would help fill this research void and enable better understanding of the culturally responsive teaching strategies.

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# 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.

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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.
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If a proposal is accepted, the guest editor will be responsible for:

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- Distribution of the Call for Papers broadly to various mailing lists and sites.
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Improving Active Classroom Participation of ESL Students: Applying Culturally Responsive Teaching Strategies  
*Dianbing Chen and Xinxiao Yang*

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