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On Invoking Third Parties in Vietnamese Medical Communication

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Abstract—This study is concerned with the practice of invoking third parties among doctors and patients in Vietnamese medical consultations. These third parties are relatives of the patient who are also medical professionals. We show that doctors invoke relatives-plus-medical professionals in order to elicit information from patients, while patients adopt this practice in order to circumvent a troublesome administrative requirement; obtain a preferred form of treatment; receive a health-related service from the hospital, while also diminishing accountability for making this request in case it turns out to be irregular; give reasons for selecting the current hospital; or challenge the doctor's expertise. Another possible motive is to receive special attention from the treating doctor. We suggest that doctors and patients are particularly inclined to invoke relatives-plus-medical professionals as third parties because of two social forces within Vietnamese culture: collectivism and social status. We also adduce evidence that, as a determinant of the patient's future treatment for their problem, their familial relationship with the third party overrides this person's status as a medical professional in this cultural context. More broadly, our findings indicate that medical communication is not invariant across cultures, but can be shaped by culture-specific forces.

Index Terms—medical communication, third parties, cultural context, Vietnam, Conversation Analysis

I. INTRODUCTION

One feature of doctor-patient communication that has been noted in the research literature is the practice of invoking third parties (Bergmann, 1992; Gill & Maynard, 2006; Heritage & Robinson, 2006). These individuals have included medical professionals (e.g., general practitioners), professionals from other fields (e.g., social workers or the police), and non-professionals (e.g., family members or friends). In addition, the practice itself has been found to occur at various stages of the consultation. Yet, despite this interest on the part of investigators in this field, it would be fair to say that a dedicated and in-depth examination of the practice of invoking third parties among doctors and patients is still called for. The chief aim of the present study is to address this research deficit.

Moreover, our investigation is situated in the Vietnamese cultural context. Within research dealing with medical discourse generally, this context has so far garnered relatively little attention (for details, see H. T. L. Nguyen et al., 2018). In the current study, we aim to augment the relatively meagre stock of research on Vietnamese doctor-patient discourse in general, and make scholarly coverage of this type of discourse more representative in cross-cultural terms as a result.

Quite apart from this lack of research, the Vietnamese cultural context seems a promising one in which to investigate the practice of invoking third parties. There are two main reasons for this. To begin with, Vietnamese society is collectivist (Bao Dat,¹ 2001; Hofstede, 2001), a consequence of an agrarian lifestyle which emphasises the importance of interdependence among people in cultivating food (V. Q. Tran, To, Nguyen, Lam & Tran, 1998). The influence of this collectivism is particularly keenly felt within family relationships (Kádár & Mills, 2011; Thompson, 1965), especially when important decisions need to be made (Appel, 2013; Kim, Klinge, Sharkey, Park, Smith, & Cai, 2000; T. X. Nguyen, 1994).

The second reason is that Vietnamese society has a deeply-ingrained hierarchical structure (Edwards & Phan, 2013) which will likely reveal itself in doctor-patient discourse as well. And indeed this expectation is borne out in the extant literature. According to Pham (2014), doctors in Vietnam often presuppose that patients meet them to address biomedical concerns only, and formulate their information-seeking moves accordingly. In studies on the patient's perspective, the main finding has been that these participants tend to adopt an inhibited, compliant attitude towards those who are charged with treating them. Fancher et al. (2010) found that the patients in their study rarely expressed their concerns directly unless asked. In G. Nguyen et al. (2007), even though most of the patients reported being

¹ This author's name consists of a middle name plus first name only (i.e., there is no surname). Accordingly, we have cited each of these names in full.

dissatisfied with their communication with their doctors in certain respects, they still gave credence to what their doctors told them about their health. Almost all of the patients in K. Tran (2009) claimed to have only spoken when invited to do so by the doctor. Tran adds that this behavior was motivated by a desire to minimise any imposition on the doctor's autonomy, avoid hurting the doctor's feelings, or reduce the likelihood of any negative evaluation of the patient's low English proficiency.

These two characteristics of Vietnamese society have led us to select a particular type of third party for close scrutiny in the present study. Our view is that the collectivist aspect of this culture especially favours the invocation of third parties who are relatives of the patient. At the same time, the hierarchical structure of Vietnamese society has its own implications for this practice. A third-party medical professional not only enjoys relatively high social status but is also an 'insider' working in the same field (and perhaps even in the same hospital). In this light, third-party medical professionals might be expected to exert more influence over the outcome of medical consultations than high-status third parties from other walks of life. Accordingly, each of the third parties included in this study is a relative of the patient who also happens to be a medical professional² (cf. Bergmann, 1992; Gill & Maynard, 2006; Heritage & Robinson, 2006).

A noteworthy feature of previous work on doctor-patient discourse in the Vietnamese cultural context in general is that, unlike Bergmann (1992), Gill and Maynard (2006) and Heritage and Robinson (2006), no study has adopted Conversation Analysis as its framework (for a comprehensive overview of how CA³ has been applied to medical communication, see Gill & Roberts, 2013). In this respect, the current study fills a significant methodological gap.

II. THIRD PARTIES IN MEDICAL COMMUNICATION

Studies which deal, at least in part, with the practice of invoking third parties among doctors and patients have been quite varied in certain respects. In one study, this practice is employed by health professionals. Bergmann (1992) discovered that psychiatrists invoke third parties within *discreetly exploring utterances* in intake interviews as a strategy for eliciting information from prospective patients about their⁴ mental state. Along with the patient's behavior in the interview, this information is used by the medical professional to decide if the patient should be hospitalised. In Extract 1, a psychiatrist is talking to a married couple, and must determine if the wife should be committed. He has just concluded a telephone call with the referring doctor (data from p. 138).

Extract 1

- 1 Dr. F (I just) got the information, (0.8)
 2 (that you're) not doing so well.
 3 Ms. B Yea::h well that is [the opinion
 4 Dr. F [Is that correct?
 5 Ms. B of Doctor Hollmann.

In his initiating move in lines 1-2, the psychiatrist indicates that his knowledge of the patient's state comes from another source ('(I just) got the information'), and is therefore not necessarily accurate. Bergmann suggests that, in framing his knowledge in these terms, the psychiatrist is inviting the patient to supply an authoritative account of her health condition. The provenance of his knowledge is then identified in Ms. B's response in line 3.

Other studies are concerned instead with the invocation of third parties by patients. Two motives for engaging in this practice have been identified. In Gill and Maynard (2006; see also Gill, 1998), it is used when the patient embeds an explanation for their symptoms within a *frank question* which, in addition to dealing with sensitive information, limits the doctor's possible range of responses. Gill and Maynard point out that, each time this type of question is put to the doctor in their data, this occurs during a phase of the consultation where they are not gathering information. Consider Extract 2. Notice that Ms. N mitigates her question about the cause of her depression by invoking her health aide, and also that this question does not receive an edifying response (data from p. 127).

Extract 2

- 1 Ms. N You know do you think I'm getting depressed at these times
 2 because'v my period? A friend- er my health aide pointed
 3 that out.
 4 (1.0)((Dr. puts down his pen)
 ((10 lines omitted where patient further
 describes her depression and not feeling well))
 14 Dr. D No Anna I've never had a very good- (1.2) feeling for what-
 15 makes you go down in the dumps

In Heritage and Robinson (2006), patients invoke third parties in order to present their health concerns as reasonable and well-founded, while simultaneously also diffusing responsibility for taking the step of seeking treatment. This is exemplified in Extract 3. In the past, this patient has received treatment for a carcinoma on the back of her neck, and she

² Note that we do not refer to the third party as 'a medical professional who also happens to be a relative of the patient.' In our analysis of Extract 6 later on, we will see that the ordering used in the main text more accurately reflects the comparative importance of these two attributes of the third party in determining the outcome of the consultation.

³ The following abbreviations are used in this article: CA - Conversation Analysis; CLA - classifier; COP - copula; D - doctor, HON - honorific; INT - interrogative; P - patient, PRT - particle; PST - past tense; RM - relative-plus-medical professional.

⁴ Throughout this paper, we use the gender-neutral pronoun 'they/their etc.' if the referent's gender is unspecified.

has just found a suspicious bump (referred to as a “mole” in line 7) at, or near, the same location as before (data from p. 59).

Extract 3

- 1 P I'm here on fal[se pre-pretenses.<I think.
 2 D [hh
 3 D [<Yes.
 4 P [ehh! hih heh heh heh!
 5 ((Five lines omitted))
 6 P I asked my husband yesterday 'cause I could feel: (0.8) (cause)
 7 I: could feel this li'l mo:le coming. An:d: uh (0.5) (he) (.) I:
 8 hh thought I better letchya know-<uh well I asked my husband' f
 9 it was in the same place you took off thuh (0.5) 'thee (mm)

The patient expresses uncertainty about the legitimacy of her concerns overtly in line 1. This is followed up in lines 6 and 8, where she diminishes her own accountability for seeking medical attention by invoking her husband.

The studies cited above have three key limitations. In the first place, there is the fundamental problem that the invocation of third parties in doctor-patient communication has only been sparsely investigated. Indeed, to the best of our knowledge, the only published study to have examined its use by medical professionals of any sort (in contrast to patients) has been Bergmann (1992).

Second, this dearth of scholarly attention is exacerbated by the fact that, even when researchers *have* shown interest in this phenomenon, it has been afforded only subsidiary importance within studies concerned with other issues. Bergmann's overriding objective is to show that, instead of treating a discreetly exploring utterance as a gambit which invites the prospective patient to talk about their problems in their own words, the patient may instead regard it as a bid to unearth evidence of conduct that is, in some sense, improper. Whether or not the utterance invokes a third party is beside the point. Gill and Maynard (2006) analyse how the patient puts forward an explanation for their medical problems during the information-gathering phase of the consultation, and how the doctor responds to this potential disruption, while Heritage and Robinson (2006) explore the ways in which the patient justifies their decision to see a doctor. Within each of these last two studies, the invocation of a third party is merely one of several means of achieving a particular end.

Lastly, note that the focus of Bergmann's (1992) study is psychiatric care. This is a concern if we allow for the possibility that the behavior of this group may not be representative of medical professionals more generally: while the information that psychiatrists need to elicit is, by its very nature, highly sensitive, this is not always true of general practitioners. In this light, the invocation of third parties by doctors in particular seems even more deserving of further investigation.

In the present study, we seek to address these limitations of previous work in this specific area.

III. METHODOLOGY

The data for this study comes from 66 primary-care visits at two public hospitals in Vietnam.⁵ The visits were recorded between June and August 2016. Ethical clearance for the study was granted by the University of Southern Queensland. Fifteen doctors and 66 patients took part in the study. The data was collected from audio recordings, and all of it was transcribed in the original Vietnamese by the first author using ELAN software. The extracts included in the present paper were then translated into English by both authors. Finally, all participants were de-identified using pseudonyms. The CA transcription notation used in this study is based on the one found in Jefferson (2004), except that one symbol (i.e., the hash (#) sign) has been added. The participants in this project often produced certain words so quickly that they were almost inaudible (e.g., the word *không* ('no') in *Tôi không biết* ('I don't know'), when this formulaic chunk was used). In a case like this, the swallowed utterance or part thereof is enclosed within hashes (e.g., *Tôi #không# biết*) in the data extracts.

IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In this section, we look at the invocation of RMs by doctors and then by patients. All instances of RM invocation by the patients occurred when the patient expanded their response to an elicitation by the doctor. This section includes every instance that occurred in the 66 visits.

Doctors invoking RMs

In Extract 4, doctor Chu invokes an RM working in his hospital in order to elicit information from patient Sang. Sang has pain and numbness in her legs.⁶

Extract 4

⁵ In the present paper, we do not discuss all 66 visits, but limit our coverage to the ones which contain examples of the phenomenon under investigation.

⁶ This exchange happened during the history-taking and physical examination stage of the consultation. The discourse which occurred immediately before this exchange was concerned with the problem with Sang's legs.

- 106 Chu *mệ* *!Q::* *củ::a* *anh* *Cánh* *à?*
 grandma⁷ aunt of older+brother⁸ Canh INT
You are Canh's aunt?⁹
- 107 (1.4)
- 108 Sang *!hư?*
 huh
Huh?
- 109 (0.3)
- 110 Chu *Q* *của anh* *Cánh* *à?*
 aunt of older+brother Canh INT
Canh's aunt?
- 111 (1.6)
- 112 Sang *\$hi hi hi* [*hi hi\$*]
- 113 Chu [*Q::* *của anh*] *Cánh* *à?*
 aunt of older+brother Canh INT
Canh's aunt?
- 114 (0.3)
- 115 Sang *biế::t* *rồi* *mà cứ* [#*hấn#*]- (.) *hắn* *c(h)á-* (.)
 see already but keep he PRT
I'm with you.¹⁰ He-
- 116 Chu [*dạ::*]
 OK
OK.
- 117 Sang *\$hà ha hi hi hi* [*hi\$*]
- 118 Chu [*VỒ*] *ĐÂY* *có* *bị-*= *đợt* *trước* *có* *bị* }
 stay here PST have hospitalisation last PST have
- 119 *rối+loa:::n*
 disorder
You had a problem with your vestibular system in your last stay in hospital.
- 120 Sang *có* *rối+loa:::n*
 PST disorder
That's right.
- 121 (0.2)
- 122 Chu *dạ::*
 yes
Yes.
- 123 Sang *răng lại* *bác* *!biế::t?*
 how PRT doctor know
How do you know?
- 124 (0.3)
- 125 Chu *dạ:* (.) *có* *nghe anh* *Cánh* *kể::i*
 HON PRT listen older+brother Canh tell
Canh told me.
- 126 (0.3)
- 127 Sang *ờ::* (.) *\$hi hi hi hi hi hi hi hi\$* (.) *.hhhhhh*
 mmm
Mmm.

After a lapse of 6.1 seconds (data not shown), doctor Chu abruptly moves to the topic of Sang's nephew, a doctor named Canh. Chu poses a question ending with the particle *à* (line 106) polarised in a positive direction to invite a *preferred next action* (Pomerantz, 1984). After a delay of 1.4 seconds (line 107), Sang's use of an *open-class form* (Drew, 1997), *!hư?* ('Huh?'; line 108), signals that she is having difficulty understanding Chu's talk. This turn treats Chu's question as an *other-initiated repair* (Schegloff, Jefferson, & Sacks, 1977) which suspends the progressivity of the sequence. It is not an answer to Chu's question, but starts off a new question-answer sequence. Chu thus reconstructs his turn as a repair (line 110). After a 1.6-second silence (line 111), Sang laughs instead of answering Chu's question (line 112). This laughter communicates that Sang registers Chu's request as delicate, thus displaying her

⁷ The hierarchical organisation of Vietnamese society is reflected in a large number of kinship terms used for addressing and referring to others (for more information, see H. T. L. Nguyen et al., 2018).

⁸ We use a plus (+) sign to join together two or more words in the Vietnamese transcription. The other options conventionally used for this purpose (e.g., a period or a hyphen) are unsuitable, as both these symbols have values within the CA transcription system. For consistency, we use the same symbol for this purpose in the interlinear morpheme gloss as well.

⁹ In morphosyntactic terms (including the use of ellipsis), Vietnamese and English diverge considerably (H. D. Nguyen, 2009). Our priority in the translations is to strike a balance between the naturalness of the English on one hand and faithfulness to the original on the original. For the sake of clarity, we also occasionally add some information that is left implicit in the original.

¹⁰ In other words, the patient is able to follow what the doctor is telling her.

reluctance to disclose this information to Chu (Haakana, 2001). This triggers Chu's repeat of his own question for the second time (line 113). At this point, Sang acknowledges her receipt of his question (line 115); however, this conforms to neither the question's action nor its *topical agenda* (Raymond, 2003), as her response does not contain 'yes' or 'no', or answer Chu's question. Having received Sang's *non-answer response* (Enfield, Stivers, & Levinson, 2010), Chu makes a bald assertion about her health condition, and ends by stretching his talk at *rôi+loq:::.....n* ('a problem with your vestibular system'; lines 118-119). Sang then confirms Chu's presupposition (line 120), but expresses uncertainty about how Chu could have obtained this information (line 123). In response, Chu attributes this information to Canh (line 125).

In this extract, doctor Chu invokes an RM (i.e., doctor Canh; line 106) as a fishing¹¹ device to elicit information from Sang. Once he has elicited this information, Chu is able to convince her of the veracity of this information as well (line 125), since it came from an RM.

Patients invoking RMs

In the first extract to be considered in this section, patient Cam invokes her daughter-in-law, Linh, who is a doctor in a large hospital in the community, in explaining why she has not brought the necessary medical documentation to the consultation. Cam has had back and leg pain for four months, and has sought treatment for these difficulties at another hospital before. Extract 5 takes place right after doctor Hung has asked Cam to show him any medical papers related to her previous treatment.

Extract 5

- 94 Cam *đó::(.) bác cho::: mẹ (.) mai mẹ*
so doctor allow grandma tomorrow grandma
- 95 *đem [đi #cũng#] được [hi]?*
bring to PRT can INT
- 96 Hung **So, could I bring the medical papers to you tomorrow?**
[/da:] [sáng] mai mẹ đem tới rồi để+cho
yes morning tomorrow grandma bring to then so+that
- 97 *con coa:::i rồ::i [à:::-]*
offspring look and uh
- 98 Cam **Yes. Bring them in tomorrow morning so that I can have a look at them and-**
[khi] ma:i mẹ có hỏi cô Linh mà cô
in morning grandma PST ask doctor Linh but doctor
- 99 *Linh nói /thôi mẹ ưa đem+đi #cũng# được mà không #cũng# được (.)*
Linh say anyway grandma like bring PRT can but no also can
- 100 *thôi*
anyway
- 101 Hung [da:]
OK
OK.
- 102 Cam [mẹ] mới đầu khá::m đi khá:m thì mẹ [đi rừ::a] cho
grandma just first visit come visit so grandma walk like+that for
- 103 *thong+ [thá:]*
without+difficulty
- Lines 98-100 & 102-103: I asked doctor Linh this morning, but she said it didn't matter whether I brought them in today or not. She said that as this was my first visit, I left them at home so that I could come here on foot without having to carry them as well.
- 104 Hung [da rồ::i]
HON OK
[ma:i]
tomorrow
- 105 **That's OK. Tomorrow will be fine.**
(0.3)
- 106 Cam *mẹ đi+bộ từ /trê:::n (0.4) cuối đườ:ng Nguyễn [Huê:::] (.) về đây*
grandma walk from on end street Nguyen Hue to here
- 107 **I walked from the end of Nguyen Hue Street to this hospital.**
[da]
OK
OK.

Having told Hung that she left the papers at home (data not shown), Cam proposes an alternative solution to this problem at lines 94-95. Hung's uptake registers her proposal as acceptable (lines 96-97). In this turn, he only states the reason why the papers are needed, without making any complaint about Cam's actions. However, Cam's next turn reveals that she has interpreted Hung's utterance as a complaint (Sidnell, 2012). In *khi ma:i mẹ có hỏi cô Linh* ('I asked doctor Linh this morning'), Cam implies that she is not at fault for leaving the papers at home: she has merely acted on the advice of her daughter-in-law, who is a medical expert. In this account (lines 98-100 and 102-103), Cam reports the advice of Linh, *mẹ đi rừ::a cho thong thả*: ('I could come here on foot without having to carry them as well'), to imply that she has difficulty walking. On receiving Hung's acceptance of her suggestion (line 104), Cam then expands her talk

¹¹ 'Fishing' is a term coined by Pomerantz (1980) to describe a technique that the doctor uses to collect information when they have limited knowledge of the patient's health condition ahead of the consultation.

to offer further justification for her actions (line 106). She discloses the location of her home, and through a self-initiated repair, replaces /tr ê:::~:~:n/ ('on') with cuối ('end') to emphasise the long distance from her home to this hospital. The implication is that, while walking itself is difficult enough for a patient with leg pain, carrying papers such a long distance will be especially so.

On their own, Cam's physical limitations would not be sufficient justification for leaving the papers at home. However, she is also able to invoke an RM in support of her actions. From her point of view, this makes them defensible.

Whereas Cam in the previous extract invoked an RM in order to avoid having to do something, in Extract 6 patient Luong uses the same strategy to obtain something that she wants. She has pain in her back running down her legs.

Extract 6

- 111 Quynh có khi+mô CHẤM+cứu uống thuốc BẮC /không?
PRT ever acupuncture take medicine Chinese INT
Have you ever had acupuncture together with Chinese medicinal herbs?
- 112 (0.2)
- 113 Luong khô:ng (0.5) thuốc /Bắ:c là qua mua Thọ Xuân Đườ:ng
no medicine Chinese COP go buy Tho Xuan Duong
No. I bought Chinese medicinal herbs at Tho Xuan Duong.
- 114 Quynh à mu:a Thọ Xuân Đườ:ng, (.) là uố:ng thôi chơ+đầ:u có châm /hây?
oh buy Tho Xuan Duong COP medication only not PRT acupuncture INT
Oh, you bought some medication at Tho Xuan Duong. So you've only had Chinese medicinal herbs, not acupuncture?
- 115 Luong khô:ng (.) uố:ng thôi
no medication only
No. Medication only.
- 116 (0.3)
- 117 Quynh rồ::i (.) [đạ]
OK OK
OK. OK.
- 118 Luong [#khô:ng#châm]
no acupuncture
No acupuncture.
- 119 (0.2)
- 120 Quynh [đạ:rồ::i]
HON OK
OK.
- 121 Luong [nói tóm+lại] là châm mà sợ #khô:ng#châm (0.3) châm
say briefly COP acupuncture COP worried not acupuncture acupuncture
I just don't like acupuncture. I'm worried that it might cause high blood pressure.
- 122 là a- sợ á:p huyế:t #hắ:n#lê:n
COP uh worried pressure blood it high
I just don't like acupuncture. I'm worried that it might cause high blood pressure.
(108 lines deleted)
- 230 Luong bạ #con#Lan vẹ qua châm mà có qua mô:i
day Ms. Lan tell come acupuncture but PRT go not
A few days ago, Lan told me to come to her house for acupuncture, but I didn't go.
- 231 (1.1)
- 232 Quynh đạ
OK
OK.
(58 lines deleted)
- 290 Quynh có điề:u+kiệ:n đế+mà vớ đầ::y châm =từ Mai Dich [vớ] đầ:y
have able to come here acupuncture from Mai Dich to here
Can you come here for acupuncture? Is it far from here to Mai Dich?
- 291 xạ /không?
far INT
Can you come here for acupuncture? Is it far from here to Mai Dich?
- 292 Luong [khô:ng]
no
No.¹²

¹² This utterance is a response to only the first of Quynh's questions in lines 290-291.

- 293 (0.5)
294 *đừng châm nữ:a (0.7)*
no acupuncture PRT
No acupuncture.
- 295 *kê:: mà mua thuốc uố:ng thôi?*
prescribe to buy medication take just
Just prescribe me some medication.
- 296 (0.2)
297 Quynh *mu::a (.) thút ún thôi háy?*
buy medication take just INT
Just medication?
- 298 (0.3)
299 Luong *đi mua thuốc uống [thôi chơ::] không [châm]*
go buy medication take just but no acupuncture
No acupuncture. Just medication.
- 300 Quynh [nế::u+nhr::] [ngoài] Ai Dịch có trạm y+tế:
if in Mai Dich have station medical
- 301 *gần aị (0.4) chị chịu+khó qua đó #hả#châm kết+hop đi (0.5)*
near PRT older+sister try go there they acupuncture together PRT
- 302 *thì vừa châm+cứu vừa thuốc Bắc #cho# [mau lành]*
COP both acupuncture and medicine Chinese for quickly better
If you live near a medical station in Mai Dich, try going there for acupuncture together with Chinese medicinal herbs, and you'll get better quickly.
- 303 Luong [trạ:m #hả#] *cần i+này*
station it near PRT
- 304 (0.2) *dà: mô tư::(.) sau nrong trước+mặt dà:: a+nì (0.9)*
house PRT at behind backyard front house PRT
It's quite near, behind my backyard- in front of my house.
- 305 *dà:: #con# La:n aị*
house Ms. Lan PRT
That's Lan's house.
- 306 (0.4)
307 Quynh *dạ::*
OK
OK.
- 308 (0.2)
309 Luong *á::*
mmm
Mmm.
- 310 (0.3)
311 Quynh *níc+là cái chị Lan làm ở đây là ở gần chị*
mean PRT older+sister Lan work in here COP live near older+sister
- 312 *phải+ /KHÔNG?=
INT
You mean, Lan who works here lives near you. Is that right?*
- 313 Luong *=GÁ:N (.) cả hai mẹ con gần nhau luôn+đây*
near both two mother offspring near each+other PRT
Yes. We two live near each other.
- 314 Quynh *ri::a+thi:: nhờ: chị /La:n (.) háy? (0.2)*
so ask older+sister Lan INT
So how about asking Lan?
- 315 *[nhờ chị Lan chị::] châm thêm*
ask older+sister Lan older+sister acupuncture combine
Ask Lan to do acupuncture for you.
- 316 Luong *[nhờ La::n được]*
ask Lan can
I can ask Lan.
- 317 *mà chừ::: (.) mua- mua- mua= mua thuốc:c uố:ng #cũng# được::c*
but now buy medication take also enough
But medication is enough.
- 318 (0.3)
319 Quynh *dạ:::*
OK
OK.

In the first sequence about Luong's previous treatment for her legs (lines 111-121), doctor Quynh asks if Luong's leg pain has been treated with acupuncture along with Chinese medicinal herbs (line 111). This elicitation displays Quynh's orientation towards her recommendation of acupuncture and Chinese medicinal herbs for Luong's problem. Anticipating Quynh's agenda, Luong rejects the option of acupuncture on the grounds that she thinks it may cause high

blood pressure (lines 121-122). After 108 lines concerned with Luong's problems with her back and her blood pressure (data not shown), Luong rejects the acupuncture option again, this time invoking the third party, Lan, to support her rejection of this option (line 230). Luong's use of the recognitional form (i.e., Lan's personal name) implies that the referent is known to Quynh at this point. Quynh treats Luong's invocation of Lan as a form of resistance. In delayed fashion after 1.1 seconds (line 231), she shows her disaffiliation through a weak token, *đạ* ('OK'; line 232). As the consultation develops, Quynh returns to her previous agenda by recommending acupuncture (in combination with Chinese medicinal herbs) for the third time (lines 290-291). Luong continues to actively resist the acupuncture treatment option (line 292). After two pauses (lines 293 and 295), Luong states the reason for her rejection of Quynh's treatment option, and requests an alternative, *mua thuốc uống* ('some medication'; line 296). Once again, Luong reaffirms her treatment preference (line 301) in her response to Quynh's request-for-confirmation question (line 299). Despite this resistance, Quynh sticks to her treatment recommendation (lines 301-303). In response, Luong mentions the location of the village hospital (lines 304-305 and 307), which triggers two utterances from Quynh: one (line 314) seeks Luong's confirmation, and one (line 315) acts as a recommendation. Luong responds to Quynh's recommendation using a *pro forma agreement* format (Schegloff, 2007), *nhờ Lan được* ('I can ask Lan'; line 316), as if to suggest that she will act on this recommendation. A *pro forma agreement* format means the speaker initially commits to the future course of action but later shows their disagreement. As it happens, Luong quickly reverts to her initial position (lines 317).

The exchange in Extract 6 indicates how patient Luong actively resists Quynh's treatment recommendation by refusing to take acupuncture. This is significant on two related levels. In general terms, it represents a triumph of the lay voice over the expert voice—a result which crucially depends on Lan's status as an RM. More particularly, this exchange also tells us something about the relative importance of collectivism and social status in determining treatment outcomes in this cultural context. As we saw above, Quynh's preferred treatment plan is that Luong should supplement her existing regime of medication with acupuncture. Luong's response is to associate the acupuncture option with another medical professional, Lan. This association then enables her to use her familial relationship with Lan to forestall Quynh's preferred treatment agenda and, ultimately, supplant it with her own. In short, as a determinant of her future treatment for her health problems, Luong's familial relationship with Lan takes precedence over Lan's status as a medical professional.

At the same time, Quynh's concession is problematic from a medical perspective (Stivers, 2006). In taking this step, she puts the final treatment decision in the hands of Luong on the basis that her health is her own responsibility: as a health provider, Quynh's role is only to give her advice, and not to impose her own treatment agenda on her. This step necessarily also has the effect of diminishing Quynh's accountability for any problems that might result from Luong's future treatment.

In Extract 6, Luong invoked an RM in order to obtain her preferred treatment option. The patient in Extract 7 also wants something, but this time it is a particular type of service. In her exchange with doctor Si, patient Nhu invokes her niece Tuyen, who is working in the same hospital, in an attempt to get the hospital to decoct some Chinese medicinal herbs for such an outpatient as her.

Extract 7

- 47 Nhu TUI là- là (.) là- (.) O của #con# TUYỀN (0.6) mà rằng ngày ni hẳn nghỉ::
I COP aunt of CLA Tuyen but why day this she off
- 48 rồi (0.5) mà hẳn- hẳn nói:::i là (0.6) là- là ở+đây có sắc thuốc
PRT but she say COP COP here PRT decoct medication
- 49 (0.3) °đó:::°
PRT
I'm Tuyen's aunt. But she's off today. She said that this hospital can decoct medication for patients.
- 50 (0.7)
- 51 Si ↑à:: (.) sắc thì ngoại+trú::: (.) giống+như dì là không- có chế+độ
oh decoct COP outpatient like aunt COP not have regulation
- 52 sắc được
decoction PRT
Oh, according to our regulations, we don't decoct medication for outpatients like you.
- 53 Nhu hà:::
oh
Oh.

At lines 47-49, Nhu prefaces her turn with the information that Tuyen is her niece, notes her absence, and then raises the issue of medication decoction. She pauses several times between turn construction units to express her uncertainty about the veracity of the second and third pieces of information, while also stretching her talk at *nghỉ::* ('off'), *nói:::i* ('she [i.e., Tuyen] said'), and *°đó:::°* to corroborate her claim. In response (lines 51-52), Si's upward-intoned *↑à::* ('oh'), plus details of the hospital regulations in second position, indicate that Nhu's sequence-initiating action has occasioned a *marked shift of attention* (Heritage, 1998). This aims to express a rejection of Nhu's presupposition. Nhu's stretched upshot, *hà::* ('Oh'; line 53), then signals a *change-of-state token* (Heritage, 1984), and treats Si's information as new.

Nhu's first-pair part in this sequence (lines 47-49) is noteworthy in two respects. First, this turn is prefaced with information that seems irrelevant to the consultation: *tui là O của con Tuyền* ('I'm Tuyen's aunt'). She raises her pitch

on the name, *TUYẾN*, to draw attention to the fact that this is new information (Kidwell, 2013). In addition, Nhu's use of the final particle *°đó::°* affords her claim the function of an announcement. Because she attributes the information about medication decoction to her niece, Nhu is able to disclose this information to Si in this forthright manner, which in turn legitimises her request that the hospital decoct medication for her.

So far in this section, we have seen patients invoke RMs in order to avoid something (Extract 5) or obtain something (Extracts 6 and 7). Neither of the remaining two extracts falls neatly into either of these categories. In each case, the patient explains why he has sought treatment in the current hospital rather than somewhere else. Consider Extract 8. Binh has suffered from seizures for four months, and was hospitalised for 20 days at a hospital in the city where the seizures started. Since he came to Vinh City three months earlier, Binh has not sought any treatment at all. This extract is concerned with doctor Yen's elicitation of information about his previous treatment.

Extract 8

- 96 Yen *bơ- (0.2) bơ- bở về Vi:nh (.) về Vi:nh là CHU:A điều+trị chi ↑hết?*
so return Vinh return Vinh COP not treatment any at+all
So you haven't had any treatment since you returned to Vinh?
- 97 Binh *chư:a chi hết*
not any all
None at all.
- 98 Yen *rôi:*
OK
OK.
- 99 Binh *bữa+ [ni mới đi-]*
today PRT go
- 100 Yen *[mà giờ]+c [hừ::]*
but today
But today-
- 101 Binh *[qua đây]*
to here
Lines 100 & 102: **Today is the first time I've looked for treatment.**
- 102 (0.2)
- 103 Yen *chừ: mới qua đây_i=*
today PRT go here
You haven't looked for treatment until today.
- 104 Binh *=ô: con- (0.2) con THU: là chá:u (0.2) kêu bằng bác*
mmm Ms Thu COP niece address COP uncle
Mmm. Ms Thu is my niece.
- 105 Yen *dạ:: ↑rôi*
HON OK
OK.

Doctor Yen opens the sequence with a question in the form of a declarative (lines 96-97). An utterance of this type formulates a 'B-event' (i.e., known to B, but not to A; Labov & Fanshel, 1977), and counts as a request for information to which the patient has primary access. If it is negatively polarised, the use of a declarative question favours a 'no' response (Boyd & Heritage, 2006), and this is what Binh supplies (line 98). Yen registers her receipt of Binh's information with *rôi:* ('OK'; line 99), without seeking any information. However, Binh adds further details to support his response (line 100). After several lines of *post-start-up overlap* (Gardner & Mushin, 2007) and *terminal overlapping talk* (Jefferson, 1984), Yen resolves the overlap using a *marked self-retrieval* (Jefferson, 2004) at line 104. This resolution leads Binh to invoke an RM, his niece Thu, who also happens to work in this hospital (data not shown).

In this extract, Binh's invocation of an RM, Thu, accomplishes two possible social actions. To begin with, he justifies his decision to seek treatment at the current hospital. Binh returned to Vinh three months ago, but has not sought treatment anywhere for his seizures: this tells us that his seizures have not been serious enough to require urgent attention. In turn, we can conclude that Binh decided to seek treatment today on Thu's recommendation. Second, consider how Binh invokes his niece at line 105. He stutters at *con-* ('Ms.') and pauses for 0.2 seconds, before raising his pitch and stretching at the name of his niece, *THU:*. The stuttering and pause indicate that Binh is having difficulty disclosing the information that Thu is his niece. More to the point, however, the pitch-raising and stretching communicate Binh's desire to draw Yen's attention to his relationship with this RM in the hope that Yen will look after him especially conscientiously.

Whereas Binh leaves his reasons for choosing the current hospital implicit, Duc in Extract 9 makes them explicit to doctor Tung. In addition, as we shall see shortly, the situation depicted in this extract is more complex than the one in the previous extract in certain respects. This extract is taken after Duc presents his back problem.

Extract 9

- 37 Tung *mà vó: (.) bệnh+viện ↑mô?*
so go hospital what
So, what hospital did you go to?
- 38 (0.8)
- 39 Duc *tôi: (.) đi chơi Ninh Bình?*
I go holiday Ninh Binh
I went on holiday in Ninh Binh.
- 40 Tung *Ninh BÌNH ↑ha?*
Ninh Binh INT
'Ninh Binh?'
- 41 Duc *dạ (.) thì tôi đau trong nó rồi tôi meo+ra cho ông+thông+gia ↑tôi*
yes COP I pain in there then I email to daughter-in-law+father I
Yes. The pain started when I was there, so I emailed my daughter-in-law's father-
- 42 (0.2)
- 43 Tung *dạ: [::]*
OK
OK.
- 44 Duc *[(vi) ông]+thông+gia tôi chuyên (0.4) chữa ci- ci: (.) cột+sống*
because daughter-in-law+father I specialise treatment CLA spine
45 *này ↑mà*
this PRT
because he specialises in spinal treatment.
- 46 Tung *dạ:*
OK
I see.
- 47 Duc *thì ông meo+vô cho rồi thuốc này- (0.2) thuốc nó thuốc*
COP he email to PRT medication this medication that medication
48 *(.) thì tôi [mua tôi] uống thế+là*
then I buy I take and
In his email, he recommended various kinds of medication. I bought them and took them, and-
- 49 Tung *[dạ]*
OK
OK.
- 50 Duc *nó: (.) thuyên+giảm ngay là tôi: (0.5) hôm+qua tôi ra*
it decrease immediately COP I yesterday I come+back
51 *hôm+qua tôi ra bằng (.) xe+nằm*
yesterday I come+back by coach
the pain decreased immediately. So I was able to come back here by coach yesterday.
- 52 (0.2)
- 53 Tung *dạ::*
OK
OK.
- 54 (0.3)
- 55 Duc *đế- đế:: (.) đế:n (0.6) khám hôm+qua họ bảo nhập+viện #xong# tôi*
come check-up yesterday they tell hospitalise then I
56 *về hỏi ch- ông tư+vấn ông thì ông bảo là: (0.5) cứ vào+viện*
leave ask him advice he then he tell COP try hospitalise
57 *đi kết+hợp bên (.) ↑thuốc+men với bên (.) ↑châm+cứu xem+thứ ra+rằng*
PRT combine PRT medication with PRT acupuncture see how
When I came to this hospital yesterday for a check-up, they advised me to stay for treatment. Then I asked him for advice, and he told me to stay here and combine medication with acupuncture, and see how it went.
- 58 Tung *dạ:*
OK
OK.

The talk included in this extract begins at the start of the consultation proper. As necessary background, note that Duc has just tried to take some medication in the presence of doctor Tung, but has been told not to. On witnessing this, Tung presupposes that Duc must have sought treatment elsewhere before coming to the present hospital (line 37). Duc responds with a narrative that spells out the reason why he chose this hospital (lines 39, 41, 44-45, 47-48, 50-51, and 55-57). In this narrative, he invokes his daughter-in-law's father, a specialist in spinal medicine (lines 44-45). Duc reveals that this RM has recommended some medication for him, and has advised him to seek treatment in this hospital (lines 47-48 and 55-57). However, this receives no assessment from Tung except an acknowledgement token (line 58).

Duc's invocation of an RM expresses an ambivalent attitude towards Tung. On one hand, by invoking someone who happens to be a clinical expert in the relevant medical field, Duc justifies purchasing medication for his back pain at another health centre before this consultation, and even attempting to take this medication right in front of his new

attending doctor. On the other hand, Duc's invocation of the RM also provides him with a rationale for seeking treatment for a doctorable health issue in the present hospital, where, needless to say, he will be in the care of someone else again. In short, by opting to seek treatment here, Duc reveals a certain willingness to put his faith in Tung. It is also possible that, in invoking an RM in this situation, Duc hopes to receive better care from Tung than otherwise, as noted in our analysis of the consultation featured in Extract 8.

V. CONCLUSION

As we have seen, the participants in this study have diverse motives for invoking an RM in a medical consultation. Our data contains one instance in which this is done by the doctor. In Extract 4, Chu invokes an RM in order to elicit information from patient Sang, so our findings are in line with Bergmann's (1992) in this regard at least. At the same time, the information Chu elicits is not sensitive in nature, whereas in the earlier study the information elicited by the psychiatrists was indeed sensitive. This constitutes evidence that medical professionals invoke third parties as an elicitation strategy regardless of whether the information is sensitive or not. Needless to say, however, this conclusion is based on a limited pool of data. We need more work to be done before firm conclusions about the role played by informational sensitivity in this situation can be drawn.

Our analysis of the patient data has yielded three further results. First and foremost, the practice of invoking an RM in this cultural context empowers the patient to behave more assertively in a variety of medical scenarios than they might otherwise do (Fancher et al., 2010; G. T. Nguyen et al., 2007; K. Tran, 2009). One patient manages to circumvent a troublesome administrative requirement (Extract 5), while another invokes an RM in order to obtain a preferred form of treatment (Extract 6). In Extract 7, the patient wishes to receive a health-related service from the hospital, while also diminishing their accountability for making this request in case it turns out to be irregular. Still other patients adopt this practice in giving reasons for selecting the current hospital, and possibly also in the hope of receiving special attention from their treating doctor (Extracts 8 and 9). In Extract 9, the patient also invokes an RM in order to challenge the attending doctor's expertise.

Moreover, these motives for invoking third parties differ from the ones observed in earlier research conducted in the Western cultural context.¹³ Recall from Section 1 that the patient in Gill and Maynard (2006) invokes a third party in order to mitigate a frank and constraining question about her health condition. In Heritage and Robinson (2006), this practice serves to validate the patient's health concerns, and to diffuse their accountability for taking these concerns to the doctor as well. We ascribe this difference in observed motives to two interrelated properties of our study: the cultural context for the study, and the type of third party we have chosen for scrutiny. As foreshadowed in Section 1, our view is that a collectivist mentality plus a strongly-defined social hierarchy work in concert to promote the invocation of RMs in particular as third parties in Vietnamese medical communication.

Our third result is that, beyond merely promoting the use of this strategy, these two social forces appear to interact with each other in a particular way when an RM is invoked. In Extract 6, we saw that patient Luong's familial relationship with Lan overrode Lan's status as a medical professional in shaping the direction of her future treatment for her health problem. While data such as this is encouraging, the available evidence must be deemed only suggestive at this point. Further research on the putative effects of collectivism and social status on treatment outcomes is undoubtedly required.

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¹³ While the patients in Extract 3 (from Heritage & Robinson, 2006, p. 59) and Extract 7 both invoke third parties in order to diffuse accountability for their actions, they do this for different reasons.

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The Influence of Implementing Role-play as an Educational Technique on EFL Speaking Development

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Abstract—The present study aims to explore the influence of implementing Role-play (RP) as a technique in English class to boost EFL learners' speaking skills in Ecuador. This work analyzes the features of RP from its origin in Psychodrama and the teaching and learning approaches that support this technique as Task-Based Learning (TBLT), Cooperative Learning (CL), Communicative Learning Teaching (CLT), and English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Consequently, RP is an educational technique which exposes learners to experience in genuine situations to strengthen learners' abilities for communicating naturally and meaningfully with their peers about events of their daily routines and future professional environments.

Index Terms—teaching technique, language acquisition, English as a foreign language, Higher education, Ecuador

I. INTRODUCTION

This study discusses the significance of Role-play (RP) as a positive complement to the English speaking development of EFL learners to function appropriately in real-life situations. The present study analyzes RP origins, definitions, contributions, and supporting approaches to understanding the benefits of this strategy to strengthen oral skills. A literature review exploration is performed to accurately analyze the features of RP from its origins in Psychodrama until its supporting approaches of TBLT, CL, CLT, and ESP.

The results show that the characteristics of RP include dramatic methods since RP is one of the most used techniques of Psychodrama which according to Moreno (1987) is a science that analyzes reality through dramatization. In addition, RP contributes to the development of communication skills since it offers opportunities to practice a foreign language socially with their peers. RP also offers appropriate learning environments in which students participate in a more fearless environment to practice English in a realistic way. Furthermore, RP improves learners' speaking skills even though it promotes chaos among students.

Together with these features, RP is supported by TBLT, CL, CLT, and ESP approaches which allow learners develop their conversational skills collaboratively with their peers through the completion of tasks that resemble genuine situations related to their daily life or professional field. In TBLT people try, from the very start of their learning process, to comprehend and produce meaningful messages in English (Task-Based Teaching, 2016). For this reason, TBLT activities are authentic examples of what learners will experience in real-life situations (Bygatte, 2015). In CL, students improve their skills to communicate socially by working collaboratively in groups in the achievement of a common goal (Laguador, 2014). A specific aspect of this approach is that teachers do not have full control over the students, but they become facilitators of new knowledge. In CLT students are encouraged to express their ideas naturally rather than focusing on the form (Alhosni, 2014). Finally, in ESP certain groups of students learn specific English related to their careers. The ESP approach provides learners with opportunities to learn English naturally (Bracaj, 2014) and to become competitive in the job market.

II. ROLE-PLAY: ORIGINS AND DEFINITION

RP has its origins in the psychodrama which is a form of psychotherapy, created by Levy Moreno.

The sources of psychodrama are to be found in my childhood games and youthful experiences. One Sunday afternoon, while my parents were out, it so happened that I and some of the neighbors' children decided to play at "God" in the enormous cellar of the house in which I lived. The first thing was to build our Heaven. To this end, we collected every available chair and piled them up on an enormous oak table until they reached to the ceiling. I now mounted my heavenly throne –mine "the kingdom, the power, and the glory" –while my angels "flew" round me singing. Suddenly one of the children called out: "Why don't you fly too?" Whereupon I stretched out my arms-and one

second later lay on the floor with a broken arm. So ended my first psychodrama, in which I had filled the dual roles of producer and chief actor (Moreno, 2017, p. 131).

Moreno (1987) defines Psychodrama as “the science which explores the truth by dramatic methods” (p. 13). It uses five instruments –the stage, the actor, the director, the staff, and the audience (Moreno, 1987). Among the different techniques of psychodrama, role-playing is the most used in the educational area since according to Moreno (as cited by Martinez, 2009), education should encourage spontaneity and creativity as essential matters for human development and as one of the bases for the social change.

The term 'role' comes from the Greek word 'rolled-up' which refers to theater's scripts used during the ancient Greek times (Craciun, 2010). Role-Plays (RP) also emerged from the games “Simulate Society” (1966) and “Dungeons & Drangons Fights” (1974) created to involve participants' feelings and emotions using heroic and fantasy elements.

Conforme and Torres (2013) defined RP as a recreational activity that entertains, amuses, and enables participants to acquire new knowledge in a significant way. During RP planning, students also choose the vocabulary and coherent expressions to the situations to play (Waffa, 2014), promoting participants' creativity through collaborative learning routines.

Kusnierek (2015) defined RP as a “complete range of communication technique which develops language fluency and promotes student interaction during the class, increasing students' motivation, encouraging their learning, but also sharing responsibilities between teacher-student” (p.7).

RP is a teaching technique based on the pedagogical psychodrama, which requires the participants' dedication and interest to complete every stage (Perez, 2016), but also, teacher supervision to avoid participants' extreme reactions that could emerge as a result of the group problem solving (Rojas, et al. 2017).

III. CONTRIBUTIONS OF ROLE-PLAY FOR STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

A. *Students' Communication Skills Improvement*

RP allows learners to improve their communication skills such as argumentation, the organization of ideas, group understanding, interpretation and inferring (Zhang, 2010). Role-plays (RP) offers multiple opportunities to practice a foreign language than any other teaching activity (Lee and Smagorinsky, 2000; and Gass and Mackey, 2006). It also strengthens students' confidence to use English as a Foreign Language in contextualized environments (Zhang, 2010; Duxbury and Ling, 2010, Asensio, 2015).

A study conducted by Yen, Huei, & Kuo (2013) analyzed an EFL instructional course by combining Facebook and Skype as platforms through which students participated in role-playing activities and observe the impact of the course on the learner's communication skills. The results show that students developed their speaking abilities through the learning tools and role-playing tasks. Consequently, Role-playing is a significant technique that centers on the learners' ability to speak and communicate by playing various roles in a genuine situation (Yen, Huei, & Kuo, 2013).

Students need to be motivated to communicate ideas and feelings using any target language (Wafaa, 2014) but also practice their “quality of thought, argumentation, analysis, synthesis, explanation, evaluation on the usage of the foreign language” (Marin and De La Pava, 2017, p. 86).

B. *Improve Learning Environments*

Jacobs and McCafferty (2006) maintain that any language practices are more efficient when the learning groups are relatively smaller. Under such conditions, students are supported by a stimulating environment that encourages them to learn a new language.

To Gass and Mackey (2006) RP's main contribution is to involve learners in a fun environment avoiding rivalry and competition among learners. Meanwhile, Huang (2008) argues that teaching and learning plans that include RP had created more adequate atmospheres for learning a foreign language; and helping students to practice English in a more realistic way.

According to Monsalve, Franco, Monsalve, Betancur, and Ramírez (2009), RP enhances students to apply language feedback and reduce peers' confrontations. It also promotes a two-way relationship between teachers and students to reach higher levels of the foreign language domain. The idea is to expose students to a wider range of opportunities for acquiring a foreign language under appropriate environments (Zhang, 2010). Finally, it is necessary teachers learn how to create friendly learning environments, which interacts different methods as active analogic teaching, and educational technology online (Raja, Qureshi and Albeshir, 2017).

C. *Improve Learners' Speaking Skills*

Role-play (RP) is a practice of functional language that allows the application of different corrective styles, such as error correction, self-correction, peer correction, etc., among English language students (British Council, 2004). However, some teachers refuse to implement RP, because it promotes chaos into the classroom (noise, laughter, shouting, and disorder). Nevertheless, many studies have been performed on the benefits of RP as a teaching technique that improves students' English speaking skills.

To Duxbury and Ling (2010), when teachers use RP they should motivate learners to perform as best as possible, avoiding instructor's interference. Thus, students live more memorable experiences to emerge higher knowledge

retention (Tran, 2014). However, RP is a versatile teaching technique that can be applied using different contents and contexts with the active participation of children and adults (Perez, 2016).

To professor Kumaran (2017), learners enjoy participating in RP using a foreign language. Students' participation enables them to communicate without hesitation and fear in real-life contexts strengthening their process of foreign language acquisition.

Instructors should be willing to implement every kind of techniques such as RP to improve speaking skills in the English class such as songs, indoor games, movement, information and communication technologies, etc. (British Council, 2004). They assume the role as a learning process mediator to supply students' feedback-learning and motivation (Mackey, 2006, p.246).

Nation and Newton (2009, p. 112) identified five possible causes of learners' reluctance to speak English which includes "inadequate vocabulary, limited control of grammar, lack of fluency, learners' shyness, and lack of encouragement". However, RP supports educator's abilities to "create a safe learning environment; provide constructive and goal-directed feedback; and cultivate the ability to communicate" (Jackson and Back, 2011, p.3).

Communication is a human process which demands learners to develop multiple and complex abilities. This could be the cause of learners' reluctance when trying to use a foreign language (Nation and Newton, 2009). Nevertheless, they use "their knowledge to express or narrate thoughts and ideas [...] focusing on the communicative and effective factors" (Zhang, 2010, p.83). For this reason, teachers should help to build an appropriate, stimulating and collaborative environment inside the classrooms.

Speaking skills also involve oral expression and phonetic exercises to communicate others: needs, thoughts, emotions, desires, and feelings (Duxbury and Ling, 2010). Consequently, the role of interlocutors and listeners are highly relevant to interpret a spoken message (Monsalve, et al. 2009).

The communication process involves two main moments: the first one takes place at the beginning of a conversation to transmit information; the second moment takes place when people focus on the intonation, pronunciation, grammar structures, ideas organization, types of speech, syntax, morphology, etc. (Peterson, Pisoni and Miyamoto, 2010). To Marin and Rea (2014) the main goal of teaching English is to develop the language acquisition process in a natural way. A teaching method that involves active learning seems to be more efficient among younger students (Peko and Varga, 2014). In addition, teachers should encourage learners "to think critically, [...] developing discussions, tasks and tests that evaluate their performance based on individual and cooperative criteria" (Marin and De la Pava, 2017, p.86). RP becomes a key strategy because it has the flexibility to bring any kind of topic to the classroom (Rojas, et al. 2017).

Behind the foreign language teaching and learning process, there is a lot of hard autonomous work. Thus, it is necessary the active participation and compromise of enthusiastic teachers who can encourage learners to use the target language by themselves (Cevallos, Intriago, Villafuerte, Molina and Ortega, 2017).

IV. ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING APPROACHES INVOLVED IN ROLE-PLAY

A. *Task-based Learning and Teaching (TBLT)*

Long (as cited in Branden, 2016) was discontent with the fact that many classes, language were approached as a mechanic system of rules in decontextualized fashion. In this regard, learners had to learn the information about a linguistic item, and then practice the item in sentences that were not related to a real situation until they learn it; only then learners were encouraged to use the linguistic item for communicative purposes. According to Long, this approach does not consist of the way people learn a language.

On the other hand, in natural, non-classroom-based processes of language acquisition, people from the very early stage of learning, strive to understand and produce meaningful messages in the target language. Tourists at the beginner levels, may be eager to pick up words and phrases they need to move around in a foreign country; adolescents who are absorbed in digital game are also eager to acquire the vocabulary they need to play the game; immigrants with a new job in their new country may be motivated to try to understand/produce significant messages related to their job (Task-Based Teaching, 2016).

According to Bygatte (2015), activities that resemble real-life contexts provide 'situational authenticity'. In other words, TBLT tasks are authentic examples of what the learners will experience outside the classroom.

For this reason, Bygatte (2015) considers that knowledge is structured via the learner's experience when interacting in the real world, in order "to be used fluently and appropriately in real time, in real contexts, and with the purposes of engaging real meanings with real people" (p 2).

In addition, the study conducted by East (2017) maintains that the TBLT approach provides an adequate and motivating environment for learning. Teachers should motivate students learning process through the creation of innovative educational environments that generate memorable learning experience under collaborative and communicational approaches (Rojas, Villafuerte and Soto, 2017).

B. *Cooperative Learning (CL) Approach*

Students who work together in groups improve their skills to communicate in social discussion and participate in the accomplishment of their common goal. Students with a low performance benefit from this approach when they have the help of high performing students. The exercise is effective for both of them since strong students can increase their

ability to explain the procedure to the weak students and the process would keep them socially prepared with concern for one another. Therefore, cooperative learning approach in the classroom boosts learners' active involvement (Laguador, 2014).

Cooperative Learning is a task-based and group-structured educational approach in which participants in groups collaborate with each other to look for achievements that are advantageous to each member with the teacher's educational and proper assistance. In this approach teachers are no longer controllers of the students' learning behaviors but promoters of their knowledge. In other words, students become active explorers and constructors of knowledge (Han, 2014).

Students, who are part of CL groups, have initiatives and responsibilities for their own learning achieving different roles as group leaders, participants, and mediators. They create knowledge by researching, negotiating and engaging (Han, 2014). Furthermore, according to Brecke and Jensen (2007), a learning environment mixed with a cooperative learning approach can generate higher levels of efficiency.

Cooperative learning is an approach related to student-centered classroom activities to attain a common goal. For this purpose, the teacher needs to prepare the activities properly to obtain outstanding learning practice on the part of the students. Furthermore, learners have a sense of direction towards the achievement of the group goals when they are provided with clear objectives of the classroom tasks. Everyone is an important active member of the team. The teachers, in this regard, should set the environment favorable for learning (Laguador, 2014).

Cooperative learning also creates future leaders where dedication and commitment to serve the group is an experience that would cultivate their leadership skills. It is also a responsibility of everyone in the academic community to provide an outcomes-based environment that would help shape the character and values of the learners. The support of the management in providing resources to sustain the implementation of Outcomes-based education is an important aspect of success. The learning outcomes of the students gained from the cooperative learning serve as an essential product in an effort to provide quality education for the future leaders of the world (Laguador, 2014, p. 53).

C. *Communicative Learning Teaching (CLT) Approach*

Previous studies of the needs of European language learners, specifically a research prepared by a British linguist, D. A. Wilkins (1972), offered a communicative description of the language that would serve as a foundation for developing communicative syllabuses for language teaching. Wilkins contributed with an analysis of the communicative meanings that a language student requires to comprehend and express. Rather than using the traditional method of language teaching, Wilkins tried to show the systems of meanings to communicate through language (Richards & Rodgers, 1986).

In order for the curriculum to provide students with regular chances of speaking, communicative activities need to be prepared for students to practice. Those tasks should center on having learners to express the meaning rather than the form. This helps students learn the language more easily as many scientists support the idea that relating students in extracurricular activities can offer them with more opportunities to use the language besides the classroom (Alhosni, 2014).

According to Matamoros, Rojas, Pizarro, Vera, and Soto (2017), through CLT "educators give language Learners opportunities to interact with the new language in situations similar to those they experienced when developing their mother tongue" (p. 968)

Teachers, who teach classes under the CLT Approach, have students participate in tasks where they apply their language knowledge by interacting with their peers. In this respect, Role-plays is one example of the techniques for this approach (Matamoros, Rojas, Pizarro, Vera and Soto, 2017). The research conducted by Flores and Cedenó (2016) in Ecuador determined that the Communicative Approach seems to be highly efficient for enabling learners to communicate orally in any context.

On the contrary, according to Alharby (2015), the absence of authentic language learning situations outside the classroom presents a major challenge to improving students' English communication skills. Furthermore, there are difficulties inside the classroom that limit the use of English, which affect the English speaking ability. In the Saudi EFL situation, Alharby's research tried to identify the reasons for Saudi students' low proficiency in English communication and offer some recommendations.

The most significant findings of the paper were: (1) reforming specific Ministry of Education and Higher Education policies in Saudi Arabia is crucial; (2) the Saudi education system should reinforce the use of contemporary approaches to teaching that emphasise problem-solving and critical thinking skills and put students in charge of their own learning; and (3) the ministry should consider converting some Saudi public schools into bilingual schools (Alharby, 2015, p. 105).

Another study conducted by Farooq (2015) centers on teachers' perceptions and practices concerning CLT and its influence on communicative skills of the learners. The results of the study propose that regardless of viewing strong interest in change and wanting to implement CLT, they are not enthusiastic about the complete implementation of this approach because of the problems and challenges they face in the classroom. Despite the acceptance of CLT during approximately forty years, its viability of implementation has been discussed in EFL situations worldwide. In Saudi universities, there are a significant number of English language teachers who are aware of the CLT and are applying it in their classroom to develop the communicative ability of the learners. In addition, the curriculum is another aspect to

develop the communicative skill of the students. Nowadays, the majority of universities in Saudi Arabia have implemented communicative syllabus centering on the use of language to communicate rather than to teach rules of grammar to learn. Nevertheless, CLT cannot be applied due to factors such as overcrowded classes, lack of technology, issues in pair and group work, and low English level of learners. Farooq's study tried to discover the perception, practices, and difficulties of applying CLT in the classroom. Therefore, "it is recommended that: - Teachers may prepare CLT activities, plan lessons, and create CLT environment to develop the communicative competence of the students" (Farooq, 2015, p. 188).

D. English for Specific Purposes (ESP) Approach

The necessity for a lingua franca related to science, technology, education, and business has originated the demand of ESP around the world. This approach has developed rapidly until it has become the main part of English language teaching and study. Consequently, understanding the necessities of other professions and readiness to get used to these necessities, make a certain group of students prepare differently since they use English for specific purposes. The ESP approach allows opportunities for the learners to learn English naturally in situations they understand and find interesting (Bracaj, 2014).

Hyland (2007) applied research methods (ethnography, critical approaches, contrastive rhetoric, and social constructionism) to study Role-play in ESP. He found that ESP classes help lectures to get highly connected to their future professional environments (Rojas, 2016). They help learners to develop communication strategies and to become more competitive in the job market.

V. CONCLUSION

The previous studies regarding the origins, definitions, contributions, and foreign language approaches involved in RP ratify the fact that, current trend develop students' speaking skills to perform authentic activities in which students are the active participants. The contemporary educational style is student-centered in which the learner is a dynamic member of his knowledge acquisition process and the teacher has lost his controlled power over the students.

RL has its origin in psychodrama which according to Moreno (1987) explores the real world through dramatization. In this respect, RP is the most used technique of psychodrama in the educational field in which the learner acquires knowledge naturally and meaningfully. During the RP preparation, students are encouraged to choose the keywords and expressions related to the context they want to resemble. This way, RP promotes the learners creativity by working collaboratively. Furthermore, RP is a communication technique that improves fluency by enabling students to interact in class and increase their motivation to learn.

Besides the contributions that RP provides to the development of the learners' speaking skills, it is supported by contemporaneous learning approaches such as TBLT which is a student-centered approach in which they are encouraged to produce meaningful messages in the target language. In TBLT activities such as RPs are authentic examples of what students will experience in the real world.

Another supported approach is CL since by working together learners develops their abilities to communicate socially and reach a common goal. In this regard, RP is a method in which students work collaboratively in groups with the instructor's help to dramatize a situation that it can also be experienced in a real context.

The third supporting approach for RP is CLT. In this approach instead of using the traditional methods of language teaching related to rules for correctness, meaningful messages are essential to communicate through language. Through RP students are encouraged to express the meaning instead of only focusing on the form of the message.

Finally, ESP is an approach that originated from the need for a lingua franca related to science, technology, education, and business worldwide. Therefore, ESP classes that implement RP enable students to function appropriately in genuine situations that relate to the specific purpose of the learners' career. Consequently, it allows opportunities to learn English naturally and meaningfully focusing on topics that are interesting and motivating for learners.

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The Effect of Online Feedback Types on Foreign Language Writing*

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Abstract—In this study a comparison is made concerning the effect of online teacher feedback and online peer feedback on foreign language writing and the learners' attitudes toward online feedbacks. To address the issues, an experiment is carried out between two university classes, who received online teacher feedback and online teacher feedback respectively. Based on the analysis, the major findings are obtained as follows. Firstly, the writing in each group has been improved significantly after the application of online feedback. However, no significant difference is shown between groups A and B. Secondly, students in both groups can incorporate feedback into their revisions, though there exist some differences in the number of successful revisions and kinds of revisions between the two groups. Finally, both online teacher feedback and online peer feedback are very well received by most students respectively. The research findings indicate that online feedback should be adopted in foreign language writing teaching.

Index Terms—foreign language writing, revision writing, online teacher peer feedback, online peer feedback

I. INTRODUCTION

Writing is seen as an important skill for foreign language learners. In foreign language learning, writing can not only improve grammatical learning and vocabulary, but be conducive to express the writer's ideas and develop the awareness of language.

In process writing theory, feedback has been regarded as an important part of foreign language writing, and has gained increasing attention in ESL. Many studies on feedback have been conducted (Keh, 1990; Hyland, 2003; Yang et al, 2006). Some research tries to discover the nature and function of feedback (Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Hyland, 2003). Other research discusses the effect of written teacher feedback and written peer feedback on writing (Yang et al, 2006; Lee, 2007). In Paulus's study (1999), the author indicates both peer and teacher feedback contributed to the revision process, with the teacher feedback bringing about more revision and favored more by students and required revision could significantly raise the essay scores of the class. Tsui and Ng's (2000) study of Hong Kong secondary schools and Hu's (2005) study of Chinese students studying English in Singapore also showed positive attitude toward peer feedback.

In recent years, with the development of information technology, especially, the wide use of Internet, the combination of Internet and language teaching and learning becomes a tendency. Therefore, some studies on online feedback are conducted, focusing mainly on the effect of online peer feedback on the writings of foreign language learners (Yang & Meng, 2013), and the effect of online peer feedback compared with traditional peer feedback on second or foreign language writing (Tuzi, 2004; Liu & Sadler (2003). However, scanty research into different types of online feedback on foreign language writing has been done. Therefore, a study is necessary to investigate the effect of online feedback types on foreign language writing and to explore foreign language learners' perception of online feedback types.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Collaborative Learning

Collaborative learning is a process in which students work together with peers or teachers to solve problems, so that they can actively construct knowledge, rather than passively accept knowledge from teachers or the textbook. Rebecca, L (1997, p.443) refers to collaborative learning as "construction of knowledge within a social context and encouraging acculturation of individuals into a learning community." Panitz (1999, p.5) also thinks that collaborative learning is "a set of processes which help people interact together in order to accomplish a specific goal or develop an end product which is usually content specific." In the process, students can actively participate in the community, communicate or discuss with their members in the group, and then share information to accomplish the specific goal.

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Collaborative learning is also a learning strategy, which, according to Liu & Liu (2009), means students and teachers find solutions to problems through interaction in order to achieve the same teaching and learning goals. Quite different from the traditional teacher-centered approach, collaborative learning is student-centered. Namely, students are responsible for their own learning, while teachers only play roles such as facilitators or guides, who just observe and provide some suggestions whenever necessary.

With its wide use in language teaching and learning, Internet provides a good environment for facilitating collaborative learning. With no restraint of time and space, students can have more chances to communicate, and discuss with their teachers or peers through E-mail, QQ, or other online tools, so that they can pool their ideas, solve problems and then learn from each other (Li et al., 2008).

B. Process Approach Theory

Process approach has greatly influenced foreign language writing research and teaching. However, there is not a definite definition for the term. Keh (1990, p.294) refers to process approach as “multiple-draft process which consists of: generating ideas (pre-writing); writing a first draft with an emphasis on content (to ‘discover’ meaning/author’s ideas); second and third (and possibly more) drafts to revise ideas and the communication of those ideas.” Thus process approach is often defined as the creative act of writing which requires time and feedback to be done.

Flower and Hayes (1981) describe writing as a recursive process, in which the writer plans, translates ideas into language, and reviews what has been written. Goldstein & Carr (1996) state that process writing refers to various strategies that include pre-writing activities, planning and then writing, as well as drafting and revising. Badger & White (2000) suggest that process approach stresses linguistic skills, like planning and drafting rather than linguistic knowledge such as grammar and text structure knowledge. Thus it can be seen that process approach focuses on the writing itself, and is a non-linear, recursive process, in which students participate actively in every stage, and discover or construct knowledge. In the process, writing not only refers to the output of linguistic knowledge such as grammar and syntax, but means what to write, and how to write.

Process approach emphasizes the whole process of writing, including pre-writing, drafting, feedback and revising, and rewriting (Mckensie & Tomkins, 2010). Pre-writing is the preparation stage, in which students should know the purpose and audience of the writing, and then determine their topics, collect relevant materials and develop their ideas following the specific techniques such as brainstorming, questioning and outlining. Subsequently students start to work out their drafts. During the stage students make use of the result of pre-writing to create their own writing and develop the content of the writing. Feedback and revising stage plays a significant role in the process approach, during which feedback is provided by teachers or peers, and then students revise their draft in terms of linguistic knowledge, topic, content as well as structure. Thus, revision can improve the students’ writing ability and also the readability of the writing. The last step is to rewrite. Students rewrite their passage based on the feedback and revision. The study focuses on the last three steps: drafting, feedback and revising, and rewriting stage, with feedback playing a central role in writing, connecting drafting with revising.

C. Definition of Feedback

Feedback is an important element in the process approach. Tsui & Ng (2000, p.148) stresses the importance of feedback as a “central and critical contribution to the evolution of a piece of writing. Feedback informs the writing process, permeating, shaping, and molding it.” As defined by Keh (1990, p.294-295), feedback is “an input from a reader to a writer with the effect of providing information to the writer for revision.” and “through feedback, the writer learns where he or she has misled or confused the reader by not supplying enough information, illogical organization, lack of development of ideas, or something like inappropriate word-choice or tense.” Following the scholars, in this study feedback means suggestions or some concrete revising information which can provide clues to better writing.

D. Feedback in Writing

Feedback can be categorized into teacher feedback and peer feedback, following the criterion of who provides it. Teacher feedback on student writing has been widely explored in the foreign language classroom. Some look into the form and content of the teacher feedback. For example, Hyland (2003) indicated that though teacher feedback focusing on form could have immediate impact on the revision to their drafts, it had no significant influence in writing development. Montgomery & Baker (2007) pointed out that teachers gave more feedback on local issues such as grammar and spelling than on global issues such as idea and content.

Some explore the effect of the teacher feedback on students’ writing. Ferris & Roberts (2001) found that students who received error feedback from teachers performed better in content than those who received no feedback.

Others investigate students’ perception and attitudes toward teacher feedback. Straub (1997) found that students had equal interest in receiving teacher feedback on global issues such as content and purpose, and on local matters of word and grammar. Tsui & Ng (2000) confirmed that most students favored teacher comments than peer comments, and teacher comments could lead to more revisions.

Peer feedback has also been a hot issue. Some explore the benefits of peer feedback on students’ writing (Keh, 1990; Lochhart & Ng, 1993). They pointed out that peer feedback can save teachers’ time, raise the audience awareness, and also help students improve their writing by reading writings of peers. However, some scholars (Zhang, 1995; Nelson

and Carson, 1998) question the advantages of peer feedback. They revealed that ESL writers preferred teacher feedback to peer feedback based on the affective values of feedback and that they made use of more teacher comments than peer comments in their revisions.

Others have compared the effectiveness of teacher feedback and peer feedback on revision writing. Based on Yang's study (2006), students could make good use of both teacher and peer feedback, with the difference lying in the fact that teacher feedback could lead to more surface revision such as vocabulary and grammar, while peer feedback more meaning revision. They also found that 90% of teacher feedback was incorporated in students' revisions against 67% of peer feedback. By contrast, Lee (2007) pointed that students could not utilize teacher feedback fully because students saw teacher feedback as indication of written errors.

It can be seen that scholars hold mixed views in terms of the effectiveness of teacher feedback and peer feedback.

E. Online Feedback in Writing

With the integration of Internet and language teaching and learning, more attention is put on online feedback. Compared with traditional studies on teacher feedback, the studies concerning online teacher feedback on students' writing are relatively less. Some focus on the students' attitude toward online teacher feedback. For instance, Duan (2011) investigated the acceptance and student's likings for types of online teacher feedback and found that one-to-one online feedback like e-mail is very popular with students, and feedback like suggestions is liable to be accepted by students.

Others investigate the effect of online teacher feedback on revision (Yang et al. 2013; Alvarez et al. 2012). For example, Alvarez et al. (2012) suggested that through the exploration of the nature and function of online teacher feedback on the students' text revisions, students could make use of online teacher feedback positively and improved their writings constructively, especially when the feedback took on forms of suggestions and questions rather than direct correction. All in all, specific studies on online teacher feedback are rather rare.

In the case of research on online peer feedback, some research mainly focused on the advantages of online peer feedback. Tuzi (2004) showed online peer feedback has the advantages of not being restrained by time or place, can thus increase the amount of student participation, improve the ability to monitor conversations and reduce the role of the teacher. According to Jiang (2005), based on the comparison of online peer revision with face-to-face peer revision, online peer feedback was powerful in enhancing learners' stimulus and motivation in writing, reducing anxiety and stress, and also revising the passage as a whole. Chen (2008) confirmed Jiang's findings later on. The explanation is that students in the Internet environment can feel more relaxed and have less pressure, and thus are willing to express their points of view and suggestions on peers' writing. Sullivan & Pratt (1996) found students in the computer-assisted classroom showed more interest in peer discussion compared to only 50% participation in the face-to-face class, and then led to more practice in writing. However, as Liu & Hansen (cited in Martin & Shi, 2007) pointed out, these advantages can be constrained by students' level of English proficiency, which affects the quantity, quality and comprehension of peer feedback, and also by students' cultural backgrounds, which affect their classroom behaviors and the amount of participation.

Some studies make investigation into the effect of online peer feedback on the second or foreign language writing (Birch, 2016; Liu & Sadler, 2003; Moradi, 2012). For instance, Liu & Sadler (2003) indicated that electronic peer review could produce more overall comments and a larger percentage of revision-oriented comments with the focus on local revision. However, Jones et al.'s (2006) and Yang's (2010) findings are different from that of Liu & Sadler (2003), they discovered that students in a first year writing class were more likely to discuss textual issues such as grammar and vocabulary in face-to-face sessions, but tended to focus on global revisions such as content, organization and topic in synchronous online sessions. Tannacito & Tuzi (2002) in their study concluded that electronic peer feedback had made influential changes in revisions in larger blocks of text and in adding new content to the essay. Furthermore, Tuzi (2004) explored the relationship between peer and teacher electronic feedback and their impact on second language writers' revision, and found that electronic feedback had a great impact on revision than oral feedback, and second language writers used e-feedback to create more macro-level revisions at the clause, sentence, and paragraph levels, with new information added. However, there was no clear indication that the impact made by peer electronic feedback was greater than that of teacher electronic feedback. Moradi (2012) studied 60 EFL students' experience of online peer feedback in essay writing, and revealed that there existed no significant difference in the performance of the online and offline groups.

In addition, there are some studies that explore the perception of students to the online peer feedback. Some research find positive attitude toward online peer feedback. DiGiovanni & Nagaswami (2001) and Chen et al (2011) indicated that students had preference for online peer feedback and most of them were willing to receive online peer feedback. By contrast, there was some other research which showed mixed attitudes toward online peer feedback. For example, Tuzi (2004) discovers that although electronic feedback had a great impact on revision than oral feedback, students prefer to oral feedback. Martin & Shi (2007) reveal that students had mixed feeling in terms of the liking and disliking for online peer feedback. Similar result is also obtained in Jane et al.'s study (2008), in which most students preferred the online peer feedback in the questionnaire, but there were still many students who enjoyed face-to-face interaction. What is more, In Ge's study (2011), all participants held positive attitudes to the online peer feedback with the focus on the

grammar and vocabulary, but they still wanted to get the teacher's view. To some extent, the attitude of students to the online peer feedback is similar to that of traditional peer feedback.

As mentioned in the literature above, research regarding both traditional feedback and online feedback has confirmed that feedback plays an important role in writing. However, research on the comparison of effectiveness of different online feedback types on foreign language writing is scanty. Therefore, it is imperative to conduct a study to compare the effect of online peer feedback with that of online teacher feedback.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

A. Research Questions

To investigate the effect of online feedback on foreign language writing, the study mainly addressed the following research questions:

1. To what extent do online teacher feedback and online peer feedback affect foreign language learners' writing respectively?
2. How do online teacher feedback and online peer feedback affect the learners' revision writing?
3. What are foreign language learners' attitudes toward online teacher feedback and online peer feedback in writing?

B. Participants

Fifty-five participants from two sophomore classes are chosen: Engineering Management class (Group A) and Building Energy class (Group B) in a famous university in China. The pretest scores showed that two groups are homogeneous in terms of writing proficiency. Thus it is determined that Group A receive online teacher feedback, and Group B receive online peer feedback treatment. In addition, all the participants have passed CET-6, so they are able to provide peer feedback with high quality.

C. Instruments

The instruments used in the study mainly included four writing tasks, pre-test and post test writing, two questionnaires and the SPSS.

Students in the two groups were required to finish four different argumentative writing tasks in the study, with the first two for treatment and the last two writing task data collected and analyzed to investigate how online teacher feedback and online peer feedback affected the students' revision in their writing.

The pretest writing was used to investigate whether students' writing ability in both groups had a significant difference before the experiment, while the posttest writing was used to investigate whether students' writing ability in both groups would improve and whether there was a significant difference in writing between both groups after the treatment of online teacher feedback and online peer feedback respectively.

Two questionnaires were mainly used to investigate student's attitudes toward online teacher feedback and online peer feedback respectively.

Finally, the data collected were analyzed by SPSS to help analyze the effects of online teacher feedback and online peer feedback on students' writing in general and revision writing in particular.

D. Materials

The materials included writing tasks for treatment and testing, rating rubric and two questionnaires.

The topics for the four writing tasks, pretest and posttest writings are chosen from CET-6 in order to guarantee the reliability of the study.

TABLE 1.
WRITING MATERIALS

Writing materials	Topics
Four writing training tasks	How to Improve Student's Mental Health
	How I Finance My College Education
	My View on Job-Hopping
	Reading Selectively or Extensively
Pretest	Should Firecrackers be Banned
Posttest	Is a Test of Spoken English Necessary

The rubric for CET-6 is adopted to rate writing,. The essays were scored from content, language expression, discourse coherence and structure. Both pretest and posttest writing were scored by two raters, the rating inter-reliability of whom was 0.95 as shown by SPSS analysis.

The two questionnaires were modified following Xiang (2010) to guarantee the reliability. His questionnaires were designed to investigate student's attitudes toward teacher and peer feedback in college English writing. The two questionnaires were modified, including 17 items in questionnaire one for online teacher feedback group, and 19 items in questionnaire two for online peer feedback group. The questionnaires were presented in Chinese, so that students could understand better. Both consisted of two parts, with part 1 involving the basic information about the participants, and part 2 specific items in terms of overall attitude, content, as well as the response of students to online teacher

feedback and online peer feedback respectively. All the students are required to rate the acceptability of each item on a 5-point Likert scale.

E. Procedures

All the participants took a writing test on April 22, 2016 to make sure they are homogeneous in writing.

Following the pretest was the treatment, which started in May, 2016 and lasted for 6 weeks. Both groups finished four writing tasks, and they were required to write twice for each topic, following the steps below: (1) the first draft, (2) online teacher feedback or online peer feedback, (3) the second draft. The first two writing tasks were designed to familiarize the participants with online feedback, especially for online peer feedback group. The last two writing tasks were completed separately by both groups. Besides, students in Group B were divided into pairs so that each had a peer to read their writing and offer online peer feedback. When the first drafts were finished, they were sent to their peers or teacher by E-mail for feedback, and then they rewrote their essays according to feedback provided by their peers or teacher.

After the treatment, two questionnaires were handed out to the students in both groups, and they were required to finish them in ten minutes in class. Finally, all participants were supposed to take a post-test writing within 30 minutes, to figure out whether there was any effect of online feedback in writing and whether there existed any effect differences between the two online feedback types.

F. Data Collection and Data Analysis

Data collected in the experiment include pretest scores, the third and fourth writing task data, posttest score, and data of two questionnaires.

Firstly, paired-sample t-test was adopted to see whether online feedback had any effect on students' writing in general and independent-sample t-test to find whether there was any significant difference between two online feedback groups in particular.

Secondly, the third and fourth writing task data, including the first drafts, online teacher feedback or online peer feedback, and revision drafts, were analyzed from two perspectives: the usable feedback provided by the teacher or peers following Hyland's definition (1998), and successful revisions following Conrad and Goldstein's (1999) classification, and kinds of revisions according to Faigley and Witte's taxonomy (1981). In addition, to ensure the reliability, another teacher was invited to do the analysis, with the agreement rate reaching 92%.

Finally, questionnaire data were analyzed from three dimensions: overall attitude, contents, and students' response to both online teacher feedback and online peer feedback. For the choices of the answers, different values were assigned: 5 for "Strongly agree", 4 for "Agree", 3 for "Not sure", 2 for "Disagree" and 1 for "Strongly disagree".

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. Online Feedback Effect on Writing

In order to investigate the extent to which online teacher feedback and online peer feedback affect foreign language learners' writing respectively, both paired sample t-test and independent sample t-test were presented as shown in table 2, and table 3.

TABLE 2.
PAIRED SAMPLE T-TEST FOR BOTH GROUPS

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
GA	Pretest	9.6154	26	1.76809	.34675
	Posttest	11.2308	26	1.33589	.26199
GB	Pretest	9.6552	29	1.75816	.32648
	Posttest	10.8621	29	1.78734	.33190

		Paired Differences				T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower				Upper
GA	pretest – posttest	-1.61538	1.41639	.27778	-2.18748	-1.04329	-5.815	25	.000
GB	pretest – posttest	-1.20690	1.78044	.33062	-1.88414	-.52966	-3.650	28	.001

Note: GA refers to online teacher feedback group; GB online peer feedback group

The mean scores of both groups in pretest and posttest indicate students' writing has been improved to some extent. And the sig values of 0.000 and 0.001 in the paired sample t-tests suggest a statistically significant difference after the online feedback treatment for both groups.

Although as presented above, both online feedback groups improved statistically significant in writing, it is not clear whether there is any significant difference between the two different online feedback groups? Therefore, independent-sample t-test is used to reveal the results.

TABLE 3.
COMPARISON OF TWO ONLINE FEEDBACK TYPES ON WRITING

Group		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Posttest	group A	26	11.2308	1.33589	.26199
	Group B	29	10.8621	1.78734	.33190

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
posttest	Equal variances assumed	5.426	.024	.858	53	.395	.36870	.42955	-.49287	1.23027
	Equal variances not assumed			.872	51.410	.387	.36870	.42284	-.48003	1.21743

As it can be seen in table 3, the mean scores for Group A and Group B are 11.2308 and 10.8621 respectively, which is rather close to each other. And the sig value is 0.395, higher than the significance level 0.05, showing no significant difference of student's writing ability after receiving two different online feedback types. To sum up, both online teacher feedback and online peer feedback have statistically significant effect on students' writing. However, there exists no significant difference between the two different online feedback type groups.

B. Online Feedback Effect on Revision Writing

The drafts of the third and fourth task written by both groups were collected and analyzed in order to address how online teacher feedback and online peer feedback affect students' revision writing. And the drafts were analyzed in terms of usable feedback provided by the teacher or peers, successful revisions and kinds of revisions influenced by feedback.

a. Feedback Points Used in Revision

To determine how many feedback points were used in their revisions, Hyland's (1998) definition was adopted: feedback points as each written intervention focusing on a different aspect of the text, and consisted of symbols and marks in the margins, underling of problems, complete correction, as well as more detailed comments and suggestions. In addition, Hyland (1998) defined useable feedback as the potential for revision of draft. For example, the teacher's comment on the wrong word "different" was regarded as usable feedback, while the teacher's comment like "Good job" was considered unusable feedback. The number of usable feedback points and that used by the students in their revision writing were shown in the following table.

TABLE 4.
PERCENTAGE OF FEEDBACK USED IN REVISION

Groups	usable feedback points	used feedback points
Group A	265	253 (95.4%)
Group B	414	350 (84.5%)

As is shown in table 4, Group A received in total 265 usable feedback points, with 253 incorporated in their revision, reaching 95.4%, while Group B incorporated 350 out of 414 usable feedback points.

It can be found students in Group B ignored more feedback points, which is perhaps due to the difference in language proficiency between the teacher and students. Comparatively, the teacher can provide more comprehensive and accurate feedback. What's more, students believe in their teacher more, and think that the teacher is more professional and trustworthy than their peers.

b. Successful Revisions Made

Then how do the online feedback types affect the students' revision. To find out the issue, Conrad and Goldstein's (1999, p.154) classification of revision is followed: successful revision, unsuccessful revision, and no change. "Successful revision" were defined as "those solving a problem or improving upon a problem area discussed in the feedback", "unsuccessful revision" were defined as "those that did not improve the text or that actually further weakened the text". "No change" was defined as "feedback points not acted on and so were excluded in the coding". In addition, there were some revisions that could not be traced to online teacher feedback or online peer feedback, so it could be regarded as self revision.

TABLE 5.
IMPACT OF ONLINE FEEDBACK ON SUCCESSFUL REVISIONS

Groups	Revisions			
	Successful	Unsuccessful	No changes	Self-revision
Group A	235(92.8%)	18	12	8
Group B	286(81.7%)	64	64	2

It can be seen from table 5, there exists some difference in the effect of online feedback on students' revision in their writings. Firstly, Group A make 235 successful revisions out of 253 used feedback points, while Group B 286 out of 350, with Group A making 11.1% more successful revisions. The potential explanation is that the teacher has corrected most mistakes directly, so students in Group A can directly incorporate them in their writing. However, most peers in Group B just underline the mistakes. Secondly, in terms of unsuccessful revisions made, Group A make 18 out of 253 used feedback points, while Group B 64 out of 350. It can be found that there are occasions students in both groups failed to understand the feedback provided. Thirdly, Group A have 12 feedback points ignored, compared with 64 for Group B. It can be explained that students occasionally doubt their peer's ability to provide professional and trustworthy feedback. In addition, online feedback has also brought about some self revisions, which indicates that students in both groups have autonomous learning ability when they revise their drafts. Students don't depend on their teacher or peers completely, and they have their own judgments.

c. Kinds of Revision Made

Faigley and Witte's (1981) taxonomy was used as the framework to analyze the kinds of revision brought about online feedback. Revision can be classified into surface changes that do not bring new information to text and meaning changes that add or delete some information to content of the writing.

TABLE 6.
IMPACT OF ONLINE FEEDBACK ON KINDS OF REVISION

Groups	Surface changes	Meaning changes
Group A	211(80.8%)	50
Group B	313(88.9%)	39

Table 6 shows that among the revision kinds made, Group A make 211 surface changes and 50 meaning changes, while Group B 313 surface changes and 39 meaning changes. Although Group B make more surface changes than Group A, they provide less meaning changes. It can be explained that the teacher in Group A has the ability to provide more feedback concerning ideas, and structure of students' writing, while peers in Group B provide feedback mainly concerning mistakes in grammar and vocabulary.

To conclude, online feedback does make some difference in students' revision writing. Both the teacher and the peers provide usable feedback online, which lead to some difference in both successful revisions and kinds of revisions.

C. Attitude toward Online Feedback

In order to investigate students' attitudes towards online feedback, two questionnaires are handed out to the two groups of students respectively. Students' attitudes are presented following three dimensions: overall attitude, contents, and responses to online feedback as shown in table 7 and table 8.

TABLE 7.
ATTITUDE TOWARD ONLINE TEACHER FEEDBACK

Dimensions	Percentage of opinion (%)				
	5	4	3	2	1
Overall attitude	73.1	26.0	0.9	0	0
contents	50.5	30.0	17.0	2.7	0
Responses to online teacher feedback	85.3	12.8	1.9	0	0

Note: 5=Strongly agree; 4=agree; 3=Not sure; 2 =Disagree and 1=Strongly disagree

Generally speaking, up to 99% of students prefer online teacher feedback. With regard to the attitudes towards the contents, 80.5% of students think online teacher feedback not only concerns grammar, vocabulary, but also idea, and structure of their writing. As to how students respond with online teacher feedback, again the majority of students express strong agreement that they would read their teacher feedback carefully, and then revise their writings accordingly. This can explain why students in Group A can improve a lot in their writing. It can be summarized that students' attitude toward online teacher feedback is positive. Table 8 below will present the results of students' attitude to online peer feedback.

TABLE 8.
ATTITUDE TOWARD ONLINE PEER FEEDBACK

Aspects	Percentage of opinion (%)				
	5	4	3	2	1
Overall attitude	17.9	53.8	14.5	13.8	0
contents	8.4	41.4	22.2	25.1	3.0
Responses to online peer feedback	37.4	53.2	8.4	1.0	0

5=Strongly agree; 4=agree; 3=Not sure; 2=Disagree and 1=Strongly disagree

The overall attitude is positive, with 71.7% of students showing their preference for online peer feedback. As for the contents, the responses are mixed, with most students considering online peer feedback paying too much attention to language itself, and some logistics while ignoring ideas, structure etc. With regard to reactions to online peer feedback, the majority of students hold that they can read their peer feedback carefully, and then revise their writings according to the feedback, which perhaps explains why students in Group B also make great improvements in their writing. It can thus be seen clearly that students' attitude toward online peer feedback is also positive.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion above, some major findings concerning the three research questions can be obtained, and some pedagogical implications can be suggested.

A. Major Findings

Firstly, both online teacher feedback and online peer feedback can play a positive role in foreign language writing. Students in both groups have made much progress after the treatment of online teacher feedback or online peer feedback respectively. However, there exists no significant difference between Group A and Group B.

Secondly, both online teacher feedback and online peer feedback have effect on students' revision in writing. Students can read the feedback points carefully, and incorporate them into their revision writing, leading to successful revisions and different kinds of revisions.

Finally, students' attitude toward both online teacher feedback and peer feedback is positive in general. Most students hold they benefit a lot from online feedback.

B. Pedagogical Implications

Firstly, the integration of technology into FOREIGN LANGUAGE classroom is not only possible but also advantageous, for it can get accessed without the restraint of time and space. For example in terms of writing teaching or learning, it can provide a good platform where students can have more communication, discussion with their teachers or peers through E-mail, QQ, or other online tools to pool their ideas, and solve problems.

Secondly, teachers are encouraged to provide more online feedback, for feedback is an important part in the process-oriented writing, which can help improve students' writing not only in terms of language, but also ideas, structure etc. Students then should follow online teacher feedback and make revisions, thus improving their writing.

Thirdly, students should be encouraged to provide online peer feedback, for this goes good not only to others, but also to their own learning process as well. By reading other peers' writing, they can learn a lot and thus improve their own writing. Besides, the process can help students construct language knowledge actively, and develop collaborative learning as well.

To sum up, both online teacher feedback and online peer feedback should be adopted in writing teaching. They can be integrated to improve students' writing ability, and get students participate actively in the revision process.

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Honglouloumeng, Honglou Meng, Hong Loumeng, or Hong Lou Meng*

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Abstract—The current Pinyin Romanization of Chinese book and journal titles is rich in examples of inconsistencies, and this problem has much more been identified than examined. The current paper traces the problem back to the guiding documents, analyzes their inborn problem. It is argued that the currently dominant practice of aggregating syllables is the source of the inconsistencies, and it results from ambiguous wordings and misconception of “ci” as the basic unit in the guiding documents. Based on this analysis, a practice of Romanizing Chinese on the basis of “zi” is put forward, and the underlying rationale analyzed. The purpose is to contribute to the solution of the issue of inconsistency and offer an approach to standardizing the practice of Pinyin Romanization of Chinese book and journal titles.

Index Terms—Pinyin Romanization, Chinese Book and Journal Titles, Inconsistencies, Aggregation of Syllables, Guiding Documents, Zi, Ci

I. INTRODUCTION

Chinese book and journal titles have a diverse outlook in the English world, as a result of adopting different methods such as translation, and transliterating according to Wade-Giles system or Pinyin system. Even under the same system, Chinese book and journal titles are rich in examples of diversity, and subsequently inconsistency. The inconsistency caused by Pinyin romanization of Chinese materials has mostly been felt in library cataloging and retrieving field (Arsenault, 2001; Diao, 2015; Huang, 2004; Li, 2008). However, much effort has been spent identifying, instead of analyzing and solving the problem itself.

The current paper focuses on the different presentations of the classical Chinese novel title “红楼梦” under Pinyin system: “Honglouloumeng”, “Honglou Meng”, “Hong Loumeng”, and “Hong Lou Meng”. The following two tables shed a light on the diversity in both real life and the virtual world.

TABLE 1
A SURVEY ABOUT PINYIN ROMANIZATION OF “红楼梦” IN A GROUP OF 10 NATIVE CHINESE TEACHERS¹

Pinyin Romanization of “红楼梦”	Results
Honglouloumeng	1
Honglou Meng	1
Hong Loumeng	1
Hong Lou Meng	5
Others	2

TABLE 2
WORLDCAT RETRIEVAL OF THE TITLE “红楼梦” IN PINYIN SYSTEM²

Romanization of “红楼梦”	Retrieval Results
Honglouloumeng	72
Honglou Meng	64
Hong Loumeng	5
Hong Lou Meng	1472

The inconsistencies illustrated here represent the general state of Chinese book and Journal titles in Pinyin Romanization. For instance, another classic Chinese novel “西游记” has a similar existence in English with “红楼梦”. According to information from WorldCat accessed on 11 Oct., 2017, there are 1,518,892 representations of “西游记” in the form of “Xi You Ji”, 201 “Xiyouji”, 452 “Xiyou Ji”, 442 “Xi Youji”. This paper will focus on the Pinyin romanization of “红楼梦” to analyze the inconsistency problem.

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¹ On 23 Sep., 2017, a survey was conducted among a group of 10 native Chinese teachers who were instructed to present their Pinyin Romanization of the title of “红楼梦”. Among the results, two were the translation of “红楼梦”, which did not fall into the Pinyin system, so they were indicated in the column of “others”.

² WordCat was accessed on 11 Oct., 2017. The retrieval was limited in the fields of “title” and “author Xueqin Cao”, and results were restricted within formats of print books and e-books.

Superficially, the differences are about semantic segmentation: in “Honglouloumeng”, the three Chinese syllables for “红楼梦” were rendered into one semantic unit; in “Honglou Meng”, “Honglou” were rendered into one unit, and “Meng” another one, thus “Honglou Meng” consisting of two semantic units; this is also the case in “Hong Loumeng”; and in “Hong Lou Meng”, the three characters were rendered into three units. Further examination of these renderings reveals an appalling realization that they are actually about an essential issue: the basic unit of Chinese language. Given the nature of this issue, we argue that the inconsistency phenomenon in current Pinyin romanization of Chinese book and journal titles be analyzed and checked, and a feasible standard be established. To fulfill this end, three research questions will be asked:

1. What is the source of these variations: “Honglouloumeng”, “Honglou Meng”, “Hong Loumeng” and “Hong Lou Meng”?

2. What are the problems with the source?

3. What should be the proper way of romanizing Chinese book and journal titles? And why?

To provide an answer to these questions, the current paper begins by reviewing the historical backgrounds of Pinyin romanization of Chinese. Specific attention will be given to documents guiding the practice of romanizing Chinese book titles. Then the problems of these documents, which are also the sources of inconsistencies, will be analyzed. Lastly, a proposal based on both historical and linguistic facts, and a conclusion of the current paper will be followed.

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUNDS AND GUIDING DOCUMENTS OF PINYIN ROMANIZING CHINESE

Pinyin system is one of the two major systems of romanizing Chinese in currency today, another being Wade-Giles system. Pinyin romanization of Chinese, as well as Wade-Giles, is but one spot in the long continuum of engaging Chinese language to the international world, the source of which could be dated back to early 17th century. Different from Wade-Giles system which was initiated with the desires of foreigners inside China to approach Chinese and materials carried by the language, Pinyin system is a result of efforts initiated at the turning point of 19th century and 20th century by Chinese people to simplify Chinese language and to promote education on a massive scale. After decades of exploration, in September of 1957, out of the 6 proposals, *Scheme for a Chinese Phonetic Alphabet* (《汉语拼音方案》) (it will be referred to as “SCPA” in this paper), one adopting Roman alphabets to indicate the pronunciation of mandarin Chinese, was passed by the State Council of PRC, and approved by the National People’s Congress in February 1958. Twenty years later, in 1978, the National People’s Congress of China resolved to use SCPA as standard romanization of Chinese personal and geographical names both at home and abroad. SCPA prescribes the 26 Latin alphabets, the initials and endings adopted to indicate mandarin Chinese. Following this resolution, more documents and laws have been issued to consolidate the role of Pinyin system. In 1984, *Basic Rules for Hanyu Pinyin Orthography* (《汉语拼音正词法基本规则》) was issued, and it became a national standard in 1996, and was revised in 2012 (*GB/T 16159 2012*). Most recently, Article 18 of *Law of the People’s Republic of China on the Standard Spoken and Written Chinese Language* (《中华人民共和国通用语言文字法》) (which was established in 2000, and has come into force since January 1st, 2001) restates that “SCPA is to be used as the tool of transliteration and phonetic notation for the standard spoken and written Chinese language” and it is the “unified norm of transliterating names of Chinese people, places, and documents”.

Corresponding to the national popularity of Pinyin system, the international world responded actively to transfer from Wade-Giles to Pinyin, and some guidelines for romanizing Chinese were issued. As early as 1958, the British Library started to use Pinyin for its bibliographical control of its Chinese collection, and UN approved to adopt SCPA for its romanization of Chinese geographical names in 1977. Five years later in 1982, ISO decided that Pinyin system be the international standard in spelling the Chinese language, and so far several specific documents have been issued to regulate the romanization of Chinese (*ISO 24615-2; ISO 7098:2015*).

The above mentioned documents demonstrate some consistent practice. First of all, aggregation of characters is a typical practice. For instance, SCPA prescribes the basic elements of romanizing Chinese: the letters, tones and apostrophe use, while the notes include such examples as “儿童” to be romanized into “ertong” and “花儿” into “huar”. This practice became dominant in later-on documents including *GB/T 16159 2012*. Secondly, *GB/T 16159 2012* prescribes that “ci” (词) be the basic unit in romanizing Chinese. As “ci” can be monosyllabic, disyllabic, or polysyllabic, this principle actually underlies the practice of aggregation characters. The rationale is twofold. Firstly, according to Feng (2016, p. 6-7), there are only 405 syllables available in Chinese. Therefore, against the 8105 characters included in the *List of Standard Chinese Characters for General Use* (《通用规范汉字表》), one syllable is to indicate over 20 characters, resulting in ambiguity on a large scale. Then, to reduce ambiguity, “ci” which may contain more than one syllable is adopted as the basic unit of romanization of Chinese. Hence, the aggregation of syllables becomes the norm giving birth to ambiguity.

Once issued, the guiding documents have been received differently, with two schools of thought: the appreciative school and unappreciative schools. The appreciative and accepting school exclaims that Pinyin system adopts Latin alphabets to romanize Chinese, so it is a monumental system to bridge the gap between Chinese language and the international language family, enabling Chinese language to participate in the international dialogue (Jie, 1990; Li, 2008; Tang, 2008; Wang, 2013). At the same time, the appreciative scholars have also pointed out the problems of Pinyin

system, among which over-generalization (Shang, 2008; Cai, 2013) and lack of consistency are most frequently referred to (Gao, 2003; Liu, et al, 2014). On the other hand, the unappreciative school holds that Pinyin system is a system totally turning away from Chinese language tradition, thus not suitable to Chinese language, so it should be eradicated (Duan, 1989; Li, 2000). Despite the problems mentioned above, Pinyin system has not been eradicated. It has been consistently revised and remains to be the dominant system of romanizing Chinese both at home and abroad.

III. AN ANALYSIS OF *GB 3259-92*---THE DOCUMENT GUIDING ROMANIZING BOOK AND JOURNAL TITLES IN CHINESE

The romanization of book and journal titles is governed by *SCPA* and other documents mentioned in the above section. However, *GB 3259-92* is a document issued for the specific purpose of romanizing Chinese book and journal titles. So, in this section, specific articles in *GB 3259-92* will be examined, and the problems with this document analyzed.

The current *GB 3259-92* was first issued in 1982, with the title of *Transliterating Rules for Basic Chinese Alphabet on Titles for Books and Periodicals in Chinese* (《中文书刊名称汉语拼音拼写法》). It was established as a national standard in 1992, thus *GB 3259-92*. In the following, focus will be given to a close examination of this document, especially to the inborn problems, for these problems have much to do with the confusion and inconsistencies in the current romanization of book and journal titles, which were mentioned at the beginning of this very paper.

A. Ambiguous Wordings in *GB 3259-92*

GB 3259-92 has five sections: Content and its Application, Terminology, romanizing Principle, Reference, and romanizing Rules. The romanizing Principle is of particular importance, because it governs the following romanizing Rules. In Section 3 of the document, it reads:

3. 拼写原则

“以词为拼写单位，并适当考虑语音、语义等因素，同时考虑词形长短适度。”

This principle is translated into English as:

The romanizing practice is conducted with “ci” being the basic unit, and at the same time phonetic and semantic aspects are to be considered appropriately, together with the proper length of “ci”.

The wording of the principle invites problems, for such ambiguous concepts as “适当考虑” (be considered appropriately) and “长短适度” (proper length) are of subjective perception and open to variation. Similar wordings also appear in the specific rules in Section 5:

5.1 中文书刊名称拼写基本上以词为书写单位。每个词第一个字母要大写。因设计需要，也可以全用大写。

5.2 结合紧密的双音节和三音节的结构（不论词或词组）连写。

The corresponding translation is:

5.1 Transliterating Chinese book and journal titles is basically conducted with “ci” being the basic unit, with the first letter capitalized. For specific purposes, each letter can also be capitalized.

5.2 The closely bound disyllabic or trisyllabic structures (whether they are word or phrases) are to be transliterated aggregately, without space in between.

According to online Oxford English Dictionary, a rule is “one of a set of explicit or understood regulations or principles governing conduct or procedure within a particular area of activity”³. Such ambiguous wordings as “也可以” (can also be), “结合紧密” (closely bound), “适当考虑” (be considered appropriately) and “长短适度” (proper length) fail the requirement of being “explicit” and “understood”. When the concepts in guiding documents are ambiguous, they are left in the hands of readers and the prescribing and guiding function of rules falls flat. “红楼梦” is offered in *GB 3259-92* as an example of “closely bound disyllabic or trisyllabic structures” in rule 5.2, and it was romanized into “Hongloumeng”. Further, it is also justifiable to ask why “长城恋” is not a “closely bound” trisyllabic structure and then is romanized into “Changchenglian”, instead of “Changcheng Lian”, as was offered in *GB 3259-92* as an example for rule 5.1?

B. The Problematic Key Concept of “Ci”

Another source of the problem lies in the key concept of “词” (ci), which is held to be the basic unit of romanizing Chinese named entities, including book and journal titles. But what is “ci”? How to judge whether a chunk of Chinese characters falls into the category of “ci” or not? *GB 3259-92* did illustrate different types of “ci” through 16 specific

³<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/rule>, accessed on Sep. 8, 2017.

rules, but unfortunately, it did not offer a response to these two very essential questions, and the concept of “ci” remained to be problematic and elusive. If the concept of “ci” remains to be ambiguous, romanization of Chinese with “ci” as the basic unit is to meet with individualistic idiosyncrasies, and henceforth inconsistencies in the current practice.

IV. A PROPOSAL FOR ROMANIZING CHINESE BOOK AND JOURNAL TITLES

After exploring the source of inconsistencies in current practice, a key issue looms large, and that is “what should be the proper way to romanize Chinese book and journal titles”. To check the current chaotic situation, our proposal is that the romanization of Chinese book and journal titles should be conducted on the basis of “zi”----characters, instead of “ci”. The following points would be adopted to back up our argument:

A. “Zi” Has Been in Chinese Language System since the Ancient Times, While “Ci” Is a Rather Recent Phenomenon

Li Wang (1958) divided the history of Chinese language into four periods (Table 3). From Ancient Chinese to Early Modern Chinese periods, “字”(zi), instead of “词”(ci) played a central role in

TABLE 3
HISTORY OF CHINESE LANGUAGE

Historical periods	Time line
Ancient Chinese	Before 3 rd Century
Middle Chinese	4 th Century---- 12 th Century
Early Modern Chinese	13 th Century---- 19 th Century
Modern Chinese	May 4 th Movement----now

Source: Li Wang (1958/1988) Collections of Li Wang Volume 9 p. 48

Chinese language system. Firstly, the monosyllabic “zi” was the basic unit in such classical texts as *San Zi Jing* (A Three-character Canon 三字经), and *Qian Zi Wen* (A Thousand-character Classic 千字文). Secondly, dictionaries were compiled to explain the meaning of “zi” (Table 4), thus “zi” being an indispensable part of the names of dictionaries. In modern times, “Xin Hua Zi Dian”, a dictionary containing explanation of 13000 “zi”, is a must for school students to learn Chinese. Lastly, “zi” was the starting point of the traditional Chinese language study which included phonology, morphology and

TABLE 4
DICTIONARIES BASED ON “ZI” IN CHINESE LANGUAGE

Date	Dynasty	Dictionary	Compiler	Number of “zi”
100	East Han	Shuo Wen Jie Zi (说文解字)	Xu Shen (许慎)	9 353
400	Jin	Zi Lin (字林)	Lü Chen (吕忱)	12 824
500	Bei Wei	Zi Tong (字通)	Yang Chenqing ()	13 734
1615	Ming	Zi Hui (字汇)	Mei Yingzuo (梅膺祚)	33 170
1675	Ming	Zheng Zi Tong (正字通)	Zhang Zilie (张自烈)	33 440
1716	Qing	Kang Xi Zi Dian (康熙字典)	Zhang Yushu, etc. (张玉书等)	47 043

(Adapted from Wu, 1995, p. 79-80)

exegesis: Phonology was about the auditory sound of “zi”; morphology about its written form; and exegesis about its semantic aspect.

Compared with “zi”, “ci” (word) is a rather recent phenomenon. In *Ma Shi Wen Tong* (马氏文通) (1898), a monumental book in Chinese linguistic study, “ci” started to be frequently addressed. However, the entity of “ci dian” (词典) (Dictionary of Ci) did not appear in dictionary names until 1945 when *Guo Yu Ci Dian* (《国语词典》, A Dictionary of Ci in Chinese Language) was issued. Bi-syllabic or polysyllabic “ci” first outnumbered monosyllabic “zi” in *Ci Yuan* (《辞源》) published in 1950: 50000 “ci” vs. 13000 “zi”. But once “ci” appeared, it took the dominance. For instance, in *Zhong Guo Wen Fa Yao Lue* (《中国文法要略》) (1942/2002: 8), Lv (1904-1998) divided the basic unit of Chinese language into “dan ci”(单词 monosyllabic word) and “fu ci”(复词 bisyllabic or polysyllabic word). “Dan ci” was what had been traditionally known as “zi”. In other words, the traditional “zi” was assimilated into the concept of “ci”, thus losing its independent status. This dominating role of “ci” was reflected in many linguistic works such as *History of Chinese Grammar* (《汉语语法史》) (Wang, 1983) and *History of Chinese Ci Hui* (《汉语词汇史》) (Wang, 1984), where the contents were based on the central concept of “ci”.

From the above sketch of Chinese language history and, it can be observed that “zi” has been in Chinese language since the ancient times; the modern concept of “ci” is an extension of “zi”, not vice versa. To romanize Chinese on the basis of “zi” is to make the history of Chinese language consistent, while to romanize Chinese on the basis of “ci” is to cut that historical consistency short.

B. “Ci” ≠ “Word”

GB/T 16159 2012 regulates that “ci” is equivalent to “word”, and it is the smallest independent unit of Chinese. This

theory is problematic in two aspects. Firstly, the concept of “ci” being the smallest independent unit of Chinese language invites counter arguments. The smallest linguistic unit, according to Lv (1981, p. 211), means nothing can be inserted in-between. GB 3259-92 regulates that “红楼梦” is a “ci”, so it is romanized as “Hongloumeng”, which means no linguistic units could be inserted between these three characters. While in fact, characters do appear in between “红楼梦”, as in examples like “红楼复梦”, “红楼正梦”, “红楼续梦”. With the smallest unit falling flat, the concept of “being independent” cannot hold itself. Secondly, the correspondence of “ci” with “word” is problematic, and linguists even questioned the very existence of “ci” in Chinese language. Y.R. Chao (1968, p. 136) argued that “Not every language has a kind of unit which behaves in most (not to speak all) respects as does the unit called ‘word’”. Lv stated in “Yu Wen Chang Tan” that “word is ready-made in English...while what is ready-made in Chinese is zi...The reason why there is no satisfactory definition for ‘ci’ in Chinese is that there is no such a ready-made concept of ‘ci’ in Chinese” (1981, p. 45). As to the Chinese correspondence of “word”, Pan (2001) put forward that if a correspondence must be established, the Chinese “zi”, instead of “ci”, is corresponding to the English term “word” for the following reasons:

(1) “Zi” is the natural basic unit in Chinese, and it corresponds with “word”, the unit *par excellence* in English. Using this natural unit as the starting point of language study is always better than using an ambiguous and controversial unit which is a result of personal idiosyncratic analysis.

(2) “Zi” is the basic unit for Chinese people to learn about the world, which corresponds to the Bible sentence “In the beginning there was the word”.

(3) “Zi” is the interface of phonetic, orthographic, and semantic study of Chinese language, as is the English “word”.

(4) “Zi” is the nexus of grammatical study of Chinese language, for it links lexicology on the one hand, and syntax on the other. In English, “word” is such an nexus.

C. Context Helps to Disambiguate

In terms of ambiguity caused by homophony --characters sharing the same pronunciation, it is important to remember that ambiguity is “a feature of all languages” (Wang, 2011, p. 5) and the context in which linguistic chunks occur helps to disambiguate the meaning. The current aggregation of syllables in Pinyin romanization of Chinese book titles was based on the effort to reduce ambiguity--by linking syllables together to indicate that they are an independent unit. However hard they tried to illustrate examples of “ci” of different kinds, such documents as *GB/T 16159 2012* and *GB 3259-92* failed in explicitly defining the boundary between “ci”, and “ci” continues to remain as a vague concept. Without a clear definition that could clarify the specific purpose of “ci”, romanization of Chinese on the basis of “ci” is just like a castle build on sand: it is fluid and unreliable. According to the guiding documents, “Hongloumeng” is a “closely bound” structure, for it is the title of the classic Chinese novel “红楼梦”, but with the absence of explicit definition of “ci” and inborn ambiguous wordings mentioned above, it is also legitimate for such book titles as “名医谈《红楼梦》与现代心理学” to be romanized as “Mingyitanhongloumengyuxiandaixinlixue”, “Mingyi Tan Hongloumeng Yu Xiandaixinlixue”, or “Mingyi Tan Hongloumeng Yu Xiandai Xinlixue” and get away with the chaotic practice. The prescription in guiding documents is the very source of ambiguity and even chaos. If the title is romanized as “Ming Yi Tan Hong Lou Meng Yu Xian Dai Xin Li Xue”, the designation of each syllable can be determined by the linguistic context in which the syllables are situated. Also, the context beyond linguistic domain (in this case, a psychology learning classroom) will help to solve the issue of ambiguity, by gradually narrowing down the designation of each syllable. Finally, readers carry with them a certain relevant knowledge, and it cannot be assumed otherwise. If the romanization of Chinese is based on “zi”, the flexibility of word segmentation in different contexts is allowed and consistency and accuracy of “ci” identification is guaranteed.

D. Lessons Can Be Learned from the Other

Lessons can always be learned from “the other”. As was mentioned above, ambiguity is a feature general to all languages, and every language has abundant examples of ambiguous linguistic units. The classical English example “white house” can provide a perfect example of how ambiguity operates in language. In English, “the white house” can refer to any specific house that is painted white, or the only place where the president of the United States resides, or the Russian parliament building. With this ambiguity, English language does not come up with the practice of aggregation of syllables. Instead, English adopts “the White House”, with the first letter in each word capitalized, to indicate the presidential residence or the Russian parliament building, leaving the context to work out its specific designation.

Lessons of similar kind can also be learned from Wade-Giles system, where the practice is to separate syllables, either by space or a hyphen. For instance, “红楼梦” has been romanized as “Hung Lou Meng” or “Hung-lou-meng” in Wade-Giles system. When the world is thinking about transferring from Wade-Giles to Pinyin system, the wisdom in Wade-Giles should not be deserted.

V. CONCLUSION

The status of “ci” occupies an ambiguous status in Chinese language: it lacks a workable definition, and the boundary between “ci” is elusive. romanizing Chinese on the basis of “ci”, as was prescribed in such guiding documents as *GB/T*

16159 2012 and GB 3259-92 is in fact “a matter of fiat, not a question of fact” (Chao, 1968, p. 136), and is the very source of the current chaos in romanizing Chinese book and journal titles. This chaotic situation cannot go examined or unchecked. In this paper, we have argued that “zi” should be the basis of romanizing Chinese book titles, for this practice firstly eradicates the chaotic situation in the current practice, and secondly, it is a lesson learned from history and current practice. So, we finally advocate that the Pinyin romanization of “红楼梦” be “Hong Lou Meng”, not “Hongloumeng”, “Honglou Meng”, nor “Hong Loumeng”.

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Elimination of Distractors: A Construct-irrelevant Strategy? An Investigation of Examinees' Response Decision Processes in an EFL Multiple-choice Reading Test

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Abstract—This paper investigates the use of elimination of distractors strategy by exploring examinees' response decision processes while answering test items. It aims to evaluate the extent to which examinees' use of elimination of distractors strategy is construct-irrelevant. As instrument, the paper uses verbal reports in order to elicit response decision processes the selected six respondents used when they eliminated item options in some selected test materials. The results indicate five main patterns of response decision processes respondents used when eliminating distractors. However, of these five patterns, four patterns include response decision processes that can be qualified construct-irrelevant to reading construct; while one pattern included response decision processes that appear to be construct-relevant. This suggests that the use of elimination of distractors is a strategy that can sometimes be construct-relevant.

Index Terms—elimination of distractors, construct-relevant strategy; construct-irrelevant strategy, reading construct, response decision processes, EFL multiple-choice reading test

I. INTRODUCTION

The conventional MC question consists of examinees evaluating a number of suggested options before choosing only one option as the answer. Although examinees may not identify the correct answer, they are however certain that some of the options are incorrect (Bradbard, Parker, & Stone, 2004). However, one of the major concerns regarding this test format is that examinees' number of correctly answered questions is composed of two numbers: the number of questions to which they actually know the answer, and the number of questions to which they correctly guess the answer (Bradbard, *et al.*, 2004). This issue has generally been addressed in terms of test-wisness strategies. The underlying assumption is that examinees utilize the characteristics and format of the test in order to receive a high score (Sarnaci, 1979). Researchers have supported that the characteristics of an item can influence examinees' scores as some examinees may get some answers right without necessarily knowing the content of these items or using the skill that is being tested (Lee, 2011; Ascalon *et al.*, 2007; Haladyna, Downing, & Rodriguez, 2002). Viewed from this test wiseness perspective, examinees' scores on a multiple choice test are generally considered to include irrelevant variance; and this threatens the test construct validity (Bakker, *et al.*, 2008; Messick, 1989; Haladyna *et al.*, 2002). Among the test wiseness strategies reported in the literature, guessing and elimination of distractors appear to be the most important; and these two strategies are interrelated. This paper, however, investigates the use of elimination of distractors strategy by exploring examinees' response decision processes while answering test items.

II. BACKGROUND

In reviewing literature on test wiseness, Sarnacki (1979) summarizes three theoretical perspectives that appear to dominate the concept of test wiseness. The first perspective considers test wiseness as function of poor test construction; and this perspective premises that examinees generally use the clues in poorly written items in order to increase their test scores. The second perspective views test wiseness as an attribute of some individual examinees with high mental abilities and who profitably utilize some strategies in order to get some test items right without necessarily having the knowledge of the content tested. Finally, the third perspective is the synthesis of the first two; suggesting that test wiseness encompasses both the method of measurement, and the examinee characteristics. This perspective argues that neither perspective alone is sufficient in explaining the test wiseness construct and only a combination of both perspectives can offer necessary information concerning test wiseness. However, in all these three theoretical perspectives, test wiseness is considered to depress test validity and reliability as it introduces variance in test scores that is unrelated to the construct being measured (Sarnacki, 1979).

Guessing, as an overarching concept in test wiseness research, is a strategy examinees use to eliminate one or some of the item options as incorrect. If such elimination is successful, it increases the probability that the option selected is the correct one; suggesting that elimination of distractors is an element of guessing (Sarnaci, 1979). The theoretical

underpinning of elimination of distractors strategy is the deductive reasoning process. Sarnaci (1979) argues that deductive reasoning is dependent on some knowledge of the tested material. However, the correct answer is not known without the presence of other choices that serve as cues in the reasoning process. In line with this argument, Katalayi (2014) argues that, in the deductive reasoning process, in order to select the correct option, the examinee goes through the different options and starts to eliminate those options he/she finds are virtually incorrect because these options are not consistent with the information contained in the item question. Gibb (1964) calls this deductive reasoning strategy as the absurd options strategy; a strategy that consists of eliminating options that express the same fact, are opposite in meaning, or are simply nonsensical to the content being tested. Test wiseness studies that have used Gibb's absurd options strategy (see Bajtelsmit, 1975; Sarnaci, 1979) have concluded that in test wiseness examinees recourse to deductive reasoning when test items are written in a way to provide them with some clues. Viewed from this deductive reasoning stance, the elimination of improbable options has been strongly associated with skills irrelevant to the test construct; therefore, generating construct-irrelevant variance in test scores.

Although research has investigated test wiseness construct from multiple perspectives including its components (Nilsson & Wedman, 1974), correlates (Diamond & Evans, 1972), measurement (Millman, 1966), teachability (Oakland, 1972), and application (Ford, 1973), research focusing on elimination of distractors is extremely limited to few aspects (Stathopoulou, & Nikaki, 2009). One aspect relates to instances when examinees use test-taking strategies to eliminate some distractors (Lee, 2011). It was found that examinees eliminated options that included information that was contradictory to paragraph/overall passage. In earlier studies, Slakter et al., 1970, and Langer, Wark, and Johnson, 1973, cited in Sarnaci (1979), reported that examinees eliminated options that expressed the same fact since these options implied each other's incorrectness. They called this principle 'similar options' or 'similar meaning'. The similar options principle has been included in the development and experimentation of instruments to measure test wiseness (; Sarnaci, 1979; Crehan et al., 1974). On their part, Langer et al., (1973) found that examinees usually eliminated options that were opposite in meaning and confidently eliminated at least one of the options on the assumption that the correctness of one implies the incorrectness of the other.

Another aspect of research focus relates to the development of scoring methods that tend to reducing elimination of distractors so as to improve the psychometric quality of MC tests (Lau, Lau, Hong, & Usop, 2011; Oh, 2004; Chang, Lin, & Lin, 2007). These scoring methods rely on the assumption of partial knowledge that supports that examinees' knowledge of any MC item can be any one of full knowledge, partial knowledge, absence of knowledge, partial misconception, and full misconception; therefore, any attempt to measure knowledge dichotomously with a pass or fail score is unsatisfactory (Lau, *et al.*, 2011; Bradbard, Parker, & Stone, 2004; Chang, *et al.*, 2007; Alexander, Bartlett, Truell, & Ouwenga, 2001). These methods criticise the dichotomous scoring of an item on the ground that it does not credit examinees' partial knowledge; therefore, teachers cannot diagnose examinees' misunderstanding and lack of understanding as this can serve to provide informative feedback necessary for facilitating students' continuous learning. One of these scoring methods is the number right elimination testing (NRET) that combines elements of number right (NR) scoring technique and elimination testing (ET) technique (Lau, *et al.*, 2011). In this method, examinees are instructed to choose either "correct," or "wrong," or "not sure" for any of the option; and for any MC item with four options, one mark is awarded for each wrong option eliminated correctly, three marks are deducted if the correct answer is eliminated, one extra mark is awarded for any correct answer selected, and no mark is awarded for choosing "not sure" (Lau, Lau, Hong, & Usop, 2011).

However, viewed the psychometric nature of the few studies on elimination of distractors strategy and their limited scope, little is known about the response decision processes examinees actually use when eliminating distractors. Yet, an understanding of these decision processes can help conclude whether or not elimination of distractors is a construct-irrelevant strategy. This is to suggest that, unless we can tell what examinees actually do when eliminating distractors during test taking process; we cannot a priori assume that the selection of this strategy is a poor choice examinees make to answer specific test items.

Elimination of distractors in multiple-choice reading tests

This paper tests the assumption according to which elimination of distractors is a construct-irrelevant strategy that brings variance in examinees' test scores on the ground that examinees use this strategy to get some answers right even though the selected option is not understood (Lee, 2011). Focusing on the use of this strategy in multiple-choice reading tests, the paper aspires to gain an understanding of how elimination of distractors strategy can be used as part of the process of construct validation. Hence, it is premised that an investigation of examinees' actual response decision processes in answering test items can provide insights into an understanding of the extent to which examinees' use of elimination of distractors is construct-irrelevant.

As a test taking strategy, elimination of distractors is a conscious process that examinees use to answer some test items. Alderson (2000) and Rupp, Ferne and Choi (2007) argue that readers adjust their strategies and engage in the type of comprehension processes that most suit their purpose for reading. Therefore, since the main purpose of responding to MC questions is to answer them correctly, examinees select their strategies accordingly in order to optimize their chances for success. To Rupp, *et al.*, (2007), factors that potentially influence the selection of strategies in testing situations relate to the level of linguistic difficulty of the text, the topic of the text, the linguistic level of the questions, the content and phrasing of the questions, the location of information from the correct answers and the

distractors, as well as the level of cognitive activity required of the examinees. On their part, Embretson and Wetzel (1987) use the concept of text mapping (a process of relating the information in the item question and response options to the information in the text) and they argue that difficulty in answering an MC reading item is influenced by the amount of information needed from the text to answer individual test questions. They argue that, if the relevant information necessary for answering an individual test item is contained in a single short sentence, text mapping will be expected to be easy; whereas if the relevant information necessary for answering an individual test item is spread throughout the text, text mapping will be expected to be difficult (Embretson & Wetzel, 1987).

In a study that aimed to investigate the taxonomy of test-taking strategies used by second language learners in answering multiple-choice reading questions, Lee (2011) found three underlying processes where examinees proceeded to eliminate distractors to achieve an answer; including when examinees have a vague sense that the other options cannot be correct; when they find option(s) that are contradictory to paragraph/overall passage meaning; and when they find options whose information is not mentioned in designated paragraph/text. However, Lee's taxonomy does not appear to rely on the conceptualization of construct validity of multiple-choice reading test. This conceptualization suggests that an MC reading test is valid if examinees' scores can provide an indication that they have read the text and understood it, that they have read the individual test questions and they have understood the questions' expectations, and that they have understood the meanings and implications of all item options (Katalayi, 2014). Yet, in light of this conceptualization of construct validity, investigating the response decision processes examinees use when eliminating distractors can offer a better taxonomy necessary to relate the examinees' response decision processes to the test construct.

Conceptual scope

The paper draws its conceptual underpinning from Embretson and Wetzel (1987)'s response decision processes as articulated in their model of reading. Embretson and Wetzel's (1987) model describes three response decision processes: encoding and coherence processes, text mapping and evaluation of the truth status of response options. During encoding and coherence processes, the examinee attempts to convert the visual stimuli of the text into meaningful representation (encoding) as well as connecting word meanings and different text propositions into a meaningful representation of the text (coherence) (Embretson & Wetzel, 1987). During text mapping, the examinee attempts to relate the information in the item question and response options to the information in the text. Therefore, Embretson and Wetzel (1987) model posits that difficulty in text mapping is influenced by the amount of information needed from the text to answer individual test questions (Embretson & Wetzel, 1987). They argue that if the relevant information necessary for answering an item is contained in a single short sentence, text mapping will be expected to be easy. Conversely, if the relevant information necessary for answering an item is spread throughout the text, text mapping will be expected to be difficult. Finally, during the evaluating of the truth status of response options, the examinee falsifies and confirms the response option (Embretson & Wetzel, 1987). These two decision processes (falsification and confirmation) describe the extent to which examinees can use text information to make decision regarding the item options. During the falsification stage, the examinee attempts to falsify as many response options as possible while during the confirmation stage, the examinee compares the outstanding response option to the text passage to determine if the text confirms the response as correct.

Objectives

- ◆ Identify the response decision processes examinees use when they eliminate distractors in answering multiple-choice reading items;
- ◆ Evaluate the extent to which examinees' use of elimination of distractors strategy is construct-irrelevant.

Context: The DR Congo English state examination

The paper investigates the response decision processes examinees conduct when answering the DR Congo English state examination; an EFL test used as a subtest of the national test administered to final year secondary school students for certification. The ESE is a paper-and-pencil multiple-choice reading test using the conventional format that requires examinees to select only one option from a list of five suggested options.

III. METHOD

Protocol analysis

The paper uses protocol analysis methodology in order to explore the response decision processes examinees use when they eliminate distractors in answering multiple-choice reading questions. This method is used to uncover psychological processes that a person goes through while performing a task (Ericsson & Simon, 1993). It premises that it is possible to verbalize examinees' thoughts in a way that does not alter the sequence of thought that mediate the completion of the task (Ericsson & Simon, 1993). In using protocol analysis in this study, the underlying assumption is that the way respondents search for text information, evaluate item options, and choose their answers can be registered through their verbalizations, and this can be analysed to discover their response decision processes.

Instruments: verbal reports and test materials

Verbal reports

The paper uses verbal reports in order to elicit response decision processes respondents use when they eliminate item options. More specifically, the paper relies on Cohen and Upton (2006)'s taxonomy of verbal reports and it uses a

combination of self-observation reports and self-revelation reports; two instruments that are meant to disclose respondents' stream-of-consciousness of thought processes when they eliminate distractors. Self-observation reports are used to enable the researcher identify respondents' specific behaviours while they eliminate options; whereas self-observation reports are meant to reveal the respondents' reasons for eliminating certain options while searching for the correct answer (Cohen & Upton, 2006). As suggested in the literature (Cohen & Upton, 2006; Ericsson & Simon, 1993), in order to accurately reflect participants' cognitive processes, the respondents' reports were collected during task completion.

Test materials

Three test papers were randomly selected from the 2013, 2014 and 2015 ESE editions. Each test paper contained a text whose length varied between 461-477 words; and it was followed by eight questions based on the comprehension of the text; thus, making a total of 24 items. The text in the test paper #1 was about the consequences a young couple experiences with AIDS. The text in test paper #2 was about trouble between students and the police as a result of a conflict between students from two neighbouring schools. Finally, the text in test paper #3 was a retold tale of a hungry fox and a group of geese from a farm-house.

Participants

The verbal reports were administered to six students (2 high achieving students, two average achieving students, and 2 low achieving students) randomly selected from a class list of 47 students on the basis of their results to their class marks in English. All the six respondents reported some familiarity with the MC technique as this was part of their classroom assessment methods.

Participants' profile

Participant identification	Gender	Age	Linguistic background		Test paper selected	Class mark /10	Test mark /10
			L1	Other languages spoken			
Participant #1	M	19	Ciluba	French, Lingala, Swahili	Paper #2	4	3
Participant #2	M	18	Lingala	French, Ciluba, Lingala	Paper #1	8	7
Participant #3	F	20	Ciluba	French, Swahili, Lingala	Paper #2	5	6
Participant #4	M	19	Swahili	French, Lingala, Ciluba	Paper #3	6	6
Participant #5	F	20	Kikongo	French, Lingala, Ciluba	Paper #1	8	8
Participant #6	F	19	Swahili	French, Ciluba, Kikongo	Paper #2	5	3

Data collection procedure

Piloting verbal reports

A pilot study was conducted in order to test and refine the two verbal protocols in terms of the administration procedure, and the kind of prompts to be used to elicit data. The pilot study included three respondents whose profile was similar to the six respondents retained in the study; but who were not retained to participate in the main study. The results of the piloting stage enabled the researcher to devise the instructions to be provided to participants and how the respondents could familiarise themselves with the task. Furthermore, it also enabled the researcher to make sense of the average time needed by each respondent to complete the task as well as the kind of prompts the researcher needs to elicit respondents' verbalisations.

Data collection

Six sessions were organised to collect data from the six respondents; in terms of one session per respondent. During each session, two phases were observed. During the first phase of each session, that lasted about 30 minutes, the researcher briefed the respondents by informing them that they were going to write an English test and he instructed them to select one test paper from the three test papers. He informed them that, contrary to the normal test, they had to verbalize their thoughts while answering the test questions. He advised them to use any language/s of their choice. Then after, the respondents were given some practice so as to familiarize themselves with the task. This practice consisted in the researcher reading a similar test paper and trying to verbalize his thoughts while answering test questions.

During the second phase, that was video-recorded and that lasted about two hours per respondent, each respondent had to complete the test task keeping in mind that he/she had to verbalize his/her thoughts while attempting to find answers to the test questions. Respondents' reports included their verbalizations of the response decision processes they had used to answer the questions as well as their responses to the researcher questions. The researcher's questions mainly aimed at gaining some clarification on respondents' choices to use particular processes or make particular decisions when eliminating item options.

Data analysis

Transcribing and translating the reports

The respondents' reports were first transcribed; and since all the six respondents had used mainly French and a mixing of French and their L1, the reports were then translated in English for analysis.

Item selection and coding

Although the six respondents answered all the eight items, the analyses were conducted only with test items where they used elimination of distractors strategy. Therefore, of the 24 items included in the three test papers, only 12 were selected for analysis. A continuous code was given to the 12 items. Thus, test paper #1 included five items that were

coded item #1, item #2, item #3, item #4, item #5; test paper #2 included 4 items coded item #6, item #7, item #8, item #9; and finally, test paper #3 included 3 items coded item #10, item #11, and item #12.

Operationalizing response decision processes used in eliminating distractors

In order to investigate the response decision processes respondents used when eliminating distractors, the paper builds on the main assumption of the construct validity of MC reading tests that suggests that a reading test is valid when examinees' scores on the test can provide an indication that they actually attempted to read the text and understand it, understand the expectations of the test questions, and understand the meanings and implications of the items options (Katalayi, 2014). In light of this assumption, the response decision processes used when eliminating distractors were explored in terms of three variables; including (a) read and understand the text or part of the text where the information necessary for answering the item is located; (b) understand the expectation of the question; and (c) understand the meanings and implications of all/some options. It is hypothesized that if elimination of distractors strategy is used when examinees use all of these three response decision processes in answering an individual item, this strategy is highly construct-relevant. Otherwise, it is a construct-irrelevant strategy.

IV. RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In reviewing the response decision processes the six respondents used when eliminating distractors in answering the twelve items, the following response decision processes emerge:

1. Reads the text, but does not understand the expectations of the question; understands the meanings and implications of (some) options [item #1, item #9]

The striking feature in the use of this response decision process is that, although the respondents attempted to read and understand the text; their attempts to understand the question expectation was either partial (for item #1) because of a vague sense they had on the five options as a result of just skimming them; or unsuccessful (for item #9) because of failure to understand that the phrasing of the question through the use of "except" in the question as this requires finding the option whose information is *not* included in the text. Therefore, respondents eliminated some options before deciding to select their answer by guessing among outstanding options.

In answering item #1, respondent #2 read the text and seemed to understand the expectations of the question. However, since the question required reading the entire text every time he had to read each option in order to falsify it, he therefore decided to read only some options and eliminated the options out of a vague sense that they could not be the answer. This excerpt from respondent's verbalization can act as evidence:

[Skims the text; but looks annoyed] I eliminate option 1; the last paragraph must be the conclusion of the story. [Skims the remaining four options] Option 5 must be also eliminated: this is the first paragraph; it is the introduction of the story. [Skims the text; and then rereads the question] I don't see where the text mentions the event that affects Yasekuru's life. [Researcher asks: So what are you going to do?] [Respondent replies] I'm going to guess from options 2, 3, and 4.

In answering item #9, respondent #6 demonstrated a good understanding of the text and the five options; but she failed to understand the implication of the use of the word "except" in the question as the inclusion of this word requires looking for an option whose information is *not* in the text. Therefore, the respondent failed to relate information in the options to the information requested in the test question. This extract can illustrate this point:

[Skims the text; and then inspects all the options] Option 1 is correct; they [students] used the pieces of stones. But let me look at other options [Goes back to the text] Oh! option 2 is also correct. How can we have 2 good answers? [Researcher asks: "What do you do then?"] [Respondent replies] I must read the other options. [Reads the outstanding options, then skims the text, and rereads the options] I feel that options 3, 4 and 5 are also good answers. [Looks confused] Ok; I can eliminate 3 and 4. So I keep 5 as answer. [Researcher asks: Why do you eliminate options 3 and 4 when you say they are also good answers?] [Respondent replies confidently] It is because there must be only one answer.

2. Does not read the text; but understands the question's expectations; and understands the meanings and implications of (some) options [item #2, item #3, item #6, item #8, item #11]

The striking feature of all the five items where respondents used this response decision process is that the respondents answered the test items without reading and comprehending the text or part of the test where the information necessary for answering the question was located; posing ipso facto the question of validity of their answers. However, the respondents demonstrated a good degree of understanding of the question expectation through reading and rereading it; and they also demonstrated a high level of understanding of the options and the underlying implications through scanning individual options.

In answering item #2, respondent #2 ignores reading the text and starts eliminating all options that are not logical, and/or do not address the issue presented in the question stem, or again that lie outside of the realm of plausibility. This excerpt can illustrate the position:

[Reads the question; then scans the five options] Option 5 must be eliminated; death cannot be the last decision one can take. [Reads other options; and carefully reads option 4] It is illogical to avoid AIDS by marrying a man with many sexual partners. [Rereads the remaining options] I also eliminate option 2; AIDS-related complications cannot be a decision one can take.

In answering item #3, respondent #5 combined two response decision processes. First, she did not read the text information but she eliminated options 3 and 5 on the basis of her understanding the question's expectations and the meanings and implications of these two options: (*Look! option 5: is illogical. "She" must relate to a singular noun; so it must be eliminated. Option 3 is not a good option because Kirongozi is a man, the husband of Yasekuru*). Then, she goes back to the text, reads it and goes back to the outstanding options, considers one option (options 1); but still, she rereads options 2 and 4 for confirmation and finally eliminates these two options and confirms option 1 that was considered earlier. Here is an excerpt of the description of her response decision process:

Now I remain with 3 options. Let's see option 1. [Reads the text where the pronoun she is underlined]. Yes! It is written here: 'At the outset Asha seemed to be in good health. Yet, she stopped gaining weight and contracted one infection to another'. So the answer is 1.

In answering item #6, respondent #1 eliminates two options (option 3 and option 4) on the basis of some clues provided in the question. Furthermore, he uses deductive reasoning to eliminate option 5 because it is not plausible in light of information requested in the test question. Recalling the text content; but not reading the part of the text where the pronoun 'his' is located, he eliminates option 3 and option 4 on the basis of his knowledge of grammar. This excerpt can act as evidence:

Options 3 and 4 must be eliminated; there must be a singular noun phrase to refer to his. [Then reads the outstanding options] Oh yes; option 1 must also be eliminated because the text speaks of many policemen; so his cannot refer to police. [Reads carefully the two outstanding options] Ok; I also eliminate option 5; [because] the lorry driver does not have companions. In the text, he is alone.

In answering item #8, respondent #3 eliminates an option that does not respond to the question being asked; and then she has recourse to her background knowledge in order to eliminate all options that do not address issues presented in the question. One particularity of this item is that the respondent gets the correct answer simply because this is the outstanding option although she is not sure of it as correct answer. The following excerpt can act as evidence of the respondent's use of this response decision process:

I really don't know the answer. [Pause] But let me read the question again. [Pause] Yes, I see; the question asks for what you can say for revealing the identity. Oh look; option 3 is wrong; it asks for the age; not identity; so I eliminate it. [Rereads carefully the other options] Also, option 4 is also wrong because it asks about the time of the incident; not the identity. [Researcher asks a question: What do you mean by identity?] [Respondent replies] My name, who my parents are, my tribe, etc. [Then continues reading options; looks at option 1] Yes; who killed the student? I think this is the answer. Let's look now at the two remaining options. [Researcher asks a question: Why do you look at remaining options when you have already the answer?] [Respondent replies] I must make sure that the two remaining options are wrong. Ok; option 2; no this is a wrong answer; it asks for the number of people involved in the accident. Option 5; no this is wrong. So the answer is option 1. [Researcher asks a question: Are you sure of option 1 as the answer?] [Respondent replies] I think it is the answer; because the other options are wrong.

Finally, in answering item #11, respondent #4 ignores to read the text and relies on his knowledge of the rule that governs the use of tag questions and eliminates all options that deviate from the rule. He feels confident of the answer option he has selected as this is the only outstanding option. The following excerpt illustrates respondent's use of this response decision process:

I eliminate option 2 first because the verb is in the present tense. [Researcher asks] Why do you think options with verbs in the present tense are wrong answers? [Respondent replies] Because the verb in the question is past; not present. [Then looks at other options] Oh I see, the answer must not be with a verb in affirmative form; so I must eliminate options 3, 4 and 5. So the answer must be option 1. [Researcher asks] Why do you believe option 1 is the good answer? [Respondent replies] This is because the other four options are wrong answers.

3. Reads and understands the text, understands the question expectation, understands the meanings and implications of the options [item #4, item #7]

The particularity of these two items is that they used all the three processes deemed necessary for answering MC reading items; however, respondents' use of elimination of distractors strategy aimed only to falsify and confirm their answer choices.

In order to answer item #4, respondent #5 demonstrates a good understanding of the text and the question's expectations and she conducts multiple readings of the text or she recalls information from the text prior to eliminating the wrong options. Furthermore, she makes use of her inferencing skills to eliminate other options; and finally she rereads the outstanding options, evaluates them and finally selects the answer option on the basis of her understanding of the text. The following extract illustrates the respondent's use of these response decision processes:

The question asks for an option whose information is not in the text. [Researcher asks: How do you know that you must select the option that contains information not stated in the text?] [Respondent replies] I know it from the word *except*. So, I must eliminate all options that contain information that is not stated in the test. [Reads carefully the options] Let's take option 1: I remember; Yasekuru decided not to get marriage again. I provisionally eliminate it; but I shall come back to it later. [Moves on to option 2] Yes, Kirongozi was a taxi driver who died of AIDS. So I can say that he suffered of a disease that was known. I also eliminate this option. [Moves on to option 3] Let me read it first. [Pause] Ah; it is difficult to say something now. Let me read the text. [Skims the text] It is not clear I shall come back later.

[Moves on to option 4] Yes, the man was a taxi driver; I remember; it is said in the text. So I also eliminate option 4. [Moves on to option 5] Let me read the text. Ok; look it is written here: 'Yasekuru's husband of eight years died of Aids-related complications'. So I must eliminate also this option. [Researcher asks: Now the answer is option 3, because this is the only option you have not eliminated?] [Respondent replies] I said I provisionally retained option 3; let me reread the text again. [After scanning the text portion where information is located] Ah the text does not say this; but I can deduce that people with many sexual partners are easily infected. But since the text does not say it clearly, this is the option that contains information not stated in the text. So, it is the correct answer.

In answering item #7, respondent #1 reads the text and demonstrates a good understanding of text main ideas and details, he then reads the question and displays an understanding of the question expectation; next he eliminates the options after understanding their meanings and implications either by going back to the text and scanning necessary information, or by recalling text information; and finally he rereads the text to confirm the answer option selected. The following excerpt is a verbalization of the respondent's response decision processes:

The question asks me to find the information that does not relate to the text; so I must start by reading the text the first time. [After careful reading of the text] Yes, I see; the text say: "*furious young men were feverishly throwing to their opponents any kind of harmful objects: pieces of stones, bricks, iron sticks...*"; so I eliminate option 1 because this is the information contained in the text. [Moves on to option 2] Ah; no idea now [Moves on to option 3; scans portion of the text] Yes, I see; the text says: "*APOLOSA, a well-known policeman, was seriously injured*"; yes; it is true. So I must also eliminate option 3. [Moves on to option 4; scans a portion of the text] Yes, I see; it is said "*The Chief District of police then decided the protection of the school from the revenge of the students*". This is what option 4 says. Remember that the correct answer is the one that does not contain information stated in the text. So I eliminate option 4. [Moves on to option 5] Ok; I remember. The police committed many abuses when they clashed with students. But I must read the text and see if this is true. [Skimming the text] Yes, I see; it is written here: "*The so-called 'strong men' were accused for that offence. Phone cells, golden jewelry and money robbery was also observed. Some demonstrators were caught to be jailed*". [Researcher asks a question: How do you know that the strong men refer to the police?] [Respondent replies] We know who the police are, what they do. We know that they consider themselves as strong because they have weapons and they use them on civilians. They are strong men. So I also eliminate option 5. Let me see; oh I remain with option 2 only. I think it must be the answer. But I have to reread the text. [Rereads a portion of the text] Oh; you see? It says "*driver was badly wounded*" but option 2 says "*the driver died as the lorry bumped a tree*". This is not what the text says. Remember that I have to choose the option that contains information not stated in the text. So this is obviously the correct answer; no doubt.

4. Reads the text, but fails to understand the expectation of the question, and the meaning of (some) the options [item #5]

The particularity of this test item that tests grammar knowledge in context is that the respondent, despite her reading of the part of the text referred to, is not capable to understand the expectation of the question, and the meaning of some options. Therefore, she proceeds to eliminate any options she fails to encode meaning. This extract is respondent's verbalization of her response decision process.

[Scans the part of the text referred to] I have read this part of the text. But I don't understand the meaning of 'hardly'. So, I can eliminate items that I don't understand. [Researcher asks: what does the question demand?] [Respondent replies] What 'hardly' means. So, I eliminate option 2, and option 4. [Then looks at option 1, thinking] Ah; I don't think happily can mean hardly; so I also eliminate it.

5. Reads the text, understands the expectations of the questions; but fails to understand the meaning and implication of (some) the options [item #10, item #12]

The striking feature of these test items is that they require inferencing skills as the information contained in the options should be related to the information that is implicitly stated in the text. Therefore, although they display a good understanding of the text and test question expectations, respondents eliminate all options where they fail to map information in the item into information in the text.

In answering item #10, respondent #4 eliminates the option that contains information implicitly stated in the indicated paragraph; although he is aware that this information is explicitly stated in another paragraph as main idea. This excerpt can act as evidence:

[Starts by reading the question; then, skims over the responses quickly and then goes back to the second paragraph]. Ah, I don't see a good answer. [Researcher asks: So what are you going to do?] [Respondent replies] Let me see if I can eliminate some options. [Rereads the second paragraph; and starts skimming options] Yes, I can eliminate option 3 because the information presented in this item is developed in paragraph 3; not paragraph 2. [Researcher asks: So, information in paragraph 2 does not relate to this option?] [Respondent replies] It does, but it is not clearly stated as in paragraph 3.

In answering item #12, respondent #4 reads the text, understands the question's expectations; but he fails to understand the meanings of options because he cannot make inferences in order to map information in the text to information in the options.

[Reads the question and the options; then goes back to the text and skims some parts; rereads the options]. I eliminate options 1, 2, 3 because this is not said in the text. [Looks at options 4 and 5, skims again the text, rereads the options];

this is not the way it said in the text; so I think these are wrong answers as well. [Researcher asks: So? No answer?] [Respondent replies] Let me first eliminate them also. [Researcher asks: So, no good answer?] [Respondent rereads the text and skims the five options] What the text says is not what is said here.

Discussion

The paper aimed to explore examinees' response decision processes they use when eliminating options in answering MC questions so as to evaluate whether the use of elimination of distractors strategy is construct-irrelevant as supported in the literature.

The results indicate five main patterns of response decision processes respondents used when eliminating distractors. However, of these five patterns, four patterns include response decision processes that can be qualified construct-irrelevant to reading construct; and one pattern included response decision processes that appear to be construct-relevant. In reviewing the four patterns that included construct-irrelevant response decision processes, it was found that examinees selected their answers after eliminating some options without reading the text, and/or understanding the question's expectations and the meanings and implications of the (some) options. More specifically, the result indicate that examinees eliminated some options without a prior reading of the (portion of the) text when they could understand information contained in the options from simple logic or deductive reasoning; or when the question provided some clues to the answer. This finding appears to be consistent with a finding by Rupp, Ferne and Choi (2006) when they reported that for items with options that were close in meaning and plausibility, comprehension of the text content or general argument structure might have been subordinate to logical reasoning. Likewise, with some grammar-based items, examinees ignored reading the part of the text where the structure was located; preferring to eliminate options on the basis of their knowledge of the rule that governs the structure. Therefore, by answering an item without prior reading or recalling of the text information, any credit score provided after eliminating distractors brings irrelevant variance in the examinee actual test score. Furthermore, the results have indicated that examinees' tended to eliminate options when they could not understand the phrasing of the question, and this resulted in failing to relate information in the options to the information required in the question. Last but not least, it was found that when information necessary to falsify the five options was spread throughout the entire text, the examinee could read only some options and therefore eliminate other options out of a vague sense that they were incorrect; or they tended to eliminate options when text information was implicitly stated and failed to map it with information in the options. This finding is consistent with existing literature that suggests that when pieces of connected and relevant information necessary for answering a test item were not presented in close proximity, examinees could hardly make a mental representation of the text (Sheehan & Ginther, 2001; Freedle & Kostin, 1992); and that inference items, since they are perceived to be difficult, are more susceptible to the use of elimination of distractors strategy as they require examinees to engage with the whole text (Rupp, Ferne, & Choi, 2006; Embretson & Wetzel, 1987).

However, the one response decision processes pattern that appears to be construct-relevant included all the three criteria deemed necessary for validating the reading construct. The results have indicated that some respondents eliminated options after they had read and understood the text as well as the questions' expectations; and after they had evaluated the truth status of each option. More specifically, the results have suggested that with some items that required respondents to read information scattered in different parts of the text, the response decision process became more and more characterized by a continual back and forth between the options and relevant text sections in order to logically eliminate, that is, falsify potentially incorrect options. This process was continued until the potentially correct option could be confirmed. The use of this response decision processes reflects Embretson and Wetzel (1987)'s response decision processes as these respondents were able to connect different text propositions into a meaningful representation of the text; they could relate the information in the item question and options to the information in the text; and they could also falsify different options and confirm the answer option for accuracy (Embretson & Wetzel, 1987). This finding, that validates the use of elimination of distractors strategy in answering MC reading items, is not consistent with existing literature that qualifies this strategy as simply construct-irrelevant (Sarnaci, 1979; Rupp, Ferne, & Choi, 2006) and associates it with general test-taking skills than with reading comprehension skills (Ozuru, *et al.*, 2008).

Conclusion

The results of this study suggest that elimination of distractors strategy can be a construct-irrelevant strategy as well as a construct-relevant strategy. Therefore, this finding helps to interrogate studies that a priori consider elimination of distractors as a construct-irrelevant strategy without any prior investigation of the actual response processes examinees use when using this strategy.

This insight is significant in test wiseness research; especially research that aim to validate the reading construct from examinees' test taking strategies use perspective. By describing the actual response decision processes foreign language students use while eliminating distractors in a multiple-choice reading test, we can gain a better understanding of the relationship between the actual use of this strategy and the reading construct being measured. Such a relationship is important as it enables to take an informed conclusion on whether the elimination of distractors strategy is a construct-relevant or a construct-irrelevant strategy. Therefore, this insight is expected to augment our understanding of elimination of distractors as a test wiseness strategy that brings construct-irrelevant variance in test scores; and therefore affects test validity. This insight can inform psychometrically-driven studies that are grounded in the concept of partial

knowledge by augmenting their understanding in their distinction between partial knowledge and absence of knowledge in answering MC items (Chang, Lin, & Lin, 2007; Alexander, et al., 2001). Furthermore, these findings can inform assessment practices that support and use elimination testing to reconsider some of their assumptions on examinees' use of elimination of distractors strategy. Last, but not least, this research insight is meant to fill the gap on the abject paucity of studies relating to elimination of distractors strategy in MC reading tests in general (Stathopoulou, & Nikaki, 2009) and the actual processes examinees engage when answering test items in particular.

The present paper has some limitations that are typical to the use of verbal reports (Cohen & Upton, 2006). The fact that respondents were verbalizing their response decision processes as they worked through the items could have influenced their way of completing the task. Furthermore, since the completion of the test was not timed, and since their scores were of no consequence, it is also possible that respondents were making an effort to respond to each item more conscientiously than they would have responded under normal testing conditions. Last but not least, a distinction was not made between response decision processes that were used for test items that were answered correctly as opposed to those answered incorrectly; yet, such a distinction could have shed further insights into respondents' use of the different response decision processes. Nevertheless, the researcher feels that the data are indicative of the kinds of processes that respondents made in an effort to answer the ESE items.

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A Study on the Application of Functional Equivalence to Business English E-C Translation

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Abstract—The “functional equivalence” advanced by the famous American translation theorist, Eugene Nida has been widely used by various translators and has had a profound impact on China’s translation field. The application of functional equivalence theory to business English E-C(English-to-Chinese) translation is of great significance to the future translation of business English. Based on that, this thesis studies how the functional equivalence theory is applied to business English E-C translation from the view of equivalence of semantic message, equivalence of stylistic message and equivalence of cultural message with the practice of E-C translation effectively in order to ensure the accessibility and efficient communication of international business activities.

Index Terms—functional equivalence, business English, business English translation

I. INTRODUCTION

With the further development of China’s economy and the globalization of the world economy, the economic exchange trades between countries are becoming increasingly close. In order to make the process of economic trade more convenient and professional, business English translation has become the focus of the study of scholars.

Business English which functions as a language tool for serving business activities among the countries all over the world is different from general English from the aspect of lexical, stylistic and textual features. Hence, general translation theory may be not entirely applicable to business English translation. First of all, business English involves a wide range of foreign trade translation, and almost covers every aspect of our society and other fields. In addition, the translation of business English is very special in time and efficiency, which is determined by the changing economic situation at home and abroad. We cannot, as for other types of translations, take weeks or even years to think about how to translate well, but have to convey information as quickly as possible. How to determine your business English translation strategies is a matter of both theoretical and practical significance. On account to these characteristics, the principles and theories should be applicable in the process of translation. Even though many scholars have made a lot of research on translation, but unfortunately a systematic theory was not achieved. With continuous research, Eugene Nida, known as the translation theorist, advanced the “functional equivalence” theory which is called dynamic equivalence in the past. This theory has had a profound impact on China’s translation field, and many translators make full use of this theory in the translation of business English.

This thesis begins with the illustration of Nida’s functional equivalence theory which focuses on the definition of functional equivalence and its three features, namely, equivalent, natural and the closest. And then the author compares Business English as a kind of English for specific purpose with English for general purpose, finding that the difference between them lies in the unique linguistic features. Therefore, this thesis introduces the linguistic features of business English from the perspective of lexical level, syntactic level and textual level after the discussion about the definition of business English. At the same time, the thesis demonstrates the four criteria with which the business English translation process should comply---faithfulness, fluency, exactness and consistency. Based on this, the fourth part studies the application of functional equivalence theory applied to business English E-C translation from the view of equivalence of semantic message, equivalence of stylistic message and equivalence of cultural message. Finally, this thesis summarizes the main ideas of the thesis and the limitation of the thesis.

II. NIDA’S FUNCTIONAL EQUIVALENCE THEORY

A. The Definition of Functional Equivalence

Nida has a view that equivalence includes two types, formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence. Nida gives a definition for “formal equivalence which focuses on the form and content of the message itself. However, the dynamic equivalence focuses on the principle of equivalence effect.” (Nida, 1964, p. 197)

“Dynamic equivalence is to be defined in terms of the degree to which the receptors of the message in the receptor language respond to it in substantially the same manner as the receptor in the source language.” (Nida, 1969, p. 24)

In order to emphasize the concept of “functional” and avoid the misunderstanding of “dynamic” that some persons regarded the term “dynamic” as referring only to something which has impact, he used “functional equivalence” instead of “dynamic equivalence”. He explains that the functional equivalence is more likely to offer a much more reasonable basis for translation “as a form of communication with a focus on what translation does or perform.” (Nida, 1993, p.124)

Nida clarifies the goal of dynamic equivalence is to seek “the closest natural equivalent to the source language message.” (Nida, 1969, p.12) That is to say Nida’s theory focuses on the functional equivalence rather than formal equivalence.

Later on, functional equivalent theory is split into two levels--that is the minimal level and the maximal level. From the minimal level, the functional equivalence is “The readers of a translated text should be able to understand it to the extent that they can image how the original readers understand and appreciated it.” (Nida, 2001, p.136) Any translation which is less than the minimal level of equivalence is hardly to be accepted. From the perspective of maximal level, the definition of functional equivalence can be regarded as “The readers of a translated text should be understand and appreciate it in substantially the same manner as the original readers did.” The maximal level stands for a high degree of language-culture correspondence between target language and source language. The target language readers can have a response that is very close to that of original readers.

B. *The Features of Functional Equivalence*

In *Toward a Science of Translating*, Nida firstly states the principle of dynamic equivalence, which he defines as “the relationship between receptor and message should be substantially the same as that which existed between the original receptors and the message.” (Nida, 1964, p. 159) He also says that the goal of the functional equivalence theory is to make the translation achieve the closest natural equivalent to the source-language message. Nida further puts forward the essential features of functional equivalence are made up of the following three essential terms aiming at the receptor response is similar to the original writer meaning at highest degree.

- (i) “Equivalent, which points toward the source-language message;
- (ii) Natural, which points toward the target language;
- (iii) Closest, which binds the two orientations together on the basis of the highest degree of approximation.” (Nida, 1964, p. 166)

The meaning of equivalent is to “reproduce the message of the original text as the equivalence of the response rather than the form.” (Zhao Yong, 2013, p. 85) which is the most primary part of the translation process. Only when the translator achieve this goal, will the receptor language conveys the primary message of the source language.

Apart from knowing the features, the following adaptation should be applied in the E-C translation of business English.

- (i) “The greater the differences in the source and target cultures, the greater the need for adjustments.
- (ii) The greater the differences between the source and target languages, the greater the need for adjustments.
- (iii) The more distinctive the style of the source text, the greater the number of adjustments.
- (iv) The greater the differences in social and educational levels of the source and target audiences, the greater the number of adjustments.
- (v) “The more a translated text is dependent on an accompanying code, the greater the number and variety of adjustments.” (Nida, 1997, p.125)

All in all, as the introduction about Nida’s functional equivalence mentioned above, it is essential to the translation field. In translation, the translator should not only pay attention to the semantic message and stylistic message but also the cultural message which is more important to achieve the functional equivalence.

III. AN INTRODUCTION OF BUSINESS ENGLISH AND THE CRITERIA OF BUSINESS ENGLISH TRANSLATION

“Business English, as a language tool for the communication of international economic exchanges and business activities, stands out as a new, interdisciplinary and comprehensive discipline, which exists in the whole process of business activities.” (Duan Yunli, 2013, p. 1) Business English, in terms of the essence of the language, is a complex of English vocabulary and sentence pattern and literary form which are often used in commercial field reflecting the professional affairs in the field.

A. *The Linguistic Features of Business English*

(1) The Lexical Features of Business English

The lexical features of business English mainly consists of the following four aspects.

- (i) Using formal vocabulary. Business English has a preference for formal vocabulary because of the binding and normative characters of business documents.
- (ii) Using single word. Single here means the meaning of the word is comparatively single. Unlike English for general purpose, business English take the words which has relatively single meaning instead of those words of rich and flexible meaning in order to grant the accuracy and preciseness of the text.

(iii) Using terminologies. Business English is a discipline which is equipped with highly applicability and comprehensiveness, involving international trade, marketing, finance, law, insurance, logistics, advertising and other fields. As a result from such wide fields, business English has a large number of terminologies.

(iv) Using abbreviations, foreign words and archaic words. Newmark (1988) points out in the classification of the English word meaning theory that terminologies, archaic words and foreign words are suitable for the accurate and concise requirements of business English texts.

(2) The Syntactic Features of Business English

(i) Using passive sentences. Passive voice is one of the language features of business English which makes language structure rigorous, the semantics accurate and expression tight, strengthens the logic and transfers the stressed object to improve the objectivity, fairness and embody the principle of good manners.

(ii) Using complex sentence. The use of complex sentence in business English makes the context clearer and more accurate, makes the manner of writing more rigorous and refined.

(iii) Using the sentence containing "shall". In business English, the sentence containing "shall" is often used with the purpose of enhancing the mood. Especially in the business contract, "shall" is not only used to embody future tense, but also indicate the responsibilities and obligations of both parties.

(iv) Using established formats. So-called established formats are some sentence patterns which are often used. Some established formats will be introduced as follows:

(3) The Textual Features of Business English

(i) Accurate and concrete. In business English, the expression of sentences must be specific and accurate, otherwise, inconvenience even loss of the company will be aroused. We can compare the following two groups of sentences.

(ii) Concise style of writing. Concise and comprehensive is one of the characteristics of business English. In business field, time is money. The concise style of writing can save the time. The expression of business English is more concise than that of other type of literature.

(iii) Normalized structure. Business English differs from English for general purposes in terms of a certain relevance. Therefore, the format of business English must be normative. Taking the business correspondence for example. Business correspondence includes inside name and address, date, salutation, body, complementary closing, signature. Different types of business documents have different formats.

(iv) Euphemistic expression.

a. Objective expression. In business English, there is a preference to using objective expression which is easier to be accepted because of the more appropriate style of writing.

b. Euphemistic rejection. In business activities, the occasion often emerges where the requirements put forward by the opposite are unreasonable and unacceptable. Then, adopting the straight way to refuse the requirements will lead to the failure of the business activities. Therefore, making use of euphemistic rejection achieves the goal of refusing also scruples the opposite's mind.

B. The Criteria of Business English Translation

(i) Faithfulness. "So-called faithfulness is to be faithful to the original content." (Wen Jingjing, 2014, p.191) The translator must convey the original content completely without any manipulation. Business English translation must be faithful to the original text, achieving the equivalence of information rather than similarities. There is a point to note is that the faithfulness does not mean being faithful to the language expression form but faithful to the content will and style effect of the original text.

(ii) Fluency. "Fluency means translation in line with the language of the premise, can be easy to understand." (ibid, p. 192) In other words, in the process of translating one language into another language, translation should be smooth, clear and easy to be understood. The translation must be a clear modern language, fluent statement, rigorous structure.

(iii) Exactness. Exactness is the most important part in business English translation. "Exactness refers to the translation should understand and select the words correctly, express the concept accurately, express the the original language information completely via translation language." (Duan Yunli, 2013, p.13)

(iv) Consistency. The so-called consistency is in the process of business English translation, concepts, terminology, etc. should be maintained unity at any time and does the same concept or the term should not be transformed randomly, such as "exclusive", exclusive territory is "独占区域", however, exclusive contract means "转销合同".

IV. APPLICATION OF FUNCTIONAL EQUIVALENCE TO BUSINESS ENGLISH E-C TRANSLATION

Since Nida put forward the functional equivalence, the theory has been widely used in business English E-C translation. This part will analyze how the functional equivalence is applied to business English E-C translation.

A. Equivalence of Semantic Message of Target Language and Source Language in Business English E-C Translation

Semantic message is the foundation of stylistic message and cultural message as the stylistic and cultural message must be expressed through the basic meaning of language. Semantic message consists of surface structure semantic message and deep structure semantic message.

1 Equivalence of Surface Semantic Message of Target Language and Source Language

Surface semantic message refers to the literal meaning of discourse. Examples will be cited to prove the equivalence of surface semantic message of source language and target language.

1a. APEC Business Travel Card (ABTC): Eligibility

A business person living in the Hongkong Special Administrative Region can apply for an ABTC if he/she:

- (i) has a HongKong permanent identity card;
- (ii) has not previously been denied entry to any of the participating economies;
- (iii) has never been convicted of a criminal offence;

1b. 亚太经合组织商务旅游证：申请资格

若符合以下条件，在香港特别行政区定居的经商人士可以申请亚太经合组织商务旅游证：

- (i) 持有香港永久性居民身份证；
- (ii) 曾未遭遇任何参与此计划的地区拒绝入境；
- (iii) 从没有因触犯任何刑事罪行而被判罪；

This translation mentioned above is the translation of legal documents, one type of business English texts. All legal documents just express the literal meaning without any extension. The legal documents clearly clarify the eligibility for the ABTC. Therefore, the legal language carries the message that is conveyed by the surface of the language, and there is no deep semantic structure.

Apart from the translation of business English legal document applies to the surface semantic message, the translation of business English contract should be in accordance with the surface semantic message. For example,

2a. The Contractor shall be responsible for the accurate delivery of the original parameters of the relevant points, lines and levels in accordance with the Engineer's work and shall, as aforesaid, be responsible for calibrating the orientation, level, size and alignment of the various parts of the Works and shall take responsible for providing everything that are related equipment, equipment and labor.

2b. 承包商应负责根据工程师的工作准确交付相关点、线和水平的原始参数，并按上述规定校准各部分的方向、水平、尺寸和对齐方式工程。负责提供一切必要的相关设备，设备和人力。

This business English contract stipulates the Contractor's obligation clearly. Contract is the legal evidence in business activities which stipulates the rights and obligations of trade parties. Therefore, when translating business English contract, no extension shall be added, just in accordance with the surface semantic message.

2 Equivalence of Deep Structure Semantic Message of Target Language and Source Language

Deep structure semantic information refers to the meaning implied by the surface structure of the language. This kind of meaning is to be understood through the understanding and speculation of the context. In order to understand the deep structure semantic message, the translator must make use of his knowledge of society, history, culture and other aspects of the source language. Examples will be listed to prove the equivalence of deep structure semantic message.

3a. The Unique Spirit of Canada.

3b. 别具风味的加拿大酒，独特的加拿大精神。(酒类广告)

In this Canadian wine advertising, if the translator just understand the surface structure semantic message, the advertisement is only conveyed the taste of wine. However, the word "spirit" is the highlight of the advertisement. It has "精神" and "烈酒、醇酒" double meaning. The source language makes use of the semantic pun of "spirit" to embody the wine and spirit in Canada are both unique. The equivalence of deep structure semantic message let the receptors have a deep understanding of the advertisement.

4a. Whatever path you take in life, you'll face financial challenges and opportunities along the way. With the Principle Financial Group, you'll have all the tools to handle them. All of our financial products and services for business or individuals, has their own unique advantage built in. That's the Principle Edge. Financial products that offer you an edge. The Principle Financial Group.

4b. 无论您在生活中采取何种路径，您一路上都将面临经济挑战和机遇。选择汇富财团，您将拥您需要用来应对这些经济挑战的所有工具。我们的每一个金融产品和服务，无论是服务于商业还是个人，都有自己内在的独特优势，这就是资本优势。金融产品给你一个转折点。汇富财团。

The advertisement mentioned above is with the picture of corresponding knife. Without careful attention, people will regard it as an advertisement of knife. The most important of the ad is the "edge" which is not only has the meaning of "刀刃、刀锋", but also has the meaning "事情的转折点、作用、优势". "Edge" in the first sentence of the ad means "优势、作用". However, in the last sentence but one, "edge" means "事情的转折点". Apart from this, the "principle" is also a pun. When translating the English words in company name into Chinese, it is usually adopted transliteration. However, the word has the basic meaning "主要的" and "资本". Seeing the company "the Principle Financial Group,

the name reminds the English readers of consortium which is well-capitalized. In order to make the target language readers have the same association, the company name is translated into “汇富财团”.

B. *Equivalence of Stylistic Message of Target Language and Source Language in Business English E-C Translation*

“Style” actually refers to different literary forms. Stylistic message is one of the message that is passed by language which is regarded as a message carrier. The transmission of stylistic message can not be ignored in the translation, otherwise the translation not only loses a lot of information but also the translation is not appropriate. The equivalence of stylistic message of target language and source language indicates the translation is intended to reproduce the original tone. For example

(i) Business correspondence

5a. Offer of a Quality Product--Bamboo Carvings

Dear Sirs/Madams,

We are very delighted to send you this letter with a copy of our catalogue for bamboo carvings. The high quality of our product is well-known and we are confident that a trial order would convince you our goods are excellent.

We are offering you goods of the highest quality on unusually generous terms and would welcome the opportunity to serve you.

Yours faithfully

The Brunner Trade Company

5b. 推销优质产品——竹雕

先生/女士台鉴：

现随信寄上竹雕目录表一份，请查收。我们的产品以优质著称。贵方如果试定一次货物，会确信我们的货物是一流的。

我们以最合理的价格提供最高档的产品，希望有机会为贵方服务。

您最忠实的

布鲁洛贸易公司

The example mentioned above is the translation of business English correspondence. The translation must reflect the format and language features of business English correspondence.

(ii) Legal Documents

6a. Insurance policies or certificate in duplicate in blank of 110% of invoice value covering all risks and war risks as per CIC of the People's Insurance Company of China dated 1st January 1981 with claims payable at...in the currency of draft (irrespective of percentage), including 60 days after discharge of the goods at port of destination subject to CIC.

6b. 保单或保险凭证一式两份，空白背书，按发票金额的110%投保中国保险公司1981年1月1日实施保险条款的综合险和战争险，按汇票使用的货币在.....赔付（不计免赔），并按照中国保险条款，保险期限在目的港卸船后60天为止。

The above example is a legally binding clause. The translation should be equipped with the characteristics of legal documents. If unfamiliar with the legal language, the translator is hard to select a proper word to translate “endorsed in blank”. It is a terminology which means “空白背书”.

(iii) Advertisement

7a. Apple thinks different.

7b. 苹果电脑，不同凡“想”。

The source language advertisement originally means Apple adopts thinking mode different from others. The translation keep the “thinks” which makes the product is more outstanding. The translation meets the features of advertisement.

(iv) Telephone note

8a. Telephone Note

Date: 20/9/2009

Message for: Peter Johnson

Message: Alice Black called from the United States. Please call her today before 5 p.m. Or any time tomorrow on 512-442-XXXX re the pricing of new products.

Taken by: John Brown

8b. 电话留言

日期：2009/9/20

收信人名字：彼得·约翰逊

正文：爱利斯·布莱克从美国来电。请今天下午五点前或者明天就新产品定价一事回电，电话号码：512-422-XXXX。

This is a translation of telephone note. The translation complies with the format of the source language. In addition, the translation is consistent with the conciseness and politeness of the source language.

C. Equivalence of Cultural Message of Target Language and Source Language in Business English E-C Translation

(1) Equivalence of Environmental Culture in Business English E-C Translation

Environmental culture refers to the culture formed by the natural environment and social environment of the region appearing in different ethnics take different languages to express toward one phenomenon or thing. The specific growth environment allows people to develop a specific mindset, so in the process of business English E-C translation, the translator may face some difficulties. "In summer keep exercising during the hottest days; in winter do the same thing during the coldest weather" can be translated into the Chinese proverb "夏练三伏，冬练三九". This means inspiring people to insist on working out.

The United Kingdom is an island. The climate is affected by the North Atlantic warm current, so the west wind blowing from the ocean is warm and humid. In the British understanding, the west wind is warm. The English word "Zephyr" means the west wind and it is used as the brand name for car. But in Chinese culture, the west wind is cold as "northwest wind" just blows in winter. Usually, it contains a certain derogatory. On the contrary, the east wind is warm, China FAW Group also produces "Dongfeng" brand cars.

Due to the difference of natural environment and social environment, the translator need to translate the source language in accordance with the environment of the target language in the process of business English E-C translation.

(2) Equivalence of Folk Culture in Business English E-C Translation

Folk culture refers to the culture which is formed from ethnic customs and habits and runs through the daily social life and communication activities customs and habits of the people in daily social life and communication activities. Language comes from life. To some degree, the language expression system is confined by living habit.

(i) Color. In terms of the attitude to color, in western countries, people regard "blue" as meaning of "sad and depressed". They call Monday "blue Monday" because it is the first day to work after the relaxing weekend with a depressed mood. On the contrary, the Chinese see the blue as a meaning of clear and fresh. In the translation of brand, "蓝天" brand is translated into "Blue Sky Lamp". Obviously, it is not in accordance with the folk culture in western countries. In western countries, "red" is connected with blood, violence and danger. In English, red flag means "惹人生气的事", in which the red means "亏损、负债". However, Chinese people regard "red" as "happy and festive". When celebrating the festivals, people are well dress in red to express their happy mood.

(ii) Number. Another obvious example is about the understanding of number. In western countries, number "7" is paid much attention. The brand "7-Up" is translated into "七喜" in Chinese rather than "七上". The number "7" is equal "8" in our country. There are also "Mild Seven"(柔和七星) and "Seven star"(七星).

(3) Equivalence of Religious Culture in Business English E-C Translation

Religious culture refers to the culture formed from religious beliefs, consciousness, etc. which is reflected by cultural difference in taboos. Religious taboos brings various taboos and restrictions for the company when carrying international business activities. The people engaged in business activities should take the religious difference into consideration, otherwise, business communication will be prevented, which will arouse the commercial loss.

In terms of religious culture, some words have the corresponding vocabulary both in English and in Chinese. However, the words should be translated flexibly because of the different religious cultural message. For example, the word "dragon" and "龙", the surface meaning both means a kind of reptile, but the cultural connotation is different. "Dragon" in English is the symbol of "怪物、恶魔、凶残". On the contrary, in China, "龙" stands for the dignity and power. "龙" is the symbol of the history of civilization in the past five thousand years. On the basis of the cultural difference, the Chinese with the word "龙" is not translated into "dragon". "亚洲四小龙" is translated into "four Asian Tigers".

(4) Equivalence of Historical Culture in Business English E-C Translation

Historical culture is the culture formed by a specific historical development process and the social heritage of the city store. Different historical origins attribute to different character and lifestyle of all ethnic groups. The history brings people memory and revelation which is reflected by language. Only when the translator master the rich historical and cultural connotation and select the proper translation method, can he convey the intention of the writer appropriately.

It seems that the historical culture has no sense to the translation of business English. On the contrary, business activity is a kind of cross-cultural activity. When the translator have a good knowledge of the historical culture, the translation will be appropriate. The following advertisement indicates the point.

9a. We take no pride in prejudice. (*The Times*)

9b. 正义的力量，舆论的导向。

In the advertisement, "pride in prejudice" is quotes from the famous works *Pride and Prejudice* written by Jane Austen embodying the "Times" adheres to the principle of fair and impartial. The advertisement has a great impact on the "Times". If the translator is unfamiliar with the cultural background of the source language, he hardly realize the equivalence of cultural message. What's worse, "We take no pride in prejudice" may be translated into "对于你们的误解,我们并不骄傲". In consideration of the target language readers' same response with that of source language readers and the effect of the advertisement, the advertisement can be translated into "正义的力量，舆论的导向".

V. CONCLUSION

As business English has its own unique linguistic features from the perspective of lexical level, syntactic level and textual level, the process of business English translation need to comply with the criteria to be in accord with these features, namely, faithfulness, fluency, exactness and consistency. Apart from the equivalence of semantic message and stylistic message of target language and source language, the equivalence of cultural message is also important in the business English E-C translation. Cultural elements play an important role in the process. However, owing to the cultural difference in terms of the environment, folkways, religion and history, the readers of the target language hardly understand and appreciate it as same as the readers of source language do. As we know, the goal of the translation is to seek the closest natural equivalent to the source language which can be regarded as the features of functional equivalence. Based on this, the E-C translation of business English will realize the equivalence of cultural message of target language and source language from the perspectives of environmental culture, folk culture, religious culture and historical culture which will make the readers of target language response with it in the substantially same manner as the readers of source language. In spite of the loss of the meaning in the translation, the translator should try his best to reduce the loss and achieve the maximal level of functional equivalence.

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A Study of Self-development of EFL Teachers in the Universities of Sichuan Province in China

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Abstract—The quality of foreign language college English teachers will affect the quality of college English teaching. This article investigated 80 college foreign language teachers of Sichuan Province and writer found college English teachers had great pressures. They were eager to get the in-service training and they should be taught how to have self-development. Teachers should co-operate each other and break the isolation among them.

Index Terms—self-development, in-service training, self-reflection, teachers' burnout

I. INTRODUCTION FOREWORD

A. *The Necessity of EFL Teachers' Self-development*

Now in ELT many educators advocate “learner autonomy”. When the focus is more moved to students, the roles of foreign language teachers are also changing. Gardner and Miller (2002) say teachers will become counselor, assessor, evaluator, materials developer, manager, administrator and organizer and students become planner (of own learning), assessor (self and others), evaluator of motivator (of self), administrator (of own learning), organizer (of own learning) and advisor (to other learners).

ShuDingFang (2006) believes Chinese language teachers should change the traditional classroom teaching model, that is PPT model (Presentation, Practice and Production). Teachers should change the classrooms into places to supply students the utmost language input and places to keep students' studying interest and solve their difficulties. Appraisal of teachers' teaching should not be based on how much they finish teaching curriculums and how much teaching content they finish, but based on how much they can keep students' interest and supply them strategies to study by themselves. To realize this goal language teachers should develop themselves or have professional development. Teacher preparation—training, education, development—are seen by Wallace (1991) as three models, which he terms (a) the “craft” model, where a range of practical techniques is learned from an experienced person; (b) the “applied” model, implying a one—way application, and often therefore separation, of theoretical research to practice; and (c) the “reflective” model, with the teacher as a “reflective practitioner”. If they don't have the sustainable development in teaching, the fossilization of teaching is easy to appear.

B. *The Current Situation of EFL Teachers in Sichuan Province*

Chinese language teachers have qualities in three aspects: the knowledge of English discipline, the knowledge of Education discipline and the noble spirit of devotion to teaching. Many of them need to develop in experience and change teaching attitude and many of them don't have the systematical training of theories and their teaching is lack of the supply of theoretical research. According to researches of many experts in recent years (XinGuangQin, 2006) Chinese language teachers have the following problems. Their working condition is not good; their work is overload; the structure of professional titles is not reasonable; little research is done in teaching; the chances to get in-service are quite few; their teaching beliefs need to be changed, and etc. These problems mainly focus on self-development, theoretical training and reinforcing abilities of applying knowledge.

Sichuan Province is in south-west of China and the economy doesn't develop as well as the eastern provinces. Teachers get few chances to study further and have few channels to know the latest teaching theories and teaching methods so the investigation about their in-service training, pressure and the ways how to get the self-development is quite urgent.

C. *The Purpose of the Research*

The writer spent three months using questionnaires to investigate the problems of teachers in Sichuan Province in order to know whether they have the same puzzles and difficulties as the teachers in other provinces and try to find the way-out for them. This article tries to explore in which ways teachers can develop themselves and improve teaching quality. By questionnaires and the open-ended questions the writer has investigated and analyzed what universities teachers need and what difficulties they have during teaching. Writer also provides some useful ways to make teachers have self-development, including the reflective teaching, the action research, diaries studies, exploratory practice and teacher' research etc.

II. SURVEY

A. Purpose of the Survey

The writer used a detailed questionnaire developed specially for the purpose of the investigation. The investigation explores college English teachers' knowledge for teaching, the abilities for teaching, their pressures in teaching, their in-service training which are closely connected with teacher's self-development and tries to find the ways how to have reflective teaching and self-development in teaching.

B. Subjects

The participants include eighty English teachers from four universities in SiChuan Province: China West Normal University; Southwest China Electronical University of Science and Technology; SiChuan University of Arts and Sciences and ChengDu University of Science and Engineering. Teachers include ones teaching English major lessons and ones teaching non-English major lessons.

C. Instruments

The investigation is divided into two parts. In the first part the questionnaire is used. In the second part the participants are asked by the open-ended questions. The questionnaire is designed with the reference to the master's theses by Xia Jimei's (2002), Dai Jian-e's (2005) and Zhang Yanlin's(2005). The writer modified and increased some lists after interviewing some colleagues. There are thirty five investigated items and the questionnaire is written in Chinese in order to be finished easily. The questionnaire is divided into two parts: part one for investigating teachers' teaching knowledge and beliefs, teachers' pressures and burnout; part two for investigating teachers' in-service training and the ways to improve their teaching. Participant finished it in one hour. The writer handed out eighty five questionnaires and eighty of them were valid. The open-ended questions included two English questions and the time for finishing them is two days.

D. Data Analysis

For the statements with only one choice SPSS (statistical analysis software spss 12.0) was used to analyze them. For the statements with multiple choices, the writer collected the data and the calculator was also used.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. The Investigation of Questionnaire

1 Demographic information

TABLE1.
DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Items		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	38	48
	Female	42	52
	Total	80	100
Age	Below30	30	38
	30-39	38	48
	40-49	8	10
	Over 50	4	4
	Total	80	100
Degree	B.A	46	58
	M.A	30	38
	Equivalent M.A	4	4
	Doctorate	0	0
	Total	80	100
Professional title	Assistant	32	40
	Lecturer	30	38
	Associate professor	18	22
	Professor	0	0
	Total	80	100
Length of teaching	Less than three years	14	18
	3-5 years	18	23
	6-10 years	16	20
	More than 10 years	32	39
	Total	80	100

In this part of the survey, it inquires about participants' gender, age, education background, professional titles and length of teaching years. According to the table above, 38% of participants are male and 52% are female; 38% are below 30; 39% have worked more than ten years. 58% have got the bachelor degree, 38% have got the master degree and 4% have got equivalent master degree. It shows the diplomas of participants still need to be improved. 40% are assistants, 38% are lectures and 22% are associate professor. It shows the young teachers are the main force so their

self-development is important for university English teaching.

2 Teachers' beliefs, and abilities, and pressures about college English teaching

TABLE 2.
THEIR PREFERENCE FOR THE PROFESSION

Preference	Frequency	Percent
Liking	36	45
Medium liking	32	40
Not liking	2	2.5
Not knowing	10	12.5
Total	80	100

TABLE 3.
THEIR WILLINGNESS TO TAKE UP THIS PROFESSIONAL A SECOND TIME

Willingness	Frequency	Percent
Yes	32	39
No	20	25
Not knowing	28	36
Total	80	100

As table 2 and table 3 indicate, 45% of participants have interest in teaching and 40% of them like teaching basically. When asked whether to continue the job of teaching if they have the second choice, 39% of participants give the positive answers and the small part of participants give the negative answers.

TABLE 4.
STRESS

Stress		Frequency	Percent
No		6	7.5
Yes	Slight stress	46	57.5
	Normal	20	25
	Fairly intense stress	8	10
	Excessively intense stress	0	0
	Total	80	100
Major factors leading to stress	Factors		
	Students	22	11.3
	Over workload	26	13.4
	Interpersonal relationship	8	4.1
	Poor working condition	18	9.2
	Their own low proficiency	20	10.3
	Research demands	56	28.8
	Curriculum reform	10	5.1
	Teaching demands	10	5.1
	Promotion of professional titles	24	12.3
Total	194	100	
Effect of intense stress	Low efficiency	10	12.5
	In low spirits	34	42.5
	Poor teaching performance	12	15
	Ill health	12	15
	Others	12	15
	Total	80	100

As table 4 indicates, 57.5% of participants are slightly stressed and 25% are normally stressed. 24% of them suffer from fairly intense stress, 10% from excessively intense stress and only 8% have no pressures. Among the factors causing teachers' pressures in teaching, research demand is the first main reason, over workload is the second main reason and the promotion of professional title is the third. When asked the main influence brought by the pressures, 42.5% of participants think they will be in low spirits. When asked how to deal with the low spirits, participants have mentioned the following ways: playing, doing sports, resting and self-regulation, etc. It shows most of participants are under great pressure and heavy workload. It maybe explains why some teachers can't really like doing this job.

TABLE 5.
MOST DISSATISFYING AND SATISFYING ASPECTS

	Aspects	Frequency	Percent
Aspects leading to dissatisfaction	Small income	38	38
	Students are tough to deal with	18	18
	Inharmonious interpersonal relationship	0	0
	Low social status	8	8
	Unfavorable promotion of professional titles	20	20
	Intense stress	16	16
	Total	100	100
Aspects leading to satisfaction	Large income	2	2.1
	Students are promising	40	43.4
	Harmonious interpersonal relationship	16	17.3
	High social status and being respected	10	10.8
	Favorable promotion of PT	6	6.5
	Good working condition	18	19.5
	Total	92	100

TABLE 6.
DEGREE OF JOB SATISFACTION

Attitudes	Frequency	Percent
Very satisfied	0	0
Satisfied	16	20
Comparatively satisfied	36	45
Not satisfied	26	32.5
Extremely dissatisfied	2	2.5
Total	80	100

As tables above show, the first three teachers' most dissatisfying aspects in teaching are the small income, 38%; the unfavorable promotion of professional titles, 20% and the intense stress, 16%. The first two teachers' most satisfying aspects in teaching is to teach students well, 43.4% and good working condition, 19.5%. It shows college English teachers have the high sense of responsibility about teaching. When asked about the degree of job satisfaction, 45% of participants are comparatively satisfied and 32.5% of them are not satisfied.

TABLE 7.
PROBLEMS EXISTING IN TEACHING AND RESEARCH

Problems	Frequency	Percent	
Problems existing In teaching	Lack of appropriate materials available	32	22.2
	Overcrowded class size	30	20.8
	Teaching students with different language proficiency	52	36.1
	Their own teaching abilities	16	11.1
	No mentoring	14	9.7
	Total	144	100
Problems existing In research	Lack of appropriate materials available	34	23.9
	No mentoring	26	18.3
	Few channels	38	26.7
	Their own research abilities	44	30.9
	Total	142	100

As table 7 indicates, the first main problem existing in teaching is to teach students with different language proficiency, 36.1%. The other main ones are the lack of appropriate materials available, 22.2% and overcrowded class size, 20.8%. Now universities are easier to go into than before and students' levels are quite different so it is more difficult for teachers to teach them. The first main problem existing in research lies in participants' lacking research abilities, 30.9%. Few channels are the second problem and the lack of appropriate materials is the third problem. So the young teachers need to consult more with the experienced teachers and learn from them.

TABLE 8.
THE MOST URGENT ISSUES TO DEAL WITH

Issues	Frequency	Percent
Increase of income	22	18.6
Promotion of professional titles	26	22
Training for professional growth	30	25.4
Improvement of living condition	14	11.8
Improvement of working condition	20	16.9
Others	6	5
Total	118	100

As table 8 indicates, the first most urgent issue to deal with for participants is the training for professional titles, 25.4%. The second most urgent issue is the promotion of professional titles, 22% and the third one is the increase of income. It shows participants hope to be given more chances to study further in order to do more researches if they want to get higher diplomas and professional titles.

TABLE 9.
THREE MOST DESIRED ITEMS

Items	Frequency	Percent
Funds for scientific research	28	12.7
Mentored by experienced teachers	24	10.9
Promotion of professional titles	54	24.5
Teaching expertise	10	4.5
Training for professional growth	52	23.6
Scholastic attainment	52	23.6
Total	220	100

As table 9 indicates, when asked about the most desired items currently, most participants give priority to the promotion of professional titles, 24.5%; training for professional growth and scholastic attainment, 23.6%. The others are the funds for scientific research and the mentoring by experienced teachers. The teaching expertise comes last maybe most participants think now they are competent to do the teaching job .

TABLE 10.
WHAT DO YOU THINK EFL TEACHERS SHOULD DO?

Items	Frequency	Percent
The only purpose is to teach well	6	8
Focus on more teaching than doing research	48	60
Focus on more doing research than teaching	6	8
Doing research and teaching are equal important	20	24
Total	80	100

TABLE 11.
HOW DO YOU THINK THE ROLES OF DOING RESEARCH, WRITING ARTICLES AND JOINING IN THE RESEARCH PROJECTS?

Items	Frequency	Percent
Not to publish articles and think it's not important	2	3
To think it's important but not publish articles	24	30
To publish articles but think it's not important	16	20
To think it's important and publish articles	38	47
Total	80	100

TABLE 12.
THE PURPOSE TO PUBLISH ARTICLES OR JOIN IN THE RESEARCH PROJECTS

Items	Frequency	Percent
To be interested in it	8	10
To improve the professional title	50	63
To satisfy need of requirement of jobs	8	10
To achieve in research field	8	10
The other	6	8
Total	80	100

As table 10 and table 11 and 12 indicate, 60% of participants think teaching is the first important and doing research is the second important. It shows although participants regard teaching as their duty and responsibility, doing research is still quite important for them. When asked whether they think doing research is important and whether they have published articles or joined in the research projects, 47% of participants think it is important and they have published articles, 30% of them think it is important but maybe due to their limited abilities or inadequate chances they can't publish articles. 63% of participants admit they publish articles because they must do it in order to get higher professional titles and only few admit they do it because of interest of getting achievements.

TABLE 13.
THE MAIN ROLE FOR EFL TEACHERS TO PLAY IN TEACHING

Items	Frequency	Percent
To teach foreign language knowledge	10	13
To guide ways to learn foreign language	24	30
To train ability of foreign language	56	70
Total	80	100

TABLE 14.
THE MAIN ELEMENTS TO INFLUENCE THE QUALITY OF EFL TEACHERS

Items	Frequency	Percent
Examination requirement	34	18.8
Teachers	24	13.3
Students	36	20
The system of education	56	31.1
The teaching materials	26	14.4
The other	4	2.2
Total	180	100

As tables above show, 70% of participants think their teaching is mainly to train students' foreign language ability and only 13% of them think their teaching is to teach foreign language knowledge. It shows most college English teachers have changed their traditional teaching beliefs and have turned the focus of teaching knowledge to the focus of training foreign language communicative abilities. When asked about the elements involved in affecting their teaching quality, the first three most important elements are education system, students and examination requirement. Participants think the current education system has some shortcomings and it needs to be improved and too much focus of CET examinations is another important element.

TABLE 15.
WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING ABILITIES DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE?

Items	Frequency	Percent
Teaching ability	72	22.9
Ability for doing research	34	10.8
Ability to design curriculum	18	5.7
Ability to assess teaching	12	3.8
Ability to design examination	20	6.3
Ability to have self-examination	44	14
Ability to teach students how to learn	22	7
Ability to have induction and generalization	26	8.2
Ability to do experiments	8	2.5
Ability to use computers	30	9.5
Ability to communicate and work in English	28	8.9
Total	314	100

TABLE 16.
CHOOSE THE MOST COMPETENT ABILITIES FROM THE FOLLOWING ONES

Items	Frequency	Percent
Ability to teach in the classroom	38	27.9
Ability to answer questions	10	7.3
Ability to use heuristic methods	40	29.4
Ability to organize classroom	16	11.7
Ability to help students study in passive ways	16	11.7
Ability to teach challenging students	6	4.4
Ability to teach slower students	4	2.9
Ability to teach advanced students	4	2.9
The other	2	1.4
Total	136	100

When asked which ability is the best one in their teaching, the teaching ability, the self-examination ability and doing- research ability are the first best abilities. So teaching and doing-research are still the most important things for college English teachers. When asked about the best abilities in detail in their teaching, 29.4% of participants choose the heuristic teaching, 27.9% of them choose the teaching ability in the classroom and 11.7% of them choose the ability to organize classroom and help students studying in passive ways.

3 the investigation for in-service education

TABLE 17.
THE TRAINING YOU HAVE ATTENDED IN RECENT YEARS

Items	Frequency	Percent
To train for improving diplomas	20	25
To train for excellent teachers	16	20
To train for new teachers	20	25
To train for using computers	16	20
The other	8	10
Total	80	100

TABLE 18.
THE MAIN TRAINING YOU HAVE ATTENDED

Items	Frequency	Percent
In-service training for a short time	34	40.4
To observe others' teaching	30	35.7
To attend training by correspondence	8	9.5
To do research on a special topic	10	11.9
To be trained to use computers	2	2.3
Total	84	100

When it comes to which kind of training participants have attended, the training for improving diplomas and the new teachers' training are both 25%, the others are the training for the backbone teachers and computers. When it comes to the detailed training model, the short-term training does the first, 40.4%; inspecting and learning from the other teachers goes the second, 35.7%. The others are the training for special research projects and training for the correspondence courses. It shows the in-service short-term training for improving diplomas is important for college English teachers.

TABLE 19.
THE MAIN REASONS TO HAVE IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Items	Frequency	Percent
To get a higher diploma	30	26.3
To finish tasks assigned	4	3.5
To get a higher professional title	28	24.5
To improve teachers' quality	50	43.8
To satisfy development of the college	2	1.7
Total	114	100

When asked why they attend these kinds of training, 43.8% of participants think it can enhance their quality, 26.3% of them think it can improve their diplomas and 24.5% of them do it to get the higher professional titles. It shows most English teachers want to not only improve their teaching level but also their diplomas by attending training.

TABLE 20.
THE DISADVANTAGES EXISTING IN PRESENT SYSTEMS OF IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Items	Frequency	Percent
Content of training is out-of-date and forms are not new	30	26.7
Content of training is not practical and not helpful for teaching	14	12.5
Teachers can't attend in-service training often	38	33.9
The chances to attend training are few	30	26.7
Total	112	100

When it comes to the shortcomings of the current training, 33.9% of participants say they can't often attend the training, 26.7% of them say they have few chances to attend the training and the content of training is too old to give the new ideas and beliefs so providing more chances for teachers is an urgent issue.

TABLE 21.
HOW DO YOU HAVE SELF-DEVELOPMENT IN YOUR TEACHING?

Items	Frequency	Percent
To study and research by yourself	58	46.7
To discuss with your colleagues	26	20.9
To consult for experts or experienced teachers	38	30.6
The other	2	1.6
Total	124	100

TABLE 22.
THE BEST WAYS YOU LIKE TO HAVE SELF-DEVELOPMENT

Items	Frequency	Percent
One another's help and interaction among colleagues	18	12.8
To get higher diploma by in-service training or attending training by correspondence	32	22.8
To study and research by yourself	30	21.4
To attend in educational experiments or researching	18	12.8
To observe and study in other places	42	30
Total	140	100

When asked about the ways for participants to have self-development, 46.7% choose to study by themselves, 30.6% choose to consult with the experienced teachers or experts and only 20.9% choose to discuss with the other colleagues. 30% of participants' favorite ways to study is to go outside for visiting and observing the other teachers' teaching, 22.8% choose to study for short-term or attend the correspondence courses and 21.4% choose to study by themselves. It shows most college English teachers don't have the habit of co-operating one another in having self-development.

TABLE 23.
THE MAIN WAYS THAT YOU HAVE HAD TO GET NEW INFORMATION

Items	Frequency	Percent
To use computers	54	42.1
To read magazines, newspapers and books	60	46.8
To watch TV	10	7.8
To discuss	4	3.1
Total	128	100

When asked about the ways to get the new information, 46.8% of participants choose to read academic magazines, books and newspapers, 42.1% of them choose to use the computers and only 3.1% choose to discuss one another. It shows reading academic books is the main way for them to get the new information.

TABLE 24.
HOW DO YOU THINK EFL TEACHERS WILL BE TRAINED?

Items	Frequency	Percent
To study teaching methods	38	39.5
To study how to do research	38	39.5
To study theories of cognition and studying	16	16.6
The other	4	4.1
Total	96	100

TABLE 25.
THE TIME THAT YOU ARE WILLING TO BE TRAINED

Items	Frequency	Percent
Three to five months	14	18
Half a year	22	27
One year	20	25
One or two years	24	30
Total	80	100

When talking about the focus of teachers' training, 39.5% of participants think the methods for doing researches and teaching are the most important and these are the teachers' main focus. When talking about the time to attend training, 30% of participants want to study one or two years and 27% of them want to study for half a year. It shows teachers want to learn the really useful things in the long-term training.

TABLE 26.
HOW DO YOU THINK THE NECESSITY TO HAVE THE REFLECTIVE TEACHING?

Items	Frequency	Percent
It's quite necessary	32	40
It's necessary	44	55
It doesn't matter	4	5
It's not necessary	0	0
It's not necessary at all	0	0
Total	80	100

TABLE 27.
DO YOU HAVE THE REFLECTIVE TEACHING?

Items	Frequency	Percent
Yes	46	58
Occasionally	32	40
Not	2	2
Total	80	100

TABLE 28.
THE REASONS FOR YOU NOT TO HAVE THE REFLECTIVE TEACHING

Items	Frequency	Percent
It's not necessary	4	5
Don't have the habit to do it	28	35
Have no ways to insist on	32	40
Don't know how to reflect it	4	5
The other	12	15
Total	80	100

TABLE 29.
HOW DO YOU HAVE THE REFLECTIVE TEACHING?

Items	Frequency	Percent
To write the reflective diary	10	10.4
To read reference materials	42	43.7
To ask for the solution from colleagues	32	33.3
The other	12	12.5
Total	96	100

When talking about their reflecting about their lessons, 55% of participants think it is necessary to reflect and 40% of them think it is quite necessary to do it. 58% of participants say they will reflect their teaching and 40% of them say they will do it occasionally. 2% of them say they don't reflect it, when asked about the reason not to do it, 40% of participants say they can't insist on it and 35% say they don't have the habits to do it and 5% of them say they don't know how to do it. When asked about the ways to reflect their lessons, 43.7% choose to read the reference materials, 33.3% choose to turn to their colleagues for the solutions to the questions and only 10.4% choose to write the reflective diaries. It shows although most teachers have realized the importance to reflect their lessons some of them don't know how to reflect so they need to be trained to learn the ways to reflect their lessons.

TABLE 30.
DO YOU OFTEN COMMUNICATE WITH THE COLLEAGUES ABOUT THE FEELING OF TEACHING?

Items	Frequency	Percent
Yes	24	30
Sometimes	56	70
No	0	0
Total	80	100

TABLE 31.
DO YOU THINK TEACHERS' MUTUAL COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION WILL HELP TEACHERS' SELF-DEVELOPMENT?

Items	Frequency	Percent
Yes	70	86
Don't know it	2	4
No	8	10
Total	80	100

When asked if participants will communicate with the other teachers about the understanding of their lessons, 70% of them say they sometimes do it and only 30% of them give the definite answers to it. 86% of participants think communication among teachers is helpful for their self-development and only 10% of them give the negative answers to it. It shows most teachers have realized the importance of communication and help one another.

TABLE 32.
WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE BIGGEST OBSTACLE FOR TEACHERS TO HAVE CO-OPERATION?

Items	Frequency	Percent
The difference of majors	8	10
The difference of time	32	40
Don't have this habit	20	25
Teachers close themselves because of competition	20	25
Total	80	100

When asked what are the obstacles existing in teachers' co-operation, 40% of participants say because their time-arrangement is not harmonious and 25% of them say they have no such habit and because teachers close themselves due to competition. It shows teachers are still not to be used to co-operating one another.

TABLE 33.
WHAT DO YOU THINK THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAYS TO ENCOURAGE TEACHERS?

Items	Frequency	Percent
The encouragement of material	30	27.2
The encouragement of spirit	16	14.5
To be promoted by leaders	6	5.4
To give teachers the free space to develop their majors and themselves	58	52.7
Total	110	100

As table 33 indicates, 52.7% of participants think they should be given a freer and more harmonious space to develop their majors and develop themselves and 27.2% of them think they should be given material encouragement. It shows teachers long for a relaxing surrounding so they can be committed to developing themselves.

B. *The Investigation of the Open-ended Questions*

The open-ended questions are: (1) What plans will the participants finish in their teaching? (2) What aims should in-service programs achieve?

These open-ended questions require the participants to offer a few lines about the plans for their in-service education and the expectations of those education programs. When asked about the plan for professional growth and what aims should the in-service program achieve, participants give different answers. Here are some answers by participants.

About plans:

"I am preparing for the postgraduate entrance examination .I want to get a higher degree in order to get a higher professional title."

"I am majored in language and teaching methodology for postgraduate study and I have a good knowledge of those theories and can generate some novel ideas for doing researches. But because of the over workload, I can't do it. I hope

in the following years, I can accumulate my teaching experiences and can efficiently allocate my time to teaching and researching, and conduct classroom research and make immense progress in my teaching and research.”

“I am a young teacher and I hope some experienced teachers can guide me and give me really helpful suggestions to do research and write articles.”

“I hope the dean can give the academic and financial support to help the young teachers to publish more articles to get a higher professional title.”

“I hope to set aside some extra time to attain a higher degree. I shall distinguish myself at teaching and also research. The current issue is to decide on my research field and make an effort to achieve this goal.”

About in-service education

“The young teachers have few chances to get the in-service training and I hope the leaders can give us more chances to get it.”

“The programs should highlight some major points, not just impart some general theories, and the effectiveness should be stressed so that it can trigger changes in teachers as soon as possible.”

“I hope the in-service education can really help improve teachers’ qualities.”

“I hope those programs can offer teachers chances to reflect on their own teaching, take into account the teachers’ real needs, are designed for teachers’ sake, provide the frontier theories and research, and can serve as a guideline for the classroom practice.”

The answers show the young teachers especially have great pressure because they are faced with more problems than the old teachers, for example, to get a higher diploma; to get a higher professional title; to earn more money to support family, etc. The young teachers are eager to get the chances of in-service training and they are eager to get the help and support of coming from their schools or leaders. They need more freedom in carrying out their teaching.

IV. CONCLUSION

A. *Major Findings and Discussion*

Based on the results and analysis above, this section discusses several issues arising from the survey.

Firstly, the participants are much confident of their teaching, but they lack confidence in doing research. They realize that they can do much better and should exert more effort to do research but their beliefs are not consistent with their behavior. Though realizing the importance of research, not many are conducting research. The fact can be traced to the following reasons. For one thing, teachers can’t afford time for doing research because of the over workload; for another, many young participants lack the theoretical knowledge to do the researches. EFL teachers’ abilities are not static but growing and changing and they include content, curriculum and teaching knowledge; the knowledge for second language acquisition and language learners; personal and practical knowledge, etc, so the youth participants need to study further. The investigation also indicates the participants have little co-operation one another and the professional isolation exists among them. They don’t often communicate each other about their feeling and ideas of their teaching. They are easy to be limited in the reflection for their own classes and they can’t see the other teachers’ reflection. They are also limited in their own classroom.

Chinese EFL teachers have the rich teaching experience and the acute teaching awareness but their literature isolation prevents them from getting continuous professional development. Many teachers don’t study and research the teaching theories systematically and they lack professional training to do the research and the necessary research technologies. It is related with the fact that EFL teachers have the heavy tasks and the great pressure so they should be provided the free context and be encouraged to share the resources in order to have the space to have self-development and time to have self-reflection.

Secondly, the participants are faced with the great pressure which is not good for teachers’ development. The young teachers especially have great pressure because they are faced with more problems than the old teachers, for example, to get a higher diploma; to get a higher professional title; to earn more money to support family, etc. Teachers are easy to have burnout in their teaching under great pressure, which is fatigue or exhaustion; decreased motivation and efficiency, etc. Zemach(2006) points out in EFL burnout is triggered by the work of teaching, poor job conditions, or both. Teaching leads to burnout because of the following reasons: it attracts personalities drawn to burnout; most teachers work in isolation; the classroom interaction can be emotionally draining; there are physical demands; there is often a lack of emotional support from colleagues and supervisors. When salaries and working conditions are not rewarding, teachers need at least verbal recognition and praise. However, many programs aren’t configured to allow that. How to prevent burnout is the important question to solve.

B. *Implication of the Survey*

LvLe (2006) points out that the disciplinary construction is the key for the sustainable specialty development. To achieve the goal of teacher development, university teachers need to be on the research team in order to devote themselves to the research in relevant disciplines and to share knowledge. Language teachers, to professionalize their language teaching, must engage in the academic research related to the courses they teach as well as the pedagogical research in terms of course content, learner study, teaching methodology, etc. The construction of the research team serves as an organizational frame work that guides teachers in their pursuit of higher professional goals.

Teachers' self-development concerns many factors including society, universities and individual, etc. Universities should try their best to provide training programs for teachers and let everyone have the chance to join in it. Universities should have the good condition and good measures for teachers to have self-development. The measures should be carried out carefully and practically. The administrators should try their best to create the favorable environment for teachers and let everyone have the chance to join in it not just those few privileged ones, but to provide equal chances to all the staff. Universities should also provide the incentive policies to encourage them to do research and have innovation. Many teachers in the survey consider research as an essential ability of effective teachers, but they still need encouragement and support from the administration. Administrators should provide financial aid for teachers and provide channels for teachers to do research and publish their findings.

Penny Ur (1996) suggests some ways for FEL teachers to develop themselves which are useful for Chinese teachers. Informal discussions with a colleague with whom you feel at ease can contribute a lot to teachers' own development. Teachers can share their success and problems and discuss the new teaching ideas they have had. Teachers should often join the teaching meetings which mainly focus on teaching researches. Teachers can have appraisals and feedback can come from colleagues, students and self-appraisal. Read new ideas in magazines and try them out and make an agreement with a colleague to observe each other's lessons.

EFL teachers' research should be based on the classroom. The traditional class is the top-down curriculum, which means educators find the new teaching belief and teaching method then let teachers practice it in the classroom or teachers just teach according to the curriculum. If teachers can have teachers' autonomy, in which they reflect their teaching, find problems and solve them, this will become the down-up efficient ways to teach and it will make teachers get professional development. Foreign language teachers can have development by becoming teachers as researchers and turning foreign language teaching into an ongoing principled problem solving activity.

Chinese teacher education and teacher training system also need to be improved. The student teachers should learn the really useful knowledge which can help them a lot in their teaching career. Now some contents of this system are out of date and can't satisfy the demand of the society. Teacher training should not only teach them knowledge but should pay attention to their attitude and their insider view. Teacher cognition which is called the hidden teaching methodology should be paid attention.

C. Limitations of the Research

First, the survey is conducted mainly in the form of questionnaire which has not been proven to be valid or reliable. And due to the exploratory nature of the research, the questionnaire is primary descriptive. Second, the samples are mainly from four universities due to my limited resources and the number of the number of the samples is not big enough to make the survey more reliable.

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Content and Language Integrated Learning for First and Second Year University Students - Aspirations, Challenges and Solutions

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Abstract—This paper offers an overview of two modules from the Centre for English Language Communication, National University of Singapore. These belong to a programme entitled the Ideas and Exposition Modules (IEM) and they pertain to a content and language integrated learning (CLIL) approach. The courses and some of the main learning objectives are explained. These are critical thinking abilities; research skills; and academic study skills. It is surmised that these are useful for all students independent of their academic discipline. The challenges that the lecturer and students face during the courses are also presented. These challenges often arise because students are from different educational cultures and academic disciplines, and as a result, classes tend to be comprised of students with mixed interests, English language levels and academic research and writing experience. Students also tend to vary in their abilities to think critically and work independently. The first section in this paper looks at the educational context of the IEM courses; the second, presents the core learning outcomes aspired to; the third, examines the challenges faced and how these are met by the tutor and students taking the courses. The final section offers a brief overview of the paper and considers the future for this genre of course, particularly how students benefit from a more student-centered, individualized educational practice today.

Index Terms—tertiary education, content and language integrated learning, critical thinking dispositions, academic research skills, academic writing skills, academic English language

I. CONTEXT

The courses pertain to a pedagogy known as content and language integrated learning. This approach to language instruction centres on using a specific academic field as a medium through which to teach specific but also general cross-curricular academic language as well as critical thinking and research skills. Zwier's (2008, p. 21) overlapping variations of language development can be used to explain the processes of language learning in society. During the first years, a person learns their basic language, or basilect. From then on, people learn more formal, academic language and become increasingly specialized in a particular content field or discipline as they go on to further education or the workplace. Dutro and Moran (2003) have constructed a commonly applied metaphor to describe this: the *bricks* and *mortar* metaphor; whereby general cross-curricular academic language is the *mortar* and content-specific language from subject areas, the *bricks*. As a paradigm, CLIL strives to enable students to learn both the *bricks* and *mortar* thus providing students with a language-acquisition-rich environment; and because of this, one that is cognitively challenging (Baetens-Beardmore, 2008; Marsh & Fregols, 2013).

The context for the courses is Singapore. Most Singaporeans entering tertiary programmes have a good grasp of English as an academic language. They are very capable of functioning in an English medium academic classroom environment. However, in the college programmes that IEM caters to, it is also common to have scholars from Korea, Japan, Vietnam, and mainland China. In addition, many Singaporeans come from homes where Mandarin, Malay or Tamil are spoken as their first languages. For them, English is an additional language. In this context, it is thus used as a lingua franca, which links these courses within the broad educational field of CLIL. The CLIL academic writing courses are delivered by content specialist related to the sociology of sport. The courses run over twelve weeks and comprise around forty-eight contact hours. Several individual consultation sessions are woven into this timeframe. One major element of teaching these classes is the small student population; the maximum number of students to a class is fifteen, allowing a great deal of teacher-student and student-student interaction, including one-to-one consultations and peer assessment sessions.

For both IEM modules, students are required to write three texts. For first years (IEM1), these are a summary-reflection, a paper comparison or lens paper, and a final argumentative persuasive essay (APE) of 1500 words. For second years (IEM2), they are an annotated bibliography, a research proposal and a research paper, or IMRaD (Introduction-Methodology-Results-Discussion), of approximately 3000 words. In each case, learning is facilitated as a construction process. The summary-reflection leads onto the paper comparison/ lens paper task, which might be two summaries plus a reflection to compare these or it might be a summary plus the application of a lens as a theoretical framework through which to analyze the phenomenon summarized. Both of these papers enable students to learn how to

use sources and to cite them as a part of their argumentation. These tasks culminate in the APE as the third paper, which builds on the knowledge and critical thinking acquired to develop an evidence-based study. For IEM2 the construction process leads to the IMRaD research paper proper. The first task, the annotated bibliography, is the basic reading the students have done on their chosen topics. This task provides both the tutor and students with an overview of the phenomenon and the issues and opinions around it. The second task, the research proposal conveys to the teacher that students have progressed from the initial background reading to pinpoint an appropriate investigation that will produce new knowledge in that field. This paper states what the objectives of the research are and how they will be achieved. Paper 3, the final research paper, presents the results, discussion and conclusion emerging from the investigation. Again, it is essential that students demonstrate the knowledge and critical thinking necessary to develop an evidence-based study.

In the next section, there is a presentation of the main learning outcomes to which the courses aspire.

II. CONTENT

During his opening speech in 1997 at the 7th International Conference on Thinking, Goh Chok Tong, the then Singaporean prime minister, revealed:

Education and training are central to how nations will fare in the future. Strong nations and strong communities will distinguish themselves from the rest by how well their people learn and adapt to change. The task of education must therefore be to provide the young with the core knowledge and core skills, and the habits of learning, that enable them to learn continuously throughout their lives. We have to equip them for a future that we cannot really predict.

Facilitating lifelong learning forms the core of Singapore's educational practices whatever the university discipline or field of employment. However, what do lecturers choose to teach their students to provide them with this *core knowledge* and these *core skills*, and *habits of learning*? Once these have been identified, how is this done? This section aims to answer these questions.

A. Critical Thinking Skills

As Teine (2000) argues, teaching is not merely transmission, nor is acquisition a simple process of storing and retrieving knowledge. If knowledge is to be acquired, there needs to be conscious activity that evaluates and organizes information; there also needs to be a communicative situation in which that information can be used, and elaborated on, in context. When educators discuss cognitive engagement of this sort, they often employ Bloom et al.,'s (1956) taxonomy or perhaps Anderson et al.,'s (2001) revised version of that to construct instructional activities to facilitate learning. For example, a student might be asked to classify items (taxon 4). However, for these courses, which focus particularly on the writing of academic expository genres at the tertiary level, the taxonomy from Ennis (1994) entitled *Critical Thinking Dispositions* (see Harvard's Graduate School of Education website) has been found to be more appropriate. It really starts at the highest of Bloom's levels e.g., to evaluate an opinion (taxon 6).

Ennis (1994) states that 'critical thinking is reasonable and reflective thinking focused on deciding what to believe or do' (p. 1). He (1994) continues:

In brief, the ideal critical thinker is disposed to try to "get it right," to present a position honestly and clearly, and to care about others (this last being auxiliary, not constitutive); furthermore the ideal critical thinker has the ability to clarify, to seek and judge well the basis for a view, to infer wisely from the basis, to imaginatively suppose and integrate, and to do these things with dispatch, sensitivity, and rhetorical skill (p. 5).

Ennis (1994) posits that in order to make a sound decision, it is necessary to employ a set of *thinking dispositions*. He defines *thinking dispositions* as types of high level reflection under specific conditions. He advances fourteen of these high-level thinking dispositions. For the IEM courses, they have been integrated into five overarching descriptors. They move from the input to output stages or from critical reading to independent critical writing about a phenomenon based on an investigative process.

The first descriptor is for students to consider with care and kindness what other authors say and to ensure that they understand correctly what these authors are communicating; this descriptor might be used to assess a synthesis of a source for IEM1, or as part of a literature review in IEM2. Also, in relation to this descriptor, if another's position seems less limited than their own, students should be able to change their minds and take on this alternative view. This may emerge in IEM1 as part of a reflection on a summary, or in a discussion section for IEM2. The second descriptor is to provide evidence of critical evaluation of an author's position through argumentation by assessing the claims and evidence provided. Again, these may surface as part of a reflection or discussion section for the relevant IEM module. The third, fourth and fifth descriptors from the IEM modules relate to Ennis' dispositions on selecting and using sources and evidence in students' own writing based on their own investigations. Students must strive to demonstrate that they are using credible primary and secondary sources; they should provide sound argumentation by positioning their own investigations within the broader academic field. They should also draw warranted conclusions from their investigations and demonstrate an ability to defend their informed position. The teacher and students focus explicitly on these descriptors use them to guide the input and output stages of the courses. They form a substantial part of the core knowledge.

B. Autonomous Learning

A rich learning environment is one whereby:

Prime emphasis is placed on the unique interests, styles, motivations and capabilities of individual learners so that learning environments can be tailored to them (Reeves, 1992, p.1).

The view of students as recipients of knowledge has shifted to beings that are intrinsically motivated and autonomous. According to Self-Determinism Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1991, p. 327), autonomy refers to being self-initiating and self-regulating of one's own actions. This view is closer to a being's natural state, one which is active and volitional, innately primed to learn, and to evolve. It is important to help students in tertiary education to learn how to manage their own learning, and to provide them with as many opportunities to learn knowledge and skills relevant to their particular intrinsic interests within a domain.

Such learning management skills are outlined and assessed in the University of Adelaide Research Skill Development Framework as the ability to collect and record self-determined information from self-selected sources; organize information using self-determined structures; and to analyze and create information to fill self-identified gaps. The courses seek to construct a teaching and learning environment in which this framework can be applied. Once enrolled, students are exposed to primary (photos; video footage; films; geographical documents; speeches) and secondary sources (typically readings from academic journal papers related to the module). They are then encouraged to choose a topic related to this content to develop as a line of inquiry. For IEM1, the product that students construct is a 1500-word APE; for IEM2, it is an IMRaD of 3000 words. As classes are limited to fifteen students, the tutor and the student can work together as participants in a process of constructing these papers. The tutor guides the processes of choosing appropriate theoretical frameworks, research methodology or data from multiple sources, to facilitate argumentation but it is the student who is encouraged to regulate the process throughout.

C. Giving Voice to Learning and Facilitating Collaborative Elaboration

Knowledge is not only independently constructed but also socially and culturally constructed (Prawat & Floden, 1994). The process of sharing individual perspectives and mutually-negotiating meanings to construct shared knowledge is known as *collaborative elaboration* (Van Meter & Stevens, 2000). This is said to lead to understanding which goes beyond the understanding that an individual alone can construct (Ritchhart, Church, & Morrison, 2011). Groups are also known to remember information for longer periods than individual students (Johnson *et al.*, 1990) because this is deemed 'an ongoing, collective responsibility' (Opfer & Pedder, 2011, p. 385). The result of this mutual-construction is termed *distributed cognition* (Vrasidas *et al.*, 2003b). In addition, the value of another person's perspective, usually gained through interaction, is a key philosophy in social constructivist theories (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Jonassen, 1994). Being able to respect each individual's opinion and work is an essential pre-requisite to collaborative elaboration. Students entertain each other's views and often collaboratively analyze which one may be more appropriate.

A key approach of the IEM1 and IEM2 courses is to respect and empower each student by encouraging them to give voice to their learning. For IEM1, students are asked to present their research papers to the class at the end of the semester. They may be provided with a framework with which to do this. For IEM2, students are required to present the core readings of the syllabus during the semester; they are also required to present their own research at the end. All presentations are followed by a question and answer session. Students are encouraged to use multiple modes for these presentations. Very often, video extracts are used particularly if using a popular culture topic such as a film for a primary source. Commonly, the tutor will do one or two paper presentations first at the beginning of the module to model how this can be done. A comfortable, enthusiastic and scholarly classroom environment is sought to make these presentations and the post-presentation Q&A sessions worthwhile learning experiences.

In addition to presentations, group work and the sharing of learning make up an essential aspect of each module. This materializes in several forms throughout the semester. In most sessions, students are asked to do related tasks in groups after these presentations. They might be asked to research a topic further and a debate might be instigated from these findings. They could be required to identify and analyze the weakness of a paper's methodology to discuss its reliability. The general goal is that the tasks develop conversation and culminate in an open class or roundtable discussion using the paper presented as a platform or springboard. An additional avenue for collaborative learning is through conducting guided peer evaluation. Class time is given throughout the writing process for students to receive and offer advice on their writing from their classmates. They may be provided with a framework for this also. Again, one of the important messages from this experience is that valuing other viewpoints is essential in an effective classroom.

In the next section, the challenges faced by the tutor and students and how they are met are presented.

III. CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

A. Guiding Students to Conduct Research Independently

In IEM1, as first years, students tend to be writing independently-chosen research papers, using multiple sources, for the first time. Even writing a 1500-word paper is a daunting task for any inexperienced researcher embarking on a topic related to an entirely new content field. For IEM2, even though students have developed skills in research, the task is more challenging as they are required to write a 3000-word IMRaD. Difficulties for both IEM modules often arise at the

beginning stages of the students' projects. Students often face challenges finding a topic to write about; and having the right scope for a paper. This can also cause challenges for the tutor as students might not be able to meet deadlines for consultations, presentations or submission of papers. For example, a student on a Sociology of Sport paper might wish to examine hegemonic masculinity in sport. This investigation would need framing by choosing a particular sport to study and a context in which to study it. It could even report on an event that inspired the topic selected to study. For example, the US women's soccer team's victory in the 1999 World Cup was swamped in controversy when Brandi Chastain scored the winning goal in a penalty shoot-out against China and famously dropped to her knees, took her shirt off and celebrated in her sports bra. This image was on the main cover of *Sports Illustrated* and the front pages of newspapers around the world and seemed to be of greater significance than the victory itself. If this is chosen, the next step is to apply the theoretical framework as a lens: why are women scrutinised in this way by the media? What kind of disciplining gaze are they subjected to? If students are doing an IEM2 module, would they also prefer to conduct interviews to ascertain whether people today still think that Chastain's action was wrong even though this sort of behaviour is commonly condoned among men?

In order to facilitate the research and writing of such a project, the tutor can provide the sort of guidance demonstrated above; a tutor can also help students to meet the challenges by offering advice on study skills. Strategies such as how to brainstorm and organise their ideas using mind or concept mapping or tree diagrams; how to find, select, evaluate and acknowledge sources; how to annotate a text; how to quote and paraphrase; how to prepare and present evidence; and how to write reference sections. In IEM2, for which students are required to write a much larger piece, these same skills might be taught, but other, more appropriate ones might also be covered. For example, one effective method for source grouping is a *synthesis grid*, also known as a *synthesis matrix*, enabling learners to store information and evidence in tabular form. Once relationships between sources have been identified, learners can take notes in the squares of the grid. On the Y axis of the grid, the learner usually provides the details of the source; on the X axis, the links between the sources are used as themes. A simplified example of a *synthesis grid* is provided below in figure 2. It is from an IEM2 student writing a paper on how athletes tend to justify certain behaviours in sport e.g., taking drugs to boost performance or diving in football.

TABLE 1.
EXAMPLE SYNTHESIS GRID FROM AN IEM2 STUDENT

Source	Moral disengagement techniques	Competitive or non-competitive sports environment	Characteristics of technique	Results of technique as related by psychologists.
Boardley, I. J. & Grix, J. (2014). Doping in bodybuilders: A Qualitative Investigation of Facilitative Psychosocial Processes. <i>Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health</i> , 6(3), 422-439.	Bandura's social cognitive theory	Non-competitive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moral justification • Euphemistic labelling • Advantageous comparison • Displacement of responsibility • Diffusion of responsibility 	Euphemisms are effectively used daily to sanitize/disguise e.g., <i>drugs</i> referred to as <i>juice</i> .
Corrion, K., Long T., Smith, A. L., Arripe-Longueville, F. (2009). "It's Not My Fault; It's Not Serious": Athlete Accounts of Moral Disengagement in Competitive Sport. <i>The Sport Psychologist</i> , 23, 388-404.	Bandura's social cognitive theory	Competitive	Ibid	Diffusion of responsibility – frequency of acts e.g., fouling in sport, weakens morality associated to it.
Sefiha, O. (2012). Bike Racing, Neutralization, and the Social Construction of Performance-Enhancing Drug Use. <i>Contemporary Drug Problems</i> , 39, 213-245.	Neutralization technique	Competitive		

As students make progress through their research projects, they are increasingly expected to identify relevant primary and secondary sources. Whatever the content-specific focus of the project, this type of strategy is very useful in guiding students to read and organize their readings.

B. Learning with Students

Even if the tutor is a content specialist, it is not common not to be fully familiar with the field of inquiry that all of the students are following. For example, in a Sociology of Sport module, during one semester, it is common for there to be forty-eight considerably different topics. Some examples are: *prosthetic technology for amputee athletes*; *the exploitation of child gymnasts in mainland China*; *the role of the Foreign Talent Sporting Scheme in Singapore*; *the ethical dilemmas of fetal doping*; *Wu Shu and masculine hegemony*; *the Olympics and the status of transgendered athletes*. The differing theoretical frameworks that are used as lenses for these studies are as diverse as the topics themselves. For example, it is common for students to apply critical approaches through Gramsci, Bourdieu, Foucault and Althusser or Functionalist theory via Durkheim and Parsons or Symbolic interactionism via Mead and Cooley.

Due to this diversity, the challenges the tutor faces working on this genre of module can really only be met as co-investigators, working to research the students' topics as an ongoing project. In this way, the tutor is not solely a transmitter of information but a 'guide on the side' in the real sense of the term, working to help the students manage their projects. As co-investigator, it is common to share tasks with students, to find appropriate sources for a student's project or to co-code a student's qualitative data and provide investigator triangulation to enhance reliability. If the tutor demonstrates enthusiasm for the project, this co-investigation can create a strong relationship between the student and tutor. It is common, during a tutorial, to hear the tutor using *we* (first-person, plural personal nominative pronoun) during a discussion. For example, *yes, that's what we should do now...* or *no, you're right, we don't want to argue that.*

In most educational settings, this may be unheard of, and it might seem unthinkable to educational traditionalists. It is a very student-centric mode of learning as it is the students who autonomously regulate their projects, disciplining themselves to conduct the appropriate reading or empirical research required for their work to progress satisfactorily. However, it is exactly this ownership of their own learning that ensures the quality of the students' work. Because of this, the students need to prepare well for the consultations as they are taking a lead role in them. They commonly show the tutor what they have found and written, ask for feedback on this and manage the next phase in their projects by agreeing with their tutor about what is to be done and how it should be done. The overall result is a very positive one. Over the course of the two years, from IEM1 as a first-year student to IEM2 as a second-year student, there is a clear difference in the ways that students perceive their studies. They develop much more independence and responsibility for their own learning and are more capable of making decisions about the content and research or writing processes. Another consequence of the development of independence can be seen during the peer evaluation sessions. IEM2 students see much more value in these sessions as they recognize that their peers are informed practitioners and thus, confident critical readers.

C. Consulting Students on Language and Genre

It has been noted that the IEM classes typically consist of students with marked differences in knowledge of English language and how to write academic English texts. The tutor therefore needs to be able to teach language (a lexico-grammatical focus) and how texts are constructed (a discourse focus). There is typically a requirement for a focus on lexico-grammatical areas, particularly systematic errors committed by students; common errors are related to endorsing authors and distancing from authors; using modality; passive constructions; and concessive clauses. One consistent idiosyncratic error is distinguishing between singular or plural nouns and conjugating them with the correct inflection of the verb. Despite these similarities, there is often too much diversity for a tutor to feedback at the class level, even if the class size is small. The feedback in these areas is therefore often given through individual consultations.

One effective way to offer feedback is through Socratic Dialogue, embedding probing statements or questions, or highlighting words, phrases or sections that require attention on the students' papers. An example problem sentence is offered below:

Lastly, there have not been many researches regarding gender stereotypes in softball, and no research has been done about this topic in Singapore's context.

There are two uses of research here, one as a count noun another as a noncount noun. Clearly, the second use is more appropriate and to make this evident to the student, the tutor might provide the following activity:

One of the uses of research is correct. Which one? What happens to the verb if the noun is noncount? If you are not sure, please use a grammar reference and then visit <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/541/01/> and read about it.

In this way, the tutor is engaging the students in two-way asynchronous communication, interacting with them and guiding them to notice what is problematic in their texts. The student is required to provide an answer in her work. The tutor has several methods for providing feedback in this way: using assessment systems built into virtual learning environments; simply using the review function in Microsoft Word; or utilizing software such as *In2go*, an annotation and screen recording tool that allows writing on top of an active desktop application such as Word in real time and recording a live video of the feedback for the student. Whatever the method used for the feedback, this practice is deeply grounded in discovery learning. Students are provided with the means to study the grammar; thus, shifting the responsibility over to them. Again, this is clearly an example of the tutor as 'guide on the side', which is very much consistent with learner-centered methodology (Blumberg, 2009). Nunan (1988) argues that using the students' own writing to teach language on a needs-based format is a far more superior approach to pre-course language syllabus design. It is a bottom-up, not a top-down focus and one which encourages students to explore.

In addition, all students generally benefit from sessions on form and function at the discourse level, in particular, input on the characteristics of the given genres students are required to write. In IEM1, there might be a focus on how an introduction or body paragraph of an APE is constructed. In IEM2, there might be a focus on how to structure an original research paper with varying time spent on writing an introduction, literature review (a theoretical framework), methodology, results and discussion, and finally a conclusion. Although a tutor can work with students in consultations on these areas, it is also common to conduct this kind of instruction at the class level. One typical instruction session at discourse level is to teach IEM1 students how to write their APEs. This might involve deconstructing a paragraph by using themes relating to the controlling ideas of each sentence. Beyond the hyper-theme (topic sentence), sentences pertaining to the development section (body) have differing roles. Often, a sentence fulfils several or all roles

simultaneously. These roles may be presented as the following: *describing* (providing extra information to supplement the controlling idea expressed in the hyper-theme); *exemplifying* (offering examples that help to illustrate the main idea); *analysing* (examining concepts related to the controlling idea); *challenging* (analysing information or views represented in sources concerning the controlling idea); *persuading* (constructing argumentation around the controlling idea); and *using supporting evidence* (referencing sources which communicate or support the controlling idea). If students report that further work is required for this activity, they can be directed to a site such as Sydney University's eLearning *Writesite* devoted to persuasive academic writing to work independently until their competence, and confidence in this field has developed.

This may seem to follow a traditionalist approach. However, as already noted, critical thinking and collaborative elaboration are essential goals of the courses. By asking students to complete tasks such as the one described above in groups, these activities can help to develop knowledge and good habits of learning. Students generally find the sort of activity described above very challenging and enjoyable. The key is to choose the right level of academic language for the text being analysed. While groups are matching form and function, the instructor monitors and provides input when necessary. As a follow-up, groups may compare results and then go on to write their own paragraph on a topic related to the module during class time. This enables them to apply the instruction as it is processed and to take risks thereby learning from each other or from the tutor. Also, by connecting the students to an eLearning site such as that found at Sydney University's *Writesite* to further study this area, students are being guided to develop as autonomous learners, one of the essential habits of learning on the programme.

IV. CONCLUSION

This paper has presented characteristics of two courses belonging to a particular academic writing programme at the Centre for English Language Communication of the National University of Singapore. The modules are content-specific. There is a deep-rooted connection to lifelong skills development; there is both learner and learning-centred approaches (Mostrom & Blumberg, 2012); and technology is ubiquitous. A module of this type offers students multiple learning experiences. There are, of course, numerous challenges that emerge when striving to deliver these learning outcomes and these have been explained in this paper. Overall, the challenges centre on the difficulty of catering to diversity. In each classroom, it is possible to see significant differences in students' abilities to research and write in English. This is not only because of varying English language levels but also due to different academic experience: some students have been trained to write academic genres more than others; some are more autonomous learners than others; and some have more intensive majors to deal with during the semester making it hard for them to manage their study time. One clear conclusion from the growth of this genre of module is that, today in South-East Asia, there is a more humanistic and individually-sensitive educational paradigm that places great respect on each student and the space that they inhabit. Long gone are the behaviourist days when a student was a passive recipient, with a clean slate, a *tabula rasa*, waiting to be filled with whatever the teacher, or text book, considered important.

As educational practices move further into the twenty-first century, it is clear that this student-centric mode of learning will continue to grow. It is a paradigm that has evolved along with notions of life-long learning, which are inextricably linked to the opportunities that citizens have today. With the ubiquitous nature of technology, the tutor and students can find academic sources at the touch of a screen; they can consult excellent online resources devoted to training students how to write academic texts; they can also manage a great deal of their interactions asynchronously, and at a distance, using review or even screen casting software to provide in-depth, meaningful feedback to students' texts. The teaching and learning environment is truly inside and outside the classroom. In addition, due to the multitude of resources available and the speed with which they can be accessed, students have more opportunity to become informed and choose what they wish to study; this also offers them more independence, increasing intrinsic motivation and reducing the degree of teacher control. All of these observations point to the increasing role of the teacher as 'guide on the side', and the continued development of student-centric modes of learning. As long as class sizes can be kept low and students have the time to work on their projects, this can only have positive repercussions.

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The Effects of TBLT's Strong Form and Weak Form on ESL Students' Vocabulary Acquisition

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Abstract—The present study applied task-based language teaching (TBLT) approach to English vocabulary teaching of vocational college students. Based on the different ideas of TBLT types—the strong form (i.e. the strong task-based approach) and the weak form (i.e. the weak task-based approach), it designed different teaching procedures aiming to explore different effects of the two types on English vocabulary acquisition. The result showed that the students as a whole had a better learning result when they were taught by the strong form of TBLT, especially when dealing with productive vocabulary. However, the strong form didn't seem to have as good an effect on lower level students as on upper and middle level ones.

Index Terms—TBLT, strong form, weak form, vocabulary teaching

I. INTRODUCTION

As an important constituent of language knowledge, vocabulary is the basis of language acquisition. However, in vocational colleges of China, most students' vocabulary competence is at a lower stage and hinders their development of English learning. Task-based language teaching approach has been in existence for over 20 years. Centering around communicative tasks, it aims to improve students' application ability of the English language during the process of using the language to finish tasks. Nevertheless, there has been a long dispute over the two types of TBLT--the strong form and the weak form. Although some scholars consider the weak form more suitable for English learners in China (Gong & Luo, 2006), few empirical studies were conducted to prove it, let alone their effects on vocabulary acquisition.

Therefore, the present study applied TBLT to college English teaching and designed separate teaching procedures based on different ideas of the strong form and the weak form, in order to explore their various teaching effects on vocabulary acquisition, thus offering suggestions for college English vocabulary teaching.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Different Ideas of the Strong and Weak Forms of TBLT

Task-based language teaching, also known as task-based instruction (TBI), derived from communicative language teaching (CLT), focusing on the use of authentic language and asking students to do meaningful tasks using the target language. As a student-oriented and task-centered teaching approach, it advocates that students acquire language in the process of accomplishing tasks. However, there has been a long dispute over the strong form and the weak form, which are the two types of TBLT, since it was introduced twenty years ago. Scholars have different views on what is a task. The advocates for strong form believe that a task is an intentional and a communicative activity that learners fulfill through the use of target language (Willis, 1996). Therefore, only a communicative task can be called a task, while other activities can be merely called practice. In contrast, supporters for the weak form claim that tasks can be divided into communicative tasks and enabling tasks. The latter refers to various language practices that support the communicative tasks (Estair & Zanon, 1994).

In the way of teaching, the major distinction between the strong and the weak forms lies in when and how to teach language knowledge. Advocates for the strong form insist that a primary characteristic of TBLT should be that learners are free to use any language form in order to achieve a communicative goal and teachers are not supposed to provide language forms in advance (Willis, 1996), for those language features that students want to use but do not know how to use are the optimal teaching goals of TBLT (Ellis, 2003). Language knowledge appears naturally during the process of using the language to fulfill tasks. It is obtained through meaning negotiation, focusing on forms, interaction and scaffolding, and consolidated through post-task practices. In contrast, supporters for the weak form insist that language knowledge should appear before the task and be consolidated during the task. That is, teaching should start from non-communicative practice of language forms to controllable communicative tasks, and finish up in real communicative tasks (Littlewood, 2004). In that way, teachers are ensuring that students communicate within their limited language ability while guiding students to advance toward authentic communication (Gong & Luo, 2006).

B. Current Research Findings of Vocabulary Teaching

1. Research from the perspective of direct and indirect vocabulary teaching

Generally, the vocabulary teaching methods are divided into direct method and indirect method. From the angle of the learner, they are explicit learning and implicit learning. When direct method is taken, learners focus their attention on the subjective and conscious activities and exercises that are directly related to vocabulary. When indirect method is taken, vocabulary is not the direct object of study, but part of the whole study. Learners focus their attention on other aspects of learning, especially on the messages conveyed by the language. They have mastered vocabulary only incidentally in order to complete the task (Sun, 2011). Dong (2001) conducted an experimental study on the vocabulary teaching of college English majors. Sun (2011) made a comparative study on the direct vocabulary teaching method and the indirect method in grade three English teaching of a senior high school. Both of their research found that when teachers combined direct method with indirect method, students' vocabulary acquisition was far more efficient than using any method alone, especially for productive vocabulary.

2. Research from the perspective of vocabulary learning strategies

A large number of scholars have explored vocabulary teaching from the perspective of vocabulary learning strategies, and have achieved fruitful results. Vocabulary learning strategies are divided into two layers: meta cognitive strategies and cognitive strategies. The former includes planning, self-assessment, self-examination and selective attention allocation strategies, etc. And the latter includes concrete methods such as rote memorization, classification, association, lexical chunks, spelling, context, dictionary search, guessing, counseling, doing exercises, word lists, keywords and semantic processing, etc. (Wu & Wang, 1998; Zhang, 2006) Most cognitive strategies are used in direct vocabulary teaching, while indirect vocabulary teaching mainly uses context, dictionary search and counseling strategies. In this paper, we do not distinguish between learning strategy and teaching strategy, because they are the same thing from different angles. When the teacher is guiding the students to use a certain strategy in class, the teacher is using a teaching strategy, while the students are using a learning strategy.

Some researchers made investigations on students' selection of learning strategies and the correlation between their learning strategies and their learning result. Among the many vocabulary learning strategies, context strategy was studied most. It derived from communicative language teaching, and considers context crucial to the way that meanings can appropriately be expressed and understood. Wu and Wang (1998) carried out their investigation among non-English major college students and the result showed there was a great correlation between learning strategies and the quality and quantity of vocabulary knowledge; learning in context was the most effective learning strategy, while rote memorization was the least efficient one. Other scholars made empirical research on the connection between vocabulary learning strategies and their learning effect. Zhang (2006)'s study strongly suggested that the meta cognitive strategies were crucial to the success of vocabulary learning and the context-oriented sources were more effective than other strategies. R. Zhao (2010) also explored and attempted the context strategy. She developed her teaching in three levels: lexical context, grammatical context and situational context. Her study showed that the use of the three levels of context in vocabulary teaching conformed to the laws of memory and cognition, and was conducive to improving the learning interest and effect. Under the guidance of communicative approach, Guan (2016) applied context strategy to vocabulary teaching in her experimental class. Her comparative study showed that context strategy played a significant role in improving the effectiveness of vocabulary teaching in senior high school.

3. Research from the perspective of language teaching approaches

Vocabulary teaching is an important part of language teaching. Various language teaching approaches have revealed vocabulary teaching strategies to some extent. For example, the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach admires indirect learning and disapproves of the study of purely linguistic forms. According to Krashen (Krashen & Terrell, 1983), language learning comes about through using target language communicatively (learners' needs considered), rather than through practicing language skills. Scholars favoring CLT believe that the words to teach should be decided according to learners' need and fully successful vocabulary acquisition is a by-product of communication. Gui (2011) applied CLT to English vocabulary teaching in a senior high school. First, she endeavored to make students familiar with the relevant vocabulary by explaining and giving examples. Then, she guided students to use the words by setting up communicative situations and organizing communicative activities. Her research found that CLT could bring learners' imagination into full play and make vocabulary learning more practical, thus effectively improving students' vocabulary competence.

Task-based approach is the development of communicative approach. A few scholars have studied vocabulary teaching under TBLT. Wang (2012) investigated English vocabulary teaching in senior high schools. After questionnaires and interviews and based on TBLT theory, she designed three-step vocabulary teaching method: concentrated direct teaching, hierarchical indirect teaching and extended teaching. The teaching method she designed actually belonged to the weak form of TBLT approach, where required vocabulary was presented and relevant exercises were carried out before the students started their task.

In summary, most of the literature investigated the use of vocabulary learning strategies of students, and a few of the literature studied the relationship between vocabulary learning strategies, direct/indirect vocabulary teaching methods and vocabulary acquisition effect, but there are few empirical researches on the effect that language teaching approaches have on vocabulary acquisition. Under the strong task-based approach, vocabulary is learned indirectly and incidentally, so it is a by-product of communicative tasks, which results in the different vocabulary that each student acquires. Therefore, it is definitely hard to have an accurate measurement of vocabulary learning effect. These

difficulties may lead to the rare studies on the correlation between task-based language teaching and vocabulary acquisition effect.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

A. *Research Questions*

The present study implemented vocabulary teaching experiment using the strong and weak forms of TBLT, trying to explore their effects on vocabulary acquisition so as to put forward suggestions for vocabulary teaching. The following questions were addressed in the present study: whether there is a significant difference between the strong form and the weak form of TBLT in the effect of vocabulary teaching; what effects the two forms have on vocabulary learning of girls and boys respectively; what effects the two forms have on vocabulary learning of upper, middle and lower level students respectively.

B. *Subjects*

The subjects were students from two classes in the second grade of a vocational college. There were 36 persons in group A, including 25 males and 11 females, and 37 persons in group B, including 27 males and 10 females.

C. *Research Method*

Quantitative research method was employed in this empirical study.

D. *Experiment Procedures*

The experimental teaching of Group A and Group B lasted 8 weeks by the same teacher. Group A were taught under the strong form during the first four weeks while Group B by the weak form; during the second four weeks, Group A were taught under the weak form while Group B by the strong form. A written task was given at the beginning of every class, such as writing a composition, completing an introduction of a particular scenic spot, etc. The tasks of Group A and Group B were the same each time. The number of vocabulary items required to learn for either group was also the same, that was, 15 words each time, including five words that needed to be mastered productively. Under the strong form, relevant words were not provided before the task. When students met with difficulties with words during their completing the task, they solved the problems by themselves using strategies such as looking up dictionaries and counseling. After the task was finished, they selected 15 words that they were not familiar with on their own. The 15 words, including the 5 words needed to be mastered productively, were checked by the teacher before they were approved of as required words and taken down on students' notebooks. Then, students needed to make sentences with the 5 productive words with the help of the dictionary and the teacher, and write them down on their notebook. While under the weak form, the teacher provided words that students might use before they started carrying out the task, together with the words' explanation, sample sentences and relevant practices. The 15 required words, including the 5 words needed to be mastered productively, were designated by the teacher after the completion of the task.

Both Group A and Group B were tested twice during the eight-week experimental period with the first test taken at the end of the fourth week and the second at the end of the eighth week, in order to evaluate the vocabulary learning effects of students when they were taught by the strong form and weak form of TBLT respectively. When examining the effect of the weak form, a dictation of the 60 words, which were designated by the teacher in the previous four periods of lessons, was implemented with the teacher speaking out the Chinese translation and the students writing out their English equivalents in order to test the learning result of receptive vocabulary. Then, the teacher selected 10 words from them, which were previously required to be used productively, and asked students to make sentences with them so as to test the learning result of productive vocabulary. When examining the effect of the strong form, the teacher made separate test papers for each student according to the words they took down on their notebooks which were collected by the teacher beforehand. Each test paper consisted of 60 words that were required to be translated from Chinese into English. The teacher selected 10 words for each paper and asked students to make sentences with them. Each student had a different paper when the effect of strong form was examined because the words to be examined were mainly decided by the students themselves in the previous four lessons.

The papers were collected and graded by the teacher. Each word carried one point and 60 words carried 60 points altogether. If one individual letter was misspelled but did not affect the meaning of expression, 0.5 point was subtracted; if the word's meaning was affected or if two or more letters were misspelled, then zero point was given. Each sentence carried 4 points and the total score for each paper was 100. The scores of the papers were recorded and the data were input into SPSS 17 to be analyzed.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

First, the effects that the strong form and the weak form had on students as a whole were analyzed; then the effects that the two forms had on male students and female students separately were tested; lastly, the effects that the two forms had on upper level, middle level and lower level students were examined respectively. The researcher endeavored to find out whether there was a significant difference between the two types of TBLT.

A. The Effects of the Strong and Weak Forms on the Whole Students

The differences of students' scores under the strong and the weak task-based approaches were detected using paired sample T test. The result is as follows.

TABLE I
THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN STRONG AND WEAK FORMS FOR WHOLE STUDENTS

	Method	Mean	N	Paired Samples Correlations	Sig. (2-tailed) of Paired Differences
Total Scores of Papers	Strong Form	75.97	73	.965	.000
	Weak Form	73.95	73		
Scores of Receptive Words	Strong Form	44.06	73	.956	.552
	Weak Form	43.95	73		
Scores of Productive Words	Strong Form	31.92	73	.670	.000
	Weak Form	30.01	73		

As can be seen from the table, when students receive vocabulary teaching in the strong and weak forms respectively, their scores show a significant difference (Sig.< 0.05). However, that difference mainly comes from the scores of productive words. As for the receptive words, there is no significant difference between the strong and the weak forms (Sig. > 0.05). It may due to the fact that students merely need to comprehend the receptive words and be able to spell them right, which is a lot easier than what students need to do with the productive words, which are required to be used in context correctly. Besides, when the weak form is taken, the exercises of language forms that the teacher leads students to do before the task help to consolidate students' memorization of the receptive words.

For the learning effect of productive vocabulary, the strong form is obviously superior to the weak form (Sig.<0.05). It may be explained by the following facts. First, the indirect vocabulary teaching method is employed in the strong task-based approach. In the lessons of strong form TBLT, the required words appear naturally during the process of students' completing their tasks, and those words are just the ones that students actually need to use in their tasks. As a result, they leave a deep impression on the students. Second, based on the previous research on the direct and indirect vocabulary teaching, the teacher added a step to the original strong task-based language teaching in the present experiment: after the students finished the tasks, they were asked to use the words to make sentences on their own employing the strategies such as looking up dictionaries and consulting teachers. In this way, they combined the indirect vocabulary learning method with the direct method, which improved their learning effect. This result was consistent with the findings of Dong (2001) and Sun (2011) which suggested that the combination of direct and indirect methods could greatly improve vocabulary acquisition effect. However, under the weak task-based approach, new words and their sample sentences are presented before the task. The learning process is controlled by the teacher and the students complete the relevant exercises assigned by the teacher mechanically and passively, thus affecting their learning result.

B. The Effects of the Strong and Weak Forms on Male and Female Students Respectively

Then, the effects of the strong and weak forms on male students and female students separately were examined through paired sample T test.

TABLE II
THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN STRONG AND WEAK FORMS FOR MALE AND FEMALE STUDENTS RESPECTIVELY

	Method	Mean	N	Paired Samples Correlations	Sig. (2-tailed) of Paired Differences
Male Students	Strong Form	75.20	52	.962	.000
	Weak Form	73.04	52		
Female Students	Strong Form	77.90	21	.982	.003
	Weak Form	76.24	21		

As is shown in table II, there is a significant difference between the effects of the strong form and the weak form of TBLT (Sig.<0.05), whether on male students or on female students, and the average scores of the strong form are higher than those of the weak form. However, the difference in average scores between the two forms is 2.16 points for boys, but only 1.66 points for girls and it seems that boys benefit more than girls from the strong form. Psychological research shows that females are more field dependent than males, and males are more field independent than females. Field-dependent people tend to rely more on the environment and the people around to get clues to solve the problem, while field-independent people prefer to rely on their own to solve the problem (Hou, 1998). The strong form proposes that no sufficient language support be given before students start their task. If students meet with language difficulties during completing tasks, they should try to overcome the difficulties on their own by looking up dictionaries, surfing the Internet, consulting teachers and their classmates. Therefore, the strong task-based approach is more suitable for field-independent learners, that is, its effect on boys' learning result tends to be greater than that on girls.

C. The Effects of the Strong and Weak Forms on Upper, Middle and Lower Level Students Respectively

In the end, the effects of the strong and weak forms on upper, middle and lower level students respectively were detected through paired sample T test. The high score, middle score and low score segments of the vocabulary tests are divided as follows: high score ≥ 80 ; $70 \leq$ middle score < 80 ; low score < 70 .

TABLE III
THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN STRONG AND WEAK FORMS FOR UPPER, MIDDLE AND LOWER STUDENTS RESPECTIVELY

	Method	Mean	N	Paired Samples Correlations	Sig. (2-tailed) of Paired Differences
Upper Level Students	Strong Form	86.94	27	.750	.000
	Weak Form	82.59	27		
Middle Level Students	Strong Form	76.25	18	.685	.000
	Weak Form	74.08	18		
Lower Level Students	Strong Form	65.23	28	.668	.531
	Weak Form	65.55	28		

Table 3 shows that for students with high and middle scores, the effects of strong and weak forms on their vocabulary test scores are significantly different (Sig. <0.05), while no significant difference exists for low score students (Sig. >0.05). Previous research found that compared with poor students, excellent students employ various learning strategies more frequently, and the difference is significant in the use of context strategy and word guessing strategy (Wu & Wang, 1998; Zhao J., 2005). Under the strong form of TBLT, Students do not have ready-made vocabulary to use, so they must play their initiative and use context, dictionary and counseling learning strategies more frequently. Therefore, it is nearly without doubt that excellent students will benefit more from the strong task-based approach.

V. CONCLUSION

A. Suggestions on Vocabulary Teaching

In the light of the previous analysis, some tentative suggestions on vocabulary teaching based on the strong and weak forms of TBLT are put forward as follows.

Firstly, the strong form of TBLT is recommended when the teaching goal is to improve students' language productive ability. In the strong form, students are encouraged to take initiative to learn new vocabulary actively, for learning is more effective when learners are actively involved in the learning process. When they use context, dictionary and counseling strategies, they are improving their practical language skill as well as learning how to learn. The ultimate aim of teaching is to "teach students to fish" rather than "give them fish". Only when students learn to know words, use words and keep enlarging their vocabulary can the final goal of vocabulary teaching be achieved. However, under the weak form, students' initiative in exploring new words is restrained, which is not conducive to the development of their creative thinking and the cultivation of their autonomous learning ability. But teachers had better add direct vocabulary teaching after students complete their tasks. For example, they can ask students to make sentences using the words they have learned during their tasks.

Secondly, because the strong task-based approach is not so helpful to poor students, students with weak English foundation can continue to be taught by the weak form, but teachers should gradually increase using the strong task-based teaching for poor students, in order to help them improve their autonomous learning ability.

However, the acquisition speed of vocabulary is slow in the strong task-based approach. So, teachers should expand vocabulary after students' completion of the task, which means adding some more vocabulary related to the task but not used by the students and giving explanation, in order to make up for the lack of vocabulary and example sentences under the strong form of TBLT.

Besides, under the strong task-based approach, lessons tend to be less predictable and teachers should be always prepared for any linguistic emergency, which poses a challenge to the teachers. Therefore, teachers should keep improving themselves and try to possess a high level of language competence.

B. Limitation and Future Direction of the Research

However, the number of vocabulary involved in this research was small, and the mastery of productive words was merely tested by making sentences, which was a relatively simple evaluation form, so the result of this study needs to be verified by larger-scale tests in multiple ways.

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Emancipation of Lexical Motivation and Second Language Teaching under the Framework of Cognitive Linguistics

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Abstract—Unlike formal linguistic paradigm which starts from the assumption that language is basically arbitrary. Cognitive linguistics holds that motivation in language is both primary and pervasive. This paper intends to justify the necessity of explicit lexical instruction and an instruction methodology that is made possible by cognitive linguistics, namely, emancipation of lexical motivations which can facilitate the understanding and memorization of multi-words expressions and in-depth lexical knowledge and points out the challenges teachers may face in the conduction of the new language teaching approach.

Index Terms—lexical approach, cognitive linguistics, lexical motivation

I. INTRODUCTION

As an open system, the vocabulary is very extensive, which has been thought by the scholars of the past dynasties having no rules to follow, and the vocabulary research is figuratively compared to “Cinderella” in the family of applied linguistics. However, as the importance of words in the language cannot be ignored, there has been no interruption in the calls for strengthening lexical research. As early as 1980, Paul Meara wrote that “second language teaching shouldn’t ignore the vocabulary”, and called on the academic community to attach importance to the study of vocabulary, and the rules of vocabulary learning, forming the theory of vocabulary acquisition. In 1986, Batia Laufer critically pointed out that grammar and phonetics are the closed systems; they are easier to generalize abstractly. But vocabulary is the open system and it can’t make assumptions and detection. So the study of applied linguistics is actually the “grammar” study, vocabulary is only supporting part. In 1997, Nation proposed that because vocabulary study (such as word frequency research based on the corpus, the study of vocabulary and the speed of vocabulary growth, knowledge detection of sub-item vocabulary) loss are outside the mainstream of the theory of second language acquisition, without connection on hot theory or hot domain. It’s not enough to pay attention to vocabulary research. He thought that vocabulary acquisition research should absorb the research results of traditional between vocabulary and grammar, and fully consider the inseparability between vocabulary and grammar. Recently, as the development of corpus linguistics and cognitive linguistics, the nature of vocabulary and their effects are relearnt, the research on the rule of the development of vocabulary knowledge and the rule of teaching have become the most popular research areas, which greatly supersedes the trend that grammar research occupied the center position of linguistics and applied linguistics. The second language teaching has long influenced by the formalism of language philosophy, second language teachers and students are generally accepted that vocabulary learning is the key to the second language level, but experts and scholars are controversial above the necessity of classroom vocabulary teaching and vocabulary teaching methods.

II. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE AND THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For this study, domestic scholars mostly discussed the combination of cognitive linguistics theory and the second language teaching. For example, Wen Qiufang (2013) proposed that the contribution and limitation cognitive linguistics had to second language teaching. Wenxu (2014) explicated the four fundamental properties of cognitive linguistics, i.e., non-autonomy of language, centrality of meaning, constructionality of mental representation, and usage-based property, and then probe into their implications for foreign language teaching. As for motivation elucidation, Zhaohong (2013) contributed to the comparative study of vocabulary motivation between English and Chinese. And Feng Jianming (2014) thought that motivation was essentially a subjective thought, which was the fundamental property of language symbol.

Some scholars thought that there’s for need to the learners vocabulary in class. Vocabulary learning should be left to

the learners themselves (such as memorizing vocabulary lists or incidental learning in reading), and valuable time should be used to teach other important knowledge, such as grammar. Other scholars maintained that classroom vocabulary teaching is necessary, but scholars who believe classroom vocabulary teaching is necessary to have different opinions on how to teach. Some tend to explicit vocabulary teaching (teaching is carried out using vocabulary for a purpose), but others tend to implicit vocabulary teaching (let students learn vocabulary knowledge in the classroom teaching activities with content understanding as the main purpose).

The author thought that recognizing the essence and impact of “vocabulary” under the framework of cognitive linguistics contributes to solving above conflict. On the basis of the theory of cognitive linguistics, this paper interpreted the importance of deep vocabulary knowledge with multi-word units as the core in the language acquisition and language use, demonstrated the necessity of the dominant classroom vocabulary teaching, suggested that lexical motivation analysis is the best way to teach vocabulary in the second language and pointed out the challenges faced by second language teachers.

III. RECOGNITION “VOCABULARY”

As the important component in language, the definition of vocabulary has always been a difficult problem for linguists. Because different linguistic schools have different definitions of vocabulary based on their different understanding of the nature of language, there is a great influence on the second language teaching methods.

A. *The Lexical under the Framework of Formal Linguistics and Teaching Research Focused on Syntax Study*

Formal linguists thought that language is composed of grammar and vocabulary and lexical is affiliated to grammar and serves for grammar. If we compare language to a tall building, grammar is a framework of tall building and vocabulary is the brick of this tall building. Based on this philosophical concept, formal linguists suggested that the center for language research is grammar, and the exploration of syntactic rules. One more realistic reason of which they maintained grammar research is that grammar is a closed system, and has rules to follow. But lexical is an open system and difficult to summarize its rules. The study of the syntactic aspects of formalist linguistics is remarkable. Affected by it, the second language acquisition emerged as an independent subject in the 1960s, mainly studied the rules of second language acquisition under the framework of formalist linguistic research. The second language acquisition theories mostly related to the syntactic acquisition in second language. Krashen (1985) founded the natural order of grammatical morpheme in ESL, on the basis of it, he proposed Monitor theory; By the study of the attributive clause, Keenan & Comrie (1977) put forward the accessibility hierarchy of language acquisition. Milon (1974) proposed developmental sequences which are based on the studies of negative sentence acquisition in ESL. Meara (1980) proposed multidimensional model and teachability hypothesis which is based on the study of German syntactic acquisition. The study of the nature and rules of vocabulary was ignored entirely.

Under these circumstances, second language teaching mainly focuses on grammar teaching. For example, famous grammatical translation is explicit teaching method. But the communicative approach, task method and natural method are implicit grammar teaching methods. The main purpose of vocabulary teaching is to help students understand and master grammar rules. Vocabulary knowledge is carried by students through memorizing vocabulary lists outside the class or acquiring in the reading and listening.

B. *The Inseparability of Words and Grammar under the Framework of Cognitive Linguistics and the Teaching Research Focusing on Multi-word Units*

Starting in 1990, corpus linguistics fundamentally shake linguistic concept focusing on grammar, then shake the other linguistic research, the study of language acquisition and the core position of the second language teaching method. Through real and intuitive corpus, corpus linguistics proved that some words were always appearing together with other certain words in the natural language. The syntactic transformation generation theory cannot explain the co-existing words, and these often co-existing words are referred to as “multi-word units”.

Many foreign language teaching theorists concluded that: the center of language is neither grammar nor words, but the “multi-word units”, and successful learning is largely a matter of mastering and memorizing these multi-word units as much as possible. Studies have shown that the storage and extraction of multi-word units can help to reduce the cognitive load of language use.

In the cognitive linguistics, “multi-word units” generally were classified as the category of “construction”. Cognitive linguists think that vocabulary and grammar are not independent of each other, the two are the inseparable continuum, and the basis of language is construction. Each of them is a form-meaning combination. They could be large and small, smallest to a word, largest to a sentence, including idioms, phrases, fixed or semi-fixed collocation; language acquisition is the mastery of various constructions.

The second language teaching under the framework of cognitive linguistics advocated the teaching method focusing on “construction” or “multi-word units”, contrasting with the syntactic centered approach in the framework of formal linguistics. The expression of “lexical approach to second language teaching” was first proposed by Michael Lewis (1993), which means mastering second language through learning various multi-word units. He maintained that elements forming language are grammaticalized lexis, not lexicalized grammar. Word collocations and word meanings

have inherent disciplines.

Usage-based and cognitive brain theory-based cognitive linguistics interpreted the inherent discipline of word meaning and word collocation in theory. Corpus, conceptual images and etymological studies have made the elucidation of motivation possible. Through elucidating causes and effects of lexical construction and lexical meaning, not only can we know it, but we can also understand it. On the one hand, such teaching helps to mobilize the learner's deep cognitive processing and deepen the memory of the target words. On the other hand, it can improve learners' interest in learning. Because the learning process is no longer the boring memorization, but the knowledge network establishment related to linguistic knowledge, encyclopedic knowledge and cognitive conceptual system knowledge. It can be said that cognitive linguistics has opened up a new way for second language teaching, which can effectively improve the efficiency of classroom teaching by helping learners to understand and master the rules of vocabulary. The research is just starting.

IV. THE OUTLOOK OF ELUCIDATION OF LEXICAL MOTIVATION AND SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHING UNDER THE FRAMEWORK OF COGNITION

In the domain of applied linguistics, the word "motivated" is often used to describe learners' enthusiasm for learning or motivation for learning. For example, a highly motivated learner or the learners are not motivated. As the core term in cognitive linguistics, it has a very high frequency in the cognitive linguistics literature and is used to describe the language itself. For instance, the language is motivated or the word is motivated. It indicated that certain linguistic form or semantic expression is non-arbitrary, rational and explicable.

As for the questions about the nature of language symbols, academic has always two theories. They were the theory of arbitrariness and the theory of motivation. The theory of arbitrariness hold that there is no necessary connection between the signifier and the signified, and they cannot be argued. The word meaning of arbitrary is same as unpredictable, unexplainable or unmotivated. The theory of motivation maintained that there was certain connection between the signifier and the signified, and they can be argued. The meaning of motivated is same as predictable, explainable or systematic. Saussure, the father of modern linguistics, had established linguistic theory which was based on the theory of arbitrariness. It has always been dominant in linguistics and has far-reaching influence. But the theory of motivation has long been neglected and has rarely mentioned in linguistic textbooks.

Different with the arbitrariness of language emphasized by formalist linguistics, cognitive linguistics underlined the motivation of language. Cognitive linguistics thought that language is rooted in our perception of the external world and were part of the cognitive mechanism. Language formation and development relies heavily on metaphor, metonymy and imagery.

The current research of motivation was restricted to the level of vocabulary, such as internal structure of lexical category, relationship of word meaning, change of word meaning and word collocation and so on. They can be interpreted from the aspect of cognitive approach and knowledge structure. The motivation of vocabulary related to embodiment, iconicity, metaphor, construal and ideal cognitive model (ICM). The research of motivation mainly aims at the polysemy of words, the internal structure of lexical category and the word collocation (idioms, fixed or semi-fixed collocation). For example, the semantic extension of polysemes from core senses to peripheral senses can be explained by image schema and its transformation, conceptualization, archetypal category radiation, metaphor and metonymy mechanism, ICM, ECM and other cognitive approaches. Internal structure of lexical category was analyzed through family iconicity, archetypal category, and category of radiation networks. Vocabulary of same category can be divided into the hypernymy level word, the basic level word and the hyponymy level word. They form a network of interrelated words through iconicity relations, schema-illustration relations and part-whole relations to help people deal with new information and store old information.

Cognitive linguists use the large corpus to dig and display the motivation of words, phrases, and idioms making the elucidation of motivation more intuitive, more convincing, objectively provide the possibility for explicit classroom vocabulary teaching based on the elucidation of motivation.

Laufer and Nation(1986) proposed that the necessity of vocabulary teaching based on the elucidation of motivation. There are some reasons: (1) The incidental acquisition of vocabulary in the process of reading or communication or other implicit learning methods, was limited in both quality and quantity, while explicit vocabulary teaching contributes to the mastery of deep vocabulary knowledge. (2) It is necessary to improve your language level and master the low frequency words, phrases, idioms and so on. While low-frequency words can't be learned due to its low-frequency in the communication activities and learning tasks. Therefore, to improve the language level of learners, the explicit teaching must be carried out for low frequency words. (3) The explicit vocabulary teaching helps the students master deep vocabulary knowledge, such as denotation, connotation of a word, aggregation and composition relations, the range and domain. Grasping deep cognitive processing needed in the deep vocabulary knowledge is advantageous to the long-term memory of vocabulary. (4) The knowledge of productive vocabulary needs to be learned in productive tasks. However, in the limited classroom teaching environment, it is not enough to form the output knowledge through the communicative teaching method. Therefore, under the classroom teaching environment, communicative teaching method is not an ideal method to help students master a large amount of knowledge of output vocabulary. (5) If there is no explicit vocabulary teaching, some vocabulary knowledge will probably never be mastered by students.

Based on the analysis of the existing teaching methods, Boers & Lindstromberg (2008) noted: Under the foreign language environment, the cognitive analysis of the target language is helpful to improve the teaching efficiency of vocabulary through cultivating the thinking mode of the target language, making the limited class teaching big significance. Such research has achieved initial success. For example, in the traditional English teaching methods, the structure and semantic of word collocation was referred as arbitrariness, making no sense to tell. Learners were required to exercise in rote memorization. For instance, “strong” and “powerful” are similar in property and meaning, while learners are told that modifying the noun tea will use strong, and modifying the noun car will use powerful, the teacher usually does not explain why they should be matched. Through corpus research, Liu founded that “the seemingly arbitrary combination “wasn’t really arbitrary. We could use strong car, powerful tea under the specific situation rather than use strong tea, powerful car. Because the connotations between strong and powerful are different, the meaning of strong tea and powerful car are disparate. The former refers to the taste of tea when tea was a drink; the latter refers to the effect of tea when tea was medical herbs. It is the same as strong car and powerful car. The former refers to the durability of the car, while the latter refers to the high horsepower of the car. The research indicated that the meaning explanation of synonyms based on corpus study contributes to the learners’ realization that English word combinations are non-arbitrary and rational. So learners needn’t do exercise in rote memorization and they can flexibly use word collocations from deep understanding of them.

Marta Berendi (2009) studied the application of conceptual metaphor and conceptual metonymy analysis in polysemes and idiom teaching. The traditional viewpoint holds that the collocation of English idiom and its meaning are arbitrary, fixed, non-structural and conventional. The whole meaning of an idiom is not a combination of its word meaning, which requires mechanical memory, so it is difficult to learn the second language. What has shown in this experiment learners realized that the meanings of idioms largely have rules to follow through parsing the cognitive model of idioms. The meaning of the idioms can be inferred through different cognitive constructs. For example, in this experiment, the target idioms about “anger” (such as burst out, simmer down, add fuel to the fire, keep smoldering) are divided into four cognitive models, these are Anger is fire, anger is hot fluid in a container, anger is insanity, an anger person is a dangerous animal. Using concrete examples, we interpreted each cognitive model in the classroom, which would help students master the rules of this kind of idiom and largely improve the efficiency of learning English idioms.

The meaning of the English verb phrases is often thought to be obscure, arbitrary and mechanical memorized. However, Nora Condon’s (2009) experiment proved that the meaning of the English verb phrases could be analyzed and could have rules to follow. She studied the effect of classroom cognitive analysis on verb phrases that were made up of different notional verbs and functional words. It shows that after the teacher has parsed over the structural mechanism of over, out, up, the learners can easily understand these phrases that were made up of different functional words.

Boers and Lindstromberg (2008) founded that using pictures to analyze the basic concepts of polysemes or multi-word units can help learners understand and memorize the extended meaning of these phrases. What concluded by the above researches, if classroom teaching would help learners realize that the relationship between symbol and meaning in the second language system is not arbitrary, but motivated, learners will learn vocabulary through using their brains flexibly and a more effective way to remember rather than exercising in mechanical memorization. If learners are aware of the rules of vocabulary, their confidence for learning vocabulary will be stronger and they will be more able to enjoy the vocabulary learning. Through the cognitive analysis of target lexical motivation, learners could master a new thinking mode and use it as a key to open the door of target lexical knowledge.

Radden and Panther (2004) made the elucidation of vocabulary motivation divide into the synchronic analysis, diachronic analysis and comparative analysis. Among them, the synchronic analysis is the most important one. It can be understood through three aspects: (1) It brought the meanings into contact with the sounds. That is inferring meaning of the word through the pronunciation of the word. (2) It brought the meanings into contact with the form of the word. That is inferring meaning of the word through the spelling of the word. (3) It brought the other meanings into contact with the original meanings. That is inferring the other meanings through one meaning of the polysemes. Generally, it is pervasive that bringing the other meanings into contact with the original meaning. Because most words in English are polysemous. The polysemous teaching included that letting students realize the core meaning of the polysemes, and interpret the semantic extension between polysemous words can be literal meaning and can be realized through metaphor and metonymy.

The diachronic elucidation of motivation, which is the etymological exploration, mainly analyzed the structural characteristics and formation mechanism of vocabulary through explaining similarity rules between lexical evolution and human cognition from the internal linguistics.

Comparative analysis is one of the diachronic analysis. It made the original knowledge and new knowledge build meaningful connection with each other by parsing the relationship between the target words and the other words, and greatly improving the memory and use of acquired knowledge. The study found that this teaching method is especially suitable for English learners in China.

The classroom vocabulary teaching based on the elucidation of motivation is largely superior to the incidental method of vocabulary or the definition learning method, which has to be improved. But compared with the traditional vocabulary learning method, elucidation of motivation is more helpful for mastering and memorizing of vocabulary knowledge. The conclusion was supported by dual coding theory, trace theory and levels-of-processing theory.

Since the validity of elucidation of vocabulary motivation has been proved, the most challenging part is how to show the motivation of target vocabulary. We expected that second language teachers will creatively elucidate vocabulary motivation in combination with the practice of class. On the one hand, teachers will carefully select and organize the materials and design teaching tools (such as pictures) before class. On the other hand, they will utilize appropriate expressions to suit for different levels of students. The language of the teacher is referred to as the “technical operational procedure” or “materialization process” of the elucidation of motivation. Due to the individual differences of teachers, such as age, character and so on, will to some extent affect the effect of elucidation of motivation. At the same time, teachers need to further improve their rational understanding of target language system.

V. CONCLUSION

The second language teaching under the framework of formalist linguistics focused on grammar. Vocabulary teaching serves as the grammar teaching. As the collocation of words, the lexical was memorized mechanically by learners by the dictionary definition. For the target vocabulary, students only know what they are but don't know why they are. The second language teaching under the framework of cognitive linguistics focused on “multi-word units”, elucidating lexical formation and the regularity and predictability of the word meaning. The second language teaching based on elucidation of motivation aims to cultivate a way of thinking and emphasize memorization based on mastering deep vocabulary knowledge. If the traditional teaching method can only give learners fish, the teaching method based on the elucidation of motivation will teach the learners fishing. The prevailing vocabulary textbooks are filled with the knowledge of sounds, meanings, word structures and so on, and almost haven't the motivation of words, which was largely on account of “the difficulty of motivation”. In the second language teaching, it is more difficult to “say” the motivation of the second language. The second language teachers should have a rational understanding of language system of target language, personal study it, sort out the motivation of target language, utilize the proper methods in classroom and the expressions suitable for learners to display the motivation of the target words, only in this way, can learners master the regularity and structure of the second language.

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ELT Materials Evaluation: A System and Criteria

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Abstract—This study aims at proposing a 3-stage materials evaluation system and separate checklists for screening and detailed analysis and testing their effectiveness. The checklists were developed at two stages: First they were developed by 113 trainees as the requirement of the materials evaluation training program and evaluated by 43 ELT teachers. Later both the system and the checklists themselves were piloted and tested in real-life by 11 ELT teachers when adopting ELT materials for their students. The data was collected through 5-point Likert scale questionnaires. The results indicated that the system allows for the quick disqualification of the inappropriate ones and saves enough time to focus on the candidate ones in detail. The checklists themselves are found to be both reliable and valid.

Index Terms—ELT materials, materials evaluation checklists, language education

I. INTRODUCTION

ELT materials establish the backbone for English language education (Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2017). Generally speaking in many language programs they function as the de facto syllabus and dictate what to teach, in what order to teach, even the density and pace of teaching (AbdelWahab, 2013; Allen, 2015; Garton, & Graves, 2014; Mishan & Timmis, 2015). Thus, they provide a common ground for both learners and teachers in an institution and besides determining the content they also control what to and how to teach and test. Not only do they regulate content but also how to implement and realize language education (Harwood, 2014; McGrath, 2013). Each ELT material is based on a language teaching philosophy (approach) which guides how to realize its principles in actual use via materials (Richards, 2006). In other words, ELT materials are more than content, they impose a teaching methodology on both teachers and learners (Hart, 2003; Işık, 2011, 2013a, 2013b, 2018; Tomlinson, 2010). When they are adopted, language teaching methodology get adopted together with them, too. It is highly likely to say that the degree to which the methodology is in congruence with the overall goal of a language program, decides the success of a language education program (Harwood, 2010). Likewise, they are of a great help for especially novice teachers (Garton & Graves, 2014; López-Medina, 2016). If they are based on a sound methodology, they are likely to guide and scaffold teachers to be efficient teachers. The tasks and teaching tips help them get to be equipped with the knowledge and skills to be self-sufficient, even maybe, exploratory teachers. They also orient learners about how to learn a second/foreign language through the tasks they provide. Even some ELT materials have specific tasks on language learning strategies to train learners to become successful learners. Furthermore, they are the main source of language input for learners. Nowadays learners can have access to ample amount of input on the internet (Allehyani, Burnapp & Wilson, 2017) however, being exposed to the relevant materials at the appropriate level of cognitive and linguistic difficulty is a problem. The ELT materials, in that sense, ensures to provide learners with the appropriate materials. ELT materials are accompanied by the periphery; audios, videos, workbooks, assessment packs, projects packs, I-tools, etc. which all create a variety of texts and tasks and enrich languages activities both in and out of the classroom. This variety also helps to address different needs and interests and individualize activities especially outside the class. I-tool applications engage students and facilitate comprehension of the texts and tasks. Together with the I-tools, online applications take learners beyond the boundaries of schools and integrate them with the rest of the world (Allen, 2015; Kukulka-Hulme, Norris & Donohue, 2015). Moreover, they pave the way for creating a global community in which learners get engaged in real, authentic interaction with others. Some materials, in addition, are conducive for self-regulated learning. They create online platforms for both teachers and learners by which teachers follow what activities their students do, how much time they spend doing those and how successful they are in task completion. The same feedback is also given to learners themselves. Those platforms also provide progress checks at the defined intervals. Both the activity reports and progress checks provide invaluable feedback to teachers and learners to diagnose their weaknesses and strengths and behave accordingly (Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2017). To sum up, ELT materials are essential for any language education programs and they set the ground for the language teaching/learning process (McGrath; 2006, 2016; Tomlinson, 2008).

The effort to emphasize the pivotal role of materials evaluation has abounded (Tomlinson, 2013). It has aimed to guide the stake holders to consider it a data-driven, disciplined and informed decision-making process. The pioneers in the field not only set the theoretical ground but also carried out research and came up with practical implications, even with materials evaluation checklists (Brown, 1995; Cunningsworth, 1995; Dubin, & Olshtain, 1986; Ellis, 1997; Graves, 1996, 2000; Grossman, & Thompson, 2008; Guyer, & Peterson, 1988; Hargreaves, 1989; Harmer, 2003; Hirsch, 1988; Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Johnson, 1989; Krahnke, 1987; Letter, 2000; Littlejohn & Windeatt, 1989; McDonough & Shaw, 1993; McGrath, 2002; O'Neill, 1982; Purgoson, 1991; Richard-Amato, 1988; Sheldon, 1987; Skierso, 1991;

Tomlinson, 2003; Willis, 2000). The theoretical and practical knowledge and data about materials have been accumulated and raised the awareness of stake holders about the issue. That knowledge has spread out and contributed to make the materials evaluation a global concern (McGrath, 2016; McDonough, et al., 2013; Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2017). In turn the research on it has also flourished globally and researchers all around the world have contributed to the ever-growing body of knowledge in the field (Garton & Graves, 2014). That concern even gave birth to the birth of a professional association, The Materials Development Association (MATSDA) which has offered courses, organized conferences, and provide services. The knowledge accumulated in the field, however, needed to be streamlined and put into practice to meet local needs.

As the knowledge about materials evaluation has developed and evolved, so has materials development (Garton & Graves, 2014; McGrath, 2016). ELT materials are either developed locally or adopted from among the ones which are on the market developed by the international publishers. The ideal one is developing materials unique for each program; custom-made ones arise from the needs analysis and context analysis to realize the goal(s) of a particular language education program. However, it is a huge task requiring expertise, time, energy, money, and team work. Since materials development is to be a data-driven, disciplined and systematic process, setting the goal(s) of a program, carrying out need and context analysis, preparing interim goals, objectives, determining content and related tasks and following the necessary steps to develop materials, first of all, necessitate expertise (McGrath, 2006; 2016). Materials developers are to be equipped with required knowledge and skills about the materials development and language teaching. It is a demanding task a single person cannot handle, thus, it requires a team. Moreover, they are needed to be accompanied by a team of experts, psychologists, applied linguists, pedagogues, information technology specialists, designers, script writers, directors, etc. All these obviously call for a budget. In short, it is a long process which is time, money and energy consuming and much above the shoulder of a teacher. The logical one is to adopt ELT materials and adapt them for the context in which they are implemented. The adopting process is not an easy one, it necessitates a data-driven, disciplined decision making. Teachers are to collect data through needs and context analysis and then implement evaluation criteria to choose the most appropriate materials (Kostka & Bunning, 2016). Since the ELT materials developed by publishers, especially international ones, are developed for a broad spectrum of learners, comprehensive, well-designed criteria get in action to choose the best. Evaluation criteria need to be customized as well to serve the specific needs of specific contexts. Obviously, evaluation criteria include items of global use as well as local one; in other words, the criteria must be customized for local use

In Turkey, as in other countries in the world, English is the key for a job, promotion, more income, and pursuing an academic career. There is an English fever (Krashen, 2006) and a great demand to master English. In formal education, the English education starts at the kindergarten and continues at the tertiary level. Besides, there are plenty of private institutions offering English courses. In short, huge amount of time, money, and energy is spent on English, thus, learners are to be provided with appropriate materials. Naturally it can be provided with a sound evaluation process. To make sound, informed, disciplined decisions there is a need for both comprehensive evaluation criteria and a systematic approach for materials evaluation. An approach to evaluate the materials are important because there are plenty of ELT materials in the market and it is impossible to evaluate all the possible materials in detail. To be practical the candidate materials are needed to be screened from among the possible ones and evaluated in detail.

To the knowledge of the researcher, there are only few studies on proposing ELT materials evaluation checklists and testing their efficiency in the new millennium. Reinders & Lewis (2006), Angell, et al. (2008), Shave (2010), Işık & Atımdört (2010) and AbdelWahab (2013), López-Medina (2016) developed ELT materials evaluation checklists. Reinders & Lewis (2006) developed a checklist to evaluate self-access materials and López-Medina (2016) for content language integrated learning (CLIL). Only Işık & Atımdört (2010) and AbdelWahab (2013) both developed checklists and tested their effectiveness. Moreover, none of them included a part on “software evaluation” yet it is accompanied by almost any ELT materials. There is definitely a need for a comprehensive checklist as well. In addition, its validity and reliability must be verified and data about its real-life use is to be provided. To sum up, the literature review has indicated the pivotal role of materials evaluation to come up with the most effective ones for each context. Although materials evaluation has aroused global concern, the research on materials evaluation checklists and proposing new checklists is not so common. Besides, since each context is unique it is mandatory to customize the evaluation process for each specific context. Moreover, the proposed checklists are no different from one another and a systematic approach to the ELT materials evaluation process has not been offered to make it more efficient and save time to focus more on the possible candidate ELT materials. In short, this study aims at proposing a 3-stage ELT materials evaluation system to create an efficient evaluation process and suggest detailed comprehensive checklists that can be exploited while forming ones for each specific ELT context.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Aim

The aim of the study is to develop comprehensive materials evaluation checklist in a two-stage fashion and to test its effectiveness.

B. References

Three groups of subjects participated in the study. The first group consisting of 113 trainees prepared the items for the criteria. The second group consisting of 43 English teachers tested the effectiveness of the items in the criteria. The third group, 11 teachers piloted the checklists.

C. Treatment

A 12-week training program was designed for the trainees who met three hours a week (see Appendix 1). In the first three weeks they study the articles on ELT materials to have a general perspective about the topic. The following three weeks they focused on materials evaluation and examined checklists. Each week, the trainer divided the class in groups and each group raised a real-life issue about topics of the week and offered solutions for them. In the 7th and 8th weeks they worked in groups to develop their own checklists. The trainer functioned as a member of each group and provided continuous feedback. At the end of the 8th week the groups shared their checklists with the others online and came to class evaluating them in the 9th week. In that week each group presented their checklists to the class and first other trainees (classmates) and then the trainer gave feedback about them. Upon receiving the feedback the group revised their checklists during the week after the class. In the 10th week in the class, the same groups started to evaluate the ELT materials used in their schools. The trainer again worked with each group. The process continued in the 11th week. At the end of the week, each group posted their evaluation to the whole class to get feedback about their evaluation. In the 12th week each group presented their evaluations and received feedback from their friends and teachers. Based on the feedback they received, they were required to revise their projects and submit them to the trainer within two weeks. The training program lasted two years with the participation of different trainees.

D. The Materials Evaluation System

A three-stage materials evaluation process is adopted; screening stage and a thorough detailed analysis stage. There are numerous ELT materials on the market it is too time- and energy consuming to evaluate each book in detail. The two-stage evaluation helps to ease the burden. In first stage “the quick evaluation checklist” is employed to screen the books to determine the candidate ELT materials for further detailed analysis. In other words, this stage eliminates the unqualified ones and delimits the number of ELT materials to be evaluated in the second stage. The evaluation approach is unique in a sense that it spares enough time to focus on the candidate books in detail in the second stage. The screening (quick evaluation) checklist is employed in the first, detailed evaluation checklist is used in the second stage.

E. The Item Development Process

The aim is to come up with two checklists, one for the screening to determine the candidate materials, and a comprehensive one for further detailed evaluation. The subjects started to work with a trainer who has evaluated, adapted, and developed materials, worked as a freelance materials evaluator for international publishers since 1989, and offered courses on ELT materials since 1999. After discussing the materials in the course pack in order to form the theoretical basis of materials evaluation, the trainees grouped in the groups of three or four. Each group was required to come up with two sets of items one for the quick evaluation checklist one for the comprehensive one. The tasks were carried out both in and out of the classroom and the trainer acted as a member of each group and provided feedback when necessary on the spot. The groups worked on their checklists for two weeks and revised them. Finally, they submitted their checklist to the trainer. The trainer worked on each checklist and created one checklist for screening (quick evaluation) and one for comprehensive detailed evaluation composed of different subcategories such as external evaluation, internal evaluation, face validity, approach, teacher-related factors, etc.

After the trainer had come with the checklists, judgmental evaluation was carried out by 43 English teachers who evaluated the quality of each item in the checklists using a 5 Likert scale. With an open-ended item in the questionnaire they are also asked what other items they would add to the checklist. In addition, to elicit their ideas about the general evaluation of the checklist another questionnaire was administered to the teachers. Depending on the feedback from the teachers, the reliability and validity of the checklists was carried out item by item. Some items were deleted, revised and added in the checklists. They were revised considering the feedback and suggestions given by the teachers and they were finalized. In other words, they got ready for piloting- the actual use (see Appendix 2).

During the judgmental evaluation teachers also answered the open-ended item. One teacher indicated that the deliberate focus on target language culture had to be looked for in materials evaluation. In the same vein, three teachers demanded native speaker standards in pronunciation. Since English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) approach has been widely adopted and it is hard to determine which target culture and dialect (American, British, Australian, etc.) are to be taught, that suggestion was realized in the item related with ELF. Two teachers suggested an item about the size of the coursebooks and offered A4 size so that they could fit in a student school bag. It was thought about and decided that size is important and that suggestion was revised and added in the checklist. One teacher offered a hardcover-related item. Since hardcover might add extra cost for the materials and it is unlikely to find hardcover ones on the market, that suggestion was disqualified. One teacher offered that materials should have an extra booklet in which the parts in the materials students are required to write would be transferred there and student materials could be kept clean and used again and again. As providing compact materials is more convenient, that suggestion was not put into practice while developing the checklist.

F. Data Collection and Data Analysis

Use The data were collected at two stages, initial evaluation and piloting. The first step was judgmental and the second practical. The first stage was carried out with 43 teachers to learn their ideas about the checklists and the approach. The second stage was actually a real-life one as it was implemented to choose course materials by eleven teachers. The teachers were supposed to adopt new course materials for the following academic year and they exploited the approach and the checklists. For both stages the evaluation criteria were given to the teachers and the data was collected through a five-point Likert. SPSS was used to analyze the data.

G. Validity of the Questionnaires

The use of an expert panel to provide critical feedback served to facilitate the development and refinement of the checklist application in the second investigation. In addition, the expert panel was considered an integral design element to demonstrate content relevance and representativeness along with the substantive and consequential aspects of validity.

H. Reliability of the Questionnaires

Internal consistency of the survey instrument was estimated by using Cronbach's coefficient alpha. In this particular study, coefficient alpha ranged from .78 to .79, suggesting a high estimate of reliability based on the mean inter-item correlation.

III. RESULTS

First trainees were asked to evaluate the training program and the results are as follows.

None of the trainees indicated any options but "highly satisfactory". With no exception all the trainees marked the "highly satisfactory" option.

TABLE I
THE RESULTS OF THE SURVEY ON THE TRAINING PROGRAM

	Highly unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Neutral	Satisfactory	Highly satisfactory
Ideas about the training					100%

The data about the checklists were collected at two different stages, judgmental evaluation and practical (piloting) evaluation.

A. Judgmental Evaluation

The results obtained from the teachers who evaluated the effectiveness of the checklist are summarized in the tables below:

Screening: Table 2 summarizes how teachers evaluated the screening checklist.

TABLE II
RESULTS OF THE SCREENING

	Mean	Min.	Max.	Var.	Cronbach Alpha
Screening	3.98	3.51	4.09	0,02	0,93

The reliability for the screening component of the proposed system is found to be within the acceptable range.

B. Detailed Evaluation

The results of the detailed evaluation are presented in two subcategories, external evaluation and internal evaluation.

C. External Evaluation

In Table 3 the external evaluation subcategory results indicate that teachers found it effective. The Cronbach Alpha values about each external evaluation subcategory are also very high, the reliability of this subcategory is quite high.

TABLE III
THE PROPOSED SYSTEM EVALUATION RESULTS

	Highly unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Neutral	Satisfactory	Highly satisfactory
It is practical		3%	12%	42%	43%
It is effective				49%	51%
It is time-saving			6%	43%	51%

D. Internal Evaluation

Table 4 indicates that the detailed internal evaluation part is found to be effective by the teachers. The reliability values of the subcategories of internal evaluation are within the acceptable range.

TABLE IV
RESULTS OF THE INTERNAL EVALUATION

	Mean	Min.	Max.	Var.	Cronbach Alpha
Aim	3.86	3.23	4.31	0.95	0.89
Approach	3.13	2.92	3.47	0.03	0.91
Syllabus	3.63	3.17	4.12	0.08	0.83
Linguistic Aspect	3.93	3.76	4.39	0.15	0.91
Teacher-related Factors	3.76	3.39	3.10	0.04	0.93
Student-related Factors	3.50	3.03	4.06	0.08	0.91
Classroom Organization	3.77	3.41	4.04	0.05	0.96
Instructions	4.09	2.93	3.23	0.02	0.93
Content	3.69	2.79	3.56	0.16	0.96
Culture	3.60	2.71	4.36	0.03	0.89
Lexis	3.89	3.37	4.43	0.09	0.91
Skills	3.15	2.95	3.65	0.03	0.87
Unit Format	3.57	3.23	4.12	0.07	0.86
Measurement and Evaluation	4.10	3.87	4.56	0.19	0.84
Software	3.77	3.56	4.09	0.05	0.93

E. The Overall Evaluation

The teachers are asked to evaluate the materials evaluation system (screening and detailed evaluation) in general. The results are as follows:

TABLE V
OVERALL EVALUATION RESULTS

	Highly unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Neutral	Satisfactory	Highly satisfactory
It is practical			6%	46%	48%
It is effective				58%	42%
It is time-saving		3%	9%	52%	36%

F. Practical Evaluation (Piloting) Results

Table 6 presents the results of piloting. It indicates a high reliability of the checklist in general:

TABLE VI
PRACTICAL EVALUATION RESULTS

	Cronbach Alpha
Screening	0.93
External evaluation	0.87
Internal evaluation	0.89

G. Evaluation of the Proposed System

The teacher who piloted the checklists during their materials adaptation process were also asked given the questionnaire to elicit their overall all impression about the materials evaluation approach. Table 7 summarizes the results.

TABLE VII
THE PROPOSED SYSTEM EVALUATION RESULTS

	Highly unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Neutral	Satisfactory	Highly satisfactory
It is practical		3%	12%	42%	43%
It is effective				49%	51%
It is time-saving			6%	43%	51%

IV. DISCUSSION

Trainees seem to be satisfied with the content of the training and the tasks they carried out. Since ELT materials are vital in the language process, participating in such a training and fulfilling relevant tasks fostered their involvement.

The data obtained from the judgmental evaluation indicate that the Cronbach Alpha value for the screening checklist is very high and the reliability related with the screening is satisfactory. The results of the detailed evaluation are no different. The data related with the external evaluation indicated that the reliability values range from 0.88 to 0.94. They are within the acceptable range. The results of the internal evaluation show that the reliability values are also very high, the lowest 0.83 and the highest 0.96. The overall evaluation results are squeezed around "agree" and strongly agree" options and fall above the accepted value. 6% of the teachers are neutral about the practicality of the materials evaluation system, 46% of them find it "satisfactory" and 48% "highly satisfactory". 58% of the teachers indicated that the effectiveness of the proposed system is "satisfactory" and 42% "highly satisfactory". In terms of "time-saving" item,

the results are no different. 3% of the teachers find the proposed system “unsatisfactory, 9% neutral; whereas, 52% find it “satisfactory” and 36% “highly satisfactory”.

Practical Evaluation (Piloting) Results indicate that the proposed system is reliable. The reliability related with the screening checklist is 0.93, external evaluation 0.87, and internal evaluation 0.89. Overall evaluation results show that generally the teachers either go for the “satisfactory” or “highly satisfactory” options. When evaluating the practicality of the proposed system, 3% of them marked “unsatisfactory”, 12% “neutral” options; on the other hand, 42% of them chose “satisfactory” and 43% “highly satisfactory. In terms of effectiveness, 49% of the teachers found the system “satisfactory” and 51% “highly satisfactory. 43% of the teachers indicated that the system is “satisfactory” and 51% “highly satisfactory” with respect to the time-saving quality of the system, while 6% were remained neutral.

The results comply with the those of Işık and Atmışdört (2010) and AbdelWahab (2013). Işık and Atmışdört (2010) and AbdelWahab (2013) tested the validity and reliability of their checklists and revised them in relation to the data as it was done in this study. Adopting the most appropriate materials in English language is a must, and to do so developing reliable and valid checklists is a must as well. The research and literature about materials development issue are flourishing, yet the checklist development, which is one of the vital means of that process, requires more emphasis.

V. CONCLUSION

First of all, the checklists are the brain child of 156 ELT teachers, not a single expert. They collaborated to create the most sound, practical checklists that can be employed to evaluate ELT materials. This collaboration helped synthesize different perspectives in two-stage evaluation criteria which could be employed by other practitioners in the field.

In addition, the process through which the trainees study ELT materials, materials evaluation and checklist preparation and develop checklist for evaluation is unique in itself. The trainees had no ELT materials evaluation background. First they received theoretical instruction about the topic, got familiar with approaches and discussions and examined checklists. After getting equipped with enough theoretical knowledge they came up with their own and employed it to evaluate ELT materials used in their schools. Some teacher may do the same task without having enough insights into the topic. Thus the training helps trainees have a wider perspective about the topic guides them to make informed decisions while developing their checklists and evaluating their own materials. Hence, the first implication of the study is that raising the awareness of teachers about the topic of interest can be an effective strategy to elicit reliable data about it.

Furthermore, the research indicates that the proposed materials evaluation system and related checklists can be used effectively for materials evaluation. The results about the reliability are found to be high and both the categories and subcategories of the checklists are employed dependably when evaluating materials. Thus, the research helps realize a reliable system for materials evaluation, concise screening checklist and the comprehensive detailed checklist for materials evaluation in language teaching.

Moreover, generally speaking teachers initiate the materials evaluation process directly with the materials evaluation checklist. In other words, it forms the first step of the process. The proposed 3-stage system for materials evaluation presents a unique perspective. First it directs the attention of teachers to context-related factors. It emphasizes the pivotal role of language teaching context in the materials evaluation process. Namely it raises the awareness of English teachers about the role of “the goal of the language program, the context in which it is implemented, the teachers and learners. The overall goal determines the syllabus (knowledge base and language content), the language skills, academic skills, etc. Likewise, the teaching-learning context is to be emphasized as well. It provides invaluable information about the role of English, whether it is a medium of instruction or one of the courses in the syllabus, length and frequency of the English class hours, class size, availability of course materials, technological equipment of classrooms, international trend, national policy, and expectations and attitudes of parents towards English. Furthermore, learner-related factors necessitate special attention. The demographic information about learners, their education background, their needs and interests, their linguistic and cognitive level, their language learning goals affect both affective and cognitive involvement of learners in the language education process. Finally, teacher-related factors need to be taken into consideration. Thus, the research highlights the vital role of context-related factors and reminds that it is the first inescapable step of the materials evaluation checklist development process.



Figure 1. Materials evaluation checklist development process

The proposed three-stage system is also found to be practical and time saving. Since there are numerous ELT materials on the market, it is not practical to evaluate each and every in detail. Hence, the system and the screening (quick evaluation) checklist speeds up disqualifying the inappropriate ones and saves enough time to focus on the qualified ones in depth.

Additionally, the detailed analysis checklist is composed of two main categories (external and internal) and nineteen subcategories, that is, it offers an extremely comprehensive checklist which pave the way for a thorough evaluation of ELT materials. To the knowledge of the researcher it is the most inclusive one developed so far. In other words, not only does the study propose a new perspective for materials evaluation, but a detailed checklist that may serve the ones who are in search of a thorough tool when evaluating their materials.

Finally, the detailed analysis checklist may appear to be too exhaustive and hard to implement. Because of the screening checklist, only few set of materials are to be evaluated and they deserve enough time and focus to adopt the most appropriate ones. Besides, it can function as a resource for teachers to choose from among to create their own checklists.

APPENDIX A. MATERIALS EVALUATION IN EFL

Objectives: This training aims to introduce prospective foreign language teachers to theoretical issues in materials evaluation. Trainees are required to evaluate the ELT materials for a specific group of learners. More specifically, they will

- a. gain insights into ELT materials and fundamental concepts and principles about them.
- b. gain insights into ELT materials evaluation

Products:

- a. Trainees will complete the real-life tasks specified for each week
- b. Trainees will come up with a materials evaluation checklist
- c. Trainees will evaluate materials

Course Outline

Week 1: Introduction

Week 2: ELT Materials

Nation and Macalister, 2010, Chapter I

Graves, 1996, Chapter 2

Long and Doughty, 2011, Chapter 17

Week 3: ELT Materials

McDonough & Shaw, 2005, Chapter 4

Byrd, 2002

Tomlinson, 2011, Chapter 1

Week 4: Materials Evaluation

Tomlinson, 2011, Chapter 8

Işık, 2013

Graves, 2000, Chapter 9

Week 5: Materials Evaluation

McDonough & Shaw, 2005, Chapter 5

Graves, 2000, Chapter 4

Graves, 2000, Chapter 8

Week 6: Materials Evaluation

McDonough & Shaw, 2005, Chapter 3

Tomlinson, 2011, Introduction

Week 7: Developing Materials Evaluation Checklists

Week 8: Developing Materials Evaluation Checklists

Week 9: Feedback on Checklists

Week 10: Evaluating ELT Materials Using the Developed Checklists

Week 11: Evaluating ELT Materials Using the Developed Checklists

Week 12: Feedback on ELT Materials Evaluation

APPENDIX B. MATERIALS EVALUATION CHECKLIST

I. SCREENING (QUALIFYING EVALUATION)

	completely unsatisfactory	unsatisfactory	neutral	satisfactory	completely satisfactory
Methodology					
Relevance of content					
Publication date					
Congruence with the aim of the course					
Age level					
Linguistic level					
Time (length of the course)					
Periphery					
Recent, innovative ideas					
Appropriacy to the context					
Software/internet support					
Universality					
Availability					
Technological requirements					
The quality and reliability of the publisher					
Price					
Compact nature of the learner book.					

II. DETAILED EVALUATION

a. EXTERNAL EVALUATION

	strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly disagree
The information given in the front and back cover is informative enough					
The materials writer(s) is a well-known expert					
The materials are quantitatively sufficient for the language program					
Table of contents provides enough information about the materials.					
Face validity					
The face validity of the front and back cover is good					
Page design offers a colorful variety					
Variety in page design is provided throughout the materials					
Page design is not squeezed, clear					
Drawings, pictures, illustrations are used effectively					
The font is appropriate					
The use of colors is successful					
The size of the book does not disturb learners.					
The periphery					
They offer a learner book					
They offer teacher's book					
They offer a workbook					
They offer realia					
They offer an assessment tool/component					
They offer a project file					
They offer a resources file for teachers					
They offer extra authentic documents					
They offer online applications					
They offer an access code for teachers and learners for the internet resources					
They provide an international online platform through which teachers and learners interact					
Learners					
They are relevant to learner needs (needs, wants, lacks)					
They are relevant to learner cultural orientation					
They are learner-centered.					
Context-related factors					
They are practical and applicable in classroom					
The text/task/classroom organization requirements are met by the classroom context					
In-class time required to cover the coursebook is appropriate					
Out-class time required to cover the coursebook is appropriate					
Classroom meets the technological requirements of the materials					

b. Internal Evaluation

	strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly disagree
Approach					
They are based on an up-to-date language teaching/learning philosophy					
Adopted language teaching/learning philosophy is observed systematically in the tasks					

They transfer recent scientific findings to materials development					
They aim at language acquisition not teaching of pre-determined linguistic structures					
They use language as means of learning, interaction					
Aim					
They meet the overall goal of the program					
They address learning needs of learners					
They meet the general expectations of all stake holders					
They lead learners to the goal in a carefully planned step-by-step fashion					
They provide interim goals					
Syllabus					
They are cross-curricular					
They teach language through content					
They reflect the adopted language teaching/learning philosophy					
They have enough number of texts to realize program goals					
They have a carefully-knitted smooth organization					
They are organized around multiple-intelligences					
They are real-life oriented					
They employ variety of tasks					
They employ variety of texts (from different genres)					
They require active participation of learners					
They have a holistic approach to language					
They avoid stereotypes and discrimination					
They favor world citizenship					
They provide ample amount of input					
They do not force learners to produce at the early stages of learning					
The modules/units are organized around the same goal					
Each unit has objectives to fulfill the ultimate goal					
There is a logical organization among the modules/units					
There is a transition between modules/units					
They exploit bodily-kinesthetic tasks					
They emphasize patterns (daily social language)					
They appreciate what learners bring to the class					
They achieve "fun"					
They foster cooperative learning					
They foster problem-based learning					
They favor experiential learning					
They are designed developmentally in terms of skills, content, and tasks					
If it is an ESP course					
They focus on specific language skills					

They focus on specific content					
They provide specific texts					
They provide specific tasks					
They exploit specific documents					
They provide specific terminology					
They teach specific symbols and acronyms					
They have real-life simulations					
They meet real-life workplace task demands					
Linguistic aspect					
They comply with CEFR					
They have appropriate intensity					
They have appropriate pace					
They are based on corpus					
They are appropriate to the linguistic level of learners					
They are divorced from traditional order of grammar items. The content determines the language forms not vice versa.					
They are language-awareness-oriented. They do not attempt to teach language forms in a classical sense.					
They present language with a context.					
They employ meaningful (not mechanical) tasks					
They are discourse-oriented.					
Teacher-related factors					
They empower and guide teachers					
They help teacher development					
They provide extra tasks					
They provide extra materials					
They provide extra ideas					
They have an interleaved teacher's book					
Teacher's book is easy to use					
Teacher's book grants initiative to teachers, does not strictly control them.					
Learner-related factors					
They exploit what learners bring to the learning context					
They are learner friendly					
They are easy to use					
They guide learners successfully about what to do					
They motivate learners					
They meet affective needs of learners					
They address learner differences					
Their cognitive load is manageable					
Their content is not too demanding					
They give choice to learners through a variety of texts/tasks					
They provide strategies for learning					
They help learners develop academic/study skills					
They make learners responsible for their own learning.					
They foster learners to question and investigate					
They orient learners about how to use the coursebook and the periphery					

They enlarge learner schemata					
They have an holistic approach to learners					
They are resourceful for learner differences (slow/fast, level, personality)					
Classroom management					
They employ a variety of classroom organization (individual, pair, group, class)					
They help class socialization through different classroom organization.					
They require active participation of learners in classroom organization.					
Instructions					
They set the scene, explain the activity and its goal.					
They are learner-friendly.					
They do not have an authoritarian voice.					
They clear and easy to follow.					
The symbols used are systematic and guiding learners					
Content					
They present language in a simple, meaningful manner					
They aim at real daily language					
All tasks are transferred from real life					
They focus on daily speech patterns (social language)					
They are functional					
The people and topics are not hypothetical					
The topics are interesting					
The topics and people are up-to-date					
They expand learner schemata					
They provide content knowledge from relevant areas					
They employ a variety of topics					
They are of optimal level of cognitive difficulty					
They address learners of different interest					
Each content has a reference (to show where it is taken and learners refer to further information)					
There is a fine balance between content and content related tasks					
The content between the units and within the same unit is developmentally organized					
The unit sticks to the same topic, does not jump from one to another					
They are age-appropriate					
The quantity of texts is enough					
Literature is exploited effectively					
The length of texts is appropriate					
The density of texts is appropriate					
The texts are authentic					
They exploit texts from different genres					
Culture					
They adopt English as Lingua Franca (ELF) approach					

They do not aim at imposing target culture					
They exploit local (our) and international culture					
They try to raise cultural-awareness					
They are not in conflict with our culture					
Lexis					
They have a lexical approach to teach new lexical items					
They emphasize collocations					
They emphasize associations					
They provide terminology from different relevant areas					
The load of lexical items are appropriate					
They recycle previously taught target lexical items systematically					
They present new items within a context					
Skills					
They have an integrated-skills approach					
They arrange the balance of the receptive vs productive skills depending on linguistic level					
They have a systematic plan to develop subskills of each skill.					
Format of a unit					
At the end beginning of each unit the objectives are stated					
At the beginning of each unit there is a pre-test about the content of the unit					
Warm-up					
The unit starts with a warm-up					
The warm-up sets the scene. Explain what is done so far and what will be done					
The warm-up aims at affective preparation					
The warm-up aims at cognitive preparation (activates or build up schemata)					
The warm-up aims at pre-teaching key lexis and grammar (if there is any)					
The warm-up gives a purpose to do the tasks in the unit, it creates an inner need					
The warm-up does something striking (exploits a short text and task, facts, data, visuals) to capture the attention of learners					
Body					
The body focuses on the content					
The content of each texts is exploited enough					
The body employs enough number of texts					
The body follows, "the warm-up, content-related tasks, personalization" sequence					
The task type is relevant to text type					
The body offers relevant tasks to learners					
The body exploits game-like, enjoyable tasks					
All tasks stem from the content covered					

The content of the task (cognitive load) is manageable					
The tasks have a gradual level of difficulty					
The tasks are not piled up, there is a logical organization					
The tasks are organized from simple to complex					
The tasks are organized from general to specific					
There are relevant (related with tasks learners are expected to carry out in their education or career)					
The tasks are meaningful, purposeful, not designed for the sake of carrying out tasks					
All tasks are integrated					
There is smooth transition from one task to another					
Tasks are age-appropriate					
Tasks foster cognitive involvement of learners					
Tasks foster affective involvement of learners					
Follow up					
They allow to put what is covered to put into practice					
They favor to carry out the tasks in different relevant contexts					
They allow field-trips					
They employ real-life tasks					
They employ simple experiments, practices					
They provide extension of the content (personalization and localization related to the content)					
They let learners choose from among different tasks					
They provide contextualized lexical practice stemmed from the content					
They provide contextualized grammar practice stemmed from the content					
They provide tasks to be done after the class					
They guide self-interest groups for extra activities after the class					
They provide a summary of the module/unit					
They provide self-evaluation					
They provide a post-test					
Measurement and evaluation					
They favor both alternative and traditional assessment					
They provide feedback to both teachers and learners to facilitate learning					
They have valid assessment procedures.					
They facilitate language program evaluation					
Software					
Software supports the coursebook (program goals)					
Software exposes learners to comprehensible samples of language					
Software provides rich extra materials/tasks for learners of different needs and interests					

Software offers a variety of materials/tasks for learners of different learning styles and types					
Software provides engaging and compelling materials/tasks					
Software is easy to use					
Software exploits multimedia					
Software has an interactive nature					
Software provides glocal interaction with other learners					
Software provides immediate feedback.					
Software provides evaluation for learner performance					

III. OVERALL EVALUATION

	are completely unsatisfactory	Are unsatisfactory	need a comprehensive adaptation	are satisfactory but need adaptation	are completely satisfactory but need minor adaptation
The materials					

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The Effects of Field Independent/Field Dependent Cognitive Styles on Incidental Vocabulary Acquisition under Reading Task

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Abstract—The present study undertook an empirical study to investigate the effects of field independent/field dependent (FI/FD) cognitive style on incidental vocabulary acquisition from the perspective of reading task. The results show that the participants in both groups acquired the vocabulary knowledge incidentally, whether tasks were arranged or not. Besides, their FI/FD cognitive style had a significantly positive correlation with their outcomes of IVA. Moreover, when fulfilling the same tasks, the participants with FI cognitive style preference acquired relatively more vocabulary knowledge than that acquired by FD participants. The study offers some suggestions for learners in second language vocabulary building. Meanwhile, as for the pedagogical implications, language educators and teachers are informed that different cognitive style preferences must be highly considered for effective vocabulary teaching.

Index Terms—field independence, field dependence, incidental vocabulary acquisition

I. INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary building plays a significant role in the overall structure of the second language learning and teaching. In the field of second language vocabulary acquisition, being an increasingly popular topic, the incidental vocabulary acquisition (IVA) has aroused wide attention of researchers. Learners acquire some vocabulary knowledge unconsciously without the intention to learn through IVA. According to Laufer and Hulstijn (2001), incidental vocabulary acquisition is learning vocabulary as the by-product of any activity which is not explicitly aimed at vocabulary learning.

Based on the research of children's learning vocabulary in their native language, Nagy and Herman (1985) proposed the concept of incidental vocabulary learning. From their experimental study, they found that children do learn a large amount of vocabulary by means of incidental learning from context. A longitudinal study by Elley (1991) proved that the extensive reading may be recommended as an optimal way to enrich learners' vocabulary knowledge.

Although IVA may happen in listening, speaking, reading and writing activities, watching movies or traveling abroad, but acquiring vocabulary incidentally through reading is regarded as the major approach. Previous studies show that there are different factors influencing the outcome of IVA, such as the percentage ensuring the occurrence of IVA (Laufer, 1989), vocabulary size (Thomas Huckin & James Coady, 1999), vocabulary learning strategy (Rubin, 1987; Li Xiaolong, 1988; Mondria & Boer, 1991; Hulstijn, 1993). Researches have indicated that reading task have a great impact on the outcomes of IVA (Newton, 1995; Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001). In China, Gai Shuhua (2003) designed an empirical study to investigate the outcomes of IVA, with fifty-seven English major sophomores as the subjects. The results showed that the subjects did acquire some knowledge of vocabulary incidentally, and reading task affected IVA remarkably. Meng and Chen (2015) and Ling Fang (2017) found that different types of glosses and ways of glossing had different effects on on IVA in reading.

Field independent(FI) and Field dependent(FD) Cognitive Style

It is widely acknowledged that individual differences perform significant functions in the field of SLA. "Knowledge of learners and their characteristics" has been listed into the categories of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), a well-known concept proposed by the American educational psychologist Lee S. Shulman (1987). Oxford and Ehrman suggested that "teachers of a second language need to identify and comprehend significant individual differences in their learners if they are to provide the most effective instruction possible" (qtd. in Williams and Burden 88). It is true that learners bring many individual characteristics to the process of language acquisition and the outcomes of that process. Besides obvious factors as age, gender, motivation, aptitude and personality, another less obvious but widely studied factor relating to SLA is cognitive style. In some literatures, cognitive style and learning style are used interchangeably. "The main application of style to language learning has been through the concept of field dependence/independence (FD/FI), developed in mainstream psychology by Herman Witkin" (Skehan 237). Field independence is described as "an analytical, in contrast to a global, way of perceiving which entails a tendency to experience items as discrete from their backgrounds and reflects ability to overcome the influence of an embedding context" (qtd. in Johnson, 143). To put it another way, some people are more capable of extracting separate parts from the complex background, and these people are thought to have a tendency towards FI cognitive style, whereas the

people who can not do this easily are believed to have preference towards FD cognitive style. (Brown, 2000) pointed out that field independence is the ability to perceive a particular, relevant item or factor in a 'field' of distracting items. In general psychological term, field may be perceptual or it may be more abstract in referring to a set of thoughts, ideas, or feelings from which your task is to perceive specific relevant subsets. FI people perceive items as discrete or unrelated to the surrounding 'field', by contrast, the people with FD style preference are easily dominated by the whole background and they are inclined to perceive things in relation to the context.

Features of FI/FD Style

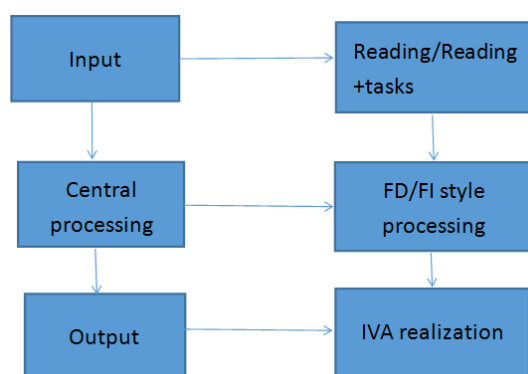
There are positive and negative characteristics to both FI people and FD people. The FI people can easily concentrate on something, distinguish parts from the whole, and analyze separate parts without the disturbance of other variables. Unfortunately, too much field independent trait may also have drawbacks because FI people have more possibilities to see only the parts and details, resulting in ignoring their relationship with the whole. Compared with FI people, FD people usually perceive the whole field from a large view.

Generally speaking, persons who are more predominantly field independent tend to be more independent, competitive, and self-confident. On the contrary, field dependent individuals are more socialized and empathic, incline to derive their self-identity from persons around them, and perceptive of the feelings and thoughts of others. When faced with a situation in which decision making is necessary, the FI people are more able to separate a problem into components and focus on the components which are significant for decision making. They usually decompose a complex background into constituent elements, and then focus on, transform, and manipulate the constituents independently. In contrast, the FD people are likely to be less analytic, and they tend to perceive the situation as a whole, instead of considering it to be analyzable components. They would like to depend on external frames of reference for making judgments; therefore, they are generally thought to be sociable, extrovert and person-oriented.

It must be stressed that FD/FI style should be considered as a continuum. Although field independence and field dependence are located at the two extremes, they are not polarities, and human beings possess some of the characteristics of both FI style and FD style, showing a tendency towards one pole or the other when facing different issues. Therefore, "either pole of the style dimension is regarded as being as 'better' but instead is simply seen to suggest alternatives. Further, each pole is seen as having advantages for different tasks" (Skehan, 1998).

Acquiring vocabulary incidentally by ways of reading demands the ability of focusing on unfamiliar word under the disturbance of other words, like distinguishing simple figures from complex pictures, and learners also need to restructure the information provided by reading material for the meaning of unfamiliar words in this process. Freeman & Long (1991) hypothesized this challenge to be analogous to people learning a second language because they are needed to isolate an element from the context in which it is embedded.

Therefore, it can be summarized that there may be some internal relationship between FI/FD cognitive style and IVA. Although there were a few previous studies investigating the relevance between FI/FD style and IVA, like Cai Shengrong (2005), Tang Xia (2006), Liu Ke (2007) and Shao Lijuan (2010). However, we still know very little of the effects of FI/FD style on IVA under reading tasks. Therefore, based on previous studies and Mclaughlin's Information Processing Model, the present study makes further investigation of the effects of FI/FD cognitive style on IVA from the perspective of reading task. The whole process is illustrated as follows:



II. RESEARCH DESIGN

Research questions

Taking reading task as a perspective, the present study aims at the exploration to the effects of FI/FD style on IVA. Three research questions are:

1. Whether Chinese college non-English major students can acquire vocabulary incidentally in two circumstances, with reading tasks to fulfill and without any task?
2. Whether their FI/FD cognitive style preferences have any effects with their outcomes of IVA?
3. After finishing the same reading tasks, are there significant differences in outcomes of IVA between students who

have different cognitive style preferences? If so, what kinds of difference are they?

Participants Description

The participants are one hundred and ten sophomores enrolled in two classes of Level A at Tianjin Polytechnic University. Fifty-five students of them are majoring in Information and Communication Engineering, and the rest majoring in Environmental and Chemical Engineering. For the sake of the experiment, the students majoring in Information and Communication Engineering are categorized as Group One and the other fifty-five students are categorized as Group Two, since the two groups had different treatments during the research procedure.

The participants are at the similar English proficiency because the classification in this university is based on the placement test. In Group One, during the Cognitive Style Figure Test (CSFT), three students were absent and two students didn't finish the test according to the instruction, therefore, these five students' scores in vocabulary pretest and post-test were dropped. In Group Two, three students' score for CSFT were invalid and two students were absent in pretest, therefore, there were fifty students' data were analyzed in the end.

Consequently, there are fifty participants in Group One, among them, thirty-four being males and sixteen being females. In Group Two there are fifty participants, thirty-seven being males and thirteen being females. Most of the participants acknowledged that vocabulary was of extreme significance in English learning and they did not have efficient and effective approaches in their vocabulary building.

Instruments

Four instruments employed in the present study are Cognitive Style Figure Test (CSFT), two versions of reading material (with and without reading tasks), Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS).

Research Procedure

Before the main study (CSFT, pretest and post-test), a pilot study was firstly carried out. The pilot study is undertaken to find out whether the difficulty of reading material was appropriate or not and to ensure the scope target words.

CSFT was administered to the participants to assess their FI/FD cognitive styles. Their performances in part one were used as references to decide whether he or she understood the requirements or not. There were fifty and fifty-three valid papers in Group One and Group Two respectively for data analysis. The full score of CSFT is twenty-four, and the higher they scored in CSFT, the more FI tendency he or she had, and vice versa.

Since the third research question is whether there are any differences in outcomes of IVA between students who have different cognitive style preferences after finishing the same reading tasks, it is necessary to make a distinction between FI students and FD students. It should be stressed that this distinction does not mean either type of cognitive style is better or worse than another, it is just a research design for the sake of the present study.

To explore the third research question, fifty students' scores of CSFT in Group Two were used as the references to make distinction between FI students and FD students. According to quartile frequency statistics for the scores of CSFT, the participants with the score below 19.250 fall into FD Group, and the participants with the score higher than 22.500 fall into FI Group, and the rest participants whose scores in CSFT between the two are not concerned for this research question.

In the pretest, all the participants were told their performances in this vocabulary test would not be recorded for any academic achievements, but to gather information about their vocabulary size. Fifty-five students in Group One and fifty-three students in Group Two were pre-tested by using a vocabulary test of twenty words which were composed of ten target words they would come across in the reading material and another ten words they had learned in their textbook. Their vocabulary knowledge of the twenty words was tested by VKS within twenty minutes.

The treatment and post-test were conducted three days after pretest. The participants in Group One were presented with the reading passage alone without any task to fulfill. They were given enough time to ensure their complete understanding of this passage. About sixteen minutes later the reading materials were turned back. The vocabulary post-test proceeded immediately after the treatment. The participants' knowledge of the ten target words were measured by VKS. The vocabulary post-test lasted fifteen minutes. Their papers were collected and scored in the same way in the pretest.

The participants in Group Two were presented with the reading passage and the tasks which they had to finish after reading, including eight statements' judgment and ten blanks filling tasks. It took thirty-five minutes. All the reading materials were turned back and the vocabulary post-test was conducted immediately. The vocabulary post-test papers and the ways of scoring of Group Two were the same way as in Group One. It should be mentioned that during all the process of treatment and vocabulary tests no dictionaries and discussions were allowed for two groups.

Data Collection

The choices of the items in CSFT, pretest and post-test were turned into scores. The full scores of CSFT are twenty-four. The higher the score is, the more FI tendency he or she has. For pretest, the full scores are one hundred. Since there are ten words served as distracts in the pretest, it is the scores of ten target words that were used for data analysis. Consequently, the full scores are fifty for both the pretest and post-test.

The raw data of the three parts for each participant were put into computer and analyzed with the SPSS 17.0 statistics software package. The descriptive analysis of CSFT and IVA, and the inferential analysis between FI/FD cognitive style and IVA were carried out by SPSS 17.0.

III. DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Data Presentation

The descriptive statistics of CSFT, the vocabulary pretest and vocabulary post-test of the two groups are showed in this section.

TABLE 1
GROUP ONE'S SCORES IN CSFT

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
the scores of CSFT	50	15.0	24.0	20.430	2.7866
Valid N (listwise)	50				

Note: full score is twenty-four for CSFT

TABLE 2
GROUP TWO'S SCORES IN CSFT

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
the scores of CSFT	50	15.0	24.0	20.470	2.5583
Valid N (listwise)	50				

Note: full score is twenty-four for CSFT

As is showed in table 1 and table 2, there are fifty valid CSFT scores in both Group One and Group Two. The minimum and maximum for two groups are fifteen and twenty-four respectively. The mean for Group One is 20.430 with the standard deviation being 2.7866 and the mean for Group Two is 20.470 with the standard deviation being 2.5583. Eight participants in Group One and seven participants in Group Two get full scores, however, some participants in both groups only get fifteen, which means participants show relatively different cognitive style tendency.

According to Song Heyi (1988), the mean of CSFT for high school students was 13.17. In the present study, the mean of Group One and Group Two are 20.430 and 20.470 respectively, which indicates the participants have more tendencies towards FI cognitive style. Most participants' scores in CSFT are around twenty-one. This result is consistent with Witkin's opinion that adults tend to be more field independent than children. In addition, the participants of two groups are both science majors; therefore it is reasonable that more FI cognitive style tendency had been showed, and this result corresponds with Clark, Seat and Weber's (2000) findings.

TABLE 3
GROUP ONE'S SCORES IN VOCABULARY PRETEST, POST-TEST AND VOCABULARY GROWTH

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
pretest	50	11	22	15.16	2.972
post-test	50	18	30	23.26	3.148
vocabulary growth	50	3	14	8.10	2.509
Valid N (listwise)	50				

Note: full score of pretest and post-test are 50

Table 3 is the overall presentation of the scores in vocabulary pretest, post-test and vocabulary growth of Group One. Fifty participants' scores are valid. The minimum and maximum of target words in pretest are eleven and twenty-two respectively with the mean being 15.16 and standard deviation 2.972. These results reveal the fact that most of the participants chose the option of A or B of the VKS in the pretest, which means they had not seen target words before or they had little knowledge of the target words. Based on this fact, the vocabulary's improvement in the post-test can be attributed to the reading treatment to a great extent, rather than the vocabulary knowledge they had acquired before.

In post-test, the minimum is eighteen and maximum is thirty, with the mean being 23.26 and standard deviation 3.148. Compared with the scores in pretest, a quantitatively small but statistically significant amount of vocabulary has been acquired after the reading treatment. The maximum of vocabulary growth after the treatment is fourteen with the mean of 8.10 and standard deviation of 2.509. Given that more reading materials including the target words and more exposure frequency are provide to participants, more significant amount of vocabulary are supposed to be acquired.

Since the participants in Group Two are required to finish two tasks after the same reading treatment, in consequence, it is believed that, compared with Group One, Group Two need more workload to process reading material and have more opportunity to access to the target words. The descriptive data for Group Two are showed in table 4.

TABLE 4
GROUP TWO'S SCORES IN VOCABULARY PRETEST, POST-TEST AND VOCABULARY GROWTH

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
pretest	50	10	22	15.98	2.386
post-test	50	23	39	31.48	3.333
vocabulary growth	50	9	20	15.50	2.188
Valid N (listwise)	50				

Note: full score of pretest and post-test are 50

Table 4 gives the full presentation of the descriptive data of Group Two. There are fifty participants' scores being valid. In the pretest, with the mean being 15.98, the minimum and maximum are ten and twenty-two respectively, which are almost the same as that of Group One. However, compared with Group One, a great advancement can be found in the vocabulary post-test of Group Two. The minimum is twenty-three and maximum is thirty-nine, with the mean being 31.48 and standard deviation of 3.333. In terms of vocabulary growth, a more significant amount of vocabulary growth is achieved by Group Two than that by Group One. From the perspective of mean, more than seven vocabulary are acquired by Group Two than Group One, with the minimum being nine and maximum being twenty, which are both higher than that of Group One.

From the descriptive data presentation in table 3 and table 4, it can be summarized that both groups make improvement in vocabulary post-test, and Group Two's improvement is much higher than Group One. It can be interpreted from the perspective of task, since two tasks are arranged to Group Two and no task to Group One, in consequence, more information restructuring ability is required for Group Two.

Paired Samples T-tests

To investigate whether Chinese college non-English major students can acquire vocabulary incidentally in two circumstances, with reading tasks and without any task, paired samples T-tests are conducted between vocabulary pretest and post-test for both Group One and Group Two. The results for Group One are presented in table 5, table 6 and table 7 respectively.

TABLE 5
PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS FOR GROUP ONE

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 the scores of vocabulary in pretest	15.16	50	2.972	.420
the scores of vocabulary in post-test	23.26	50	3.148	.445

As is shown in table 5, the mean of the participants' vocabulary knowledge of ten target words in the pretest is 15.16, while the mean in the post-test is 23.26, which indicates a quantitative improvement in the acquisition of the target words after the treatment. To make further exploration about whether there is any significant difference of the ten target words between pretest and post-test, the tables of paired samples correlations and paired samples T-test are presented below.

TABLE 6
PAIRED SAMPLES CORRELATIONS FOR GROUP ONE

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1 the scores of vocabulary in pretest & the scores of vocabulary in post-test	50	.665	.000

Table 6 show the relationship between the two variables, the scores of vocabulary in pretest and post-test, the coefficient of which is .665, with the Sig. (2-tailed) being .000 (<0.05). These results prove the participants' knowledge in the pretest is significantly different from that in the post-test. The negative t value in table 7 indicates that the mean of vocabulary in pretest is less than that in post-test. In another word, the participants do acquire some knowledge of vocabulary incidentally in the reading treatment.

TABLE 7
PAIRED SAMPLES T-TEST FOR GROUP ONE

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 the scores of vocabulary in pretest - the scores of vocabulary in post-test	-8.100	2.509	.355	-8.813	-7.387	-22.827	49	.000

The same statistic method is used to see the results of Group Two which are illustrated in table 8, table 9 and table 10 respectively below.

TABLE 8
PAIRED SAMPLES STATISTICS FOR GROUP TWO

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 the scores of vocabulary in pretest	15.98	50	2.386	.337
the scores of vocabulary in post-test	31.48	50	3.333	.471

As can be seen in table 8, the mean vocabulary knowledge of Group Two's in pretest is 15.98 which is nearly the same as that of Group One. While the mean in the post-test for Group Two is 31.48 which is significantly higher than that in the pretest. These results suggest a quantitative improvement in the acquisition of the target words after the treatment. Tables of paired samples correlations and paired samples T-test for Group Two are presented below to make further investigation about whether there is any significant difference of the ten target words between pretest and post-test.

TABLE 9
PAIRED SAMPLES CORRELATIONS FOR GROUP TWO

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1 the scores of vocabulary in pretest & the scores of vocabulary in post-test	50	.756	.000

TABLE 10
PAIRED SAMPLES T-TEST FOR GROUP TWO

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 the scores of vocabulary in pretest - the scores of vocabulary in post-test	-15.500	2.188	.309	-16.122	-14.878	-50.101	49	.000

Table 9 shows the relationship of the two variables, the scores of vocabulary in pretest and post-test of Group Two, the coefficient of which is .756, with the Sig. (2-tailed) being .000 (<0.05). These results prove the participants' knowledge in the pretest is significantly different from that in the post-test. To put it another way, they do acquire some knowledge of target words incidentally after the treatment. The negative t value in table 10 indicates that the mean vocabulary in pretest is less than that in post-test. Comparison can be made between the t value of Group One and Group Two, and it is clear that more vocabulary knowledge are acquired incidentally by Group Two than that by Group One.

By now, the descriptive analysis of two groups' results and paired sample T-tests have provided an answer to the first research question. Chinese college non-English major students can acquire some vocabulary knowledge incidentally through reading, whether tasks are arranged or not. Besides, through the comparison, the participants who have to finish tasks after reading perform better in IVA than those participants with no task to fulfill.

Correlation Analysis

Being one of the most important research questions, Pearson correlations are conducted to answer whether the participants' cognitive style preferences have any effects on their outcomes of IVA. According to the definition in statistics, if the absolute value of the coefficient is between 0.40 and 0.70, it can be said that a relatively significant correlation is between the two variables. Table 11 and table 12 serve as the presentation of Pearson correlation analyses for Group One and Group Two.

TABLE 11
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN FI/FD COGNITIVE STYLE AND IVA FOR GROUP ONE

		the scores of CSFT	the vocabulary growth
the scores of CSFT	Pearson Correlation	1	.592**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	50	50
the vocabulary growth	Pearson Correlation	.592**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	50	50

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

TABLE 12
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN FI/FD COGNITIVE STYLE AND IVA FOR GROUP TWO

		the scores of CSFT	the vocabulary growth
the scores of CSFT	Pearson Correlation	1	.479**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	50	50
the vocabulary growth	Pearson Correlation	.479**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	50	50

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

As can be seen from table 11 and table 12, the participants' FI/FD cognitive style correlates to some extent with their vocabulary growth, namely IVA. For Group One, the correlation between FI/FD cognitive style and IVA is positive and relatively significant ($r=.592^{**}$, $p<0.01$). For Group Two, a relatively significant positive correlation between FI/FD cognitive style and IVA can be found as well ($r=.479^{**}$, $p<0.01$). The results show that the more FI tendency a participant has, the more vocabulary knowledge can be acquired incidentally.

By now, the second research question has been answered through the consequences of Pearson correlation analysis. The participants' FI/FD cognitive style preferences have a positive and significant correlation with the outcome of IVA.

Independent Sample T-test

The third research question concerns with whether there are significant differences in outcomes of IVA between students who have different cognitive style preferences after finishing the same reading tasks. Therefore, it is necessary to make a distinction between FI participants and FD participants, which doesn't mean the priority of FI cognitive style to FD cognitive style, or vice versa. This distinction is just for the convenience to explore the answer to the research question for the present study. Since no task is arranged for Group One, it is believed that more workload and information processing are involved in for Group Two. Consequently, it is Group Two's CSFT scores that serve as the data sources of the third research question.

The quartile frequency analysis is used to divide CSFT scores of FI group and FD group in this study, since there is no common criterion used to distinguish the scores between FI style and FD style. According to table 13, the participants with the scores lower than 19.250 fall into the FD group and the participants with the scores higher than 22.500 are in FI group. Therefore, based on the statistics in table 13 and table 14, twelve participants are grouped in FD and eleven participants in FI.

TABLE 13
QUARTILE FREQUENCY STATISTICS FOR FI/FD OF GROUP TWO

N	Valid	50
	Missing	0
Minimum		15.0
Maximum		24.0
Percentiles	25	19.250
	50	21.000
	75	22.500

TABLE 14
CSFT SCORES FREQUENCY OF GROUP TWO

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	15.0	4	8.0	8.0
	17.0	3	6.0	14.0
	18.0	1	2.0	16.0
	18.5	4	8.0	24.0
	19.5	6	12.0	36.0
	20.0	5	10.0	46.0
	21.0	11	22.0	68.0
	22.5	5	10.0	78.0
	23.0	4	8.0	86.0
	24.0	7	14.0	100.0
Total	50		100.0	

Independent sample T-test is conducted to make further investigation about the different outcomes of IVA between the participants of Group FI and Group FD. The descriptive data for the two groups in the outcome of IVA are reported in table 15.

TABLE 15
DESCRIPTIVE DATA FOR GROUP FI AND GROUP FD IN THE OUTCOME OF IVA

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
the outcome of IVA	FI	11	17.64	1.748	.527
	FD	12	14.42	1.505	.434

As can be seen from table15, there are eleven and twelve participants for Group FI and Group FD respectively. The mean for Group FI is 17.64 and for Group FD is 14.42, which means the quantitatively significant difference in the outcomes of IVA. The two groups have almost the similar standard deviation being 1.748 and 1.505, and the two relatively low value means there is no much difference in Group FI and Group FD respectively. Although there is more vocabulary acquired by Group FI than by Group FD in terms of mean, whether the results are meaningful statistically, the table 16 of the independent sample T-test is necessary and illustrated below.

TABLE 16
INDEPENDENT SAMPLE T-TEST

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	t-test for Equality of Means								
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
the outcome of IVA	Equal variances assumed	.136	.716	4.746	21	.000	3.220	.678	1.809	4.630
	Equal variances not assumed			4.714	19.870	.000	3.220	.683	1.794	4.645

From table 16, the Sig. of Levene's Test for Equality of Variances is .716 (>0.05), which means the equal variance of the two groups. Therefore, the data in Equal variances assumed are used to be the results in Independent sample T-test. From this table, the positive value of Mean Difference between Group FI and Group FD is 3.220 which indicates that three more words were acquired incidentally by Group FI than Group FD. The standard error difference is 0.678 and the t value is 4.746. The Sig. (2-tailed) equals to .000, which is less than 0.05. That proves that there are significant differences in the outcomes of IVA between FI cognitive style and FD cognitive style.

By now, the third research question has been supported by the positive answer, that there are significant differences in outcomes of IVA between students who have different cognitive style preferences after finishing the same tasks. The students with FI cognitive style preference acquired more vocabulary knowledge incidentally to some extent than those with FD cognitive style preference.

IV. CONCLUSION

The major findings of the present study will be summarized as the answers to the three research questions at the beginning of the paper. Firstly, the mean of vocabulary growth for two groups are 8.10 and 15.5 respectively, which means quantitatively significant that vocabulary have been acquired after the reading treatment. Therefore, extensive reading can serve as the reliable source of intermediate Chinese EFL learners' vocabulary building. Secondly, the participants' cognitive style preferences have a relatively significant positive correlation with their outcomes of IVA. Thirdly, there are significant differences in outcomes of IVA between the students with FI cognitive style and FD cognitive style after finishing the same reading tasks. Learners with higher FI cognitive style tendency are more likely to acquire more vocabulary knowledge than those with FD cognitive style tendency after finishing the same tasks.

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Construction and Verification of Effectiveness of English Listening Teaching Model Based on Interactive Model Theory*

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Abstract—Listening teaching is an important part in English teaching. On the basis of analysis of disadvantages of traditional English listening teaching in China, teaching model of English listening based on interactive model theory is constructed. The newly constructed teaching model consists of six teaching modules, including phonetic teaching, vocabulary teaching, grammar teaching, discourse teaching, background information teaching and strategy teaching. In order to test the effectiveness of the new model, two natural classes are chosen from some university. The control group adopted traditional listening teaching model while the experimental group new model. Independent samples test of SPSS was adopted to analyze their listening scores in pretest and posttest. The results show that the new English listening teaching model is significantly effective in improving students' listening proficiency ($P < 0.05$). New model of English listening teaching is worth popularization.

Index Terms—listening comprehension, interactive model theory, teaching model, English listening

I. INTRODUCTION

A large amount of comprehensible input contributes to language acquisition, and language input by way of listening plays a crucial role in acquiring a language (Hedge, 2002). Listeners also recognize listening as the most difficult course in foreign language learning (Granham, 2002). Meanwhile, the listening teaching is also one of the most important courses in language teaching (Elisha-Primo et al 2010). Listening teaching has been an important link in ESL (English as a Second Language) or EFL (English as a Foreign Language) Learning, which is also recognized in the field of foreign language teaching.

In China, although there are some researches about listening teaching methods, skills, and strategies (He & Huang, 2011; Shi, 2012), there is not a systematic teaching model of English listening. At present, college students are particularly weak in English listening in China. Cultivation of Chinese EFL learners' listening ability is consequently a greatly difficult as well as significant task in English teaching (Jian, 2015).

Therefore, based on analysis on disadvantages of traditional teaching model of English listening, the paper tries to construct a new teaching model of English listening based on interactive model theory, which will be significant in improving English listening teaching in China.

II. DISADVANTAGES OF TRADITIONAL TEACHING MODEL OF ENGLISH LISTENING

The traditional teaching model of English listening, which is based on behaviorist theory, has some disadvantages as follows.

A. Tedious Teaching Process

Under the traditional teaching model of English listening, the whole teaching process is basically divided into three parts: explanation of vocabulary before listening, listening to the material, and checking the answer. The process is rather tedious and it is difficult to effectively attract students' attention. However, only those input which has been noticed can be changed into intake and used to process information effectively (Xu, 2016). Besides, teachers play the role of turning on and off the player, playing the English audio material again and again. Moreover, one or twice English listening class in a week cannot provide sufficient listening input. All those result in lower levels of English listening after one semester. In the end, students will have negative feelings, losing interest in English listening. Negative feelings, tedious learning content and dull teaching model are the main reasons for learning interest (Wang,

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2012).

B. Weak Teaching Practice

Some so-called new teaching model of English listening, which aims to improve teaching effectiveness, are only limited to theory discussion. They are not applied to listening teaching practice. Some hypotheses cannot be verified because of the limitedness of software and hardware facilities.

All and all, traditional teaching model of English listening in China cannot effectively arouse students' interest in learning English listening and their listening proficiency cannot be improved due to the dull and tedious teaching model. Therefore, it is imperative that we explore a new English listening teaching model to improve the effectiveness of English listening class within limited time.

III. CONSTRUCTION OF NEW TEACHING MODEL OF ENGLISH LISTENING BASED ON INTERACTIVE MODEL THEORY

A. Interactive Model Theory of Listening Comprehension

Interactive model theory was proposed by Rumelhart (1975) when he researched reading comprehension, while it is also applied to the process of listening comprehension (Flowerdew & Miller, 2005). Interactive Model Theory of Listening Comprehension is combination between bottom-up model and top-down model.

Bottom-up model was proposed by Shannon and Weaver (1949). According to this model of listening comprehension, listeners comprehend the auditory information from the single phoneme. That is to say, the process of listening comprehension begins from the lower level of segments to the higher level of syllables, words, phrases, clauses, sentences and finally the meaningful discourse. Hence, enriched knowledge about language is necessary for listeners to comprehend listening material based on bottom-up theory.

On the contrary, top-down model is different from bottom-up model in that the former model doesn't depend on processing a single segment or a single word, while it focuses on the effect that listeners' previous knowledge have on processing information. The way of processing information with help of context and listeners' previous knowledge about the world is called top-down processing (Anderson, 2000).

According to the interactive model theory, second language learners adopt both bottom-up model and top-down processing in listening comprehension. Namely, on one hand, listeners inductively form sentences based on sounds and words, understanding sentences with the language grammar. On the other hand, they also use their previously mastered knowledge to help them understand sound information (Wang, 2013).

To sum up, listening comprehension is the combination between bottom-up processing of information and top-down process of information. With these two ways, listeners can succeed in decoding the new vocal symbols.

B. Construction of New Teaching Model of English Listening

The new teaching model of English listening is different from the traditional one in that the new model can reach the final goal of improving students' listening comprehension by way of cultivating their ability of processing auditory information interactively. The new model is shown in Fig. 1.

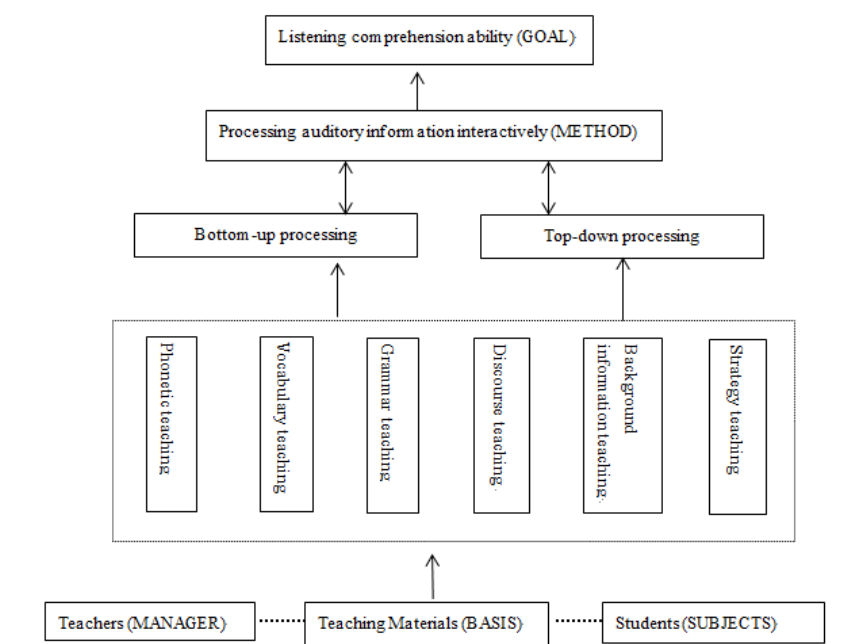


Figure 1. New teaching model of English listening based on interactive model theory

Under the new model, teaching goal, content, key points and difficult points, method are all different from the traditional one. Simply speaking, through improving students' ability of interactive processing information, the goal of improving their listening proficiency will be reached. Teaching key points and difficult points will depend on teaching content.

Under the new teaching model of English listening, Teachers are the leader or manager of guiding students who are the learning subjects to be aware of interactively processing information. Based on teaching materials, classroom teaching consists of six modules—phonetic teaching, vocabulary teaching, grammar teaching, discourse teaching, background information teaching and strategy teaching. The former three modules are mainly used to cultivate students' ability of bottom-up processing of auditory information, while the latter three modules are mainly used to train students' ability of top-down processing of auditory information. With the improvement of students' ability of interactively processing information, their English listening proficiency will also be raised. The six teaching modules will be introduced in detail as follows.

1. Phonetic teaching

Phonetic teaching aims to guide students to focus on distinction between similar sounds, segmentation of fluent speech, assimilation, linking, incomplete plosion and contraction, stress, intonation, and rhythm and so on. The phonetic factors causing the comprehension difficulty should be intensively analyzed when the students meet with the phonetic obstacles, because the listening level can be improved when phonetic obstacles are overcome in learning a second or foreign language (Hu, 2017). Explanation of English phonetic knowledge and training are necessary, because phonetic perception is the first step to listening comprehension.

2. Vocabulary teaching

In listening comprehension, vocabulary is greatly important. Insufficient vocabulary will directly influence listeners' understanding of the material. Moreover, whether a person masters a word accurately will also have an effect on listening comprehension. Under the new teaching model of English listening, vocabulary teaching is not limited to pre-listening vocabulary teaching. Vocabulary guessing teaching during listening and depth and width of vocabulary will be emphasized after listening. In the process of teaching English vocabulary, in order to enlarge students' listening vocabulary and improve the speed and accuracy of matching the phonetic form and meaning of a word, teachers can design some tasks to raise students' awareness of learning the new vocabulary. For example, students are encouraged to repeat the new words. Teachers can also stop the player when a new word occurs in a text and let students repeat the pronunciation of the word so that the students can have the chance to memorize the phonetic form of the new word. Furthermore, teachers can guide students to guess the word's meaning through making use of the context or background information. Besides, some methods of memorizing words should be introduced to help students master more words. When listening vocabulary is enlarged, listening comprehension ability is also naturally improved.

3. Grammar teaching

Whether a student well masters the grammar or not can directly affect the accuracy of listening comprehension. Grammar teaching mainly includes analysis of the long and difficult sentences. Teachers can choose some typically long and difficult sentences and then help students analyze their grammatical structure, which is beneficial for students to recognize the differences between English and Chinese. In addition, in order to relieve students' anxiety, some playing software can be used to slow down the speed of the audio material or appropriately stop the audio material according to the meaning groups.

4. Discourse teaching

Discourse teaching aims to teaching cohesive devices of discourses, characteristics of discourses of different styles and so on. Introduction to common cohesive devices can help students understand the discourse structure and then understand the main idea of the whole text. Explanation of the characteristics of discourses of different styles can also help students construct the schema of relevant discourses.

5. Background information teaching

Background information teaching refers to teaching background information about the theme of the listening materials. For example, teaching cultural background in listening could provide students a faster way to understand the listening material (Wei, 2016). Through introduction to the cultural background information in listening teaching, students can immediately grasp the effective information and their comprehension ability will be finally improved (Qu & Ren, 2014).

6. Strategy teaching

Listening strategy teaching should be added into listening teaching, which will bring about a better effect than traditional teaching model of English listening (He, 2016). It has been evidenced that strategy training can improve students' listening achievements (Wang, 2016). Listening strategy teaching includes metacognitive strategy teaching, cognitive strategy teaching and effect/social strategy teaching. Teachers can make a strategy format before the class and guide students to use it in class listening, which will help student form a good habit of using listening strategies when they listen.

Generally speaking, phonetic teaching, pre-listening vocabulary teaching, grammar teaching, and teaching of cohesive devices are all beneficial to bottom-up processing meaning of words, sentences and discourses. And guessing meaning of words during listening, teaching background information and listening strategies are helpful for students to

train their ability of top-down processing of sound symbols.

All in all, under the new teaching model of English listening, students will not be the negative receivers for auditory symbols. Instead, they are active in making use of English phonetics, vocabulary, grammar and discourse, triggering background information in their minds, and matching and validating meaning and sounds. Teachers will not play the role of turning on and off the player, while they are the guider, leader and helper in teaching listening comprehension.

IV. VERIFICATION OF NEW TEACHING MODEL OF ENGLISH LISTENING

A. Subjects and Method

1. Subjects

Two natural classes of freshmen of English majors in some college in China are randomly chosen as the subjects of the experiment. The two classes are taught by the same teacher. One is randomly recognized as the control group, the other one is experimental group. The control group adopts traditional teaching model of English listening, while the experimental group adopts the new teaching model of English listening.

2. Method

Testing material: pretest adopts the listening materials of CET4 (College English Test Band 4) in June, 2012, while posttest adopts that in December, 2012. The full score is 25. The validity and reliability can be both higher because CET4 is an authoritative examination around China. All of the students participating in the experiment had never taken the CET4 in 2012. In order to guarantee the authenticity of the test results, students will be told to listen carefully. Cheating is not allowed.

Procedure: firstly, the pretest was taken simultaneously by the experimental group and control group in March, 2016. Then, the new teaching model of English listening was adopted in the experimental group. The teaching period was from March to May, which was all together twelve teaching weeks. Finally, the posttest was taken in late May. In the end, the achievements of every student in experimental group and control group were calculated and sorted out. SPSS 22.0 was used to analyze the relevant data.

B. Results

The pretest achievements can be seen in Table 1.

TABLE I.
INDEPENDENT-SAMPLES TEST IN PRETEST

	Control Group (n=27)		Experimental Group (n=28)		MD	t(53)
	M	SD	M	SD		
Achievements	13.96	4.31	13.60	4.54	0.36	0.30

$P>0.05$

Through the independent-samples test, the results show that the average score of the control group is 13.96, and standard deviation (SD) is 4.31. The average score of the experimental group is 13.60, and the standard derivation is 4.54. The mean difference (MD) is 0.36. On one hand, it proves that students' English listening proficiency is rather low, because of the average score of the subject is only below 14 (out of 25). On the other hand, the listening achievements between the control group and experimental group is not greatly different ($t(53)=0.30$, $P>0.05$). That is to say, the listening level of the control group is generally equal to that of the experimental group.

The posttest achievements can be seen in Table 2.

TABLE II.
INDEPENDENT-SAMPLES TEST IN POSTTEST

	Control Group (n=27)		Experimental Group (n=28)		MD	t(53)
	M	SD	M	SD		
Achievements	16.96	3.95	20.46	4.93	-3.50	-2.90*

* $P<0.05$

The results in independent-samples test in posttest show that the average score of the control group is 16.96, and standard deviation (SD) is 3.95. The average score of the experimental group is 20.46, and the standard derivation is 4.93. The mean difference (MD) is -3.50.

To begin with, both the groups improved their listening proficiency. However, the experimental group improved higher than the control group. More importantly, Table II shows that students adopting new teaching model of English listening were significantly different from those adopting traditional teaching model of English teaching on CET4 listening ($t(53)=-2.90$, $P<0.05$). Inspections of the two group means indicate that the average CET4 score of students using new teaching model of English listening(20.46) is significantly higher than the score of students using traditional teaching model (16.96).

V. DISCUSSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Discussions

Based on the results above, we can see that there is no great difference between the control group and the experimental group in the pretest. They are two parallel classes. In the posttest, both the groups improved their English listening proficiency. Moreover, there is great difference between the two groups in the posttest. The experimental group which adopted the new teaching model of English listening gained higher score than the control group which adopted the traditional teaching model of English listening. And the difference between those two groups is statistically significant. That is to say, it is the new teaching model of English listening that leads to the higher score of the experimental group. And the new teaching model of English listening based on the interactive model theory is effective.

The results also verify that listening comprehension, just like reading comprehension, is also the combination of bottom-up process and top-down processing. The listeners construct hypothesis as they are listening, and meanwhile they match the hypothesis with the auditory information they later listen. Then, some hypotheses are confirmed, while others are not and then maybe corrected according to new information.

Although the difference between the means of the control group and the experimental group is 3.5, it is statically significant. After all, the experimental groups only adopted the new teaching model for twelve weeks. If the time is longer, the different between the means of these two groups must be greater.

There are some suggestions for English listening teaching in English as second or foreign language countries, based on the new constructed teaching model and its effectiveness in improving EFL learners' listening proficiency.

B. Suggestions

1. Suggestions for teachers and students

On one hand, teachers should change their role in English listening teaching. They are the manager of the whole class, guiding students to complete some tasks in or after the class. Hence, firstly, teachers should make a good preparation before the class. For example, some words which have different meaning just because they are stressed differently could be prepared to let students listen so that they can be trained to be sensitive to the stress of a word and its meaning. To a certain extent, teachers should not be limited to the textbook. Additional listening materials should be chosen with care to be used in the listening class. Secondly, teachers should assign some relevant tasks to students so that they can practice what they have learnt in the class. Only in this way can they enhance their awareness of applying knowledge they learned to listening comprehension in the class. Thirdly, teachers should explain some knowledge about the process of listening comprehension. That listening comprehension is the combination of bottom-up processing and top-down processing should be introduced to the students. In this way, they can have a good understanding of the process of listening comprehension, and they will come to know how to improve their listening ability.

On the other hand, students should first realize that listening comprehension of combination of bottom-up processing and top-down processing and raise their consciousness of interactive processing information. Besides, they should also realize that they can be active in listening. That is to say, students should make full use of their language knowledge, background information and strategies to actively imagine, predict and verify information they listen. The process of listening comprehension is not a negative process of receiving sound symbols.

2. Suggestions for improving interactive processing of information

It has been proved that listening comprehension depend greatly interactive processing (bottom-up processing and top-down processing). Knowledge about English phonetics, vocabulary, grammar, discourse, background information and strategies in listening comprehension are all helpful for improving listening proficiency, because they are useful in the interactive processing in listening comprehension. In this part, we will introduce some concrete methods to improve students' ability of bottom-up processing and top-down processing.

1) Improving bottom-up processing ability

There are several important tips for improving students' bottom-up processing ability. The ability of distinction between similar segments and segmentation of fluent speech, the quick matching between word sound and its meaning, the syntactic characteristic of words and sentences are all basis for quicken bottom-up processing in listening comprehension. Hence, students must master the knowledge of English pronunciation and intonation, enlarge their vocabulary, especially listening vocabulary, and acquire English grammar. In addition, some knowledge about cohesive devices can also be helpful for students to understand the logic of the whole discourse. Besides, accurate understanding of a word and a sentence is the good beginning of using the strategy of making inferences and predication in listening.

2) Improving top-down processing ability

In order to improve top-down processing ability, students should get knowledge of discourse. For example, the different styles of discourse. With the knowledge of different style of discourses, students could quickly grasp the key information they should focus. For example, when students listen to a novel, they should pay attention to the plot and details of the story. If they listen to news, they should focus on the former part or even the first sentence, because the main idea of the news is generally at the beginning part. In addition, the background information can provide students with a good understanding of the main idea of the whole text, and even it can help listeners make inferences of meaning of some words, phrases and sentences.

To sum up, bottom-up processing and top-down processing are combined in listening comprehension. They complement one another.

VI. CONCLUSION

Listening teaching has not a fixed model. Teachers and researchers tries to construct a relevantly effective teaching model of English listening based on different theories. In this study, a new teaching model of English listening is based on the interactive model theory. This new model is more systematic, flexible and concrete than the traditional teaching model based on behaviorism. This new model can effectively cultivate students' language ability, enlarge their background information and improve their ability of using listening strategies in listening comprehension. Based on both bottom-up processing and top-down processing, students can decode the sound symbols interactively and actively. In addition, it can enliven the learning atmosphere in classroom and enhance students' confidence in improving English listening.

The results of the experiment also prove that the new teaching model of English listening can effectively improve students' listening proficiency. It could be applied in English listening teaching in colleges and universities in China. And the new teaching model of English listening also set an example for ESL or EFL listening in other countries.

The limits of the study lie in that it didn't investigate differences between low-proficiency and high-proficiency students. Maybe they have difference preference for choosing bottom-up processing or top-down processing. This could be the next topic for the latter researchers.

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Teaching English Pragmatic Features in EFL Context: A Focus on Request Speech Acts

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Abstract—This study attempted to explore the possible impacts of teaching English pragmatic features to Iranian high school students' use of request speech acts. To this end, a sample of Iranian female high school students (n=50) between 12 to 18 years range of age participated in the study. The students with the same level of proficiency were assigned into two experimental and control groups. The data were collected by administering Multiple-Choice Discourse Completion Test (MDCT) as both the pre and the post-tests. The pragmatic features were selected from the high school English textbooks and the excerpts taken from the *Top Notch series* (2A, 3A, 2B). With the focus on request speech acts, the control group received conventional instructions whereas the experimental group was exposed to the researchers' request speech act interventions. After statistical analysis of the findings, the data revealed that teaching pragmatic features has significant impact on the Iranian high school students' performance on request speech acts. Besides, the overall responses by the experimental group showed that indirect request speech acts were more widely used than direct request speech acts as the sign of social and cultural politeness.

Index Terms—discourse completion test, direct/indirect request, politeness, pragmatics, speech act

I. INTRODUCTION

Pragmatics is defined as a branch in language acquisition and one of the main components of organizational knowledge of language that has become one of the most critical concerns of linguist scholars (Karthik, 2013, p. 1). In a narrow linguistic view, “pragmatics studies the factors that govern our choices of language in social interaction and the effects of those choices on others” (Crystal, 2008, p. 379). Moreover, pragmatics deals only with those aspects of context which are encoded within the structures of a language user's pragmatic competence. More especially, pragmatics is known as the interdisciplinary fields of linguistics, sociology and psychology and so on. Hence, Verschueren points out that it is a “general cognitive, social, and cultural perspective on linguistic phenomena in relation to their usage in forms of behavior” (as cited in Culpeper & Haugh, 2014, p. 7). In pragmatics, context may be defined as the set of suppositions which have critical effects on the production, and interpretation of communicative acts.

Language is the human-specific tool to transmit messages, emotions, and ideas and even to develop cross-lingual communication. Thus, language learners learn a new language by starting from the language they already know wherein learning this new language is usually influenced by the features of the first language. To communicate appropriately in a foreign language context, the language learners need to identify the pragmatic or context-bound features through some meaningful activities and pragmatic awareness-raising tasks (Safont Jordà 2004, p. 25), so do the foreign language teachers consider the possibility of transferring pragmatic interlanguage features (Žegarac & Pennington, 2008, p. 147).

Hereupon, in the last few decades the studies on fostering pragmatic competence of EFL learners have attracted lots of attention. Many studies were conducted on comparing the use of speech acts between native and non-native language speakers. Research supports the fact that EFL learners' competence for speech acts is mostly different from the native English speakers. Nevertheless, one of the ignored issues in interlanguage pragmatics research is the developing pragmatics knowledge of school students learning English as EFL and its effects on their success in speech acts. The belief is that there is a close link between the knowledge of pragmatics and successful communication by language learners. Especially in the polite and formal interactions between EFL learners, indirect speech acts are the confident means to save face and to show respect, particularly in Asian cultures when it comes to making requests (Khaliba & Tayehb, 2014, p. 54).

In Iranian EFL context, the English teachers have complaints of the high school students' inappropriate declaring requests, the ambiguity, and the low level of politeness and directness (Safavi & Zamanian, 2014; Zaferanieh & Hosseini-Maasoum, 2015). By the same token, the current researchers aimed to investigate the effects of teaching English pragmatic features on Iranian high school students' performance of In/Direct speech acts requests.

II. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Pragmatics is a favorite term which is widely used in the EFL/ESL studies. It was a popular field of study in the late sixties and early seventies. As a branch of applied linguistics, pragmatics is concerned with language use and the situated meaning of utterances. In other words, it is the study of context dependent aspects of meaning which are systematically abstracted away from in the construction of content or logical form (Horn & Ward, 2006). It is one of the keys to effective communication in a second language (Taguchi, 2009). In other words, it is all about communicating appropriately in a certain context.

Murray (2010) defines the pragmatic competence as an “understanding of the relationship between form and context that enables us, accurately and appropriately, to express or interpret intended meaning in terms of speech acts” (p. 293). According to Austin (1962), when language users express themselves, they may produce utterances with propositional contents which can be true or false in the real world. In other words, we are constantly doing things with words (as cited in Kılıçkaya, 2010, p. 187). Accordingly, a speaker produces three acts during the uttering a performative speech act: *locutionary* which is the speech itself or what is actually said (e.g. “what time do you call this?”). *Illocutionary* which is the force or intention produced in the said words (e.g. “an apology or explanation for someone being late”); and *perlocutionary* act which is the effect the said words have on the intended hearer (e.g. “Speaker is apologizing or explaining”) (Suhirman, 2016, p. 22).

Although, Austin (1962) claims that “what we have to study is not the sentence but the issuing of an utterance in a speech situation” which reveals the speech acts that may be produced indirectly (as cited in Cline, 2002, p. 27), but his taxonomy lacked the sound representation of the communicative functions and affective factors that influence the speech acts. Speech act theorists focused on the force of speech acts to infer whether they were direct speech acts (directly marked) or indirect (indirectly marked). Hereupon, theories recommend the illocutionary force indicating devices as the appropriate way to recognize whether the speech act is directly marked or not (Trosborg, 1995; Green, 2016).

The use of an Illocutionary Force Indicating Device (IFID) is usually represented by a direct performative verb; also the speaker can signal the type of illocutionary act being performed on the outset of the utterance with performative verbs. For instance, a direct speech act is represented as a simple link between the words’ illocutionary force and their perlocutionary effect on the hearer. Therefore, in order to reach the speaker’s intended meaning, the hearer simply attends to the message with no inference.

Culpeper and Haugh (2014, p. 168) stated that the stress carried on the utterances which contain IFIDs might be closely dependent on and identifiable according to the context. For example, in “*I promise I’ll withhold your pocket money.*” it is not a promise rather a threat. This mismatch between the form of the utterance and its function is imposed by its illocutionary force, intonation and inference needs; hence there is a direct reference to what is an indirect speech act. As a result, the speaker can exploit the indirect speech act to communicate or say something with additional meaning which needs to be inferred by the hearer.

In the field of interlanguage pragmatics, Vázquez and Sharpless (2009) highlighted the importance of teaching pragmatics to EFL learners. Accordingly, pragmatic errors are more important than grammatical mistakes, hence the developing pragmatic competence takes a much longer time and efforts than linguistic competence. Moreover, a simple exposure to second language input can rarely provide adequate comprehensible pragmatic input to the learners. On the same vein, Furkó and Monós (2013) reminded that despite ample evidence to the difficulties that acquiring pragmatic competence relative to linguistic competence might expose the language learners, they are still teachable. In addition, they undelined the importance of “ample comprehensive input” and the relevance of noticing as only the starting point of cognitive processes to second language acquisition in any EFL environment” (p. 137). On the contrary, Doughty (2001) believed that learning of pragmatics involves a constant noticing, practicing and storing the input in long-term memory. Moreover, problems in performing suitable request speech act in socio-pragmatically ways might be the major reason for EFL learners’ failure in appropriate pragmatic performance (Uso-Juan, 2010, p. 237). Hereupon, Ariana Ahmadi Shirazi, and Mousavi Nadoushani’s (2017) noticing hypothesis emphasizes that pragmatic features must be so executed in EFL curricula that they consist of authentic input of different situations of target language use. Consequently, awareness to the social norms of the learners’ culture and society is essential for material developers (Alemi & Khanlarzadeh, 2017).

A. Indirect Speech Acts

In English, there are three major illocutionary forces or indirect speech acts associated with three basic sentence structures: (i) Declarative: assertion (e.g. *That plant is green.*); (ii) Interrogative: question/enquire (e.g. *Do I have to water the plant?*); (iii) Imperative: command/ordering (e.g. *Water the plant, please!*) (Culpeper & Haugh, 2014, pp. 168-171). Considering the above examples, it can be observed that a particular speech act may be performed with different forms, so if there is between a speech act and its form, it is a direct speech act. In other words, direct speech acts are the utterances which the propositional content of the utterance is consistent with the speaker’s intent (Achiba, 2003, p. 7). On the contrary, if such correspondence does not exist, the speech act is indirect wherein the speakers’ intentionality plays a critical role (Şanal, 2016).

Searle (1979) asserted that there are “cases in which one illocutionary act is performed indirectly by means of performing another” (p. 30). Although, he revised his notion as with indirect speech acts, the interactants communicate with more than the speakers what they actually say. They usually have to rely on mutual and shared background knowledge and on each other’s inferential and rational abilities. Indirect speech acts can also be considered as an appropriate means to create socially polite statements, commands, and requests (Lempert, 2012, p. 182) and as an inspiration to people’s indirectness (Brown & Levinson, 2009; Blum-Kulka, House, & Kasper, 2010; Leech, 2013).

B. Request Speech Acts

Requesting is an essential speech act frequently used in social interactions. According to Alcón Soler and Safont Jordà (2008), request is performed by a speaker in order to push the hearer to do an action that “coincides with the speaker’s goal” (p. 168). On one hand, requests as the first part of linguistic actions within adjacency pair sequences is a Face Threatening Act (FTA) because they threaten hearer’s negative face. On the other hand, based on Searle’s taxonomy of speech acts, requesting is an illocutionary act since it is dependent on the speaker’s “directives” (as cited in Björgvinsson, 2011, p. 15). That later is called “impositives”, too in order to avoid confusion in using the term “directive” in association with direct and indirect illocutions (Janochová 2013, p. 34). Accordingly, Trosborg (1995) proposed that, the performance of requests could be softened by increasing the degree of politeness since the speaker’s aim is to obtain non/verbal services. This politeness can be achieved by the use of linguistic indirectness on the part of the speaker. Trosborg (1995) developed the taxonomy of request strategies in which categories of requests are graded from direct to indirect. This taxonomy is based on previous research conducted by Austin (1962-1975), and Searle (1969-1976), but reformulated by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984-1989), Brown and Levinson (1978-1988), and Usó-Juan (2010). Trosborg (1995) classified requests into direct, conventionally indirect (hearer-based), conventionally indirect (speaker-based), and indirect.

In direct request, the intention of the speaker is explicitly revealed by its propositional content that can be recognized directly from its sentence structures such as imperatives or requesting verb phrases (e.g. *Lend me your car.*, or *Our car, please.*). In conventionally indirect (hearer-based) speech acts, the speaker asks directly the hearer to obtain some services or benefit in which the requests are usually stated with the modal verbs so the requests are realized by questioning the speaker’s ability, willingness or possibility (e.g. *May I go to your house tomorrow?* or *Would you mind cleaning up the house?*).

As it can be seen in the examples above, the speaker increases the level of politeness towards the hearer, since this type of request relies on the hearer’s choice whether to accept the request. While in conventionally indirect (speaker-based) request, the speaker expresses his/her own volition without asking the hearer for permission or acceptance, so the requests are considered as less polite than hearer-based (e.g. *I want/need to borrow your car.*) Consequently, applying strategies of polite requests or avoiding face threatening acts are vital to successful communication in the real world.

The researchers developed a classification for direct requests strategies (Salmani Nodoushan, 2008; Blum-Kalka, et al., 2010; Salmani Nodoushan & Allami, 2011; Xiaoning, 2017). This classification includes three dimensions of (i) internal and external modification (ii) directness level of the head act and (iii) the core request. While the internal modification is applied to soften and intensify the force of the request, the external modification is used either for mitigating moves or aggravating moves (Xiaoning, 2017, pp. 3-5). The head act is the core part of a request sequence which verbalizes the request.

Several empirical studies with cross-cultural perspectives have been conducted on the request speech acts. Halupka-Resetar (2015) investigated two characteristics of request speech acts production. She stated that EFL learners' rate of requests is low in terms of internal and external modification and frequency of utilization. Halupka-Resetar (2015) has noted that the EFL learners’ request production is due to pedagogical instruction which is significantly in a lower level than linguistic development. Accordingly, Cunningham (2017) has analyzed the requests production of L1/L2 speakers of German in synchronous computer-mediated communication (SCMC). He concluded that L1 speakers use more internal modification than the L2 speakers while both do not show a significant difference in their use of external modification (p. 92). On the contrary, Jaliliafar (2009) investigated the realization of request strategies utilized by EFL learners and native speakers of English. He concluded that the EFL learners at advanced level of language proficiency overused the indirect request strategies relative to the excessive use of direct request strategies by less proficient EFL learners.

III. METHOD

A. Participants

To achieve the aims of this research, 50 Iranian high school students at the pre-intermediate level of English language proficiency were randomly selected from three high schools in Tehran on a voluntary basis. They were all female students with the age range of 12 to 18 years who attended the twenty-one hours of the school summer semester. They were exposed to the selected units from *Top Notch* series (Saslow & Ascher, 2015) and *High School English textbooks* (I, II, III) (Alavi Moghaddam, et al., 2015; Birjandi, Norowzi, & Mahmoudi, 2015). This was a quasi-experimental research with a pre-test, an intervention period, and a post-test. The selected subjects were divided into one experimental and one control groups.

B. Instruments and Materials

The Multiple-Choice Discourse Completion Test (MDCT):

In line with the purpose of current research, two versions of multiple-choice discourse completion test (MDCT) were administered twice to compare the participants' perception of the request speech acts: one prepared by Rezaei and Birjandi (2010) as the pre-test, and one by Soleimani and Birjandi (2013) as the post-test. The internal reliability indices of ($\alpha=0.80$) and ($\alpha=0.78$) was estimated using Cronbach's Alpha formula for the pre- and post-tests, respectively.

Material:

This study focused on the "making polite requests, making choices, providing description of objects, expressing specific personal needs, and requiring assistance" as the main features of pragmatic competence (Goberis, et al., 2012, pp. 302-303). The experimental group in this study received formal instructions after a brief introduction to the concept of English pragmatic features while the control group received conventional instructions to their English textbook.

Initially, the participants were equally and randomly assigned into two groups of experimental and control. In order to investigate the participants' pragmatic knowledge of request speech acts in English classrooms, Rezaei and Birjandi's (2010) multiple-choice discourse completion test (MDCT) was employed as the pre-test. Later, an explicit-deductive set of instructions, following the "presentation, recognition and production" (Usó-Juan, 2007, p. 238) model of teaching pragmatic features, was conducted with the experimental group. Awareness to request speech acts was raised with identification tasks to assess the participants. Ultimately, as the post-intervention test, the Soleimani and Birjandi's (2013) multiple-choice discourse completion test (MDCT) was employed as the post-test to assess the participants' achievement of the request speech acts in English.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to tabulate the participants' scores on pre- and post-tests, statistical analysis was conducted and the results were summarized by Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 20th edition.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST SCORES

Groups		Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
		Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Pre-test	Experimental	8.00	17.00	12.56	2.53	-.34	.46	-.84	.90
	Control	8.00	17.00	12.50	2.48	.03	.46	-.93	.90
Post-test	Experimental	9.00	16.00	13.56	2.06	-.95	.46	-.16	.90
	Control	7.00	16.00	12.44	2.32	-.11	.46	-.77	.90

As Table 1 shows, the experimental group shows considerable improvement after receiving the request speech act intervention. It also shows a lower standard deviation since the experiment started. In other words, it shows that instructions to request speech act has caused a homogeneous and steady improvement among the participants in this study. Furthermore, to observe the homogeneity of variance and normality of scores distribution on pre- and post-tests a Levene's test was administered.

TABLE 2
LEVENE'S TEST OF HOMOGENEITY OF VARIANCES

	Levene's Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Pre-tests	.005	1	48	.94
Post-tests	.78	1	48	.38

As it can be seen in Table 2, the variance of both groups' scores was insignificant across the pre- and post-tests ($\alpha=.98>.05$, $\alpha=.38>.05$, respectively). To testify the formulated research null hypothesis, the inferential statistics was run with the parametric test of ANOVA.

TABLE 3
ANOVA TEST ON THE EFFECT OF TEACHING PRAGMATIC ON IN/DIRECT REQUESTS

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Pre-tests	Between Groups	.00	1	.00	.000	1.00
	Within Groups	302.32	48	6.29		
	Total	302.32	49			
Post-tests	Between Groups	56.18	1	56.18	11.60	.001
	Within Groups	232.32	48	4.84		
	Total	288.50	49			

The indices of F in Table 3 show that, for the scores of both groups on the pre-test, the $F=0$, insignificant at $p\text{-value}=1.00>.05$. In other words, the experimental and control groups did not show any difference in their performance on the pre-test. On the other hand, the measure of F for both experimental and control groups' scores on the post-test is $F=11.60$, significant at $p\text{-value}=.001<.05$. This proves the different performance of the experimental group from the control group on the post-test after receiving intervention in this study. Accordingly, the researchers concluded that

intervention in terms of request speech acts had observable impacts on Iranian EFL learners. To measure the size of this impact and ensure its magnitude, the Eta Squared was calculated.

TABLE 4
EFFECT SIZE FOR THE POST-TEST SCORES

	Eta	Eta Squared
Posttests * Groups	.44	.190

As it can be seen in Table 4, the measure of $\eta^2 = .190$ according to Cohn (1988) is a very large effect size which is interpreted as the effectiveness of the intervention to make a considerable improvement in the experimental group's performance on the post-test. Hereby, the researchers could safely reject their null hypothesis in this study.

The researchers' main concern in this study was to reexamine the effectiveness of direct exposure to the request speech acts on the Iranian high school students' pragmatic competence. The overall responses by the experimental group showed that conventionally indirect requests have been widely preferred over direct requests. To compare the classes of request speech acts used by the students, both groups preferred the indirect speech acts on the pre-test for 62.8% of the times, while 84.75% of the experimental group preferred direct speech acts and 71.5% of the control group used indirect speech acts address on the post-test. As a result, after exposing to both classes of request speech acts, the experimental group changed their preference for more direct request speech acts.

For instance, as a new experience, the participants practiced to require their teacher to write them a recommendation letter, by asking "Write me a recommendation letter, please." as a direct request strategy, while the frequent use of modal verbs such as *could* in "Could you write a recommendation letter for me?" as an indirect and polite strategy was commonly used.

Iranian high school students, however, mostly prefer to use the indirect requests strategies to minimize the risk of losing their face on formal occasions. Consequently, some participants regressed to "Could you please" to address equal-status classmates to ensure receiving positive responses that overshadowed their choice for direct requests. This phenomenon seems to be in accordance with Fukushima who found that Japanese EFL learners switched to direct request strategies in both formal and informal occasions (as cited in Konakahara, 2011, p. 257).

It should be noted that cultural dimension of pragmatic knowledge has a prominent role in language learners' communication practice. As (Ogiemann, 2009) asserted, "the dimensions of individualism and power distance have proved most influential in studies linking culture with verbal behavior" (p. 25). Analysis of the responses in this study has shown that the Iranian language learners frequently use the indirect request speech acts *could* as a negative politeness signal for the unequal status hearers followed by *please*; while they prefer *I want you* as a positive politeness signal for statues equals. Therefore, L2 language learners' sociological variables like power, social distance, and rank of imposition are reflected in terms of polite language to preserve their interlocutors' face and distance.

V. CONCLUSION

The objective in this research was to illuminate the necessity and importance of developing pragmatic knowledge hand in hand with the language competence in L2 learners. The findings in the current research not only emphasize the improvement of pragmatic knowledge in L2 learners, but also promote different contextual variations inside language classrooms as a requisite for successful communications. Therefore, some direct and indirect request forms were selected with a communicative purpose in the target language to be introduced and practiced by high school students in their English courses. It was concluded that instructional input to request speech acts had a positive impact so that the experimental group reached a higher rate and appropriateness in using direct/indirect request strategies. However, the results suggested that Iranian high school students would show a high degree of variance in their degree of pragmatic awareness after receiving instructions.

The effectiveness of teaching different classes of speech acts in English language classrooms is undisputable in terms of an optimal instructional approach for pragmatic development in an EFL environment. The language students require having access to comprehensible and pragmatic input. Their attention should not only become confined to syntactic and lexical aspects of the language. Since English textbooks are usually packed with isolate, simple and de-contextualized instances of language; the pragmatic components of the language cannot reach its optimal level to be learnt (Usó-Juan, 2007; Salazar Campillo, 2007). Research, therefore, should budget to preparing texts and tasks to pump the pragmatic competence and communicative aspects.

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Study on the College English Curriculum from the Perspective of General Education

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Abstract—English is a very important skill. Learning English well is no longer an optional skill, it can improve the students' overall quality. Teachers should guide students to re-understand English from the perspective of general education so that students are willing to learn English well. This article reviews the domestic research on college English general education in the past 15 years so that researchers can have a better understanding of the present situation, development trend, existing problems and future development directions of general college English education in China. And from it, we can get some useful implications for college English teaching.

Index Terms—general education, College English, courses

I. THE REFORM BACKGROUND

The new historical period put forward new requirements for college English teaching. For decades of reform and opening up, college English has basically focused on cultivating the students' comprehensive ability to use English and it has even been the only goal. It emphasizes the instrumentalists of English language. Although it is mentioned in the guidelines of English teaching that English teaching should improve the students' cultural awareness. It is bound to improve students' cultural accomplishment in English teaching to a certain extent. However, the humanistic nature of college English teaching has not been given due attention. At the same time, CET-4 and CET-6 are treated as the only standard for testing university students' knowledge of English, our teaching thinking has been restricted and teachers can not give full play to their abilities, potentials and creativity. Students can not show their ability of autonomous and individualized learning. On the one hand, The Guidelines to College English Teaching defines the basic requirements for college English teaching, on the other hand, College English Teaching should also establish a classification system for college English teaching and encourage colleges and universities of different levels, types and regions to build a scientific and reasonable college English curriculum innovation system under the teaching guidelines. At present, the total credits of college students are limited, so many colleges and universities are reducing course credits, among these courses, the credits of college English is the first one to be reduced. Following this trend and with the continuous deepening of college English teaching reform, Many colleges and universities in our country are also gradually adjusting their college English curriculum. The percentage of general English teaching which aims at improving the students' language abilities decreased while the percentage of ESP and EGP has gradually increased. Optional courses after college English foundation course should be composed of EGP and ESP modules. EGP is divided into skills and humanities class. Academic type (ESP) is associated with a particular major that serves both students' professional and interdisciplinary learning. The new college English Curriculum System of the Trinity Mutual Inclusion of general English, EGP and ESP will become one of the directions for the development of college English teaching in China. Only three are compatible with each other and the ration of them is appropriate Only learning is combined with thinking and teaching students according to their aptitude, can a new situation in our college English teaching be established. The "College English Curriculum Standard" promulgated by the Ministry of Education in 2011 pointed out: "The setting of the college English curriculum is both instrumental and humanistic," and the notion of "instrumental and humanistic unity" is the brightest spot in the new English curriculum standard. On the one hand, "The Guidelines to College English Teaching" defines the basic requirements that college English teaching should meet; on the other hand, it tries to establish a classification system for college English teaching and encourage colleges and universities at different levels, types and regions to follow the teaching guidelines and school orientation, Students characteristics, personnel training specifications and other self-made personalized college English syllabus to build a scientific and reasonable university English curriculum innovation system. Curriculum reform should be an important part of college English teaching reform and a starting point to improve the quality of college English teaching. The new "College English Course Teaching Requirements" has a specific description for the curriculum, which shows the autonomy and individualism spirit. This research will realize the fundamental change from the teaching mode reform to the teaching content reform, and provide a new idea for deepening the reform of college English teaching. It is helpful to promote the overall improvement of teaching quality in higher education, and realize the goal of cultivating internationally-minded and innovative practical talents. This course system expands the field of college English teaching and enriches the content of college English teaching so as to help students to better inherit and spread Chinese culture. In particular, it can enhance the humanistic and international horizons of students and at the same time lay the

foundation for students to further their study of professional foreign languages. It can stimulate students' motivation of learning and cultivate students' autonomy and individualism. In a certain extent, it meets the needs of students in many aspects, plays a practical and guiding role in constructing a system of innovative and practical talents with a combination of humanities and talents.

II. RESEARCH STATUS OF COLLEGE ENGLISH GENERAL EDUCATION

1. Research Trends

The domestic research on college English general education has been receiving attention since 2003, with only one related article published in this year. Up to 2007, there were 5 relevant articles published in these 5 years. However, the period between 2008 and 2017 witnessed a rapid development. In the four years, a total of 55 related articles were published.

2. research content

2.1 College English general education

In the thesis "General Education in College English", Chen Li proposed that general education should include foreign culture, history, literature and art, moral reasoning, natural science, social analysis and quantitative reasoning. Zhang Mei (2010) vigorously tapped the "general connotation" in college English courses to make up for the problems of college students' "emotional intelligence" and the lack of "manhood" through general education. Qi Tianli (2016) conducted a questionnaire survey and analysis on college English teaching and the current college English curriculum setting, and proposed some suggestions on the reform of college English curriculum settings that is adjusting the existing curriculum structure, setting up a variety of course contents and creating a new type Course model. Chen Yan and Liu Haiyan (2017) combined with the "3 + 1" college English teaching reform piloted by Jinan University in 2015 and explored the effective mode of integrating college English curriculum through the concept of general education.

2.2.3 College English Teaching Reform from the Perspective of General Education

Jiang Hongxin (2004) first reviewed the history of general education in Western and Chinese universities in details and then reflected on the teaching of English majors and put forward the idea of teaching reform on how to cultivate English majors. Based on general education, Shanshan (2011) proposed that the study of background knowledge be the only way to improve the students' English proficiency and the specific way to improve the humane connotation of English teaching. Sun Shengping (2017) put forward it is an effective way to implement general education in college English education to carry out the student-centered interactive classroom teaching by making full use of multimedia. Feng Xinhua (2014) put forward the optional courses in college English is an effective way to achieve general education. Zhou Ying (2008) explored the specific ways of implementing general education of college English through teaching and educating people. Kang Zhifeng (2009) put forward countermeasures of changing the teaching idea and teaching mode on how to embody general education in college English teaching. Huang Gang (2010) explored the future integration of college English bilingual teaching and general education. Wang Erxia (2011) expounds the goal and reform ways of college English teaching under the perspective of general education which is building a diversified and distinctive curriculum system and strengthening the building of a culture-based curriculum system. Yu Zuying (2011) demonstrated that the second class of college English is an effective way to implement general education. Liu Wanting (2012), Gong Haoling (2013), Wang Lihui (2014) (College English Teaching Reform from the Perspective of General Education), Gao Jiangling (2015) and Cui Yunbo (2017) proposed that teaching should be reformed on teaching objectives, teaching content, curriculum, teaching Model, and teaching method.

2.2 research results

During the nine years from 2008 to 2017, researchers in our country have shown great enthusiasm for research in college English general education and have made great strides in the research on general education of college English, but at the same time, There are also some shortcomings in the domestic research on college English general education: (1) From the point of view of research methods, most of the researchers only use literature review to study general education of college English, which lacks practical research methods. (2) From the point of view of research content, most of the researches are doing the repetitive research of college English teaching reform from the perspective of general education, and the research on innovation is obviously insufficient. (3) The formation of college English general education is not an overnight thing. At present, the research on this aspect basically adopts the horizontal research method and lacks the vertical follow-up and experimental research.

III. TEACHING IMPLICATIONS

College English courses include: college English course objectives, college English class schedule, college English compulsory courses, college English elective courses, college English follow-up courses and related factors affecting college English settings (teaching methods, teaching staff, English teaching materials, Evaluation system). We should reform the college English curriculum from the above perspective.

1. Make clear the concept of general education

At present, teachers and students in colleges and universities have the obscure concept of general education. They often confuse general education with quality education, professional education. Even when reforming higher education

by using the concept of general education, they didn't carry out the overall design based on their own characteristics, but copied the teaching mode abroad, which didn't achieve the good effect. The first step of college English curriculum reform from the perspective of general education is to clarify the concept of general education. Colleges and universities should take strong measures to make teachers and students have a systematic and comprehensive understanding of general education. Undoubtedly, there are two sides to high education: utilitarianism and non-utilitarianism. Too much pursuit of utilitarianism in higher education will lead to deviations in the teaching philosophy of colleges and universities and to a large extent it will adversely affect students. General education is not only an educational concept, but also an educational view. It is also a brand new educational environment. Its proposal will guide high education to change and update the educational concept. The concept of general education is to train qualified and sound "perfect" human, which is also the ultimate goal of college education. This concept is the guidelines of the overall direction of college English curriculum. General education curriculum is the way to achieve the goal of general education. We can generalize the goals of college English curriculum from the perspective of general education as follows: the first one is to improve students' practical English ability, including listening and speaking ability. English, as an international language tool, is used for international communication and exchange. One of the goals of general education is to equip students with the basic knowledge and skills to adapt to social development. At present students are not satisfied with their own listening and speaking ability. The employers also think that students lack practical ability. If students learn English simply to find a job and earn a graduation credit, their enthusiasm to learn English will be greatly reduced. And they will be bored to learn English, which leads to the reduction of English practical ability. Second, Cultivate students' sentiments and improve their cultural literacy. General education is designed to enable students to acquire a high degree of understanding, tolerance and the pursuit of an elegant life through learning. Therefore, the study of English should incorporate the customs of western culture and the relevant contents of cultural differences at home and abroad to enhance students' cultural accomplishment. Third, Enhance English interdisciplinary knowledge learning. The goal of general education is to achieve the all-round development. In actual English communication, it needs not only English professional knowledge but also the knowledge in other fields. This requires that diversified subject knowledge must be integrated into the English curriculum so as to broaden students' knowledge.

According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, human needs are divided into five levels, namely: Physiological needs, Safety needs, Love and belonging, Esteem, and Self-actualization. People only pursue high-level needs when their primary needs are met. For high education, professional education is a low-level requirement. It helps students acquire basic knowledge so that they can survive in society after they graduate. General education, on the other hand, is a high-level requirement that enables students to achieve Self-actualization. Therefore, under the new situation, we should change the traditional concept of English teaching and integrate general education into it. College English teaching should carry out the education idea of "people-oriented". On the basis of teaching basic knowledge, it should also emphasize on cultivating students' abilities of innovation, appreciation and reference of foreign culture, English thinking ability, practical ability and correct value orientation so that Students can form a reasonable structure of knowledge and ability and promote the all-round development so as to help the students become "perfect people" with coordinated development of moral, intellectual and physical aspects and a high social responsibility and noble sentiments.

2. Build a new English curriculum system

From the perspective of general education, college English should run through the entire university, but from the previous survey we can see that college English learning only stay in the basic learning stage. It is necessary to build a new English curriculum system. The new curriculum system consists of two levels: the implementation system and the security system. The implementation system includes: the course objectives, class schedule and course content. Security system includes teaching methods, teachers, English teaching materials and evaluation system. Class arrangements include the entire stage of the University, English compulsory courses should be set for the freshman and sophomore. For juniors elective courses should be set for them. For the senior English expansion development courses should be set. The courses consist of five parts: (1) basic courses (ie. basic listening, reading and writing course); (2) advanced courses (including advanced English reading, listening, writing and translation).The purpose is to improve the students' comprehensive English proficiency; (3)Development Courses (cultural literacy courses and cross culture communication courses, which includes English film appreciation, Western civilization and culture, Chinese and Western ceremonial culture and customs, the general introduction of British and American countries, the appreciation of famous British and American works, business English, etc.);(4) stealth courses; (5) online courses. In college English courses English courses, cultural literacy courses, listening and speaking courses, international courses and other cross-integration of English will be integrated to ensure that students' abilities in all aspects can be improved.

3. Guide students to understand the latest information

In the information technology society where science and technology is more and more developed, only the students have the latest information can they take the initiative in the process of communicating with others. For various reasons, if students only learn the information from the Chinese language, the students' access to information is very narrow. Students can learn more if they can read the information on the search engine directly in English. Teachers can make students aware of the importance of learning English in terms of getting students to know more.

For example, teachers can guide college students to read the following information:

My favorite library is the Shenzhen University library which is near my home. It is a very big library. It has bright reading rooms, modern facilities, and efficient staff with gentle smile. These facilities and staffs provide us with a good condition to further their knowledge. The library has a collection of all kinds of books. Academic reading materials, novels, newspapers, magazines, etc. meet the needs of various local different people. You can obtain the updated information in almost all fields here. Till now the library owns 300000 copies of paper books, 280000 electronic books, 200 journals, 45 newspapers. Electronic resources have a superstar digital library, scholar digital library, VIP database, Wan fang database and see Chinese newspaper network database, basically forming a "paper + digital resources" two layers of financial guarantee system. I also buy the digital library service and enjoy it a lot in the mobile device.

This is an introduction to Shen zhen library in English, if students can read English, they can learn the status of the construction of Shen zhen Library from another point of view. Students can go to the library to read their own books based on their needs. If students know a lot of important information are informed directly in English at present, they will be willing to learn English knowledge.

4. Guide students to develop practical ability

Practical ability of English includes speaking ability, reading ability, writing ability and so on. In this information age, people place higher demands on college students, which requires college students to solve all kinds of problems in their daily lives with the knowledge they have learned.

For example, teachers guide college students A and foreign students to communicate with B, college student B does not understand Chinese, she only speaks English. Two students exchange process is as follows:

A: What do you do in your spare time, Linda?

B: Well, I like shopping very much with my friends and I play basketball with them at the weekends.

A: Basketball?

B: Yes, I am fond of it a lot. What about you, Sam?

A: Me? Well, I like going to the cinema and the theater. And I like reading

B: Wow! You have a lot of hobbies.

A: Well, I like to enjoy my free time lonely not together with other people. And I plan to learn swimming, collecting coins which only one can do them. They can give me a lot of pleasure.

B: To be honest, I'd rather watch TV every night.

In this conversation, if Student A does not have solid basic English skills, he can not start a variety of topics with B.

Because she has a solid foundation in English, she can exchange her interests and daily life with B.

5. Guide students to understand other countries' culture

In this information society, college students often have to carry out cross-culture communication. in the actual exchange, students will find there are not only language barrier, but also cultural barrier. If Students communicate with others from their own point of view, there will be misunderstanding between them. This is due to historical reasons and geographical reasons. There are many cultural differences between our country and other countries. If you do not understand these differences, it is difficult for college students to communicate with other people.

In conclusion, when guiding college students to learn English, teachers should make university students understand that learning English well can improve themselves and their overall quality from the perspective of general education.

6. Take a variety of teaching methods

Some scholars once said that it is more important how to teach knowledge than to what kind of knowledge should be taught. The goal of college English teaching is that students can not only have a reasonable knowledge and ability structure by learning English, but also can observe and think about the world using their unique thinking patterns. At present, English teaching in colleges and universities is a "one-way inculcation-oriented teaching" led by teachers. Students have low participation. In this way, students can really learn basic knowledge, but it is also easy to make students feel bored of learning which is not helpful to improve the students' cultural attainment and the innovative ability. Furthermore, due to college expansion of enrollment, English classes in some schools have become a big classroom of one or two hundred people, making English teaching effects unsatisfactory. Teachers lay much stress on the basic knowledge, which is not in conformity with the requirement of employers to pay attention to the practical ability of English. We should change this traditional English teaching mode so that teachers become the designers of the classroom and the students become the center of the classroom. English teaching in colleges and universities should promote "heuristic education in English" so that students can take the initiative to learn English and improve their English thinking ability and flexibility. Teachers can assign tasks to students in advance, for example, the students need to systematically interpret the differences between American culture and Chinese culture through reading relevant materials to cultivate students' thinking ability and oral expression ability. Students can also imitate the English lessons and write a similar article, which not only can consolidate the knowledge, but also enhance students' writing ability. In the English class, a variety of teaching methods such as role playing, game interaction, scene simulation and group discussion are used to activate the classroom atmosphere, eliminate students' fear of the English classroom, improve students' classroom participation and create an environment for students' interpersonal communication. And it can also promote communication between students and teachers and enhance the team spirit and cohesion of classes, develop students' creative ability, stimulate students' interest in learning and help students learn how to behave well.

7. Reform English teaching materials

Although there have been many changes in college English textbooks over the past two decades, there are few teaching materials that have had a substantial effect on college English teaching. Many of the textbooks have no definite teaching goal and lack comprehensiveness and practicality. As a base to achieve the goal of English teaching, English teaching material has a direct impact on the students' interest and motivation in learning English, which is a key factor in deciding the success or failure of English teaching. Firstly, the teaching materials must be real materials that can clearly reflect the economic conditions and religious cultures of the countries in Europe and the United States so that students can obtain real information about English and American countries from English learning. The updating of textbook should also keep up with the pace of the times. Secondly, we should select the article from the perspective of the needs of students. Students are more interested in humanistic literacy, entertainment and popular science articles, which should be included in order to stimulate students' interest in learning and improve their cultural accomplishments. Finally, articles in English textbooks should include interdisciplinary knowledge, such as national trade, business etiquette, travel English, etc. Teaching materials must have depth and breadth which can trigger the students' curiosity, enhance students' cross-cultural awareness and enhance students' comprehensive quality and the ability to accept new information. Besides, listening comprehension materials in college English also lack new ideas, and there are many out of dated essays as listening comprehension texts. Oral English textbooks and translation textbooks are still a "black hole" in college English textbooks. They should prepare translating textbooks that are suitable for students' needs and enhance students' English practical ability to establish a correct outlook on life and values and improve students' personality.

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The Characteristics of Language in Cosmetic Advertisements

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Abstract—Advertising plays a vital role in the development of society and economy. Its function can not be underestimated. Advertising language is a special applying language when it compares with others like literary and technological languages. It has become an indispensable part of daily life because of its particular characteristics. It makes a brief introduction into the definition, function of advertising at first in this paper. Then, it mainly summarizes and analyzes the linguistics characteristics of cosmetic advertisements at lexical, rhetorical levels and sentence structure. Through the analysis of cosmetic advertisements, the linguistic features of advertisements are summarized. It is important for people to understand the beauty of language in advertisements.

Index Terms—advertisement, cosmetic advertisements, linguistic characteristics

I. INTRODUCTION

Advertisements play an important role in people's daily life. We can see the advertisements on TV, on the newspaper, on the internet, in the movie even on the buses. Advertising has pervaded in human's daily life. Everyone can see or hear many advertisements everyday. The market share of one particular cosmetic brand has much to do with the effect of advertisements. Manufacturers take advertisements as one of the most powerful "weapon" to open the market and promote their products. Advertising is beneficial for manufacturers to increase profits, manage attitudes and social values. It also makes great contributions on shaping people's life style. Moreover, advertisements influence our language, culture and psychology.

Advertisements are made up of three types of information: audio, optical and language. Usually, audio, language and visual collectively function in promoting the brand. In the writer's opinion, the information given by language is more exact. For this reason, this paper will introduce the linguistic characteristics of cosmetic advertisements at lexical, structure of structure, rhetorical. There is a literature review at the beginning. In the end, there is the conclusion. The key of this paper is the middle of three parts, that is, respectively analyzes the linguistic characteristics of cosmetic advertisements at lexical, the structure of sentence and rhetorical levels. From the data analysis, the writer provided the conclusion of the thesis.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this part, the basic concept of advertisements will be discussed first. It contains the definition and role of advertising, the meaning of cosmetic advertising language will be introduced as well. In the last part, the studies on cosmetic advertisements and cosmetic advertising language at home and abroad will be reviewed.

A. Definition of Advertising

The word "advertising" originate from the Latin word "adventure", which means to catch the public's attention and lead them to certain direction, the advertisements become fashionable since the end of the 17th century. Advertising is "a form of communication for marketing and used to encourage, handle or convince listeners (sometimes a specific group) to continue or take some new actions. Although ideological and political advertising is also usual". Another well known definition is "the non-personal communication, which is usually forceful and paid for in nature about commodities, services or ideas by specific organizers though the variety of media" (Zhaojing, 1991, p.1). These two definitions share some similarities: Advertisements are non-personal linguistic form. They contain mass media. It is used to communicate information or persuade potential audience.

The definition mentioned is related to commercial advertisements, which is one classification of ordinary advertising. Another classification of advertising is public service advertising. Even though public service advertising also values a lot in the society, it isn't discussed in this paper. Instead, commercial advertisements, especially the cosmetics advertisements will be discussed in this paper. It includes foundation makeup, body cleanser, sun screen, facial cleanser, puff cake, perfume, toner, lotion, cream, and so on. Because of the particular characteristics of cosmetic advertisements, there are differences between cosmetic advertising language and other types of advertising language.

As a special kind of speech behavior from the definition of advertising, the purpose of advertising is to encourage the audience to continue or take some new action. Persuading and informing are two main functions performed by advertising (Crystal and Davy, 1983). Many scholars hold the idea that the two functions of advertising are not of equal

importance. People use advertising to present certain information about their goods to the public, in order to persuade the audience to make choices or take actions. The purpose of presenting message of advertiser is not for expanding audience's knowledge, but a preliminary for the function of persuasion. The advertisers need to consider the needs, income, psychology, gender, culture when they pass the information to the potential consumers. That's the final purpose of advertisements. The language in an advertisement must be able to "attract attention, motivate desire, evoke interest, create conviction and get action" (Vesterguard&Kim, 1985, p.49).

B. *The Definition of Cosmetic Advertising Language*

The word "cosmetic" derives from the Greek word "kosmetikos". And it firstly appeared in 1605. When we relate to the cosmetic products, many kinds of products such as day cream, make-up, night cream and so on. But they aren't enough. According to Webster's Third New International Dictionary (1993, p.514), cosmetic is defined as "a preparation(except soap), preserving, or changing the appearance of a person as for conditioning, cleansing, coloring."

The aim of the study is combining the previous definitions of advertising and cosmetics, cosmetic advertising language can be defined as follows, "As a special one type of advertising, cosmetic advertising language can be a non-personal communication of information between the potential consumers and advertisers (especially women), which includes the title and contents of cosmetic advertising and aims to make their cosmetic brand, products and service known to all and urge the consumer to buy their products through the media." The basic function of cosmetic advertising language is providing some information about products, persuade to make choices and take some actions at last, peculiarly to buy products.

C. *The Research Situation at Home and Abroad*

The advertising industry is prospered in England at the end of 17th century. After that, scholars are interested in this area. The English linguist Leech studies the characteristics of advertising language from the view of semantics. Vesterguard and Kim (1985) studies advertising language from the view of macroscopic. The research about advertising language at home appeared in the late 1980s. Qin Xiubai(1986) studies advertising language from stylistics. Huang Guowen (2002) studies advertisements in discourse level. There are also scholars who studies advertisements in economic area or psychological point of view.

When Huang Guowen published his *Problem-Solution Pattern in Cosmetic Advertising* in 1997, the study of cosmetic advertisements caught scholars' eyes quickly. Besides, many scholars are interested in cosmetic advertisements and fruitful researches are produced from other various fields. The earliest cosmetic advertisement is produced by the American cosmetic company. The same as other varieties of advertisements, conventional structure of cosmetic advertisements contain a headline, the main part, company information and the brand name. More and more cosmetic advertisements cover two or more elements we mention above. There is one common characteristic of cosmetic advertisements: take the female as the target audience. Williamson believes the cosmetic advertisements not only to promote the products to the female consumers and their expectation but also have a more attractive image.

Comparing with other types of advertising language, cosmetic advertising language has its own unique features. Firstly, the female features in the language are obvious. For example, pursuing of nature, beauty, safety and so on. Secondly, the advertisers use adjectives to meet the demand of the potential consumers. At last, there are many color words in cosmetic advertising language. According to the research, we find that like the other special linguistic forms, cosmetic advertising language has its unique features in structure of sentence, lexical levels and so on. In summary, cosmetic advertisements are one type of advertisements, spread some information to the potential consumer and its ultimate goal is to convince them to buy cosmetic products through some medias.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

This paper analyzes the linguistic characteristics of cosmetic advertisements at lexical, the structure of sentence and rhetorical levels reference to former research findings and survey methods respectively to provide the language of cosmetic advertisements for a certain help. It includes research purpose and research methods.

A. *Research Purpose*

A successful advertisement is to make consumers want to buy, so to attract consumers, advertisers must carefully consider the language of advertising. In fact, the success of an advertisement does not lie in the application of a certain factor of voice, vocabulary, grammar and pragmatics. It is often a combination of factors that can create a successful advertisement. So this thesis is carried out from vocabulary, grammar, syntax, pragmatics and other aspects to make some contributions to achieve the success of the cosmetic advertisements.

B. *Research Methods*

Firstly, the literature method is used in the research, through the classification of the related literature. Secondly, the way of classification through mastery of content about topics, and some data collection and collation are used in the research to make the whole process of classification. Thirdly, the action research method is used in the survey, it tries to classify all kinds of cosmetic advertisements, which generalizes the characteristics from the aspects of vocabulary, the structure of sentence and rhetorical levels, then continue to explore and summarize to draw general conclusions.

IV. THE ANALYSIS OF CHARACTERISTICS OF LANGUAGE IN COSMETIC ADVERTISEMENTS

This part will introduce the characteristics of language in cosmetic advertisements from vocabulary, rhetoric and sentence structure aspects.

A. *The Vocabulary in Cosmetic Advertisements*

Nowadays, the pace of living is becoming quicker and quicker with the development of technology. However, few people is willing to slow down to read a piece of advertisement carefully. The advertisements in our lives are usually composed of only a few words. As a fashion industry, vocabulary in cosmetic industry has its unique features.

1. The Use of Adjective

In the study of cosmetic advertisements, adjective appears mostly in cosmetic advertising language. That is to say, adjective is an indispensable part for cosmetic advertisements. Adjective is the core. The examples will be listed as the following:

- (1) Expose your glamorous side, your stunning, luminous, brunette goddess side. (Shampoo Advertisement)
- (2) Discover a dermatologist's way to reveal fresh, new, healthy skin. (L'Oreal Advertisement)
- (3) Lip so moisturized, they can silky, soft, smooth. (L'Oreal Lip Color)

Obviously, these cosmetic advertisements contain a high proportion of the adjective than general English article. Some are habitual collocation, these adjectives rarely appear in daily spoken English. For instance, "smooth, silky, soft, fresh, new, healthy" often appear in the skin cream advertisements, "fragrant, fresh, pure" always can be found in the perfume advertisements. Nearly everyone of us can bolt out two or three adjectives used in advertisements. This is still determined by the function of advertisements--to promote the brand. Therefore, at least it should let consumers know two things: what is the product and how is the product. Furthermore, adjectives used in cosmetic advertisement are usually at the superlative degree. There is an example for this: Defend your blonde from the attack of every day residue and stay your lightest and brightest, your best blonde ever. (Sheer Blonde Shampoo Advertisement) We know that light and bright should be the common feature of shampoo. In order to show the advantage of the present similar products, the advertiser accepts adjectives in the highest level.

2. The Use of Verbs

In the study of the verb of cosmetic advertising language, a significant observation shows that as long as it doesn't affect the understanding of this whole article, cosmetic advertiser don't use verbs. There are many cases of cosmetic advertising show that verb almost be omitted. The examples will be listed as the following:

- (1) Sheer brilliance. A shiny kiss of crystal color. (Channel Lipstick Advertisement)
- (2) Fragrant as fresh-peeled Lime, fresh as nature itself, frothy lure lime shampoo. (Lime Shampoo Advertisement)

There is a common feature in cosmetic advertisements, that is, verb doesn't appear in the advertisements. Verbs simple using is another significant feature in cosmetic advertising. The book of the famous British linguist Geoffrey Leech once summarized the top-pest 20 verbs used in cosmetic advertisements, they are make, protect, discover, build, provide, feel, show, help, clean, love, keep, wear, wash, bring, give, use, take, look, need, like. All of them represent an actual action and are easy to understand and remember. This is resulted from the function of advertisements. Cosmetic advertisements are the ways of publicizing and promoting a brand, which means it should make consumers catch the focus meaning at their first sights. If the word used is so unfamiliar that the reader needs to ask a dictionary for help, the advertisements limit the range of potential consumers and fail to reach the desired effect.

3. The Use of Phrase

The noun phrase with synthesis of modifiers and verbal phrase is simplified. Some verbal phrases still include more than one word, on this occasion, the advertisers often use the following structure: verb+object+object complement. This center word of the structure is a simple verb. Although the function of verbal phrase in cosmetic advertisements is very important, verbal phrase doesn't described in this paper, it mainly considers the function of noun phrase and different functions of adverbial phrase in the process of communication.

3.1 Noun Phrase

The complexity of noun phrase is one of the significant features of cosmetic advertising language. Cosmetic advertisers try to use the minimum number of words to describe the products and service. This goal is mainly achieved by noun phrase. A center word and multiple modifiers often appear in cosmetic advertising language. For example: fast-foaming, quick-acting shampoo; natural, a fresh, healthy-look pressed powder and water-based liquid makeup. It is worth noting that the noun phrase in the cosmetic advertising language loaded with multiple modifiers. Although the excessive modification of noun phrase can catch the reader's attention, the concentration can not be quickly understood.

3.2 Different Functions of Adverbial Phrase in the Process of Communication

Adverbial phrase is not as important as other phrases, but also take the most seat in cosmetic advertising language. It usually expresses a certain attitude, place, time, purpose and result. Adverbial phrases can be divided into four different forms: 1) conjunctive adverbs, such as "because, even if, why, when" and so on. 2) adverb phrase, such as "feeling lovely and cheerfully, stay fresher, taste so good" and so on. These adverbs are similar to the adjective, virtually play the role of verbs. 3) because of its play to the function of adverbs, so these adverbs with prefix is called adverbial phrase. 4) collective adverbs, such as "every day, any time".

B. *Rhetorical Analysis of Cosmetic Advertising Language*

As a major kind of linguistics, rhetoric is a useful and interesting way to convince people. The cosmetic advertising language is a quite forceful language. Therefore, there are a lot of rhetorical devices in cosmetic advertisements. The suitable use of rhetorical devices is sure to enhance the artistic and strengthen the expressiveness. Now, the writer will appreciate these wonderful sentences in cosmetic advertisements.

1. The Use of Metaphor

In the cosmetic advertising language, metaphor is mainly used to improve the convince of information. A metaphor makes comparison to describe a word or phrase is same as another things. It is another way of comparison. The comparison in metaphor is a more implicated way, people need to use more wisdom to find the beauty of metaphor. The examples will be listed as the following:

(1) A perfect storm. And in body copy it suggests: Max-wear Lip color makeup that a weathers storm and create one too. (Max Lipstick Advertisement)

(2) More moisture, and what a relief--same addictive feel. The signature line is “never go thirsty again” (CLINIQUE Skin Cream)

In the example (6), the advertiser links the lipstick to the implied meaning of storm. More interesting is the word “storm” appear three times in the advertisement, it is quite a perfect storm, weather storm, create one,. This advertisement can be understood as Max lipstick can protect lips from weather. On the other hand, Max attracts the opposite sex. The example (7) is an advertisement of skin cream. In this case, the example implies that the skin without moisturizer feels like thirsty. Metaphor is widely used in perfume advertisements. For instance, “A seductive gathering of lush fruits and sumptuous flowers.” The word “seductive” is interpreted as perfume is attractive, which draw the interest of potential audience.

2. The Use of Metonymy

Metonymy is substitution of one thing by another. Metaphor and metonymy play important roles in linguistics, which is substitution of one word by another word. However, these two kinds of rhetorical devices play different roles in linguistic. Metonymy mainly refers to the similar of different things, and metaphor mainly refers to the connection between the two. The appropriate use of metonymy makes the image more impressive. The examples will be listed as the following:

(1) Head & Shoulders Extra Fullness is a dream.

(2) Advanced Radiance beats that lost-sleep look by instantly softening appearance of fine lines and shadows and helping brighten skin for a look that’s five years younger!

(3) Thank goodness for Head & Shoulders Ultimate Clean.

These examples are cosmetic brand name, but it is sure to represent the cosmetic products. Brand name and product connect in a domain. This is the traditional application of metonymy in cosmetic advertising language. Except for the general metonymy, people can find creative metonymy in cosmetic advertisements. For example, a perfume advertisement for male “Backham fragrances--a new fragrances for man”. David Beckham is a excellent football stars, he represents the charming. In this advertisement, “Baceham” is a brand of perfume, and it represents a kind of perfume.

3. The use of Personification

Personification makes the things which don’t have the behavior and emotion that people have be same as people. Examples include ascribing human emotions to force of nature and describing jinn with human form. The use of personification can perk up the cosmetic advertising language and make it more vivid and attractive. The examples will be listed as the following:

(1) With OLAY mousse Cleansers you can also moisturize or refine the look of pores, even fight aging appearance.

(2) Your skin will love to drink it.

(3) Hair color remover, So lighten up and have fun with your hair.

(4) CLINIQUE will tell you something scientists know--UVA protection is important, but just no longer enough to prevent signs of aging.

(5) Promise your nail a new future.

After reading these examples, the characteristics of cosmetic advertisements can be found, they are endowed with actions as human being. For example, “OLAY can fight aging appearance”, “have fun with your hair”, “CLINIQUE can tell you something” and so on. In addition, there are some human behavior and emotion are also used in cosmetics advertising language, such as “skin love to drink it”, “nail has a new future”. Through the personal way, it makes advertisements more interesting and helps people to create personalized products. Thus makes the personal products more acceptable.

4. The Use of Parallelism

Parallelism sentences have used to express a same idea in English and Chinese languages, emphasize the language potential, emphatic rhetorical devices. It is such a ordinary literary device. And it is hardly ever noted as a figure of speech. And this device is widely used in cosmetic advertisement to strengthen people’s impression towards certain brand and features of its product. The examples will be listed as the following:

(1) I will never forget her kiss, her smile, her perfume. (Channel No.5)

(2) As real as breathing, truth is the only word to be remembered, truth is a free face, truth is the perfect after

deposition. (Sofnon Advertisement)

These advertisements use parallelism and the advertisers use simple words over and over again to achieve the effect of easy to remember, give their consumers deep impression. Such as, the word “her” appears several times in the advertisement to enhance people’s impression towards their products. It is easy to appear the advertisements in people’s brain when they choose and buy the product. By this means, advertiser improve the competitiveness of their products in the same type of products. This is a very powerful “weapon” to promote their products.

5. The Use of Pun

The pun is a way of word that shows the meaning of two or more by using plenty of meanings of words, in order to achieve rhetorical function and intended funny. Puns may be identified as conventional structure, given that their meaning is totally local to its culture and a particular language. The same sentence may have two different meanings, however it represents expression. That is to say, puns need many words and phrases to understand. Puns used by comedy writers for a long time. And in cosmetic advertising, it also claims a special manor. The examples will be listed as the following:

- (1) Dior addict. (Dior Lip color Advertisement)
- (2) Enhance the eyelids, smoothing deep wrinkles, flashing big eyes. (Eye Cream)
- (3) Be fair to your complexion. (Dermacare Whitening Cream)
- (4) Who cares if your hair is different? Sunsilk care with three special shampoo. (Sunsilk Shampoo Advertisement)

In the first example, addict has two meanings. On the one hand, it introduces the function of the lip gloss--attract the opposite sex. On the other hand, it highlights the features of product, only a can of Dior make you addictive, other lip gloss can not. In the second example, the word “big” has two meanings. One is the meaning of the original word and the scope is at a very high level. The other is the meaning of adjective, that is, compared with “small”. And in the example (19), “big” means eyes become bigger after use the product. The use of the word not only perks up the cosmetic advertising language, but also helps the consumers know the function of product to achieve desired result. In the fourth example, using the word “care” has two different meanings. The first word “care” is a verb. The second “care” is a noun.

6. The Use of Rhyme and Alliteration

Rhyme is a repetition of the same sound or similar sounds in two or more words, usually on the last syllable in poems and songs. And the cosmetic advertisements also use the rhetorical device. Rhyme serves as a powerful device to remember. And rhyme is pleasant to hear. The use of rhyme helps to mark the end of the syllable. And the listener knows the syllable structure. Advertisers use rhyme in their advertisements to draw the attention of potential consumers. Besides, the advertisers use alliteration in their advertisements to achieve the function of persuasion.

Alliteration derives from the Latin word “litera” meaning “letters of the alphabet”. Alliteration has beautiful effect. And alliteration is not only used in poetry, but also in the title of book especially in cosmetic advertisements. The use of alliteration in cosmetic advertisements will strengthen customers’ impression of the products and persuade the audience to make choice or take action. The examples will be listed as the following:

- (1) A piece of soap is so special, it’s made for your face being a smooth silky skin.(Soap Advertisement)
- (2) Avon-- the more beautiful shop in town.
- (3) Minimize lines; maximize your savings.
- (4) Slip, Slop, Slap. (Slip on a shirt, sloping on some sun-screen lotion, and slapping on a hat.)

In the example (22), the use of alliteration are “a soap so special” and “a smooth silky skin”, it emphasizes the characteristics and function of product. In the example (23), as one of the world’s most prominent cosmetics company’s advertising, it has already known very well by us. The use of two “s” shows the position of the company and highlights the features of company. In the example (24), the aim is essentially to promote product at lower price. In the fourth example, advertisers persuade consumer use the product to protect their skin from UV rays.

C. The Sentence Structure in Cosmetic Advertisements

It is obvious that word is not enough to make a piece of good advertisement. Another feature of cosmetic advertisement is its sentence structure. The sentence structure in cosmetic advertisements tremendously differs from that used in other estrogen and situations such as in novel, prose and drama.

1. The Use of Primitive Sentence

It is sure that a sentence that can occur in our mind at any time and any place must be a short and simple sentence. According to a scientific research, man can quickly grasp the focus meaning of a sentence and repeat it shortly after listening to it when it is formulated by less than 24 words. If we have a glimpse over the sea of cosmetic advertising, we can find that the most of them are only a line of words. The examples will be listed as the following:

- (1) Lime--fragrant, fresh, pure.
- (2) After cleansing, smooth on, rinse off, like conditioner. (OLAY Body Lotion)
- (3) Leave pores detoxified, leaves skin purified.
- (4) For the new dew look Nivea vanishing cream with eucerite.
- (5) No wonder, Neutrogena is recommended most by dermatologist.

These are representative simple sentences. The kind of expression is extremely concise. In present society, no one will spend an extra period of time analyzing and understanding what an advertisement wants to say and this requires a

sentence in the advertisements to be short. The characteristics of cosmetic advertisements are closely related to its function. And another reason why the expression in advertisements is concise lies in the high cost of a piece of an advertisement. Pick up the TV advertisement as an example, a company has to pay millions yuan for a second and this thus force the expression in advertisements to be concise and effective.

2. The Use of Imperative Sentence

In our daily life, imperative sentences are used for suggest, ask or order others to do something and recommend. And this feature of imperative sentence meets the demand of advertisements which aims to make consumers pay for the product. At the same time, imperative sentence also features for being able to cut the point directly and make consumers know its meaning within several seconds. Therefore, there is no wonder that we can meet many imperative sentences in the world of cosmetic advertisements. The examples will be listed as following:

- (1) Come experience the word...As you've never experienced it before...(OLAY)
- (2) Don't be afraid. Don't worry about travel in summer. (Nivera)
- (3) Perfect you most extraordinary eye-catching blonde. Daily use refreshes and perfects treasured highlights, revitalizing all shade blonde.
- (4) Let skin young twice a day

These examples show that the advertisements bring a cordial feeling to us. Our hope and desire to enjoy product or service will be evoked immediately. Words and phrases like let's, enjoy and go ahead possess tremendous power of calling for people to take actions. This is useful strategy to promote sales.

3. The Use of Question

The natural curiosity of people drives them to pay more attention and think more deeply when they meet something they do not know. And if the answer is showed to people finally, it will usually stick in their brains. And the use of question takes the advantage of this feature. Firstly, it throws a question to you deliberately and wakes up your curiosity, and then it gives you several sentences to promote the product. The examples will be listed as the following:

- (1) Is her skin really this beautiful? Don't you love being a woman? Max Factor.
- (2) Who cares if your hair is different? Sunsilk cares with three special shampoo.
- (3) Why your skin drink it down so quickly? (OLAY)

These examples show that the advertisements wake up our curiosity. The first example lists a group of two questions to catch the attention of woman. Firstly, it lists a question "Is her skin really this beautiful?" Secondly, it continues to ask question, then it answers the question. Max Factor makes people have beautiful skin. Each woman wants to have beautiful skin, so they get a lot of attention to keep beauty. Under these circumstances, woman will buy and use the products. The example (37) is a very simple question, nevertheless, it contains much implication. Please note the word "quickly", which means the function of the products. And then she will wonder that what is the difference between this one and other similar products, what kind of new technique is used in the product, at the end of these questions she will want to have a try on her own and answer these questions by herself. This is a useful strategy to attract consumers' attention.

V. CONCLUSION

Cosmetic advertising language, as a rapid development of fashionable jargon, has affected many consumer's consumption concept and buying behavior. The rapid development of cosmetic advertisements demands in-depth researches in this area. By analyzing the lexical, structure of sentence and rhetorical levels of cosmetic advertisement, the writer finds out the characteristics of cosmetic advertising language. Based on the previous discussions and analysis, the major findings in this paper will be briefly summarized in what follows.

The advertisement is a kind of text which combines informative function, expressive, aesthetic and vocative functionality in one. Its multiple functions determine that cosmetic advertising language has its own features. Along with the analysis of the paper, the writer finds that cosmetic advertisements make the language concise, interesting, more informative and euphemistic. Those aspects are the embodiment of the functions in cosmetic advertising language, with which the language could be more persuasive and attractive. And the cosmetic advertiser could use more effective advertising language to promote their products. Meanwhile, the proper cosmetic advertising language could benefit the consumers in the following aspects: get more useful information within the limited time or space, enjoy this special kind of communication.

The paper on the whole makes a deeper research. Efforts have been made to find out how the cosmetic advertising is extraordinary through the analysis of three aspects: lexical, rhetorical devices, sentence structure. At lexical level, simple words that show the functions of cosmetic is preferred. Besides, other ways of word formation such as phrase are also widely used in cosmetic advertisements. At rhetorical device, it plays an important role in making the words more beautiful. At syntactic level, in order to make the expression more short and concise, simple sentence takes the most seat in cosmetic advertisements. Question, imperative sentences are also adopted to achieve certain effect.

In conclusion, cosmetic advertisements, as a specific genre or discourse, can show many things, such as ideological and many cultural features as well. This investigation is only tentative attempt. As the ability of the author is limited, the data collection also has certain limitation, so the weak point herein is unavoidable. It is requested that earnestly fellow teachers to give the criticism to point out mistakes.

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Improving EFL Students' Speaking Proficiency and Motivation: A Hybrid Problem-based Learning Approach

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Abstract—The present study used a Hybrid Problem-Based Learning (H-PBL) approach for teaching a Speaking Course to the First-Year students of the English Department at Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia. Previous research has proved the currently inappropriate teaching approaches and the lack of motivation to be the most significant reasons for EFL students' poor speaking proficiency. The lack of motivation is due to the traditional, rigid and tedious teaching techniques adopted in speaking classrooms and partly due to the standardized curriculum of the speaking course where there is no scope for instructors to change their teaching approach or introduce new ideas in the curriculum. The H-PBL approach has been proved to be an effective model for teaching language skills; however, the existing literature still lacks an actual action plan or a methodology to introduce this approach as a pedagogical remedy for motivating EFL students and improving their speaking proficiency. The study addressed this gap by recommending the use of H-PBL approach in EFL speaking classes. The study used a pre-post speaking proficiency test, a students' motivation questionnaire, interviews and observation sheets as data collection tools. Results revealed that the H-PBL approach has a positive effect on improving the students' speaking proficiency, students' motivation significantly increased and, eventually, students tended to be more self-directed and independent. Instructors also applauded the use of H-PBL approach but recommended adapting the curriculum and the teaching strategies to support this approach.

Index Terms— H-PBL, speaking proficiency, motivation, teaching strategies

I. INTRODUCTION

Speaking is a major language skill that EFL learning programs have sought to develop to enable students to express their ideas appropriately and to communicate successfully. Speaking proficiency has become evidence that learning a language is achieved (Glover, 2011). However, speaking is considered the most challenging skill in mastering a language because of its spontaneous nature and the implementation of conventional teaching approaches that emphasize memorization and students' passive role (Shabani, 2013). On the contrary, research has revealed that improving speaking proficiency requires students' vigorous involvement in the learning process and a supportive environment that triggers students' motivation.

In response to the calls for involving students in the learning process, various approaches and methods based on the constructivist approach of learning are being adopted, such as Project-Based Learning, Task-Based Learning, Cooperative-Learning and Problem-Based Learning (PBL) (Ammar, 2005; Juvova et al, 2015). These methods have been developed as a reaction to memorization or rote-learning as well as to teacher-centered approaches that focus only on the transmission of knowledge from teachers to students. PBL, the focus of the present study, is believed to be suitable for current EFL settings because students, through this approach, find an opportunity to communicate, work together and collaborate to solve complicated and authentic problems. This approach has been proved to motivate students' learning process and facilitates the acquisition of language skills (Li, 2013). Moreover, it is claimed that PBL approach has the potential to help students with poor language skills as it has been an effective teaching approach used for enhancing productive skills in very difficult situations (Lian, 2013).

PBL has gained much currency among educators not only as a teaching approach but also as a radical philosophy that seeks to change the theory of teaching and learning (Bueno et al, 2015). It is described as the most outstanding educational innovation in the 20th century (Jonassen, 2011). In this regard, the strength of the PBL approach resides in the following points: (1) relying on a reliable theory in the field of cognitive psychology; (2) calling for an active and central role of students; (3) minimizing the over-dominant role of instructors; (4) advocating self and peer assessment instead of teacher's assessment; (5) fostering students' critical and creative thinking; (6) relating learning to real world problems; and (7) enhancing students' motivation (Savery, 2006).

The main objectives of PBL approach are to structure new knowledge by creating an environment in which students can employ their previous knowledge with the one acquired during their problem-solving sessions (Barrell, 2007), to develop flexible and extensive knowledge, to foster the acquisition of problem-solving and reasoning skills (Uden &

Beaumont, 2006), and to support autonomy and self-directed learners who rely on their intrinsic motivation (Hmelo et al, 1994). In other words, in the PBL approach, real learning takes place when learners practice problem-solving skills and develop their language skills. PBL approach was first introduced at McMaster University as an experiment model to evaluate whether learning acquired in school was relevant to future career (Barrows, 1986). With the implementation of the PBL approach, students were required to first identify problems and then attempt to resolve them through inquiry and exploration. This necessitated that they learn key concepts and strategies necessary for resolving problems.

Wu (2006) illustrates that the PBL approach can be implemented in full and in a hybrid or guided mode. The former type requires students to define the problem through exploration and understanding the scenario; to learn on their own, with teacher only facilitating and prompting them to give further clarification and explanation. No lectures are given by the teacher. Eventually, students are required to work independently to offer best solutions to the problems under study and justify them. On the other hand, the hybrid mode, first introduced in Harvard Medical School (Armstrong, 1991), takes a case-based approach wherein the teacher presents the problem case-scenario contextually, delivers lectures to explain basic concepts, defines its theoretical perspectives and divides students into groups requested to determine the problem(s) based on the facts, identify the issues and propose the best solutions based on their newly acquired knowledge and skills.

The H-PBL approach is based on constructivism which postulates that learners' attitude, behavior and overall learning are based on their prior knowledge. According to Gijbels and Loyens (2009), constructivism considers learning the ultimate outcome of the interaction between learner's current knowledge and new experiences acquired by the learner from the environment. Thus, the constructivists adopt a student-centered learning approach in which students are actively involved in a process of new knowledge construction (Liang & Gabel, 2005). Similarly, Ben-Ari (2001) observes that, in order to construct new ideas or concepts and to pave the way for real interaction with prior knowledge, a learner must be involved consistently into an act of mental balancing instead of obtaining information directly from the teacher. In this regard, learning environment plays a major role as it allows the learners to gain learning experiences (Taber, 2000), to retain learning and to improve problem-solving, critical and creative thinking skills (Neo & Neo, 2009). On the contrary, the constructivist approach is often criticized for minimizing the role of the teacher in the learning process to guiding students throughout the learning process and creating a supporting learning environment to enable them to construct knowledge.

Exploring what a student is expected to do in a H-PBL approach is of paramount significance. According to Jaleniauskiene (2016), the H-PBL approach requires that the individual student should participate actively in his own learning and undertake the responsibility for identifying his or her learning needs and achieving the desired outcomes. Simultaneously, the students are expected to use the H-PBL approach with interdisciplinary, additional learning resources and apply measures, such as critical thinking, fun learning experiences or any contextualized issues to understand and gain knowledge, thus introducing the concept of hybridity (Norman & Schmidt, 1992). Being interdisciplinary in nature and by introducing the concept of hybridity, this approach also allows a simultaneous development of analytical and professional skills in the learners, which is difficult to achieve with conventional teaching methods.

In conclusion, the study aimed at investigating how the H-PBL approach can be utilized to create a learning environment that will not only facilitate the improvement of students' speaking proficiency but can also result in positive changes in their motivation too.

A. *Problem of the Study*

It has been observed that the majority of English majors at Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University encounter difficulties such as poor speaking skills, reluctance to participate in conversation, fear of committing errors, lack of confidence, and lack of English speaking peers or social circles, which can help them to hone their speaking potential. In addition, most of the students are passive recipients of data as they take no initiative in participating in activities, such as English club, seminars, language workshops which are intended for the enhancement of their speaking proficiency.

Another aspect of the problem is that Saudi EFL students are less motivated to learn English (Alfawzan, 2012; Alajmi, 2014; Aslam, 2014; AlKaabi, 2016). All these studies are unanimous that Saudi EFL students' lack of motivation for learning English is due to the traditional teaching approach that prepares learners only for mid/end term examination and the learning outcomes are test-oriented rather than cognitive. The current teaching practices pay much attention to grammatical rules, rote learning or memorization, translation of texts to facilitate teaching of skills courses without being concerned with students' motivation for learning English. Moreover, students' low motivation has a negative effect on their academic achievement in speaking tests (AlKaabi, 2016).

Given all the aforementioned practices, there is a need to change the teaching practices in speaking classrooms. The researcher argues that the H-PBL approach rather than the traditional lecture-based approach is more pertinent to resolving the issues. However, this would not be an easy task due to a few challenges and constraints. The H-PBL approach would require a longer duration to prepare lecturers and lab sessions; instructors need to be trained on the implementation of this approach, particularly its methods of delivery and post-teaching assessments; the students, too, have no exposure to this new approach as their past learning was based on the conventional approach during their high school.

B. *Questions of the Study*

This study sought to address the following questions:

- 1- What is the effect of using a H-PBL approach on improving Saudi EFL students' speaking proficiency?
- 2- What is the effect of using a H-PBL approach on improving Saudi EFL students' motivation?
- 3- What are the teachers' and students' perceptions of using a H-PBL approach in teaching a speaking course?

C. *Hypotheses of the Study*

The study was based on the following hypotheses:

- 1- There would be statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group in the post-test of speaking proficiency in favor of the experimental group.
- 2- There would be statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group in the post-application of students' motivation questionnaire in favor of the experimental group.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. *Students' Role versus Teacher's Role in PBL*

According to PBL, a student-centered approach, students take charge of their own learning whereas instructors assume the role of facilitators in an endeavor to: (1) scaffold students via modeling and active implementation of questioning strategies; (2) provide sufficient guidance to guarantee students' smooth progress in the different stages of PBL (3) monitor students' performance and exchange of their feedback; (4) encourage students' implementation of reasoning skills; and (5) decrease the amount of scaffolding when students display willingness to and competence in constructing their learning (Hmelo et al., 1994; Torp & Sage, 2002). However, teachers face two serious challenges in implementing PBL. First, difficulty with constructing the problems as they should meet a number of criteria such as addressing students' interests, challenging students' thinking potentials, relating to students' real-life needs and serving as a means for meaningful communication (Larsson, 2001). Second, the target language is used as a means for discussing and solving the problems. This means that students should have sufficient language proficiency. Otherwise, students will be frustrated and demotivated.

B. *Using PBL to Improve Students' Motivation*

Reviewing previous studies shows that the PBL approach seeks to provide learners with more choices, autonomy and self-determination to keep them motivated (Mossuto, 2009; Li, 2013). For instance, Mossuto (2009) in his empirical study found out that using PBL in which learners studied in interactive groups and their learning depended on open-ended tasks was significant in triggering students' thinking throughout the learning process and keeping them highly motivated. Razzak (2012) introduced the PBL approach in an educational psychology course in Bahrain to identify the factors that cause students' lack of motivation. Data were collected by monitoring students' performance in group presentations. Findings showed high satisfaction with PBL and improvement in the learning outcomes. Similarly, Huang (2012) experimented PBL in EFL classrooms in order to examine its feasibility in real situations. Four variables were qualitatively investigated including students' attitude, satisfaction, motivation, and self-achievement. Findings revealed that students' attitude toward learning was positive and their motivation level was significantly high compared to the traditional group.

C. *Using PBL to Improve Speaking*

In EFL context, several studies were conducted to assess the effectiveness of the PBL approach in developing speaking skills (Ahlfeldt, 2003; Solaina, 2013; Rohim, 2014). Ahlfeldt (2003), for instance, examined the use of PBL approach in contrast with the traditional learning approach. Results of this study hinted that PBL was a more effective method of instruction as learners prepared better speeches than students who learn in traditional classrooms. It was also found out that students in PBL were involved in text and the course material that helped them to cope with their speaking anxiety, which was not the case in traditional classrooms. Rosalina (2013) implemented PBL approach in an EFL university speaking class in Indonesia. Her study revealed that the use of PBL not only improved students' speaking skills but also positively affected the other relevant components such as grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Similarly, Rohim (2014) implemented PBL approach to improve speaking skills of a heterogeneous group comprising multiple nationalities. His research employed a mixed method approach using action, observation, and reflection during the experiment. The findings revealed a significant improvement in the students' speaking skills.

Finally, it seems that no study was conducted on the implementation of the H-PBL approach in EFL settings. This necessitates attempting this recommended teaching approach since much attention has been paid to students' active involvement in the learning process. This study, having taken into account the results of previous ones, aimed to fill the gap by exploring the possibility of implementing the H-PBL approach in the context of EFL speaking classroom and to examine how the H-PBL approach can be adopted to improve Saudi EFL students' speaking proficiency and to motivate them to learn English.

III. METHOD

A. Research Framework

The present study employed the H-PBL approach in teaching a speaking course to accomplish at least two main objectives derived from the problem under investigation. In other words, the two objectives were to improve EFL students' speaking proficiency and to find ways to motivate them for learning English. The major concern of the present study was to investigate the relationship between motivation and improvement of students' speaking proficiency. This is consistent with the arguments made by researchers that motivation is responsible for acquisition and development of language skills in EFL; more than a good curriculum and skilled and experienced instructors (Wang, 2008; Murphy & Alexander, 2000; Dornyei, 2008; Li, 2013). Hence, improving students' speaking proficiency and motivation to learn English are the two main foci of this study. In addition, it was also necessary to investigate instructors' and students' perceptions of the H-PBL approach; this constitutes the third objective of this study.

B. A Mixed-method Approach

The present study used the mixed method approach whose two components, qualitative and quantitative, are combined to verify a judgment (Onwuegbuzie et al 2012). The study commenced with the quantitative approach by administering a pre-post test for both groups sampled for this study and proceeded to the qualitative approach, after setting the results of the quantitative analysis through a statistical assessment. The rationale for using the mixed mode is to be consistent with the recommendations of Teddlie and Tashakkori (2008) who confirmed that the use of the two methods concurrently will lead to more accurate results.

To recap then, the former phase, the quantitative phase, was dedicated to understanding the first two variables of the study, namely students' speaking proficiency and their motivation for learning English. In the latter phase, the qualitative approach was used for data collection through individual semi-structured interviews and class observations of the first phase as significant predictors of the usefulness of the H-PBL approach to study the three variables, including the instructors' perceptions of H-PBL approach. Hence, the former phase of this study was exploratory and adopted a quantitative approach while the latter phase was confirmatory of the new data and followed a qualitative approach. The mixed approach helped to avoid the so-called methodological monism, or using a single research method (Creswell, 2014).

C. Sample of the Study

This research employed a homogenous sampling strategy (Creswell, 2014) that enabled a purposeful, convenient sampling to identify respondents of the same membership of a subgroup having pre-defined characteristics. This sampling technique also assisted in the selection of the research site, that was, Prince Sattam Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia. The participants were selected based on several pre-identified characteristics; one case is that they must be EFL learners registered in the First Year of the English Degree Program since the speaking course is offered only at this level to all students of the English Dept. As a part of the protocol, all participants were asked to sign an approval form to guarantee that they were willing to participate in this research. In addition, the researcher demonstrated the objectives and the expected outcomes of this research. In short, sixty students from the English Department participated in the experiment, after having divided them into two equivalent groups (control vs experimental).

D. Tools of the Study

I. Test of Speaking Proficiency (TSP)

The test aimed at measuring the speaking proficiency of first year students at the Department of English, Prince Sattam bin Abdul Aziz University, Saudi Arabia. The TSP took the shape of oral presentations in which the participants' speaking proficiency was assessed through a set of criteria to determine whether the level of communication would improve after implementing the H-PBL approach. The assessment criteria included, besides speaking fluency, testing vocabulary and grammar structures, understanding what is asked, and adopting a pronunciation and intonation intelligible to speakers of the English language. Therefore, a 4-point rubric was developed for scoring the test (see Appendix A). Four criteria were used to assess students' speaking proficiency: (1) fluency, (2) pronunciation, (3) vocabulary and (4) grammar. Each criterion had a maximum score of four points; therefore, the maximum score for the test was 16 points. Two experienced professors volunteered to participate in scoring each student's speaking proficiency. They rated the student's speaking proficiency independently, using the scoring rubric designed by the researcher. Prior to the experiment, an orientation session on how to assess students' performance based on the rubric was conducted by the researcher. Inter-rater reliability was 0.89, which indicates a high level of reliability. To determine content and face validity, the test and the 4-point scoring rubric were submitted to a panel of ten EFL experts whose comments and amendments were considered in the final version of the test. Thus, it was concluded that the test is a valid instrument for measuring the students' speaking proficiency.

II. Students' Motivation Questionnaire (SMQ)

To assess students' motivation, the researcher prepared a questionnaire that included 25 statements in its initial version. Students were requested to respond to each statement on a five-point Likert Scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questionnaire was submitted to a panel of experts to determine its suitability for measuring students' motivation. The questionnaire, in its final version, consisted of 20 items (see Appendix B). Thus, it is an approved, validated and appropriate tool for measuring students' motivation. The reliability of the SMQ was

established via the test-retest method. In the pilot stage, the questionnaire was administered twice on a sample of 20 students excluded from the main sample of the study. There was a four-week interval between both administrations of the questionnaire. An Alpha Cronbach's correlation coefficient of 0.88 was calculated. Moreover, an internal consistency reliability check was computed and it was found that the alpha coefficient for the SMQ was 0.90.

III. Instructors' and Students' Interviews

Interviews with the participants and the instructors were carried out to investigate the instructors' and students' perceptions of using a H-PBL approach for teaching a speaking course and how the H-PBL approach was effective in improving the students' speaking proficiency. The open-ended questions were chosen to assess the students' and instructors' perceptions (see Appendix C). These qualitative interviews provided in-depth data about the informants' reflective experiences which could not be identified during their oral presentations.

VI. Procedures

At the beginning of the first semester of the academic year (2017/2018), two classes of 30 students each were chosen. The first class employed the traditional approach of teaching the speaking course while the H-PBL treatment was applied in the second class. At the end of the semester, the two groups were post tested. Students were required to deliver presentations after the experiment was over. These students were also interviewed to explore the difficulties and anxieties they faced in learning the speaking course. In addition, instructors were also interviewed to obtain their feedback about EFL students' speaking proficiency and motivation and how far the implementation of H-PBL was effective in improving students' speaking proficiency.

The experiment commenced with conducting the pre-test on the two groups: Group A (traditional method of teaching) was the control group and Group B (H-PBL method of teaching) was the experimental group. To serve the purpose of this study, a model similar to the Edwin Bridges' Problem-Stimulated PBL (PSPBL) model (Bridges, 1992) was implemented in teaching the speaking course offered to the first-level students at PSAU, Saudi Arabia. Since the main goal of PSPBL was to develop domain-specific skills, this model suited the objectives of this study. This model helped the researcher to find various means to enhance Saudi EFL students' speaking proficiency, means that were far below expectations. Moreover, PSPBL was also a suitable model in the context of this study since students were not motivated to learn English and a need arose to use novel techniques for engaging the students.

According to this model, and pertinent to H-PBL approach, the lessons were presented in the form of a problem. In other words, each lesson took a case-based approach, following the original Harvard model (Armstrong, 1991), in which both the teacher and students understand problem contextually based on facts, define hypotheses and suggest best possible solutions through newly acquired learning. For example, Unit 2 of the Textbook dealt with Internet dangers and harmful effects of access to the Internet 24/7 and addiction of kids to laptops, tablets, smartphones, and game consoles. The students were asked to treat it as a problem and convert it into a case, formulate hypotheses, and find out solutions to reduce the chance of child victimization. The students conducted group discussions to understand the problem. It was quite clear that students used their prior knowledge as they brainstormed ideas into different hypotheses to explain the problem. During this activity, all students of the group were encouraged to speak. The researcher used such a model over the whole semester to teach all the units of the textbook. (Appendix D)

During teaching sessions, classroom observations were carried out by the teacher. The value of using observation was to give teachers an opportunity to see directly what students do rather than to rely on what they claim they can do (Dornyei, 2007). However, these observation sessions were more of a reflective assistance, not an evaluative tool (Yin, 2014). Then the researcher also informed the students in the follow-up interviews to comment on some of the learning incidents observed in their oral presentations, which helped frame the themes and sub themes of this study.

Throughout the semester, data were collected through oral presentations, semi-structured interviews and observations. The multiple tools enabled the researcher to perform a methodological triangulation of data in the end. All oral presentations and the interviews were recorded to prepare transcripts. The transcripts of both interviews and oral presentations used the analytical coding method (Linda, 2011) which necessitated reading and re-reading line-by-line to gain familiarity with the data. While reading the transcripts of both interviews and oral presentations, the data were coded into categories and themes using Miles and Huberman's (1994) Concurrent Flow Model which required reducing different types data not in linear manner but simultaneously as themes and sub-themes happening over and over again. This analysis enabled the researcher to draw relationships between data sources and make themes more visible and retrievable. Gradually, the data sources became saturated and themes and categories were more refined enabling the researcher to understand general patterns and relationships emerging from the data.

The process of thematic analysis is often directed by the grounded approach proposed by (Glaser & Strauss, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1994) and is most suitable and informative particularly in the fields of educational and cultural research. Therefore, the thematic content analysis of the transcripts of students' oral presentations and interviews (instructors and students) was a useful primary data technique not only to assess how H-PBL approach motivated Saudi EFL students and improved their speaking proficiency but also to assist in assessing the instructors' and students' perceptions of the adoption of the H-PBL approach in contrast with the traditional approach. The method eventually helped the researcher to identify themes based on the categorization and clustering of the factors that were emerging from the transcripts from both groups. These themes were distributed in clusters and termed as pre-identified characteristics of the Saudi EFL students as they were the primary participants of this study. Last but not the least, the

method helped the researcher to make a close examination of the perception of the participants in both groups as they experienced events in their “multiple contextual factors” (Creswell, 2102) with a constructivist approach and with participatory perspectives (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). As the last step, findings were compared between group A (traditional approach) and group B (H-PBL approach) to examine how the H-PBL approach improved Saudi EFL students' speaking proficiency. Although the researcher had made homogenous sampling, comparisons were still made between the responses within the themes and across all themes to determine which responses corroborated or contradicted each other.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Results of Speaking Proficiency Test

By the end of the experiment, the TSP was administered on the sample to test the first hypothesis of the study. This hypothesis predicted statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group on the post-application of TSP in favor of the experimental group. An independent-samples t-test was used to compare the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group on the post application of TSP. The results, displayed in Table 1, showed a statistically significant difference in the scores for the experimental group ($M = 13.06$, $SD = .691$) and the control group ($M = 6.80$, $SD = .961$); $t(58) = 28.985$, $p = 0.01$ in favor of the experimental group. These results showed a positive effect of the H-PBL approach on improving the students' speaking proficiency and the difference between the two groups is due to the implementation of the H-PBL.

TABLE 1.
INDEPENDENT-SAMPLES T-TEST RESULTS OF THE DIFFERENCES IN THE MEAN SCORES BETWEEN
THE CONTROL GROUP AND THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP ON THE POST APPLICATION OF TSP

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Control	30	6.80	.961			
Experimental	30	13.06	.691	28.985	58	0.01

The experimental group students' speaking proficiency improvement in terms of fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar, as presented by their scores on each item compared to the students of the control group, is displayed in Table 2. The mean score of each item on the experimental group students' post-test is higher than that of the control group ($M = 2.83 > 1.73$ for fluency; $M = 2.80 > 1.66$ for pronunciation; $M = 3.63 > 1.63$ for vocabulary; $M = 3.80 > 1.76$ for grammar). Further analysis showed that the students improved mostly in grammar (M difference = 2.04) whereas fluency witnessed the less improvement (M difference = 1.10). Moreover, the results revealed that using H-PBL resulted in a statistically significant improvement in all aspects of speaking proficiency.

TABLE 2.
INDEPENDENT-SAMPLES T-TEST RESULTS OF THE DIFFERENCES IN THE MEAN SCORES BETWEEN THE CONTROL GROUP AND THE EXPERIMENTAL
GROUP ON THE POST APPLICATION OF TSP IN TERMS OF FLUENCY, PRONUNCIATION, VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR

TBWS	Control Group		Experimental Group		t	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
Fluency	1.73	0.44	2.83	0.37	10.24	0.01*
Pronunciation	1.66	0.47	2.80	0.40	9.87	0.01*
Vocabulary	1.63	0.49	3.63	0.49	15.80	0.01*
Grammar	1.76	0.43	3.80	0.40	18.81	0.01*

Note: * $p < .01$

B. Results of Students' Motivation Questionnaire

The results of post application of SMQ showed that students of the experimental group were highly motivated compared to their counterparts of the control group. This confirmed the second hypothesis of the study that predicted statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group on the post-application of SMQ in favor of the experimental group. An independent-samples t-test was used to compare the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group on the post application of SMQ. The results, displayed in Table 3, showed a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of the experimental group ($M = 86.70$, $SD = 4.77$) and the control group ($M = 33.30$, $SD = 4.77$); $t(58) = 43.34$, $p = 0.01$ in favor of the experimental group. The results indicated a positive effect of the H-PBL approach on improving students' motivation.

TABLE 3.
INDEPENDENT-SAMPLES T-TEST RESULTS OF THE DIFFERENCES IN THE MEAN SCORES BETWEEN THE CONTROL GROUP AND
THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP IN POST APPLICATION OF SMQ

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Control	30	33.30	4.77			
Experimental	30	86.70	4.77	43.34	58	0.01

Moreover, a positive correlation between the level of students' motivation and their improvement in speaking proficiency was found. Thus, it could be concluded that motivation is a prerequisite for a significant improvement in students' speaking proficiency.

The data analysis of students' oral presentations and subsequent interviews and a careful examination of the interviews transcripts by the instructors revealed three main findings (themes) and six secondary findings (sub-themes), corresponding to the variables identified in the research framework of this study. Figure 1 exhibits these main and secondary findings.

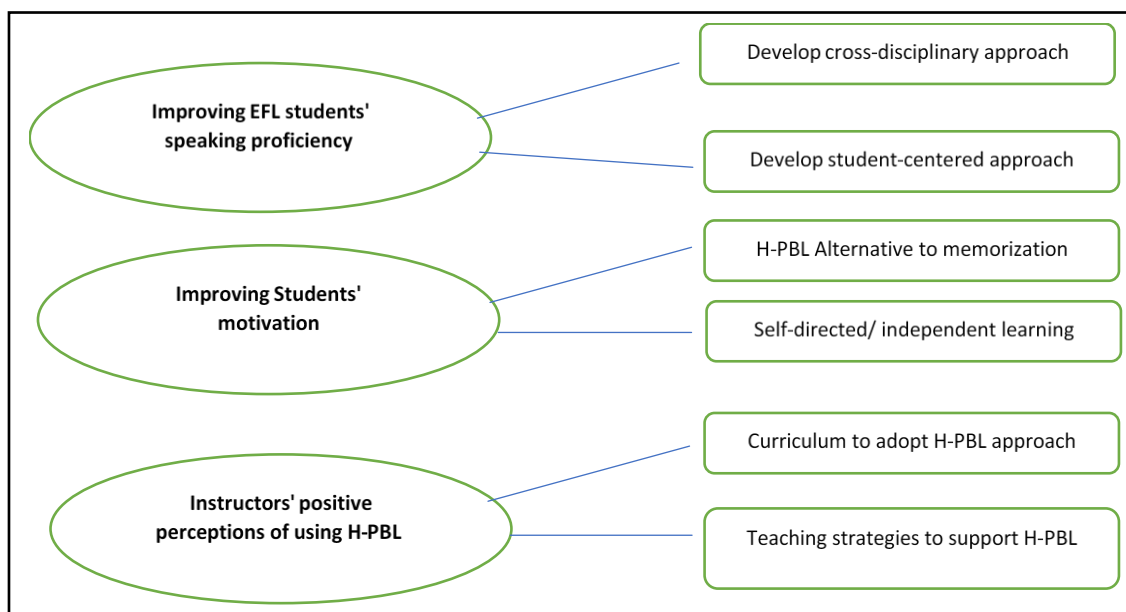


figure 1. Themes and sub themes of the H-PBL approach found in this study

As the figure reveals, the first major finding of introducing the H-PBL approach is improving EFL students' speaking proficiency. This was made possible mainly through two methods: a cross-disciplinary approach and a student-centered approach, which are ideally suitable for the H-PBL approach. The second set of findings of this study emerges in the form of improvement in students' motivation which was sub-divided into two categories for ease of understanding. That is, H-PBL is seen as an alternative to memorization or retention of learning and it encourages self-directed or independent learning to develop English speaking proficiency. The third cluster of findings was in the form of instructors' positive perceptions of the H-PBL approach with two sub-divisions: first, the curriculum must be adapted according to the new H-PBL learning and second, teaching strategies must support the H-PBL approach.

Students' motivation was explored when the students were asked whether they felt more motivated to learn speaking by using the new teaching approach, how far the new teaching technique suited their ability and which teaching approach they would prefer, the traditional lecture-based learning or the H-PBL. The main objective to ask such questions was to obtain information on how the H-PBL approach motivated participants for learning English and what was students' level of motivation for learning the Speaking course before and after implementing the H-PBL approach. Students admitted that in the beginning they faced multidisciplinary problems while trying to practice English speaking skills; e.g., they faced problems of memorization and retention but then the H-PBL was seen as an easy alternative. The researcher found that the H-PBL was referred to several times during the interviews, so it was acknowledged as the first sub-theme of motivation. Thus, many students admitted that H-PBL was the most convenient way to get rid of memorization habits and help in the retention of the lessons. Moreover, a few informants also mentioned that H-PBL helped them with self-directed learning. When H-PBL approach was employed, students could engage themselves in a learning process that improved their oral communication skills along with other activities such as analyzing and synthesizing the lectures. This was taken as the second sub-theme because H-PBL promoted self-directed learning and ensured the initiation of a lifelong learning process to.

C. Results of Instructors' Interviews

These interviews took place after the completion of the experiment. The purpose was to identify teachers' perceptions of the use of the H-PBL approach. Almost all interviewees accepted that H-PBL approach was definitely a useful approach but they emphasized that while using the H-PBL approach it was necessary to innovate without sacrificing the best of the traditional. According to them, prior to implementing the H-PBL approach, it was necessary to make two changes: first, to prepare a customized hybrid curriculum to adapt to the PBL approach and second, to identify the teaching strategies that support the H-PBL approach. The rationale for suggesting a hybrid curriculum of the speaking course was that it might encourage self-directed learning for the students and give enough opportunity to

the teacher for discussing cross-disciplinary concepts. Thus, they admitted to what the student-informants had already commented on during their interviews. The instructors also emphasized that a revised curriculum of the speaking course would increase active learning and decrease students' passive learning or memorization that happened in the traditional method. For this purpose, the instructors suggested reducing the number of lectures from the traditional curriculum and introducing more tutorials, workshops and lab activities to ensure more interactive presentations. Their second suggestion related to identifying such teaching strategies that would support the H-PBL learning. The rationale for making this suggestion was that H-PBL approach involved teaching difficult concepts. In addition, the focus was also laid on getting the desired learning outcomes, making positive changes in learners' behavior, and developing speaking skills in particular. Hence, the instructors recommended identifying a range of carefully planned teaching strategies for integrating all pedagogical elements required for the PBL approach. These findings are consistent with those of previous studies (e.g., Distlehorst et al 2005; Huang, 2012; Li, 2013).

V. CONCLUSION

This study posits a few interesting facts about H-PBL approach. First, it was revealed that H-PBL, if used in a discipline-specific situation such as teaching a speaking course, would prove to be a good initiative for introducing this new teaching approach. Second, in a problem-based approach, students address the problem without any prior preparation which interestingly motivates them. The problem may be presented to them as a complex, very ill-structured, challenging and pragmatic one. But it was observed that students are able to discuss and analyze the problem to determine and locate the resources to solve it. Thus, they develop their skills independently in a self-directed way, either individually or in a group. Eventually, students develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning and they work independently of one another. The researcher concluded that the H-PBL approach proved to be an effective way to improve EFL students' speaking proficiency and motivation.

The present study had certain limitations too. First, the generalization of the findings may not be applicable to all skills courses as this research was conducted only in the context of a speaking course in the undergraduate program of PSAU, Saudi Arabia. Second, the data were collected from a very small sample size, confined to PSAU's English Department. It would have been more credible if the study sample was collected from 4 or 5 different universities around Saudi Arabia and also from two concurrent academic semesters to determine its vast application, transferability and application beyond time measurements. Factors such as gender, age, educational backgrounds and level of language comprehension represent another limitation of this study. These factors were not explored in this study as they were outside its scope of investigation but can be investigated and explored in further research.

Two main challenges faced the researcher in carrying out the present study. Changing students' learning style and perceptions of the learning process represented the first challenge. Students, under the conventional method of teaching, expected to receive the learning material from the teacher without any real participation or serious efforts. Thus, encouraging students to be involved in problem-solving was not an easy task. Gradually, students succeeded in adjusting themselves to learn, act and work collaboratively according to the new conditions. Changing the instructor's role from transmitter to mentor/coach represented the second challenge as many difficulties arose: developing the instructor's coaching skills, redesigning the content of the course to match the requirements of H-PBL, tailoring immediate feedback on students' progress and crafting evaluating tasks.

This study has wider perspectives as the H-PBL approach could be applied to other areas of language learning. Future studies should be carried out to explore the possibility of applying the H-PBL approach to other skills and courses such as reading, writing, grammar and vocabulary. Eventually, faculty development programs and workshops are recommended to train instructors on how H-PBL approach could be implemented successfully.

APPENDIX A. SPEAKING PROFICIENCY GRADING RUBRIC

Aspect/Criterion	1 Poor	2 Satisfactory	3 Good	4 Excellent
Fluency	Students speak very slowly, pauses are frequent and lengthy, breakdowns are detected and hesitation impedes possible communication.	Students are often slow and incomplete sentences are used. However, students are able to process the speech.	Students' speech is almost smooth. However, some hesitation and repetition may take place with little effect on the comprehensibility.	Students speak fluently and smoothly. They are able to develop speech/topics appropriately. Hesitation and reluctance are avoided.
Pronunciation	Students lack the right pronunciation rules. No efforts are detected to use the right accent. Understanding is hard to be achieved.	Students commit frequent pronunciation errors and create some difficulty to the listener.	Students commit some pronunciation, inflection, rhythm and intonation errors. However, these minor errors do not create misunderstanding.	Students use the right pronunciations, inflection, rhythm and intonation. They use a native like accent.
Vocabulary	Students are unable to use suitable words to express their ideas. Lack the appropriate vocabulary impedes them from producing the right response.	Students use basic/limited vocabulary choice as variety and richness are lacking.	Students use accurate vocabulary. Repetition of some words may be detected. Students are still able to express their ideas clearly.	Students use rich and precise vocabulary to express their ideas eloquently. Idiomatic language is used accurately to enrich their speech.

Grammar	Students are unable to use correct grammatical rules and are hard to be understood by others as mistakes impede communication.	Students commit many mistakes that they are unable to correct, fail to use varied sentence structures and accurate tenses, and	Students commit some mistakes. However, they are able to correct themselves and this does not negatively affect the comprehensibility of their speech	Students show mastery of grammatical rules. They use varied sentence structures and accurate tenses.
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APPENDIX B. STUDENTS' MOTIVATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Read the following statements and choose the number that best matches your opinion of each statement.

1. Strongly disagree 2. Slightly disagree 3. Neutral (Neither agree nor disagree) 4. Slightly agree 5. Strongly agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1. English is my most favorite subject					
2. I persist in using English even if I face difficulties					
3. I exert much effort to be fluent in English					
4. Learning English inspires me					
5. I plan to improve my English language skills					
6. Attending English classes is really great					
7. I like listening to people speaking English					
8. I try to speak English for the praise of the instructor.					
9. I like reading English articles and watching English movies					
10. Communicating with English native speakers is interesting.					
11. I study English diligently as it will help me to get a good job after graduation.					
12. I study English diligently to prepare myself for higher studies after graduation.					
13. I'm more confident in using English compared to my colleagues.					
14. I like to learn more about different aspects of English language					
15. I do my best to understand oral and written English					
16. If it is my decision, I would devote more time for studying English					
17. Studying English contributes positively to my personal development					
18. English is a major component of the College program					
19. I plan to attend more English classes in the future					
20. Conducting some mistakes while using English does not impede me from communicating with others in English					

APPENDIX C. STUDENTS' AND INSTRUCTORS' INTERVIEWS

Students' Interview

1. Did the new approach employed in the course motivate you?
2. How and when did you and your group members get motivated –during discussions, reading for the text, speaking?
3. Are you still motivated to continue your learning skills even after the completion of this class?
4. Do you think that the assigned learning goals have been achieved with this new teaching approach?
5. Did this class address your learning needs and learning outcomes?
6. Do you prefer the old teaching approach or the new one? And why?
7. What do you think is required to become a good speaker in English?
8. In what way has the new teaching approach improved your speaking proficiency?
9. Do you think the new approach will affect your performance in class (e.g higher GPA)
10. Do you think the new approach can be employed to study other courses as well e.g Reading and Writing, Grammar and Vocabulary?

Instructors' Interview

1. Which teaching approach do you prefer the traditional teaching approach or the H-PBL? Why?
2. Do you think that H-PBL suits the students' ability?
3. Do you think that students became more motivated to learn English in the new teaching approach that you applied this semester?
4. Do you think that students' speaking proficiency improved as a result of implementing the new teaching approach?
5. Do you recommend this approach to teach the speaking course in EFL at Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University?
6. Do you think the text books are adequately designed to suit the H-PBL approach?
7. Do you think the current curriculum and credit system adequately designed to suit the H- PBL approach?
8. Do you think the instructors are adequately trained to adopt the H-PBL approach in their teaching?
9. How much time do you think will be required for the students to completely switch over to the new teaching technique?
10. What are the advantages and challenges of using the H-PBL approach in the context of this university?

APPENDIX D. SAMPLE H-PBL LESSON PLAN

Stage	Content	Teaching/Learning Activities	Teaching/ Learning Outcomes
Stage 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaking Course overview • PBL introduction • Accent/ Pronunciation orientation • Group formation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronunciation, Accent etc. samples taken of students to determine their current level of performance (Peer/ group discussions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great academic environment built up to implement PBL approach • Problems identified
Stage 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recall of Problems identified in the last stage • Instructor draws a table consisting of four columns: (1) Facts (2) Problems (3) Hypotheses about cause and effect and (4) Learning objectives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learning objectives explained; focus to be on PBL approach • Instructors discusses facts / problems/ various causes and effect (e.g Cultural barriers; words meanings; Hesitation; Fear of failure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement and Task focus; • Learning starts: Pronunciation and accent clarity encouraged; Loud and clear reading, Problems understood • Schematic representation of problems & their explanation
Stage 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group discussions of problem and methods used to solve it. • students encouraged to speak their mind 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group contributes their views and thoughts to problems identified. • Students raise relevant points from their prior knowledge to explain the problem, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • students motivated, interest and curiosity stimulated • students made to think deeply rather than just memorize • a framework designed to initiate the teaching based on PBL approach
Stage 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students need to acquire necessary knowledge about learning outcomes before course commencement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group agree on a set of focused and achievable learning outcomes. • Self-directed learning; private study and use of a wide range of resources Each student practiced to understand what work is to be done to achieve learning outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructuring prior and existing knowledge to identify gaps in understanding. • concepts are linked and priority areas identified. • students motivated to learn from several resources
Stage 5 Classroom teaching begins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real learning begins with H-PBL approach • Text based study focused on developing Speaking skills, pronunciation etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students listened to the audios and teacher explained correct articulation of consonants, vowels, diphthongs, etc. • Students practiced the articulation of the words Students used some variety in their voice (volume, rate, pitch, and rhythm, use stress and intonation) they emphasized key words (noun, verbs, adjectives and adverbs). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students were able to produce a stretch of spoken discourse that was grammatically correct • They assisted each other in understanding difficult concepts. • Critical reflection on the techniques achieved • Self-discipline and criticizing resources done

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Translation of Classics by JX Native Literati of Song Dynasty from the Perspective of Translation Aesthetics*

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Abstract—With the significant growth of China's comprehensive national power, Chinese culture should not only "bring in" but also "go out". Chinese culture is extensive and profound, and classical literature has reached its peak in the Tang and Song dynasties. Jiangxi has been full of natural resources and outstanding people since ancient times, especially in the Song dynasty, when people of talent came forth in large numbers and created brilliant heritage of classic literary works for their offspring. Therefore, study on the translation of classics by JX native literati of Song Dynasty has very important academic value, application value and popularization meaning. Based on the modern translation aesthetics theory, this paper discusses how English translation of Chinese classics represents the beauty and the aesthetic value of the original from the perspective of rhetorical devices, form, images, and emotion respectively, in the hope to carry forward Chinese classics and Chinese culture.

Index Terms—translation aesthetics, English translation of Chinese classics, aesthetic representation

I. INTRODUCTION

Jiangxi culture had been developing for hundreds of years from the Eastern Jin to the Sui and Tang dynasties, and had reached its peak in the Song dynasty. During the prime time of Jiangxi culture, the prosperity of literature was a prominent mark. The phenomenon of Jiangxi literature in the Song dynasty has formed a brilliant landscape in the course of Chinese history. According to *The Complete Works of Song*, there were 16813 literati in the Song dynasty, among which 1322 were from Jiangxi, including the leaders on the literature arena at that time, such as Ou Yangxiu, Wang Anshi, and Huang Tingjian. These brilliant literati's works have been the culture gems of the whole Chinese people, reflecting the beauty of the ancient Chinese, the aesthetic standards and aesthetic value that people pursued in the Song dynasty.

Many brilliant translators such as Xu Yuanchong and Wang Rongpei have translated Chinese classics to popularize Chinese culture. Their translation works, whether from the sound, word, and sentence of formal system or from the image and emotion of non-formal system, are rare aesthetic masterpieces. Classics translation has always been a heat topic of study, and scholars often discuss it from various points of view. For example, Professor Wang Hong (2015) has conducted massive research on the strategies of Chinese classics translation and dealt with the translation of Chinese classics under the contemporary context. Nevertheless, seldom scholars undertake a study on the translation of classics by JX native literati of Song dynasty. Based on this foundation, this paper takes some works by Jiangxi native literati in the Song dynasty as examples, and through the comparison of the source texts and the target texts, analyzes how the target language embodies the beauty and the aesthetic value of the original works from the perspective of modern translation aesthetics.

II. TRANSLATION AESTHETICS

It is generally acknowledged that western aesthetics begins in the ancient Greek period. Plato (427-347BC) is the first one who discusses aesthetics from the perspective of philosophical speculation, and he puts forward "beauty in itself", the relativity and absoluteness of beauty, and the theory of beauty and epistemology. Chinese aesthetics also stems from philosophy. The concept of beauty is proposed by Lao Zi (571-471BC), who believes that honest words are not beautiful, and beautiful words are not true; and pursues the beauty of nothingness. From then on, this notion has become the standard of translation, which can be embodied in the translation thought of Gao Shian (the buddhist scripture translator in the Eastern Han Dynasty) and Zhi Qian (the buddhist scripture translator in the Three Kingdoms Period). Xuan Zang (602-664) is an outstanding translator, who translated 1335 volumes of buddhist scriptures during

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19 years. The core of his translation theory is the beauty of sound, marking the acme of the ancient Chinese translation. The classical aesthetic propositions of these ancestors have special significance to the formation of modern translation aesthetics.

Chinese translation had been in downturn since the first peak of translation of the buddhist scriptures until the most famous translation theory "faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance" in modern China was put forward by Yan Fu (1898) in his translation of *Evolution and Ethics*, which indicates the second climax of Chinese translation. The "elegance" emphasizes the beauty of language. Before Yan Fu, Ma Jianzhong (1894) has proposed the theory of "good translation", striving to imitate the tone and the style of the original. Thence, the translators, such as Lu Xun and Lin Yutang have made the theory of "faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance" more firmly established in China. In the 1820s, Chinese translation theory changed rapidly, and literary translation was combined with aesthetics. The theory of keeping the charm of the original proposed by Zhu Shenghao; the meaning aptness rather than form identity by Fu Lei, and the principle of "transmigration" by Qian Zhongshu, all of these have advanced the development of translation aesthetics.

As early as the in the 1980s, Zhu Guangqian, a Chinese famous aesthetic master, has put forward the concept of "translation aesthetics". In 1992, *Comparative Aesthetics of Literary Translation* written by Xi Yongji is the first monograph on translation aesthetics in China, which gives affirmation to the artistic value and aesthetic value of the source language and the target language. In 1993, Qian Guanlian's *Aesthetic Linguistics* establishes the foundation for the formation of modern translation aesthetics theory, which elaborates the issues in linguists from an aesthetic point of view. In the same year, Fu Zhongxuan also published *Practical Translation Aesthetics*, in which he expounds the aesthetic subject and aesthetic object in translation, aesthetic activities and aesthetic standards, taking an important step for the construction of translation aesthetics. Liu Miqing (1995) published the book of *An Introduction to Translation Aesthetics* in Taiwan which triggered heated responses. Not only absorbing the research achievements of predecessors, this book also discusses the artistic and scientific significance of translation, the origin of translation theories, the problems of literary translation, translation aesthetic ideal and aesthetic representation and so forth. This book constructs a complete and scientific theoretical framework for the theory of translation aesthetics. Mao Ronggui (2005) further discusses the beauty of Chinese and English respectively and the fuzzy beauty of interlingual conversion in the translation process in his book *Translation Aesthetics*, which is the symbol of the maturity of translation aesthetics and expands the fields of translation study.

III. AESTHETIC REPRESENTATION OF BEAUTY IN TRANSLATION OF THE SONG CI BY JIANGXI NATIVE LITERATI

A. *Reproduction of Beauty in Rhetorical Devices*

The rhetorical devices, a collection of language expression methods, are used to improve the impressiveness and vividness of the language according to the needs of expression by modifying and adjusting the statement. The common rhetorical devices are: metaphor, personification, exaggeration, parallelism, duality, repetition, rhetorical question, and rhetorical question. Rhetorical devices are widely used in song lyrics, which are usually short in length but vivid in language. The figures of speech in song ci help to create a picturesque scene for its readers, and thence revealing the emotion of the authors.

Example 1:

The original:

黄庭坚 清平乐

春归何处，寂寞无行路。若有人知春去处，唤取归来同住。

春无踪迹谁知，除非问取黄鹂。百啭无人能解，因风飞过蔷薇。

The translation:

Celebrating Peace and Order^{[10](P. 59)}

Oh! Where is Spring?

I know not where to go in lonely dismay.

Would anyone who knows Spring's whereabouts kindly bring

Him word, requesting that he would with me stay?

Alas! Who knows, as no trace is to be found?

To seek th'oriole's advice I may well try.

Yet unfathomable's th'bird's twittering sound;

With a gust of wind o'er th'rose bush th'fowl does fly.

Analysis: In 1105, on the way of exile to Yizhou, Guangxi Province, Huang Tingjian wrote this piece of song ci to express his deep affection for spring and to reflect the political situation. At the beginning, the author expresses his ignorance of where spring has been and his desire to consult others. When no one knows, he asks the bird for help but in vain, in that the words of the bird are not intelligible to him, which is more disappointing than a question without a reply. The poet uses the Chinese characters "归", "行路" and "住" that are used to describe human to personalize spring. In the poet's eyes, spring is more than a season, it can be said as a man, or even a friend, who he wants to live with. The rhetorical device incarnates the author's affection for spring. Therefore, the translator should pay heed to the

personification of this lyric. “Personification is a rhetorical devices which attributes human characteristics to impersonal things, such as animals, inanimate objects, or abstractions. It is usually employed to add vividness to expression”. (Zhang, 2005, p.185). From the English version, it is obvious that spring has been translated as a person. The words “whereabouts” and “stay” accord with the original Chinese characters “行路” and “住”, then the words “him” and “he” explicitly indicate that spring is a man. Moreover, the sentence “唤取归来同住” is translated as “bring Him word, requesting that he would with me stay”. The translator adds the phrase “bring Him word” intensifying the personification of spring and showing the author’s nostalgia for spring. In a word, the translation reproduces the personification of the original, which not only reserves the beauty of rhetorical device, but also makes it easier for English readers to understand the poet’s pity for the past of spring.

Example 2:

The original

欧阳修 生查子

去年元夜时，花市灯如昼。月上柳梢头，人约黄昏後。

今年元夜时，月与灯依旧。不见去年人，泪湿春衫袖。

The translation:

Tune: Song of Hawthorn^{[6](P.152)}

Last festival of Vernal Moon,

The blooming lanterns bright as noon.

The moon above a willow tree

Shone on my lover close to me.

This festival comes now again,

The moon and lanterns bright as then.

But where’s my lover of last year?

My sleeves are wet with tear and tear.

Analysis: This piece of song ci describes the lovesickness. The first two lines portray a picture of the last Lantern Festival; the lantern fair bright as daylight, the moon, the willow tree, and nightfall create a romantic atmosphere for lovers to date. However, now the festival comes again, everything is the same as last year except the absence of my lover. It has the same effect as the “去年今日此门中，人面桃花相映红。人面不知何处去，桃花依旧笑春风”。 Through comparison between the two years, the happier I was, the lonelier I am. The English version also makes comparison between the Lantern Festival of this year and that of last year. In the first part “blooming lanterns”, “the moon above a willow tree” and “moon and lanterns bright as then” demonstrate the pageant of the festival in the past year. Amid this beautiful scene, my lover stood close to me. Although “my lover close to me” isn’t translated from word to word from the original, it’s safe to say that the translation embodies the happiness of the lovers dating on the evening of the Lantern Festival. As to the second part of this poem, the moon and lanterns are bright as last year, but “where’s my lover?” The rhetorical question has the effect of making the finishing point, not only retaining the comparison of the original but also highlighting the loneliness and lovesickness of the writer. The English version of this lyric fully represents the beauty of the original whether from the rhetorical device or from the emotional perspective, making the affection conveyed in the poem more vivid and genuine.

B. Reproduction of Beauty in Form

Form refers to the particular way something is, seems, looks or is presented. According to Liu Miqing (2005), material forms of aesthetic objects compose of the sound, rhythm and external appearance. Various literature genres have various forms. Song ci is a kind of music literature; the beauty of its rhythm is the most remarkable feature. And the characters are also visible in the external appearance; the upper stanza and lower stanza of song ci are often neatly symmetrical and repeated in the beautiful form. English poetry also has the beauty of form, and it lays emphasis on the beauty of sound; alliteration, assonance, and rhyme contribute a lot to the musical beauty of English poetry. As to the form of appearance, English poetry does not have strict requirement of the arrangement of words. Translators should pay attention to the differences between Chinese poetry and English poetry.

Example 3:

The original:

晏殊 蝶恋花

槛菊愁烟兰泣露(lu)，罗幕轻寒，燕子双飞去(qu)。明月不谙离恨苦(ku)，斜光到晓穿朱户(hu)。

昨夜西风凋碧树(shu)，独上高楼，望尽天涯路(lu)。欲寄彩笺兼尺素(su)，山长水阔知何处(chu)？

The translation:

Tune: Butterflies in Love With Flowers^{[7](P.73)}

Orchids shed tears with doleful asters in mist grey.

Silk curtain chill, a pair of swallows fly away.

The moon, knowing not parting grief, sheds slanting light

Though crimson windows all the night.

Last night the western breeze blew withered leaves off trees.
I mount the tower high and strain my longing eye.
I'll send a message to my dear,
But endless ranges and streams sever us far and near.

Analysis: This is one of the masterpieces of the ci writer Yan Shu, and is also one of the most famous works of song ci. Yan Shu makes great achievements and contributions in literature. He can write both poetry and ci in an elegant and gorgeous style; his works is lucid and attractive in language and melodious and harmonious in tone. Xu Yuancong is an outstanding translator who emphasizes the beauty of images, sounds and forms. The upper stanza and the lower stanza of song ci have the same sentence pattern and are equal in the number of the characters, which can be regarded as a parallel structure. "Parallel structures are delicate, well-structured, and rhythmic in tone, thus giving the reader or listener a profound impression and at the same time being able to emphasize the meaning in a more economical way of expression." (Zhang, 2006, p.149) From the English version, the complete sentence "The moon, knowing not parting... all the night" is divided into two lines to create a visually parallel structure, which resembles the literary style of the old English narrative poem. Poems are usually increased in the number of words and expanded in the form of appearance when they are translated into English, while Xu Yuancong retains the Chinese poetry's beauty of form through enjambment. "The sentence of Chinese poetry is generally not broken, but enjambment is in line with the rules and forms of English classical poetic composition, which is of the effect of fostering strengths and circumventing weaknesses." (Xu, 1984, p.90). In addition, the enjambment creates the conditions for the beauty of rhythm. Each line of the English version is also well-rhymed in the form of "aabbdd" /aɪ/, /aɪt/, /ɪə/ respectively, which not only concurs with the rhythm of the original but also makes the translation close to the English poetry. Therefore, the translation completely embodies the beauty of form of appearance and the beauty of sound both in Chinese and English classical poems.

C. *Reproduction of Beauty in Image*

The discussion about image in China dates back in the pre-Qin period when Wang Chong (27-97) introduced it into law and discipline rite. In the Southern Dynasty Liu Xie (465-520) first introduced the image as the concept of beauty into the poetics, and the image has been established in the poetics. The word "yi xiang" (image) is an important concept in ancient Chinese literary theory. The ancients thought that "yi" is the internal abstract thought, and that "xiang" is the external concrete object; "yi" is expressed by means of "xiang". Poetic creation is a process of observation, perceiving, reflection and expression, which is a process of representing life. The author has a feeling for the outside world, and he places it on a selected concrete image, which can be integrated into the author's own sentimental color, and creates a specific art world, so that readers can make a secondary creation in their heart according to the artistic world through reading the poems.

Example 4:

The original:

文天祥·《酹江月 和》
乾坤能大、算蛟龙、元不是池中物。
风雨牢愁无著处，那更寒虫四壁。
横槊题诗，登楼作赋，万事空中雪。
江流如此，方来还有英杰。
堪笑一叶漂零，重来淮水，正凉风新发。
镜里朱颜都变尽，只有丹心难灭。
去去龙沙，江山回首，一线青如发。
故人应念，杜鹃枝上残月。

The translation:

Libation to the Moon over the Hill^{[10](P161)}
Of all in the universe vast and wide,
The *dragon, which is not to be confin'd
To the little pond, is the only pride.
In addition to deep grief on my mind,
Crickets chirp in th'cell, rains pour and winds blow.
Oh, th'ambitions Cao who wrote a poem, spear in hand,
Turn'd into th'distress'd Wang who, atop th'tower tall.
Compos'd fu, and then all th'efforts melted down like snow.
Howe'er, like waters in th'rill, in this land.
More heroes are yet to come, after all.
As if a drifting leave I come to th'side
Of th'Qinhuai River again, at a time
When the north wind is puffed up with pride.

In the mirror no more signs of my prime
 Are left, yet royal the heart does remain.
 On my way north to Longsha, I back turn
 To see the lost territories that lie
 Like a ribbon blue, which does lend me pain.
 On th'tree at dim nights, friends who show concern
 'Bout me might see th'Unyielding Cuckoo cry.

*In Chinese folklore, the dragon is symbolic of sovereignty, magical power, or auspiciousness.

Cao Cao was king of the kingdom of Wei, who launched an expedition against the kingdom of Wu *and Shu, and composed A Short Song on deck of his man-of-war before the famous Campaign of Chibi(the Red Cliff)

*Wang Can wrote his fu Ascending the Tower to express his homesickness and feelings about the sufferings inflicted by war and social upheavals while staying in Jingzhou as a refugee at the fall of the Han Dynasty.

Analysis: Wen Tianxiang, the politician and national hero in the late Song Dynasty, has written many a poem with patriotism. This piece of song ci is written during the time of being captured with his friend Liu Yan because of the failure of the war. This poem includes various images to express his loyalty to his country and patriotic emotion. The Chinese characters “蛟龙” refer to those able men who are in a fix at the moment but will eventually get rid of all the troubles. The author uses this image to express his confidence and to encourage his friend. The translator adapts the word “dragon” which has negative meaning in western cultures, so he compensates it by adding a note to explain the meaning in Chinese folklore. “风雨” and “寒虫” are natural images, referring that the status quo is difficult for the writer and the chirping of the crickets makes the poet even restless. From the translation, these images are translated literally, The sentence “横槊题诗，登楼作赋，万事空中雪。”not only refers to two famous persons, Cao Cao and Wang Can, but also means that he and his friend Liu Yan, both of them will fade away like the snow in the course of history. The translator compensates the messages that are hidden in the original, which makes it more effortless for the target language readers to understand. As to the “江流”，“一叶”，and “杜鹃”，the translator also uses literal translation. However, the Chinese characters“残月” is translated as “dim nights”，creating a scene for the readers to feel the author’s longing heart to return his home. Owing to the cultural difference between English and Chinese, it is not feasible for English readers to completely comprehend Chinese classics. Therefore, when paying attention to being faithful to the original, the translator sometimes should compensate the underlying messages and add notes to explain the historical characters and events.

D. *Reproduction of Beauty in Emotion*

“Emotion is a core proposition in Chinese literature and art aesthetics, and people are driven by emotion to create beauty”(Liu, 2005, p.354). China is a country of poetry, from *The Book of Songs* to Songs of Chu, and to Tang Poems, Song Ci, and Yuan Qu, myriad of the poets melt their emotion in the beautiful Chinese characters. The emotion falls into numerous categories, including the homesickness, nostalgia, serving the motherland, retiring from the world and so on. Emotion is the soul of literature. If translators fail to reproduce the emotion of the original, the translation is bound to be unsuccessful and ineffective. Here an example is cited to make a tentative analysis.

Example 5:

The original:

晏几道 临江仙

梦后楼台高锁，酒醒帘幕低垂。去年春恨却来时。落花人独立，微雨燕双飞。
 记得小苹初见，两重心字罗衣。琵琶弦上说相思。当时明月在，曾照彩云归。

The translation:

Riverside Daffodils^{[7](P129)}

Awake from dreams, I find the locked tower high;
 Sober from wine, I see the curtain hanging low.
 As last year spring grief seems to grow.
 Amid the falling blooms alone stand I;
 In the fine rain a pair of swallows fly.
 I still remember when I first saw pretty Ping,
 In silken dress embroidered with two hearts in a ring,
 Revealing lovesickness by touching pipa’s string,
 The moon shines bright just as last year;
 It did see her like a cloud disappear.

Analysis: Yan Jidao, the representative of plaintive style poets, is called “double Yan” with his father Yan Shu. The style of his poems is similar with that of his father’s, but better. He is adept at describing the love life in concise and beautiful language and in smooth tone. *Riverside Daffodils* narrates the sentiment of missing when the author revisits the place where he first met his lover Xiao Ping. The first sentence describes the scene when the writer wakes up, which is the excellent point of this poet. The author does not explain his dream. Instead, he gives the rein of imagination to the

readers, which greatly increases the connotation and the attraction of the poem. Then “人独立” and “燕双飞” are in stark contrast, showing that the writer is lonely and misses his lover. In the second part, the poet recalls the scene when he first met Ping. The decoration on her dress indicates that this couple of lovers are closely attached to each other. At last, the moon doesn't change and has witnessed my lover disappearing like a flake of cloud. Although the whole poem does not express the lovesickness directly, the emotion flows out from every character. As far as the English version is concerned, Xu Yuanchong represents the genuine feeling of the poet. “locked tower high” and “curtain hanging low”, “alone stand I” and “a pair of swallows fly” are two sets of comparison, completely illustrating the loneliness and sentiment of missing of the writer. “两重心字” is translated as “two hearts in a ring”, which is very vivid to show that they fall in love with each other. The last sentence means that the moon which has seen my lover go away is still there. For some scholars, “彩云” is the symbolic of Xiao Ping, but some believe that it means that Xiao Ping is just like the cloud, even though she has disappeared, wandering in my heart like a flake of colorful cloud. Xu Yuanchong translated the second meaning, “see her like a cloud disappear”. Furthermore, he adds “shines bright” to modify the moon, thus the dolefulness of the writer is more obvious and concrete against this scene. The translator not only conforms to the beauty of form, but also represents the beauty of emotion of the original. “The pursuit of beauty” can be regarded as the soul of Professor Xu's translation practice and thoughts.

IV. CONCLUSION

Song ci, one of the most important ancient literary genre, is the representative of aesthetic pursuit of ancient Chinese. And Jiangxi native literati take an indispensable part in the realm of song ci. Although numerous scholars have studied the translation of song ci from different perspectives, few analyze it from the angle of translation aesthetics. In the viewpoint of the author, the soul of song ci is the beauty of its sound, form and emotion. Combining the translation of Chinese classics with the translation aesthetics can fully demonstrate the charm of song ci and provide a new angle for studying classics translation. Representation the beauty of the original classics should not only be the aim of translator but also the duty for popularizing Chinese culture.

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A Practical Study of the Cultivation of Innovative Foreign Language Talents in Colleges and Universities*

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Abstract—The cultivation of foreign language innovation talents must start from its concept. First of all, it is necessary to accurately understand the core concepts of innovation talents, foreign language innovation talents and innovative talent cultivation practice. The cultivation of innovative foreign language talent is a holistic design. It is the overall orientation and guidance of thought and spirit. It involves education theory, innovation theory, and talent development concepts. These categories boil down to basic theory and basic principles. Colleges and universities use this theory and principles as the basis, innovate in organizing various teaching elements to achieve the goal of cultivating foreign language creative talents. The cultivation of foreign language innovation talents is not composed of a single concept. In order to do a good job in cultivating foreign language innovative talents, we must accurately define the important concepts it includes. This article aims to cultivate the necessary foreign language talents for social development. It tries to integrate innovation training theory into talent education and eventually puts it into teaching practice.

Index Terms—innovative Foreign language talents, comprehensive quality, practical research

I. INTRODUCTION

With frequent cultural exchanges and changes in social needs, many countries are aware of the importance of the cultivation of innovative foreign language personnel. Domestically, there are also distinctive features in the cultivation of foreign language innovative talents. Some universities, research institutes, and foreign language experts have long recognized the importance and urgency of cultivating foreign language innovation talents. In particular, some foreign language research universities make use of good opportunities. Based on their understanding of foreign language innovation talents and their own objective conditions, they have learned from the successful experiences of foreign countries and adopted distinctive innovation training models. The emphasis is on both liberal arts and sciences, emphasizing the direction of scientific research in the cultivation of foreign language innovation talents, adopting a multidisciplinary model, and suggesting that foreign language teaching should be forward-looking and that teachers of applied disciplines should be taught to foreign language students.

Judging from the current status of our country's teaching practice, the basic theory of the cultivation of foreign language innovative talents has been recognized by domestic universities and has become one of the teaching goals for the development of domestic colleges and professional foreign language colleges in the future. Although foreign and domestic foreign language research scholars have made achievements, they have effectively promoted the construction of a practical system for the cultivation of foreign language innovation talents. However, from the existing foreign language teaching practice, there are still some problems and deficiencies. Moreover, with the development of the times, general education has become an important part of the cultivation of innovative foreign language personnel.

II. FOREIGN LANGUAGE INNOVATION TALENTS

The connotation of foreign language innovation talents is talents with innovative abilities in foreign language majors. Innovative foreign language talents have a good foundation in foreign language studies and have a deep understanding and mastery of the cultural background knowledge of the foreign languages they possess. They usually have knowledge and skill systems that include multiple disciplines, and can integrate professional subject knowledge and foreign language knowledge into one. Innovative thinking can deal with possible work problems with traditional and innovative work methods, and it has strong competitiveness after entering the society (Huang & Huang, 2016). Foreign language innovation talents have the following distinctive features: solid foreign language knowledge and application skills,

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careful logic judgment ability, and success beliefs. The composition of the knowledge system is not limited to the multiple majors of the foreign language major itself, and it has a sufficient level. The open way of thinking judgment is firm, and it extends to multiple professions related to the application of foreign languages, and has a sufficient level.

III. RESEARCH STATUS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE INNOVATION TALENT AT HOME AND ABROAD

With frequent cultural exchanges and changes in social needs, many countries are aware of the importance of the cultivation of innovative foreign language personnel. Nowadays, foreign institutions have made different experimental attempts to cultivate foreign language innovative talents based on their own understanding and objective conditions, and have achieved good results. The cultivation of foreign language innovation talents in the United States started from research universities. These schools use research centers and professional laboratories as training units, emphasize the cooperation between departments and colleges, and form joint training groups, stressing the cultivation of foreign language innovative talents in an interdisciplinary background (Li, 2011). In order to achieve the purpose of strong alliances, training characteristics is quick and takes up less resources. Different from the United States, the United Kingdom put the starting point into the daily foreign language teaching classroom, and gradually cultivated the innovation of foreign language talent through the setting of courses. Germany, as a powerful education country, starts from the application practice and provides students with a large number of opportunities in business practice, and takes the needs of the enterprise as the direction of teaching. In the foreign language course, the content of subjects such as philosophy, psychology, mechanics, etc. was added. The two countries have cultivated foreign language innovative talents from the perspective of academic research. They hope that they will inspire innovation in foreign language talent through research work. Some universities and foreign language schools in Japan have no longer taught individual subjects in foreign languages (Liu, 2015). Instead, they combine foreign language subjects with other subjects to form a unified subject teaching group. Adopt flexible teaching and use industrialized models to cultivate foreign language innovation talents that meet the requirements of Japanese society. Japan attaches great importance to practicality in the cultivation of foreign language innovation talents, emphasizing the cultivation of foreign language innovation talents based on the needs of society. It can be seen from the above that foreign universities and colleges are based on the actual conditions and needs of their own countries in the cultivation of foreign language innovation talents and adopt a joint training model, emphasizing the importance of practical teaching.

Domestically, there are also distinctive features in the cultivation of foreign language innovative talents. Some universities, research institutes, and foreign language experts have long recognized the importance and urgency of cultivating foreign language innovation talents (Mao & Wang, 2011). In particular, some foreign language research universities make use of good opportunities. Based on their understanding of foreign language innovation talents and their own objective conditions, they have learned from the successful experiences of foreign countries and adopted distinctive innovation training models. The emphasis is on both liberal arts and sciences, emphasizing the direction of scientific research in the cultivation of foreign language innovation talents, adopting a multidisciplinary model, and suggesting that foreign language teaching should be forward-looking and that teachers of applied disciplines should be taught to foreign language students. Some colleges and universities have taken the lead in trying to break the long-term foreign language education in the cultivation of foreign language students in our country has paid too much attention to the current situation of foreign language learning, increase natural science courses, use fresh and lively subject knowledge to stimulate students' brain cells. This approach is consistent with the evolution of foreign languages as a language itself. The results of educational practice have also cultivated many foreign language professionals with innovative qualities. In the practice of training foreign language innovative talents, some universities have achieved very good results. For example, Shandong University has introduced a new foreign language training model of "Foreign English + X", which is characterized by multidisciplinary knowledge teaching (Niu & Lu, 2015). It focuses on foreign language subjects and related applied disciplines, integrates teaching resources of multiple disciplines, and adopts a five-year system. The double-degree class has achieved outstanding results. The overall quality of students is obviously improved, and they are more willing to play their unique views. They can often produce innovative ways of thinking and dare to translate actual learning into concrete behaviors in social practice. Some province-level colleges and universities in Shandong Province believe that a comprehensive training model should be adopted at the basic teaching stage, stressing that foreign language innovative talents need to have two basic qualities, namely critical thinking ability and logical reasoning ability. We hope to use a specialized and innovative team of teachers to promote teaching and develop innovative foreign language teaching practices in the context of professional competence.

Judging from the current status of our country's teaching practice, the basic theory of the cultivation of foreign language innovative talents has been recognized by domestic universities and has become one of the teaching goals for the development of domestic colleges and professional foreign language colleges in the future.

IV. PRACTICAL EXPLORATION OF INNOVATIVE FOREIGN LANGUAGE TALENTS

From the perspective of the history of teaching reform, a foreign language school of a medical university has a relatively clear understanding of foreign language personnel training. It is specifically reflected in the formulation of teaching goals and has always kept pace with changes in society's demand for foreign language professionals.

According to the new requirements of the society for foreign language talents, new content is added to the syllabus. Especially in recent years, the demand for innovative talents in foreign languages has been increasing (Sun & Liu, 2013). The School of Foreign Languages recognizes the era and importance of the cultivation of innovative foreign language talents.

From the teaching practice point of view, schools and foreign language colleges have joined the relevant content of foreign language innovation talents in the formulation of the annual talent training program, and clearly put forward encouragement and cultivation of innovative spirit and innovation ability, and improve the training and cultivation of students' innovative thinking ability. Although the Foreign Language Institute has made efforts in the cultivation of foreign language innovation talents, the effect has also been affirmed. However, the concept of innovative talents is still not clear, there are no explicit guiding opinions, and there is no clear explanation for the concept of innovation consciousness (Wang, 2017). The College of Foreign Languages implements a credit system and stipulates total credits for foreign language students. In addition to compulsory courses, there are a large number of elective courses and reforms of current teaching. Although the current teaching content is still dominated by foreign language and literature, it also increases the content of foreign language application disciplines. The instructors are professional teachers. It also cooperates with the three colleges of law, management, and economics, allowing foreign language students to study courses at three colleges, and the credits they receive are directly credited to the total credits. Students are exposed to knowledge related to foreign language applications outside of this major. Although it cooperates with disciplines, the curriculum is still relatively small and cannot fully meet the needs of students (Wang & Ma, 2014). From the perspective of the breadth of knowledge, it is still relatively limited and the number of disciplines is small.

In the talent training program, it is clearly stated that the cultivation orientation of foreign language students includes education, economics, trade, foreign affairs, culture, science and technology, knowledge of economy, trade, and science and technology, and the formation of innovative thinking, clearly points out that we must have modern consciousness, and we must cultivate students' innovative spirit. Such as English majors, teaching content includes an introduction to linguistics, an overview of English and American countries, English literature, American literature, translation, interpretation, and cross-cultural communication. The Russian language professional has Russian national conditions, Russian literary history and selected works. Japanese language majors have an introduction to Japanese and Japanese literary works. To selected readings of DPRK literary works in Korea, Korean society and culture, history of Korean literature (Xia, 2015). In order to enrich students' knowledge system and expand their horizons, data analysis theory and information retrieval contents have been added to elective courses. Although the latest talent plan partially embodies the concept of cultivating innovative talents in the teaching and training program, it involves few applied subjects, and the content of humanistic knowledge is still insufficient. This objectively limits the cultivation of students' innovative ability and easily eliminates students' Innovation enthusiasm.

With regard to the teaching system, starting from the actual conditions of schools and colleges, it provides students with better facilities for innovative practice activities. Specific measures include encouraging students to participate in various types of academic activities. In order to better ensure the participation of students, they must make rigid rules. At the end of each academic year, students are required to write their own academic results and participate in assessments. This assessment is credited to the final student file. For students' original academic works, the literature is affirmed from the school's point of view, and special "innovation credits" can be obtained, which is equivalent to obtaining the same credits as elective courses, and is included in the total credits. The curriculum is designed to draw on the success of other foreign language schools in China, set up a wide range of foreign language applications, and arrange for students to participate in the annual extracurricular practice. However, for students with low creative credits, objectively it will affect the students' enthusiasm for innovation. In the evaluation of innovation, there is still a lack of scientific means. From the actual operation, we still use the regular examination plus some subjective evaluation models, and there is a certain gap between the objective requirements of foreign language innovation talents (Xie & Chang, 2013).

Pay attention to the construction of a practical base. The practice of foreign language students is divided into two parts, intramural and out of school. The College of Foreign Languages arranges students to conduct teaching practice at a practical base for each semester. The time for internships is fixed so that students can test knowledge and have innovative results in practical situations. The content of practice is rich, such as work translation, office clerk, product introduction, industrial product sales, etc. Students can choose according to their own preferences and development needs. Appropriate rewards are given to those who perform well, such as providing opportunities for foreign companies to serve as interns. All of these have inspired the creative expansion of student thinking to some extent (Xie & Wu, 2013). However, the number of places and posts for internships is still low, and the time for internships is too tight. There are not many internship companies outside the university. They cannot fully meet the needs of students.

School of foreign languages has made many attempts and exploration in cultivating innovative talents, to innovative ideas and innovative spirit mentioned hitherto unknown height and write the personnel training programs, develop, teaching objectives in the curriculum, teaching system, base construction and other aspects have done a lot of work. However, there are still many unsatisfactory places for the cultivation of foreign language innovative talents, and there are still problems to be solved in many aspects.

V. FOREIGN LANGUAGE INNOVATIVE TALENTS TRAINING PROGRAM

A. Teaching Objectives

1. Subject application ability

Emphasizing the application ability of disciplines, according to *the requirements of College English curriculum requirements* issued by the Ministry of education and the current needs of foreign language majors, we can think that the essence of foreign language teaching at present is giving students foreign language knowledge and mastering them. Only based on the premise of language application, foreign language teaching is meaningful and truly plays the communicative role of the foreign language itself. It is necessary to improve the quality of foreign language students in all aspects and must break through the limitations of the existing foreign language disciplines. The school of foreign languages should reconsider the orientation of foreign language teaching. Foreign language teaching is no longer confined to the Foreign Language Institute itself. Instead, it should expand to all schools and majors related to foreign languages, and enrich students' knowledge structure. Let the language and knowledge integration, according to the characteristics of foreign language majors, the teaching plan to re-evaluate existing construction, formed in the foreign language study as the foundation, professional skills and disciplines knowledge to complete teaching system and supplement, classroom teaching and extra-curricular learning combined, teachers guide students according to the need of study and their own ideas and development goals to multi-level teaching system. According to foreign language students today's employment wide broad, pay attention to expand students' knowledge and vision, more from the social practice perspective on the importance of learning a foreign language and practical significance, the students from the original foreign language learning into the social practice, to meet the objective needs of society for talents, deepening the understanding of the students foreign language learning itself.

2. Learning concept

It is necessary for students to set up a learning idea to learn to use. Foreign language teaching is not only the imparting of the content of foreign language knowledge. From the perspective of the application of foreign languages, foreign language learning is based on the application of the subject. The language content of the foreign language is covered with the content of the specialized subject, and the information exchange between different language groups is realized. Expand the number and type of students' extracurricular reading materials. According to professional requirements and student preferences, the school year is used as a unit to formulate a range of reading books for students after class, from low to high difficulty foreign language professional books, famous literary works in China and foreign countries, and culture-related classics of various countries. Books, etc., through reading exercises, integrate foreign language and professional knowledge learning into the construction of students' knowledge systems, and at the same time pay attention to the cultivation of students' own character qualities.

3. Breadth of knowledge

Broadening the students' knowledge breadth is a necessary measure for foreign language majors. One of the conditions of innovative talents is that they have enough knowledge and breadth for the world. The knowledge that students possess must meet the needs of society in a wide range, which is also an important quality of diverse social needs. With the continuous deepening China exchange with the world level, in the process of innovative foreign language talents, pay attention to help students to broaden their horizons, cultivate students' cross-cultural awareness and international communication ability, and innovative international thinking ability, some foreign cultural knowledge reserves, familiar with the customs of different peoples and cultural characteristics respect each other's customs in the process of communication with other nations, a reasonable deal with problems. In the process of international affairs, the students are trained with keen social observability, skillful means of transnational communication and good judgment of active thinking. In the course of school learning, the human resources of the school, the system structure of the school and the knowledge resources of the teachers can be maximized. Therefore, on the premise of cultivating students of foreign language learning foreign language skills, to ensure a comprehensive development of many aspects of students' moral, mental and physical health, especially in foreign language related disciplines more professional knowledge, to effectively improve the students with professional knowledge in the field of contact surface, broaden the students to society cognition, strive to become the compound and practical talents. Strengthen the cultivation of students' humanistic quality. Teachers are not only the imparting knowledge, but also the students' understanding of foreign language learning and the deep understanding of the foreign language learning itself. The importance of humanistic quality is not only to enrich students' knowledge, but also to have the mental quality of a healthy life. In this way, in the complex and complex social environment, the quality of innovation can be successfully turned into results, and the successful transformation of ideas and applications can be realized.

B. Teaching Content

1. Innovation spirit

In the teaching of cultivating innovative foreign language talents, the cultivation of innovative spirit must be embodied. The spirit of innovation is the ideological consciousness of the individual, which comes from the students' active behavior to knowledge, and is influenced and restricted by the subjective thinking ability of the people. The ability of active thinking is the direct source of innovation. Only students with the ability of active thinking can burst the spark of inspiration. The training of students' active thinking ability begins with imitation. Study and analysis of

problems imitated when facing problems and problem solving ideas, ideas change the past one-way teachers impart knowledge to teaching methods of students, students should be regarded as equal subjects in the teaching process, students participating in the teaching organization give opportunity to activate the vitality of classroom teaching, stimulate the creativity of students, so foreign language teaching has become a true two-way circulation of knowledge imparting behavior. The training of students' active thinking ability begins with the analysis of the problem. The problem is divided into two types: the analysis of the problem and the problem solving. Analyzing problems refers to students' consideration of problems through objective analysis, understanding of the nature of things or phenomena, or the nature of internal relations between certain things or phenomena. Such problems will encourage students to think in different ways, such as comparison, relevance, logic, and organized ways. The problem of solving the problem is to respond by creative thinking activity on the basis of hypothesis, objective analysis, reconstruction, and the needs of subjective imagination. In this way, students not only learn to use definitions and rules, but also produce evaluation, abstraction, prediction, and imagination, which is a specific and systematic process. In classroom language communication activities, we can concentrate on evaluative analysis questions, so as to activate students' original knowledge and experience reserves and facilitate learning of new knowledge. In reading teaching, we can choose more ways to solve problems and guide students to form complex and holistic thinking habits to solve problems.

2. Innovation consciousness

The consciousness of innovation is the individual characteristic of human being, it is the logical mode of thinking that solidified in the mind, and it is gradually formed in the practice of subjective consciousness. The cultivation of innovative consciousness should start from teaching, start from scratch, and lay a solid teaching strategy according to the characteristics of foreign language learning, focusing on the work of foreign language teaching. According to the maturity of human psychology, the intelligence of college students is the most active time in human life, and psychology is also moving towards maturity. This is the key period for the gradual establishment of abstract thinking. The traditional one-way language training model can not fully meet the psychological demands of college students. The challenging, difficult and logical discussion and analysis teaching model is the most suitable for the development of college students. Therefore, according to the characteristics of the psychological development of college students, the content of research is added in the teaching of foreign languages, the difficulty and depth of foreign language teaching are improved, the problem of "with" purpose is set for the students, and the senses of the students are mobilized. In order to guide students to master, explore and establish a learning mode with personal tags. In this way, we can not only save teaching resources, but also enable foreign language teachers to introduce the content of applied disciplines from the perspective of comprehensive quality development, so as to improve the depth and efficiency of foreign language teaching.

3. Knowledge content

The combination of the existing foreign language teaching and applied disciplines is relatively small, which is not conducive to the integrity of students' own knowledge system and limits the scope of innovation consciousness and strategy. Therefore, it is necessary to enrich the knowledge of applied subjects and develop interdisciplinary teaching. Drawing lessons from the experience gained at home and abroad and the status of applied disciplines in a medical university, medical courses such as nursing and mental health are closely introduced into the teaching arrangement and are closely related to the current foreign language major. Teachers are hired to attend classes, which are organized in the form of seminars, seminars, and joint training. This kind of interdisciplinary training method has achieved good results both in domestic and foreign practice, and it also meets the practical needs of foreign language innovation personnel training.

Interdisciplinary training is not a simple introduction to new curriculum content, but a higher starting point to guide foreign language teaching. Using ESP and other task type teaching methods, we absorb and learn the thinking concepts and learning methods of applied disciplines, draw lessons from the research mode, stimulate students' curiosity and curiosity for new things. In the process of interdisciplinary learning, students accept two disciplines knowledge teaching, which is helpful to stimulate students' learning potential and guide students' innovative ability from multiple perspectives.

C. *Teaching Practice Model*

1. Practice base

The purpose of practice is to test students' innovative learning outcomes and provide students with innovative thinking platform. Therefore, colleges and universities should increase practice base for practice according to the requirements of foreign language majors and construction needs. The construction of the practice base is the fundamental guarantee. Only innovation through practice can be a real innovation. Therefore, based on the combination of existing practice bases, improve and add new practice bases. Establish a system of responsible persons for practice. The leadership of the external institute is responsible for the practical work within the language profession. According to the teaching laws of foreign language majors, according to the track of the growth of talents, establish a practice base that meets different stages. The establishment of an off-campus training and training base can actively cooperate with enterprises. The practice base must participate in the substantive operation stage. Students have planned interns in various units during the summer and winter vacations. Every practice base has a foreign language professional tutor, and a student's practice tracking inspection and appraisal conclusion (Zhuang, 2012). Practice teaching will inspire

teachers to pay attention to the reform of classroom teaching. The construction of practice training base can combine the training of innovative talents with the actual needs through the way of employment channel, and form a benign interaction.

2. Content of practice

Practice is the sole criterion for testing truth, and the cultivation of foreign language innovation talents is also included. To refine the content of the practice, such as the English language professional for the United States, Britain and other English-speaking countries, translation, technical translation and other posts. The practical content of students must be based on the real language environment. Teaching management departments and colleges should meet students' practical requirements and guide students in the campus environment to feel the same working atmosphere as society. According to the characteristics of the students, the conditions of the school's teaching resources, and the future development trends, a reasonable and practical approach should be established. Provide a variety of forms of practical communication. Such as foreign language debate games, speech contests, foreign language film dubbing competitions. By combining the interests of students, students are strongly concerned. At the same time, it allows students participating in the study to truly understand the characteristics of foreign language practice exchanges.

3. Inspection of results

Contemporary college students have a strong sense of autonomy and are willing to try new ideas and practice. However, only the tested learning results can guide students to follow the correct road. The college can rely on this favorable condition to encourage students to carry out independent innovation practices and enrich the specific forms of innovation and practice activities. Monotonous practice behaviors can easily lead to psychological fatigue and affect the effectiveness of innovative teaching. Therefore, it is necessary to enrich the forms of innovation and practice activities. Students' subjective initiative should be brought into play and students should be encouraged to create and participate in various types of innovative practical activities according to their interests, hobbies and ideas. For example, foreign language debates, dramas, speeches, etc. are held. Such self-innovation actual behavior can stimulate students' potential, honing their will, and stimulating the active thinking cells in the brain. In the actual application process, it is of great benefit to improve the overall quality of students. In addition to students' proactive behavior, advanced teaching methods can also be adopted to guide students' independent innovation. Reproduce through specific scenarios to create a scene of perceptual knowledge and knowledge. If you can establish a business communication scene, teachers can use some pictures, charts, and some examples to help students obtain customer information and learn communication methods. Teachers can also obtain information from other websites, allowing students to browse the company's website, including product pictures and samples, and then collect information such as credit status, product variety, transaction scope, etc. to summarize and compare, and select the appropriate partner company. Allow students to analyze and propose improvements. Finally, the student completes the establishment of the business relationship based on the selected information. During the entire process, the teacher is only responsible for setting up the situation. Solving the problem is left to the student to handle the problem.

D. *Guarantee System of Teaching System*

1. Foreign language teachers

Foreign language teachers are the direct executors, leaders, and witnesses of the cultivation of foreign language innovation talents. With superb professional quality and ideological quality, fully recognizing the history and practical significance of the cultivation of foreign language innovation talents is an important guarantee for the cultivation of foreign language innovative talents. The cultivation of foreign language innovative talents requires a team of teachers that meets the requirements of innovation, that is, the establishment of a team of foreign language teachers with knowledge of applied subjects. The specific approach may be to improve the professional quality of teachers through a variety of practical and effective forms, such as professional training, professional training, special seminars and academic reports. The introduction of fresh blood and the recruitment of talents will help young and middle-aged talents with innovative consciousness to teach in schools and enrich their foreign language teachers. It is also possible to learn the successful experience of the college. At the same time, we should improve the existing teacher management system, set up a post standard for teachers, select qualified teachers to teach, encourage foreign language teachers to actively improve their teaching skills and enhance their professional quality. The introduction of the annual talent introduction plan enriches the new foreign language teachers to the existing teachers. We should also set up regular teachers' technical training classes to improve the overall teaching level of foreign language teachers in the short term.

2. Teaching management department

The cultivation of foreign language innovation talents is not a one-time, it is a difficult practice process. The Department of Teaching Management should work together to ensure that this important teaching work can be carried out smoothly. Create a good atmosphere and do material protection. School-level innovation talents training awards and outstanding innovation talents awards have been established. Students and teachers in the field of innovative talent cultivation have been given material and spiritual rewards. Incentives are the driving force for teachers and students to advance in foreign language innovation. The student assistantship system and the student representative system can also be adopted. The student assistantship system can effectively reduce the work burden, and let the teachers put more energy on how to improve the students' ability to think on the initiative. As a teaching assistant, students can enter the student's foreign language learning with the student's special identity, and continue the classroom teaching to daily life,

forming a real-time unification of class and class learning. The student representative system is to choose a representative student with outstanding foreign language ability. Through them we may understand the students' problems in foreign language learning and the characteristics of their thinking. It can help teachers to better inspire students, guide students to form a personality of foreign language learning model, guide students to exercise independently, active test and improvement. It can be seen from this that teaching management departments should fully implement the two systems, provide better treatment for the students who are in charge, set up the typical models of students, and promote the reform of foreign language teaching aiming at innovative training.

3. Teaching quality evaluation

The evaluation of teaching quality is an effective way for foreign language teachers to understand the courses taught and grasp teaching information, as well as an accurate reference for students' self adjustment and improvement. The starting point of teaching management department should be the training principles of innovative talents in foreign languages, the scientific setting of teaching quality evaluation criteria, and accurate comprehensive consideration of foreign language teachers, curriculum settings and student learning effects. The motivation of human behavior is to look at the training of foreign language innovative talents. The positive motivation of teachers is the intrinsic motivation of improving the talent cultivation rate of foreign language talents (Zhuang & Liu, 2012). A lot of practices have already shown that external pressure has an unpredictable impact on Teachers' work enthusiasm, and often leads to opposite results, which hinders teachers' enthusiasm and is not conducive to the development of innovative talents' teaching. Therefore, in the traditional delete biased assessment of the contents of the evaluation of teaching quality, starting from the perspective of improving teachers' enthusiasm, to create a good working environment for foreign language teaching, to promote the current foreign language teaching reform, help teachers to recognize the problems in teaching, to guide the learning of advanced teaching methods and teaching ideas, will enhance the cultivation of foreign language talents as a fundamental purpose.

4. Student achievement assessment

The assessment of student achievement should be based on the actual situation of teaching, the characteristics and development requirements of students, especially the regularity of foreign language innovative talents, so as to establish a scientific assessment system. Get rid of the single score standard, take full account of the individual differences of the students, and realize the diversification of the assessment means, scientific and rational. On the content standard of student achievement evaluation, besides traditional scores, we should add professional skills, professional knowledge, innovative ability and problem-solving ability to achieve a more comprehensive performance evaluation. The subject of evaluation should also be diversified. It can choose teachers, practice experts and select students, so as to analyze and comment on students from multiple perspectives. The methods of evaluation are also diversified. Different evaluation methods have their own specific purposes. Some of them are evaluation of phased learning achievements, others are the evaluation of thinking ability, others are the evaluation of problem-solving ability. Specific ways can be phased and summative examinations, random classroom questions, classroom exercises, academic reports, articles with scientific nature, practical reports and so on. Student achievement assessment is not only a summary of the preceding learning process, but also a comprehensive finding of the problems existing in student achievement and promoting students' all-round development. Evaluate students' achievements from different perspectives. For example, we should carefully investigate and study student achievement and use modern pedagogy, psychology and planning evaluation methods and means to ensure the quality of evaluation, the objectivity and impartiality of science (Zhuang & Han, 2012). Based on the characteristics of the course content, a multi-level evaluation grade is set up, and the students' innovative learning results are evaluated by classification. A variety of testing methods should be allowed according to the characteristics of the subject. In any form, we should focus on cultivating students' ability to think and evaluate students' ability to acquire knowledge and information.

VI. CONCLUSION

The cultivation of foreign language talents is one of the key areas of language research, whether foreign or domestic, foreign language researchers have to cultivate talents from different angles, do a lot of research work, and achieved very fruitful results, but there are many shortcomings in the study, and the development of innovative talents is the trend of future development. The cultivation of innovative talents in foreign languages is a complicated systematic project. It requires college administrators and foreign language teachers to take a long-term perspective and understand the essence of the current demand for foreign language talents from the perspective of the times, in order to accurately grasp the core content of foreign language specialty innovation.

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A Study of Form and Content of Private Speech Used by Iranian EFL Learners

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Abstract—From the sociocultural point of view, the investigation of private speech is important in seeing how the mind works. Yet, not much is known about the form and content of private speech. A group of English language learners were required to talk about some topics of their reading courses. Their voices were recorded and the private speech used by them were identified. It was found that the main role of the loud and silent forms of the private speech in the data is to help learners manage the interaction. Private speech is embedded within the speech context and it needs to be explained in the context in which it happens.

Index Terms—private speech, sociocultural theory, interaction

I. INTRODUCTION

Conventionally, the study of SLA has centered on learners' use of speech for social or public purposes (as in writing for an audience or taking part in conversation) (Deguerrero, 2012). Recently, however, a growing number of scholars have begun to identify the prominence of speech that L2 learners direct to themselves. Speech that is self-directed and intended for adjusting oneself is identified as private speech (Deguerrero, 2012).

Investigation of private speech has been significantly influenced by Vygotsky's (1986) theories of cognitive advancement. Mainly attractive has been his famous suggestion that children make available speech through a process of internalization that contains a development from social speech to inner speech, with an intermediate phase he called egocentric speech (Deguerrero, 2012). At this phase, speech stops to be totally social and takes on a psychological aspect. Speech begins to serve the intellect and help the child in problem-solving, imaginary play, controlling behavior, and other cognitive procedures. A preschool child, working alone and seeking to resolve an animal home matching task. Egocentric speech is articulated and can be received by others (or seized by a tape recorder), but it is self-directed (Deguerrero, 2012). Egocentric speech does not stay outward, nonetheless. At some time, Vygotsky postulated, it goes secret as silent inner speech. For of its prominence in mental and linguistic improvement, the stage of egocentric speech—more frequently denoted to as private speech in existing literature—has created great interest as a central window into language learning and use, both from a first language (L1) and an L2 standpoint (Deguerrero, 2012).

In L2 learning, private speech has been examined mostly from two viewpoints: (1) as an indication of language learning in progression, and (2) as a self-regulatory means of getting influence in mental tasks. Both standpoints have revealed extensive practice of private speech among L2 learners of all ages, language backgrounds, and proficiency stages (Deguerrero, 2012). A number of studies have been purposefully inaugurated to provoke private speech (McCafferty, 1994); other investigations have given proof of incidental private speech among L2 students (see, for example, Saville-Troike (2006)). A large number of investigations have celebrated oral private speech as it happens in private or cooperative discourse; some research has observed private speech as it is revealed in writing and gesture (Deguerrero, 2012). Roebuck (2000), for instance, found private speech features—such as lexical word searches—in the written protocols of college learners of Spanish, whereas Negueruela et al., (2004) noticed semantic features associated with L1 thinking in some of the gestures of advanced ESL students. Deguerrero (2012) contends Private speech between L2 students has been described in the literature as happening both impulsively in normal classroom contexts (e.g., Ohta, 2001) and in experimental settings purposefully shaped for research purposes (e.g., Centeno-Cortes & Jimenez, 2004).

Private speech between L2 learners has been illustrated to hold an important part in language acquisition. In Vygotskian sociocultural theory, this is identified as the internalizing use of private speech so that private speech is identified as a beneficial instrument for turning inwards L2 resources in the milieu (Deguerrero, 2012).

Form of Private Speech

Form signifies prosodic and structural features of private speech. Conventionally, research on private speech has taken into account volume, intonations, and abbreviations to recognize the form of private speech. Likewise, two common features surface among earlier studies on adult language learners: (a) silent speech/whispering), and (b) loud utterances that are directed to the self (self-directed utterances such as self-directed questions, comments, and responses to the self) (DiCamilla & Anton; 2004).

Silent speech/whispering. Most studies recounted private speech to happen in a low tone of voice (Platt & Brooks, 2002). Studies verified that learners whispered to themselves to (a) gain regulation (Brooks et al., 1997); (b) to be involved cognitively in the task (Brooks et al., 1997); (c) to retrieve knowledge of L2 from memory (Platt & Brooks, 2002); and (d) to adapt themselves and their partners to the task (DiCamilla & Anton, 2004).

Brooks et al. (1997) studied Spanish learner statements during a collaborative jigsaw activity and recounted that students whispered to themselves in order to achieve regulation and for cognitive engagement to the task. They conveyed that their learners whisper target language in L2 (Spanish) like counting in the L2 (“*Uno, dos, tres, cuatro, cinco*”), making affective reactions (“Oh goodness,” “Damn this is hard”), and opening or closing an activity (“Let's see here...”, “Okay...” “Now what?”) (Khorshidi & Abdikhah, 2013). In the same way, DiCamilla and Anton (2004) examined Spanish learners with changing proficiency levels during a cooperative writing task to recognize clear instances of private speech in adult collaborative interaction. They identified cases of self-whispering during the activities. They maintain that Spanish learners whispered to themselves when they are trying to retrieve knowledge of the target language form in Spanish with the help of repetitions.

Loud forms of private speech. These utterances are created in the social tone of voice but they do not have social speech qualities. These are private speech utterances that seem like social speech. These are called private speech since they are not addressed to the interlocutor but to the self. Earlier studies advocate that private speech is situated in context and it could not be in a specific pre-defined form when adult language learners are involved in cooperative interaction, when associated with individual activities of the learners. For instance, the frontiers between private and social speech may obscure in a conversation between two learners during a collaborative language activity.

A few researchers directly examined private speech in adult language learner collaborative interaction (DiCamilla & Anton, 2004) and others recounted existence of private speech in related studies on cooperative learner discourse (Brooks & Donato, 1994). These researchers studied all utterances to have a psychological and social orientation and they concentrated on the regulatory functions of the utterances when studying private speech (DiCamilla & Anton, 2004).

Contents and functions of private speech

Inquiries on adult learner private speech do not clearly categorize content of private speech but it is conceivable to classify content in studies on private speech. These classifications help categorize the content referred to in SLA research on adult private speech. A review of literature since the late 1980's shows that the content of adult learner private speech incorporated but not limited to self-directed questions, affective markers, repetitions, utterances that indicate the hypothetical stance of the speaker, labeling or counting some aspects of the task, pause fillers, metalanguage, and comments on one's own task, knowledge, and performance.

It is key to bear in mind that private speech is set in the context in which it happens. As documented earlier, private speech may occur in diverse forms and the contents may not be limited to the ones listed below. These classifications are not exclusive, for instance, a self-directed question can also be metalanguage. One of the research questions in this study tries to ascertain the relationship between the form, content, and function of private speech of adult language learners in a cooperative discourse context. The content categories and their functions are explained below.

Based on what has been discussed the following research question will be addressed in this study: What are the forms and functions of private speech used by Iranian EFL learners?

II. METHODOLOGY

Thorough examination of the interaction seems critical for the clarification of the results of the specific context of this study. Participants in this research are advanced English language learners. Learners were required to talk about some topics that they had already encountered in their reading courses. While they were involved in the cooperation their speech was audio recorded. This stimulating task as a plan that is contributing to considerable collaborative talk is what is needed in this study in investigating the language. By analyzing the language produced by learners the private speech used by them is analyzed.

Data coding for the form and content of private speech are described below.

Form	Definition
Silent	Utterances that are made in ancerning the low tone of voice.
Loud	These utterances are not generated in the silent form but they are addressed to the self.

Silent speech/whispers.

A: well, *How can I say it?* ... It's a home appliance that is quite modern.

B: Ok.

A: As I remember in the past in the homes we did not have such an instrument.

B: Where in the home is it used?

Loud forms

A: You know, the word I am explaining to you shows a typical kind of person who is different from others. We have an example of a Turkish computer programmer who has made billions of dollars with designing hardware and software.

B: *Wow, great.* Can you explain more?

Content	Description
1. Self-directed questions	Statements involved questions addressed to the self. The question is either disregarded by other students or the individual answers to it himself/herself immediately after the question.
2. Affective Utterances	Any statement that displays affective expressions of the speaker concerning the task or performance on the task for emotional release, in order to motivate the self.
3. Repetitions	Repetitive statements or sounds as if the individual is looking for a word, correcting a previous speech, or focusing attention on the task.
4. Comments that Indicate a hypothetical stance	Contain verbs, adverbs, and modal verbs such as "think, guess, believe, probably, can, could, will, would". These utterances may help the student to orient his/her interlocutors to the task.
5. Labels	Any type of labeling, and counting to bring structure to a text. Participants may also use these statements to mark the beginning and end of an activity or episode. These statements may be employed to bring structure to the task, or to manage the task by labeling, naming, or counting.
6. Pause fillers	Any type of statement that seem to be comprised of meaningless sounds such as eh, um, ah, er, etc. but that indicate a thinking process. They may show that the learner is concentrating or planning his next utterances.
7. Metalanguage:	Any type of statement that is utilized to analyze or describe language. These utterances can contain individual's own comments about the language, and its structures and use.
8. Comments on self	<i>These are utterances that learners make to create shared cognition and regulation. These private speech utterances usually occur either before or after a turn and play an important role in establishing shared orientation.</i>

Self-directed questions.

A: Everyone by using this word thinks of a word that I can't use it now and is used in carpentry. Can you guess?

B: Please explain more.

A: *What was it? A tool.* It's a tool for attaching two pieces of wood.

B: A nail?

Affective markers.

A: This word is used when two countries for example are in state of battle conflict. If this thing is used huge number of people will be killed.

B: *Oh my God ...* Is this nuclear bomb?

Repetitions.

A: If you are homesick, the way you feel is the word I want.

B: *I am homesick, I am homesick.* Tired?

A: Close, it's close to nervousness.

Comments that indicate a hypothetical stance.

A: In the case of horror movies we sometimes have a group of people who suddenly enter ships.

B: They may attack the ship. Do they try to steal people's belongings?

Labeling and counting.

A: The substance I am explaining to you is used in cooking without this food is tasteless.

B: Oil?

A: Oil is added before this substance.

B: *First oil, then another substance.* Is it water?

A: No, it's used during cooking.

Pause fillers.

A: When you do a good job people clap for you and express their ... can you guess?

B: *hmmm, eeh,* is the word pleasure?

Metalanguage.

A: I am explaining a verb to you which shows a shocking and horrible sound that makes people afraid.

B: *A verb frightening people.* And do people run away?

Comments on self.

A: The word I am explaining to you is a kind of taste which is not pleasant.

B: Is it salty?

A: No ... *It's difficult to explain,* rotten food or vegetable have such a taste.

III. RESULTS

In this next example silent private speech is observed as repetitions when the learner focuses attention on the task:

A: the word shows a typical kind of person different from others.

B: *A different kind of person, a different kind of person.*

In the following example we see A's silent private speech in line 2 notifying B and initiating his assistance. Again in line 3 A utters another private speech showing his frustration and this causes B to again help his by asking about the function of the word.

1 A: Well, *How can I say this word?*

2 B: do your best.

3 A: *Hmmm ...*

4 B: Is it a verb?

There are also instances that silent private speech is uttered in an incomplete form.

A: when people are traveling they use this item for example.

B: *people traveling.*

A: ok. *How can I?* ... This is a compound word consisting of a noun and an adjective.

Findings for content and functions of private speech

Affective markers.

Affective marker showing disappointment of being incapable to finish the task

A: When we go to a foreign country we have such a feeling.

B: *piish.*

Affective marker specifying indications of finding

A: For example if someone has a successful lecture people ... for him.

B: *oooh ... clap?*

A: Yes.

Hypothetical stance.

1 A: This word is used in time you don't think someone is correct.

2 B: Rectify?

3 A: No, *I should explain differently ...*

4 B: You mean we disagree with someone.

In the excerpt above, B is using private speech in line 3 to clearly revise his task strategies and bearing in mind different options at the end of the task. This statement shows hypothesizing and reasoning and as a result, it facilitates B to achieve self-regulation to adapt towards interaction. It can be stated that hypothetical stance statements show students' revision of their approach towards the language activity in order to have regulation.

Labeling/Counting.

In this example, the learner adjusts self and peer to the task in a collaborative activity.

A: Well, this part 1,2,3,4 lines. Ok, let me explain this.

Repetitions.

A: I know what you're talking about okay okay okay

A: Other other other symptoms.

In the examples above repetitions facilitate retrieving vocabulary.

Pause fillers.

In the next except A sees the word before explaining the word to his partner. She says that she is not prepared and carries on to review the words while humming. His humming shows that she is still planning and organizing his thoughts for the task and indicates his peer not to distract his until he is done with planning as a tactic to evade distraction.

A: Go.

B: let's wait. Dm dm dm.

Metalinguage.

In the example below B says "a verb" to himself, while searching his memory in order to find the word explained by his peer.

A: This word is used when you don't want to show your real feeling. It's a noun.

B: Fake affection you mean? *And a noun?*

Self-directed questions.

This example is the lexical search of the learner.

A: *What was that word? Sister-in-law*

Comments on self.

A: *How can that happen?* Can you explain about this concept?

By using comments on self, the participants intentionally reveal their thought processes by showing the limits of their knowledge.

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Some hypothetical clauses, self-directed questions, and comments on self also occur largely in the loud form and may get reactions from peers. The main role of the loud and silent forms of the private speech in the data is to help learners manage the interaction. By expressing their thoughts, learners tried to concentrate on the activity by attempting to

organize their cognitive processes. As a case, learners used repetition to regulate their thoughts in realizing the vocabulary. Furthermore, learners frequently used loud private speech to encourage themselves and arrange their thoughts while they tried to coordinate their following move.

Private speech utterances are utilized as a mental means that is adjusted to the participant's peer. Nonetheless, there are variations in how learners use it as a cognitive tool. For instance, a number of students use affective markers to get scaffolding from their peers. Repetitions are sometimes used to manage thought and sometimes for lexical pursuit and sometimes as a mental strategy to raise the awareness of peers on a difficult task. Some participants adjust metalanguage to their peers and use incorrect syntax so as to give strategic assistance and maintain interaction (when peered with less proficient partners) and at times they utilize correct forms of the language.

In the current study, participants have a high awareness of self and other knowledge and they constantly examine assumptions about peers' awareness and functioning. It was observed that students utilize hypothetical clauses purposefully to orient their associates to the task and to search for ways out of difficulties by giving ideas. Swain (2000) contends that the use of metalanguage is very much governed by the context. In this study correct use of the language is not taken into account as the task goal so there are many times language is used with grammatical mistakes since participants only want to communicate. Participants' abilities use the rules about the structure of their L2 in a unique way indicate their control over the language.

Metalanguage use is known to be task-dependent (Swain, 2000). It is possible that the type of task elicits a particular type of metalanguage from learners. In this study, learners' goals participating in the task are not language learning or correct use of language forms but simply communicating a concept to peers in a social setting. Therefore, it is possible that peers do not feel the pressure to use correct references to the grammatical structure of the language. Instead, they focus on communicating the message in the most effective way in light of the task's time constraints.

In short, the study of private speech among L2 learners seems to be a productive and encouraging opportunities of topics in L2 acquisition; Private speech offers teachers and researchers significant evidences into features of L2 language learning and use that can not be observed but are nonetheless crucial (De Guerrero, 2012).

As a self-regulatory mechanism, private speech has also welcomed substantial attention among L2 researchers (McCafferty, 1994). Students who are skillful to carry out psychological processes can use private speech, an earlier mode of thinking, to obtain self-regulation in instants of mental struggle (De Guerrero, 2012). A possible description for the use of private speech can be that the clear makeup of vocalized private speech aids solidify sensible consideration by maintaining awareness concentrated (De Guerrero, 2012). Findings concerning L2 and FL learners do indicate that they now and again express their rational procedures through the medium of private speech after resolving demanding scholarly tasks that need use of the L2 (De Guerrero, 2012).

From the sociocultural theoretical framework, language development instigates at the social plane and moves towards the psychological plane in the process of learners becoming self-regulated. However, only a limited number of investigations have considered adult language learner private speech in interaction. Lantolf (2009) argues that various groups of students should be examined in different contexts in order to enlarge the SLA database and to understand learner's use of private speech in experimental context on cooperative tasks.

As described above, private speech is embedded within the speech context and it needs to be explained in the context in which it happens. According to Frawley and Lantolf (1984), private speech works as a cognitive tool in the internalization of L2 where its function is to express the thinking process and to mediate thinking and learning in language learners' efforts to achieve regulation over tasks and activities.

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Application of Constructivist Theory in Flipped Classroom — Take College English Teaching as a Case Study

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Abstract—In the context of information globalization and the popularity of the Internet, the flipped classroom as a new teaching mode, a new pedagogical method has become a heated topic and a growing concern for educators across the world. In this paper, the flipped classroom is supported by constructivist learning theory. The teaching mode under the constructivist learning theory is typically students-centered which corresponds with the flipped classroom mode. This paper mainly focuses on the application of constructivist learning theory in flipped classroom, taking college English teaching for example to interpret the student- student, teacher- student interactions in the flipped classroom with the final goal to promote students' learning efficiency and quality.

Index Terms—flipped classroom, constructivist learning theory, self-directed learning, college English teaching

I. INTRODUCTION

Traditional classroom teaching mode is a one-way process that teachers, guided by certain teaching goals in certain teaching places, pass on human beings' existing cultural knowledge to the educated (students) through indoctrination. In this mode, teachers just rely on a textbook, a reference book, a piece of chalk, and a mouth to carry out the education teaching activities with goals, plans and emphasis in accordance with the principle of teaching theory and in the form of classroom teaching. This kind of teaching is teacher-centered, and the students' knowledge acquisition depends on the teacher's imparting and guiding (Luo, 2012).

The rapid development of information technology brings the infinite possibility of education. The popularity of the Internet has changed the way people work and live, as well as the way of education and learning (Li, 2016). The flipped or inverted classroom teaching mode refers to the re-adjustment of time in and out of the classroom, transferring the decision of learning from the teacher to the student. Under this teaching mode, students will be able to concentrate more on the initiative of project-based learning, and gain a deeper understanding during the precious class time. Teachers no longer just take the classroom time to pass on information but guide students. The role of a teacher is the faithful supporter of students' construction of knowledge and the facilitator and collaborator of students' learning. The required or relevant information should be prepared by students or through watching video lectures, listening to podcast or reading e-books out of class. They can also discuss with other classmates through the Internet and consult the materials they need at any time. In this case, teachers may have more time to communicate with everyone in class and pay more attention to the individual one.

As Bergmann and Sams (2012) have described that the flipped or inverted classroom is an instructional model in which the traditional lecture is a student's homework and in-class time is spent on collaborative, inquiry-based learning. Felder (2012) showed his view as this: student-centered instructional models, including the flipped classroom, are grounded in the constructivist theory of learning. The core idea of constructivism applied to learning is that the environment is learner-centered where knowledge and understanding is socially constructed. The flipped classroom environment can be totally considered a constructivist learning environment. The constructivist learning theory advocates the student-centered learning under the guidance of teachers. Besides, constructivist learning environment includes four elements: situation, cooperation, conversation and meaning construction. In this way, we can summarize the teaching mode that adapts to the constructivist learning theory and constructivist learning environment as follows: In the course of the whole learning process, teachers will play the role of organizer, mentor, helper and facilitator while students are placed at the center. Situation, cooperation and conversation are used as learning environment elements to completely stimulate the initiative, enthusiasm and the pioneering spirit of students. Thus, it can finally achieve the purpose of effectively realizing the meaning construction of the current knowledge (He, 1997). In this mode, students are active constructors of knowledge rather than passive recipients of external stimuli; and the teacher is the facilitator of the instructional process, rather than the teacher of knowledge. The knowledge provided by the textbook is no longer

the content of the teacher's teaching, but the object of the students' active construction of meaning. Media is no longer the means for helping teachers pass on knowledge, but to create a situation in collaborative learning. Conversation is used as one of the students' collaborative and exploratory learning tools. On this occasion, four elements including teachers, students, teaching materials and media, compared with the traditional teaching method, have their own different roles and completely different relationships between each other. But the role and relationship are definitely clear. Through the process of teaching activities, or under the constructivist learning environment, the relationship has gradually become a stable structure.

II. RESEARCH ON FLIPPED CLASSROOM TEACHING MODE

Flipped classroom is a new kind of teaching method that completes the transmission of knowledge outside classroom and realizes the internalization within the classroom. Throughout the world, there has been a boom in research on flipped classroom teaching mode both at home and abroad.

A. *Researches Abroad*

As the new pedagogical method of flipping the class has been popular for decades in foreign education, abundant researches have been conducted in this field and fruitful research findings have come out (Wang, 2017). In recent years, the research on flipped classroom has a high degree of heat. Foreign research on flipped classroom started earlier. Before 2005 the study focused on the patterns of flip classroom, and since 2010 it has been concerned more about such aspects as active learning, and blended learning, some research areas mainly covering medical education in tertiary education. In terms of active learning and blended learning, foreign studies have adopted the quasi-experimental research method. The influence of flipped classroom on students' emotion and behavior is explored through the analysis of pre-test. Richard Pearce et al. (2012) used video blog to develop classroom teaching, and cultivate the students' active learning ability. The results showed that students not only improved their grades, but also had positive views on teaching methods. Paul Barpule et al. (2014) found that learning in a mixed learning way could be no less effective than traditional classroom learning and improve students' cognition of learning environment. Developed countries like the United States and Australia have high popularity of flipped classroom research, which indirectly indicates that the research on flipped classroom is relevant to the education degree and reform requirements of the country. Those countries mainly promote active learning and blended learning based on flipped classroom. Besides, the researches abroad are more focused on application studies, using quasi-experiment for evaluation. Through comparison before and after the test, they focus on students' performance and the improvement of problem solving, information literacy, critical thinking, and collaborative learning ability (Wang, Huang & Jiang, 2017).

B. *Researches in China*

The researches of flipped classroom in China are mainly combined with Micro-course Mooc to construct teaching models and work out optimum teaching designs and so on. To localize flipped classroom, Professor He Kekang (2014) fought to analyze the origin and the effect of classroom and challenges which may exist in implementation, and explored the essential characteristics of the flipped classroom. He put forward a clear guidance for the development of flipped classroom in China. Dr. Zhao Xinglong (2014) compared the flipped classroom in the international and domestic contexts, and designed the flipped classroom teaching mode from the perspective of macro and micro. To design the flipped classroom and attract the students' attention, Zhang Jinlei (2013) put forward three stages of flipped classroom based on the concept of game-based teaching and flipped classroom teaching mode. Chen yi et al. (2014) took the basic course of computer application as an example to design a flipped classroom teaching plan which included two stages of flipped classroom model before and after class.

By constructing the flipped classroom teaching model and using educational resource, China aims to optimize teaching design, such as Micro-course Moocs. On the research type, there are more theoretical studies in China and in terms of evaluation dimensions, questionnaires and interviews are adopted to know about teachers and students' recognition of the curriculum, students' interest, participation, and their concern about the course. Flipped classroom teaching is frequently applied to the courses of computer, foreign language, and literature, Marxist theory and so on. More attention is paid to the paradigm of design research, from design to practice, and to the revision or improvement of original design or mode model. Currently in ubiquitous learning environment, flipped mode as the basis is used to promote blended learning, strengthen the combination of the online and offline. Through online self-learning and offline interaction between teachers and students, students' internalization of knowledge and the process of knowledge construction are emphasized (Wang, Huang & Jiang, 2017).

III. FLIPPED CLASSROOM TEACHING MODE

Advances in information technology have revolutionary influence on the development of education. With the informationization of education, flipped classroom teaching mode has been widely popularized and applied.

A. *Defining the Flipped Classroom*

Despite the buzz around the flipped classroom as an exciting new topic in educational research, there is a lack of

consensus on what exactly the flipped classroom is. Perhaps the simplest definition of the flipped, (or inverted) classroom is given by Lage et al. 'Inverting the classroom means that events that have traditionally taken place inside the classroom now take place outside the classroom and vice versa' (Bishop & Verleger, 2013). The exposition of Hamdan et al. is more comprehensive. 'In the flipped learning environment, teachers provide students with video, which is convenient for them to watch and learn from time to time, so as to make them more efficient learners. Because the direct teaching process of knowledge is transferred from class to outside, teachers can use class time to guide students to active participation in the learning process and provide them with personalized guidance and support' (Li, 2016). The idea of flipping the classroom with resources like the Khan Academy is simple. Rather than the teacher provides synchronous in-class group instruction, students are expected to use the video resources provided, along with other materials, to learn concepts and complete tasks independently at their own pace and at locations convenient to students. Individual students can focus their efforts on their individual learning needs so that they are not left behind by class discussions that go too fast or become bored by class time that is spent covering content they have already known (Davies, Dean & Ball, 2013).

Nevertheless, there are misconceptions towards the understanding of the flipped classroom. Some people equate it with online video or online courses, thinking video courses will completely replace teachers, thus students' learning is isolated without a framework. As the earliest practitioners of flipped classroom, to prove its feasibility as a teaching method, Bergmann and Sams (2012) listed several characteristics of the flipped classroom teaching mode as follows: it is the means to increase the interaction between teachers and students and can encourage students to be responsible for their learning environment. In the class, teachers transfer their role from 'the sage on the stage' to 'the mentor around' with the integration of direct teaching method and constructivist learning idea. Students can keep up even if they miss classes because of illness or extracurricular activities. Besides, with this mode, teaching resources can be kept at any time for students and students can be fully engaged in the learning process. Then, it provides students with a shortcut to a personalized education (Li, 2016).

B. The Rise and Application of Flipped Classroom Teaching Mode

As a new paradigm of classroom teaching, flipped classroom can be traced back to the Peer Instruction method founded by Harvard University physics Professor Eric Mazur in 1990. He proposed that the learning process should include knowledge transfer and knowledge reception. Professor Mazur asked students to teach themselves about course content outside class while in class, he mainly took the teaching method of 'asking questions--thinking--answering' and some other interactive activities. The first to propose the conception of 'flipped classroom' were Maureen J. Lage and Glenn J. Platt, who taught at the University of Miami's Business School. They defined the flipped classroom as this: The teaching and learning activities that have been carried out in the classroom are put into practice before class, and the reverse is still true. As a matter of fact, not only did they define the flipped classroom, but in 1996 flipped classroom instruction was applied to the micro-economics course for sophomores. This course turned the flipped classroom concept into the instruction, which first divided the teaching materials according to the subject, and then let students use their free time after class independently to read some related subject contents, and watch the video as well as the corresponding teaching courseware.

The real initiators of flipped classroom are Jonathan Bergmann and Aaron Sams. The two chemistry teachers at Woodland High School in Colorado, US, started the flipped classroom in 2007 by a chance of attempt, and later it has gone through the rapid development. They thought the class time was mainly used to teach the students to do exercises, solve students' doubt, tutor students in cooperative learning and the differential learning between groups. Before class, students must finish viewing the already uploaded teaching micro video. As they took the 'World Flipped Classroom Open Day' activities regularly, the concept of flipped learning was deeply rooted in the hearts of the people and vividly shown in public. Besides, more and more primary and secondary schools in the United States began to participate in the application of flipped classroom practice. The impact of the flipped classroom was pushed to the world by Salman Khan, founder of Khan Academy, who made his famous TED speech--- using video to recreate education in 2011 which made the flipped classroom begin to get the attention of global educators. By 2012, there were nearly a thousand of primary and middle schools in North America to carry out practical application of flipped classroom teaching mode (Dai, 2016).

The flipped classroom emphasizes the interaction between teachers and students and focuses on the self-learning and collaborative exploration based on resources, and pays special attention to the acquisition process of knowledge rather than the teaching of teachers. The rapid development of information technology brings the infinite possibility of education. The OpenCourseWare project, which was launched in 2002 by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, broadened the breadth of education resources to the academic authority of education. MIT alumni Salman Kahan made full use of the convenience of network transmission and the low cost of video reuse. Since the teaching of knowledge points can be reached through prerecorded video, valuable classroom time is invested in irreplaceable teacher-student interactions and classroom activities based on project and problem solving. This is also the core of flipped classroom teaching idea (Li, 2016). The flipped classroom which is equipped with a variety of technologies, like video and online automatic response systems has brought about great changes in the following aspects (Bishop & Verleger, 2013; Abeysekera & Dawson, 2014; Kim et al., 2014): the way classroom time was used, the approach of utilizing extra-curricular time, the use of class, and the form of interaction.

C. *The Presentation of Flipped Classroom Teaching Mode*

The advantage of the flipped classroom teaching mode is that it can transfer the process of knowledge acquisition in the traditional classroom into the process of students' autonomous learning knowledge before class. In class, they only explore and solve the confusion and difficulties of some certain knowledge points. This process is conducive to students' autonomous learning. It carries out the flip both before and in class and cultivates students' learning initiatives. There can be two types of the presentation of flipped classroom teaching mode: flip before class and flip in class.

First, about the presentation of flipping before class. Students need to learn the lesson and other related information before class, have a basic understanding of major knowledge, complete the inspection, summarize the gain in learning and think for the confusion of knowledge points, and then solve the difficulties with teachers and classmates in the classroom. Teachers need to offer Micro-Course Online Video and study guides to students, and students study before class. Next, about the presentation of flipping in class. Based on the students' learning outcome before class, students in the classroom are required to consolidate the fundamental knowledge, solve problems and take some practical operations, as appropriate to the grasp of knowledge or to expand exploration, and develop comprehensive quality. The class is in essence switched into the venue of training students' abilities of researching and thinking on the basis of mastering basic knowledge. The presentation is featured by teachers and students' joint determination of questions and inquires and students' independent settlement of problems in addition to teachers' guidance in students' performance of collaborative exploratory activities. Ultimately, the presentation is fulfilled by students' display and teachers' evaluation and feedback (Fang, 2017).

IV. CONSTRUCTIVIST LEARNING THEORY

In flipped classroom, students are the main body of cognition, the center of the whole class, and the active constructors of meaning construction which breaks through the limitations of traditional classroom. Before class, students preview the relevant knowledge through some online media to have their autonomous meaning construction. Such a teaching mode of flipped classroom is carried out by the constructivist learning theory which holds the opinion that students are active constructors of meaning, the leader and controller of the learning process while teachers only assist students in developing their autonomous learning.

A. *Defining the Constructivist Learning Theory*

Felder (2012), Gordon (2008), Neo et al.(2009) hold the opinion that constructivism has emerged as a powerful theory for explaining how humans learn about the world around them and how new knowledge is formed. The theory of constructivism is that knowledge is not waiting to be discovered but rather it is constructed by humans by interaction with the world and with each other. Learner collaboration, interaction, and engagement are foundational in the constructivist theory of learning. Carini, Menchaca, Merrill et al. think that collaborative, interactive activities have been touted to be most effective at helping students reach a higher level of understanding (Butzler, 2014). The constructivist learning theory states that through consultation in the community, learning can be the process of construction and cognition of knowledge. The introduction of system of language and text has solved the communicative and objective validity of knowledge and made it possible to achieve the teaching and learning of knowledge. The largest community is mankind. As long as man exists, knowledge can be acquired. And at the meantime, knowledge can only be acquired under the condition of the existence of mankind (Ren, 2008).

Currently, the constructivist learning theory is widely used in the area of education and the activities of teaching. Analysis of and enlightenment from this theory may be expounded as follows: From the perspective of knowledge construction, knowledge is the understanding and hypothesis towards reality of an individual influenced by specific experience and culture. Different persons have different understandings towards the construction of knowledge. Thus, teachers pay attention to their students' individual characteristics and teach them according to their aptitude, so that each student can construct new knowledge according to their own cognitive level of knowledge. From the perspective of teaching, constructivists believe that learning is the active exploration of the student subject or the learning object so as to construct the process of understanding the object meaning. Therefore, teaching pivots on the meaningful construction of students by inspiring them to construct their own knowledge structure. From the perspective of learners, constructivists confirm that students are active constructors of meaning. So, during the process of teaching, teachers try their best to exert students' initiatives, emphasize the students' autonomy and help them actively discover, analyse and solve the problems in learning.

B. *Constructivist Teaching Mode and Teaching Design*

The constructivist learning theory emphasizes that students are the center of teaching and the subject of cognition. Teachers should adopt new teaching mode and carry out new teaching design in teaching process. Therefore, the new teaching mode and teaching design that are suitable to the constructivist learning theory are gradually formed.

1. Constructivist teaching mode

In the constructivist learning environment, compared with the traditional teaching method, the status of teachers and students has changed greatly. The constructivist learning theory emphasizes the opinion of students, taking students as the main body of cognition, and as the active constructors of the knowledge meaning. Teachers only help and promote

the meaning construction of students and are not required to impart knowledge directly to students. Obviously, the constructivist learning theory advocates the student-centered learning under the guidance of teachers. Besides, constructivist learning environment includes four elements: situation, cooperation, conversation and meaning construction. To be more specific, the situation in the learning environment must be conducive to the students' construction of the meaning of what they have learned. Collaboration occurs throughout the learning process. It is very important for the collection and analysis of learning materials and the evaluation of learning outcomes and the final construction of meaning. Conversation is an integral part of collaborative learning process which should be discussed by the group members on how to complete the prescribed learning tasks. Meaning construction is the ultimate goal of the whole learning process. In the process of learning, teaching is harnessed to help students construct meaning, digest the content of the current study, and achieve a deep understanding of the inner link between one thing and some other things.

In summary, the teaching mode, based on the constructivist learning theory and constructivist learning environment, can be expounded as follows: In the course of the whole learning process, teachers play the role of organizer, mentor, helper and facilitator while students are placed at the center. Situation, cooperation and conversation are used as learning environment elements to completely stimulate the initiative, enthusiasm and the pioneering spirit of students. Thus, it can finally achieve the purpose of effectively realizing the meaning construction of the current knowledge (He, 1997).

2. Constructivist teaching design

In recent years, experts have made an extensive research and exploration in the field of education technology. They try to establish a new teaching design theory and method system which can adapt to constructivist learning theory and constructivist learning environment. It is a difficult task, and cannot be completed in a short term. But its basic ideas and main principles have become gradually clear and have been applied to the teaching design under the constructivist learning environment with aid of on multimedia and Internet. The teaching design principles can be summarized as follows: Firstly, there are three main elements, which are taking student as the center, externalizing knowledge and realizing self-feedback. Secondly, they emphasize the important role of situation in meaning construction. Through assimilation and adaptation, the construction of new knowledge can be achieved successfully. Thirdly, they focus on the key role of collaborative learning in meaning construction. Constructivists hold that the interaction between learners and the surrounding environment is very important in the understanding of learning content (i.e. the construction of knowledge). Fourthly, it emphasizes the design of the learning environment rather than the teaching environment. Constructivists strongly advocate that learning environment is a place where learners can explore freely and learn independently. Under this environment, students can use various tools and information resources, such as text materials, audio, video materials, CAI, multimedia courseware, Internet information to achieve their final learning goals. Teaching means more control and domination, while learning means more initiative and freedom. Fifthly, they favor the use of many information resources to support the idea that learning rather than teaching is more important and necessary. Media and information are not used to assist teachers in the presentation but to support students' autonomous learning and collaborative exploration. Last but not least, the final goal of the learning process is to accomplish the construction of meaning rather than to complete the teaching goal. According to the above analysis, the teaching design in the constructivist learning environment should contain the following contents and steps: Analysis of teaching aims, the creation of environment, information resource design, autonomous learning design, collaborative learning design, learning effect evaluation design and reinforcement practice design (He, 1997).

V. THE APPLICATION OF CONSTRUCTIVIST LEARNING THEORY IN FLIPPED CLASSROOM

Flipped classroom teaching is the right embodiment of the constructivist learning theory. In other words, the constructivist learning theory can be practically applied to the flipped classroom teaching.

A. *The Role of Teachers and Students in Constructivism*

In the flipped classroom, the role of teachers and students is transformed. Teachers change their role into the facilitator and helper of students' learning while students become the main controller during their own learning process.

1. The role of teachers

In constructivism, the role of teachers is the faithful supporter of students' construction of knowledge. Teachers alter their role from traditional teaching into the facilitator and collaborator of students' learning. Teachers should devote themselves to provide students with some guidance. They also should create a good learning environment for students to expand their learning through cooperative learning and realize that teaching is a process of gradually reducing external control but increasing internal self-control of students. Besides, teachers should play the role of an active guide of students' construction of knowledge, not only stimulating their interests in pursuing knowledge but also keeping their learning motivation. Teachers play an important and indispensable part in students' pursuit of knowledge, and their construction of the knowledge they have learned so far. Consequently, teachers pay more attention to collaborative learning, discussion and communication in class, making the whole class beneficiaries in the process of constructing the meaning of knowledge.

2. The role of students

In the teaching activities, students play the role of active participants and constructors of knowledge. Under the constructivist environment, students are confronted with a complex real-world situation and they are also required to complete a complex task in reality. Students adopt new learning styles and new cognitive processing strategy, forming a mental model in which he is both the builder and the reader of knowledge. Compared with the traditional mode of teaching, constructivist mode of teaching requires students to take more chances to manage their own learning independently. Students should use exploratory method and discovery method to construct the meaning of knowledge. As students play an important role, they need to actively collect and analyze the relevant information and resources, putting forward various hypotheses and try to verify the problems which they have learned. The center of teaching is transferred from the teacher to the student. The final goal of constructivist teaching is to cultivate lifelong learners. In addition, teachers and students are not in a vacuum, but in society. Therefore, parents, the designers and evaluators of the curriculum, relevant administrative personnel, and some other participants should change their ideology and actively face the learning and teaching revolution brought by constructivist (Wang, 2009).

B. The Application of Constructivist Learning Theory in Self-directed Flipped Classroom

1. Self-directed flipped classroom

Self-directed learning method is a kind of autonomous learning. In this method, individuals form their own learning needs and goals, and choose some proper learning strategies to acquire knowledge without the help of others. In flipped classroom, students' autonomy is fully reflected for the reason that flipped classroom is endowed with high degree of openness and flexibility, emphasizing on students' interaction. The core of flipped classroom is learning, which means that flipped classroom acknowledges students' autonomous and self-directed learning. American scholars first and most widely studied self-directed learning. Rubin, Holec, Candy et al. described the features of self-directed language learners as follows: They have their own typical learning styles, approaching the target language in a tolerant and open manner. They can also use state-of-the-art technology to deal with languages. They are willing to use the target language in a real environment and have the alternative strategies for testing and revising the target language. In self-directed learning mode, the learners are required to correctly assess and actively manage the learning targets, behavior, learning environment and the final results. From the point of most scholars' eyes, self-directed learning is considered the process of how to learn. Dickinson (1987) had his own special ideas about self-directed learning. He thought that was neither a process nor an ability, but an attitude. Holec thought that although self-directed learning means that the individual should have autonomy, this kind of ability may not be used or applied in the process of learning (Li, 2016).

2. The application of constructivist learning theory

In the flipped classroom, the teachers provide students with the teaching situation, teaching media, and teaching content, and assist students in actively exploring and completing the cognition and information processing. Students need to be active and creative in order to achieve learning targets in collaborative learning. Constructivist Learning Theory emphasizes that in the learning activities students are at the center position and are the active constructors of meaning. The main responsibility of teachers is to promote self-directed learning of students. Therefore, based on the Constructivist Learning Theory, in a student-directed flipped classroom, on the one hand, teachers carry on the corresponding training on the ability of autonomous learning through certain methods like using micro class. While on the other hand, emotionally teachers need to encourage students, giving them certain confidence in order to gradually cultivate the habit of self-learning. Under the Constructivist Learning Theory, in a flipped classroom self-directed learning mode, students learn how to learn, how to use knowledge and how to use the knowledge they have learned to solve complex problems, while the teacher systematically arranges courses for the purpose of integrating, exercising and refining complex ideas and learning techniques. It conforms to constructivist learning mode. Students participate in the learning activities entirely, and teachers help them master and know the learning targets, utilizing the classroom assessment to foster the teaching (Li, 2016).

C. Case Study on College English Teaching

College English teaching covers many courses, of which comprehensive English course is a compulsory course for freshmen and sophomores in English major throughout the undergraduate fundamental education. It is also a comprehensive skill course at this stage cooperating with listening, speaking, reading and writing lessons. The course aims to cultivate students' logical thinking ability, hoping that through reading and analyzing language materials of the lessons, their minds can be broaden for sharp thinking, and solid professional foundation can be laid for the study of related courses. As comprehensive English course plays such an important role in college English teaching, the flipped classroom mode in this course can be taken out as a typical course to study the flipped classroom on college English teaching.

Vice President of Hangzhou Normal University of Foreign Languages, Li Ying tried the flipped classroom mode of self-directed learning and teaching in her own class of comprehensive English course in the second semester of freshman year because students are already familiar with the university environment at this stage, and the study pressure is not very high. She divided the students' tasks into three aspects: text, after-class extension, the explanation of main points of CET and TEM. The teacher provides the text comprehension PPT to the students' teaching group for reference, and students can add and subtract content according to their own judgment. For after-class extension, students need to

select appropriate learning resources according to the text, including books, news, audio and video resources. For the explanation of main points of CET and TEM, the teacher urges the students to keep the habit of doing exercises frequently, explaining the key points of CET and TEM. In her lesson, she divided the whole class into eight groups and each group had three to four members. Each time, one group was responsible for teaching in any form as they like. Three of the students in the audience were observers, recording some details of the lectures and their own evaluations. In order to make the evaluation maintain objective continuity and varied perspectives, one of the three reviewers was permanent, that is to say, one student needs to record and evaluate each time, while the other two persons are in rotation. After the students' self-directed learning and flipped teaching mode had been implemented for half a semester, it was found that through self-assessment and mutual evaluation, students found their own gap, reflected on their own language learning process, and systematically sorted out the already grasped knowledge. Students surpassed themselves, demonstrating their learning ability, research ability and expression ability. Moreover, the study also found that students' ability of language output was much higher than that of other students in the same grade. Each group with joint efforts of all the members, tried to present a popular comprehensive English class under the guidance of the teacher. Students also experienced the achievements of self-management, self-regulation and group cooperation.

This mode has broken the traditional comprehensive English course mode which takes teachers and the classroom as the main body, focusing on patterns of teaching explicit language knowledge. The curriculum is built into a mode that based on students' language foundation and language skills, taking students as the main focuses. And under such mode of teaching, the participation of students in the whole process of learning is maximized, and students' independent learning ability has been greatly improved (Li, 2016). And this kind of flipping in comprehensive English class also corresponds with the core idea of constructivist learning theory which emphasizes the independence of students in learning and construction of knowledge and meaning. Students act as the main leader and controller of their own learning process, previewing the learning contents autonomously while teachers help students promote self-directed learning successfully.

VI. CONCLUSION

The main feature of the constructivist learning theory is that it emphasizes the mode of students-centered learning. Students are seemed as an important and noticeable part in the process of English teaching of flipped classroom. Under the mode of constructivist learning theory, the students' subjective dynamic role is fully displayed. Students are the center of teaching activity, and teachers need to play the role of the organizer, helper, and mentor, only to assist students in the process of learning activities and students play the leading role in this type of classroom. Based on the constructivist learning theory, in the English teaching of flipped classroom, students are the main body of cognition, and the active constructors of meaning construction which breaks through the limitations of traditional classroom. Before class, students preheat the relevant knowledge through some media to carry on autonomous meaning construction.

At the same time, under the support of constructivist learning theory, the main responsibility of teachers is to promote self-directed learning of students. Teachers help students to carry out self-directed learning, regard students as the leader of the learning process, and cultivate students' learning independence. In terms of students themselves, they actively participate in teaching activities, complete self-learning, information integration, exploratory and collaborative learning and strive for self-meaning construction. They give full play to subjective initiative, and become the best controller and manager of self-learning process and activities. Moreover, with constructive learning method, students' learning motivation in English can be fully stimulated. It can arouse students' interests in learning and autonomous learning consciousness. In such a flipped classroom, students may set a long-term or short-term goal for themselves and spare no effort to achieve that goal which subtly change students' attitude and push them to learn actively and construct meaning with great enthusiasm.

In a word, constructivist learning theory is quite important in a flipped classroom. It plays a vital role in self-directed learning. It also has profound influence in the future development and promotion of flipped classroom both at home and abroad.

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Literature Review of Language Planning and Language Policy since 21st Century

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Abstract—As a major part of sociolinguistics, language planning has become a major research topic for many scholars. As a branch of Applied Linguistics, language planning is not a theoretical field of academic research, but mainly based on solving language problems in society. In the past 50 years, language planning research has been deepened and the coverage has gradually expanded. Especially, since 1990s, language planning has become a subject of rejuvenation, which has increasingly highlighted its importance and research prospects. This paper will review and analyze the general situation of language planning research in the past 20 years at home and abroad, and look forward to the future trend of language planning research.

Index Terms—language planning, language policy, linguistics

I. INTRODUCTION

LPLP, as a typical noun phrase, has two different denotative meanings. In the first level, it refers to the actual language planning practices, which is more often than not done by governments, institutions or organizations, etc. Just as Kaplan & Baldauf (1997, p15) noted, "In one sense, our knowledge of language planning is probably as old as recorded human history as it is a part of how people use language." In the second level, LPLP signifies an independent academic discipline whose primary task is to study those actual language planning practices. According to Wright (2004), LPLP as a recognized subject of academic research can be traced back to the Post-Second World War time with a history of no more than sixty years. Human language planning has a long history. However, after the Second World War, language planning was established as a recognized professional course in universities. The real academic research of language planning started roughly in 1960s.

The definition of LPLP varies from scholar to scholar, depending on their viewpoint of this discipline. Cooper (1989, p30-31) listed as many as twelve and abroad by the time of his writing. However, there is no need to review these definitions one by one, but some well known scholars whose definitions could be considered as representatives of dominant ideas of LPLP research at that time. The chosen definitions are listed as following: definitions after the publication of Haugen's 1959 article.

"Language planning is deliberate language change; that is, changes in the system of language code or speaking or both that are planned by organizations that are established for such purposes or given a mandate to fulfill such purposes.....for solving language problems to find the best (or optimal, most efficient) decision" (Rubin and Jernudd, 1971, p 29)

Language Planning is also a social and cultural process, often through status planning, ontology planning, and acquisition planning to make people change the use of language. Language planning may be influenced by the following or several kinds of guidance. (1) Language is regarded as a problem (therefore, language diversity must be eliminated) (2) language as a right to solve the right of language in the environment of language competition Problems (3) language is the resource (promoting language democracy and pluralism). In a word, language policy and language planning all have social, political and cultural attributes. It is these attributes that make the two inseparable.

Fishman (1974) defined as a deliberate effort to change the position, structure and acquisition of language. Language planning is a major category of social planning, including housing, employment, migration, tax policy. It has a definite goal and the implementation plan. Language policy refers to the official institutions and departments carry out an implicit or explicit language program (such as the Ministry of education, the school, and the leadership of the unit). Language policy can be a guideline or regulations of language use and language acquisition which a state or institution which aimed at the structure of language. The implementation can be explicit (such as the entry of language policy to the Constitution) and May be hidden without saying.

However, language policy has its advantages in the formulation and implementation of government agencies, but most scholars believed that language policies can be held by public institutions (such as government agencies, schools, courts), or by private machines. The structure (such as companies, enterprises, non-governmental organizations) is made by itself (Tollefson, 2011, p357). The language policies and planning formulated by the people will have an immeasurable influence on the social structure and development and the life of people.

The implementation effect of language policy and language planning is largely controlled by language education. The goal cannot be achieved by the programming without acquisition. Acquisition planning is responsible for position planning and implementation of ontology planning. Once a policymaker determines the role and specific language form

of a language in the field of public life, language acquisition is organized and implemented by educators. Namely, acquisition planning is accomplished through language education and planning (Cooper, 1989).

The policy of language education refers to the policy related to the acquisition of language in formal education, which generally includes The regulations and documents of the governments at all levels, the regular work of the subordinates, and so on. Early language education policies and planning are related to modernization and development theories and have three key common points: (1) Scholars optimistically believe that language education policies and plans benefit minority language groups; (2) Policy and planning experts should play an important role in formulating and implementing efficient and reasonable plans and policies; (3) Academic research and practice should focus on nation-states. It is generally believed that the government educational institutions play a major role in language policy and planning activities. It makes early research adopt a top-down perspective. However, there are several shortcomings in the early practices: (1) they ignore the complexity of social and political systems, the causal relationship between policy and implementation effectiveness is extremely complex, and social groups often have different goals that are not stated clearly; (2) Concern over national policies And planning, ignoring the attitudes and language habits of language education objects; (3) Too much trust in the value of language education policies and planning for integrating minority language groups (Tollefson, 2008). The above problems arise because language policies and planning have regional, time, political, and social limitations. The guiding ideology of policy and planning is changing, and when it is feasible and effective, it has lost its value here and now.

It is generally believed that the study of modern language policy and planning began in the field of sociolinguistics in the 1960s and began in the 1970s. The development of disciplines was related to the problems faced by many newly independent countries in Asia and Africa at that time facing the selection and promotion of Mandarin. Language selection, standardization and promotion, national unity and development and other issues have attracted a large number of scholars to study and discuss, so that the disciplines develop in a problem-driven direction. However, whether language can be artificially challenged at the beginning of the discipline development is being questioned. The current academic community believes that language can be planned, but does not mean that language should be planned. Structuralism is opposed to language planning not only because the theoretical basis of structuralism is very different from regulatorism, but also because language planning goes beyond linguistics. It is an interdisciplinary subject that focuses on policy formulation and implementation, with a clear sociopolitical dimension (Jernudd & Nekvapil, 2012). Some of the theories from the non-linguistic field have the tendency to integrate society, while others advocate the diversity of language and culture. The different epistemology of language shows different tendencies in the language policy and planning research community: language purity, descriptivism, liberalism and so on. For this reason, there has been no mainstream theory of language policy and planning so far.

II. LPLP STUDY ABROAD

In the early stage, foreign researchers focused on the definition of language planning, principles, classification, tasks and other basic theory. The last 10 years of the 20th Century, the western countries are facing a series of problems of language, more and more people got to know the importance of language problems and began to examine and study the language planning. Many scholars such as Cooper, Kaplan, Baldauf, Fierman, Phillipson and Fishman deeply discussed the problems of the language policy and planning, such as the disappearance of languages, language revival, language variation and language contact, language transfer and language communication and expansion and so on, from the angles of society, economy and politics. After more than 60 years development, the research of language policy and language planning has possessed a relatively mature discipline system, roughly forming the four schools and the school of rational choice is the mainstream, consisting of North American linguists. Since 20th century, the research of foreign language policy and language planning has not only developed in depth, but also breadth which reached a hitherto unknown degree. Many academic papers published in various research journals, and a number of important monographs or edited have also appeared. The representatives are Bernald Spolsky's three books published by University of Cambridge press. The language policy focuses on the hot issues in the forefront of many language policy researches: attitudes towards language specification and bad languages, bilingualism and multilingualism, protection of language disappearance and endangered languages, language choices and language education policies as human rights and civil rights.

"Language management" is a language planning research monograph, which provides a new perspective for language planning, and plays a leading role in the discussion and solution of the future social language problems. "Handbook of Cambridge language policy " is the first practical handbook devoted to the exploration of language policy, covering all aspects of language planning research, as well as a comprehensive case study.

In addition, another prominent feature of foreign language planning research is that they more focused on the research of practice. Many scholars use the theory of language planning to analyze the language planning and policy of one or several countries or a political and economic union. In brief, Haugen has proposed the concept of language planning since 1959. Language planning and Policy research of western linguistics has become one of the popular and fast development discipline, not only published many monographs, set up relevant academic journal, published a lot of articles, and the study in this field of also has attracted great attention in University. Language planning and policy

research in foreign countries has formed a mature talent training mechanism, cultivating many talents who are interested in this field. The theoretical and practical studies of language planning have been carried out abroad

Language planning research in theory and practice is becoming more and more mature. In a few decades, many scholars have made relatively adequate theoretical research to the basic elements of language planning activities. Some scholars have given theoretical Analysis and description on a certain language planning practices in some countries. Theoretical and practical research of language planning interacts and makes language planning more perfect.

III. LPLP STUDY IN CHINA

In China, language planning is still one of research topics in Applied Linguistics and Social Linguistics, so there is no study of language planning works, only some of the relevant research papers until the end of 20th Century. Domestic researchers began studying the language planning with editing and publishing essays. In 2001, the book-- *Foreign Language Policy and Planning Process* was published by Chinese press, which was edited by Zhou Qingsheng and collected some of the major national language planning and policy research papers from all continents. This work has played a pioneering role for people to understand the foreign language planning and policy research. Later, Zhou Yuzhong & Wang Hui edited the collected papers: *Language Planning and Language Policy: Theory and Country Study*. This collection give a detailed introduction and analysis of language planning in some major countries in the world, which also properly evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of language policy, so that readers can understand the history and prospect of Chinese language planning and policy research. *Language Planning Research* is Chen Zhanqai's personal paper collection. This collection is also the first one focused on the study of language planning, to which the author devoted much effort and time, playing a very important role in leading the domestic language planning research.

After the 20th Century, the academic circles, especially linguistics, have grasped the new mission and new opportunities given by the historical development and the domestic language planning and language policy research has shown a "blowout" trend. Since 2006, both the quality and quantity of the publication and the expansion of interdisciplinary studies have heralded the advent of the spring of language planning and language policy research. In 2006, the Chinese Press published the book *Language Planning in Theory and Practice: Proceedings of the Fourth National Symposium on Sociolinguistics*, which has the positive symbolism because of the theme of language planning in theory and practice, highlighting the field of language planning that has been attracted great attention. Over the next few years, domestic scholars have published several monographs on the real meaning of language planning, of which the representatives are *Chinese Language Planning* of Li Yuming and *Chinese Language Planning Research* Yao Yaping. The main research contents of the former include language life, language standards, academic planning and planning theory etc. The latter discusses the basic nature of language planning, the object of study, the subject of conduct, the main content, the key problems and the objectives of language planning, etc., which has established a new angle for language planning.

Li Yuming's English Edition *Language Planning in China* was published by German Walter de Gruyter. The publication of the book is an important milestone in the study of language planning in China, marking the internationalization of Chinese language planning research, reflecting the international attention to Chinese language planning. The famous linguist Bernard Spolsky wrote preface for it. In the preamble, it is pointed out that this collection has gone beyond the theme of Chinese language planning and can lay the foundation for the study of the whole language management field. The publication of this book can provide valuable possibilities for Chinese and Western scholars to engage in valuable cooperation in language policy and management. In the same year, another important event was the publication of *An Introduction to Language Planning* by Mr. Chen Zhang Tai. Mr. Chen is the leader and pioneer in the field of language planning who has been working on language planning research in China for many years. The monograph absorbed the latest research results at home and abroad and used applied linguistics, especially the theory of sociolinguistics, combining with the actual situation of language planning in our country, and introduced systematically the basic theories and methods of language planning, clarifying the basic situation and major theoretical problems of planning language. Therefore, people could have a better understanding of language planning so as to promote the teaching and research of language planning and language planning theory. Zhao Ronghui spoke highly of this book and considered it Constructing a language planning theory system with Chinese characteristics, highlighting the characteristics of Chinese school in language planning research, and it is the most perfect and outstanding work which summarizing the practice and research of Chinese language planning.

In terms of language ontology planning, there are many papers and specialized works are rare. *The Study of Word and Word Writing: New Prospects for Chinese Language Planning* (Peng Zerun) is a representative of ontology planning research, describing Chinese word consciousness and the development of information resources, the history of Chinese writing, words and related problems of misunderstanding etc. This book is forward-looking, pragmatic and operational. In the interdisciplinary study of language planning, domestic scholars have also made useful attempts. *The Introduction of Language Ecology* (Feng Guangyi) is the first book about language ecology focusing on studying language ecology system, ecology of language from the perspective of language contact, language ecology and language policy, language ecology and language attitude, language ecology and language harmony etc. The author has made a preliminary attempt to construct a language ecology discipline system with Chinese characteristics.

Besides the above research monographs and edited, there are also many research papers. Wu Meili introduced foreign research results of language planning in theory and practice, including the concept, classification, stage, acts, motivation and purpose of the study. Wang Hui summarizes the type, target and concept in the field of 50-year language planning, discussing the framework of language planning theory proposed by Haugen, Cooper, Kaplan and Baldauf. Dai Manchun explores the definition, formation and development of the subject, the effectiveness, rational choice model and other aspects of language policy and language planning according to the latest research and discussion of western scholars, and points out that language policy and planning have the limitations of the region, age, political and social aspects. Any language policy must conform to the times. Huang Xiaolei pointed out that due to the profound social linguistic background and strong interdisciplinary tendency, international language planning research has three main research orientation in the method in the latter half of the 20th Century. Feng Jia and Wang Kefei gave a detailed study and overview of the latest development of the foreign language program in the first 10 years of twenty-first Century.

In the expansion of the research content, Zhao Shouhui, Zhang Dongbo explore the new international language planning and communication field and related phenomena, providing a new perspective for future research and practice of language planning from the perspective of globalization on language planning. Li Yuming has further broadened the field and vision of language planning research, and pointed out that China should pay attention to and implement the domain of language planning. Shen Qi and Xia Tian studied the language planning in the field of international academic communication, and proposed a language planning analysis framework based on different object levels and multi problem domains. Li Yuming thinks that we should adhere to the "language equality", rational planning of "language function", pay more attention to the cultural function of language, and through a comprehensive and scientific study on the mechanism of language planning, language conflict, timely pays attention to public opinion of language and minimizes language conflicts, avoiding language conflict, and constantly promotes the harmonious language life.

IV. CONCLUSION

Language policy and planning research is an evolving discipline. Like all areas of dynamic change systems, it must adapt to change, not only to discover new phenomena and new problems, but to reassess past practices and existing theories based on new knowledge. Language policy theorists and practitioners not only need to explain the current observed facts, but also provide necessary guidance for those who want to resolve conflicts, improve communication efficiency, and respect language variants. Because of this, they often need to avoid too simple models and solutions. Scholars generally do not directly put forward clear recommendations, but rather reveal the complexities of understanding the challenges of understanding language policies, describing socio-linguistic ecology, recognizing many opposing views, and proposing language planning and management methods (Spolsky, 2012, p 15).

The social process has three major characteristics: globalization, migration, and regional management. The theoretical model of language policy and planning undoubtedly must comply with the needs of the times. Although new research issues are constantly emerging, the old issues will still be noticed. These are the essential features of language policy and planning disciplines.

Of course, there are still some problems in the domestic language planning research, and It seems that there still exists a long way for Chinese LPLP research to go to link up with the international standards.

Zhao Ronghui pointed out that three aspects of the book, such as the lack of interdisciplinary perspectives, the lack of theoretical construction, and the inadequate research methods, are the areas in which the book is in short supply." And in fact, this is also some serious problems of language planning that the domestic researchers are facing. Chen Zhan tai considers that:"..... The scientific research is not adequate and strong enough, and the language planning theory is relatively weak, and some language planning activities and practices are not scientific enough."

In recent years, the study of language planning focuses on practical research. Many scholars use the theory of language planning to analyze language planning and language policies of one or several countries or a political and economic union from an academic perspective. Krzyanowski and Wodak (2011) discuss the relationship between politics and multilingual policy, deeply exploring EU multilingualism during Lisbon strategic period. They believe that the economic factors of language policy and multilingual policy mainly depend on the EU strategy deployment on the overall economic development. Georgiou (2011) discussed the standardization of geographical names in Cyprus. Nolan (2010) conducted a detailed study of the French language policy and multilingual status, and explored many language events from 1992 to 2004

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Angst in Albee's *A Delicate Balance*

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Abstract—The works of Albee reflected the state of rejection and indignation that invaded the American society in the middle of the last century as manifested in the infiltration of trade forms and industrialization into all fields of life. His first works, including in his play *A Delicate Balance* Albee focused on the themes of loss and anxiety that the American individual suffered in that period. This paper will try to examine the reasons that drove the main characters in this play to anxiety and loss, and how they lived in complete isolation by their obsession over aging and fear. Also, this paper will touch on the deterioration of relations among family members under the influence of the “American dream” project.

Index Terms—aging, angst, fear, loss of self-confidence, Albee, *A Delicate Balance*

I. INTRODUCTION

A Delicate Balance tells the story of the following characters: Agnes is a woman in her late 50s who suffers from the fear of losing her mind. Sensing her role as the point of reference for her family, Agnes tries hard to hide her fear from others to maintain the balance in her family. She not only ignores the presence of her alcoholic sister in her home since her divorce, but also endures the embarrassing situations caused by her husband, Tobias.

Tobias is a few years older than Agnes and suffers from a fear of death. Although he was left emotionally shocked by the death of his young son Teddy several years ago, Tobias strives to maintain his balance and hide his internal conflict and state of anxiety by indulging in alcohol. He also forces Agnes to accept the presence of his friend Harry and his wife Edna in their household.

Claire is the alcoholic younger sister of Agnes, who is not afraid of showing her faults to others. She considers the most honest character in the play. She does lack a harmonious relationship with her sister, which she subjects to constant embarrassment, and even tries provoking Tobias to leave his wife.

Julia is the daughter of Tobias and Agnes, who has already been married and divorced several times in her early 30s. She has lived with her parents since her latest divorce, has a hysterical temper, and is greatly distressed by the presence of her aunt and her father's friend at their home.

Harry and his wife Edna are friends of Tobias and Agnes, who are close to their age. They are suffering from a fear of the unknown, which drove them out of their house and seek solace in Tobias and Agnes's home. Their fear is unknown to the other characters in the play. Harry and Edna themselves do not know the cause of their fear. Agnes is annoyed of staying at home, but reluctantly does so to satisfy the demands of her husband.

The play takes place in the living room of Agnes and Tobias's house. The couple is suffering from loneliness and feels that they can no longer protect their marriage, which they consider meaningless. Claire, who has suffered from a failed marriage and has no friends, is living together with her sister Agnes and her brother-in-law Tobias. Agnes and Tobias's daughter Julia comes to live with them after the failure of her latest marriage. Harry and his wife Edna also live with the couple to cope with their fear of the unknown. All these characters escape from their reality and gather in the house of Tobias and Agnes in search of comfort and safety. However, instead of finding solace, they enter into arguments and are forced to confront their struggles and internal suffering.

II. FEAR

Escape from reality and fear of the unknown are the common denominators of all characters in *A Delicate Balance*. The fear of the unknown, which reflects the state of anxiety experienced by these characters, is embodied in several aspects depending on each character. Agnes, the main female character in the play, suffers from the fear of losing her mind. This phobia controls Agnes because she finds that insanity will help her escape the vacuum in which she lives. “...the belief that I might very easily- as they say- lose my mind one day” (Delicate, p.19).

Agnes strives to hide her phobia from others and maintain the image of a strong woman who is capable of maintaining the bonds within her family. She simultaneously tolerates the harsh words thrown at her by her alcoholic sister Claire and the difficult situation being faced by her daughter Julia. Agnes is also evaluating her marriage with Tobias, who suffers from fear of death and struggles with the same emotional shock that he has not shaken off since the

death of his son Teddy. In other words, Agnes lives in a state of contradiction and conflict between her fear of madness that controls her thinking and her attempt to hide such conflict from the other living in her home. Agnes's suffering lies in her difficulty of striking a balance between her steadfastness in maintaining a strong personality and behavior and her desire to live in a world of madness. Nilson (1989) argued that "Human life consists of a delicate balance between the options of a consciously willed order and an abandonment of the self to the forces of chaos and dependence" (p.150).

Meanwhile, Tobias suffers from anxiety and fear of death and has never gotten over the death of his son many years ago. Similar to Agnes, Tobias tries to hide his grief and anxiety by drinking alcohol or pretending to be indifferent to others around him. "Capitulating into a sense of order which is in fact no more than mere routine and denial of the force and reality of loss" (Biggsby, 1975, P.294). In this sense, both Agnes and Tobias are having troubles in balancing their internal suffering and fulfilling their duties to others.

After the death of his son Teddy, Tobias has immersed himself in grief that he cannot get rid of or overcome. According to Agnes, their family life has undergone a complete overthrow after the death of Teddy. She thinks that the death of Teddy has killed all signs of a marital relationship with Tobias because her husband has completely isolated himself from his family and his responsibilities to his wife.

Agnes: "It was an unreal time: I thought Tobias was out of love with me-or, rather, was tired of it, when Teddy died, as if it had been the string."

Tobias fears that he would relive the death of his son by entering a new relationship. However, this was not a habit of Tobias's before his son's death. "Tobias's passivity is a choice, not due to some lack of his nature" (Gussow, 1999, p. 261).

Tobias and Agnes have their own ways of hiding their fears. On the one hand, Tobias suppresses his internal struggles and denies their existence by avoiding his paternal responsibilities to his family. Even Agnes accuses him of being responsible for the failures of their daughter because he has not shown her the paternal authority that she needs to make the right decisions.

Agnes: "Each time Julia comes, each clockwork time...do you send her back? Do you tell her, Julia, go home to your husband, try it again? Do you? No, you let it...slip" (Delicate, p.100).

On the other hand, Agnes completely avoids discussing her problems with her sister or daughter and refuses to debate about the misfortunes and failures in her family. She applies general rules in her daily behavior as a way to avoid discussing the sad parts of her life with others. For example, she does not see any need to discuss private or public matters at the dining table and she tends to avoid engaging in futile discussions. Biggsby (1975) stated that "her desire for order eventually makes her deny the reality of what she sees and avoid the responsibility for any deep problem in the household" (p. 295).

Agnes and Tobias use a non-confrontational style when talking to the other characters in the play in hopes that doing so will help them prevent disclosing their fears. Despite their inner fears and memories of an imperfect marriage, Agnes and Tobias work hard to maintain the balance in their family. Each member of the family has endured painful memories and loss throughout their lives, yet tries to hide these feelings and show to others that they are living normal and balanced lives.

Harry and Edna represent another aspect of fear. They have fled their homes and retreated to the house of Tobias and Agnes in search of a feeling of safety that they cannot find in their own home.

Harry: "We can't go back there" (Delicate.47).

Harry and Edna are not aware of the exact cause of their fears. What they only know is that this type of fear does not make them feel secure in their own home. Agnes, as the focal point in her family, was initially reluctant to welcome Harry and Edna into their household because she knew that her family members are facing their own fears and have no space left to accommodate the concerns of other people.

The fear and anxiety being faced by Julia and Claire are manifested in their defeat and fear of facing reality. Claire and Julia are the most defeatist characters in the play who are unable to make their own decisions or establish proper relationships with people inside and outside their homes. Both Claire and Julia find in Tobias and Agnes a safe haven where they can completely avoid the difficulties they face in the outside world. They also find in Agnes and Tobias the mature personality and authority to make decisions. "Julia, the adult child who is unable to sustain a relationship outside her family is incapable of taking a step to alter and improve her relationships within the family. She waits for others to take action" (Gussow, 1999, p. 262).

Paolucci (1972) argued that Julia's return to her parents' home has intensified her difficulties and psychological crisis because she believes that her parents' home is a thing of her past and that her parents cannot help her solve her problems and prevent her from marrying scammers, homosexuals, and gamblers. "...a long-lost dream, the dead past, and in choosing to return, Julia is merely aggravating her already serious emotional difficulties" (p.110). Nielsen (1989) found that Julia's choice and association with such men is not coincidental; he observed that Julia has a psychological tendency to choose those people who cannot maintain marital relations. In this case, Julia sees her parents and her childhood home as a warm place that not only gives her comfort and safety, but also stops her from entering a real marital relationship. She has "a tendency on her part to look for impossible partners so that she has to return to the womb of her parent's house which she cannot bring herself to leave" (p. 153).

Claire feels threatened by the arrival of Julia, Harry, and Edna in her sister's home. She feels that their arrival may push her into a marginalized position in the house. However, Claire considered the most secure character in the play because she admits that she has given in to her situation and has no desire to change anything. Unlike the other characters in the play, Claire is unrestrained and acts freely without observing public traditions or customs. She has resorted to alcohol as a way of escaping her reality. However, all characters in the play suffer from anxiety, fear, and lack of comfort or safety, and each one of them has entered Tobias and Agnes's house in search of something missing. Each of them lives in a dark world filled with bitter memories and experiences that have caused them frustration, despair, and loss. Harry and Edna's entry to the house marks the turning point of the play. Despite his fear of the unknown, Harry has unmasked the fears of every other character in the play. He and his wife have entered a Tobias's house to hide themselves from their fear of living in their own home. However, they have discovered that everyone in Tobias and Agnes's family is having the same fear and anxiety that they are facing, but in different ways. Therefore, they eventually leave the house and search for another place where they can find safety. Harry and Edna's decision to leave the house has placed Tobias in a dilemma. On the one hand, he does not want them to stay at his home because of their fear. On the other hand, he does not want to disavow his friendship with Harry and appear disrespectful to himself and his friends. With regard to the relationship between the play and its title, Albee explained that "The delicate balance is between what we should be doing and what we ultimately decide we need to do to protect ourselves. I assume that's why I called the play *A Delicate Balance*" (Gussow, 1999, p 256-257). As mentioned above, Tobias's lack of interest in assuming the decision-maker role in his household can be ascribed to his fear of death. He is afraid of entering new relationships with others to avoid experiencing the same loss that he felt after the death of his son. In other words, Harry and Edna's decision to leave the house has pushed Tobias into a situation where he must decide between stopping his guests from leaving and getting rid of his withdrawal complex and thoughts of irresponsibility. Tobias did not try to stop his guests from leaving until it was too late.

Tobias: "Stay! (Softer) Stay! (Soft, tears) Stay. Please? Stay? (Pause) Stay? Please? Stay?" (Delicate, p. 117).

Tobias's pleas for Harry and Edna to stay reflect his desire to make a decision. Sense of responsibility and decision-making ability are long lost to Tobias. According to Paolucci (1972), "He has settled for the illusion of peace. The ordeal, the Terror, is reduced to conventional proportions and buried with all the other failures of the past" (p. 116).

The arrival of Harry and Edna at Tobias's house has given him and his family an opportunity to face and overcome their fears, but they eventually find that they are not yet ready to do so. After the departure of Harry and Edna, Agnes announces that she is still attempting to keep her family stable, although she has completely collapsed from the inside and that her fear of losing her mind has made her believe that she is actually crazy. "Albee recurrent theme of threat, which is posed by reality is dispelled and they eagerly embrace their self-deceptions" (Adler, 2007, p. 84). Unable to face his sense of hesitation and irresponsibility, Tobias is convinced that he has been unable to face his fears and that he has failed to exploit the opportunity to do so. Claire continues to drink alcohol and act indifferent to everything that goes on around her, while Julia retains her childish way of thinking and lack of self-confidence as well as continues retreating to her parents' home every time she faces failure. "People sleep at night because they fear darkness" (Delicate, 150). This statement by Agnes reflects the fear of an individual to face his reality. In this play, Albee argued that individuals sometimes feel that their past lives have been meaningless and that they are too late to fix them. They are left with no choice but to adjust themselves to living and balancing the conflict between their desire to restore the past and their belief that doing so will not allow them to live peacefully in a world filled with feelings of loss and fear of the unknown.

III. AGING

Every human being follows almost the same sequence of life; they move from infancy to childhood, to adolescence, to adulthood, to marriage, and for a period of aging. Although each of these phases has its own characteristics and natural conditions, some believe that aging is the most difficult phase of a person's life. From the physiological perspective, man loses much of his activity, strength, and vitality during this phase. By contrast, from the psychological perspective, a man at this phase of life suffers from the vacuum and anxiety of the fate that awaits him. With regard to marital life, partners may suffer from the disintegration of bonds among them and feel that they have been separated from one another. Through *A Delicate Balance*, Albee touched upon the situation being faced by couples during their aging phase. Albee focused on how an individual can exploit his early life without feeling loss or regret upon reaching the old age because the feeling of remorse for one's past life and attempting to change it despite being too late represent man's inability to compensate for his past mistakes, which pushes him into a situation of loss and frustration.

The main characters in *A Delicate Balance* are nearing their aging phase and find themselves unable to adapt to a materialistic society. They feel that their past lives have been meaningless and that the feelings they have throughout their lives are all false. Therefore, their lives are filled with isolation, fear, and anxiety about their fate. Although fear is a common concern for all characters in the play, each character faces a different type of fear. For instance, Julia is afraid of maturity and tends to stick to her childish ways of thinking because she is incapable of assuming her responsibilities as a mature woman. Claire is also afraid of facing her reality and tends to fill her vacuum with alcohol. Meanwhile, Tobias and Agnes as well as Harry and Edna, are generally afraid of approaching the old age.

Harry and Edna run away from their home to escape their feelings of insecurity, the emptiness and loneliness of their family life, and the fear that something is chasing, frightening and making them feel unsafe. Albee did not specifically mention what Harry and Edna were afraid of and merely implied that they were afraid of aging. They are afraid of death and the feeling that their life is starting to run out of their hands. Their decision to leave their home and retreat to the house of Tobias makes them behave like children who are afraid of the dark and need to be embraced. "It symbolizes all the unspeakable fears of modern man, and especially man's fear of being alone and of being unable to communicate basically with any other living creature" (Post, 1969, 164).

Harry's fears of loneliness, a sense of the threat of the unknown, inability to communicate, and inability to face reality all represent the effects of the old age. These fears have pushed him and his wife out of their home and seek solace in Tobias's house.

Harry: "...We got frightened, we got scared, we couldn't stay there, and so, we came here. You're our very best friends" (45).

Harry and Edna have tried to kill such sense of threat by preoccupying themselves with learning the French language and frequently visiting social clubs, but these activities have failed to completely save them from the threat. By sharing their distresses to Tobias and Agnes, Harry and Edna show that they have very limited choices and that their lives are approaching the end. This reality has resulted in a feeling of despair from which they have repetitively tried to escape. They ultimately decide to leave Tobias's house because they cannot find the safety that can save them from the phobia and the threat of reaching the old age.

One of the effects of aging is reflected in the behavior of Tobias. Entering the aging phase has made Tobias live for himself only. His wife, Agnes, always blames him for not fulfilling his role as a father to his daughter and not paying attention to her problems. The passage of time has killed Tobias's feelings as a husband and father. By killing a cat that he has taken care of for a long time, Tobias rids himself of any feelings of love in his life. "Symbolically the story of the cat correlates to the lack of love in Tobias's world, for just as the cat responded indifferently to him, so Tobias responded indifferently to Agnes and Julia" (Roudane, 1987, p 113).

The death of the cat also represents the disconnect between the reality and inability of Tobias to keep giving love to those who love him. Tobias has also expressed regret over the killing of his cat, and such regret suggests that he also feels guilty for not being enough for his family, thereby leading to his sense of failure as a father and husband. Tobias's aging stops him from repairing his previous mistakes, thereby leaving him with no choice but to escape his reality by showing surrender and carelessness as well as abandoning his family responsibilities.

Despite Agnes's attempts to improve her role as a mother and shoulder all family responsibilities after Tobias surrenders his role as a husband and father, she also suffers from a fear of madness that is associated with her aging. Therefore, her attempts to maintain balance in her family were only superficial and she cannot find solutions to the fears being suffered by all the members of her family.

Agnes: "when we keep something in shape.... We keep it from falling apart. We do not attempt the impossible. We maintain. We hold" (Delicate. 80).

Julia's tendencies to stay in her childish mold and her fear of becoming a mature woman who is capable of building an independent family all represent her fear of aging. Julia has suffered four failed marriages, and each failure had driven her back to her parents' home because she does not want to stop living in her illusion of a childhood world and she does not want to become a wife and a mother because of her fear of aging. "... so you can look down the hall from the bed and see that Mommy's the door is open" (Biggsby, 1975, 92). Moreover, after the death of her brother Teddy, Julia was neglected by her father, who retired from his marital and family life and gave up his parental responsibilities toward her. Her father's and husbands' neglect prompted Julia to remain in a childlike state to make up for her lost childhood, which was taken away from her by the birth of her brother.

Agnes: "Teddy's birth, and how she felt unwanted, tricked ... All the schools we sent her to, and did she fail in them through hate ... or love?"

Similar to Harry and Edna, Julia retreats to her parents' home to feel safe and get rid of her loneliness. However, she is also unable to find what she is looking for because her family is emotionally shattered and unable to tolerate their and others' fears. In this case, through *A Delicate Balance*, Albee underscored the nature of family relations when parents are nearing the aging phase and how couples during this phase abandon their responsibilities to live in a world of illusion. Albee also highlighted the anxiety and fears that dominate the thinking of aging people as well as their sense of exclusion from the materialistic American society.

IV. CORROSION OF FEELINGS

A Delicate Balance shows many feelings of loss depending on the circumstances and situation of each character. Agnes lives in a state of conflict between her attempts to maintain her family's balance and her struggle to maintain her mental equilibrium and face her fears of going mad. She lost her youth at age 37 following her marriage to Tobias, after which she discovered that her marital life with him was meaningless. Agnes has faced another feeling of loss when her son died before reaching his adolescence. She has also been deprived of the opportunity to have another child because Tobias stopped having sex with her after the death of Tobias. These reasons have eroded Agnes's feelings until she became deprived of love, and such deprivation serves as the foundation of her other losses.

Meanwhile, Tobias has entered a world of loss and consequently withdrew himself from his parental role in the family. He feels indifferent to what is happening around him and to the problems being faced by his family, including the return of his daughter Julia and the death of his son Teddy, of which the latter marked a turning point in his life that killed all human feelings inside him.

Julia's four failed marriages have consumed all her feelings as a woman, her self-confidence, and her ability to move from a child's mindset to that of a mature woman. She has chosen to live in a world of illusion inside her parents' home. Similarly, Claire's failure to marry and start a family as well as her alcoholism have killed all her human feelings. Harry and Edna, after a long marriage, have developed a fear of the unknown, have lost their sense of security, and have no other means to address their fears.

Agnes and Tobias's marital relationship started to degrade following the death of their son Teddy, after which Tobias began to neglect his wife and sleep in a separate room. Meanwhile, Agnes continued living a sterile married life devoid of any feelings of love that are usually shown by couples living under the same roof. According to Stenz (1978) "if in real life the springs of motivation remain obscure, the dramatist locates the moment between two people where the descent began. As Tobias puts it, once you drop, you can come back up part of the way, but never really back again" (p.19).

However, Agnes maintained her integrity and filled her emotional vacuum by devoting all her efforts to maintaining the stability and integrity of her family. Although these plans did not work out for her, she successfully kept her family afloat, albeit informally.

The conflict and loss being suffered by Tobias are almost as great as those being suffered by Agnes. After Teddy's death, Tobias's life took a dangerous turn and he started showing his fear of death, which he felt would come to him at any moment. The biggest difficulty for Tobias is his fear and reluctance to enter another human relationship, including his marital relationship with Agnes, because of his fears of facing another loss after the death of his son. Tobias also stopped fulfilling his sexual obligations to his wife in fears of reliving Teddy's death by giving birth to another child. "For Tobias, the emotional pain was so intolerable that he could not face the possibility of another child, another loss. Unable to cope with the ultimate implication of this double vulnerability" (Stenz, 1978, 77).

The erosion of marital feelings between Agnes and Tobias not only resulted in the failure of their marriage, but also directly affected their relationship with their daughter Julia on the one hand and Julia's private life on the other. Stenz (1978) argued that "...it is impossible to discuss the effect of the death of Teddy on Julia without examining Julia's relationship with her parents" (p.76). After Teddy's death, Julia was neglected by her parents, especially by Tobias. Similar to any child of her age, Julia needed guidance and advice following the loss of her brother. She also needed parents who could watch, teach, and guide her toward the right path.

Agnes and Tobias cannot give Julia all the important things that parents must provide their child. After Teddy's death, Julia tried to fill the role of the first and only child in the family, but Tobias completely lost his interest in his daughter. He continued with this treatment of Julia even after she entered adulthood and became a wife. Each time Julia faced a failed marriage, Tobias did not even try to intervene or ask her what did not work out. In other words, the erosion of feelings between Tobias and his family has destroyed any possibility of communication among them. Each member of the family is facing a great sense of loss that prevents them from reviving their feelings of love.

V. CONCLUSION

Through *A Delicate Balance*, Albee presented an in-depth study of the anxiety, loss, denial of love, and discomfort being felt by American families. The events of the play, reveal that the principles of a happy family, including love, strong ties between parents and their children, and close relations with friends, have disappeared and have been replaced by material benefits and false social competition. Through these characters, Albee revealed that American families are linked together by their fear of their traditions and perceptions of the society.

Having a house with parents and children who are bound together by love and affection is one of the highest values that individuals aim to achieve in different societies, including the American community where people have lost their values after the Second World War. These themes are reminiscent of Albee's earlier plays, which all suggest that the aforementioned values have become false and meaningless as a consequence of the "American dream" project, which Albee has always criticized in his works.

The other important topics addressed in this play include the individuals' escape from reality, their tendency to live in a world of illusion, their anxiety, and their fear of death and madness. In *A Delicate Balance*, Albee chose the main characters to be over the age of 50 to reflect the state of individuals when they reach an advanced age. Albee also explored the thinking and behavior of these people and how they show their weaknesses and abandon their responsibilities. In this regard, Albee argued that "the play is basically about these people who have accommodated to their weaknesses and compromises, the adjustments they have made" (Gussow, 1999, 256).

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