

# Theory and Practice in Language Studies

ISSN 1799-2591

Volume 8, Number 9, September 2018

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# Quality of Argumentation Models

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**Abstract**—This study investigated the effectiveness of updated argumentation quality criteria. It evaluated the scale and quality of selected argumentation models judged by the new criteria. Effectiveness concerned content validity, reliability, and practicality of the criteria. The argumentation models were regarded as possessing good quality when they featured important elements in the criteria and received high scores. Five argumentation models were purposefully selected from an argumentative writing course. The models were evaluated by three evaluators with expertise in academic writing. Analysis confirmed the effectiveness of the quality criteria and scale. It addressed all important concerns in evaluation of argumentation; evaluation scores were in accordance with each other, and the important argumentation elements carried equivalent weight. Only three of the models received a quality score of 4 on a scale of 0 (null) to 5 (highest), because they did not feature all quality elements required by the criteria. The updated framework and argumentation models can be further employed for teaching, learning and evaluating argumentation.

**Index Terms**—argumentation, English, criteria, model, quality, Thai

## I. INTRODUCTION

Argumentation has been taught and learned in classrooms around the world. Ability in the skill of argumentation is measured in high-stake English standardized tests including Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and The International English Language Testing System (IELTS). In education, argumentation has been identified as the language ability at the B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001). In the classroom, for example, the Common Core State Standards, adopted by more than 40 states in America, stresses argumentation skills, especially skills in logical arguments and using relevant evidence (Deane & Song, 2014). In Malaysia, trainee teachers study argumentative writing because it helps their future students become critical and reflective thinkers (Bipinchandra, Shah, Puteh, Din, Rahamat & Aziz, 2014). In Chile, argumentation is researched as a predictive tool of university study and academic achievement over time (Preiss, Castillo, Flotts & Martin, 2013).

Among written text types, argumentation has been reported to be the hardest, in comparison with others such as description and narration (Aertselaer & Dafouz-Milne, 2008; Yang & Sun, 2012). In fact, progress in mastering a new type of text covers three categories, namely, 1) narratives, 2) procedures, and 3) argumentative essays (Martin, 1989; Schleppegrell, 2004). The argumentative ability of school children progressively matures through the grade levels (McCann, 1989; Crammond, 1998). Narratives tend to be well mastered by around age ten, but argumentative writing develops at a later stage (Berman & Nir-Sagiv, 2007). By the time students enter university, they should already be able to write argumentation effectively. However, this conclusion may not always be applicable. According to one study, students at a college were not very effective at producing written arguments. They failed to include critical argumentative elements such as thesis, reasons and evidence. In other cases, they failed to clearly present the elements. As Golder and Courier (1996) point out, argumentative writing is difficult in itself due to its language-specific nature. It is even more challenging for students who write in different languages (Aertselaer & Dafouz-Milne, 2008).

When it comes to argumentation in teaching English as an additional language (TEAL), some form of instruction is important to yield satisfactory results. Findings of one L2 study were truly surprising. Knoch, Rouhshad, Oon and Storch (2015) report that the writing of undergraduate students in their study improved after three years of study, but only in terms of fluency. Changes in accuracy, grammatical and lexical complexity, as well as global scores of writing fell short of significance. More often than not, formal instruction effectively minimizes such problems. In another L2 context, Varghese and Abraham (1998) taught argumentative writing using Toulmin's classic scheme/structure of argumentation. They found that students made obvious progress after instruction. They produced more claims, specific and developed data, and reliable warrants. They also became more aware of views from opposing sides. In another study, Liu and Stapleton (2014) examined argumentative essays written by students at a Chinese university. The students received instruction in argumentation which included counter arguing and refuting. It was found that inclusion of the elements was positively correlated with the overall score on argumentative essays.

More studies such as these have yielded positive results as a consequence of instruction. Many researchers have investigated teaching techniques such as public Internet discussion forums (Ritchie & Black, 2012), online peer feedback (Noroozi, Biemans & Mulder, 2016), parent-child discussion (Domenech & Krah, 2014), and debates (Dickson, 1994). The present study is motivated to investigate the quality of the techniques themselves. It focuses on argumentation models employed in the instruction. This consideration is based on a genre-based approach to teaching writing. In this approach, learners are first exposed to examples of target text types. They have a chance to study the

examples before they produce their own. Studies have demonstrated the usefulness of the genre-based approach to develop the writing ability of English learners (e.g., Bhatia, 1993, Paltridge, 2001, Hyland, 2004). This study is based on the premise that using good models will have a positive influence on the quality of novice writers' argumentation skills. In line with Noroozi, Biemans and Mulder (2016), the quality of edited essays in their study was dependent on the quality of peer feedback itself. In this scenario, the schemes of argumentation, such as those pioneered by Aristotle in ancient Greece, and revised by Qin and Karabakak in 2010, have been recently updated to keep pace with advancements in the field. The latest scheme has been transformed into a quality criteria and scale for teaching, learning and evaluation of argumentation. Like CEFR (2001), it is designed to be an all-inclusive framework. The criteria and scale were created by the researcher as a result of examination of related literature in the field of argumentation. It comprised five main categories: 1) relevancy, 2) reasoning, 3) language use, 4) organization and 4) writer's voice. The criteria and scale must be examined for quality (see sections C, F) when used to evaluate the argumentation models. Investigation into such criteria, scale and argumentation model is relatively scarce in recent publications except for one published by Khodabandeh (2014). The study also looked into model essays. However, the research emphasized moves, functions and linguistic forms, which are different from this study.

#### *Research questions*

Specifically, this study has aimed to find answers to two questions.

- (1) How effective are the updated quality criteria and scale for argumentation?
- (2) How complementary are the argumentation models with the updated quality criteria and scale?

## II. MODELS AND QUALITY

It is considered important in this research that EAL learners have the opportunity to learn from good-quality models when they study argumentation, and instruction is organized around effective quality criteria and scale. Concepts of quality may be defined differently in various situations. Therefore, both the models and concepts of quality are re-examined in this study.

### *A. Argumentation Models*

Learners can access argumentation examples from a variety of sources, for instance, from English standardized tests, instructional websites, academic papers, web articles, and commercial textbooks. The examples might be selected as models for teaching, learning, and evaluation. Based on these sources, argumentation is present in five main channels of communication: an independent task on a standardized English test; a student essay; a letter to an editor/principle/teacher; part of an academic paper/article; and a magazine/web page/columnn.

Argumentation is measured specifically on independent writing tasks on two English standardized tests, namely, TOEFL and IELTS. In TOEFL, test takers are asked to give reasons to support their choice of position – to agree or disagree with a given statement. They are allowed 30 minutes to complete their answer with a length of approximately 300 words. In IELTS, test takers are asked to write approximately 250 words in response to a point of view, argument or problem. They are given 40 minutes to complete the task. Hawthorn English Language Centres (1997) gives an example of a response to an IELTS task. A communication situation is given for test takers to present arguments to an educated non-specialist audience: "In the last 20 years, the assessment of students has undergone major transformation. Many educational institutions no longer use formal examinations as a means of assessment as they believe formal examination results are an unfair indication of a student's ability" (p. 33). The sample response is 370 words long and comprises six paragraphs. In the first paragraph, the controversial situation is repeated. In the second paragraph, the writer states her position –she believes that examinations can give an unfair assessment of students' ability. In the third paragraph, the writer gives examples and reasons for her position in more detail. In the fourth paragraph, she reports on an opposing position and one reason for that position. The writer quickly returns to her stated position. When she comes back, the opposing position and reasons are rebutted. Reasons are given for the rebuttals with examples of possible and fairer evaluation methods. In the concluding paragraph, she reviews the situation and restates her position, as well as gives recommendations for future examinations that should include the evaluation methods exemplified in the fourth paragraph.

Another source of argumentation models are instructional websites, such as one that teaches the skill of writing argumentative essays by Daly (1997). One of the two sample essays available on the website concerns marine parks. The essay length is approximately 734 words, containing six paragraphs. A controversial situation and issue are reported in the introductory paragraph, where the writer also positions himself – marine parks should be prohibited. After that a series of reasons for the position are laid out in the next four body paragraphs. The body paragraphs discuss important topics one by one. The first three body paragraphs establish the opposing position and its reasons first and then switch to the writer's chosen perspective. The opposing contents are split almost into equal halves by a single connective, the word 'however.' The fourth body paragraph is dedicated to the writer's position with reasons to support it. The essay ends with a concluding paragraph, where the writer's position is restated, and the previously debated topics are mentioned. Also in the last paragraph, a strong final warning is given regarding negative consequences of the position in opposition to the writer. An outstanding feature of this essay is the inclusion of in-text citations to support both the writer's and the opposing views. Consequently, a list of references is given after the essay. This feature makes this essay unique because most examples of student essays do not contain citations and references.

Argumentation can also be found in the bodies of theses, academic reports and papers. In an introduction section to research (Chien, Lee & Kao, 2010), argumentation is analyzed in a sample paragraph. The paragraph is 176 words in length. The researchers support inclusion of English for specific purposes in university study programs. They begin by citing two experts' opinions regarding the possibility for English learners to transfer general English skills to tasks required in their specific disciplines. This suggests that English for specific purposes is not necessary. However, the writers take a turn in the middle of the paragraph to present an opposing recommendation, which encourages university students to improve their English ability specifically in their area of expertise. The proposition is followed by three supporting reasons and evidence. Like the student essay, relevant sources are cited to support both positions. This example of argumentation differs from the student essay, and differs from the response to the English standardized test, in that the writers' position is not so clearly stated.

Letters to editors/principles/teachers are frequently presented at school as examples of argumentation. An example of such a letter is given in a commercial textbook in writing (Azar, 1999). The argumentation concerns the high cost of college education. The letter has only one paragraph, and is approximately 147 words in length. The writer starts the letter with her family background. Then she moves on to a controversial issue under discussion, where she reports on her choice of a lower-cost college. After that, she describes the disadvantages of a possible circumstance that she might have faced if she had chosen a higher-cost institution. She also explains the advantages of the situation that she has chosen. The writer ends the letter with a conclusion: "After all, in four years, when you graduate, what you have achieved will reflect far more about you than where you achieved it" (p. 110). Personal stories count in this argumentation. The writer does not provide extensive explanations as shown in the earlier student essay. This is most likely due to the space limit of such a channel of communication.

Argumentation can also be observed in web articles. In the New York Times (Matter, 2013), a columnist wrote an article of 814 words. He focused on whether or not communication technology such as text messaging and Facebook can drain brain power and weaken work performance. He began with a discussion of the deleterious effect of multi-tasking. Then he reported his own investigation in collaboration with a university to measure the brain power lost when someone is interrupted. They asked research participants to complete a standard cognitive skill test, with some of them being purposely interrupted during the test. Although the participants who were interrupted performed lower than those who were not, they learned to adapt themselves and performed better later. In this context, participants who were warned of interruptions that never came performed better than participants who were left alone doing the test. At the end of the article, unlike the other argumentation models, the writer repeated both the opposing view and his own position. Another observable feature was the way the author presented content in very short paragraphs. Links to cited sources were also given intermittently throughout the article.

All of the examples cited thus far can be used as argumentation models in the classroom. Most of them have probably been edited before publication. Therefore, they should be of good quality. It is re-examined in this study, however, because an updated evaluation framework is in place (see section B).

### B. *Evaluation of Argumentation Quality*

When argumentation is evaluated, the focus can be divided into three main categories, namely, general writing elements, argumentation elements, and other elements.

General writing elements mostly refer to task relevancy, organization, grammar, vocabulary, cohesion and coherence. The notion of task relevancy in argumentation differs from other kinds of writing. In argumentation, the content concerns a controversial issue and the writer must take a position regarding it. Relevancy is measured as part of idea development in TOEFL and task response/achievement in IELTS. It was measured in a study carried out by Stapleton and Wu (2015), analyzing the argumentative essays of students in Hong Kong. The essays were scored, firstly, for their relevancy to the topic, and, secondly, for three levels of acceptability: not acceptable, weak, and acceptable. Evaluation of the other five elements was generally conducted in the same way as other kinds of writing.

The evaluation is an overall approach, such as when an essay receiving a top score of five is described as "effectively addresses the topic and task," "is well organized and well developed, using clearly appropriate explanations, exemplifications and/or details," "displays unity, progression and coherence," and "displays consistent facility in the use of language, demonstrating syntactic variety, appropriate word choice and idiomaticity, though it may have minor lexical or grammatical errors" (Educational Testing Service–TOEFL 2016). Examination of the general elements may also be centered in only some of their features, such as when Maxwell-Reid (2015) analyzed clausal embedding in argumentative texts written by Spanish junior secondary students. In the study, the students' control of the language resources required for clausal embedding was found to vary depending on their ability.

Evaluation of argumentation more often focuses on general writing elements than argumentation elements. Common elements of argumentation are understood to include 1) the writer's statement/s of his/her position regarding a controversial issue; 2) reasons in support of the position; 3) a statement/s of the opposing position; 4) reasons in support of the opposing position; 5) the writer's statement rebutting the opposing position and reasons; and 6) his/her reasons for the rebuttals. The six elements or reasoning scheme are called claim, data, counter-argument claim, counter-argument data, rebuttal claim and rebuttal data, respectively (Qin & Karabakak, 2010). These elements have been applied to many research contexts. The elements originated in ancient Greece by Aristotle and were widely recognized when Toulmin introduced his scheme of argumentation in 1958 (Qin & Karabakak, 2010). For example, in

an investigation into argumentative papers written by second-year English-majors at a Chinese university, it was found that an average paper had at least one claim supported by four pieces of data. The papers contained fewer uses of counter-argument claims, counter-argument data, rebuttal claims, and rebuttal data. However, employment of these elements served as a predictor of the overall quality of the argumentative papers (Qin & Karabakak, 2010). As noticed, reasoning is the heart of argumentation. It should be more frequently emphasized in the evaluation of argumentation.

Other elements to be considered in the evaluation of argumentation include persuasiveness, argumentative strategies and writer's voice. Ferretti, Lewis and Andrews-Weckerly (2009) compared persuasiveness and quality of argumentative essays written by students who were assigned two instructional conditions: elaborated and general conditions. The students in both conditions wrote a letter to a teacher taking a position regarding an issue on homework assignments. The students' responses to the prompt were scored for overall persuasiveness, argumentative structures, and argumentative strategies. The analysis found that the students in the elaborated condition wrote more persuasively than those in the general condition. The argumentative strategies used were highly predictive of the essay quality, and nearly all students used the argument from consequences strategy to defend their standpoint. With regard to writer's voice or authorial voice, research has more frequently reported on its positive influences on quality of argumentation.

Yoon (2017) examined how the quantity and diversity of textual voice elements that a writer used would contribute to holistic voice strength and essay quality. Argumentative essays written by Greek-speaking EFL students were collected from a standardized English examination, which was developed at Michigan State University. The results suggested quite positive correlations between textual voice and holistic voice strength. The textual voice features explained 26 percent of the variance in voice strength scores. The results also indicated weak correlations between textual voice and essay quality.

To summarize, an investigation into the quality of argumentation could make use of the examples presented in section A, depending on the research purposes. More importantly, it should take both the general writing elements and the argumentation elements into account. As for the other elements, writer's voice should be built into the existing criteria because it has received more attention and casts a stronger influence on the writer's position. It can actually be regarded as advancement in the field.

### III. RESEARCH METHODS

Three research methods were accomplished in this study: selection of research materials, invitation of evaluators, and data analysis.

#### A. Materials

Two kinds of materials were evaluated in this study; 1) an argumentation quality criteria and scale; and 2) argumentation models used in a real classroom.

The criteria and scale were created by the researcher (Kaewpet, in press) based on examination of related literature to argumentation. It has drawn on CEFR specifications of argumentation at the B2 level (Council of Europe, 2001), independent tasks of TOEFL (ETS–TOEFL, 2017) and IELTS (IELTS, 2016), elements of argumentation such as those reported in section B (Qin & Karabakak, 2010; Stapleton & Wu, 2015), plus other recently published articles in argumentation (e.g., Yang & Sun, 2012; Liu, 2013; Bastukmen & Randow, 2014; Crossley, Kyle & McNamara, 2016; Lancaster, 2016; Yoon, 2017; Zhao, 2017). The criteria and scale consist of five main categories and eleven items in total (cf. Introduction, see TABLE I). The criteria and scale were further investigated for content validity and reliability in this study.

TABLE I.  
ARGUMENTATION QUALITY CRITERIA AND SCALE

Directions: Please choose the degree to which the argumentation has met the criteria (0 = not at all, 5 = most).						
Criteria	0	1	2	3	4	5
<b>I. Relevancy</b>						
1. The writer has addressed a/ the given controversial situation.						
<b>II. Reasoning</b>						
2. The writer has stated his/her position regarding the controversial issue.						
3. The writer has given adequate reasons in support of his/her position.						
4. The writer has shown his/her awareness of the opposing position and included opposing reasons in the essay/response.						
5. The writer has given reasons to rebut the opposing reasons and to maintain his/her position.						
<b>III. Language Use</b>						
6. Use of grammar is effective.						
7. Use of vocabulary is effective.						
<b>IV. Organization</b>						
8. The essay has good organization.						
9. Use of connectives is effective.						
10. Ideas are developed effectively.						
<b>V. Writer's voice</b>						
11. You can feel the presence of the writer's authority and confidence.						

Argumentation models in this study were meant to be those easily and internationally accessible such as those presented in section A, and they had to be employed in real instruction. This ensures wide and real applicability of the models. To fulfill this purpose, a research site had to be selected, and the argumentation models had to be utilized at the site. In accordance with the requirements, a course on argumentative writing was offered at a university in Thailand. The course was selected as the site of the study. According to the course instructor, ten argumentation models were used in the course, and approximately five of them could be covered at a time. The course length was 15 weeks with a lesson of three hours each week. The instructor was the only person teaching the course. She had been teaching this course for approximately ten years. Therefore, she was the only expert available at the site. However, that was not to guarantee the best quality of the models, because the models could have been employed for many purposes such as for analysis or improvement. The purposeful sampling method was similar to that employed in Stapleton and Wu's study (2015), in which research materials were first examined to ensure elements of argumentation before they were evaluated for their reasoning quality. Five of the course's argumentation models were randomly selected for this study. Argumentation model IV was the same as the formal examination reported in section A.

Argumentation model I was organized the same as the marine parks essay in section A. It came from the same source (Daly, 1997). The writer prepared it for teaching argumentative essay to students undertaking the Victorian Certificate in English for Vocational Education and Further Study course at Victoria University of Technology in Melbourne, Australia. The essay was 379 words long. The issue concerned which was the better condition for caring for children: in their own homes or at childcare centers. The writer argues for children's own homes. The differences between the marine parks and childcare essays were that the childcare essay had one less paragraph. The missing paragraph was the one dedicated for the writer's side of reasons. The body paragraphs are also organized around one topic at a time. They began with the opposing side and then switched to the writer's side by using the same connective 'however.' There were no in-text citations in this essay, however, and references were not provided. As a result, the body paragraphs and reasoning were briefer. The concluding paragraph was also shorter – only one long sentence to repeat the writer's position and main idea.

Argumentation model II came from a commercial textbook focusing on writing. The essay was on whether or not people should choose faith healers over modern medicine. It was 276 words long and contained five paragraphs. In the first paragraph, the controversial situation and issue were introduced and the writer's position was stated: "Going to a faith healer is a risky thing to do, even if science cannot solve your problem" (Pavlik & Segal, 2002, p. 150). The second paragraph had only one sentence and functioned to restate the writer's position and main idea. In the third paragraph, an anecdote was used as evidence of the position and main idea. The fourth paragraph was also short and used to emphasize the writer's position. In the last paragraph, the position was restated. In this model, the opposing position was presented along with the writer's position in the first paragraph. However, it was not explained in the other paragraphs.

Argumentation model III was drawn from a website which gave examples of argumentation for free (English Club 1997-2018). The essay was 346 words long and offered two options: blocking employees from social media or giving access to it. A prompt was given before the essay. The example essay in response to the prompt contained five paragraphs. The first paragraph repeated the controversial situation and announced the writer's position: "It is a wise decision to remove these Internet temptations." In the second paragraph, reasons were given to explain the position. Negative consequences on employers were demonstrated in the third paragraph, and the negative consequences on employees were explained in the fourth paragraph. In the concluding paragraph, the writer's position was further explained and restated.

Argumentation model V was an example of a TOEFL test. The issue in question concerned which was the more important quality of teachers – the ability to relate well with students or excellent knowledge of the subject taught (Educational Testing Service–TOEFL 2016). The length of the essay was 436 words. A prompt was given before the essay. The prompt consisted of the issue in question and directions for writing an answer. The essay consisted of five paragraphs. In the first paragraph, the writer provided a background to her position settling in a kindergarten where she remembered all of the teachers. In the second paragraph her position was stated –she believed that teachers should relate well with students. In the third paragraph, the position was explained using the writer's personal experiences. The fourth paragraph was again dedicated to the writer's position. The opposing position was referred to in this paragraph, but it was used to highlight the writer's own position. In the last paragraph, the personal experiences shared in the third paragraph were extended to a more general situation before the writer's position is restated.

The criteria and scale and the models were accessible to the research's evaluators (see section D). A Google site web page was created and links to them were provided. The models were kept on Google Drive and the evaluation forms were created using Google Forms.

### *B. Evaluators*

Three TEAL instructors who had experience teaching writing and/or English standardized tests were invited to evaluate the models using the created criteria and scale. All of them were working in Thailand. The first evaluator was from the United Kingdom and was working at the research site. He had been teaching English for seven years. He taught courses including Essay Writing, English Standardized Tests and Independent Study. He had also published a number of research papers. The second and third evaluators were not working at the research site, but had expressed

their interest in working there. The second evaluator was an instructor from South Africa who had been working in Thailand for nine years. He had taught English courses at a high school and an undergraduate institution. The courses he taught included English for Writing and some preparation courses for English standardized tests. The third evaluator was from India. She had been teaching English in India, Cambodia and Thailand for 25 years. She had extensive experience in academic work and activities such as participating in conferences, chairing meetings and supervising doctoral theses. Links to the argumentation models as well as the evaluation forms/quality criteria and scale were sent to the evaluators. The evaluators were contacted by email and evaluated the models using the online evaluation form.

### C. Data Analysis

The evaluation data was analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the updated quality criteria and scale, and the respective argumentation model with the updated quality criteria and scale. The criteria and scale were considered as effective when they addressed all important concerns in evaluation of argumentation, when scorers' evaluations agreed with each other, and when the important argumentation elements carried the same weight. The existing models were regarded as of good quality if they received a quality score of 4 on a scale of 0 (null) to 5 (highest), when they featured all quality elements in the criteria and scale, and when the scorers' evaluation agreed with each other. The analysis was carried out through free statistical calculators provided for students and researchers working in the social sciences. The output of the calculators has been audited for accuracy against the output produced by a number of established statistics packages, including SPSS and Minitap (Stangroom, 2017).

In order to analyze the argumentation quality criteria and scale in terms of effectiveness in addressing all important concerns, content validity was carried out by re-examining related literature to argumentation. When the related literature was examined the first time with the aim to update the quality criteria and scale (see section C), the literature was limited to publications in high-stake databases in the past ten years. Later, interesting issues raised in the publications, although outside the period, were also explored. In the first round, the focus was on existing schemes of argumentation, conceptions of argumentation in four obvious sources (CEFR, TOEFL, IELTS, TOEIC), plus any others that could contribute criteria for quality of argumentation. In this study, the literature was re-examined focusing on important general writing elements, argumentation elements, and other elements for evaluating argumentation. Knowledge obtained from this round was regarded as principles to look into the initial framework to determine its validity. The procedure was in fact qualitative content analysis. New knowledge emerged through processes of focusing, organizing, coding, classifying, reducing the data, as well as interpreting and making conclusions (Lynch, 1996; Neuman, 2000). The procedure arrived at the stage of measuring the framework for its credibility, one of the important measurements of trustworthiness in qualitative studies. Credibility is another word to refer to validity in qualitative research.

Establishing credibility began with evaluating the effectiveness of the argumentation criteria and scale in terms of scorers' agreement in the evaluation, its effectiveness to balance important argumentation elements to equal weight, and to measure the mean scores for quality of the argumentation models. Next, it was necessary to determine whether or not the models featured all quality elements in the criteria and scale. The raw data collected from the Google Forms was entered into the one-way analysis of co-variance (ANOVA) calculator available on the web site by scorer, criterion, and model, respectively. Statistically, the procedures were carried out to establish the reliability of the data.

## IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The research was conducted to find answers to questions regarding the effectiveness of the updated quality criteria and scale, and to enhance the argumentation models with the updated criteria, in other words, to improve the quality of the argumentation models.

### A. Effectiveness of the Updated Quality Criteria and Scale

Effectiveness of the updated criteria and scale was observable from its content validity, the evaluators' agreement in the evaluation, and its effectiveness in giving equal weight to the important argumentation elements. The literature review reported in section II confirmed that the updated criteria and scale drawn from related literature in the first round (cf. section E) was effective in terms of content validity. It comprised: 1) relevance, which was one of the common general writing elements; 2) reasoning, which embraced common argumentation elements; 3) language use: grammar, vocabulary, which were two of the six common elements of general writing; 4) organization, including organizational patterns, cohesion and coherence, which were three additional general writing elements; and 5) writer's voice, which was an important element in the other concerns category (cf. Introduction, section C).

The analysis of the evaluation data by ANOVA revealed that the updated quality criteria and scale were also effective in terms of reliability. TABLE II and TABLE III show that they were effective because 1) the evaluators' evaluations agreed with each other, 2) their evaluation was consistent across the criteria and models, and 3) the quality criteria and scale gave equal weight to the important argumentation elements.

TABLE II.  
EFFECTIVENESS OF THE UPDATED CRITERIA AND SCALE BY EVALUATOR

Summary			Result Details				
Evaluator	Mean	Std. Dev.	Source	SS	df	MS	
I.	3.6111	1.28	Between evaluators	57.7901	2	28.8951	$F = 1.35044$
II.	4.7037	2.5	Within evaluators	3402.0926	159	21.3968	
III.	5	7.5035	Total	3459.8827	161		

The  $f$ -ratio value is 1.35044. The  $p$ -value is .262082. The result is *not* significant at  $p < .05$ .

TABLE III.  
EFFECTIVENESS OF THE UPDATED CRITERIA AND SCALE BY CRITERION

Summary			Result Details				
Criterion	Mean	Std. Dev.	Source	SS	df	MS	
I.	4.1333	1.1872	Between criteria	3.5273	4	0.8818	$F = 0.66469$
II.	3.7333	1.3387	Within criteria	212.2667	160	1.3267	
III.	4.0667	0.8277	Total	215.7939	164		
IV.	3.8000	1.1201					
V.	3.8667	0.9155					

The  $f$ -ratio value is 0.66469. The  $p$ -value is .61741. The result is *not* significant at  $p < .05$ .

The results provide insights into the number of evaluators that should be invited to mark a subjective test, the significance of availability of a practical evaluation method, and the importance of each of the evaluation criteria in the updated framework. Firstly, it is generally recommended that a subjective or essay test should be scored by more than one evaluator. In TOEFL for example, trained raters plus automated scoring technology are used to score the writing section (ETS–TOEFL, 2017). However, the results of this study suggest that only one evaluator is also dependable, when he/she is experienced and knowledgeable in the evaluation area. In this study, the evaluators were experts in the field of academic writing, and so no significant differences were found among their scores. Secondly, many subjective tests are scored using a score band descriptor – holistic or analytical, which requires specialized training, and makes marking a difficult job. In this study, a marking tool, or the quality criteria and scale, was designed to be as marker-friendly as possible. The technical terms, such as claim and data, were presented in the form of the vernacular language and a rating scale. Therefore, it was practical for the evaluators, and no additional training was necessary. The evaluators were not trained in using the updated quality criteria and scale before the research. A design like this one could be proved useful in other situations. Finally, it was found that all of the criteria were of the same significance – there were no significant differences among the scores. This implies that instruction and evaluation on argumentation should take all of the important argumentation elements into account.

### B. Quality of the Argumentation Models

The quality of the argumentation models was observable from their means scores, the way they were enhanced by the quality criteria and scale, and whether or not the scorers' evaluations were in accordance with each other. The means score defined as good quality in this study was a minimum of 4 on a scale from 0 to 5. TABLE IV demonstrates that the quality scores of the argumentation models ranged from 2.76 (Model 2) to 4.58 (Model 1). The scores were significantly different as judged by the updated quality criteria and scale and the three evaluators. As reported in the previous section, the evaluation scores of each evaluator were found to concur with each other. Therefore, it was most likely the presence or absence of the important argumentation elements that caused differences among the scores.

TABLE IV.  
EFFECTIVENESS OF THE UPDATED CRITERIA AND SCALE BY MODEL

Summary			Result Details				
Model	Mean	Std. Dev.	Source	SS	df	MS	
I.	4.5758	0.5019	Between models	66.703	4	16.6758	$F = 17.89594$
II.	2.7576	1.1734	Within models	149.0909	160	0.9318	
III.	4	1.199	Total	215.7939	164		
IV.	4.3333	0.736					
V.	3.6364	1.0252					

The  $f$ -ratio value is 17.89594. The  $p$ -value is  $< .00001$ . The result is significant at  $p < .05$ .

When looking into the individual argumentation models described in section C, one would understand that it is essential to include all of the important elements in his/her argumentation. It has been reported by many studies that some argumentation elements, such as counter-argument data and rebuttals, more strongly influence the quality of argumentation than the others (e.g., Qin & Karabakak, 2010). This study has confirmed that the two models receiving the lowest scores were missing the opposing views and reasons. Although one of the higher-scoring models did not contain many of the elements, it compensated for this lack through stronger usage of other elements. The optimum quality of argumentation should contain all of the important elements.

## V. CONCLUSION

The study reported in this paper has confirmed the validity, reliability and practicality of the updated quality criteria and scale. It can be used as principles for teaching, learning and evaluation of argumentation particularly in TEAL, where students have to deal with the specific nature of argumentation and write in a different language (Golder & Courier, 1996; Aertselaer & Dafouz-Milne, 2008). In addition, the argumentation models investigated can be further employed as good or needing improvement, depending on the context of use.

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# The Effectiveness of Using Internet in TEFL Learning

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**Abstract**—This study aimed at investigating the effectiveness of internet in learning English through testing TEFL courses outcomes. The main data was collected by both an interview with the TEFL tutors and a questionnaire with the students taking TEFL courses in Kuwait. The sample of this study included 5 TEFL trainers and 150 students in Kuwait. The questionnaire and interview contained four main sections (advantages of using the internet, disadvantages of using the internet, most effective internet-related tools that are used in TEFL courses and the recommendations that can be followed to enhance the quality of the internet in TEFL courses). The results revealed that using internet has a positive impact on the effectiveness of learning English and TEFL courses, it also showed that the speed, availability, affordability, easiness and other factors are some of the advantages of the internet. However, cheating, lack of communication, technical problems and unreliable information are some of the disadvantages of using the internet. Moreover, this study concluded that YouTube is the most effective internet tool that is used to teach TEFL and EduBuncee is the weakest one. This study recommended improving the role of social media in TEFL courses by creating more interactive methods.

**Index Terms**—TEFL, learning English, Kuwait, internet learning

## I. INTRODUCTION

With the development and spread of the English language across the world, it is applied as a second language within many countries; moreover, it is the first language to other countries. English have a great prestige within some countries (Honna, 2005; Crystal, 2012). Now English status and role is greater than ever like evidenced through its position like an important subject of the medium of curriculum and instruction. Since the English learners' number is growing, diverse education techniques have been applied to assess the teaching process effectiveness. Employ of accurate materials within the TV form, films and radio has been presented for an extended time. Actually, these technologies have verified successfully within substituting the traditional teaching (Shyamlee & Phil, 2012).

The novel era assigns novel duties and challenges of the modern teacher. The English teaching tradition has been radically changed among the technology remarkable entry. Technology is providing a lot of options since making teaching interesting in addition to making teaching further productive for developments. Technology is one of the mainly important drivers of equally linguistic and social change. According to Graddol (1997), technology is in the center of the globalization process; in a shape that affect culture and education work. English language use has rapidly increased afterward 1960. Now, the status and role of English relies on the fact that it is the social context language, political language, sociocultural, business, education, industries, media, library, communication across borders, and vital subject in language and curriculum of communicating education. In addition, it is a critical determinant for university entrance in addition to processing well-remunerated jobs within the commercial part (Patel, 2013). While there are increasingly English learners, diverse teaching techniques have been applied to test the teaching process effectiveness. One method engages multimedia within ELT to create English circumstances. This assists students to learn and be involved consistent with their needs, it has been experienced effectively as well as is extensively acknowledged to English teaching within contemporary world (Pun, 2014).

Technology is utilized for the modern styles upliftment; where it satisfies equally auditory and visual students' senses (Erben, Ban & Castaneda, 2008). With the development and spread of English internationally, it has been used as well as learned by increasingly speakers. Consistent with David Graddol, English is the language at the technological and scientific development leading edge, innovative thinking in management and economies, innovative entertainment genre and literatures (Graddol, 1997, p. 2). This study aims at investigating about the effectiveness of using internet in TEFL learning.

### Study questions

The following are the main questions that this study is trying to answer:

1. What is the effect of using internet on teaching TEFL
2. What are the main advantages and disadvantages of using internet on teaching TEFL
3. What is the most effective internet-based way in teaching TEFL?

### Hypothesis

H1: using the internet has a positive impact on the effectiveness of TEFL courses outcomes

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### **Technology Use in English Teaching**

Since the English use has amplified in acceptance, the requirement for practiced educators to educate students within the language has increased. It is accurate that here are teachers who utilize the technology of 'cutting edge', but the greater part of educators immobile teach in the old way. Not any of these old ways are terrible or destructive for the students (Parvin & Salam, 2015; Raiskinmäki, 2017). Still, there are several opportunities in front of students to increase confidence practice and outspread themselves, particularly for ESL students who study the language to purposes other than fun. To them for keeping pace with ELT in addition to gain more confidence they must pace into the multimedia technology domain (Motterram, 2013).

### **The Impact of Using Educational Websites on learning**

The significance of the Internet within education is a good recognized fact. It gives access to many information resources that are difficult for being obtained through additional traditional means (Higgins, Xiao & Katsipataki, 2012). The incessant improvements within Internet technologies are giving novel learning environments, which attract learners as well as motivate them for learning. The use of the internet within higher education is rising and has turn into a significant topic in a lot of educational researches and journals. It is playing a significant role in improving and facilitating the English learning process (Ta'amneh, 2014; Robov á J. (2013; Wong, 2013).

Modern Web-based learning gives the means to change the thinking way in that the learning resources are carried to learners. Consistent with Medina (2002) by web learning and multimedia resources can make education extra widely available, improve the process of learning, improve the learning environment, and create cost efficient solutions to the knowledge dissemination.

Many educational websites have good features for example narrative, interactive examples, video, written text, and animation. These websites are intended to give students among a "self-help" learning source to match traditional textbook (Arsham, 2002). They create a wonderful environment to improve and enrich educational process during interactive hypertext, communication and collaboration in addition to dynamic content (Taylor, 2002).

Consistent with Karisiddappa (2002), the sources of online media have been observational as information valuable sources, which can help learners in raising their capacity to social interaction. They are observed to promote creativity and investigation through the interaction of different knowledge forms such as graphics, text, photos, multimedia, music, video, animation, sound, etc.

Instructors ought to use these websites for enhancing learners' communicative abilities so as to express themselves within the target language in addition to give learners the chances to interact among others and efficiently experience negotiation through classroom instruction (Sawadogo, 2004). Concerning learners in meaningful and authentic interactions with learners, universal using the internet can motivate learners for keeping learning and hold learners for becoming more willing and responsible to engage within their possess learning, that is defined like learner autonomy (Toyoda, 2001).

### **The TEFL Concept**

Following to mentioning the English importance in society as well as the corporate world, the English classes take action as a medium for which obtaining English skills are probable. TEFL claims for simply being the improved and new modern catering version to those requests. EFL is learned either for passing exams as an essential part for one's education, or to career progression as working to a business or organization with an international center. EFL can be division of the curriculum of the state school in countries wherever English has no particular status; it also may be complemented by lessons salaried for privately. However, TEFL is expected at those wanting for teaching English to clients in addition to prospective topics who desire for learning English as a 2<sup>nd</sup> or foreign language. One more EFL vantage point is to collect a sight of the techniques as well as teachings thereof, this is identified as TEFL. The TEFL course for EFL trainers contains (as collected of TEFL's lesson curriculum) of 12 chapters changeable from teacher-student association, class management to lesson planning and teaching grammar (Irmscher, 2011).

The course just offers a 6 month window for completing the program moreover to reach the total of 150 hours. Consistent with Teflonline, the permitted period is enough to acquire every necessary piece of information wanted to can teach English like a foreign language for students whose mother language is not English. At the end of every chapter, accompanied among video tutorials, the module exams are in use. The mark for passing each module is 70%. Every TEFL member course has a personal teacher, which assists him/her all through the whole course, for aiding in every uncertainty, or for common help. This is to make sure that potential EFL teachers have every necessary materials and aids to their discarding. The Researcher has finished this TEFL program through Bridge TEFL in addition to have successfully achieved a TEFL certificate for teaching English like a foreign language. Personal insight can be given on the standard and duration of this course. The Researcher is of view that the main components of the English learning for example, vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure, phonology, and concord, productive/receptive language skills are methodically explained within the TEFL course. Further factors each EFL

teacher ought to keep in mind are, *inter alia* classroom management, the role of the student and teacher, lesson planning, error correction, cultural awareness, how to supervise teaching aids and group exercises, support the student during learning. The Researcher is also of view, taking into account the sum of exercises and literature, which have to be finished; the TEFL course presents an ample quantity of time for every course modules for being completed (Irmscher, 2011).

### **TEFL Strategies and Methods**

The first EFL implement, Metacognition is defined by Flavell (1979) as:

*"...the experiences and knowledge we have about our own cognitive processes"*

(Schwartz and Perfect, 2002, p. 1).

Metacognition is thinking on thinking, a powerful instrument for effective learning and teaching; moreover, it is an integral element of the EFL teaching. Through linking metacognition to his/her teaching plans, the EFL teacher can plan and prepare to an every class. This is completed by selecting in addition to using applicable and specific learning strategies. Then the teacher is able to orchestrate different techniques, monitor the strategy utilize, then finally assess those strategies within the lesson plan.

Many educators believe adults and children of non-English-speaking environments will study English best throughout structured immersion, wherever they have EFL or ESL classes in addition to content-based instruction within English (McLaughlin, 1992).

Teachers recognize that subjects learn in diverse ways; the knowledge within the classroom verifies this each day. Additionally, extensive research and well-accepted theories document and illustrate learning differences. Nearly all educators can converse about learning divergences, whether through the name of psychological type, learning styles, multiple intelligences, or cognitive styles. Learners get their own character approach, interests and talents to the learning condition. It is a very important position of EFL to nurture as well as enhance these exceptional learning capabilities of the subjects to secure victorious language acquisition (McLaughlin, 1992).

The EFL teacher plans and prepares for every class by notifying the subjects on the aims as well as the objective to the exercises, expected outcomes to the class, plus the reason for group activities and pair work etcetera. Then the lecturer leaves on to use and selects learning strategies through teaching the subjects diverse learning methods; for instance, showing them memo-taking strategy, outline practicing in addition to chart forms. The EFL teacher monitors plan use by talking about among the subjects that note taking plan they prefer as well as what and why they find difficult about the additional methods. The teacher of EFL orchestrates different strategies through applying two strategies addicted to the lesson. Those strategies are intended to complement every other and develop the learning procedure.

For instance, in vocabulary advance, BridgeTEFL, consider that the multiple strategies application for the vocabulary acquisition is helpful in increasing the speed of the word learning and rising the time length for keeping a word. Whether a learner performs the writing strategy all novel vocabulary down, defining it, categorizing it, reading the word repeatedly, using it within a sentence, hearing it, associating several imagery among the word, and orally employing it within context, the learner can benefit extra a learner who experienced just one of those strategies.

Lastly, by assisting strategy use moreover learning, the EFL teachers repeat the learners for evaluating their strategies to learn. Quizzes are given to aid in evaluation, which are stranded on content which was learned through a conscious strategy, or during several diverse learning strategies, as well as through letting subjects believe the different strategies outcome in addition to what works greatest for them.

The EFL teacher as a result, by practicing and teaching metacognitive skills within the classroom, is able to allow the subjects for achieving higher learning through supplying them with apparatus to make aware decisions on their learning procedure.

Little distinct characteristics of the EFL teachers are to the present novel language within context through role-play or visual situations. EFL teachers not at all ask questions except they have qualified the subjects how to respond those questions as well as they learn for anticipating problems. In addition, EFL teachers praise subjects as they get questions correct, but they do not support them. In addition, the EFL teacher not at all abandons a subject when topics do not recognize, instead they go back to the work, analysis it, and incorporate it to additional lessons in anticipation of the subjects understand.

An additional TEFL characteristic concerning grammar is the employ of the exercise drills.

A distinctive TEFL exercise drill for instance repetition, would appear as the following:

Teacher: "He's sleeping."

Subjects: "He's sleeping."

Teacher: "She's sleeping."

Subjects: "She's sleeping."

Teacher: "Great!"

Then the teacher of EFL can continue to satisfied through the subjects' pronunciation and understanding. Another step within this exercise is to insert more differentiation, through adding a drill among 'wh' questions similar to "with", "why", "who". This can be used as well as the yes/no questions. The teacher keeps on the exercise also asks

with a sequence of pictures revealed for the subjects for eliciting the responses which the teacher needs: "Is he sleeping?"

Subjects: "Yes, he's sleeping."

Teacher: "Is he sleeping?"

Subjects: "No, he isn't sleeping."

Teacher: "What's he doing?"

Subjects: "He's reading."

Teacher: "That's right"

Teacher: "What's she doing?"

Subjects: "She's reading."

Teacher: "Very good!"

### III. METHODOLOGY

In this study, a mixed methodology of both qualitative and quantitative methods was used. At first, the primary data was collected by making interviews with 5 TEFL trainers where the questions were focusing on the following aspects:

- How are students influenced by using Internet-based ways of teaching TEFL
- the main advantages of using Internet-based way to teach TEFL
- the main disadvantages of using Internet-based way of teaching TEFL
- the most effective Internet-based way to teach TEFL
- Recommendations to increase the effectiveness of TEFL courses

Moreover, a questionnaire was distributed on 150 students in Kuwait who are taking or took a TEFL course while the questionnaire concentrated on the following aspects:

- Using the internet in TEFL courses
- Advantages of using the Internet in TEFL courses
- Disadvantages of using the Internet in TEFL courses
- Internet-related tools

### IV. RESULTS

#### Questionnaire results

Total of (23) hypothesized items to denote ten scales were established to be used in this study. The scales were established depending on a review for the related studies and literature that offers evidence of the validity of the content. This part presents the method of selection of items, and the reliability and validity evaluation of the measurement scales. Moreover, the items of each scale reliability were measured by Cronbach's coefficient alpha depending on the scales internal consistency. The Acceptable and unacceptable levels of the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient as presented in next table.

TABLE (1)  
ACCEPTABLE AND UNACCEPTABLE LEVELS OF THE CRONBACHS' ALPHA COEFFICIENT

Alpha coefficient	implied reliability
Below .60	Unacceptable
between .60 and .65	Undesirable
between .65 and .70	minimally acceptable
between .70 and .80	Respectable
between .80 and .90	very good

Beside that in Nunnally's (1978) guideline, scale reliability of 0.70 and above is preferred. Nunnally (1978) also proposes that items that are less than 0.30 values to total correlation can be deleted in order to develop the scale reliability. The results of this study shows that the value of Cronbach's coefficient alpha for scales are different in the values according to analysis data. In this study, we computed Cronbach's coefficient alpha for the scales before data screen, after data screen,

TABLE (2):  
THE STABILITY OF THE INSTRUMENT (CRONBACH'S ALPHA) FOR THE VARIABLES OF THE STUDY

	<i>Cronbach's alpha</i>
Using the internet in TEFL courses	0.91
Advantages of using the Internet in TEFL courses	0.88
Disadvantages of using the Internet in TEFL courses	0.91
Internet-related tools	0.93
<b>Total</b>	0.94

All alpha values were acceptable.

**Respondents' Characteristics.** The profile of the respondents with to Gender, Age, Nationality, Education shown in Table (3).

TABLE 3:  
FREQUENCY AND PERCENTAGE FOR DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

		Frequency	Percent
Gender:	Male	66	44.0
	Female	84	56.0
	<b>Total</b>	150	100.0
Age category:	17-19 years	61	40.7
	20-25 years	72	48.0
	More than 25	17	11.3
	<b>Total</b>	150	100.0
Nationality	Kuwaiti	142	94.7
	Bahrain	4	2.7
	Saudi Arabia	4	2.7
	<b>Total</b>	150	100.0
Education	Education	9	6.0
	Bachelor	6	4.0
	High school	135	90.0
	not educated	-	-
	<b>Total</b>	150	100.0

Table 3 show that:

1. The majority of the respondents within the gender group are (44.0%) per cent is male and are (56.0%) female.
2. With regard to the age, most of the respondents (48.0%) per cent are in the age group of (20-25 years), (11.3%) per cent are More than (More than 25).
3. With regard to the Nationality, most of the respondents (94.7%) per cent are Kuwaiti, (2.7%) per Bahrain, Saudi Arabia.
4. With regard to the Education, most of the respondents (90.0%) per cent are in the(High school), (4.0%) per cent are (Bachelor).

**This part, including as a result of the study depends on the descriptive statistics:**

**Results of the first question:** What is the effect of using internet on teaching TEFL?

table (4) shows some descriptive results for the research Using the internet in TEFL courses

The table shows mean and standard deviation for the research variables of Using the internet in TEFL courses.

TABLE 4  
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE RESPONDENTS ON THE LEVEL OF USING THE INTERNET IN TEFL COURSES IN A DESCENDING ORDER

Rank	No		Mean	Std. Deviation	Degree
1	1	Using the internet has helped my learning journey.	4.44	0.64	High
2	3	Using interactive tools such as YouTube, online dictionary, etc. have eased the learning process	4.22	0.78	High
3	2	I gained more vocabulary than what was planned in my course after using the Internet	4.20	0.70	High
4	5	The traditional learning ways have a lot of limits that can be avoided through using the Internet	3.77	1.05	High
5	4	The burden on the teacher is now less since using the Internet	3.67	1.07	High
Total			4.06	0.48	High

Table 4 shows that the arithmetic means for the sample's approval for the level of the Using the internet in TEFL courses with other team members ranged from (3.67-4.44) and the highest was item No. (1), which reads: "Using the internet has helped my learning journey" while the lowest was item (4), which reads: The burden on the teacher is now less since using the Internet." the arithmetic mean for the field as a whole was (4.06) with a High degree.

**Results of the second question:** What are the main advantages and disadvantages of using internet on teaching TEFL?

Table (5) shows some descriptive results for Advantages of using the Internet in TEFL courses. The table shows mean and standard deviation for the research variables of Advantages of using the Internet in TEFL courses.

TABLE 5

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE RESPONDENTS ON THE LEVEL OF ADVANTAGES OF USING THE INTERNET IN TEFL COURSES IN A DESCENDING ORDER

Rank	No		Mean	Std. Deviation	Degree
1	1	There is always an explanation for my mistakes which enhances my understanding	3.89	0.84	High
2	6	I can ask experts from all around the world for explanations	3.85	0.85	High
3	2	I get immediate feedback for my work	3.77	1.06	High
4	3	I can have a break whenever I want	3.71	0.97	High
5	5	I have a full-time available teacher using online resources	3.65	0.94	Medium
6	4	There is no embarrassment in asking questions or making mistakes	3.63	1.10	Medium
7	7	I can afford learning English in this way	3.62	0.95	Medium
8	8	There aren't any complicated steps that need to be followed to learn English online	3.53	0.96	Medium
Total			3.71	0.49	High

Table 5 shows that the means for the sample's approval for the level of the advantages of using the Internet in TEFL courses ranged from (2.53-3.89) and the highest was item No. (1), which reads: "There is always an explanation for my mistakes which enhances my understanding" while the lowest was item (8), which reads: "There aren't any complicated steps that need to be followed to learn English online" the arithmetic mean for the field as a whole was (3.71) with a High degree.

Table (6) shows some descriptive results for Disadvantages of using the Internet in TEFL courses. The table shows mean and standard deviation for the research variables of Disadvantages of using the Internet in TEFL courses.

TABLE 6

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE ESPONDENTS ON THE LEVEL OF DISADVANTAGES OF USING THE INTERNET IN TEFL COURSES IN A DESCENDING ORDER.

Rank	No		Mean	Std. Deviation	Degree
1	1	There is a lack of communication between my teacher and me	3.79	1.08	High
2	2	Technical interruptions occur often during my learning sessions	3.59	0.83	Medium
3	6	I feel that I am lost with no guidance	3.51	1.07	Medium
4	3	The computer cannot deal with my unexpected questions	3.47	1.05	Medium
Total			3.59	0.71	Medium

Table 5 shows that the arithmetic means for the sample's approval for the level of the Disadvantages of using the Internet in TEFL courses ranged from (3.47-3.79) and the highest was item No. (1), which reads: "There is a lack of communication between my teacher and me" while the lowest was item (3), which reads: "The computer cannot deal with my unexpected questions" the arithmetic mean for the field as a whole was (3.59) with a medium degree.

**Results of the Third question:** What is the most effective internet-based way in teaching TEFL?

Table (7) shows some descriptive results for Internet-related tools. The table shows mean and standard deviation for the research variables of Internet-related tools.

TABLE 7

ARITHMETIC MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE MEMBERS OF THE STUDY SAMPLE ON THE LEVEL OF INTERNET-RELATED TOOLS IN A DESCENDING ORDER

Rank	No		Mean	Std. Deviation	Degree
1	3	I use YouTube tools in TEFL learning	3.56	1.08	Medium
2	6	I use English grammar online in TEFL learning	3.49	1.14	Medium
3	5	I use Cambridge dictionaries online in TEFL learning	3.33	1.11	Medium
4	4	I use ESL conversation online in TEFL learning	3.18	1.00	Medium
5	1	I use Web 2.0 tools in TEFL learning	3.04	1.09	Medium
6	2	I use the EduBuncee tool in TEFL learning	2.99	1.03	Medium
Total			3.27	0.80	Medium

Table 7 shows that the arithmetic means for the sample's approval for the level of the Internet-related tools ranged from (2.99-2.56) and the highest was item No. (3), which reads: "I use YouTube tools in TEFL learning" while the lowest was item (2), which reads: "I use the EduBuncee tool in TEFL learning" the arithmetic mean for the field as a whole was (3.27) with a medium degree.

### **Testing the study hypotheses**

Hypothesis testing in the model were conducted depending on 3 measures, the Coefficient of Determination ( $R^2$ ), the significance of Correlation Coefficients (R), and the Multiple Regression (Beta).

Possible correlations ranged from (+1 to -1). Generally, as a rule of thumb, the values of r that are 0 to .2 are considered weak while the values from .3 to .6 are considered moderate then, the values from .7 to 1 are considered strong (Brace et.al, 2000). The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) is useful since it offers the variance proportion of one variable, which is predictable out from the other variable. This measure allows to define how certain one can be in building predictions from a certain graph/model. The Multiple Regression determined by Beta that is a measure for how each set of predictor variables strongly effect the criterion variable. Multiple regressions use can test theories about precisely that variables set is affecting our behavior. Generally, the Correlation Coefficients (R) can

measure the relation between two variables only but the Multiple Regression, Beta, can measure the relation between a set of variables with one variable. The Coefficient of Determination ( $R^2$ ) shows the linearity between many variables. In this study, we test  $r$  through Pearson Correlation Coefficients determined for variables pairs in order to test the correlation coefficients significance. Beta is determined through applying the linear regression test.

H01: using the internet has a positive impact on the effectiveness of TEFL courses outcomes:

TABLE (8):  
THE RESULTS OF THE APPLICATION OF THE REGRESSION USING THE INTERNET HAS A POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TEFL COURSES OUTCOMES

	$\beta$	T	Sig.	R	R2	F	Sig.
using the internet has a positive impact on the effectiveness of TEFL courses outcomes	0.36	4.67	0.00	0.36	0.13	21.80	0.00

According to the results of the above table (8) that there is a relationship statistically significant at the significance level ( $0.05 = \alpha$ ) between using the internet has a positive impact on the effectiveness of TEFL courses outcomes, as the value of the correlation coefficient (R) of (0.39), a value statistically significant and indicate the degree of correlation statistically significant between the independent variables and the dependent variable, and the value of (R-square) (0.13), a statistically significant value, and the value of the test (F) (21.80) in terms of the statistical (0.00), which value statistically significant at the significance level ( $0.05 = \alpha$ ), therefore, accept the alternative hypothesis.

#### Interview results

According to the TEFL teachers, one of the main advantages of Internet-based ways is to open the students to wider range of options and opportunities while the loss of communication was the main disadvantage of Internet-based ways. You tube was classified as the most effective and common internet-based way to teach TEFL. Incorporating the social media and strengthen the role of discussion seminars were the main recommendations that were proposed by most of the teachers.

### V. DISCUSSION

The results of this study showed that there is a positive impact of using internet in teaching TEFL especially on the students who feel more helped in their learning process which is consistent with Islam (2011) study that concentrated on the effect of internet that facilitates the improvement of the English level. However, the effect of internet on helping the teacher seems to be insignificant from the students' point of view as stated by Koivuniemi (2012) on his study.

As stated by the students, it was noted that the further explanation that the internet tools provide for students was the most common advantage of this method, while the simplicity of the internet tools was not considered as a positive feature. Moreover, openness, learning autonomy, stimulating interests of learners in language learning and strengthening learners' learning autonomy are some of the advantages of internet-based learning (Daneshdoust, 2012). However, lack of communication between students and teacher was the main disadvantage of using internet in TEFL courses.

According to Aydin (2007), prior studies showed that there are many disadvantages of using internet in second language learning. For instance, communication with native speakers influences reading skills badly. Moreover, writing and speaking skills. Though it is known that the internet enhances language and communicational skills, the important point is that learners and teachers are not aware sometimes of how, why, where and whom they learn and teach.

The results showed also that YouTube is the most effective internet-based way in teaching TEFL, while EduBuncee is the lowest one. This result is consistent with many studies including (Khalid & Muhammad, 2012; Alhamami, 2013; Almurashi, 2016; Bastos & Ramos, 2009; Kabooha & Elyas, 2015).

### VI. CONCLUSION

This study was conducted to investigate about the effectiveness of internet-based learning in TEFL courses in Kuwait. The results showed that the effect was positive where this method helped the students in the learning process. moreover, the further explanation internet offer fir students was the most common advantage of internet-based learning while the lack of communication is the major disadvantage. Moreover, it was found that YouTube is the most common effective internet-based way in teaching TEFL.

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# The Reasons behind Inefficient English Language Teaching Practices in Saudi Universities

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**Abstract**—This empirical survey has been conducted to investigate the responses of both teachers and students of English Language Department to identify the reasons behind inefficient English language teaching (ELT) at the department. The study utilized quantitative tool of data collection. A 38-item Likert-scale structured questionnaire has been developed and administered to both sample groups: English faculty members at the Foreign Languages Department (FLD) and junior and senior English-major students of FLD. The data gathered from the questionnaire responses has been analyzed and descriptive statistics have been exploited to present the result of this survey. Both groups have agreed to each other related to issues given below: 1) interaction should be activated among students, 2) authentic teaching material should be provided in all classrooms, 3) students' standard is quite weak when they take admission in FLD, 4) English language proficiency test should be a condition to promote to the next academic level and 5) remedial courses should be initiated in the department for the weaker learners. It is also found that lack of a strict admission policy, learners' examination-centered attitude and low motivation among students are also reasons in this regard as reported by the faculty. Recommendations have been given to develop the methods of teaching English in Saudi universities.

**Index Terms**—inefficient ELT, teaching practices, English-major, junior, senior

## I. INTRODUCTION

As a matter of fact, English has become the dominant language and it has been used in multiple fields such as international banking and economic affairs, global brands, international tourism, international law, interpretation and translation and internet communication (Zugoul, 2003; Crystal, 2003; Strevens, 1987). The demand to learn English is increasing and the number of people seeking to learn English is increasing accordingly. It is estimated that one billion students are learning English worldwide (Crystal, 2003). Like other students, Arab university students face English language shortfalls in their academic and professional career. Diverse reasons have been identified for this ineffective English language teaching at university level and research findings have offered deep insights into rectifying the prevailing situation (El-Fadil, 1985; El-Mowafy, 1983; Tushyeh, 1992; Ibrahim, 1975; Jorstad, 1981; Kouraogo, 1987; Reymond, 2008; Ibrahim, 1983; Rababa, 2003; Ramakanta, 1999). Theil (2009) and Al-Nahas et al. (2004) highlighted the importance of effective teaching for better national progress and economic growth. Several research studies have indicated that in spite of phenomenal governmental efforts, the required level of English language proficiency could not be achieved whether at pre-university level or at university level in Saudi Arabia (Ibrahim, 1975; Zughoul, 1986). This dilapidated situation calls for adequate attention of university faculties and comprehensive academic approach to rectify it.

### A. *ELT in the Gulf*

Several researchers such as (Ibrahim, 1975; Zughoul, 1986; Sahu, 1999; Rababah, 2003; Al-Jarf, 2008) mention that English language teaching in the Arab world has not approached the satisfactory outcomes. The students of these countries lack desired standard of proficiency and the governments are forced to subsidize higher education (Al-Nahas et al., 2009). According to (Kaur, 2003; Abbad, 1988 and Wahba, 1998 cited in AlFadly, 2003), Arab students of English are still try to acquire the required standard in the target language even after long years of formal study. Sahu (1999) also concludes that an average Yemeni learner of English language cannot communicate properly in various social, academic and professional settings after several years of English teaching. Tushyeh (1988) analyzes several English language departments and reported that these departments remained unable to make their graduates proficient in English. Kaur (2003) analyzes several studies that were carried out at Arab universities and found out "that graduates of English departments ----- could not on the average cope with undergraduate university education through the medium of English" (p. 14). He also mentions that these incompetent students join schools and colleges as English teachers and thus strengthen the vicious circle of ineffective English teaching.

As mentioned earlier, the number of English users is increasing all over the world, In comparison with the situation in Non-Arab countries, English has not been matched with an increase in the English Language proficiency of the students at their different levels of education (Zughoul, 1986). He has further mentioned that lack of EFL teacher training has been the main reason of ineffective English teaching in the Gulf. El-Fadil (1985) has declared that English language teachers have not well-acquainted themselves with the "developments in curriculum and instruction design"

(p.15) that resulted in ineffective teaching. Inappropriate teaching methods, untrained English teachers, inappropriate classroom settings and unsatisfactory English textbooks were identified as the main causes in this regard (El-Fadil, 1985).

#### *B. ELT in the KSA*

In 2003, Saudi Ministry of Education decided to teach English as a one of subjects in primary schools from grade six. It was decided that highly proficient supervisors would be supervising English language teaching at Saudi schools to ensure effective ELT (Al-Riyadh Newspaper, 2003). It was also strongly recommended that best efforts should be put in to develop state-of-the-art textbooks to train English language teachers and exhaust modern technology etc. to meet the above-mentioned goal.

According to (Shuttleworth Foundation, 2008) a report presents that Saudi Arabia is spending huge budget on education but still the Saudi students seem inefficient in their English language proficiency.

#### *C. Definition of Effective Teaching*

Teachers, in this era of globalization need to find effective methods of teaching. Westwood (1966) indicates that "Excellent teaching is that which produces learning and understanding" (p. 63). Earlier researchers in the field of language teaching emphasize that effective teaching promotes interaction, goal emphasis and facilitation (Shulman, 2004). Additionally, Raymond (2008) states that effective teaching achieves excellent, successful, outstanding learning outcomes.

All kinds of teaching involve two parties; teachers and students, and we need to consider the point of view of both these concerned groups to reach at a conclusion about the definition of effective teaching regarding seemingly two contradictory perspectives. First, we look at it from the teachers' perspective and Feldman (1988) analyzes thirty-one studies about the definition of effective teaching from the faculty perspective and reports that they considered the following pedagogical areas as the most important factors in this regard: 1- subject knowledge, 2- enthusiasm for the specific subject and for teaching itself, and 3- keenness about class level and learners' progress. The research has given significant views into the fact that both identified groups have the same pedagogical features yet their order of preferences stand as remarkable differences. Hativa and Birenbaum (2000) state that a lot of research studies have suggested that problem-based teaching, teachers' interaction with the students, classroom discussions and learners' active participation in the teaching process are highly appreciated by the students and it has a positive effect on students' academic development. Majority of the students dislike the traditional technique of lecturing and stated that it negatively affects students' learning.

Wilson (1986) mentions that task-based teaching is a leading method to achieve this much sought-after goal and it is "learning by doing" (p.28). This makes the process of learning a language meaningful and purposeful (Shu, 1998). Task-based learning usually involves the learners in real-life tasks. It makes the learners as a basic part of the role or situation and it establishes such kind of rapport within classroom settings (Li, 2009). (Sotto, 1994 cited in Westwood, 1996; Kauchak and Eggen, 1989; Brophy and Good, 1986) report that "a) knowing your subject, b) being able to see to the heart of the matter and c) the ability to explain things in simple terms", "Questioning", "teaching task-approach strategies" and "adapting instructions identified as the most important salient features of effective teaching (p. 69).

Much has been written about more effective and efficient ELT methodologies and Li (2009) points that "product-centered" and "process-centered" are two philosophies in ELT and the later one has been recognized to inculcate life-long learning (p. 72).

Gray (1990) summarizes the three main features of process-centered teaching as follows: 1-What should be taught? 2- what does the learner want to do with the language? and what activities will stimulate and promote language acquisition? These are the main dimensions on which any type of effective teaching centers itself on them.

Research has identified yet another factor that contributes substantially to effective learning. It is recommended that appropriate measures taken by a good EFL teacher ensure effective learning in the language learner and that language teachers' role is fundamental in positively influencing learners and obtaining high outcomes (Mackay, 2003; Campbell, et al., 2004; Rockoff, 2004 cited in Shishavan and Sadeghi, 2009).

#### *D. Related Projects*

One of the relevant studies to this article is of Raymond (2008) who investigates student and faculty perceptions of effective and ineffective teaching practices at the university level. The study uses both quantitative and qualitative tools what is so called "a multi-method data collection procedure". The aim behind this is to get authentic and reliable findings. Interviews and questionnaires were used. The samples included both male and female students and faculty members (n=69 and n=64). The data collected during 2005 and 2006 from four populations: English students, English faculty, science students and science faculty. The findings revealed that the faculty members and the students had same perception of effective and ineffective teaching. The study concluded that the excellent university professor is someone who: (1) is respectful, (2) always makes classes interesting, (3) a fair in evaluation, (4) pays much on students' success, (5) creative in their subject, (6) is friendly, (7) encourages questions and discussion, (8) is always well prepared and organized, and (9) makes the material easy to learn

Alfadly (2003) analyzes several research studies that were conducted at various Arab universities (Abbad, 1988; Wahba, 1998; Sahu, 1999 and Rababah, 2003) and the findings exhibited that Arab learners of English lack communicative competence. He further declares that even after several years of formal ELT, the students do not attain satisfactory proficiency in English language and they remain unable to “cope with undergraduate university education through the medium of English” (p. 12). Inappropriate curriculum, insufficient contact hours and delayed introduction of English language in the schools have been identified as the main contributing factors for ineffective ELT. These recommendations were set to improve English language proficiency of the learners: a) Courses contact hours should be increased in all levels of the study plan, b) teacher-training programs should be activated at all levels, c) much exposure to English should be provided to the learners outside classrooms, d) cheap and easy access of modern resources like internet for the learners and e) an English language awareness campaign should be arranged with the help of the society in general and the parents in particular.

Gamal and Debra (2001 cited in Karim, 2004) have conducted a research study to identify the reasons that contribute to ineffective communicative ELT in Egypt. Lack of sufficient financial support was reported as the major cause in this regard. Low salaries, absence of teacher-training programs, unequipped classrooms and lack of teaching resources were the results of this lack of funds. Discrepancy between EFL curriculum and examination syllabus was identified as another factor. Important classroom activities such as simulation and role play were not accepted by the students and administration as serious teaching that also made EFL teachers hesitant to do these productive activities in the classroom.

Eissa and Al-Mutawa (1988) examine the problems in coping up with English as the medium of instruction in Kuwait University. Sixty-four percent of the faculty members emphasize that their students' English language proficiency was very low which effects negatively their education in the subject matter. The students face difficulty in comprehending their textbooks and in comprehending the lectures delivered in English by their faculty teaching members. Ineffective ELT was the main reason behind their English language deficiency.

Feldman (1998) reviews 31 research studies that analyzed faculty and students' responses regarding the characteristics of effective teaching and he reports that all these studies carried similarities as far as the responses of both the groups were concerned regarding effective teaching. All these studies engaged the samples from the same universities and colleges and asked them. They focused mainly on describing attitudes and practices important to good and effective teaching. Both students and faculty members gave recognized status to these seven categories: a) teachers' concerns to learners' level and their gradual progress, b) proper and perfect preparation of the subject, c) subject knowledge, d) teachers' interest in teaching and in their subjects, e) ability to explain things with clarity that ensure learners' understanding, f) easy access and sympathetic attitude towards learners and g) fair assessment.

## II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was carried out at Foreign Languages Department (FLD) of Taif University in which eighteen faculty members ( $n = 18$ ) and sixty-three ( $n = 63$ ) participated in this survey. A structured Likert-scale questionnaire was designed and translated into Arabic to facilitate the task for the participants (See Appendix1). Data concerning the empirical work were collected by means of the structured questionnaire that was administered to the faculty members as well as to the students. The questionnaire was translated into Arabic for the students but English version was used for the faculty members. The population of this study is both juniors and seniors students, in addition to all the faculty members in (FLD). The sample involves sixty-three juniors and seniors students enrolled at Foreign Languages Department (FLD) and all the faculty members in the (FLD). The Arabic version of the questionnaire was handed over to various faculty members in particular who were teaching the students of the third and fourth year to complete the questionnaire. Twenty faculty members were handed over faculty questionnaires and 18 were returned. The total number of questionnaires were scientifically analyzed to forward final recommendations. The researcher used the descriptive statistics methods namely; the means, medians, and standard deviations. Moreover, the data generated was statistically described by the researcher.

## III. RESULTS

This part presents the results of the questionnaire survey. The main objective of this part is to present the faculty members' as well as the students' attitudes in order to state the causes of ineffective ELT at FLD. Table (1) details the analysis of the data collected through the questionnaire to draw a comparison between the mean values of the students' and the faculty's responses for all the questionnaire items.

TABLE (1):  
COMPARISON OF MEAN VALUES FOR THE STUDENTS' AND FACULTY'S RESPONSES

No	Questionnaire items	Mean Students	Mean Faculty
1	Students acquire satisfactory English language proficiency when they graduate.	2.6214	2.9032
2	English department has a clear vision of English teaching.	3.3204	3.3194
3	Departmental teaching vision is clear to all teachers and students.	3.2136	3.1613
4	All courses equally contribute to English language proficiency.	3.1456	3.1613
5	Language courses help improve English language proficiency the most.	3.1650	3.3871
6	Literature courses help improve English language proficiency the most.	2.9417	3.4839
7	Linguistic courses help improve English language proficiency the most.	3.2136	3.5806
8	Translation courses help improve English language proficiency the most.	3.9223	3.2258
9	Language courses should be increased.	3.6796	3.9032
10	More literature courses should be added.	2.699	3.0968
11	More linguistic courses should be added.	3.4078	3.3226
12	More translation courses should be added.	3.7379	2.871
13	Number of courses should be decreased.	3.5825	2.8387
14	Credit hours should be increased to three instead of two.	2.8155	3.3226
15	Interaction should be promoted in classroom.	4.0583	4.4194
16	The majority of the students are not hard working.	2.8252	4.0968
17	Most of the students are not motivated.	3.0388	4.0323
18	Students' English language proficiency is weak when they enrolled in the university.	3.6311	4.129
19	Weak students affect better students' proficiency.	2.8447	3.5806
20	Students' attendance is poor.	3.0583	2.9355
21	Students study English only to pass the examination.	3.3301	4.0323
22	Students study English to improve their English language proficiency.	3.4757	2.7097
23	Students study English for no obvious reasons.	2.835	3.3226
24	Students use English with each other in the classroom.	2.8447	2.0645
25	Students should not be allowed to take more than five courses in one semester.	3.7087	3.6452
26	Teachers are not well-qualified.	3.0777	3.129
27	Teachers are poorly trained.	2.9903	3.2258
28	Teachers help the students' individual problems during their office hours.	3.2913	3.4839
29	Teachers assign regular homework.	3.1553	3.5161
30	Teachers always use English in the classroom.	3.4078	3.5161
31	Textbooks are appropriate and suit students' level.	3.2816	2.9355
32	Classrooms should be provided with modern teaching means.	4.1942	4.3226
33	All final exams are of equal difficulty level.	2.8835	2.6774
34	There should be more class quizzes.	3.0388	3.4516
35	FLD should follow a strict admission policy.	3.3883	4.1613
36	Students have to pass the admission test to qualify for admission.	3.3107	4.2258
37	The students have to pass the proficiency test to move to the next level.	3.6796	4.1613
38	FLD should have a remedial plan for the weaker students.	4.4272	4.0323

### Most Favored Ten items

The researcher thoroughly studied the data and decided to interpret it in terms of ten most favored items identified by the faculty members as well as by the students and the following results were generated.

Table (2) contains the ten items that had maximum mean values as identified by the faculty members. High mean values of these items reflect that these urgent factors need to be addressed immediately and comprehensively to uplift the standard of ELT at Taif University.

TABLE (2):  
TEN MOST FAVORED ITEMS IDENTIFIED BY THE FACULTY MEMBERS

No	Item	Mean	Standard deviation
1	Interaction should be promoted in classroom.	4.4194	.9228
2	Classrooms should be provided with modern teaching means.	4.3226	1.1658
3	Students have to pass the admission test to qualify for admission.	4.2258	1.2030
4	The students have to pass the proficiency test to move to the next level.	4.1613	1.0032
5	FLD should follow a strict admission policy.	4.1613	1.2137
6	Students' English language proficiency is weak when they enrolled in the university.	4.129	1.3352
7	The majority of the students are not hard working.	4.0968	1.0442
8	FLD should have a remedial plan for the weaker students.	4.0323	1.0483
9	Most of the students are not motivated	4.0232	1.016
10	Students study English only to pass the examination	4.0232	1.016

The faculty members have declared that making the classroom more interactive is the most important factor to ensure effective ELT. The traditional method of lecture-based classes has been identified as one of the major stumbling block in making students proficient or competent in the target language. The first and the second item of questionnaire correspond closely to each other. It has been suggested that instead of the present big lecture halls installed with fixed chairs for the students, there has been an urgent need to modify the present classrooms with more learning-friendly settings that would allow the faculty members to have the freedom of implementing innovative classroom activities to engage the students in pair/group work so that more opportunities of real-life language practice may be provided in the classes. Along with these flexible classroom settings, modern teaching facilities have also been recommended strongly so that classes might be transformed from the traditional lecture-based teaching to modern task-based teaching allowing

the faculty to maneuver in length to achieve the departmental vision of effective ELT. The third most favored item has been to ascertain that all the students should be administered an admission test and only those students should be allowed to get admission who qualify that test. Another major factor identified by both sample groups has been that the students' proficiency is quite low when they get admission at FLD that make it difficult for the faculty to teach them as one group. This kind of strict admission policy would certainly help the department to secure properly motivated and hardworking freshmen students. The faculty members have strongly suggested that along with regular individual examinations for various subjects, the department should introduce some sort of standard English language proficiency test that the students need to pass before entering the next academic year. This practice would ensure that the students would not only concentrate on their technical subjects but also try to achieve general English language proficiency. The fifth item on this list of most favored list was also linked to the third item of implementing some sort of strict policy so that only those students would be allowed admission in the department who are genuinely motivated in studying English language. Another factor that has been identified as one of the contributing factors that hinder effective ELT at FLD is the fact that most of the students who get admission as English-major freshmen at FLD have poor English language proficiency that create problems for the faculty members to move forward effectively. "Most of the students are not hard working" has been the seventh most-favored item that is directly linked with the previous item that due to a relaxed admission policy, weaker students get admission at FLD who are not in the habit of working hard. The next item is about another extremely important and urgently needed factor that remedial programs should be arranged by FLD for the weaker students. This becomes rather inevitable if annual English language proficiency tests are introduced. The remedial courses or programs would help the students who fail the proficiency tests to improve their level and be able to continue their studies at FLD later on. The second last item on the list is that most of the students are not motivated. Another important finding has been identified by the faculty members about the psychological underpinning of the students that they bear an examination-centered attitude instead of learning-based behavior towards ELT.

TABLE (3):  
TEN MOST FAVORED ITEMS IDENTIFIED BY THE STUDENTS

No	Item	Mean	Standard deviation
1	FLD should have a remedial plan for the weaker students.	4.4272	.9862
2	Classrooms should be provided with modern teaching means.	4.1942	1.2838
3	Interaction should be promoted in classroom.	4.0583	1.1617
4	Translation courses help improve English language proficiency the most.	3.9223	1.1262
5	Translation courses should be increased.	3.7379	1.2599
6	Students should not be allowed to take more than five courses in one semester.	3.7087	1.3331
7	Language courses should be increased.	3.6796	1.4088
8	The students have to pass the proficiency test to move to the next level.	3.6796	1.3447
9	Students' English language proficiency is weak when they enrolled in the university.	3.6311	1.2207
10	Number of courses should be decreased.	3.5825	1.3249

Table (3) reports the attitude of the students towards ten most crucial factors concerning the ineffective ELT at the department as well as their suggestions to improve the effectiveness of English teaching at FLD. Among the ten factors, the following five factors are the same that have been mentioned by the faculty as well: a) interaction should be promoted in classroom, b) modern teaching facilities should be available in classroom, c) students' English language proficiency is weak when they enrolled in the University, d) Students have to pass the proficiency test to move to the next level.

and e) FLD should start remedial programs for the weaker students. Identification of the above-mentioned factors by the both sample groups has offered significant insights into the fact that FLD of Taif University has to address these issues on urgent basis to enhance their ELT services. The common factors have been described earlier and the remaining ones will be dealt with intensively here. The students have declared that translation courses help improve English language proficiency the most and ranked it fourth on their ranking of most preferred list of ten items. As compared to the lower mean value of only (3.25) by the faculty, the students have recorded a higher value of mean (3.92) to this item that manifests their preference for these courses. "Translation course should be increased" has been allocated fifth position on the list that provides sufficient insights that they strongly believe that translation courses are quite instrumental in improving their English language proficiency. Students have assigned a mean value of (3.74) to this item and the faculty seems at variance in this regard and assigned only (2.87) that suggest that they do not think that translation courses contribute significantly. Another interesting finding is that the students have also allotted a high mean value to this item that involves the role of language courses in developing student' English proficiency and they have suggested that more language courses should be added as well. It seems that the Arab students of English have a strong liking for using Arabic language as a supporting factor to learn English language and this preference of the use of Arabic language has been reflected in their preference of selecting the items related to translation courses as the most preferred ones. "Students should not be allowed to take more than five courses in one semester" has been assigned sixth position on their preferred-item list and the faculty has allocated nearly the same mean value to this item appears to imply that this factor should also be implemented seriously to ensure better results. The last item on this list is also directly related to the previous item and the students have suggested decreasing the number of courses by increasing the credit hours of the remaining ones.

#### IV. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION

The researcher has carefully examined the data generated through all the tools and the following findings are presented about the various factors that cause ineffective ELT at FLD and to improve the standard of ELT at the department. It has been found out that neither the students nor the faculty members at FLD are satisfied with the present standard of ELT at FLD. Both sample groups have disclosed that the undergraduates at the department do not have reasonable command of English language. It has been learned that all kinds of courses at FLD contribute somewhat equally towards improving English language proficiency of English-major undergraduates of Taif University but language courses have been identified as the ones that help improve English language of the students more as compared to other courses. It is learned that the present enrollment system allows the students to opt for as much as ten courses in one term that is negatively affecting their learning process and they are not in the position to do justice with this high number of courses. Furthermore, it is also discovered that the samples have preferred to have three or four credit hours instead of the existing two or three for most of the courses. Furthermore, extremely high mean values of the responses of both sample groups have clearly indicated that lecture-based classes are not preferred by the samples. It is learned that they exhibited strong liking for more interactive classes. It has been found out that majority of the students are not hard working and inconsistencies in the faculty members' attitude towards examinations, class discipline and attendance are the other factors that contribute to make the students rather lazy and easy-going. Low mean values calculated for the responses of both sample groups have offered deep insights that freshmen students have low English language proficiency when they join FLD because of certain factors in their schools that negatively affect their motivation for learning English. This lack of motivation has been reported in these students even after joining Taif University that makes it very difficult for the faculty members to ensure proper progress and success at FLD. It is also learned that the majority of the students are not genuinely interested in enhancing their English language proficiency but all their efforts are diverted towards achieving high scores in their examinations. This examination-centered attitude is another stumbling block in achieving proper pace and progress in ELT at FLD. It is discovered that not to speak of off-campus settings, English is not used regularly inside as well as outside the classes. Language learning is a skill and this scarcity of opportunities of using English at FLD with the faculty members and the fellow students is a major factor that causes ineffective ELT at the department. It is noted that office hours are not productively used to address the individual academic problems of the students and there lacks the atmosphere of visiting the faculty members during the office hours to seek their expert and professional opinion and guidance on various academic problems. Some of the textbooks are not very suitable for the students at FLD as far as their difficulty level and appropriateness is concerned. Fourteenth, the data analysis transpires that the present classrooms at Taif University do not have the required modern teaching facilities to ensure efficient and effective learning. These classrooms have fixed furniture that suits lecture-based teaching but they are highly deficient in providing proper language learning atmosphere. It is learned that the department started to follow a strict admission policy that makes it possible for many students who are quite weak in English language to get admission as English-major freshmen students at Taif University. This lack of effective screening in the beginning gives birth to many pedagogical issues for FLD to effectively and efficiently execute their study plan. FLD at Taif University does not have a parallel system of providing remedial courses for the weaker students at the department to raise their English proficiency level so that they might be able to comfortably cope up with their peers.

The following recommendations are forwarded that are based on the scientific analysis of the data generated through various tools used in this exploratory study. It is important to review the present study plan of FLD and adapt it accordingly to suit the linguistic needs of English-major students of the department. It is strongly advocated that the department should form a committee to review the study plan to rationalize it according to the departmental pedagogical vision. It is also proposed that the language courses should be increased because they enable the students to face challenging tasks of studying technical subjects effectively. Moreover, they will improve students' English language proficiency. It is also recommended that the faculty members who teach these language courses should coordinate and interact with each other to ensure maximum level of success. It is also recommended that the department should decrease the ceiling of number of course in a term and it is advised to limit it to not more than six. It is proposed that the number of credit hours should be increased to three instead of the present two credit hour policy. It is strongly recommended that lecture-based classes should be discouraged and all the faculty members should try to make their classes more interactive where all the students are provided with sufficient opportunities to take an active part in all class processes which will enable them to achieve the goal of written and oral proficiency in the target language. It is proposed that the faculty members should follow a consistent policy as far as classroom discipline, examinations and attendance is concerned. All members of faculty need to involve their students in a challenging academic atmosphere so that the students have to work hard to cope up with English teaching at FLD. Considering the examination-centered behavior of the students, it is recommended that examinations should be set in a way that should force the students to study comprehensively to get better marks. It is also exhorted that all the mid-term and final examinations should be submitted to the departmental examination committee that would review them intensively to ensure that all the exams are valid, reliable, comprehensive and of equal difficulty level. Thus, the teacher plays many roles besides involving the task of motivation among his/ her students. It is highly important to change the examination-centered behavior into learning-based one by highlighting the practical needs and benefits of learning English in their practical life so that they

could be transformed into life-long learners. It is strongly recommended that the students should be prohibited to use Arabic in the campus and the faculty members should provide them with a modal by constantly communicating in the target language with the students as well as with their colleagues. The teachers should not use Arabic in the classes as well as in their offices with the students and the students should be motivated to make groups among their class fellows who try to speak English even outside the campus. It is also advised to introduce speaking components in the maximum possible examinations. Faculty development programs are the backbone of all ambitious English departments. Thus, teachers are highly recommended to do different functions such to create an atmosphere of mutual interaction and idea-sharing. This can be performed by arranging regular academic sessions, extended workshops and conferences in which internal faculty members as well as external professionals should be invited as resource persons. Teacher-student relationship is reported to have positive overbearing on the overall learning process. Teachers need to establish friendly and academic relationship with their students. Students can visit their teachers during the office hours to discuss various matters related to their studies. These mutual discussions will enhance students' confidence that will boost their motivation and interest in English language learning. It is strongly recommended that all the classrooms should be equipped with the latest teaching facilities and the faculty members should be trained and exhorted to exploit these modern technologies intensively to meet the challenge of effective ELT at FLD. It is suggested that the university should have a strict admission policy and FLD should have a role in the process of admission. FLD should administer an admission test and only those students should be allowed to enroll as English-major freshmen students who qualify that test. It is recommended that the department should administer a standard English language proficiency test at the end of each year. Students who only pass the test will be moved to the next level. It is also extremely important for the department to have parallel coaching facilities for the weaker students so that they might be able to join the mainstream of the department after getting some additional intensive coaching. These remedial courses should be compulsory for the students who fail to qualify the annual promotion examinations and optional for the other students of FLD.

#### APPENDIX 1. QUESTIONNAIRE OF THE FACULTY MEMBERS

##### **Part (1)- PERSONAL (optional)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

##### **Part (2)- Circle the most appropriate choice.**

1 = strongly disagree    2 = disagree    3 = neutral    4 = agree    5 = strongly agree

No	Questionnaire items	1	2	3	4	5
1	Students acquire satisfactory English language proficiency when they graduate.					
2	English department has a clear vision of English teaching.					
3	Departmental teaching vision is clear to all teachers and students.					
4	All courses equally contribute to English language proficiency.					
5	Language courses help improve English language proficiency the most.					
6	Literature courses help improve English language proficiency the most.					
7	Linguistic courses help improve English language proficiency the most.					
8	Translation courses help improve English language proficiency the most.					
9	Language courses should be increased.					
10	More literature courses should be added.					
11	More linguistic courses should be added.					
12	More translation courses should be added.					
13	Number of courses should be decreased.					
14	Credit hours should be increased to three instead of two.					
15	Interaction should be promoted in classroom.					
16	The majority of the students are not hard working.					
17	Most of the students are not motivated.					
18	Students' English language proficiency is weak when they enrolled in the university.					
19	Weak students affect better students' proficiency.					
20	Students' attendance is poor.					
21	Students study English only to pass the examination.					
22	Students study English to improve their English language proficiency.					
23	Students study English for no obvious reasons.					
24	Students use English with each other in the classroom.					
25	Students should not be allowed to take more than five courses in one semester.					
26	Teachers are not well-qualified.					
27	Teachers are poorly trained.					
28	Teachers help the students' individual problems during their office hours.					
29	Teachers assign regular homework.					
30	Teachers always use English in the classroom.					
31	Textbooks are appropriate and suit students' level.					
32	Classrooms should be provided with modern teaching means.					
33	All final exams are of equal difficulty level.					
34	There should be more class quizzes.					
35	FLD should follow a strict admission policy.					
36	Students have to pass the admission test to qualify for admission.					
37	The students have to pass the proficiency test to move to the next level.					
38	FLD should have a remedial plan for the weaker students.					

Thank you very much for your cooperation

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# Exploring the Association between Religious Values and Communication about Pain Coping Strategies: A Case Study with Vietnamese Female Cancer Patients

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**Abstract**—This study explores the association between the values of dominant religions in Vietnam and the communication about pain coping strategies employed by Vietnamese women who have cancer. Data was collected by means of in-depth interviews with twenty-six Vietnamese female cancer patients. Content analysis was then utilised to describe and interpret the women’s pain talks. Participants proposed six religion-related pain coping strategies, including *accepting pain*, *bearing pain on one’s own*, *trying to change karma*, *being positive about pain*, *managing to forget pain* and *sharing pain when it becomes unbearable*. The findings reflected that the religious values of Confucianism and Buddhism are associated with the patients’ communication about the strategies they employed to cope with their pain. Moreover, the language of communicating pain coping could be mapped onto the categories of *passive language* and *active language*, within the religion framework. The research has thus also confirmed the role of language in the communication about pain experience.

**Index Terms**—pain coping strategies, religious values, Vietnamese culture, language of pain

## I. INTRODUCTION

Amongst the cultural values that impact on pain communication, religion plays a particularly important role. Religion has been found to influence issues such as the quality of life, the communication about coping strategies and the mental health of those who undergo cancer treatment. Nonetheless, the available studies focus mainly on American, European, or South American samples with the predominant religions being Catholicism or Protestantism. In addition, most of these studies collected the data by means of a questionnaire, for example, the Intrinsic Religious Motivation Scale (Hoge, 1972). This study, which is part of a larger project of Vietnamese pain language, uses a qualitative methodology to explore the association between religious values and the communication about pain coping strategies employed by Vietnamese women who have cancer.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. The Concept of Pain

As Livingston (1943) reasoned, any consideration of pain, by one approach alone, and without due regard for other potential approaches, is inherently incomplete. In fact, pain has been viewed as a whole phenomenon from either a physiological or psychological perspective (Livingston, 1943), in its biological and socio-cultural context (Zborowski, 1969), as a key biological, cultural and philosophical theme (Rey, 1998), or as a phenomenon characterised by physical, psychological and socio-cultural aspects (Lascaratou, 2007).

While several definitions of pain have been proposed, none of them has achieved complete acceptance. It is the diversity of the pain experience that explains why the definition of pain is controversial; this is also “a sign of the vigour, excitement and rapid development of the field” (Melzack & Wall, 1996, p. 46). The definition currently achieving consensus is Merskey’s (1964), which has been reworded by the International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP). Pain is defined as “[...] an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage, or described in terms of such damage” (Merskey & Bogduk, 1994, p. 250). It has been widely accepted that this definition views pain as a subjective bio-psycho-social phenomenon.

Since pain is a subjective phenomenon, the communication about pain may be associated with many factors, one of which may be the religious values that a person holds.

### B. The Role of Religion in the Communication about Pain

Research has indicated that religion may have certain influence on people’s communication about pain. Within the religion framework, Keefe and his colleagues (2001) described pain coping strategies as either positive or negative. Specifically, positive religious strategies were things like believing that one’s life was part of a larger spiritual force, or

looking to God for support and guidance whereas negative religious strategies referred to beliefs such as God was punishing them or God was abandoning them for their sins. Research also reported that religious patients had lower levels of pain and less negative emotions (Shaw et al., 2007; Yates, Chalmer, James, Follansbee, & McKegey, 1981) and found it easier to accept pain (Bussing et al., 2009; Whitman, 2007).

Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism are three convergent religions in Vietnam and they are part of Vietnamese cultural heritage (Le, 2004; Tran, 1996). There have, thus far, been very few studies on the association between religious beliefs and the pain experienced by people with cancer in Vietnam.

In countries that have similar religious observances, however, some findings have been noted. For example, these religions have been reported as having a strong influence on the perceptions and interpretation of pain and the types of pain coping strategies adopted amongst Chinese people (Chen, Miaskowski, Dodd, & Pantilat, 2008). First, followers of Taoism believe that pain occurs if there is disharmony within one's body and/or between one's body and the universe; therefore, maintaining harmony within oneself and with the universe will help release pain (Chang, 2000; Chen et al., 2008). Second, Buddhist tenets see physical and psychic pain in birth, aging, sickness, and death; moreover, Buddhist teachings also see pain as an inseparable part of life and a defining characteristic of the human condition (Anderson, 1999; Chen, 2006; Tu, 1987). In Buddhism, pain is originated from people's craving and aversion; therefore, coping for the followers of Buddhism involves the transformation of one's craving and aversion in order to free oneself from all of life's troubles and sorrows (Chen, 2006). Buddhism emphasises that if one can endure pain calmly, then one can achieve higher states of being (Smith-Stoner, 2003), and that pain ends when one cultivates and practises the eight disciplines of right speech, right action, right living, right effort, right mindfulness, right meditation, right thought, and right understanding (see Chen, 2006). Finally, Confucians also regard pain as an essential element in life and one is no longer considered human if one loses the sensation of pain (Chen et al., 2008; Tu, 1971). Since the Confucian golden rule is that you should not do to others what you would not want others to do to you, people who practise Confucianism may derive comfort from people around but characteristically endure pain without reporting it until the pain becomes unbearable (Chen et al., 2008; Tu, 1971).

A recent study in Vietnam has explored the association between the dominant religions in Vietnam and the communication about the nature of pain by Vietnamese women who have cancer (Nguyen, 2018). The research revealed both non religion-related and religion-related explanations for suffering pain with the religion-related explanations being pain as fate and pain as karma. When the patients could not find a plausible explanation for why they had cancer pain, they blamed fate. Vietnamese people believe that Ông-Trời, a concept with varied meanings, one of which refers to Heaven, can determine people's fate, which is unchangeable, irrational, and unapproachable. That Ông-Trời determines people's fate is a common understanding in Vietnamese folk culture. This is, however, rooted from Confucianism which explains Ông-Trời's/Heaven's will ruling over people's lives. Karma, on the other hand, is originated from Buddhism, which generally refers to an action or deed resulting in the entire circle of cause and effect (Hoang, 2011). In Buddhism, karma specifically involves one's volition expressed in one's physical actions, words and intentions. In other words, karma itself is one's volition, producing the circle of cause and effect. Karma keeps developing until it produces outcomes under appropriate circumstances. Unlike fate, which is beyond one's control, karma is believed to be controllable and changeable. The Buddhist patients attributed the nature of their pain to karma, which they understood as their misconduct in their previous life and they were therefore suffering in the present life as a way to pay for it. As a result, the Vietnamese understanding of pain as fate and pain as karma reflected the association with Confucianism and Buddhism, respectively. A thorough examination of the two concepts of fate and karma has shown the high tension within the patients themselves: accepting that it is one's unchangeable fate to suffer pain while at the same time considering pain as karma that is changeable. Moreover, within the religion framework, the language of communicating the nature of pain could be divided into two main categories: passive language and active language. Nguyen's (2018) research has thus also confirmed the role of language in the communication about pain experience.

This paper extends Nguyen's (2018) research findings by discussing how dominant religions in Vietnam are associated with their communication about pain coping strategies. The research participants in the current study were also a group of Vietnamese women living with cancer.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### A. Participants

Participants of the current study included 26 Vietnamese women with cancer recruited from one large hospital in Vietnam which provides support for patients from different parts of the country. Eight of the women had breast cancer, four had lung cancer, four had cancer of the head and neck, two had ovarian cancer, two had lymphoma, and the remaining six women had cancer of the pancreas, stomach, thymus, gall, liver, and of an unidentified organ. The stages of cancer ranged from 2 to 4, with higher stages indicating more advanced disease. Eight women were at stage 4, twelve at stage 3, five at stage 2, and one was at an unidentified stage at the time of interview but kept complaining about her unrelenting pain.

The women's age ranged from 37 to 79 ( $M = 53.42$ ;  $SD = 10.19$ ). Cancer patients were selected to participate in the study because the cancer incidence in Vietnam has been increasing very quickly with growing mortality and pain is a

frequent concomitant of cancer as has been documented in a number of studies (e.g., Krakauer, Nguyen, Green, Le, & Luong, 2007; Le, Mizoue, & Yoshimura, 2002). Female patients were the focus of research so that rapport between the patients and the female researcher who conducted the interviews could be established.

Since Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism are three convergent religions and they are part of Vietnamese cultural heritage (Le, 2004; Tran, 1996), the researcher took the position that the values of these three religions are associated with the Vietnamese daily-life communication, to varying extents. With 53.85% of the Vietnamese cancer patients in the current research reporting practising Buddhism officially, it was expected that these patients would show their understanding into the teachings of the religion.

#### B. Data Collection Methods

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from both The University of Queensland Behavioural and Social Sciences Ethical Review Committee and the Research Committee at the hospital in Vietnam.

Data collection took place in nine months. The researcher was introduced to potential patients by one of the treating doctors in the hospital. Each of the twenty-six participants who agreed to take part was advised about the informed consent in both written and oral forms in Vietnamese. Permission was also obtained from the patients to record the conversation. All of the communication with the patients was in Vietnamese in order to facilitate their natural and free communication.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the patients about the pain coping strategies that they used. The researcher audio-recorded and took notes of the patients' responses to the interview questions.

#### C. Data Analysis Methods

The data analysis of this descriptive qualitative study was conducted in two phases. In the first phase, the data was transcribed and analysed following Patton's (2002) empirical phenomenological psychological approach. The chief investigator read the transcripts, broke them into meaning units, and ascribed descriptive labels to the units. These labels were then reorganised into themes of pain coping strategies. A second Vietnamese coder with similar educational background to the chief investigator was recruited to repeat the procedure of data analysis. The inter-rater reliability was 91.83%. The chief investigator and the second coder had a discussion to resolve the discrepancies; they explained how and why they coded the data differently. At the end of the discussion, they reached an agreement regarding those discrepancies. Finally, the data was translated into English by the chief investigator and checked by the other two investigators in the research team.

In the second phase, content analysis was employed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Qualitative content analysis involves "a second-level, interpretive analysis of the underlying deeper meaning of the data" whereas qualitative content analysis indicates the objective and descriptive account of the surface meaning of the data (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 246). In the current study, quantitative content analysis allowed the strategies of pain management to be presented using descriptive statistics. Qualitative content analysis was then employed to interpret the patients' pain talk in the light of the literature on pain and religion.

### IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

All of the women reported that they were kind and generous, and that it was their nature to do good deeds whenever possible. Therefore, they felt heartbroken that they had developed cancer and were suffering pain. They questioned themselves about what they had done wrong. Some complained about why life did not treat them well and why Ông-Trời was so unfair and harsh to them by making them suffer cancer pain. They were mocking and doubtful about the value of being a kind person, as it had not protected them from suffering. They did not wish to think about ways to deal with pain. Nonetheless, the patients finally offered to report how they coped with pain, with the pain coping strategies being both religion-related and non-religion-related.

The non-religion-related strategies of pain coping occurred in 9 pain expressions, where the patients admitted using methods of pain relief such as taking palliative medicine (1) and (2), or doing physiotherapy (3). In these non-religion-related pain coping strategies, the patients were not passive, but actively attempting to control pain:

- (1) Khi chị đau hung quá thì uống thuốc-giảm-đau.  
When sister-1<sup>st</sup> per.sing.pro. hurt cruel too much then drink palliative medicine.  
When it hurts too much, I take palliative medicine.
- (2) Mỗi lần (cá chân) nhức là chích morphine thì mới đỡ đau.  
Each time (the leg) ache then injection morphine I only less hurt.  
Whenever my leg aches, only a morphine injection can help reduce pain.
- (3) (Mệ) đau (bụng) thì xoa-bóp dầu lên đó.  
(Grandma-1<sup>st</sup> per.sing.pro.) hurt (stomach) then massage oil onto that.  
When it hurts in my stomach, I massage the stomach with some treatment oil.

In the next sections, the religion-related strategies of pain coping occurred in either pain expressions or groups of sentences, and can be classified into six main themes. These six groups of strategies help them manage their pain, and are relevant to the religion-related nature of pain, including *pain as fate* and *pain as karma* (Nguyen, 2018). The

religion-related pain coping strategies were: accepting pain, trying to bear pain on one's own, trying to change karma, being positive about pain, managing to forget pain, and sharing pain with others when it becomes unbearable.

#### A. Accepting Pain

Pain acceptance is a relatively common reaction that is practised by patients with chronic pain (McCracken & Vowles, 2006). Research has shown that patients with higher scores of acceptance reported less pain and physical limitation; moreover, higher acceptance patients had slower growth rates of depression (Pinto-Gouveia, Costa, & Marôco, 2013).

In their fight against cancer, all the patients in the current study saw accepting pain as the best way to deal with their situation. They accepted pain because they considered pain as an inseparable part of their existence, as well as part of the circle of **sinh, lão, bệnh, tử** (*birth, aging, sickness, and death*) in human life, a belief originated from Buddhism, which defines pain as a characteristic of human life (Anderson, 1999; Chen et al. 2008; Chen, 2006; Conze, 2001; Tú, 1971, 1987). The fact that one can realise and understand that pain exists, and that *birth, aging, sickness, and death* involve suffering is the practice of *right thought* - one of the eight ways to end the path of pain, according to Buddhist teaching (Chen, 2006; Chen et al., 2008). In addition, the patients accepted pain because they thought they could not change their fate, which had already been determined by Ông-Trời (Heaven), a belief rooted in Confucianism (Chen, 1997; Lau, 1979; Nguyen, 2011). These patients' perception is also influenced by Confucianism in that people are no longer considered human beings if they lose the sensation of pain (Chen et al., 2008; Tu, 1971). For example, the woman in example (4) expressed her acceptance of pain, which is in keeping with the teachings of both Buddhism and Confucianism, reflected in her utilisation of '**sinh, lão, bệnh, tử**' (*birth, aging, sickness, and death*) and **ý Trời** (*It's Trời's will*), respectively:

(4) [...] **Mình đã sống trên này, mình có đau-đớn, cũng là chuyện bình-thường. 'Sinh, lão, bệnh, tử' mà. Hơn nữa, giờ đi đang đau ung-thư thể này, đó là ý Trời, d ì kh ông thể thay-đổi gì cả, phải chấp-nhận thôi.**

[...] *That we live in the present world means we are supposed to suffer. It's the circle of 'birth, aging, sickness, and death'. Moreover, now that I am suffering cancer pain, it is Trời's will, which I cannot change and which I have to accept.*

Zborowski (1969) regarded pain acceptance as the *willingness* to tolerate the pain sensation. However, he stressed that, people are reluctant to accept pain. In the current research, the patients knew that pain came as an absolute certainty, but it remained difficult for them to tolerate pain willingly. This explained their repeated use of phrases like **phải chấp-nhận thôi** and **phải chịu thôi** (*having to accept this*) in order to express their acceptance of pain in an unwilling manner:

(5) **Mình đau thì phải chịu thôi; cái số-kiếp bắt mình đau thì mình phải chấp-nhận thôi.**

*I have to accept the fact that I suffer pain; suffering pain is my fate and I have to accept it.*

In summary, the Vietnamese patients accepted pain, though unwillingly, as a pain coping strategy associated with the religious values of Confucianism and Buddhism.

#### B. Bearing Pain on One's Own

The acceptance of pain, which was practised by all the Vietnamese patients taking part in the interviews of the present study, has suggested a preference to bear pain on one's own. *Bearing pain on one's own* was a frequently practised strategy by the patients (n=21, 80.8%). The patients chose to keep silent, cry, or groan alone. They felt reluctant to let their families know that they were in pain, since they did not want to upset their families. In particular, one woman was concerned that her crying would badly influence her children, thus she kept trying to bear the pain until she could no longer. These patients emphasized that their pain was their own concern, and thus it was not good to make people other than themselves suffer. This reflected the association with Confucianism of which the golden rule, according to Tu (1971), is that you should not do to others what you would not want others to do to you. The most common phrases employed by the patients include **chịu** or **chịu-đựng** (*bearing [the pain]*), **im-lặng chịu-đựng** or **cẩn-răng chịu-đựng** (*bearing [the pain] in silence*), **cố-gắng chịu-đựng** (*trying to bear [the pain]*).

(6) **(Chị) đau vừa-phải thì ìn chịu được. Chị im-lặng chịu-đựng, kh ông la-h ót, r ên-rĩ, ph àn-n àn.**

*If I suffer moderate pain, I can bear it. I endure in silence, without screaming, groaning, or complaining.*

(7) **Như theo tư-tưởng của d ì nếu (d ì) có đau nữa thì ìn cũng cố-gắng chịu-đựng cho tới lúc trút hơi-thở cuối-cùng.**

*In my philosophy, if I continue to suffer, I will try to bear the pain until the moment I die.*

(8) **(D ì) đau có lúc là phải chảy nước-mắt nhưng mà phải cẩn-răng chịu-đựng.**

*Sometimes it hurts so much that I move to tears but I have to bear the pain in silence.*

(9) **Mà (d ì) đau cỡ nào ìn cũng cẩn-răng chịu được hết; ìn vượt-qua hết.**

*I can bear the pain in silence to whatever extent it hurts; I can overcome all the pain.*

These examples illustrate the patients' strength of will in trying to bear and overcome pain. However, according to what the Vietnamese health professionals revealed, this strategy was not considered effective from the health professionals' perspective, since the patients' effort to bear pain on their own may prevent the health professionals from providing more timely medical support.

Accepting pain and trying to bear pain on one's own, however, did not mean that the patients were passive. The women also proposed several other strategies that they used in an attempt to change the situation.

### C. Trying to Change Karma

The patients who believed that cancer pain was their karma, a belief originating in Buddhism, said they were trying to change this bad karma by praying and doing more good deeds in their daily lives. In other words, these patients' view of pain as karma not only resulted in their acceptance of pain, but also gave them more hope and determination in cultivating themselves in order to reduce the effects of karma. As one woman reasoned:

(10) **Mình đau thì mình chấp-nhận. Nhưng mình muốn thay đổi. Mình không thể ngồi chờ chết được.**

*I suffer pain and I accept it. But I want to make a change. I can't wait for the (agonizing) death to come.*

The patients (n=13, 50%) said that they were trying to change karma by praying to Buddha, either at home or in hospital. As the patients claimed, praying helped them to concentrate their thoughts on Buddha and feel protected by Buddha. They were aware that Buddha could not terminate pain, but thinking about Buddha could bring them positive feelings, which helped them to reduce the pain, sleep well, and forget the pain, sadness, anger, and fear. The Buddhist patients also believed that their practice of praying could eventually help change their karma in a positive way, so that they would not have to suffer agonizing pain before they died. Some patients also believed that their practice of praying would help them to have a better next life, as well as prevent their family from suffering cancer pain:

(11) **(Đi) đau thì đi niệm Phật. Niệm Phật làm mình quên đi đau-đớn. Nghĩ về đức Phật mà cái đầu mình cứ lâng-lâng, rồi ngủ thiếp đi.**

*When I suffer pain, I pray to Buddha. Praying helps me forget the pain. Thinking about Buddha makes me feel comfortable, and fall into sleep easily.*

(12) **(Mẹ) đau thì chỉ c ó niệm Phật thôi. Niệm Phật để đức Phật gia-hộ cho mình, để mình bớt đau. Để khi chết không phải chịu đau-đớn.**

*When I suffer pain, I keep praying to Buddha. I pray so that Buddha would support me and help me, so that I would suffer less, so that I wouldn't have to suffer pain before I die.*

(13) **Lúc-nào đau thì đi chỉ biết niệm Phật chứ biết làm gì nữa. Niệm Phật để quên đi đau-đớn, cầu-mong cho kiếp sau không phải đau-đớn thế này, cầu-mong cho người-thân của mình không phải đau-đớn như mình.**

*Whenever I suffer pain, the only thing that I can do is pray to Buddha. Praying helps me forget pain. I also pray for my next life not having to suffer. I also pray for my family not having to suffer like me.*

These patients were trying to bring about some change to their current state of suffering. They resorted to praying to Buddha, which they believed would help change their karma. Praying to Buddha and concentrating their thought on Buddha so that they could forget pain is the practice of *single-minded concentration* – one of the eight right ways in Buddhism to free people from pain, as discussed by Chen (2006) and Chen et al. (2008).

### D. Being Positive about Pain

Half of the patients (n=13), who claimed to practise Buddhism as their formal religious affiliation, chose to be positive as a way of coping. They contended that being optimistic, cheerful, and patient enabled them to feel more hopeful about the future. As a result, these patients, when in pain, were still able to face pain, accept it, and try to cope with it. In particular, one patient stressed her good fortune in still being alive after fighting the cancer for more than five years. She reasoned that her optimism and her family's great support gave her strength to survive pain:

(14) **Mỗi-khi chị lên cơn-đau, chị lại nghĩ rồi cơn-đau sẽ đi qua, sẽ nhanh thôi, nên chị cũng không thấy đau nhiều. Rồi gia-đình mình đang ở đây với mình. Chị lại thấy như có thêm sức-mạnh để vượt-qua.**

*Whenever I have pain, I think the pain will go away, it will go away soon, so I don't feel hurt much. Moreover, my family is here. I feel like I am given more strength to overcome the pain.*

Although the patients did not specifically state how Buddhism was related to their being positive about pain, the practice of thinking about pain positively can be understood as making *right efforts* in the Buddhist framework of values. Practising *right efforts* helps to conquer the evil side and promote the good side of a phenomenon (Chen, 2006; Chen et al., 2008). When the patients practised *right efforts* by being positive about pain, they could conquer the depression caused by pain as well as gain more strength to face and bear the pain. The coping strategy of being positive about pain is therefore associated with Buddhist ideals.

### E. Managing to Forget Pain

About a third of the women (n=9, 34.6%), all of whom claimed to practise Buddhism, managed to refrain from thinking about pain by concentrating on other things such as practising breathing, taking a walk, talking to others, or even doing household chores. For example, a woman described how she was coping with pain as follows:

(15) **Khi đi tập trung vào hơi-thở, đi thấy dễ-chịu hơn. Khi đi nhắm mắt lại, đi thấy mình đang dõi theo hơi-thở của mình. Những lúc đó, đi không nghĩ về cơn-đau nữa.**

*I feel more comfortable when concentrating on my breath. When I close my eyes, I see myself watching my breath. I don't think about the pain then.*

(16) **Ban-đêm, mỗi khi chị đau là chị đi tới đi lui. Đi hoài vậy cũng làm mình quên cơn-đau đi.**

*At night, when I have pain, I keep walking back and forth. Walking helps me to forget the pain.*

These patients actually practised *single-minded concentration*, where their mind focused on one particular subject (e.g., their breath, their walking, their conversation with others, or the household chores) so that they could ignore pain. *Single-minded concentration* was also practised by those praying to Buddha and thinking about Buddha in order to forget the pain. The Buddhists believed that *single-minded concentration* would lead them to peace (Chen, 2006; Chen et al., 2008) and that the right path to relieving pain was to develop a disinterested attitude toward it (Tu, 1980). As a result, it can be said the Buddhist teaching of how to free people from pain was reflected in the Vietnamese patients' discourse, concerning their proposing to cope with pain by managing to forget it.

#### F. Sharing Pain When It Becomes Unbearable

It is considered inappropriate for Vietnamese subjects of this study to follow the typically Western practice of communicating one's pain or misfortunes with others in order to "share the burden". One should rather respect the calm good feelings of others and of the group. However, when the pain became unbearable, over half of the patients (n=15, 57.7%) reported revealing and sharing pain by screaming, crying, talking to, or seeking help from their family, and by consulting healthcare professionals. In these cases, language plays a useful role in the patients' expressions of pain:

(17) **Tui đau mà chịu không nổi. (Tui) đau mà la mà hét um sùm. Thì cũng phải khóc, phải hét, phải la thối. Cũng đỡ được phần nào.**

*I suffered pain to an unbearable extent. It hurt so much that I screamed and yelled noisily. I felt the need to cry, scream, and yell. I felt a little better (after crying, screaming, and yelling.)*

These patients maintained that they preferred bearing the pain on their own, but they had to share it when the pain overwhelmed them. This strategy, therefore, still corresponds to Confucian teaching since it showed that the patients had a deep concern for the others' feelings.

Amongst the six pain coping strategies, "accepting pain" (100%), "bearing pain on one's own" (80.8%), and "sharing pain with others when it becomes unbearable" (57.7%) were employed the most. As the discussion suggests, the first strategy corresponded to philosophies of both Confucianism and Buddhism, whereas the other two were Confucian. Moreover, "trying to change karma" (50%), "being positive about pain" (50%), and "managing to forget pain" (34.6%) were examples of the patients' practice of Buddhist teachings.

In general, the coping strategies all demonstrated the patients' struggle: finding it difficult to accept pain, accepting pain, bearing pain on one's own, and then looking for ways to fight against it. The strategies also implied that accepting pain and bearing pain on one's own did not necessarily mean being passive. Each patient was indeed active and developed multiple pain coping strategies.

Although "trying to change karma", "thinking about pain positively", and "managing to forget pain" were strategies corresponding to the Buddhist teachings, it cannot be denied that the patients employed these strategies to manage pain on their own. This implied the patients' reluctance to share pain with others and their endeavour to minimise the effect of their pain on others. The intertwining of Confucianism and Buddhism therefore could be seen in the patients' practice of these three strategies.

In addition, particular patterns of language used for the patients' communication about the pain coping strategies could be mapped closely on to aspects of religions. Within the religion framework, the language of communicating pain coping can be divided into two main categories: *passive language* and *active language*. *Passive language* refers to words, phrases, and sentences indicating the patients' accepting pain and bearing pain because what is associated with pain is uncontrollable (e.g.; *I suffer pain and I have to accept this; I can't change anything; I have to bear the pain, etc.*), whereas *active language* expresses the patients' attempt to control pain (e.g., *I want to make a change; I pray so that Buddha would support me and help me; I pray so that I would suffer less, etc.*).

#### V. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The findings describe the association between the religious values of Confucianism and Buddhism and the patients' communication about the strategies they used to cope with their pain. Confucianism was expressed in the patients' considering and accepting pain as their fate, in their common tendency to manage pain on their own, and finally in their sharing pain with others when they could not bear it for themselves any longer. Buddhism was revealed in the patients' practice of the right ways to release pain such as accepting pain as a part of their lives, striving to change their karma, being positive about pain, and managing to forget pain.

The findings in the current study correspond to Nguyen (2018) in that Confucianism and Buddhism were a central part of the Vietnamese patients' socio-cultural life when the patients' communication about pain coping is also associated with Confucianism and Buddhism. Moreover, the patients' ways to cope with pain indicated their understanding of pain as fate and as karma, two popular religion-related explanations for the nature of pain, as confirmed by Nguyen (2018). The findings also match Nguyen (2018) in that Taoism which stresses the harmony within one's body and/or between one's body and the universe (Chang, 2000; Chen et al., 2008), did not show to be influential in the way the Vietnamese women initiated pain coping strategies, although Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism are considered as three convergent religions with a common nature and origin, thus being regarded as a philosophical foundation of Vietnamese culture (Le, 2004; Tran, 1996).

Similar to Nguyen (2018), the findings support the available literature about the role of religion/spirituality, particularly that of Confucianism and Buddhism on people's communication about pain. The findings also help to extend the literature in terms of how religious values and communication about pain coping are related in Vietnamese culture. In addition, this study shows how patterns of language are mapped onto aspects of religions, including passive language and active language. The role of language has therefore been confirmed in the communication about pain coping.

The study has emphasized the association between religion and how Vietnamese women with cancer pain communicate the strategies they use to cope. While these findings come from one qualitative study, they raise the importance of a factor hitherto not routinely considered by health professionals. The findings suggest the value of health professionals' equipping themselves with knowledge about the patients' religion, for example, by attending custom-designed workshops (Meredith, Murray, Wilson, Mitchell, & Hutch, 2012) as this may assist them in learning how to listen to pain talk as an expression of religious belief, thus understanding how their patients perceive pain and decide upon certain strategies to cope. Moreover, knowledge about the patients' religion may facilitate the health professionals' development of trust and rapport with patients, which makes the difficult journey of fighting cancer pain more tolerable (Mitchell, Murray, Wilson, Hutch, & Meredith, 2010). For example, health professionals can encourage the patients to seek support from their religious community and to employ more frequently the strategies that the patients find useful. More importantly, if they develop a relationship of trust with the patients, health professionals can encourage them to share pain more easily in order to provide timely medical support. Although sharing pain might be considered inappropriate in the Vietnamese cultural context, the relationship of trust between health professionals and patients would help the patients come to understand that health professionals are willing to help them and that their sharing of pain is not a burden to others.

Given that most healthcare professionals are substantially unaware of the power of language in shaping their thoughts and understanding of their work (Loftus, 2011), the study contributes to Vietnamese healthcare professionals' understanding of how the patients communicate about their pain experience using language. The study has also established a foundation for Vietnamese applied linguists who wish to explore the language of pain, a new domain of applied linguistics extending beyond education to areas such as health, therapy, and counseling.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to thank the Vietnamese women with cancer who gave their time to be interviewed and the Vietnamese doctors and nurses for their support during the collection of the data.

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# Truncating English and Arabic Onset Cluster by a Bilingual Child: An Optimality Theory Perspective

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**Abstract**—This study investigates the process of truncating English and Arabic onset cluster in the early speech of a bilingual child within the framework of Optimality Theory Model. It specifically proposes the child's hierarchical grammar(s) responsible for the child's process of simplifying English and Arabic consonantal sequences into singletons in onset position. The importance of this research stems from the absence of research on truncating Arabic onset cluster within the Optimality Theory perspective. Therefore, it is the first to put this theory into practice as far as reducing Arabic clusters is concerned. The data for this research were collected through parental diaries. Only data collected between the ages of 1;9 and 2;5 were analysed. The results reveal two different hierarchies of the grammar each of which is responsible for truncating the clusters into singletons in one particular language. The results also reveal a conformity with the universally fixed onset constraint hierarchy in the child's English production. However, a deviation from this universally fixed onset constraint hierarchy is detected in the production of the sequence formed by fricative followed by stop or vice versa in Arabic.

**Index Terms**—onset cluster, fixed hierarchy, optimality theory, truncation, sonority

## I. INTRODUCTION

Over the years, a great deal of studies on language acquisition has been accumulated investigating the development of consonant cluster in onset position in different languages. However, very few studies, if any, have attempted to tackle the way bilingual children whose two first languages are Arabic and English simplify consonantal sequences in onset position in two typologically different languages from an Optimality Theory perspective. Consequently, the main goal of this study is to account for the grammar responsible for the cluster reduction strategy resorted to by the child to get rid of the cluster in onset position in English and Arabic.

At the time that the Optimality Theory Model (henceforth OT) has been used as a tool to trace the way onset cluster is truncated into singleton by monolingual and/or bilingual children acquiring several European languages, very few studies have been conducted to investigate this strategy of simplifying Arabic onset cluster within the framework of OT. Therefore, it is, with no doubt, of equal importance to put this theory into practice regarding the simplification of Arabic and English consonant clusters by a bilingual Jordanian child in his early stages of production. Hence, the main aim of the study is to compare and contrast the way the child handles consonantal sequences in onset position in two different languages descending from two different families. The study focuses on the early stages of the child's acquisition process; that is to say, it analyses the data that were collected during the ages 1;9 and 2;5.

It is worth mentioning here that the researcher of this paper has recently published a study in which she traced the developmental path of English and Arabic onset clusters in the speech of her bilingual child. Daana and Khrais analysed the data collected from the first researcher's child and investigated target elements between the ages of 1;9 and 3;6 (Daana and Khrais 2018). This study however differs in that it utilizes OT modal to compare and contrast the way the same child truncated the clusters in both languages only throughout the early stage of acquisition. That is through the stage at which the child's clusters are truncated into singletons.

## II. TYPES OF ONSET CLUSTER IN ARABIC COMPARED TO ONSET CLUSTER IN ENGLISH

To start with, onsetless syllables are not allowed in Arabic. Consonant clusters in onset position are allowed in the form of Arabic under investigation –Ammani Arabic-. Ammani Arabic allows clustering consonants in onset position with no restriction on consonantal sequences. This leads to the existence of the three types of onset clusters suggested by Watson (2002): core in which the consonantal sequence between the elements of the cluster complies with the Sonority Scale Principle (SSP) suggested by Clements (1990) as in /kla:b/ *dogs*. The second type of clusters found in Ammani Arabic is plateau which is formed by two elements of equal sonority as in /kbi:t/ *big*. The third type is reversal in which the sonority distance between the elements of the cluster violates the SSP as in /rma:h/ *spears*. On the other hand, English allows onsetless syllables. It also allows consonant clusters in onset position respecting the Sonority Scale Principle except for sequences starting with /s/ (Carr 1999).

### III. RELATED STUDIES

The acquisition of consonant clusters has recently been the target of a large number of research (Pater and Barlow 2003; Kirk and Demuth 2005; Levelt, Schiller and Levelt, 2000; Gnanadesikan 2003; Barlow 1997; Lleo and Prinz 1996; Ohala 1996; Daana 2009; Daana and Khrais 2018). In their study, Pater and Barlow (2003) detected a pattern in the production of one of their subjects in which the child selected the fricative over the liquid in clusters formed of fricative followed by liquid. Their child's production satisfied the SSP or the universally fixed onset constraint hierarchy suggested by Pater 1997:

**\*G-ONS>> \*L-ONS>> \*N-ONS>> \*F-ONS>> \*S-ONS**

In these constraints, G stands for glide, L stands for liquid, N is nasal, F is fricative and S is stop. This hierarchy is subverted by three conflicting constraints:

**\*FRICATIVES \*DORSAL MAX-LABIAL**

On the other hand, their child selected the nasal and deleted the fricative in sequences formed by fricative followed by nasal by virtue of the higher ranking of **\*FRICATIVE** relative to **\*N-ONS**

Unlike the method used in this study, Daana and Khrais (2018) used the descriptive method tracing the developmental path of onset clusters in the production of the first author's bilingual child acquiring English and Ammani Arabic (a form of Jordanian Arabic). Their results reveal a conformity to the universally fixed onset constraint hierarchy stated above together with few cases in which his production deviated from this hierarchy of onset constraint.

In her study, Daana (2009) investigated the acquisition of consonant cluster in onset position in Ammani Arabic. Her informants' ages ranged between 2 and 7 years. Her findings show that several factors determine the earlier acquisition of some particular sequences than the others. Sonority distance, ease of articulation, frequency in the input and salient perception of the sequences are the factors that determine which sequence is to be acquired before other sequences.

### IV. THIS STUDY

#### A. Study Objective

The aim of this study is to find out the child's grammar(s) responsible for the child's handling of onset clusters in two languages during the early stage of acquisition.

#### B. Data Collection

The source of data tackled in this study is traditional parental diary of the spontaneous production of the researcher's child. The child was the researcher's only son. The child was learning English and Arabic and he had no perceptual or articulatory impairment. He was exposed to Ammani Arabic by his parents and the very few Jordanian friends who used to visit the family on social occasions as the family used to live in the UK at that time. Ammani Arabic, the child's parents' native language, was mainly used by the child's father and sometimes by the child's mother who used to speak to her child using English and Arabic. The child's mother was a PhD student majoring in Language Acquisition at that time. The researcher spent hours with her child talking, playing, arguing, describing pictures, telling stories and reading stories in both languages. Each session lasted for about 45 minutes and was audio recorded. Sessions took place on daily basis in the child's room. Nobody was present at the time of the sessions. All recordings were narrowly transcribed by the researcher and were checked by another potential PhD Jordanian student majoring in Phonology. Data was chronologically classified and saved in computer files. These files included the child's production, the adults' equivalent, the glossary of the Arabic production and some details about the context if necessary.

### V. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

For the purpose of this study only the child's Arabic and English production of repaired target words were analysed. As far as the Arabic language is concerned, the child started repairing target words- with initial onset cluster- at the age of 2;3. The child produced all such target words deleting one element of the cluster and preserving the other. At the age of 2;6, the child started using other different strategies to simplify the clusters in addition to the occasional use of truncation in both languages. However, the child started repairing target-words with initial onset clusters in English at the age of 1;9. At the age of 2;6 the child's strategy simplifying the English clusters varied. The main aim of this research is limited to investigating and describing the child's simplification of the English and Arabic clusters in onset position between the age of 1;9 and 2;5. The child's data were analysed in parts. Each part explains a particular consonantal sequence in both languages. A trace of the grammatical hierarchy responsible for such production is suggested along the parts.

The child's first production of Arabic words was noticed at the age of 2;3. Target words with clusters in onset position were reduced to singletons between the ages of 2;3 and 2;5 by virtue of the fact that **\*COMPLEXonset** was ranked at the top of the hierarchy in the child's grammar at this age- stage.

**\*COMPLEXonsets**

**Complex onsets are not allowed.**

#### A. Fricative/Stop - Approximant Cluster

The first consonantal sequence to be tackled is the one formed by fricative/stop followed by approximant. Between the ages of 2;3 and 2;5, target words with fricative/stop followed by approximant as elements of the cluster in onset position emerged in the child's production all of which underwent a deletion of the approximant. This act reflects conformity with the universally fixed onset constraint hierarchy. Representative production of the child's words are exemplified in Table 1.

TABLE (1)  
ARABIC (FRICATIVE/STOP - APPROXIMANT CLUSTER)

Age	Target words	Child's production	Glossary
2;3	/fri:t/	[fi:t]	cassette
2;4	/hra:m/	[ha:m]	blanket
2;4	/kla:b/	[ba:b]	dogs
	/tra:b/	[ta:b]	soil
	/bwa:b/	[ba:b]	doors
	/bwa:t/	[ba:t]	boots

The fact that the child consistently truncated the Arabic clusters into singletons confirms findings of other research (pater and Barlow 2003; Gnanadesikan 2003; Barlow 1997; Daana 2009; Daana and Khrais 2018; Ohala 1996) most of which attributed the deletion of the sonorant segment to the domination of **Markedness** constraints over **Faithfulness** constraints. Table 1 above shows that at this stage, the child's grammar is dominated by **\*COMPLEXonset**. The fact that the child selected the fricative/stop over the approximant indicates the dominance of **\*G-ONS** and **\*L-ONS** in the child's grammar. These three structural constraints, however, dominate **Faith**.

#### FAITH

##### The output must be faithful to the input

This can be illustrated in Tableau 1 below.

TABLEAU (1)  
\*COMPLEXONSET>>\*G-ONS>>\*L-ONS>>\*F-ONS>>\*S-ONS>>FAITH

	*COMPLEXonset	*G-ONS	*L-ONS	*F-ONS	*S-ONS	FAITH
<b>/bwa:b/</b>					*	*
→/ba:b/						*
/wa:b/		*				*
/bwa:b/	*!	*			*	
<b>/hra:m/</b>						
→/ha:m/				*		*
/ra:m/			*			*
/hra:m/	*!		*	*		
<b>/kla:b/</b>						
→/ka:b/					*	*
/la:b/			*			*
/kla:b/	*!		*		*	

As Tableau 1 above shows, the child's production of this particular Arabic consonantal sequence results from the child's grammar:

##### \*COMPLEXonset>>\*G-ONS>>\*L-ONS>>\*F-ONS>>\*S-ONS>>FAITH

English onset clusters formed by stop or fricative followed by approximant were also reduced to singletons deleting the approximant. Representative data is shown in Table 2 below.

TABLE (2)  
ENGLISH (FRICATIVE OR STOP – APPROXIMANT CLUSTER)

Age	Target words	Child's production
1;9	flower	[faʊə]
1;10	floor	[fɔ:]
2	tree	[ti:]
2	green	[gi:n]
2;1	please	[pi:s]
2;3	front	[fɒnt]
2;3	twinkle	[tɪŋkʊ]
2;4	fruit	[fu:t]
2;4	slow	[səʊ]
2;4	sleep	[si:p]
2;4	clean	[ki:n]
2;4	press	[pes]
2;4	brown	[braʊn]

This is also attributed to **\*COMPLEXonset**, **\*G-ONS** and **\*L-ONS** constraints which are ranked above **FAITH**. This is shown in Tableau 2 below.

TABLEAU (2)  
\*COMPLEXONSET>>\*G-ONS>>\*L-ONS>>\*F-ONS>>\*S-ONS>>FAITH

	*COMPLEXonset	*G-ONS	*L-ONS	*F-ONS	*S-ONS	FAITH
<b>/frɔg/</b>						
→/fɔg/				*		*
/rɔg/			*			*
/frɔg/	*!		*	*		
<b>/sli:p/</b>						
→/si:p/				*		*
/li:p/			*			*
/sli:p/	*!		*	*		
<b>/pres/</b>						
→/pes/					*	*
/res/			*			*
/pres/	*!		*		*	
<b>/kli:n/</b>						
→/ki:n/					*	*
/li:n/			*			*
/kli:n/	*!		*		*	
<b>/twɪŋkl/</b>						
→/tɪŋkʊ/					*	*
/wɪŋkʊ/		*				*
/twɪŋkl/	*!	*			*	

So far, it can be assumed that the production of this type of consonantal cluster is governed by the same hierarchy in both languages.

**\*COMPLEXonset>>\*G-ONS>>\*L-ONS>>\*F-ONS>>\*S-ONS>>FAITH**

*B. Fricative - Stop Cluster*

The next consonantal sequence to be investigated is the one formed by fricative followed by stop in English and Arabic. The child dealt with this form of cluster in two different ways. The child chose to retain the stop and delete the fricative in his English production. Representative English data are shown in Table 3.

TABLE (3)  
ENGLISH (FRICATIVE – STOP CLUSTER)

Age	Target word	Child's production
1;10	spoon	[pu:n]
2	star	[tɑ:]
2;1	school	[ku:]
2;2	spider	[paɪdə]
2;3	speak	[pi:k]
2;4	stop	[tɒp]

The production of this English sequence also shows conformity with the universally fixed onset constraint hierarchy in which the higher ranking of **\*F-ONS** makes the child delete the fricative. This is illustrated in Tableau 3 below.

TABLEAU (3)  
\*COMPLEXONSET>>\*G-ONS>>\*L-ONS>>\*F-ONS>>\*S-ONS>>FAITH

	*COMPLEXonset	*G-ONS	*L-ONS	*F-ONS	*S-ONS	FAITH
<b>/sta:/</b>						
→/tɑ:/					*	*
/sɑ:/				*		*
/sta:/	*!			*	*	
<b>/sku:l/</b>						
→/ku:l/					*	*
/su:l/				*		*
/sku:l/	*!			*	*	
<b>/spu:n/</b>						
→/pu:n/					*	*
/su:n/				*		*
/spu:n/	*!			*	*	

Hence, the same hierarchy is responsible for the production of this second English consonantal sequence:

**\*COMPLEXonset>>\*G-ONS>>\*L-ONS>>\*F-ONS>>\*S-ONS>>FAITH**

On the other hand, the universally fixed onset constraint hierarchy was disturbed in the child's production of such a consonantal sequence in Arabic. The child chose to delete the stop and retain the fricative. A sequence formed by stop followed by fricative in Arabic which had no resembling sequence in English was also dealt with by deleting the stop and retaining the fricative (Table 4).

TABLE (4)  
ARABIC (STOP- FRICATIVE AND FRICATIVE – STOP CLUSTER)

Age	Target words	Child's production	Glossary
2;3	/tfaddal/	[faddaj]	come in
	/kfu:f/	[fu:f]	gloves
2;4	/stanna/	[sanna]	wait (M)
	/ftare:tha/	[faje:ta]	I bought it (F)

The child treated these two Arabic sequences in the same way. He selected the fricative and deleted the stop. This behaviour however contradicts other children's behaviour acquiring these sequences in other languages as found in previous research (Pater and Barlow 2003; Gnanadesikan 2013; Ohala 1996). It also contradicts the child's own production of such sequences in English as we could see. Other children in the literature had the tendency of deleting the fricative and retaining the stop by virtue of the universally fixed onset constraint hierarchy. \*F-ONSET is ranked above \*S-ONSET. The child's English production manifested a deletion of the fricative and retaining the stop. However, the child in his Arabic production tended to delete the stop and retain the fricative. This can be attributed to the fact that IDENT-strid is ranked above \*F-ONSET in the child's Arabic grammar.

#### IDENT-strid:

**The feature strident in the input must have a correspondence in the output**

TABLEAU (4)  
\*COMPLEXONSET>>\*G-ONS>>\*L-ONS>>IDENT-STRID>>\*F-ONS>>\*S-ONS>>FAITH

	*COMPLEXonset	*G-ONS	*L-ONS	IDENT-strid	*F-ONS	*S-ONS	FAITH
/stanna/	*!				*	*	
→/sanna/					*		*
/tanna/				*		*	*
<b>/ftare:t/</b>							
/ftaje:t/	*!				*	*	
→/faje:t/					*		*
/taje:t/				*		*	*
<b>/kfu:f/</b>							
/kfu:f/	*!				*	*	
→/fu:f/					*		*
/ku:f/				*		*	*

Therefore the child's grammar responsible for the production of the Arabic sequences represented in Table 4 is:

**\*COMPLEXonset>>\*G-ONS>>\*L-ONS>>IDENT-strid>>\*F-ONS>>\*S-ONS>> FAITH**

#### C. Fricative – Nasal Cluster

Clusters formed by fricative followed by nasal in English and in Arabic were also dealt differently. The child chose to truncate this English sequence into a singleton in favour of the nasals (Table 5).

TABLE (5)  
ENGLISH (FRICATIVE – NASAL CLUSTER)

Age	Target word	Child's Production
2	snow	[nəʊ]
2;3	small	[mɑ:j]

The fact that the child chose to delete the fricative and retain the nasal was counter to the sonority pattern. This indicates that \*FRICATIVE is ranked above \*N-ONS in the child's English grammar. We could see in Tableau 2 that the child preserved the fricative when followed by a liquid. This requires ranking \*FRICATIVE between \*L-ONS and \*N-ONS. This pattern was also found in Pater and Barlow's findings (2003). Tableau 5 below shows the hierarchy responsible for the production of this type of sequence.

TABLEAU (5)  
\*COMPLEXONSET>>\*G-ONS>>\*L-ONS>>\*FRICATIVE>>\*N-ONS>>\*F-ONS>>\*S-ONS>>FAITH

/snəʊ/	*COMPLEX onset	*G-ONS	*L-ONS	*FRICATIVE	*N-ONS	*F-ONS	*S-ONS	FAITH
/səʊ/				*		*		*
→/nəʊ/					*			*
/snəʊ/	*!			*	*	*		
<hr/>								
/smə:l/								
/sə:j/				*		*		*
→/mə:j/					*			*
/smə:j/	*!			*	*	*		

Hence so far, the child’s grammar responsible for the production of the three types of English cluster discussed so far can be suggested as:

\*COMPLEXonst>>\*G-ONS>>\*L-ONS>>\*FRICATIVE>>\*N-ONS>>\*F-ONS>>\*S-ONS

On the other hand, the same type of consonantal sequence in Arabic was repaired by epenthesis of a vowel (Table 6).

TABLE (6)  
ARABIC (FRICATIVE – NASAL CLUSTER)

Age	Target word	Child's Production	Glossary
2;3	/ʕmalha/	[ʕamaja]	you do it
2;4	/ʕma:l/	[zama:j]	camels

Choosing not to delete the bilabial nasal but rather to insert an epenthetic vowel shows the importance of **MAX-labial** which is ranked above \*N-ONS in the child’s Arabic grammar.

**MAX-labial**

**The feature labial in the input must have a correspondence in the output**

Choosing to retain the fricative shows that \*FRICATIVE has no effect in the child’s Arabic grammar. However, it makes it possible to assume that the ranking between **MAX-labial** and **IDENT-strid** is not vital. That is, they may be equally ranked. At this stage of production all the child’s production of clusters witnessed a truncation except for this Arabic sequence. This particular production contradicts the results of other studies in which children resorted to deleting either the nasal or the fricative. As well as it contradicts the same child’s production of the same sequence in English as is illustrated in Table 5 above. Therefore, the child’s Arabic grammar responsible for the production of fricative followed by nasal in this manner is illustrated in Tableau 6.

TABLEAU (6)  
\*COMPLEXONSET>>\*G-ONS>>\*L-ONS>>MAX-LABIAL,IDENT-STRID>>\*N-ONS>>\*F-ONS>>\*S-ONS>>FAITH

/ʕmalha/	*COMPLEXonset	*G-ONS	*L-ONS	MAX-labial	IDENT-strid	*N-ONS	*F-ONS	*S-ONS	Faith
→/ʕamaja/							*		*
/ʕmaja/	*!					*	*		
/maja/					*	*			*
/ʕaja/				*			*		*
<hr/>									
/ʕma:l/									
→/ʕama:j/							*		*
/ʕma:j/	*!					*	*		
/ʕa:j/				*			*		*
/ma:j/					*	*			*

This equal ranking of **MAX-labial** and **IDENT-strid** makes the child preserve both the fricative and the labial. The tableau above indicates that the child's grammar which accounts for the repairing of the three Arabic sequences discussed so far is:

\*COMPLEXonset>>\*G-ONS>>\*L-ONS>>MAX-labial, IDENT-strid>>\*N-ONS>>\*F-ONS>> \*S-ONS>> FAITH

*D. Nasal – Glide Cluster*

The last English sequence to be investigated is the one formed by nasal followed by glide. This sequence has no resembling sequence in Arabic. The child chose to delete the glide and retain the nasal conforming to the universally fixed onset constraint hierarchy. Illustrative data is introduced in Table 7.

TABLE (7)  
ENGLISH (NASAL – GLIDE CLUSTER)

Age	Target word	Child's Production
2;4	news	[nu:z]
2;4	music	[nu:zik] [mu:zik]

The grammar responsible for the deletion of the glide and preserving the nasal is shown in Tableau 7 below.

TABLEAU (7)  
\*COMPLEXONSET>>\*G-ONS>>\*L-ONS>>\*FRICATIVE>>\*N-ONS>>\*F-ONS>>FAITH

/nju:z/	*COMPLEX onset	*G-ONS	*L-ONS	*FRICATIVE	*N-ONS	*F-ONS	*S-ONS	FAITH
→/nu:z/					*			*
/ju:z/		*						*
/nju:z/	*!	*			*			
/mju:zik/								
→/mu:zik/					*			*
/mju:zik/	*!	*			*			
→/nu:zik/					*			*
/ju:zik/		*!						*

Hence, the child’s grammar responsible for the overall English production of the different English consonantal sequences in onset position at this stage is:

**\*COMPLEXonst>>\*G-ONS>>\*L-ONS>>\*FRICATIVE>>\*N-ONS>>\*F-ONS>>\*S-ONS>>FAITH**

*E. Nasal – Stop Cluster*

The last two Arabic sequences have no resembling sequences in English. They are the ones formed by (i) nasal followed by stop and (ii) liquid followed by fricative. These two sequences are of the reversal type. The child chose to conform to the universally fixed onset constraint hierarchy deleting the nasal and the liquid preserving the sounds with decreased sonority. This is shown in Table 8 below.

TABLE 8  
ARABIC (NASAL - STOP AND LIQUID – FRICATIVE CLUSTER)

Age	Target word	Child's Production	Glossary
2;03	/nkasrat/	[kassat]	it broke (F)
2;04	/mʔaʃʃ/	[ʔaʃʃ]	a pair of scissors
2;04	/rfu:f/	[fu:f]	come in
	/ʕibit/	[ʕibit]	I played

Therefore, no further constraint is required to account for such a production as long as the Arabic hierarchy which has been produced so far explains the child’s selection to delete the segment with the higher sonority. Tableau 8 below illustrates the production of these sequences.

TABLEAU (8)  
\*COMPLEXONSET>>\*G-ONS>>\*L-ONS>>MAX-LABIAL,IDENT-STRID>>\*N-ONS>>\*F-ONS>>\*S-ONS>>FAITH

/nkasrat/	*COMPLEX-onset	*G-ONS	*L-ONS	MAX-labial	IDENT-strid	*N-ONS	*F-ONS	*S-ONS	FAITH
/nkasjat/	*!					*		*	
/nasjat/						*			*
→/kassat/								*	*
/rfu:f/									
/ru:f//			*						*
/rfu:f/	*!		*				*		
→/fu:f/							*		*

Hence, the child’s grammar responsible for the production of Arabic cluster in the manner shown in the Tableaux can be suggested as:

**\*COMPLEXonset>>\*G-ONS>>\*L-ONS>>MAX-labial, IDENT-strid>> \*N-ONS>> \*F-ONS>> \*S-ONS>> FAITH**

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study investigated the truncation process of onset cluster in the early speech of a bilingual child whose two first languages are Arabic and English. The study provided us with two different grammatical hierarchies each one of which is responsible for the deletion of a particular segment and the pertaining of the other in each language. The child’s simplification of the English cluster was consistent with findings of other results in that his production reflected conformity with the universally fixed onset constraint hierarchy. In his English production, the child repeatedly deleted

the segment with the higher sonority. The grammatical hierarchy that was suggested to be responsible for the truncation of English onset cluster was:

**\*COMPLEXonst>>\*G-ONS>>\*L-ONS>>\*FRICATIVE>>\*N-ONS>>\*F-ONS>>\*S-ONS>>FAITH**

In the child's Arabic production, however, the universally fixed onset constraint hierarchy was partially subverted especially in the production of the sequences formed by fricative followed by stop and stop followed by fricative. This sequence witnessed a truncation in favour of the fricative by the influence of **IDENT-strid** which is ranked higher relative to **\*F-ONS**. The Arabic sequence formed by fricative followed by nasal was subject to epenthesis influenced by **MAX-labial**. The grammatical hierarchy responsible for the production of the Arabic consonantal sequences in the way discussed throughout the research was suggested as follows:

**\*COMPLEXonset>>\*G-ONS>>\*L-ONS>>MAX-labial, IDENT-strid>> \*N-ONS>> \*F-ONS>> \*S-ONS>> FAITH**

## VII. RECOMMENDATION

Further research on the truncation of Arabic onset clusters by monolingual children is required so that a pattern can be detected for the reduction of Arabic onset consonantal sequences into singletons.

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# Reality and Mythology, Convention and Novelty in T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*

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**Abstract**—Eliot's *Waste Land*, its implications, sources, his treatment of myth, reality, convention and novelty, has received a huge bulk of criticism among Eliot's scholars whose views of the poem are divided into two categories: positive and negative. This article examines these terms against Eliot's fundamental approaches to an individual work of literature in his "Tradition and Talent" essay and the application of the "objective correlative" when applying criticism to the poem. The article argues that Eliot employed myth, allegory and symbols in a very novel way to connect the past with the present; he could criticize without direction and educate and entertain his readers with host of interpretations applicable to the now and then. Another important key to understand Eliot's *Waste Land* is that his objective correlative is what links the poem which may look fragmentary, but in fact complete in thought with the help of this technique. By so doing Eliot has gained a statutes among the modernists in the realm of poetry – new modes of writing poetry.

**Index Terms**—Eliot, Myth, reality, convention, novelty

## I. INTRODUCTION

Eliot's writings whether in poetry, drama, philosophy or criticism are read and quoted on a large scale. These writings have proved, among the intellectuals and to a lesser degree among the average readers, to help grasp "our social world, and awareness of its conditions." Since Eliot was a critic, a poet, a dramatist and above all a modern thinker, his creative art has gained a status among literary circles particularly his treatment of mythology in his great works such as *The Waste Land*. He projects myth on reality to avoid directness. Calder (1987) states in the introduction to his book *New Readings*: "Eliot's poetry is bifocal; it can be read in relation to 20<sup>th</sup> century history" (p. 6). This statement of fact applies to all writers. Who can write without some kind of influence, reference or reflection of his or her life, experience, time, place and what have you. These are the building blocks in the creative writing of a man of letters in any given time since Homer to Eliot to our 21<sup>st</sup> century. However, Eliot's greatness lies in his treatment of myth and reality, convention and novelty which makes a man of letters distinguished and an icon for the his age.

By way of introduction to Eliot's time, the twentieth century saw great changes. The first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Europe as well as America witnessed eruption of wars and revolutions, whose consequences were tragic not only to the ordinary man but also to the intellectuals like T.S. Eliot (1888-1965) and his mentor Ezra Pound who both came from USA to settle in Britain. It was such a short time after they had left their native land, they voiced different perspectives of literature, enriching the literary scene with novel modes of literature. They were considered revolutionary compared to conventional literary figures. Between 1910 and 1922 Eliot was having personal problems; his marriage was unhappy one. Pinion (1986) referred to a biographical note when Eliot reduced the five lines to three "on the closed car and the game of chess in *The Waste Land* referring to Vivienne, Eliot's wife" (p.102).

Under the firelight, under the brush, her hair  
Spread out in fiery points  
Glowed into words, then would be savagely still.

What these lines uncover a scene from his life with Vivienne is important to the allusions in this poem whether, realistic, mythological, allegorical or symbolic. Eliot's treatments of these elements are keys in the poem to the reader or the critic. When Eliot wrote the Poem, he made it symbolic and allegorical by the employment of mythology to represent the political, philosophical, social and religious aspects in his time, a nut shell poem representing the age.

In addition to all that, one cannot read the poem without drawing on the occasion on how Eliot met his friend and mentor Ezra Pound, Calder (1987) specifies the time when Eliot was in London in 1921 he met Pound, the editor of *The Waste Land* and showed him his unfinished poem; Eliot wrote the final sections of the poem when he was in Switzerland." It was said that Pound encouraged Eliot "to cut away lengthy narrative and satiric consequences in different voices" (p.51). Pound's changes on the original poem were discovered in New York after being lost for many decades.

With Pound's massive cuts to the poem, Eliot became confused by Pound's heavy editing of the poem; he did not know whether he had written a single poem or a host of many. Pound had persuaded Eliot to publish it. Then it appeared in complete sequence in a single issue of the *Dial*, a USA magazine (November 1922). However, Eliot first published it in book form, published by Boni and Liveright in New York USA (December 1922). "In September 1923, it appeared in Woolf's Hogarth Press in London. It is said that Eliot provided the notes to avert charges of plagiarism

and to expand the poem into a book"(p52). These biographical notes above mentioned are facts or keys serving as synopsis to understand the background of the poem.

## II. THE STRUCTURE OF THE POEM

*The Waste Land* is along poem of four hundred thirty four lines; it consist of five parts: Burial of the Dead, A Game of Chess, The Fire sermon (the longest part), Death by Water (the shortest part) and What the Thunder Said. The first line of the poem alludes to Chaucer's Canterbury Tales Prologue; Eliot starts the poem with real depiction of seasons, London Bridge. Then he draws on a mythological character Tiresias the blind and then he goes back to reality, London Bridge. These allusions can be seen in the following extracts from the poem.

April is the cruelest month, breeding  
Lialacs out of the dead land, mixing  
Memory and desire, stirring  
Dull roots with spring rain.  
Winter kept us warm, covering  
Summer surprised us, coming over the Stambergersee  
With a shower of rain; we stopped in the colonnade,  
And went in the sunlight, into the Hofgarten  
And drank coffee, and talked for an hour. (The Burial of the Dead)  
Now Eliot shifts to the description of London and its bridge and inhabitants.

Unreal city,

Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,  
A crowd flowed over London Bridge so many,  
I had not thought death had done so many. (The Burial of the Dead)

Then after that Eliot depicts a mythological character Tiresias, seen by many critics as the protagonist of the poem, who serves as a symbol to connect past with the present.

At the violet hour, when the eyes and back  
Turn upward from the desk, when the human engine waits  
Like a taxi throbbing waiting,

**I Tiresias**, though blind, throbbing between two lives,  
Old man with wrinkled female breasts, can see  
At the violet hour, the evening hour that strives  
Homeward, and brings the sailor home from the sea (The Fire Sermon)

In addition to all, Eliot in the couplet below connects all places mentioned above in the poem and it serves as a logical conclusion to his vision of seeing the fall of London Bridge as a symbolic fall of western civilization.

Shall I at least set my lands in order?

London Bridge is falling down falling down falling down (What the Thunder Said)

## III. CRITICISM OF THE POEM

Commenting on these lines and others of the poem, Wilson (1922) in his article entitled "The Poetry of Drouth", first published first in 'Dial' and then appeared in MICHAEL NORTH's *T.S. Eliot THE WASTE LAND*, argues that Eliot "uses *The Waste Land* as a concrete image of a spiritual drouth." His argument is based on the following objections, which Wilson in his article touches briefly on Eliot as " is one of our only authentic poets and that *The Waste Land*

For this new poem--which presents itself as so far his most considerable claim to eminence--not only recapitulates all his earlier and already familiar motifs, but it sounds for the first time in all their intensity, untempered by irony or disguise, the hunger for beauty and the anguish at living which lie at the bottom of all his work. (p. 140).

For the first reading of the citation, it may sound contradictory but in reality, it reveals harsh criticism.

Another objection Wilson finds in the poem is that Eliot's symbolism was derived from Miss Jessie L. Weston's book *From Ritual to Romance*. As I mentioned above, who can write without relying on some sources, references or allusions? Absolutely no one can do that. Wilson's accusations have not stopped there, he contends that Eliot's mind "finds itself looking out upon the present with the prouder eyes of the past and which loves to make its oracles as deep as the experience of the race itself by piling up stratum upon stratum of reference, as the Italian painters used to paint over one another" ((P. 140). This criticism is positive rather than negative. It is impossible for a poet Like Eliot not drawing on any reference in the past and transforming it to his poem; this allusion connects those who had lived in the past and those who still live in the present; by alluding to the past, Eliot is assuming the role of continuity, which many thinkers, poets, dramatists and philosophers in the western civilization still presume for ages since the Greeks, Romans till the present time.

## IV. "TRADITION AND THE INDIVIDUAL TALENT"

However, I think the best way to read Eliot's *Waste Land* requires the reader to, first, read Eliot's essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1919) in which he voices his basic principles of criticism. Then, his tenets must be taken into consideration while evaluating or criticizing his poetry, particularly *The Waste Land*. Below an extract taken from the essay which shows a procedure to follow when evaluating a particular or individual piece of art, a book and so on, bearing in mind the mature production or productions of a poet or artist than his immature one or ones. This extract of the essay which appears in David Lodge's *20th Century Literary Criticism: A Reader*

One of the facts that might come to light in this process is our tendency to insist, when we praise a poet, upon those aspects of his work in which he least resembles anyone else. In these aspects or parts of his work we pretend to find what is individual, what is the peculiar essence of man. We dwell with satisfaction upon the poet's difference from his predecessors, especially his immediate predecessors ..., but the most individual parts of his work may be those in which the dead poets, his ancestors, assert their immortality most vigorously. And I do not mean the impressionable period of adolescence, but the period of full maturity. (Lodge, 1972, p 71).

Clearly this citation lays down principles for criticism when we read a particular work of literature of a poet and his and her talent for mastering this work. Another aspect from Eliot's essay which tackles the implications of tradition in literature is the timeless, the continuity but with novelty which makes the poet or the artist original rather than a copy of tradition of literary conventions. On this issue Eliot argues that: "Tradition should positively be discouraged ...; and novelty is better than Repletion. Tradition is a matter of much wider significance. It cannot be inherited, and if you want it you must obtain it by great labor .Eliot adds that tradition "involves, in the first place, the historical sense, which we may call nearly indispensable to anyone. and "it" involves apperception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence and it compels a man to write not merely his own generation in his bones, but with a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer within it the whole of literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order." This historical sense, a combination of "the temporal and of the timeless and of the temporal, is what makes a writer traditional ... at the same time what makes a writer most acutely conscious of his place in time, of his own contemporaneity" (p.72).

Such continuity with the past by invoking literary figures from distant past has made Wilson disregard Eliot's poem when he alludes to Eliot's sources: "the Vedic Hymns, Buddha, the Psalms, Shakespeare, Virgil, Dante, Miss Weston's book," and Eliot's own earlier poems"(142). One may wonder about the objectivity of Wilson's criticism when being harsh in evaluating Eliot's poem as work of literature not as a document of history; Wilson has denied a poet as Eliot his imagination to treat mythology as he pleases not as Wilson would.

It seems that not only critic Wilson has harshly criticized the poem but also Hay (1982) declares "The poem is Eliot's first long philosophical poem and it can be read simply as it was written, as a poem of radical poem and negation, urging every human desire to be stilled except the desire for self surrender, for restraint, and for peace" (p.48). This criticism is too general, and we cannot blame Eliot for writing in such away; for the reader's best knowledge Eliot was writing a new genre of poetry. Thus the above mentioned attacks of his poem are based on lacking the comprehension of this new genre whose objective correlative is basic to understanding Eliot's poetry.

#### V. THE OBJECTIVE CORRELATIVE

Sharma (2018) states: "Objective Correlative is a term popularized by T.S. Eliot in his essay on 'Hamlet and His Problems' to refer to an image, action, or situation – usually a pattern of images, actions, or situations – that somehow evokes a particular emotion from the reader without stating what that emotion should be (web).

On the application of the objective correlative to *The Waste Land* Matthiessen (2003) writes:

It should now also be clear that his understanding of the value of the objective correlative was what caused Eliot to base the dramatic lyric intensity of *The Waste Land* in the externalized structure of parallel myths. It also led him to give the poem even further focus sifting it through the eyes of a central observer, Tiresias—a device which Eliot has learned in part from Henry James's use of Strether in *The Ambassador*. As Eliot states in a note. "What Tiresias sees, in fact, is the substance of the poem. And Tiresias is the exact symbol for such haunting inclusion consciousness: only Tiresias, who had experienced life both as a man and a woman, who, though blind, possessed the torturing faculty of being able to foresee the future, could contain in his vision the ranges of life in a great metropolis (p.86).

#### VI. INTERSEXUALITY, MYTHOLOGY AND SYMBOLISM

Audhuy (1985) argues that Eliot's *Waste Land* has a lot on common with Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*. Symbols of analogy between the two works are Owl-eyes in *Gatsby* and Tiresias in *The Waste land* who is blind but sees into the future. She says When the Owl-eyes man appears, the emphasis is on seeing, through distortion and confusion. In *The waste Land* Tiresias is blind but a soothsayer of antiquity who had figured in Oedipus Rex, a very important symbol for Freud in psychological analysis. Tiresias is only a spectator, not character, but the most important symbol in the poem (p.117). I think both Eliot and Fitzgerald have invented new roles for their characters to play. The former is fictional but functional, the latter mythological but suggestive. That is why Audhuy's reading of the poem is profound and has also given credit to the poem by applying modern criticism rather than conventional approaches to literature. Eliot's imagery in the poem is strikingly new by the application of the objective correlative technique, which is key component in

understanding Eliot's poetry. In fact, there are other key features in Eliot's poetry such as myth, symbols, allegory and others; all these have been summoned in *Eliot's Waste Land*.

The myth of Greek tragedy represented by Tiresias is an allusion and symbol for the foreshowing of what is going to happen as a bad omen. This treatment is an addition to Eliot's vision of mythological characters. Again Fitzgerald has used the Owl-eyed man as a symbol of watching but doing nothing, which in reality means that a host of things that happen in the society where the authorities take no actions against. No wonder that both writers have the same vision as allegory of political and social implications. This tackling of allegorical aspects may "quicken the destruction of the modern world where power rules over everything and the weak are to suffer their fate at the mercy of the strong and powerful" (Guerin, p.66). I think Guerin is right in his conclusion that "the intricate links of the many shards of experience drawn from both the ancient and the modern worlds are linked by the pervasive Tiresias" (p.67).

On this paradoxical treatment of life, Brooks (1971) points out that *The Waste Land* is "built on a major contrast between two kinds of life and two kinds of death. Life devoid of meaning is death; sacrifice, even the sacrificial death, may be life-giving, an awakening to life. The poem occupies itself to a great extent with this paradox." (p.8) in this vein, Drew (1949) argues that

the Grail legend had transposed the older symbols of initiation ceremonies into their Christian forms ... into the ordeals of the knights who set out to achieve the cure for the king and salvation for the land through self-purification (p.62).

Drew has more or less provided some insights or interpretation of Grail legend which may very well apply to Eliot's *Waste Land*. One may wonder who will bring such things in the world. There is some foreshadowing for the second coming of Christ according to Christian doctrine. Then Eliot is right to turn his poem into a host of readings and it is left to the educated and the average reader to interpret the poem according to his or her knowledge of the world and personal experience.

#### VII. IMAGERY

Finally, Pinion (1986) describes the imagery and scenes in *The Waste Land* as lacking "contextual narrative. Scenes from life are presented in symbolical terms to communicate deeper meaning to form a whole by a response in feeling and attitude which might metaphorically be described as a 'music of ideas'" (p.120). Pinion after having analyzed the poem, he suggested that imagery in the poem be taken into consideration. On this particular aspect of the poem he writes:

the imagery in *The Waste Land* is biblical in origin. It expresses Eliot's apprehension that with the decay of the Christian faith no religion would succeed it, and humanity would become spiritually dead). These views only reflect the early poetry of Eliot before he converted and received in the Church of England and then became a British citizen on 2 November 1927" (pp.35-36).

This biographical note adds to the understanding of Eliot's involvement in religious upbringing and his faith. Calder considers Tiresias a representative of both sexes; a voice of Buddha who preaches against lust and Eliot echoes St Augustine's rejection of sensual temptation" (p.57). Another point to consider is that according to Calder: "The Fisher King still sits fishing and *The Waste Land* ends in chaos and madness. It echoes the wars and the Russian revolution in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Calder suggests that Eliot's is struggling like the Victorians poets, he wants to find a way out from this chaos and anarchy in the world" (p.64). What Calder has just suggested is the reality which Eliot depicts in *The Waste Land*: myth of the Fisher King and its projections on the present situations throughout Europe and America. People then were suffering from social instability, integration and above all spiritual emptiness. These are the musings which Eliot treated in *The Waste Land*. It is the paradox of his age that he transformed in his poem.

#### VIII. CONCLUSION

From the above one can conclude that early Eliot's master piece *The Waste Land* should be viewed as such within the context of Eliot's knowledge, experience of the world. However, Eliot's later life and poetry should be taken into consideration when evaluating such great poet, critic and thinker; his "Tradition and Talent" essay, should receive equal attention when evaluating his poetry. His poetry is novel. That is why he discouraged tradition of static convention. His treatment of classic literature was a means to project on the present. To do so he employed myth, allegory and symbols in a very novel way to connect the past with the present; he could criticize without direction and educate and entertain his readers with host of interpretations applicable to the now and then. Another important key to understand Eliot's *Waste Land* is that his objective correlative is what links the poem which may look fragmentary, but in fact it is complete in thought with the help of this technique.

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# An Automatic Quantification of the Randomness of Answering Correctly in Taking Traditional Multiple-choice Tests

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**Abstract**—In taking traditional multiple-choice tests, random guessing is unavoidable yet nonnegligible. To uncover the “unfairness” caused by random guessing, this paper designed a Microsoft Excel template with the use of relevant functions to automatically quantify the probability of answering correctly at random, eventually figuring out the least scores a testee should get to pass a traditional multiple-choice test with different probabilities of answering correctly at random and the “luckiness” for passing it. This paper concludes that, although random guessing is nonnegligible, it is unnecessary to remove traditional multiple-choice items from all testing activities, because it can be controlled through changing the passing score and the number of options or reducing its percentage in a test.

**Index Terms**—quantification, random guessing, multiple-choice questions

## I. INTRODUCTION

Multiple choice (MC) is a form of an objective assessment in which respondents are asked to select only correct answers out of the choices from a list. A traditional multiple-choice test (MCT) consists of a collection of questions or incomplete statements, often referred to as *stems*, each having a number of associated *options*. A stem together with its options is often referred to as an *item*. One of the options within each item is the right answer while the others are all wrong answers, often referred to as *distractors* (Bush, 2015). Since the early 1900s, traditional MC item formats have achieved a position of dominance in learning assessment (Swartz, 2006) and multiple-choice tests (MCTs) have been widely used to replace or supplement constructed responses (problems, essays or oral questions), notably due to the pressures of growing students' numbers, budget constraints and the subjectivity of constructed forms of assessment (Becker & Johnston, 1999). Moreover, the wide use of information technology and convenient accessibility of computer networks have greatly helped the development of online MCTs, which allow for more flexibility in delivery as students take their tests at a time and place convenient to them (Krieg & Uyar, 2001; Nicol, 2007). Because of these advantages, traditional MCTs have played, and will continue to play, an indispensable role in educational assessment.

Unfortunately, traditional MCTs came under fire years ago. CQUniversity Australia decided to ban multiple-choice questions (MCQs). According to the Academic Board resolution (24 March 2014), no multiple-choice questions can be used in any exams after Term 2, 2014. Actually, the criticisms of traditional MCTs have never stopped, but this decision indicated that the disadvantages associated with MCTs seemed to be intolerable.

As we know, the most serious disadvantage of traditional MCTs is the limited types of knowledge that can be assessed. MCTs may only measure and foster students' ability to memorise or recall factual information rather than test higher levels of cognitive processes (Becker & Johnston, 1999). MCTs also fail to test students' ability to develop an argument – a skill actively encouraged in higher education (Paxton, 2005). However, one nonnegligible, yet easy to be neglected or forgotten, concern raised by critics of traditional MCTs is that test-takers can guess their way towards a substantial percentage of their grade (Dawson, 2014). Early in 1922, Hahn pointed out that one of the dangers in tests requiring alternative responses was the guessing factor. Students regard MC examinations favourably because: (1) they are perceived as objective, (2) marks can be improved through making correct guesses, and (3) it is possible for students to gain marks on MC tests even if they do not reach the end of the paper in the allotted time (Simkin & Kuechler, 2005).

Although it is often assumed that the effects of guessing are negligible and even some scholars have described the threat of guessing as “overrated” (Haladyna, 2004, p.113), the actual fact is that there is always a chance that examinees will answer items correctly by guessing when an exam includes MC items (Foley, 2016). Additionally, it should be noted that (1) guessing in taking traditional MCTs is random in most cases, having almost nothing to do with the knowledge being tested; (2) guessing in taking traditional MCTs is somewhat encouraged because there is no penalty for answering incorrectly; and (3) random guessing (RG) has become an effective strategy for some “lucky” examinees to “unfairly” pass some decisive examinations.

It is unnecessary to doubt the existence of RG in taking traditional MCTs. What is important is to figure out in what way and to what extent RG plays its role in taking traditional MCTs. In some sense, RG discussed here simply refers to the randomness of answering correctly (RAC), which is to be studied intensively in this paper through an automatic quantification designed with the help of Microsoft Excel.

## II. AUTOMATIC QUANTIFICATION

### A. Definition of Traditional MCTs

A MCT may have different numbers of options: 2, 3, 4, or 5. A MCT is regarded as a true-false (T/F) test when the number of options is 2. In testing practice, 3-option, 4-option and 5-option are often applied for a MCT, but the most widely-used is 4-option, so a traditional MCT usually refers to a 4-option multiple-choice test with only one correct answer in each item. In taking traditional MCTs, testees get points for answering correctly, but no penalty for answering wrongly.

### B. Problems to Be Solved

The automatic quantification in this paper is designed to solve two problems: (1) how to quantify RAC probability (hereafter denoted as “G”) in taking a traditional MCT; (2) how to quantify the “luckiness” for passing the test (hereafter denoted as “L”).

### C. Pre-research

It is not difficult to understand that, in taking traditional MCTs, the theoretical probability of RAC is 0.25 because each item has four options, with only one being the correct answer. The probability of RAC has been studied and interpreted by some mathematical statistics. For example,

$$B(m|n, 1/k) = \binom{n}{m} \left(\frac{1}{k}\right)^m \left(\frac{k-1}{k}\right)^{n-m}. \quad (1)$$

if  $k$  is the number of options in (1), the probability of guessing correctly exactly  $m$  of the  $n$  items is given by the binomial (Budescu & Bar-Hillel, 1993).

Foley (2016) introduced a FERG (full-exam random guessing) strategy to pass traditional MCTs through illustrating the probability of achieving different scores using a FERG strategy, as shown in Fig. 1. In a 100-item exam consisting of 4-option MC items, an examinee likely would obtain “25” (a 0.25 chance of guessing each question correctly multiplied by 100 items) by using FERG on this exam. However, 25 is only the average score one would obtain across many repeated FERG attempts. Approximately half of the time examinees would score higher than 25, and about 15% of the time examinees would score 30 or higher. Theoretically, there is a miniscule, but non-zero, chance that the examinee could score 100% correct.

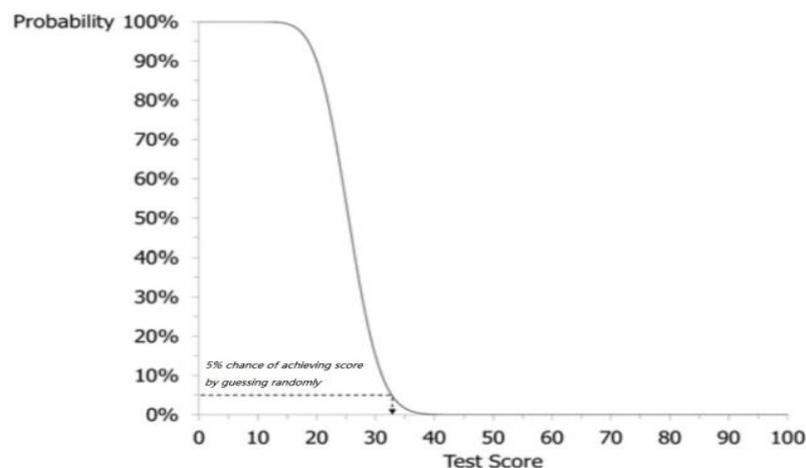


Figure 1. The probability of achieving different scores using a FERG strategy on a 100-item, 4-option MC exam.

Out of curiosity, we designed a game and often played it in the classroom to manually collect the data for the purpose of illustrating G in a traditional MCT. The game used to be played in the following way.

First, students were asked to write down at random any 20 answers for a 4-option and 20-item traditional MCT which had no questions, only to guarantee pure randomness. Students were not allowed to select only A, B, C or D as their answers and the 20 answers were suggested to be listed five by five for their convenience in marking. Normally, this was done within ONE minute. For example, Student A wrote as “ABCDD CBACD BABCD AABDC”.

Then, I picked out at random any one of the students, say Student A, to copy on the blackboard his or her 20 answers which were going to serve as the keys of the virtual no-question test and, according to these keys, other students were required to mark their own answers and write down the number of correct answers. For example, Student B wrote as “BBCAD CAACD DBBCA ACDDC”, earning up to 12 points.

After that, all students were encouraged to voluntarily announce their numbers of correct answers, so the whole class knew on the spot who was the “luckiest” person to achieve the highest score and who was the “least lucky” person to get the lowest one. To be “fair”, another student, say Student C, was picked out at random to copy his or her 20 answers as the keys and, according to the new keys, other students were asked to mark again their own answers and write down the new number of correct answers. This time, the “luckiest” and the least “lucky” persons would most probably change. For example, Student B earned only 5 points according to Student C’s answers “ABDDC CABBA DCCBC ABCCD”.

Last, we collected all the answer sheets, input the data, and conducted some statistics by means of Microsoft Excel to figure out the average value of G in the played games. Here is a sample of data statistics from five games played by 58 students.

TABLE I.  
THE AVERAGE VALUE OF G FOR A 4-OPTION AND 20-ITEM TRADITIONAL MCT IN FIVE GAMES PLAYED BY 58 STUDENTS

Order	1	2	3	4	5	Average	Percentage
The highest score	11	8	10	13	10	10	50%
The lowest score	1	1	2	1	1	1	5%
The number of students who get 10 to 20 correct answers	3	0	2	4	3	2	3.44%
The number of students who get 5 to 10 correct answers	17	12	11	24	15	16	27.58%
The number of students who get 0 to 5 correct answers	38	46	45	30	40	40	68.97%
The average probability of RAC	4.14	3.92	4.06	4.15	5.58	4.37	21.85%

We played the game many times in the classroom and collected plenty of data. It can be seen from Table I that the data of the same category were quite close between any two games in spite of some minor fluctuations and that the average value of G (represented by 4.37 and 21.85%) was expectedly close to the theoretical one (represented by 5 and 25%).

The data collected from the games were authentic, but it was not an easy thing to let the students know all the results as quickly as they expected because all the numbers of the collected data had to be manually input one by one. For this reason, we designed a Microsoft Excel template with the use of relevant functions to automatically quantify G in taking a traditional MCT, and eventually, to quantify L through figuring out the least RAC scores (hereafter denoted as “M”) for passing a traditional MCT with various G values and the “lucky” RAC scores (hereafter denoted as “N”) for passing the test.

D. Template Design

In this paper, a Microsoft Excel template was designed to automatically quantify the RAC of 1000 testees in taking a 4-option and 20-item traditional MCT. Interestingly, the testees and the test are not authentic but virtual. This template is a one-sheet file with three mutually-related areas that work together through Microsoft Excel functions, such as “CHOOSE”, “RANDBETWEEN”, “SUMPRODUCT”, “COUNTIF”, “MAX”, “MIN”, “SUM” and “AVERAGE”. The following is a detailed introduction to the three areas in the template.

The first area (See Fig. 2) presents the RAC of each testee in taking a 4-option and 20-item traditional MCT. The array “B4:B1003” is about the order of the testees, with most of them concealed for users’ convenience of viewing. The array “C4:V1003” presents all the values of answers which are randomly and automatically given by the computer. The values of RAC scores are listed for each testee in the array “W4:W1003”, and the values of G in the array “Z4:Z1003”. Row 3 is highlighted in red as the keys. The Microsoft Excel functions used in the first area are listed in detail in Table II.

	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	AA
2	Testees	RG																				RAC Scores	RAC Probabilities			
3	Key	A	B	B	B	C	D	C	D	B	C	A	A	D	A	A	C	C	B	D	D	A	20	100.00%		
4	1	B	A	C	B	D	A	C	A	A	C	C	A	D	A	C	C	D	D	D	A	9	45.00%			
103	100	A	D	D	D	B	A	C	D	A	B	B	B	A	C	D	B	A	D	B	C	5	25.00%			
104	101	C	B	B	A	A	A	B	C	B	B	C	B	A	A	D	A	D	C	D	D	6	30.00%			
203	200	D	D	C	D	C	C	C	B	D	A	D	C	A	B	C	A	C	A	A	D	4	20.00%			
204	201	A	C	A	A	C	D	B	C	A	A	A	C	C	B	C	B	B	A	C	C	6	30.00%			
303	300	A	C	D	C	D	B	D	B	D	B	A	B	D	A	B	A	B	B	D	C	5	25.00%			
304	301	B	A	D	B	C	B	B	A	A	B	A	A	A	B	A	D	B	C	C	D	5	25.00%			
403	400	B	B	C	A	B	D	D	B	D	B	B	C	C	D	C	C	D	C	D	B	5	25.00%			
404	401	D	C	B	B	D	A	B	D	D	A	C	C	A	B	C	B	B	C	D	A	8	40.00%			
503	500	C	B	D	D	B	D	B	C	C	A	C	B	B	A	A	A	D	C	D	D	4	20.00%			
504	501	B	A	C	B	A	B	B	C	D	A	A	C	D	A	B	A	B	C	D	A	6	30.00%			
603	600	C	B	A	A	C	D	D	B	B	D	A	C	D	D	C	B	A	C	B	B	6	30.00%			
604	601	D	B	D	D	C	C	D	C	B	D	B	D	D	B	B	A	C	A	B	A	5	25.00%			
703	700	C	D	D	C	D	D	B	D	B	C	B	C	A	D	C	C	D	B	B	3	15.00%				
704	701	C	A	D	A	A	D	D	D	D	B	C	D	A	C	C	B	D	D	A	A	7	35.00%			
803	800	C	D	D	A	D	A	A	C	B	C	B	B	A	A	C	A	C	A	D	B	4	20.00%			
804	801	A	A	D	B	C	D	A	D	A	D	A	A	A	D	B	D	B	B	B	B	8	40.00%			
903	900	D	B	D	D	D	D	B	C	A	A	A	A	D	C	C	D	B	C	B	C	5	25.00%			
904	901	D	D	D	A	D	A	A	B	A	D	D	A	B	C	D	B	C	B	D	A	2	10.00%			
1003	1000	B	D	A	C	C	C	D	C	D	C	C	A	D	B	A	C	C	A	B	D	3	15.00%			

Figure 2. The RAC of each testee in taking a 4-option and 20-item traditional MCT (quantified in the first area).

TABLE II.  
THE MICROSOFT EXCEL FUNCTIONS USED IN THE FIRST AREA

Arrays	Functions	Examples		
		Cell	Formula	Number format
C4:V1003	CHOOSE; RANDBETWEEN	C4	=CHOOSE(RANDBETWEEN(1,4),"A","B","C","D")	Text
W4:W1003	SUMPRODUCT	W4	=SUMPRODUCT(N(C4:V4=\$C\$3:\$V\$3))	General
Z4:Z1003	DIVISION	X4	=W4/20	Percentage

The second area (See Fig. 3) is designed to automatically calculate the G values of all the testees in taking the test. To get a clearer look at the whole data, the 1000 testees are divided into 10 groups. As shown in Fig. 2, the data of the first 100 testees are located in the array "B4:Z103", the second in "B104:Z203", the third in "B204:Z303", and so on. In Fig. 3, the 10 groups follow the order from B1008 to B1017. Values in the array "C1008:C1017" are the maximum RAC scores in each group, and "D1008:D1017" the minimum. In the array "E1008:Y1017" are the numbers of testees with different RAC scores ranging from 0 to 20. In the array "Z1008:AD1017" are the numbers of testees in different ranges of RAC scores. In the array "AE1008:AE1017" are the sums of RAC scores for each group. The array "AF1008:AF1017" deals with the average G values in each group. In Row 1018 are all the average values of different arrays for the 10 groups. The Microsoft Excel functions used in the second area are listed in detail in Table III.

	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	AA	AB	AC	AD	AE	AF	AG:AH
1006	Order	MAX	MIN	The Number of Testees with Different RAC Scores																				The Number of Testees in Different Ranges of RAC Scores				SUM of RAC Scores	Average RAC Probabilities			
1007				0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	0-2	3-6	7-8	9-10	11-20			
1008	1	10	1	0	4	6	17	17	18	17	6	10	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	69	16	5	0	495	24.75%
1009	2	12	1	0	1	4	16	15	14	23	17	6	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	68	23	1	3	535	26.75%	
1010	3	10	1	0	2	5	8	27	24	16	8	6	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	75	14	4	0	503	25.15%	
1011	4	10	2	0	0	6	20	23	18	16	9	4	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	77	13	4	0	482	24.10%	
1012	5	9	0	1	3	5	16	16	19	16	13	5	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	67	18	6	0	501	25.05%	
1013	6	10	0	1	3	6	17	16	12	16	21	3	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	61	24	5	0	504	25.20%	
1014	7	10	0	1	1	9	19	17	10	20	12	6	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	66	18	5	0	492	24.60%	
1015	8	13	0	2	6	7	18	18	19	15	7	3	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	70	10	3	2	455	22.80%	
1016	9	10	1	0	4	7	11	18	20	22	12	4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	71	16	2	0	490	24.50%	
1017	10	9	0	1	1	4	12	20	25	14	10	8	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	71	18	5	0	513	25.65%	
1018	Average	10	0.6	0.6	2.5	5.9	15	19	18	18	12	5.5	3	1	0.3	0.1	0.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	69.5	17	4	0.5	497.10	24.86%	

Figure 3. The average RAC probability of all the testees in taking a 4-option and 20-item traditional MCT (quantified in the second area).

TABLE III.  
THE MICROSOFT EXCEL FUNCTIONS USED IN THE SECOND AREA

Arrays	Functions	Examples		
		Cell	Formula	Number format
C1008:C1017	MAX	C1008	=MAX(W4:W103)	General
D1008:D1017	MIN	D1008	=MIN(W4:W103)	General
E1008:Y1017	COUNTIF	E1008	=COUNTIF(W4:W103,0)	General
Z1008:AD1017	SUM	Z1008	=SUM(E1008:G1008)	General
AE1008:AE1017	SUM	AE1008	=SUM(W4:W103)	General
AF1008:AF1017	DIVISION	AF1008	=AE1008/2000	Percentage
C1018:AF1018	AVERAGE	C1018	=AVERAGE(C1008:C1017)	General

The third area (See Fig. 4) is designed to automatically show the average "luckiness" for each group to pass the test. The array "B1022:B1031" presents the order of the 10 groups of testees. The values in the array "C1022:C1031" in this area are the average G values, equaling those in the array of "AF1008:AF1017" in the second area. In the array "H1022:H1031", 20 is a constant, representing the total scores of the test (hereafter denoted as "T"). In the array "K1022:K1031", 60% is also a constant, representing the supposed percentage of passing scores out of the total scores (hereafter denoted as "P"). In the array "Q1022:Q1031" are the average values of M for passing the test. In the array "W1022:W1031" are the average values of N for passing the test. The values in the array "AA1022:AA1031" represent the average values of L (=N/T). In Row 1032 are all the average values of different arrays for the 10 groups. The Microsoft Excel functions used in the third area are listed in detail in Table IV.

	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	AA
1020	Order	G		T		P		M		N		L														
1021		(RAC Probability)		(Total Scores)		(Percentage of Passing Scores)		(The Least Passing Scores)		(The "Lucky" Scores)		(N/T)														
1022	1	24.75%		20		60%		9		3		13.16%														
1023	2	24.30%		20		60%		9		3		12.84%														
1024	3	22.85%		20		60%		10		2		11.85%														
1025	4	26.00%		20		60%		9		3		14.05%														
1026	5	24.30%		20		60%		9		3		12.84%														
1027	6	25.55%		20		60%		9		3		13.73%														
1028	7	23.30%		20		60%		10		2		12.15%														
1029	8	25.40%		20		60%		9		3		13.62%														
1030	9	23.20%		20		60%		10		2		12.08%														
1031	10	25.35%		20		60%		9		3		13.58%														
1032	Average	24.50%		20		60%		9		3		12.99%														

Figure 4. The "luckiness" for passing a 4-option and 20-item traditional MCT (quantified in the third area).

TABLE IV.  
THE MICROSOFT EXCEL FUNCTIONS USED IN THE THIRD AREA

Arrays	Functions	Examples		
		Cell	Formula	Number format
C1022:C1031	EQUATION	C1022	=AF1008	Percentage
Q1022:Q1031	SUBTRACTION, MULTIPLICATION and DIVISION	Q1022	=H1022*(K1022-C1022)/(1-C1022)	Number
W1022:W1031	SUBTRACTION and MULTIPLICATION	W1022	=H1022*K1022-Q1022	Number
AA1022:AA1031	DIVISION	AA1022	=W1022/H1022	Percentage
C1032:AA1032	AVERAGE	C1032	=AVERAGE(C1022:C1031)	Number; Percentage

E. Data Analysis

The quantification in the Microsoft Excel template introduced above is run automatically, meaning that, whenever the F9 button is pressed, all the variable values in the three areas will be updated immediately. It is so exciting that each second F9 is pressed, the corresponding data of the 1000 testees come out; that is to say, if F9 were pressed 10 times, all the data of 10,000 testees would come out within 10 seconds. Certainly, this template works far more efficiently and conveniently than in the way I used to get the results from the games played in the classroom.

In the first area, RAC is the most important data to be collected for the whole quantification. As is shown in Fig. 5, the values of RAC scores in the first group of testees center around 3-8, ranging from 0 to 12. The similar data can be collected from other groups. Interestingly, no matter how many times I pressed F9, the highest score never touched 14 or more, but in the games I played in the classroom, 14, 15, and even 16 really happened.

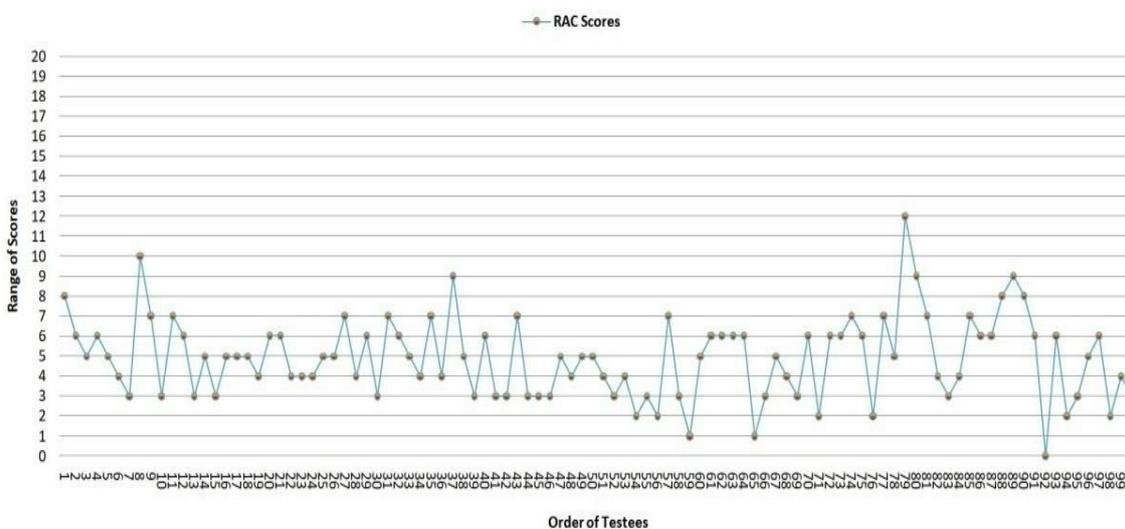


Figure 5. The values of RAC in the first group of testees.

In the second area, the average G values of each group can be seen and understood from various perspectives. In average, the maximum RAC score is 10, and the minimum one close to 1. The average numbers of 100 testees with different RAC scores ranging from 0 to 20 center around those in the range of RAC scores from 3-8, as is illustrated in Fig. 6, and roughly in Fig. 7. From the average sum of RAC scores (497.10 in Fig. 3), it is easy to get the average G value (24.86% in Fig. 3), which are very close to 25%, the theoretical G value.

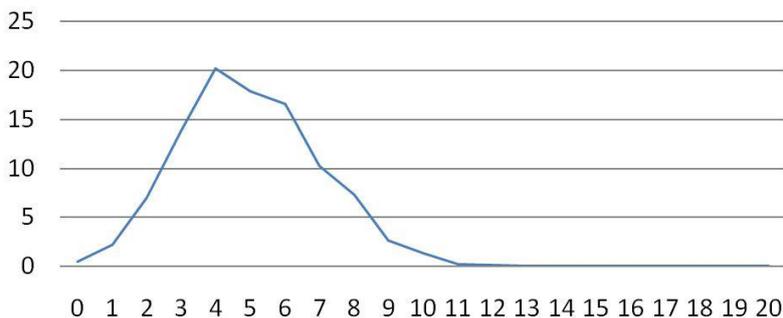


Figure 6. Average numbers of 100 testees with different RAC scores.

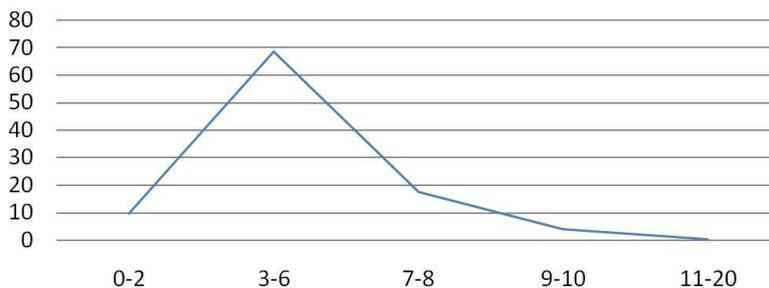


Figure 7. Average numbers of 100 testees in different ranges of RAC scores.

In the third area, the first and most important thing is to calculate M.

$$(T - M)G + M = TP \quad (2)$$

$$M = \frac{T(P - G)}{1 - G} \quad (3)$$

The essential relations among G, T, P and M can be demonstrated in (2), through which M can be calculated as in (3). From M, it is easy to calculate N as in (4) and L in (5), which both clearly indicate the “luckiness” in passing the test. In this template, the automatic quantification is conducted for a 4-option and 20-item traditional MCT, the passing score of which is 12, 60 percent of the total scores, so T is constantly 20, P is constantly 60%, and R is approximately 25%. It can be seen from this area that the average M for the test is 9, which is 3 less than 12, and the average L is around 13%, which is more than half of R. Actually, the “luckiness” in passing the test cannot be fully demonstrated by M in this template, which looks like a small number because T is only 20, but L, presented as a percentage, can directly show the “luckiness”. The average L values come out as expected and can be objectively calculated, but the result is astonishing since 13% is not a small percentage.

$$N = TP - M = TP - \frac{T(P - G)}{1 - G} = T \frac{G(1 - P)}{1 - G} \quad (4)$$

$$L = N/T = \frac{G(1 - P)}{1 - G} \quad (5)$$

#### F. Discussion

No matter how many times F9 is pressed in the template, the average L values center around 13% when P is 60%. The possibility of guessing at MC items means some unfairness when it comes to testing, in particular to selection assessment. If there are two examinees of equal (moderate) level of ability, then one of them might fail the test while the other passes (Kubinger, Holoher-Ertl, Reif, Hohensinn & Frebort, 2010). It is indisputable that RG in taking a traditional MCT does diminish the validity and reliability of the test, but how to minimize the negative effects of RG has been a headache ever since the practice of traditional MCTs.

To deal with guessing effects in a fair manner, Birnbaum (1968) developed from Item Response Theory (IRT) a 3-PL model, which provided an item-discrimination parameter and an item-guessing parameter. Also, a lot of research has been done on scoring rules to solve this guessing problem. Number Right (NR) is the simplest scoring rule which just counts the number of correct responses. Since 1953, the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) employed a formula-scoring rule which corrected for random guessing by penalizing incorrect responses, while being neutral regarding omitted items (Budescu & Bar-Hillel, 1993). Although many approaches have been proposed to reduce RG in taking traditional MCTs, none would be superior.

In the Microsoft Excel template designed in this paper, L considerably reflects how much RG does in taking a traditional MCT. Since L equals N/T, L seemingly has to change with both N and T, but it is clear in (5) that L is only connected with P and G.

Although M and N change with T, L has little to do with T. As we know, the reliability of a multiple-choice test is partly governed by the number of items it contains; however, longer tests are more time consuming to take, and for some subject areas, it can be very hard to create new test items that are sufficiently distinct from previously used items (Bush, 2015). Consequently, it is not the right choice to reduce RG by simply raising the number of items. The feasible way is to change P and G.

The automatic quantification of G and L in the template is done on a 4-option and 20-item traditional MCT. When P is 60%, L is approximately 13%. However, when P is 50%, L will be about 17%, a bit more than 13%, which exactly verifies what CQUniversity Pro Vice-chancellor Professor Rob Reed (Hincliffe, 2014) said, “With a pass mark of 50 per cent which is the standard pass mark across Australia, you can know about a third of the answer and guess about

two thirds at that 50 per cent level.” More L variants in Fig. 8 are calculated as in the array “C3:F7”. For example, the formula of C3 is “ $=(1/C2)*(1-\$B\$3)/(1-1/C2)$ ”, in which “1/C2” is a G value.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	L		Number of options			
2			2	3	4	5
3	P	50%	50%	25%	17%	13%
4		60%	40%	20%	13%	10%
5		70%	30%	15%	10%	8%
6		80%	20%	10%	7%	5%
7		90%	10%	5%	3%	3%

Figure 8. L changes with P and G.

### III. CONCLUSION

While it is true that the probability of obtaining a high score through guessing is small (Sax, 1989), it cannot be said that RG is negligible. No doubt, with the help of RG, some testees really passed one or more decisive assessments in an unfairly lucky way. Even so, it is unnecessary to remove traditional MC items from all testing activities, but possible to reduce the percentage of them at least. Now that RG has little to do with the number of items, P and G may be changed to keep RG under control. A successful example is the Knowledge Test for a Minnesota driver’s license. The test contains 40 questions in the form of traditional MC and T/F and the testee must obtain a score of 80 percent to pass. First, the number of items in the test is moderate, so the test doesn’t take a long time and the questions can be renewed on a large scale to reduce repetition. Moreover, MC and T/F are allocated appropriately to cover the knowledge and understanding of Minnesota traffic laws and road signs. Most important of all, 80% is a high P value, so L in the test is very low, or rather, RG in the test is limited to a satisfying range.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First, this paper is fully indebted to the grant from the 2017 Overseas Research Scholar Program for Young and Middle-aged Teachers of Higher Education in Shanghai, which was sponsored by Shanghai Municipal Education Commission. Second, this paper was supported by College English Listening (s201718001), one of the 2017 Key-curriculum Construction Projects for Undergraduates of Higher Education in Shanghai. Third, the authors would like to give special thanks to the White Horse Gang who encouraged and supported us during the time when we were writing this paper in St. Cloud.

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# A Study on Attitudinal Meanings of Different Narrative Roles in *Emma*

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**Abstract**—By adopting the Attitude System within the Appraisal System and the concepts of narrative roles and narrative points of view within narratology as the theoretical framework, the present study aims to analyze the distribution of attitudinal meanings, find out the similarities and differences of attitudinal meanings expressed by different narrative roles from different points of view and discuss how attitudinal meanings contribute to the analysis of the character depiction, plot development, theme presentation and the expression of irony in *Emma*.

**Index Terms**—appraisal System, attitudinal meaning, narrative roles, *Emma*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Jane Austen, as one of the most famous and popular masters of the English novels, is good at employing irony to depict the characters of her time especially middle-class ladies and explore their social and moral problems they have been faced with. Her masterpiece *Emma* tells a story about a wealthy lady called Emma who is full of enthusiasm about matchmaking her friends instead of thinking about her own marriage. Up to now, many scholars have researched the novel from different perspectives such as feminism, archetypal criticism and comparative literature. However, few of them explore it from the perspective of attitudinal meanings within the framework of the Appraisal System.

The Appraisal System, is a development of the interpersonal function in Halliday's Systemic-Functional linguistics. In 1990s, James Martin extended the study scope of interpersonal function and proposed the Appraisal System. The system consists of three subcategories, namely Attitude, Engagement and Graduation. Since the first introduction of the Appraisal System, it has been attracting many scholars to conduct researches on it. The first application of the theory is an analysis of the attitudinal system in journals. Then the system is applied to many other fields such as discourse analysis, literature, translation, cognition and so on, but inscribed and invoked attitude are hardly discussed in light of narrative roles and narrative point of view in narratology.

Therefore, the thesis adopts the Appraisal System and narratology as the theoretical framework and aims to study the ways of character depiction, plot construction, theme presenting and the expression of irony in the novel *Emma* by analyzing the attitudinal meanings of different narrative roles.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. *The Appraisal System*

Martin and White (2005) proposed that evaluation itself consists of three interacting domains which are Attitude, Engagement and Graduation. Martin and White (2005) also pointed out that interpersonal meaning is based on the lexical level and evaluative meaning is on the lexicogrammatical level through the realization of evaluative lexis.

Although the Appraisal System has not become a systematic and comprehensive theory until 2005, a number of scholars abroad have discussed its applications especially in discourse analysis since 1990s. The study of media discourses first drew attention among scholars. Iedema, Feez and White (1994) studied evaluations in journalistic discourses featured in their objectivity and subjectivity, their evaluative values, their relationships and changes of voices. White (2001) made a further analysis of semantics about attitude, evaluation and intersubjectivity through a study of different kinds of news reports. Furthermore, narrative discourses are widely studied under the framework of the Appraisal System. Martin and Plum (1997) endeavored to prove that it is significant to deploy evaluations to analyze the interaction of events in narrative. Macken-Horarik (2003) intended to investigate how the Appraisal System is applied to analyze the relations between the writer and the readers in narrative discourses. Page (2003) analyzed the evaluation expressed by women and men when narrating some experiences about childbirth.

### B. *Narrative Roles*

The earliest studies on the narrative communication can date back to an analysis of Language Communication Mode by Jakobson (1960), who proposed six factors of verbal communication, namely the addresser, the addressee, message, code, context, and contact. American narratologist Chatman (1978) also proposed a well recognized narrative communication mode by many narratologists, as an attempt to illustrate both film narrative and text narrative. Rimmon-Kenan (2002) held an opposite opinion that the narrator and narratee are optional. Toolan (1988) believed that

the narrative communication made by Manfred is too complex, so he proposed an easier mode in which he omitted the implied author and the implied writer. Chinese scholar Shen (2010) pointed out the narrative transaction should be canceled. Obviously, Shen gave a high affirmation to the narrative communication proposed by Chatman. Peng (2015) cited Chatman's narrative communication mode and studied the evaluative meanings and their relations with different narrative roles as appraisers. By adopting the Figure-Ground Theory and the narrative communication mode as theoretical framework, he analyzes three kinds of narrative roles who can express attitudinal meanings, namely the narrator, the character and the implied author. Peng uses a systematic network to make a conclusion about the phenomenon that the thesis has discussed. Firstly, the network with different allocation modes exposes the evaluative stances of different levels and categories, which indicates the multiplicity and complexity of the evaluative meanings. Secondly, in theory, the network can be used to deal with all kinds of resource allocations, which means each mode may consist of more than two kinds of narrative roles. Thirdly, these different allocation modes may be included in the same text. Therefore, the research not only provides an effective theoretical framework for evaluative values of stylistics, but also a valid way for the identification of evaluative meaning in discourses. It is a refinement of the Appraisal System itself as well. Fourthly, according to the former analysis, it can be seen that the evaluative stance of the implied author can be implied by the character.

### III. ATTITUDE SYSTEM

Attitude mainly refers to those values by which speakers attach evaluations to participants and processes by reference either to emotional responses or to systems of culturally-determined value systems (White, 2001). Attitude is construed by feelings, including Affect, Judgement and Appreciation. The system consists of three semantic regions covering what is traditionally referred to as emotion, ethics and aesthetics respectively. "Affect is concerned with construing positive and negative feelings: do we feel happy or sad, confident or anxious, interested or bored?" (Martin & White, 2008:42). Judgement is used for evaluating whether human's actions and dispositions are fine or not in light of some regulatory rules. It is the evaluation of human's behavior, which we admire or criticize, praise or condemn. It can be sub-divided into social esteem and social sanction. Appreciation has three sub-categories which are reaction (impact and quality), composition (balance and complexity), and valuation (how innovative, authentic, timely, etc.). The core of the Appraisal System is Attitude, which can be construed by inscribed Attitude and invoked Attitude.

### IV. DISTRIBUTION OF ATTITUDE

Attitude is concerned with speaker's feelings, including emotional reactions, judgement of human's behavior and evaluation of things and we can locate appraisal as an interpersonal system at the level of discourse semantics. Due to limited space and time, 45 selected texts in volume 1 of Emma are analyzed and discussed in this thesis. And both of them contain 15 texts with double appraisal stance allocation, 15 triple appraisal stance allocation and 15 quadruple appraisal stance allocation respectively.

TABLE 1  
DISTRIBUTION OF ATTITUDE RESOURCES DEPLOYED BY NARRATIVE ROLES

Narrative roles	narrator	implied author	character	amount
attitude				
inscribed attitude	197	49	170	416

The above table shows there are altogether 416 attitude resources in volume 1 of Emma, in which 197 items are deployed by the narrator, 49 by the implied author and 170 items by the characters. The reason why there are more inscribed attitude resources deployed by the narrator and the character is that in volume 1 of Emma, the first three chapters are mainly narrated from the omniscient point of view, which means from the narrator's point of view. The first three chapters are some basic introductions of the background of the novel and an introduction of the main character Emma such as Emma's reaction when she knows Miss Taylor will get married. Then from the beginning of the fourth chapter, some other main characters are narrated from character's point of view, such as Mr. Woodhouse, Mr. Knightley. So when more characters appear in a novel, it is unavoidable that many more conversations are generated, and then more attitude resources are used by the characters. However, the implied author is always hidden in a novel so that it covers fewer frequencies compared with attitude resources by the narrator and the characters.

#### A. Distribution of Affect Resources

The distribution of affect resources is as follows:

TABLE 2  
DISTRIBUTION OF INSCRIBED AFFECT RESOURCES

narrative roles		narrator	implied author	character	amount
dis/inclination	positive	10	2	7	19
	negative	2	1	3	6
un/happiness	positive	10	2	8	20
	negative	4	0	3	7
in/security	positive	11	4	9	24
	negative	2	0	0	2
dis/satisfaction	positive	10	2	5	17
	negative	0	1	3	4
amount		49	12	38	99

It shows that affect resources of the narrator (49 times) and the character (38 times) are more than those of the implied author (12 times), which indicates the narrator and the character always express their attitude in *Emma* in a more direct and frequent way than the implied author. And in each subcategory, the positive affect resources are more than the negative ones. In the former chapters, the narrator uses many positive words to describe Emma and the character Emma also gives high evaluations to Harriet. In the following chapters, Mr. Knightley uses some positive affect words to show his high evaluations to Emma. And some negative affect words are used in the descriptions about Emma and Mr. Woodhouse's sad feelings of Taylor's marriage.

### B. Distribution of Judgement Resources

The distribution of judgement resources is shown in the following table:

TABLE 3  
DISTRIBUTION OF JUDGEMENT RESOURCES

narrative roles		narrator	implied author	character	amount
social esteem (normality)	positive	10	3	8	21
	negative	2	6	3	11
social esteem (capacity)	positive	5	2	6	13
	negative	12	4	11	27
social esteem (tenacity)	positive	18	3	31	52
	negative	10	4	3	17
social sanction (veracity)	positive	9	2	6	17
	negative	8	3	4	15
social sanction (propriety)	positive	15	3	11	29
	negative	13	5	10	28
amount		102	35	93	230

The table indicates that judgement resources used by three appraisers are 102, 35 and 93 items respectively, which cover a relatively high amount compared with affect resources and appreciation ones. This is because characters are the most important components in a novel and the depictions of characters must be realized by their behaviors and conversations. In addition, the amount of positive judgement resources surpasses those of negative ones. In addition, the positive evaluations of the narrator (57>45) and the character (62>31) are both more than the negative ones. On the contrary, the positive judgement resources by the implied author (13<22) are less than the negative ones. It can also be seen that in a text, there is not only one appraiser and there can be two or more than two appraisers. More importantly, the frequencies of the negative evaluations of the implied author are more than that of the positive ones by the narrator and the character, which is the reason why the novel is full of rhetorical devices of irony.

### C. Distribution of Appreciation Resources

The following table shows the distribution of appreciation resources:

TABLE 4  
DISTRIBUTION OF APPRECIATION RESOURCES

Narrative		narrator	implied author	character	amount
reaction	positive	26	1	26	53
	negative	4	0	2	6
composition	positive	7	0	8	15
	negative	0	0	0	0
valuation	positive	8	1	2	11
	negative	1	0	1	2
amount		46	2	39	87

According to the above table, appreciation resources used by the narrator (46>2) and character (39>2) cover more frequencies than those by the implied author. This is because the narrator's narration covers most parts in the first three

chapters and the character's narration in the next following chapters. Shown in Table 4-5, positive reaction resources are used most frequently among appreciation resources, because characters always describe something by appreciation evaluations. For example, the narrator describes that Emma "units some best blessings of existence".

The table reflects that the distribution of these three appraisers is different, but reaction resources inscribed by the narrator, the character and the implied author are more than composition and valuation, whose reason is that reaction can deliver characters' feelings in a better way. Hence, these three appraisers focus more of their evaluations on reaction than on composition and valuation.

In conclusion, it should be noticed that when narrative roles hold the congruent inscribed attitude, they expose the similar characterization, plot and theme. However, when narrative roles hold the incongruent attitude, it may invoke other attitudinal subcategories and they aim to reveal a sarcastic tone in the text.

## V. A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS ON ATTITUDINAL RESOURCES OF DIFFERENT NARRATIVE ROLES

### A. A Comparative Analysis on Attitudinal Meanings of the Narrator and the Implied Author

According to Chatman's flow chart of narrative exchange mode (1978), the narrator is a sender of narrative information and the implied author is the image of the writer produced by readers. Hence, when a text is narrated by the narrator, the implied author also narrates although their evaluative stances may be congruent or incongruent. Moreover, in the first three chapters in *Emma*, most are narrated by the narrator from the omniscient point of view and some basic background information is introduced. Then in the next following chapters the omniscient point of view is transferred to selective omniscient point of view that only shows the main character Emma's inner activities to readers and fixed internal point of view which shows other characters' inner activities.

#### a. The congruent attitudinal stance

(1) She was the youngest (+5) of the two daughters of a most affectionate (+2), indulgent (+2) father; and had, in consequence of her sister's marriage, been mistress of his house from a very early period. Her mother had died too long ago for her to have more than an indistinct (-11) remembrance of her caresses; and her place had been supplied by excellent woman as governess, who had fallen little short of a mother in affection.

At the beginning of the novel, Emma is described from the omniscient point of view. She is "young" (+5) and is "affected" (+2) and "indulged" (+2) by his father. And she has an "indistinct" (-11) remembrance of her mother. In this text, the narrator holds the congruent opinion with the implied author that Emma, as the young hostess of her house, can do anything that she likes under the protection of her father. Therefore, at the start of the novel, the description of Emma by the narrator gives a first impression on her and intrigues readers' interest, which leads readers to think what will happen to Emma with those dispositions.

#### b. The incongruent attitudinal stance

(2) She recalled her past kindness (+8)—the kindness (+8), the affection(+2) of sixteen years—how she had taught and how she had played with her from five years old—how she had devoted all her powers to attach (+3) and amuse (+3) her in health—and how nursed her through the various illnesses of childhood. A large debt of gratitude (+3) was owing here;

The pattern of attitudinal meanings is shown by the figure:

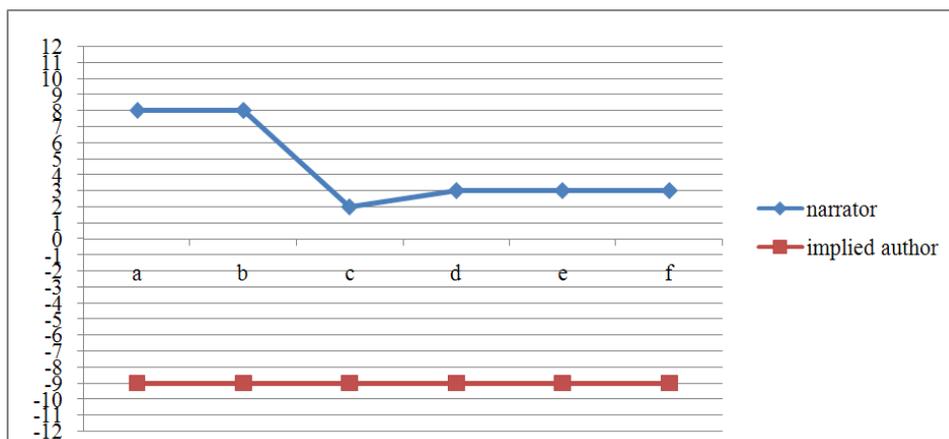


Figure 1 The Pattern of Attitudinal Meaning In Example 2

At the beginning of this selected text, the verb "recall" is a mental process which can reflect that the following text is what Emma is thinking about. The selected omniscient narrator Emma describes Taylor with such words as "kindness" (+8) and "affection" (+2). The narrator uses "attach" (+3) and "amuse" (+3) to recall the time when Taylor is not married and Emma has a kind of "gratitude" (+3) to Taylor. When reading this part, readers sympathies and feels pity because Emma loses her close friend. But through the following narration, Emma feels happy again when she finds she

can have matchmaking with Harriet. It can be seen that the selected discourse is a negative propriety (-9) evaluation presented by the implied author. Thus, this paragraph not only lays a foundation of revealing Emma's real deposition in the following chapters, but also promotes the development of the plot. And in this text, the story is almost narrated from Emma's point of view which is a selected omniscient point of view. Emma shares her thoughts even her mistakes with readers. In this novel, most narrations are used from Emma's perspective. For example, when Emma has some conflicts with other characters, the narrator will narrate through Emma's point of view so that readers may think about the situation in Emma's place and their stance will be quite influenced.

#### B. A Comparative Analysis on Attitudinal Meanings of the Narrator, the Character and the Implied Author

##### a. The congruent attitudinal stance

(3) "Emma knows I never flatter (+7) her," said Mr. Knightley, "but I meant no reflection (+5) on anybody. Miss Taylor has been used to have two persons to please (+3); she will (+1) now have but one. The chances are that she must (+7) be a gainer."

In chapter one, Knightley talks about Taylor's marriage with Emma and Mr. Woodhouse. Through his words Emma knows he "never flatters" (+7) her, it seems that Emma has a close relationship with Mr. Knightley. And the expression "no reflection on anybody" belongs to the subcategory of normality (+7), which demonstrates Mr. Knightley is righteous (+9). At last Mr. Knightley uses such words as "please" (+3), "will" (+1) and "must" (+7) to evaluate Taylor's decision. The use of these three words shows that Mr. Knightley is upright (+9) and outspoken (+9). In *Emma*, Knightley always expresses his opinion in a direct way such as his dissatisfaction to Harriet's refusal to the proposal by Martin. Hence, the implied author and the narrator hold the same opinion that Knightley is righteous (+9).

##### b. The incongruent attitudinal stance

(4) "Exactly so; that is what principally (+11) strikes me. So much superadded (+9) decision of character! Skilful (+6) has been the hand!"

(5) "Exactly so—The shape of the eye and the lines about the mouth—I have not a doubt (+7) of your success. Pray, pray attempt it. As you will do it, it will indeed, to use your own words be an exquisite (+10) possession."

These two paragraphs are listed in the same pattern:

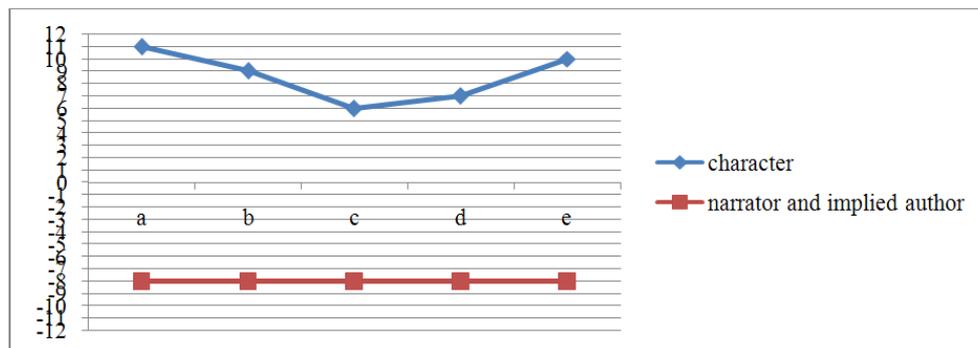


Figure 2 The Pattern of Attitudinal Meaning in Example 4-5

These two examples are selected from the sixth chapter. The first example occurs when Elton agrees with Emma's words on her "giving Harriet more decision". Elton adopts "superadded" (+9) and "skilful" (+6) to praise Emma. The attitudes he adopts are propriety and capacity resource. In essence, although the character Elton gives high praise on Emma, the narrator and the implied author hold the opposite opinion. Because after the picture is painted by Emma, Knightley thinks that Emma paints Harriet too tall and Emma also knows what she has done. Here, the narrator and the implied author have a mockery to Elton's hypocrisy (-8).

#### C. A Comparative Analysis on Attitudinal Meanings of the Narrator, the Implied Author, Character1 and Character2

##### a. The congruent attitudinal stance

(6) "I have always thought it a very foolish intimacy (-10)," said Mr. Knightley presently, "though I have kept my thoughts to myself; but I now perceive that it will be a very unfortunate (-10) one for Harriet. You will puff her up (-12) with such ideas of her own beauty, and of what she has a claim to, that, in a little while, nobody within her reach will be good (+10) enough for her. Vanity (-8) working on a weak head, produces every sort of mischief. Nothing so easy as for a young lady to raise her expectations too high. Miss Harriet Smith may not find offers of marriage flow in so fast (+9), though she is a very pretty (+10) girl. Men of sense, whatever you may chuse to say, do not want (-1) silly wives (-6)."

The conversation talks about Knightley's idea about the relationship between Emma and Harriet. Mr. Knightley deploys many negative evaluative lexis to show that it is such a dangerous thing that Harriet makes friends with Emma. Although Mr. Knightley is one of the main characters in *Emma*, he is like a narrator to visualize everything around him. This is why we say Knightley is an agent of the implied author. In the novel, Knightley thinks Emma and Harriet have a foolish intimacy and it will be an unfortunate thing for Harriet to make "friends" with Emma. This is also the opinion that the narrator and the implied author intend to express.

#### D. The Incongruent Attitudinal Stance

(7) “Oh no, no! The letter had much better (+7) be all your own. You will express yourself very properly (+9), I am sure. There is no danger of your not being intelligible, which is the first thing. Your meaning must (+7) be unequivocal”

(8) “Ought to (+7) refuse him! My dear Harriet, what do you mean?”

(9) “I shall not (+7) give you any advice, Harriet.”

(10) “I lay it down as a general rule, Harriet, that if a woman doubts as to whether she should accept a man or not, she certainly ought to (+7) refuse him.”

(11) “Not for the world,” said Emma, smiling graciously, “would (+7) I advise you either way. You must (+7) be the best (+10) judge of your own happiness (+2).”

(12) “Perfectly, perfectly right (+10), my dearest Harriet.”

(13) “He must (+7) have a pretty good opinion of himself.”

(14) Emma assured (+8) her there would be no difficulty (+11) in the answer, and advised its being written directly, which was agreed to, in the hope of her assistance;

The following figure shows the pattern of attitudinal meanings about Emma’s words:

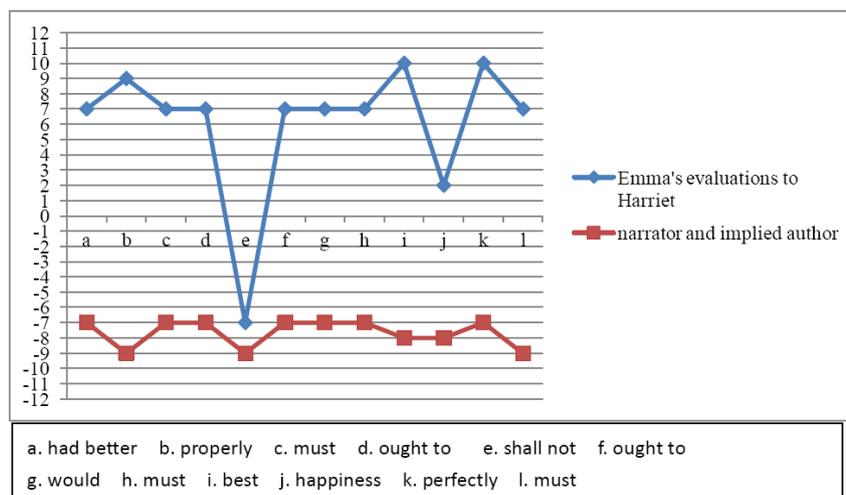


Figure 3 The Pattern of Attitudinal Meaning in Example 7-14

These conversations appear at the moment when Harriet seeks Emma’s advice about whether she should marry Martin or not. In the beginning, Emma always says she shall not give Harriet any advice. We may feel that Emma respects Harriet and she doesn’t interfere with her choice. However, in the following part, she chooses the positive capacity (+7) “must”, “ought to” and “had better” to help Harriet make decisions. It reveals her strong desire of control (-7) that Harriet requires her refusal of Martin’s proposal. Then in the sentence “You must be the best (+10) judge of your own happiness (+2)”. It seems that Emma thinks that Harriet’s decision is concerned with her future happy (+2) life and Harriet should have a best (+10) judgement. But in fact, Emma doesn’t care about what Harriet’s future life will become of and she only wants to make demand of her desire of control (-7), which demonstrates Emma’s dishonesty (-9). As a matter of fact, she has already helped Harriet to make a decision. The implied author and the narrator demonstrate that Emma acts arbitrarily (-9).

As an agent of the narrator and the implied author, the character Knightley’s inscribed evaluation can be equal to the views of the narrator and the implied author. According to Knightley’s words, readers understand the temperaments of Martin and Harriet and the danger that Harriet makes friends with Emma more objectively and more clearly. Furthermore, when the character Emma evaluates Harriet, it seems that Emma cares about Harriet very much. In essence, it is an irony about Emma’s strong desire of control (-7) implied by the narrator and the implied author. Thus, the congruence and the incongruence of the evaluations, generated by the character, and the narrator or the implied author, demonstrate the depiction of characters. More importantly, the incongruence is the essential condition under which a novel uses irony.

## VI. CONCLUSION

In light of the Attitude System within the Appraisal System and the concepts of narrative roles and narrative point of view within narratology, the thesis aims to discuss how the expression of attitudinal meanings of different narrative roles functions in the study of character depiction, plot development, theme presenting and the use of irony. Firstly, the sub-categories of inscribed and invoked attitude deployed by different narrative roles that appear in 90 selected texts in volume one of *Emma* are marked by their serial numbers within the framework of the Appraisal System. Then the distribution and realization of inscribed and invoked attitudinal meanings by narrative roles are given through a classification and statistical analysis of 90 selected texts with appraisal markers. Lastly, a comparative analysis of

attitudinal resources of different narrative roles is made.

Through the analysis of volume one of *Emma*, major findings are as follows.

(1) The expressions of inscribed and invoked attitudinal meanings are related to narrative roles. The narrator and character's attitudes are usually expressed in the inscribed way and those of implied author are invoked.

(2) Different allocation modes are used in the novel. They are used in a prosodic way to realize the extension of the evaluations in order to transfer values of the author. In the double allocation mode, the stance of the implied author may be congruent or incongruent with the narrator. So it requires readers' profound understanding of the context, the background and so on. In the triple and quadruple allocation mode, the stance of the implied author is always reflected through views of the characters', especially those indirect descriptions violating ethics and morality.

(3) Different narrative roles as appraisers express different attitudinal meanings which may be congruent or incongruent with each other. When these appraisers hold the same stance, their attitudes contribute to the character depiction, plot development and theme presenting together. However, when the appraisers hold the opposite opinions, the implied author aims at expressing his ironic tone in the novel.

(4) The analysis of narrative point of view provides an objective basis for the identification of different appraisers, thereby helping to figure out the configuration of allocations of attitudinal meanings by different appraisers.

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# Teachers' Evaluation of the ILI High Intermediate Book Series through an Eclectic Checklist

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**Abstract**—Taking a glance at the plethora of literature on language books evaluation, one can easily explore the critical role being played by coursebooks in language learning contexts. Selecting a course book which fits the requirements of a specific course and aides teaching and learning processes besides offering organization and discipline to an educational course is a critical task carried out by teachers, practitioners or materials developers. One of the most commonly used instruments in evaluating course books in order to adopt or even adapt them, in cases needed, is checklist. Focusing on this recent issue, the present study aimed at evaluating a series of the ILI books which are widely used all around Iran at high-intermediate levels in one of the most well-known national language schools called Iran Language Institute (ILI). The participants were 23 experienced teachers holding BA, MA or PhD at this language school in adult section from different branches in Shiraz. The instrument used in this survey was an eclectic checklist devised and suggested by Yusuf Demir and Abdullah Ertas (2014).

**Index Terms**—checklist evaluation, ILI high intermediate series, ILI language school, textbook evaluation

## I. INTRODUCTION

On the importance of using textbooks to enhance education, there are plenty of resources. Also there are pieces of research evaluating textbooks for the purpose of selecting the ones that can meet certain course objectives and learners' needs in different contexts. Lots of evaluative frameworks mostly taking the form of a checklist were offered by different researchers as in Williams (1983), Breen and Candlin (1987), Sheldon (1988), McDonough and Shaw (2003), Cunningsworth (1995), and McGrath (2002). Using checklists as a systematic and comprehensive means of evaluating the materials paves the way in doing research in this field. Though in some cases some sorts of modifications are needed. (According to Dickinson, 2010).

ILI (Iran Language Institute) which is evaluated in this study is one of the most well-known language schools in Iran with branches all over the country. High intermediate books which are evaluated through an eclectic checklist devised by Demir & Ertas (2014), in this study, is a series of three levels among a five-stage categorization of adult section including: basic, elementary, intermediate, high intermediate, and advanced levels.

The present research includes a review of literature on the theoretical and practical aspects of book evaluation with emphasis on checklist evaluation and the ILI book series evaluation, exclusively; followed by the results gained from the evaluation of high-intermediate book series, the discussion and the conclusion based on the findings.

## II. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

### A. Theoretical Considerations

Evaluation is a key term in the field of materials development. As Tomlinson (2013, p.21) put it, "it is a procedure of measuring the potential value of learning materials which involves making judgments about the effects of the materials on the people using them." This potential value of the materials involves the credibility, flexibility, reliability, validity, the motivating power of the materials, its effect on learners' success in tests (described as a short-term goal) and their achievements in communication skills (termed as a long-term goal), aiding teachers in achieving their instructional and evaluative goals, and above all meeting the administrative needs in terms of standardization in classes, syllabus coverage, and exams preparations (Tomlinson, 2013).

Tomlinson (2013) offered different types of materials evaluation in terms of *pre-use evaluation* which involves *making predictions about the potential value of the materials for their users, whilst-used evaluation* which concerns *measuring the value of the materials while using them or while observing them being used*; this type of evaluation can be considered *more objective and reliable* since it makes more use of measurement rather than prediction and *post-use*

*evaluation* which he considered as the most valuable type of evaluation but not frequently used since it measures the *actual effects of the materials on the users*.

Following the point that evaluation is not the assessment of the materials rather the effect of the materials on those who are involved in the course of teaching and learning, he believed since evaluation is being done on users of the materials and involves judgments about the effects of the materials, it is subjective in many ways. In his opinion, using checklists and certain criteria in evaluating the materials reduces the subjectivity and adds to its objectivity and value for generalization; he elaborated on some standard approaches and offered certain criteria for the purpose of materials evaluation. Concerning criteria set for the purpose of textbook evaluation, Cunningsworth (as cited in Richards, 2001) mentioned such criteria as meeting learners' needs, course objectives, users' current and future needs and purposes, facilitating language learning without imposing a rigid method, having a mediating and supporting role for learners, and learning the target language. He also presented a checklist for evaluating textbook materials which considers "*aims and approaches, design and organization, language content, skills, topic, methodology, teachers' books and practical considerations*" (Cunningsworth, as cited in Richards, 2001, p. 258).

According to Asiyaban and Zamanian (2014), currently most books are produced mainly based on financial and commercial concerns, thus lack the required appropriateness and efficiency concerning the educational purposes and the need to evaluate the books arises from this fact.

### B. Empirical Studies

Most studies regarding book evaluation were conducted through the use of checklists.

Banaruee and Zare-Behtash (2017) evaluated the New Headway Advanced Series (2015), and the Iran Language Institute (ILI) Advanced1 (2008) through a checklist based on the standards of American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). They found New Headway Series more practical than ILI Advanced1 in terms of design and *organization, authenticity, attractiveness, functionality, practicality*. They concluded that the ILI books are mainly focused on reading and writing and thus less efficient in improving learners' interactional, transactional and communicative needs.

Dickinson (2014) evaluated the materials used to teach a group of young Japanese EFL learners – the coursebook and additional materials of *Let's Go 1*, its student book (with CD-ROM), workbook, skills book (with self-study CD), teacher's book, audio CDs, and student and teacher flashcards through a checklist-based materials evaluation scheme using a Likert Scale of agreement to disagreement in terms of *general appearance, layout and design, methodology, activities, language skills, language content, topic content, teachability and flexibility, and assessment*. The result of the study revealed the appealing appearance of *Let's Go 1* book, the clear layout of the materials besides being user friendly, the general appropriateness of the language and topic content with occasional adaptation and supplementary materials use requirement. It was also found out that the teaching methodology offered in the teacher's book was not based on any learner- or learning approaches and the structural and grammatical approaches applied in this book did not leave any room for independent learner responses and creativity.

Sadeghi and Mahdipour (2015) evaluated Iran Language Institute Advanced book series in terms of learning objectives based on Bloom's Revised Taxonomy. The cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains were assessed to determine the way critical thinking skills are used and to the range of difference among these books. Results revealed the higher frequency of lower-order cognitive skills (i.e. remembering, understanding and applying) than the higher-order ones (i.e. analyzing, evaluating and creating) in ILI Advanced Series. No significant changes in cognitive skills from Book 1 to Book 2 and Book 3 were observed. The affective skills were not treated differently in ILI advanced series based on the result of the study while in terms of sub categories of psychomotor skills, significant differences among ILI advanced series were observed.

In another study by Shahheidari (1998), frameworks proposed by Sheldon (1988) and Skierso (1991) which contain main factors used by teachers and administrators in selecting appropriate textbooks, were adopted to evaluate the ILI (Iran Language Institute) intermediate book series (4-7). The books were evaluated through such factors as: *rationale, availability, user's specifications, layout/graphics, accessibility, linkage, selection/grading, physical characteristics, appropriacy, authenticity, sufficiency, cultural bias, educational validity, stimulus/practice/revision, flexibility, guidance, and overall value for money*. Concerning these factors, Shahheidari (1998), stated that the ILI series in these levels (4-7), lack a clear objective, availability in the public market, specifications as *target age, range, culture, probable learning preferences*, introductory section and authors' names, use of graphics and pictures, phonetic transcription and complete and easy-to-understand definitions, authentic conversations, target cultural effect, room and time for teachers' flexibility and modifications. The definitions of the vocabularies are often harder to understand than the vocabularies themselves. There are insufficient grammar explanations, writing practice, meaningful exercises, not enough space for note taking, low paper and binding quality. Artificial rather than authentic materials are among the other deficiencies of this book series. On the other hand, in his opinion, the textbook meets the Iranian learners' academic needs and enjoys the advantages of audio-lingual method in sequencing grammar points, drills and repetition. The dominant method affecting the ILI teaching method, curriculum and textbooks is ALM though according to Shahheidari (1998), they claim to follow an eclectic method and try to make up for the most deficiencies of this method by employing experienced and skilled teachers.

Razmjoo and Farmer (2012) also investigated the intermediate level of adults and young learners' books at the ILI in terms of multiple intelligence introduced by Gardner (1983) to evaluate the extent to which their course books represent the *Multiple Intelligence Theory*. To reach this goal, the checklist developed by Botelho (2003) was used with some modifications for the purpose of localizing based on the focused theory. Analyzing the course books in terms of each intelligence through this checklist, and the frequencies and percentages revealed the dominance of verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical and visual/spatial types of intelligence compared to the other types. Naturalistic and bodily/kinesthetic types were considered to be the least focused types of intelligence in the ILI intermediate book series. There was a significant difference in terms of logical/mathematical, bodily/kinesthetic, visual/spatial, intrapersonal and musical types between the young and adult section book series. Regarding the percentage of occurrence of verbal/linguistic, interpersonal and naturalistic types of intelligence, no significant difference was reported.

Asyaban and Zamanian (2014), also studied the intermediate ILI English book series through a forty-item questionnaire developed by Litz (2000). The participants were eighty BA and PhD experienced teachers. Practical considerations including: the reasonability of textbook's price, its accessibility, publishing qualification, textbook package and authors' views on language and methodology; layout and design; activities; skills; language type; subject and content; and conclusion were the items of the questionnaire based on which the ILI intermediate books were investigated in this study. The results of the study revealed a few deficiencies in most parts of the textbook despite the overall strength of the materials. Teachers' average level of satisfaction and significant difference between male and females' opinions about the "subject and content", "language type", and "conclusion" categories were also shown through this study.

All in all, textbook evaluation seems to be an indispensable part of curriculum and syllabus development and increases the efficiency of the education; Checklists have been widely used to evaluate the textbooks due to their ease of use, reliability and generalizability qualities.

### III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Since the Iran Language Institute (ILI) is considered as one of the most successful governmental language institutes concerning such factors as teachers, syllabus and books in Iran, and most language institutes consider it as a model to design their syllabi and develop their materials, while some complaints on the part of the teachers and learners regarding the materials have been observed, evaluating the textbook being taught at this institute to realize their strength and weak points is of great value. To reach this goal the present study seeks to answer the following question:

1. What are the EFL teachers' perceptions of *High Intermediate ILI* book series concerning the EFL context of Iran?

### IV. METHOD

#### A. Participants

The participants were 23 ILI teachers all with *High Intermediate* books teaching experience, instructing at different ILI branches in Shiraz.

#### B. Materials

ILI (Iran Language Institute) high-intermediate 3-level book series were investigated through an eclectic checklist developed by Demir & Ertas (2014). Each book includes ten chapters, with the main focus on grammar. Each unit begins with a passage which is aimed at contextualizing the grammar and includes a variety of the vocabularies. The new vocabularies are also listed in a glossary which is offered as a separate supplementary small handbook. A workbook and a CD are also included in the package offered for this high-intermediate course. Despite the grammar-based nature of this book series, the four skills of reading, listening, speaking and writing are involved. Data will be analyzed through descriptive statistics to address the first question of this study and an Independent Sample *t-test* will be run to determine the probable difference between male and female teachers' opinions towards the books used in *High Intermediate* levels at the ILI.

#### C. Instruments

The eclectic checklist developed by Demir and Ertas (2014) used in this study was considered as the instrument to collect data. It includes four categories as Subjects & Contents (10 items), Sub-skills & Skills (25 items), Layout & Physical Make-up (14 items) and Practical Considerations (7 items) which make up 56 items in general. The content validity of the checklist is kept by sticking loyal to the literature as mentioned by Demir and Ertas (2014) and validated through a pilot study by 10 experts in the field as suggested by Demir and Ertas (2014).

In developing this eclectic checklist, 23 evaluation forms and checklists were utilized and combined with the researchers' own items. The draft instrument was reviewed by ELT researchers at a conference of English language teachers' association in Turkey and concerning the feedback received some items were modified.

#### D. Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected through an eclectic checklist devised by Demir & Ertas (2014) given out to 40 ILI teachers in adult section of the ILI who are capable of teaching high intermediate series in Shiraz. 23 of the questionnaires were

handed back. The checklists were distributed by the researcher and a brief explanation was given individually or in groups to the colleagues by the researcher. For further comment part of the checklist, the participants were asked to make any further comments in written form.

## V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. *Subjects and Contents*

The first category of *subjects and contents* involves ten questions as follows: the first question asks whether the content reflect the target language culture (American and British)? Most teachers (17 out of 23) answered this question positively. Most teachers in this study believe that the ILI High Intermediate books reflect the target language culture. The second question asks if the book subjects and content are interesting; regarding this question 14 ILI High Intermediate teachers agree that there are some interesting topics though the books need a great revision to bring the topics up-to-date in this regard. Concerning the challenging nature of the content, 18 teachers claim the content of the course book is challenging enough. Most units are developed in a way that require the learners to learn lots of vocabularies and concentrate on new grammatical points to grasp the gist of the unit and to be able to succeed in the final exams based on these books. Next question asks about the motivating nature of the subject and content of the High Intermediate books on which only 11 High Intermediate ILI teachers agree which shows the subject and content as an extrinsic and instrumental type of motivation does not play its role pretty well. The comprehensibility of the thematic content to the students is the other question in the category of *subjects and contents*. 20 teachers responded positively to this question. This item is possible through teachers' aid which is of great importance in the ILI educational system. Concerning the variety in the subject and content of the course book, 14 teachers think there is enough variety though this variety is not to the interest of the students as they often complain about the burden caused by the variety of grammar points they need to learn. As it was mentioned before in this institute mainly the target language not the target culture is focused, therefore the content seems to be absolutely compatible with learners' L1 culture. 17 out of 23 teacher participated in this study believed in the thematic content culturally appropriateness of the books used in this study. The majority of teachers i.e. 20 out of 23 assert that the texts and topics are free from any kind of discrimination. Following the Iranian cultural etiquettes, it seems the ILI high intermediate books do not involve discriminations of any kind. On the relationship between the content of the course book and the real life situation, there seems to be sufficient relevance since most passages and listening materials of the book are claimed to be extracted from the newspapers, magazines, journals and news excerpts, therefore, the follow-up discussions based on them involve real life practice of the language; besides, most teachers tend to require the students to make real life questions relevant to the topics as an assignment which reinforces learners' experience of real life practice of the language. 18 ILI teachers agree that there is a relationship between the content of the course book and the real-life situations. Concerning the last question in the first category of the checklist, only 7 teachers believe that the topics and texts in the coursebook include elements from both local and target culture. As it was mentioned earlier, L1 culture i.e. local culture is emphasized in the ILI book series and except some authentic texts and listening parts which involve some target language cultural features, there seems to be no direct exposure to the target language culture.

### B. *Skills & Sub-skills*

#### a. *Reading*

This category involves the inclusion of reading, listening, speaking and writing as the four primary skills, and vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation as the sub-skills in the course book.

Concerning the three questions raised in this part, only 7 out of 23 participants in this study approved of the adequacy and appropriateness of the exercises and tasks for improving reading comprehension, 14 teachers suppose that there is a wide range of different reading texts with different subject content, and most teachers (17) consider the reading selections as authentic pieces of language.

Regarding the ILI high intermediate books, since the main concern of these three levels is grammar and all the other skills and sub-skills revolve around grammar, the most prominent part of the books content in these levels is the sub-skill of grammar. Each unit includes a reading passage with the focus on the grammar point of the very unit and the variety of the topics relies on the variety of the grammatical content. Most passages are claimed to be extracted from the authentic articles and papers.

#### b. *Listening*

Each unit contains one or two listening tasks a chance to reinforce and practice the grammar which involve some follow-up questions to be answered and discussions, paraphrasing run by the teachers. A short description of the content of the listening excerpt and an instruction of the follow up activities is also provided. The questions in this part ask whether the coursebook has appropriate exercises and tasks for improving reading comprehension, if the listening material is well recorded and as authentic as possible and whether the listening material is accompanied by background information, questions and activities which help comprehension. All the three questions were answered positively by 18 teachers.

#### c. *Speaking*

Each listening task is followed by a communication task which requires the students to make use of the newly-learned grammar points and vocabularies to run a discussion in groups. The speaking task is mostly of an open-ended, free discussion and meaningful type. As mentioned earlier a group discussion follows each listening task which involves the individuals, though the teachers can assign individual speaking practice and evaluation tasks. The three questions in this part discuss whether the coursebook includes speech situations relevant to students' background, if the activities are developed to initiate meaningful communication and finally whether the coursebook includes adequate individual and group speaking activities. The first question received 15, the second, 11; and the last, only 8 positive answers respectively.

#### *d. Writing*

Regarding writing skill, in the textbook except the grammar points and the follow-up written exercises, there is no specific practice of writing, though in the workbooks, each unit involves a special punctuation note but not a categorization of different genres with models. The punctuation notes involve great writing tips, however they tend to be confusing for the students in some cases. The writing task is confined to the punctuation note presented in each unit and guided and controlled through the follow-up exercises. (e.g. adding the punctuation marks to the text or identifying the mistakes). This part includes three questions as follows:

1. Are models provided for different genres?
2. Do the tasks have achievable goals and take into consideration learners' capabilities?
3. Is the practice provided in controlled and guided composition in the early stages?

The first question received 8; the second, 16; and the third one, 13 positive answers.

#### *e. Vocabulary*

The sub-skill of vocabulary section of the checklist involves 5 questions which deal with the vocabulary load and if it seems to be reasonable for the students of that level; if there is a good distribution (simple to complex) of vocabulary load across chapters and the whole book; if the vocabulary exercises promote internalization of previously and newly introduced items; if the new vocabulary words are repeated in subsequent lessons to reinforce their meaning and use; and if there is new vocabulary integrated in varying contexts and situations. 17, 11, 14, 11, 14 positive answers were given to these questions by the participants respectively.

With regard to vocabularies, it seems that ILI high intermediate books are full of new words, in the passages, grammar exercises, listening parts and workbook exercises, and sometimes the students complain about the large number of the vocabularies, they are required to bear in mind and their high difficulty level. Sometimes the difficulty level of the vocabularies seem to be much higher than the proficiency level of the students; however the new words are introduced in context which makes it easier for the students to remember, though since the emphasis is put on grammar in high intermediate levels, there seems to be no specific gradation of the vocabularies as it is observed in grammar sequencing and if certain vocabularies are repeated in the following units, it is not with the purpose of vocabulary reinforcement yet a variety of contexts with new words are offered which have been mainly provided to contextualize the grammar.

#### *f. Grammar*

Grammar is the other sub-skill dealt with in this eclectic checklist.

The first question in this part asks whether the grammar points are presented with brief and easy examples and explanations; most teachers (19) agree on this point. Second question considers the primary function of new structures for interaction and communication; 10 teachers suppose the new structures are interactional and communicational. The third question deals with the fact that the structures gradually increase in complexity to suit the growing reading ability of the students; 13 teachers believe in gradual difficulty level increase of the grammar. The fourth question in this part asks about the systematic presentation of the structures besides being contextually meaningful; the majority of the teachers (19) approve of this fact about the ILI high intermediate book series. Next question concerns the issue that whether the grammar points are recycled in the following units. 12 participants answered yes.

As it was mentioned earlier, the high intermediate book series at the ILI are grammar-centered, though the examples provided to contextualize the grammar points seem to be too difficult for the students to grasp, due to the large number of new vocabularies; in most cases, this burden is left on teachers' shoulders to provide the learners with simpler examples while illustrating the grammar points. Some structure tend to be practical for the purpose of communication and interaction while most structures are rarely used in daily conversations or even writing tasks. Since the materials is presented with the focus on grammar in high intermediate levels, a smooth gradation of grammar points seem to be observed, besides, systematic presentation of the grammar in a meaningful context. The last item of grammar sub-skill in the checklist asks whether the grammar points are recycled in the following units. To answer this question, it is worth mentioning that, the ILI high intermediate books generally contain the whole grammatical points that the students have learned in previous levels of basic to intermediate, in more detail and with occasional introduction of some new grammar points which mostly expand the learners' previous knowledge of grammar.

#### *g. Pronunciation*

Pronunciation is another sub-skill which is addressed in the used checklist in the present study.

In this part three questions are raised as follows:

1. Is there sufficient work on recognition and production of stress patterns, intonation and individual sounds?

2. Are the pronunciation points repeated and reinforced in subsequent lessons?
3. Does the coursebook cover other sub-skills like note-taking, skimming, scanning, inferring meaning, listening for gist, etc.?

All the three pronunciation part questions were answered negatively by the majority of the teachers with only 3, 6, and 7 positive answers given to these three questions respectively.

The last two parts of the checklist deal with the layout and physical make-up of the book and some general considerations are brought into attention as follows:

#### C. Layout & Physical Make-up

Concerning the layout and physical characteristics of the books in high intermediate level at the ILI, such issues as printing quality, the general appearance of the book, the inclusion of a detailed overview of the functions and structures which will be taught in each unit, the reflection of learners' preference in terms of layout, design, and organization, the inclusion of pictures, diagrams, tables etc. to help the students understand the printed text, and the informative and functional illustrations and the convenience of the books in terms of size and weight, are dealt with.

The first question in this part concerns printing quality which is high in most teachers' opinion (i.e. 19). Second question asks whether the books look interesting and fun most teachers think they do not (i.e. 19).

Regarding the third question the majority of the teachers i.e. 21 assert that the coursebooks include a detailed overview of the functions and structures that will be taught in each unit; a small number of teachers i.e. 6 think the coursebooks reflect learners preferences in terms of layout, design, and organization and that they contain enough pictures, diagrams, tables etc. helping students understand the printed text. 11 teachers believe the illustrations in coursebooks are informative and functional and 18 participants consider the size and weight of the coursebooks convenient for students to handle.

Investigating the ILI high intermediate books in terms of the above mentioned factors, reveal that the books suffer from serious lack of interesting, fun, informative and functional illustrations and pictures except the simple tabulation of grammatical structures which provide the students with a short preview of the grammar content of the unit they are going to study. The general lay out of the books does not look interesting, the size and weight of the books seem inconvenient as well, though the books enjoy the high printing quality and the detailed overview of the structures which are going to be taught.

#### D. Practical Considerations

Regarding the recency of the high intermediate books and their availability, that make up the first two items of the *practical considerations* of the checklist, 20 teachers think the books are up-to-date and easily accessible. 21 teachers think the books are affordable and provided with supplementary materials. Only 9 teachers out of 23 participants in this study think the coursebooks have supporting online materials/tests and e-format and a similar small number of 7 teachers think the books address different learning styles and strategies. Less than half of the participants i.e. 10 think the activities and exercises introduce the main principles of CLT. 16 teachers assert that the coursebooks include self-assessment parts. 12 participants think the activities can be exploited fully and embrace various methodologies in ELT and the fact that the type of syllabus design used in the book is appropriate for learners. 16 teachers disapproved of the capability of the coursebooks integration into technology, thereby allowing for individual study outside the school. Most teachers in this study i.e. 17 teachers think the high intermediate coursebooks fit curriculum/goals. 16 participants think the objectives are explicitly specified in the coursebook and most teachers i.e. 15 believe the coursebooks are not designed by taking into account the learners' socially and historically English-free status.

Regarding the last part of the eclectic checklist used in this study which addresses some practical considerations:

1. Concerning the recency of the books in high intermediate levels the content has not been revised and brought up-to-date for years.
2. The books are only available in local bookstores of the ILI branches not in the market.
3. Most students tend to complain about the high price of the books.
4. The textbooks are offered with the workbooks, CD and a supplementary test books (though the test books are not provided adequately). A separate glossary handbook is also offered with the books for each level.
5. Supporting online materials and mid-term tests are provided in the ILI website.
6. The books in high intermediate levels mainly focus on grammar content which call for the teachers' skill to present the materials in a way which addresses various learning styles and strategies.
7. The ILI book series mainly relies on Audio-lingual approach to learning yet the authorities claim to adopt CLT approach as well, and there are such parts entitled as *Communication Practice* which include the listening part as well as a follow-up discussion relevant to the grammar content and subject matter.
8. No self-assessment parts are found in evaluated high intermediate book series.
9. Concerning the lack of time and the large amount of the materials presented in each unit, teachers are obliged to stick to the syllabus tightly and there is no room for maneuvering over the materials exploiting various methodologies; moreover the authorities and observers require the teachers to follow the steps presented in teachers manuals tightly and not violate the set syllabus in any ways. Since the associate their success to these rigid rules of presenting and practicing the materials that have been applied for years.

10. The syllabus design may put pressure on learners in some cases as they complain about the boring and demanding content of the materials and tasks which are to be covered each session, though the final results of learners' successful performance tend to confirm the appropriateness of the syllabus design.

11. In general, ILI classes are believed to be teacher-centered and it does not appear that the students be able to study the books on their own; moreover the listening files are not included in the students CDs though the grammar content and the passages can be reinforced through student CDs, appendices and online provided instructional and evaluative grammar files and vocabulary lists.

12. It seems the books meet the requirements set by materials developers and experts efficiently. Providing the students with a variety of grammar points and vocabularies, besides lively listening, speaking, and reading activities.

13. The objective is stated in the introduction part of the book as: "... providing the Student's Books that serve not only as vehicles for classroom instruction but also as resources for reference and self-study. In each Student's Book, the combination of grammar charts, grammar notes, and appendices provides a complete and invaluable reference guide for the students."

14. Last item in the checklist asks whether the course book has considered the learners' socially and historically English-free status; as it was mentioned earlier, since the ILI is a governmental language institute, the developers have tried to develop the materials with the focus on linguistic aspects of language learning, mainly grammar and vocabularies with restricted inclusion of the target language cultural and social features yet since the new structures are presented in natural context of passage, articles and dialogs, they tend to create a fairly rich source of social and historical aspects of the target language.

#### **Teachers' opinions regarding the high intermediate ILI books in their own words**

There was a part at the end of the checklist for teachers' further comments and criticisms which was completed by some of the participants (12) in this study. What follows is a summary of their responses.

One of the teachers stated that: "the subjects and the pictures are neither fun nor varied enough. And that there is much more focus on the grammar and vocabulary than on the ideas, communication, interaction, listening, speaking and writing skills, and students awareness of the target culture and spoken English."

Another teacher supposes high intermediate books especially the third one are "too difficult for the learners...too many new words."

Some teachers consider the books appropriate for grammar courses. "The book has been designed to develop the learners' grammar. It is actually a grammar course. So, other aspects of language learning have been less dealt with in these textbooks. All the activities center around grammar in high [intermediate] classes at the ILI."

"The series of high intermediate books are totally grammar-based. Students are not motivated to improve other skills. Most often the teacher is the only speaker. Materials are not that interesting."

Some think the books need to be revised and brought up-to-date to meet the present learners' needs. And the fact that the books are not communicative enough despite current emphasis on learning language for communication in the present world of language learning. Lack of time is another matter of complaint expressed by some teachers in this study. "I believe our students certainly need an up-to-date and motivating material to learn well. The existing coursebook is neither encouraging nor appropriate for learning contemporary English."

"High intermediate books are not the type of books recommended for those who are into CLT. They just pressure both teachers and learners into teaching and studying something invalid and outmoded."

"The book seriously lacks communication-based material and activities. The material is old-fashioned and hardly addresses present-day issues and topics e.g. recent electrical devices, late marriage, inflation, new fashion trends, etc."

"It is not communicative at all. Too much grammar is boring. The book is all black and white, so boring. The topics are good, though there is not enough time to fully explore them or let students have discussions."

"In my opinion, only an experienced, enthusiastic teacher can breathe life into these textbooks so that they become less tedious, of course if time allows."

One of the most experienced experts at the ILI besides praising the teachers and the methodology at the ILI, concerning the need for bringing the books up-to-date states: "in the ILI English textbooks many of the items in this checklist are missing and are somehow light and shallow. However, the teachers' roles coupled with the unique methodology makes up for those deficiencies. There seem to be an urgent need to modernize and update them, a process which has already started, and the new books are coming in to use."

Another experienced teacher pinpoints the reason for higher popularity of the ILI advanced books compared to high intermediate ones by saying: "These books have to be revised to better meet the main principles of CLT or they[there] will remain a gap between Intermediate and Advanced levels which sound more appealing to learners."

One of the teachers meticulously leaves comments on different parts of the checklist concerning the ILL high intermediate books as follows:

1) Regarding writing, only production of basic elements of a paragraph is explained and required. The point that is worth mentioning is that the students learn to get their ideas across by incorporating correct structural rules.

2) As with the vocabulary, the movement from simple to complex words is evident in High [Intermediate] 2 and High [Intermediate] 3, but with High [Intermediate] 1, the vocabulary seems to have been sacrificed to grammar in the first 5 or 6 units.

3) Every lesson is a separate entity standing by itself, irrelevant to the ones preceding or succeeding it, only having to do with the accompanying workbook set exercises related to it.

4) The new vocabulary does not seem to appear in a variety of contexts, but the mere mention of it in one sample context really helps the learners internalize it.

5) It is mostly the teacher's job to present the material beautifully and in the most comprehensive way.

6) What is missing in the compilation [compilation] of the book is pronunciation practice.

7) Apart from the class CD, the students have the reading material recorded on their own CD, and the Research and Planning Department of the institute has devised a supplementary book of exercises, which is offered to students along with the coursebooks.

8) The book does include mid-term self-test and three remedial tests, devised by the Research and Planning Department again. Those appear in the workbook. Also in cases the coursebook offers personality questionnaires through which the students unconsciously use the target structures.

9) The only complaint that learners have is that they have to learn too much grammar; however, the teachers approach may in many cases alleviate the problem.

## VI. CONCLUSION

All course books have some strengths besides some weak points. Teachers and materials developers need to identify the efficiency and deficiencies of the materials they make use of in their teaching context and reinforce the capacities and eradicate the problems to reach the best ends. The high intermediate book series investigated in the present study enjoy an overall success in terms of grammar gradation and sequencing, providing rich authentic context for the grammar and vocabularies, high printing quality, and the detailed overview of the structures which are going to be taught though it requires a great revision in terms of general appearance, inclusion of illustrations, diagrams, tables and providing learners with more opportunities to reinforce their listening, writing skills and pronunciation as a sub-skill.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors, herewith, would like to express their gratitude towards the Iran Language Institute (ILI) and High Intermediate teachers for their cooperation.

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# Hemingway's Reminiscence of Nature: An Eco-critical Study of "Fathers and Sons"

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**Abstract**—"Fathers and Sons" is the final tale in Ernest Hemingway's *Winner Take Nothing* and last published Nick Adams Story. This article employs ecocriticism to explore the ecological consciousness in the short story. It introduces the definition of ecocriticism and briefly describes the natural world in Hemingway's biography, then focuses on the exploration of Hemingway's reminiscence of the lost natural beauty in "Fathers and Sons". The study holds that Hemingway artistically associated Nick Adams' reminiscence of his beloved father with the loss of ecological beauty in the Michigan State. Through the portrayal of Nick's memories, Hemingway exposed human being's ruin of nature and showed his sympathy for the destroyed ecology. The story actually reflects the Hemingway's yearning towards the lost beauty of nature.

**Index Terms**—Hemingway, "Fathers and Sons", ecocriticism, reminiscence

## I. INTRODUCTION

Ernest Hemingway, a famous American writer and Nobel Prize winner, is also universally recognized as one of the world-famous writers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Today "His presence in the world of celebrity — a rugged macho figure called Papa with a signature with beard" (Donaldson, 2000, p.1) still leaves a great impression in the hearts of his readers and literature researchers. Hemingway is not only noted for his novels and novelettes, but also productive in the writing of short stories. Throughout his writing career, Hemingway published a great many short stories, which are generally collected into four volumes, namely, *In Our Time*, *Men Without Women*, *Winner Take Nothing* and *The Fifth Column and First Forty-Nine Stories*. In recent years, Hemingway's short stories, like his novels and novelettes, have also become a focus of academic study and they have been interpreted by literary critics from many perspectives, such as the artistic features, the code hero image, the themes of nihilism and alienation, etc. This article employs ecocriticism to explore the ecological consciousness in Hemingway's short story "Fathers and Sons" in order to present an important perspective of Hemingway studies and further arouse the readers' ecological awareness.

## II. ECOCRITICISM AND HEMINGWAY'S NATURAL WORLD

The term ecocriticism was devised in 1978 by William Rueckert in his pioneering essay "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism". It is a methodological approach to literary and cultural criticism that takes nature and environment as its primary focus. The main point of this literary criticism is to probe into the deep relationship between man and nature. According to the eco-critics, "we are one animal among many in this shared world, living in interwoven interspecies communities" (Feder, 2014, p.5). The eco-critics re-read literary works from an eco-centric point of view, with a particular emphasis on the representation of the natural world. They also "extend the range of literary-critical practice by placing a new emphasis on relevant 'factual' writing, especially reflective topographical material such as essays, travels writing, memoirs and regional literature" (Barry, 2002, p.264). As the theorist Greg Garrard pointed out, "Ecocriticism is unique amongst the contemporary literary and cultural theories because of its close relationship with the science of ecology. Eco-critics may not be qualified to contribute to debates about problems in ecology, but they must nonetheless transgress disciplinary boundaries and develop their own ecological literacy as far as possible". (Garrard, 2004, p.5). Cultural criticism as it is, ecocriticism is different from any other criticism because it has more literary perspectives than the mere gender, religion, social class and has the combination of many subjects such as ecology, biology, psychology, anthropology, cultural studies, aesthetics, ethnics, historiography, etc. In fact, ecocriticism has become an important literary criticism, from which many famous writers and their literary works have been re-interpreted. Ernest Hemingway is one of the typical cases among them.

Hemingway was a great writer with deep affection towards nature, as Robert E. Fleming indicated "few authors in history have been so closely identified with the natural world as Ernest Hemingway" (Fleming, 1999, p.1). Hemingway's love towards nature was first cultivated by his father Dr. Clarence Edmonds Hemingway, a highly-respected physician who held a strong interest in hunting and fishing. He was also a tender and soft-hearted boy as his mother Grace, a talented singer and music teacher, once wrote, "crying bitterly over the death of a fly he had tried to revive on sugar and water" (qtd.in Baker, 1987, pp.7-8). When Hemingway grew up, he experienced the two world wars and understood the sufferance and misery the war meant to people. In his time, everything, including the physical environment was in a state of chaos and disorder. He had been many places such as the Michigan state which

had been ruined by the cutting of forests, the ancient Africa messed by the hunters and Italy that had been fouled by the Fascists. All these experiences made the writer pursue for all his life the unpolluted natural beauty and rethink about the close relationship between man and nature.

Hemingway's ecological consciousness also owed to his traveling experiences. As a keen traveler, Hemingway spent much time in his life traveling and the experiences in turn had some direct impact on his writing career. He had traveled to a great many places both at home and abroad, including the prairie of Illinois, the forests of Michigan, Canada, France, Italy, Cuba, Switzerland, China, Spain, Africa, etc. Because of the experiences he was often dubbed a world citizen. What's more, the adventures presented the writer a more vivid outlook about nature. Eastern Africa, especially the places in and around Kenya, is not only famous for their beautiful natural beauty, which gave Hemingway spiritual comfort, but also well known as the home town of many wild animals that brought some of the writer's imaginations into reality. Tuna fishing in Spain, trout fishing and skiing in Switzerland, and hiking in Germany all took much of Hemingway's time and gave him lots of pleasure. Besides, Hemingway had been living in Cuba for a large part of his life. His accommodation in Havana was cozy and close to nature. In this old country Hemingway also enjoyed the happiness of fishing.

Due to his experiences in the places above, Hemingway found a sense of returning to nature and harmony with the physical environment. These experiences also offered him abundant materials on his writing. Based on his personal traveling adventure in Spain, Hemingway obtained the materials of *Death in the Afternoon*, a book about Spanish bullfighting, in which his famous Iceberg Principle was put forward. The bullfight in Spain expanded his knowledge about human being's relationship with animals. As Edward Stanton put it, "From his love and understanding of the fighting bull, I believe Hemingway himself began to sympathize with the animal's feeling for a querencia where he felt secure and confident" (Stanton, 2005, p.129). Because of his hunting experiences in Eastern Africa, he was able to write the novels *Green Hills of Africa* and *True at First Sight*, the short stories "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber", "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" and "An African Story". Meanwhile, Hemingway's life in Cuba, his close relationship with the sea and the fishes provided him with rich materials on the famous work *The Old Man and the Sea*. Thus scholars claimed that "in all his work, from the early stories to *The Dangerous Summer*, there arises a kind of opposition between those who live in harmony with nature and those who do not" (Josephs, 2000, p.222). And "Fathers and Sons" is one of the important short stories reflecting Hemingway's awareness of ecological protection.

### III. REMINISCENCE OF THE LOST NATURAL BEAUTY IN "FATHERS AND SONS"

"Fathers and Sons" is the final tale in *Winner Take Nothing* and Hemingway's last published Nick Adams Story. Nick, in the short story, is driving along a highway in an American main street with his young son beside him asleep on the car seat when he suddenly recalls some of the hunting and other anecdotes during his youthhood with his beloved father, who committed suicide a long time ago. On first sight, "Fathers and Sons" seems to be nothing more than a description of Nick's entering the psychic journey and emotional terrain he has previously avoided, yet it is through Nick's reminiscence of his father in the story that Hemingway attempted to show his concern about the loss of natural beauty in the State of Michigan. And Hemingway's deep ecological consciousness can be explored through an eco-critical reading of this short story.

The arrangement of the highway in the beginning paragraph of the story can be understood as one of the clues showing Hemingway's concern about the loss of nature and ecology in the Michigan State. "Fathers and Sons" begins in an uncharacteristic setting for Hemingway, such as the Main Street, Middle America, and Sunday afternoon. But that setting is characteristically oppressive. Driving through this small town, Nick is constantly stopped by the traffic lights that flash on and off although there is less traffic on Sunday. The shade trees lining Main Street are "only too heavy, they shut out the sun and dampen the houses" (Hemingway, 1987, p.369). Nick has been driving for a long time. The place he has arrived in is different from that of the country of his own childhood. This small southern town through which he passes makes him feel like a stranger. As far as Nick is concerned, the place is so cloying that he tries to put it behind as soon as possible. No wonder he chooses to ignore the detour sign, taking for granted that "cars had obviously gone through" (Hemingway, 1987, p. 369). There is a feeling of relief as Nick moves out "past the last house and onto the highway that rose and fell straight away ahead" (Hemingway, 1987, p.369); and beyond the town, "all of this country was good to drive through and to see" (Hemingway, 1987, p.369). Nevertheless, "neither Nick Adams nor his creator is a Kerouac, a Steinbeck, a Least Heat Moon, an American poet of the open road. Highway, in Hemingway, is a wound on the land, destroyer of a way of life" (Beegel, 1998, p.77), just as Ashton Nichols put it, "These authors, poets, and early scientists, consistently claim that human beings are contiguous with the natural world rather than distinct from it. They collapse the distinction between nature and culture at the same time that they point out similarities between and among all living things. (Nichols, 2011, p.22). Quite a short time before writing "Fathers and Sons", Hemingway mourned the destruction by the highway of Nick Adams' Michigan State in a passage that was later deleted from *Death in the Afternoon*:

Michigan I loved very much when I lived in it, and when I was away from it, but as I grew up each time I returned to it it was changed. It was a country of forests, lakes and streams and small farms with hills and pastures, always with a background of woods. There was no place in upper Michigan where you could look across open land and not see the woods and you were never far away from open water. They cut down forests, the streams lost their water, the lakes had

their levels lowered and raised by the taking or not taking of water to float sewerage from Chicago down the drainage canal; they built concrete motor roads across all the country and around the lakes; the motorists caught all the fish out of the streams and, as the boys went to Flint or Detroit to work and prices made it impossible to make a living, they abandoned the farms. (qtd.in Beegel, 1998,p.77)

This same sense of destruction and loss is also illustrated in "Fathers and Sons", in which Nick perceives the highway as a kind of laceration, with "banks of red dirt sliced cleanly away" and "second-growth forest on both sides" (Hemingway, 1987, p.369), reminding us of the old-growth timbers that have all been slashed to make way for automobiles. We know that the American industrial revolution reached its climax at the beginning of the twentieth century. A lot of automobiles came up and went to the villages, mountains and forests. Countryside and wild fields were turned into a web of highway and as a result the whole natural system was severely damaged. In the year 1947, Hemingway wrote to William Faulkner talking about his life away from America. Part of the letter read, "My country gone. Trees cut down. Nothing left but gas station, sub-divisions where we hunted snipe on the prairie, etc" (Hemingway, 1981, p.624). In this sense it is not difficult to detect that Nick's driving across the American highway is also "tingled with mourning for the land and for an expulsion from the Eden" (Beegel,1998, p.77), which serves as a reflection of the serious destruction of natural beauty by the modern civilization.

However, it is ironically the highway that carries Nick back into the "good country", where farms have not yet been abandoned. And "driving easily" now, Nick starts to think about hunting in his mind. As his hunting is first taught by his father, Nick begins to recall the appearance of his beloved father. The land flushes the sentimental memories and they come pouring at Nick, who is, like the startled quail hunter, unprepared to take them. He feels sentimental when his mind is haunted by the grief memories of his father's appearance, character and death. To release himself from such a spiritual torture, Nick tries to think about some other things in the mind. Consequently he flinches away from the painful images of his father in the casket and his own shame at planning to exploit those images in his writing and begins to recall his first sexual intercourse in the hemlock woods behind the Indian camp. Nonetheless, the therapy he hopes for is still not available and there is still no comfort in such a psychological change, as Nick's memories here in the following description include the destruction and exploitation of both the hemlock woods and the Indian ways of life:

Then the main road went off to the left, skirting the woods and climbing the hill, while you went into the woods on the wide clay and shale road, cool under the trees, and broadened for them to skid out the hemlock bark the Indians cut. The hemlock was piled in long rows of stacks, roofed over with more bark, like houses, and the peeled logs lay huge and yellow where the trees had been felled. They left the logs in the woods to rot; they did not even clear away or burn the tops. It was only the bark they wanted for the tannery at Boyne City; hauling it across the lake on the ice in winter, and each year there was less forest and more open, hot, shadeless, weed-grown slashing. (Hemingway, 1987, p.372)

Together with Nick's driving in the car, his anecdote in the hemlock woods behind the Indian camp is another lengthy and meaningful description. In actual distance, "the journey is not great, but metaphorically it is. Rather than the modern world of automobiles and paved highways and traffic lights, we are carried to pre-civilized world, where people move on bare feet through forest and swamp" (Flora, 1989, p.49). Here the author wrote the remembrance for the sake of his abstract meanings. To be more precise, the detailed description in the paragraph above actually shows the picture of how the Indian forests were plundered and destroyed. After the American Civil War, due to the development of new forms of transport, felling, mill technology and the rise of corporate monopolies, the lumber and forest product industries entered a period of vigorous expansion. Nick Adams' Michigan State, because of its special geographical setting, became one of the regions that had been ravaged. The following quotation will provide us with a more specific sight of the devastation:

Michigan and other lake states – with their dense, rich and various tree cover, their low and gently rolling terrain, and their readily available water transport via lakes and rivers – became the site of frenzied exploitation, peaking at 10,000 million board feet per annum in 1890, falling off gradually to a still staggering 4,000 million board feet in 1910. This timbering rampage was conducted entirely without today's concern for "sustainable" yields, and the impact on the Michigan of Nick Adams' boyhood was devastating. By 1907, more than 10.7 million acres of the state had been clear cut. (qtd.in Beegel, 1998, p.84)

The vivid description and statistics show us that the ravaging forestry practices had at that time exerted a devastating impact on the Indian people, whose traditional lifestyle included hunting, fishing and basic agriculture. To this innocent group of people, the cutting of forests was itself to a certain extent an exploitation of their subsistence. The Indians used the materials of fruit and nuts, bark, sap, dyes, medicine and arrow wood in quite a sustainable way, and they cut only dead or dying trees for firewood. They seldom cut down green or living trees, "from the idea that it puts them to pain, and some of their medicine men profess to have heard the wailing of the trees under the axe" (qtd. in Beegel, 1998,p.85-86). But the illegal exploiter's destruction of the forest changed the Indians' way of life. Hence they had to sell their labor force and property at a very low price to the timber barons who took away their living sustenance. Hemingway, who used to live in a northern Michigan summer house, sometimes played with the Indians. The images of the Indians, their primitive yet innocent ways of life and their unity with nature all left a deep impression in the heart of Hemingway. Consequently the writer was sympathetic towards the people and realized that his passion for wilderness, hunting, and fishing was becoming a continuing source of grief and mourning. In "The Last Good Country", another

Hemingway's Nick Adams' story, Nick's sister's words "Damn slashings" and "I hate them. And the damn weeds are like flowers in the tree cemetery if nobody took care of it" (Hemingway, 1987, p.516) can be another demonstration of this point. Through the depiction of Nick's memories in the quotations above, we can see that Hemingway also showed his nostalgia for the old-growth forests and the sorrow towards the loss of the beauty of nature and ecology in the State.

As the story goes on, it has become nearly dark after Nick's recalling of the hunting experience and first sexual intercourse. The story tells us that, to Nick, the end of the day always belongs to him alone and he will never think of his father in such a moment. However, the fact is that Hemingway didn't put an end to Nick's reminiscence of his father in the story. Instead, the description was again switched to Nick's recalling of his father. This time the reminiscence is related directly to the setting of nature:

His father came back to him in the fall of the year, or in the early spring when there had been jacksnipe on the prairie, or when he saw shocks of corn, or when he saw a lake, or if he ever saw a horse and buggy, or he saw, or heard, wild geese, or in a duck blind; remembering the time an eagle dropped through the whirling snow to strike a canvas-covered decoy, rising, his wings beating, the talons caught in the canvas. His father was with him, suddenly, in deserted orchards and in new-plowed fields, in thickets, on small hills, or when going through dead grass, whenever splitting wood or hauling water, by grist mills, cider mills and dams and always with open fires. (Hemingway, 1987, pp. 374-375)

Nick's love towards his father has been changed into a strong passion for the great nature; meanwhile, his reminiscence of his father has been turned into the sentiment towards the disappearance of the natural beauty in the American countryside. Nick is conscious that his father will never come back to life; neither can the destroyed nature be recovered completely. This reminiscence of lost natural beauty comes from the Michigan timbering frenzy that damaged the regenerative capacity of the land. What's more, "clearcut forests in Michigan were not replanted until the 1920s, and that first crop was not ready for harvest as saw timber until five years after Hemingway's 1961 suicide" (qtd.in Beegel, 1998, p. 85). According to ecologists, once the environment of a place is severely destroyed, it will never recover to its original state. They hold that "although what remains may evolve into a viable ecosystem of another sort – like a suburban neighborhood supporting whitetail deer – that ecosystem will bear no resemblance to what was lost" (Beegel, 1998, p.103). As a result, there is no wonder Nick's son prefers the family should live and be buried in France or at an American ranch in the future.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Environmental crises today are obviously the result of human being's disconnection from the natural world, which are caused by our overconfidence in conquering nature. In this serious situation, the raising of ecological conscience is a foundational way to solve the problem. The arousal of respecting and protecting nature lies not only in nature writings, but also in many modern narrative fictions, as Leo Marx pointed out in his pioneering book *The Machine in the Garden*, "There can be little doubt that it affects the nation's taste in serious literature, reinforcing the legitimate respect enjoyed by much writers as Mark Twain, Ernest Hemingway, and Robert Frost" (Marx, 1979, p.6). From the knowledge of Ernest Hemingway's biography and the careful eco-critical study on his works, we come to the recognition that Hemingway is a great writer who, as an avid lover of fishing, hunting, and bullfighting, has a deep love and appreciation towards nature; and the relationship between man and nature is one of the themes of his literary works. "Fathers and Sons" is an elegiac short story in which Hemingway, who was himself taught fishing and hunting by his father like Nick Adams in the story, artistically associated Nick Adams' reminiscence of his beloved father with the loss of ecological beauty in the Michigan State. Skillfully moving from motion to emotion and through the portrayal of Nick's memories, Hemingway exposed human being's ruin of nature and showed his sympathy for the destroyed ecology. The story actually reflects the Hemingway's yearning toward the lost beauty of nature and civilization. The analysis of "Fathers and Sons" from an eco-critical point of view offers an important perspective for the study of Hemingway's short stories. And the readers' environmental consciousness will definitely be further aroused after they re-examine the short story with such an eco-critical approach.

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# Remedial Instructions for C-level ESL College Students with Severe Listening Disabilities

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**Abstract**—This paper suggested two strategies to improve the listening capacity for C-level ESL College Students with Severe Listening Disabilities: boosting self-confidence and providing pre-listening vocabulary support. Special instructions shall be adopted for C-level ESL College Students, for they encounter severe listening problems that are vital for their second language acquisition.

**Index Terms**—remedial instruction, ESL, listening disabilities, College English, C-level students

## I. THE PROBLEM

In China, College English in universities and colleges face common problems. As one of the compulsory courses, College English is required to be finished in two years. The first year college students have to take a special examination to be categorized as different levels of English learners, namely A level, B level, C level. In this test, especially in Shanghai University, listening counts for much. Consequently, students from economically developed regions such as Shanghai, Zhejiang Province, Jiangsu province would perform better than those from the west, the less developed regions and provinces, such as Tibet. In addition, some provinces such as Guizhou would have a different way of having the listening test. For example, the examiners would play the listening tape for the test twice, even more. Therefore when these students come to listening tests in which the tape is allowed to be played only once, they would meet with difficulties of understanding and comprehension. These students are the C-level students with severe listening disabilities.

The problem is that there is no fundamental difference concerning the teaching methods between the C-level students with the A and B. Usually different leveled students would have different text books for the same course College English according to the level of difficulties. But the teaching method is similar. There is no special adjustment to students' listening disabilities. Currently, the series Twenty-first Century College English is the text book for C-level students. In this series, the text book *Watching, Listening & Speaking* is designed to improve the listening ability of this level. In this book, communication skill is laid the greatest importance. It aims to prepare students for the future career. Thus, most listening and speaking materials are about business English. For example, the first unit in Book 2 focuses on how to make complain in the workplace, and unite 2 is about how to listen in the workplace, etc. For the majority of the freshmen, these materials are far from their campus life and daily concern. In addition, the dictions and expressions form a sharp contrast with their high school English. It is found that 90% of the freshmen have problem with the listening and speaking class. Both the vocabulary and context are unfamiliar to the students. The teachers find it difficult to move the class forward, for students simply have not much interest in it, and they cannot follow the whole class.

Based on the current situation, this paper has two suggestions. The first one is to boost students' confidence of learning English with some strategies. The second is to enhance students' basic listening skills from the very fundamental level. These two approaches are well connected with each other. If the students have the confidence in listening, they would like to follow the teachers and continue their studies. Otherwise they would probably give up learning English totally, just as some C-level students have done. And if the students grasp the basic listening skills step by step, their confidence would be gradually boosted. Then they would come into a positive cycle of learning English. The problem is not to learn how much, but how to learn.

## II. THE IMPORTANCE OF LISTENING

Listening plays a vital role in language acquisition for it helps students develop other language skills (Feyten, 1991; Mendelsohn, 1995; Rost, 2002). According to Nunan, listening is the fundamental skill in language learning. Without effective listening skills, learners will find it difficult to communicate effectively. And he also believes that more than half of the time that students spend on functioning in a foreign language will be devoted to listening (1998).

Two dominating views, "Bottom-up" processing view and the "Top-down" interpretation view, concerning the pedagogy of listening over the last twenty years shed new insights. In the bottom-up processing model, as is believed, listening is a process of decoding the sounds that one hears in a linear fashion, from the smallest meaningful units (or phonemes) to complete texts. That is to say, phonemic units are decoded and linked together to form words, words are linked together to form phrases, phrases are linked together to form utterances, and utterances are linked together to

form complete meaningful texts. While for the top-down view, it is the listener who actively constructs, or reconstructs the original meaning of the speaker using incoming sounds as clues. In this reconstruction process, prior knowledge of the context and situation within which the listening takes place is used by the listener to make sense of what he or she hears (Nunan, 1998). In this latter view, the prominence of background knowledge the listeners have possessed is emphasized. When they perceive and process the information they are hearing, the listeners use the prior knowledge to facilitate their attempt to grasp the incoming information by relating the familiar with the new one. If the listeners lack the prior knowledge, their efforts of comprehending the listening would be hampered. Therefore, whether the learners can effectively perform this processing determines the outcomes of their listening.

For the C-level students with severe listening disabilities, the Top-down view would be more effective in improving listening capacities. This is largely because, the C-level students is lack of associating between what they have learnt and what they are going to learn. On the one hand, they had always performed not well in doing listening tasks, that they have no confidence in doing them well. They tend not to associate with what they have known, for they believe that they have known nothing useful. This psychological problem has to be solved in order to improve students' listening abilities. On the other hand, teachers have not done enough to help students to consciously make the association happen. Pre-listening activities are even ignored. With liminal background information, C-level students find it more difficult to comprehend the listening, and their confidence in listening is weakened therefore.

### III. REMEDIAL INSTRUCTION

Known as developmental education, basic skills education, compensatory education, preparatory education, and academic upgrading, remedial instruction is designed to assist students in order to achieve expected competencies. According to King (1973), remedial instruction can be regarded as those instructions that intend to correct bad habits, to bring students up to the level they are supposed to have reached in order to carry out requisite tasks of understanding the spoken and written word, of speaking and of writing. Remedial instruction is adopted more to teach children with learning disabilities (Torgesen et al., 2001). For the application of remedial instruction in adult, researches have done in United States (Bossone, 1966). They believed that not only children but also adult need remedial instruction. In Bossone's study, approximately 70 percent of the entering freshmen (of which there are approximately 270,000) in California public junior colleges fail the qualifying examination for English 1A; and, with the trend toward education for all persons through the age of twenty, there will be undoubtedly an increase in the number of students in need of remedial English work.

There is an assumption that the remedial English provided for native speakers of English will also do for students of English as a second language. However, there are differences between improving the English of the native speaker and improving the English of a foreign speaker (King, 1973). Researchers from countries and regions that English as non-native language have done some researches in this field. Ho (2016) has examined the extent to which using an English Remedial Instruction Course enhances the vocabulary of Form 3 Malaysian students at a rural school in Sarawak, Malaysia. The study showed there were significant differences using Remedial Instruction enhance the learners' vocabulary.

In China, things are different. Here remedial instruction is also known as "buxiban" (simplified Chinese: 补习班) to help students to remain competitive with their peers of the same age. Students that go for remedial instruction are not altogether those having problem with learning. In addition, remedial instruction is popular in primary school, middle and high school years, rather than in the college, for the purpose of remedial instruction is to help students to get a high-enough college entrance exam score to attend prestigious universities. After students were enrolled into universities, remedial instruction is seldom to be adopted. It is commonly accepted that college students shall be able to study by themselves. In addition, getting high scores in colleges are not that important as in high school. Therefore, remedial instruction is not popular in universities and colleges.

Whether college students in China need remedial instruction requires more discussions and researches. In Qiong's study (2012), the method of e-learning was adopted to demonstrate the effectiveness of remedial instruction in College English. It suggested methods such as individualized teaching, love-oriented teaching, motivation strategies and instruction with the help of technology, to facilitate students' listening comprehension. While Qiong's study has provided some important evidence for the positive effect of the remedial instruction in College English teaching, more studies are clearly needed to confirm this positive effect, considering especially the following problems in Qiong's study. This study intended to solve the problems of students of low-achievement through e-learning, such as making the PPT more attractive to students. It is effective to some extent. But some fundamental issue has not been covered. This paper is going to approach this problem from two perspectives, the one is physiological and the other is concerned with the most basic skills. In addition, as the fundamental capacity, listening is regarded as an important approach to English capacity improvement.

### IV. STRATEGY: BOOSTING SELF-CONFIDENCE IN ENGLISH LISTENING

Researches on improving listening comprehension for English as second language tend to lay great emphasis on skills rather than other factors such as emotion or psychology. Habte-Gabr's study (2006) has clearly shown that socio

affective strategies play a major role in teaching mainstream subjects. It argued that socio-affective strategies were those that involve stimulating learning through establishing a level of empathy between the instructor and student. In Oxford's study (1990), the socio affective strategies include factors such as emotions and attitudes. It is believed that confidence in doing listening tasks is essential. It will help reduce the listeners' anxiety and promote their motivation in improving listening comprehension. According to Vandergrift, L. (2003), if the only purpose of using listening activities is to test students' comprehension ability, students would feel anxiety and under great pressure, which would obstruct students' listening comprehension and confidence. Teachers shall use some strategies to guide students through the process of listening. They shall not only instruct them to successfully complete a listening task, but also guide them to have a clear picture of the whole process of listening, and motivate them to control their listening. In their influential book *Learning Strategies in Second Language Acquisition* (2001), O'Malley & Chamot offer an account of the nature and significance of learning strategies, and demonstrate how to plan more effective instructional practices using the strategies. They believe that affective strategies influenced the learning situation immediately.

Many teachers disregard the importance of students' confidence in learning English. They put more value on students' motivation. However, students with high motivation do not necessarily perform well in both classroom study and final examination. As one of the compulsory courses, college English takes 24 GPA points among. And usually if students fail C-1, they would probably fail C-2, C-3, for C-1 is the most basic and easiest. Most universities and colleges take the academic performance as the requirement for the entrance to the majors. If their GPA is not high enough, they would be excluded from the most popular majors. In a word, students have the motivation to learn English well. However, in each semester, there would be 10% of the C-level students fail the course. Most importantly, there are a large number of students who is not allowed to have the graduation certificate because of their failure in this course. They are allowed to re-attend the class after graduation, but most times they would fail again. This is partly because they have no enough time to study during the workday compared with that when they were in the college. Although some universities and colleges have abolished the regulation that students must pass the national English test: College English Band 4 before their graduation, and there are many criticism against the test itself, there is still much applause of college English in the labor market. Students are well conscious of the importance of college English and they certainly have the motivation. The bad academic performance is not due to the lack of motivation, but something else.

From the conversations with C-level students and observation of their behaviors in the classroom, this paper believes that lack of confidence in learning English count for much. C-level students do not necessarily mean that they perform not satisfactorily in all the subjects, such as math and physics. On the contrary, they are very intelligent in fields other than English. In fact, in order to be enrolled by the universities, C-level students must have higher scores in other subjects, for their English is not very good. They have problem in English learning, not learning itself. They are confident in all subjects except English. And being categorized as C level, some students feel not very good. They determined to go to B level, which indicates that their confidence has been harmed to some extent.

In order to boost students' confidence of listening, teachers shall monitor all the process of listening tasks. Most importantly, teachers shall help students set goals. It is definitely important to set goals in English learning. However, C-level students are not able to set appropriate goals that can really motivate them and eventually help improve their confidence in learning. Most students have a very vague purpose, such as passing the final examination, or improving their English. But they have no specific measures of achieving these goals. Eventually they would totally forget what they have determined to accomplish in this semester during the learning process, and when the final examination day is approaching, they would feel intensely the anxiety and frustration. After several painful experiences, students would gradually suggest to themselves that they do not have the ability to improve English, and eventually give up totally. In this situation, teachers shall help them to set executable goals and plans step by step. Most college English teachers regard students as adult who shall be responsible for their study. They believe that as a college student, one shall be able to learn by oneself. However, for the C-level students, teachers shall help students build confidence step by step by monitoring the whole listening process. They shall tell the students the purpose of each listening activity, and allow them to have a clear idea of the results of listening by demonstrating the evaluation process.

Among the pre-listening activities, while-listening activities and post-listening activities, pre-reading activities shall be the focus for C-level students' teachers. Currently, in the College English classroom, while-listening activities and post-listening activities have been conducted well, while the pre-listening activities are mostly ignored. This is largely because of teachers' concept that if students have done something related with what they are going to listen in the class, they would pay less attention to the in-class listening activities. However, pre-listening activities are very important, especially for the C-level students. This is not only because these activities would help students build their confidence in listening, but also are positive in improving their listening comprehension. In the pre-listening activities, teachers shall provide students with context information for the specific listening task and try to activate students' prior knowledge. This would help build up their expectations for the coming information.

#### V. STRATEGY: PRE-LISTENING VOCABULARY SUPPORT

Researches on ESL listening have found that pre-listening support is crucial to the effective of students' listening comprehension. Previewing the test questions, repetition of the input, providing background knowledge about the topic, and vocabulary instruction are four types of the most used pre-listening supports. By comparing the effectiveness of the

four types of pre-listening support, the research of Chang & Read (2006) showed that the most effective type of support overall was providing information about the topic, followed by repetition of the input, and vocabulary instruction was the least useful form of support. However, other researches have demonstrated that there are strong correlations between vocabulary knowledge and listening comprehension (Bonk, 2000; Stahr, 2009). In Bonk's study, 59 Japanese learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) were examined to find the relationship between the students' level of familiarity with the lexis in the listening texts and their comprehension. It is found that participants knowing fewer than 75% of the content words in the input texts, including nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, were unable to have an acceptable comprehension score. Those knowing more than 90% all demonstrated good comprehension. In short, the study argues that 'acceptable comprehension levels were significantly associated with higher text-lexis familiarity' (Bonk, 2000). Similarly, in Stahr's study (2009) with 115 advanced Danish EFL learners, it was found that students with larger vocabulary would perform more effectively in their listening comprehension. It is implied that the size of one's vocabulary plays a very important role in listening comprehension.

Researches not only demonstrated the importance of vocabulary in listening comprehension, but also noted the value of lexical collocation instruction. In Hsu & Hsu's study (2007), 34 English majors in two groups received three different types of instruction: single-item vocabulary instruction, lexical collocation instruction, and no instruction in each class, and right after the instruction they were requested to have a listening comprehension test. It is found that the participants who received lexical collocation instruction had the highest score in the test. Hsu & Hsu's study clearly demonstrated the single-item vocabulary instruction is not effective compared with lexical collocation instruction. However, the focus of most studies on pre-listening vocabulary instruction was on single words. Although single words are certainly important, there are some shortages of instructions of such individual words. Firstly, such instructions would isolate individual words from the overall content of the passage, thus making learners difficult to comprehend the whole text. Secondly, such instructions do not help much the learners quickly and accurately parse the speech stream into meaningful chunks (Conklin & Schmitt, 2008). In Pan et al.'s study (2018), multiword units are adopted to facilitate listening comprehension. By investigating the effectiveness of two different levels of 18-week vocabulary support, Pan et al. concluded that the expanded vocabulary support was particularly helpful for lower proficiency level students.

While Pan et al.'s study has provided some important evidence for the positive effect of the instruction of multiword units on listening; more studies are clearly needed to confirm this positive effect, considering especially the different situations in different regions. In addition, usually in a technology college, the English proficiency level is varied, and the situation in China is also different from that in Taiwan. Taken C-level students in Shanghai University as example, this paper would demonstrate how the pre-listening vocabulary support enhances the students' listening comprehension. As stated above, C-level students in Shanghai University are from different provinces with different English education background. Compared with other pre-listening support, these students are in great need of vocabulary support. And the expanded vocabulary support would be more effective to enhance their listening comprehension and confidence in listening. By comparing students with the expanded vocabulary support with those that received no expanded vocabulary support, this paper intends to demonstrate how vocabulary instruction before the listening task facilitates students' listening comprehension.

A total of 78 first-year students from two C-level classes participated in this research. They would have two 45-minute classes on Monday and two on Wednesday. All the participants in the two classes had studied English for at least six years. They all have listening problems. During a ten-week semester, students from two classes were randomly assigned to either the experimental (EG) or control (CG) groups. Throughout the course of College English for C-level students, both EG and CG were assigned with same listening material and having same listening tests. The only difference lies in the pre-listening vocabulary support. EG would receive multiword units vocabulary support while CG not. These expanded vocabulary support activities were designed for students to have a better understanding not only of the vocabulary itself, but also of the whole lexical structure.

Test results drawn from eight listening quizzes, midterm and final exams as well as responses to lexical intervention questionnaires were collected. By analyzing the data collected, this research intended to answer the three research questions: (1) What were the effects of pre-listening vocabulary support on the final performance of the college students? (2) What types of listening behaviors did the treatment group exhibit? and (3) What were students' perceptions of pre-listening lexical support in regard to their listening tasks? It is found that the EG lower-proficiency students benefited more from expanded listening support than their higher-proficiency counterparts did. In addition, from interview surveys it is found that students have a positive overall opinion of the role that listening support played. By motivating students to have control of their listening, this research would further facilitate students' independent listening study. In a word, pre-listening expanded vocabulary support can have strong and positive effect on ESL students with severe listening disabilities.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors wish to thank Ph. D. Yin'er Zhu for her generous support of this project. This work was supported in part by a grant from Schools of Foreign Language, Shanghai University, namely "Strategies of Remedial Instructions for C-level Students in College English".

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# Exploring the Moves and Steps in TEFL M.A. Theses Introduction and Review of Literature PowerPoint Presentations: A Genre Analysis Approach

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**Abstract**—The use of technology has had great impacts on different aspects of our lives. Educational settings, in this regard, have been no exception, and technology is changing and affecting the way students learn and present academic endeavors. Among these is the use of computer assisted presentation of materials (PowerPoint in particular) that has received special attention when it comes to presenting the results of research such as students' theses. This study investigates the moves and steps M.A. students of TEFL use in the introduction and review of literature sections while presenting their M.A. theses through PowerPoint. The findings showed that five basic units of M.A. theses (Introduction, Literature review, Method, Results and Discussion) are present as the rhetorical structuring of PowerPoint presentations. The findings of this study can have implications for students, teachers, material developers, curriculum designers and all those who wish to benefit from the genre theory and make use of it practically.

**Index Terms**—CALL, discourse analysis, ESP, genre analysis, move, powerpoint presentation, step

## I. INTRODUCTION

As a result of the growing interest in higher education for the sake of better educational and job opportunities, the number of articles and papers among university-educated societies is increasing, too. The steady increase in the use of technology has empowered the educationalists and university students to move far beyond the written world and traditional way of presenting the articles and use technology as a powerful way for interaction between the text and audience. Video conferencing, internet and presentation software are samples of this technology. As Corder and U-Mackey (2011) stated integration of technology into the pedagogical outcomes can resolve pedagogical issues. The use of technological tools requires consideration of its different dimensions. According to Chalhoub-Deville (2002) emergence of computers and undeniable impact of computer technological advances has facilitated the world of foreign language education. Technology can simplify and facilitate the communication purposes of language learning and inject interests and innovations into the area of education.

Computer-assisted language learning (CALL) has many applications on language learning and teaching. PowerPoint Presentations as part of this technology provides its users with different communication tools (Chapelle, 2010). Widespread use of this software in presenting different projects such as class projects, articles, or theses strengthens the necessity of a methodical, step by step analyzing of its features. Effective use of this multidimensional technology reveals a need for its careful consideration from an applied genre study view.

Hammond and Derewianka (2001) have advanced the impact of genre in English for specific purposes (ESP) on increasing the importance of assisting the professionals familiar with the "language required" for communicating in the various academic and communicating setting. As stated by Swales (1990, p. 72), the danger of ignoring genre is precisely the danger of ignoring communicative purpose. Bahatia (1993) has mentioned that any mismatch in the use of generic recourses will be recognized as odd both by the members of the specialist community and the good users of the language.

The fact that teachers are one of the most effective members of every educational system and the wide use of PowerPoint presentation by this group of educational members stress the importance of PowerPoint's genre familiarity for them to be able to keep up with the rapid changes of technology for succeeding in dealing with the communication purposes of the belonging community.

In spite of the fact that PowerPoint presentations as the main way of presenting articles and theses are increasingly being used, few researchers (e.g. Atai & Talebzadeh, 2012; Rowley-Jolivet & Carter-Thomas 2005) have considered it from a discourse perspective.

Although there have been valuable studies which have analyzed the moves and steps of different sections of theses and articles such as Swales' (1990) analysis of introduction section of research articles or Nguyen and Pramoolsook's (2015) analysis of theses' results-discussion chapters, few studies have systematically investigated PowerPoint presentations from a genre perspective. Since the importance of genre familiarity in providing understandable and recognizable presentations is undeniable, the present study attempted to explore the moves and steps of PowerPoint presentations as the means of communication and it focuses on the theses of English language teaching students as the highly expected community to have a considerable amount of genre knowledge for serving their students' communication needs on one hand and dealing with their own community members' professional expectations on the other hand.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

In genre analysis relying on the ESP approach, different kinds of genres such as research articles, theses, lectures, job application letters and sales promotion letters have been of interest for ESP scholars. The framework used for analyzing these genres in many cases followed the Swales' (1990) move analytical model (which he viewed as the most perceptive aspect of applied genre analysis) conducted for the analysis of rhetorical structure of academic texts such as the introduction of research articles. In move analytical model particular attention to the formal characteristics of genres is emphasized (Hyon, 1996; Partlidge, 2007).

More recently, by incorporation of technology into the academic settings, educational members have shifted their attention from paper-based articles to the other forms of presentation which highlighted a growing need in developing digital literacy skills which were defined by Gilster (1997) as the skills needed for communicating with the information presented via computers. CALL as one of the implications of digital literacy emphasized the role of computer in language teaching and learning (Levy, 1997). CALL was later used to refer to any kind of technological innovation embedded in everyday practice and therefore normalized. Alkash and Al\_Dersi (2013) referred to PowerPoint presentation as a kind of CALL which provides users with text, images, animation, sound and audio-visual.

This kind of CALL puts demand on the genre analysts to explore its different visual and textual aspects. Investigating on the PowerPoint presentations which were based on the experimental articles, case studies and some other forms of research showed that researchers typically follow a macro-model framework for structuring the main parts of their articles. The macro-model framework consisted of four sections: Introduction, Methodology, Results, and Discussion or Conclusion (Rowley-Jolivet, 2002; Trady, 2005). Each of these sections found by the macro-model framework must be analyzed separately for finding the layers embedded in each which is called Move and Step.

### A. *Move Analytical Model for Introduction Section*

The moves introduced by Chen and Kuo (2012) for introduction section of research articles are the same as the moves introduced by Swales (1990) for research articles with one extra move. However the steps are not completely the same. These are the moves found by Chen and Kuo (2012): Move IT: Establishing a territory; Move IN: Establishing a niche; Move IO: Occupying the niche; Move IL: Referring to other studies.

### B. *MIT: Establishing a Territory*

Swales (1990) relates this move to the goal and current capacity. Chen and Kuo (2012) find four steps for it: step ITb or Providing topic generalization/background can be viewed in two forms of statement about knowledge or statement about the phenomena; Step ITc or indicating centrality/importance of topic tries to persuade the members of discourse community that the research is part of a significant and valuable research area; step ITd or defining terms; step IT1 or reviewing previous research in which the author relates what has been found with the finder. The author provides specification of previous findings, researchers and results.

### C. *MIO: Occupying the Niche*

As Swales (1990) states move IO or occupying the niche turns the niche established into the research space that explains the present article. It can appear in these steps: Step IOp or indicating purpose/aims/objective; Step IOc or indicating scope of research; Step IOu or indicating chapter/section structure; Step IOh or indicating theoretical position; Step IOw or announcing research/work carried out; Step IOe or describing parameters of research; Step IOq or stating research questions/hypotheses; Steps IOd or defining terms; Step IOm or indicating research method; Step IOr or indicating findings/results; Step IOt or indicating models proposed; Step IOa or indicating applications; Step IOv or indicating value or significance; Step IOj or providing justification; step IOo or indicating thesis structure.

### D. *MIL: Referring to Other Studies*

This move which was absent in Swales' (1990) CARS model for Introduction section of research articles can be expressed through three steps: Step ILt or providing background information; Step ILd or providing definition of terms; Step ILj or providing support or justification (Chen & Kuo, 2012).

### E. *Move Analytical Model for Literature Review Section*

These are the moves introduced by Chen and Kuo (2012) for literature review section of the investigated master theses: Move LI or introduction which indicates organization of the review chapter and justifies the themes or areas to be reviewed. It doesn't express through any steps; Move LE or establishing one part of the territory of one's own research by; Move LN or creating a research need (in response to previous move) by; Move LO or occupying the research niche by announcing; Move LC or conclusion that provides a summary of the review of the themes and relates the review to the present study.

#### *F. MLI: Introduction*

Chen and Kuo (2012) did not find any steps for MLI and just explained it as a move that indicates organization of the review chapter and justifies the themes or areas to be covered.

#### *G. MLE: Establishing One Part of the Territory of One's Own Research*

Based on Chen and Kuo (2012) these are the steps of this move: Step Len or surveying the non-research related phenomena or knowledge claims; Step LEc or claiming centrality; Step LEr or surveying the research-related phenomena.

#### *H. MLN: Creating a Research Need (in Response to Move LE)*

These are steps introduced by Chen and Kuo (2012) for this move: Step LNC or counter claiming which expresses weaknesses and problems; Step LNg or gap-indicating; Step LNa or asserting confirmative claims about knowledge or research practices surveyed; Step LNr or asserting the relevancy of the surveyed claims to one's own research; Step LNs or abstracting knowledge claims to establish a theoretical position or a theoretical framework; Step LNT or concluding a part of literature review.

#### *I. MLO: Occupying the Research Niche by Announcing*

Chen and Kuo (2012) found these steps for Move LO: Step LOa or indicating research aims, focuses, research questions or hypotheses; Step LOt or indicating theoretical positions or frameworks; Step IOd or indicating research design or process; Step LOi or interpreting terminology used in the thesis.

#### *J. MLC: Conclusion*

Chen and Kuo (2012) did not introduce any steps for conclusion and just explained it as a move that can provide a summary of the review of the themes and relate the review to the present study.

#### *K. Genre*

Discourse analysts have always been interested in how writing and communicative skills in academic and professional academic setting use the idea of genre to achieve their communicative goals (Johnstone, 2002). Many scholars looked at genre as a framework for analyzing nonliterary discourse for the purpose of serving educational needs such as raising genre awareness for writing compositions, articles and English for specific purposes (Hyon, 1996).

Swales (1990) provided the most practical definition of genre:

A genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some sets of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community and there by constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style. Communicative purpose is both a privileged criterion and one that operates to keep the scope of a genre as narrowly focused on comparable rhetorical action. (p. 58)

Dudley-Evans and ST John (1998) made a distinction between discourse analysis and genre analysis: while discourse analysis refers to any study of language at a level above that of the sentence, genre analysis focuses on the differences between text types. So genre analysis focuses on the frequently occurred structures that distinguish one genre from another. It focuses on the distinguishing features of different texts.

Bhatia (2004) stated that genre analysis as an attempt to study "situated linguistic behavior in institutionalized academic or professional settings" (p. 26) accounts "for not only the way a text is constructed, but also for the way it is often interpreted" (p. 23).

#### *L. Moves and Steps Analytical Models*

Swales (1990), Dudley-Evans (2000), and Bhatia (1993) referred to move analysis as the most perceptive aspect of applied genre analysis. In move and step analysis, formal characteristics of a special genre are emphasized. Bhatia (2001) defined moves as "rhetorical instruments that realize a sub-set of specific communicative purposes associated with a genre, and as such they are interpreted in the context of the communicative purposes of the genre in question" (p. 84). According to Nwogu (1997), a move is "a text segment made up of linguistic features (lexical meaning, propositional meaning, illocutionary force, etc.) which give the segment a uniform orientation and signal the content of discourse in it" (p. 122). Based on Dudley-Evans and ST John (1998) a move is a "unit that relates both to the writer's purpose and to the content that s/he wishes to communicate" (p. 89).

Moves have their own steps which are parts of the same rhetorical structure and can be viewed as different strategies for realizing the value of moves (Bhatia, 2001). Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) defined step as "a lower level text

unit than the move that provides a detailed perspective on the options open to the writer in setting out the moves” (p. 89).

Following Swales’ move and step model of research articles’ analysis and aiming at instructing the students directly on how to compose their own theses, Nguyen and Pramoolsook (2014) worked on electronic Master’s theses’ introduction chapters written by Vietnamese students in the field of TESOL. The moves they distinguished were the same as Swales’ moves in 1990. Nguyen and Pramoolsook (2015) used the same procedure for results-discussion chapters in TESOL master’s theses of Vietnamese students and their analysis revealed that the students constructed the texts according to their perceived communicative purposes. Except the rhetorical structures of these TESOL thesis chapters in Vietnam, the results of the study also suggested the explicit teaching of the construction of these chapters for genre familiarity because of the insufficient knowledge of these students about this genre.

#### *M. PowerPoint Presentation*

Kjeldsen (2006) traced the starting point for using media back to 70s and early 80s. The age he called “the age of the overhead projector” (p. 2). In 1984, works on an electronic presentation program called Presenter began. The name of Presenter changed to PowerPoint. Despite PowerPoint powerful effects on the teaching, learning and understanding, Kjeldsen (2006) noticed some of its limitations such as “poor resolution and fixed format, its speaker-oriented cognitive style and the bullet points (which are too general)” (pp. 3-6). Facing these hurdles with PowerPoint as a widely used presentation tool in conferences, meetings and academic settings made Kjeldsen suggest that:

The solution to the PowerPoint problem is for us to stop thinking in terms of technology and begin to think rhetorically. As speakers, we should not be thinking of how to fill in a template. We should be thinking of purposes, goals and means. What do we want to achieve? How can we best achieve it? What tools will help us best? And what are the technological limitations and possibilities? If Media Literacy represents the ability to read and interpret media statements, Media Rhetoracy represents the ability to create and communicate such statements. (pp. 11-12)

It seems that from this viewpoint, PowerPoint can be dealt with as a genre. As Rowley-Jolivet (2002) has highlighted the importance of visual channel of communication in scientific presentations, the importance of PowerPoint presentation as one of these most widely used channel can’t be neglected.

### III. MATERIAL

In order to achieve the objective of the present study, a corpus of 50 PowerPoint presentations was collected. These PowerPoint presentations had been prepared by language teaching students of Islamic Azad University, Rasht Branch and based on their M.A. theses. The presentations had been presented in English in short sessions of 15 to 25 minutes in their viva sessions. For the consistency of the results, all the presentations chosen for this study were taken from M.A. students in the field of language teaching.

### IV. PROCEDURES FOR DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

This study was conducted between March 2015 and July 2016 and followed a corpus-based approach with its focus on the actual language used in naturally occurring text rather than the possibilities of language. It built on the assumption that textual features of educational discourse in paper-based and computer-based presentations might be different.

The Move analytical model presented by previous researchers was utilized to analyze the PowerPoint presentations presented based on the participants’ M.A. theses in this study. As information needed for making these PowerPoint presentations are extracted from relevant paper-based theses, it may be influenced by the cognitive and rhetorical structuring of the written theses process genres. For representing the schematic structure of different sections of the presentations, Chen and Kuo’s (2012) move analytical model was adopted. In their model they had found the moves and steps of different parts of Master theses in applied linguistics. For determining the moves’ frequency of occurrence, Swales’ (1990) cut-off point was used. If a move’s occurrence is below 50% it can be considered as optional and if it is above 50% it can be considered as obligatory. However instead of the word “obligatory”, this study uses the word “conventional” introduced by Kanoksilapatham (2005) for the moves that their occurrence is above the cut-off point.

### V. RESULTS

In a move analysis, the Introduction and Literature review of the PowerPoint presentations were analyzed manually based on Chen and Kuo’s (2012) analytical framework through identification of the moves and steps in each section. Moreover, a comparison was made among these two sections of M.A. thesis PowerPoint presentations with respect to rhetorical structures used to see if the structures are entirely the same for these sections.

#### *A. The Results of the Analyses for the Introduction Section*

Through the genre of the introduction section of the PowerPoint presentations, M.A. students had used different information structure to represent the relevance of their thesis to previous work in the field and their own perspective towards previous research and mentioned the significance, merits, and their justification for their study.

The results of the move-step analyses revealed that the introductions in fifty theses presentations contained three conventional moves that were establishing a territory, establishing a niche and occupying the niche and one optional move that was referring to other studies. The rhetorical structures of the introduction section of the PowerPoint presentations are summarized in Table 1.

TABLE 1.  
RHETORICAL MOVES FOR THE INTRODUCTION SECTION OF THE POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS

	Frequency	Percentage	N
<b>Move IT: Establishing a territory</b>			
Providing topic generalization/background ITb	43	86	50
Indicating centrality/importance of topic ITc	32	64	50
Defining terms ITd	23	46	50
Reviewing previous research ITl	40	80	50
Average percent		69%	
<b>Move IN: Establishing a niche</b>			
Indicating a gap in previous research INg	40	80	50
Question-raising INq	10	20	50
Counter claiming Inc	8	16	50
Continuing/extending a tradition INe	0	0	50
Indicating a problem/need Inn	50	100	50
Average percent		54%	
<b>Move IO: Occupying the niche</b>			
Indicating purposes/aims/objectives IOp	30	60	50
Indicating scope of research IOc	13	26	50
Indicating chapter/section structure IOu	30	60	50
Indicating theoretical position IOh	27	54	50
Announcing research/work carried out IOW	0	0	50
Describing parameters of research IOe	0	0	50
Stating research questions/hypotheses IOq	50	100	50
Defining terms IOd	42	84	50
Indicating research method IOm	35	70	50
Indicating findings/results IOr	6	12	50
Indicating models proposed IOt	3	6	50
Indicating applications IOa	43	86	50
Indicating value or significance IOv	47	94	50
Providing justification IOj	0	0	50
Indicating thesis structure IOo	44	88	50
Average percent		61.66%	
<b>Move IL: Referring to other studies</b>			
Providing background information ILt	21	42	50
Providing definition of terms ILd	22	44	50
Providing support or justification ILj	19	38	50
Average percent		41.33%	

As it was displayed in Table 1, in general, four moves were identified in the Introduction section. Three of these moves were conventional based on Swales' (1990) cut-off point since the moves' occurrences were above 50%; and simply the move IL: Referring to other studies was optional based on Swales' (1990) cut-off point as the move's occurrence was below 50%.

These included Move 1: Establishing a territory, conventional, in which steps one, two and four were considered as conventional ( $P > 50\%$ ). Move 2: Establishing a niche consisted of five steps only two of which (steps one and five) are considered as conventional with 86 and 100 per cent respectively. Move 3: Occupying the niche included 15 steps nine of which were regarded as conventional with step 7 (stating research) having 100% occurrence.

#### B. The Results of the Analyses for the Literature Review Section

In the literature review section of the presentations, M.A. students had used information and evidence to fulfill the aims of their study. Moreover, they had tried to reveal the gap in theory or practice that was important for their inspection, and also made a critical judgment of the previous views, and had indicated the strengths and weaknesses of previous studies. Table 2 summarizes the rhetorical structure of the literature review section of PowerPoint presentations.

TABLE 2.  
RHETORICAL MOVES FOR THE LITERATURE REVIEW SECTION OF THE POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS

	Frequency	Percent	N
<b>Move LI: Introduction</b>			
Indicating organization of the review chapter(s) and justifying the themes (areas)LI	8	20	50
<b>Move LE: Establishing one part of the territory of one's own research</b>			
Surveying the non-research-related Len	28	70	50
phenomena or knowledge claims /Claiming centrality LEc	30	75	50
Surveying the research-related phenomena LER	32	80	50
Average percent		75%	50
<b>Move LN: Creating a research need (in response to Move LE)</b>			
Counter-claiming (weaknesses and problems) LNC	16	40	50
Gap-indicating (paucity or scarcity) LNg	14	35	50
Asserting confirmative claims about knowledge or research practices surveyed LNa	8	20	50
Asserting the relevancy of the surveyed claims to one's own research LNr	14	35	50
Abstracting or synthesizing knowledge claims to establish a theoretical position or a theoretical framework LNs	6	15	50
Concluding a part of literature review and/or LNt indicating transition to review of a different area	10	25	50
Average percent		28.33 %	50
<b>Move LO: Occupying the research niche by announcing</b>			
Indicating research aims, focuses, research questions or hypotheses LOa	16	40	50
Indicating theoretical positions/theoretical frameworks LOt	18	45	50
Indicating research design/processes LOd	18	45	50
Interpreting terminology used in the thesis LOi	0	0	50
Average percent		43.33%	50
<b>Move LC: Conclusion</b>			
Providing a summary of the review of the themes and relating the review to the present study LC	6	15	50

Table 2 showed that, five moves were recognized in the Literature review section of M.A. theses presentations. They included the "Introduction Move" that was related to "Indicating organization of the review chapters and justifying the themes (areas) to be reviewed". Move 1 was related to "establishing one part of the territory of one's own research" while Move 2 was related to "creating a research need". Furthermore, Move 3 included "occupying the research niche"; and the "Conclusion Move" that was related to "providing a summary of the review of the themes and relating the review to their study".

The results of the Move- step analysis showed that from among the five moves found in the Literature Review section only Move 2 that was "establishing one part of the territory of one's own research" and its three steps were conventional ( $P > 50\%$ ). The rest four moves were optional with the frequency of occurrence being 20%, 28.33%, 43.33%, and 15%, respectively.

Based on the analysis of the introduction and review of literature sections, a framework for M.A. PowerPoint presentation is proposed which is provided in Table 3.

TABLE 3.  
PROPOSED RHETORICAL FRAMEWORK OF M.A. POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS

	Conventional	Optional
<b>Introduction</b>		
Providing topic generalization/background ITb		
Indicating centrality/importance of topic ITc	*	
Defining terms ITd		*
Reviewing previous research IT1	*	
Indicating a gap in previous research INg	*	
Question-raising INq		*
Counter claiming Inc		*
Indicating a problem/need Inn	*	
Indicating purposes/aims/objectives IOp	*	
Indicating scope of research IOc		*
Indicating chapter/section structure IOu	*	
Indicating theoretical position IOh	*	
Stating research questions/hypotheses IOq	*	
Defining terms IOd	*	
Indicating research method IOm	*	
Indicating findings/results IOR		*
Indicating models proposed IOT		*
Indicating applications IOa	*	
Indicating value or significance IOv	*	
Indicating thesis structure IOo	*	
Providing background information ILt		*
Providing definition of terms ILd		*
Providing support or justification ILj		*
<b>Review of literature</b>		
Indicating organization of the reviewchapter(s) and justifying the themes (areas)LI		*
Surveying the non-research-related Len	*	
phenomena or knowledge claims Claiming centrality LEc	*	
Surveying the research-related phenomena LEr	*	
Counter-claiming (weaknesses and problems) LNC		*
Gap-indicating (paucity or scarcity) LNg		*
Asserting confirmative claims about LNa knowledge or research practices surveyed		*
Asserting the relevancy of the surveyed LNr claims to one's own research		*
Abstracting or synthesizing knowledge LNs claims to establish a theoretical position or a theoretical framework		*
Concluding a part of literature review and/or indicating transition to review of a different area LNT		*
Indicating research aims, focuses, research questions or hypotheses Loa		*
Indicating theoretical positions/theoretical frameworks Lot		*
Table 4.6. (continued)		
Indicating research design/processes LOd		*
Providing a summary of the review of the themes and relating the review to the present study LC		*

## VI. CONCLUSION

This study produced results which corroborate the findings of the previous work in this field. These findings are in agreement with Atai and Talebzadeh's (2012) findings which showed PowerPoint presentations of conferences in applied linguistic contain the same sections of the relevant articles. The results are in line with Chen and Kuo's (2012) study, too. However, because the present study investigated on the presentations instead of the paper-based theses, less moves and steps were found in comparison to Chen and Kuo's study. The time limitations of a viva session, having audiences' attention and interest and not having a clear framework for preparing the presentations might be some reasons of these differences.

To analyze the Introduction section of PowerPoint presentations a scheme of three sequential moves and one independent move, consisting of 27 steps in total, was used. The framework taken from Chen and Kuo (2012) is similar to Swales' (1990) three moves CARS model with an extra move as "referring to other studies". The structures of Introductions in the present study generally follow Chen and Kuo's (2012) model, but with fewer steps under the moves.

Some of the steps introduced by them were completely missing in the presentations such as "continuing a tradition" of the second move and "announcing research carried out" and "describing parameters of research" of the third move. This could be because of the time limitation of the viva session which makes students include only main parts of the theses in the presentations. The majority of the presentations included Move 1 (IT) "establishing a territory" which is in line with Atai and Talebzadeh's (2012) results about PowerPoint presentations of research articles which can indicate that stating the goal and current capacity is of great importance for slide makers. It also confirms Chen and Kuo's (2012) results about M.A. theses. However Chen and Kuo reported a higher frequency for Move 1. The frequencies of Move 2 (IN) and Move 3 (IO) were also similar to what Atai and Talebzadeh (2012) reported. The occurrence of Move 3 (IO) was more than Move 2 (IN) and less than Move 1 (IT). It may be due to the fact that students prefer to investigate on

their research area by occupying the niche than focusing on the other studies to find a gap in them or indicate problems which make the present study necessary.

Regarding the sequence of the steps some differences were observed between the results of the present study and Chen and Kuo's results. In two presentations step "announcing research carried out" was seen at the beginning of presentation which is not a normal order of occurrence of IOw. The Move 4 or "referring to other studies" had the lowest frequency among the presentations and did not follow the sequence introduced by Chen and Kuo (2012) as it was not viewed as separated parts or in isolated slides in any of the presentations. The occurrence of this move was distributed among other slides of the Introduction.

Literature review section was analyzed through three sequential moves and two independent moves and their related steps (16 steps in total). Unlike Chen and Kuo (2012) which had reported a frequency of 100% for the Move LI or "introduction" and a high frequency for the Move LC or "conclusion", the results revealed that very few presentations had these two moves. That may be because of the fact that these two parts in each chapter are obligatory for the writers of thesis while the students don't have to include an "introduction" and "conclusion" or "summary" at the end of each part of the presentations. It seems that presenters don't want to lose the audiences' attention with loading them with too much information. In addition the limited time of viva session doesn't let them to include all parts of Chapter two as the longest chapter of a thesis in the presentations. This may be a reason for the limited numbers of slides devoted to Literature Review in the presentations (maximum three slides).

The frequency of Step LEn or "surveying the non-research related phenomena or knowledge claims", Step LEc or "claiming centrality" and Step LEr or "surveying the research-related phenomena" indicates that Move LE enjoys the highest frequency among the moves of this chapter. However, the frequencies of three step sequence patterns were generally low, suggesting that they do not always exist a fixed way. Chen and Kuo (2012) had reported similar results about Steps LEn and LEr.

Having emphasized the importance of genre familiarity, the results of the present study can help the graduate students of English teaching to prepare more comprehensible presentations for their viva session. Well-organized presentations would be able to communicate much easier with the audience in comparison to those that are made haphazardly, as comprehension can be greatly improved if more attention is paid to the rules of the relevant genre. In addition, the results of this study about the ever-growing genre of PowerPoint presentations can help these graduate students as future teachers enrich their genre knowledge's source and transfer it to their own students in the future.

Some clear implications can be drawn from this study for the lecturers and professors to support their students with the knowledge of PowerPoint presentations as the genre of technology in the process of writing their theses and preparing slides based on them. By drawing students' attention to the relationship between the written theses genres and the genre of PowerPoint presentations, they can assist them with the necessary genre knowledge and support them for providing their audience with highly effective and interactive presentations.

It is hoped that the results of this study provide material and curriculum developers with theoretical information about this genre. Materials which contain theoretical information about different genres can be of great importance for learners and teachers and therefore may help the material developers reach a career progression through the systematic gathering of such information in electronic or paper-based materials. By the use of the information extracted from such studies, curriculum developers and syllabus designers can provide the learners and teachers with the information about genre of technology and shorten the distance between theory and practice by including this information in the process of education.

The present study investigated the written form of PowerPoint genre. Accordingly, visual elements that play a very communicative role remained underexplored. With analyzing visual characteristics of the presentations and verbal and non-verbal communicative behaviors of the presenters beside rhetorical features of the presentations in other studies, audience will be provided with more complete information about this genre and the way it achieves its goals. Other researches can also be conducted in different academic settings except Islamic Azad Universities. Different studies can be carried out with more samples, presentations taken from different fields and different levels. This study ignored the gender of presenters and its possible effects on the preferences of them in the process of slide making. It might be beneficial to take the effect of this demographic variable on the language and discursal preferences into the account in other studies.

This study attempted to describe the moves and steps in introduction and review of literature sections of PowerPoint presentations of M.A. students in the field of teaching English as a foreign language at Islamic Azad University, Rasht Branch. Findings showed the existence of some shared structures among the presentations that were preferred by the students to achieve the communicational needs of their discourse community and be effective members of their academic settings. The findings also showed some differences between PowerPoint presentations as a manifestation of CALL and M.A. theses as written form genres.

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# On the Content of the Pre-service Teachers' Teaching Reflection in the Practicum

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**Abstract**—Reflection plays an effective role in promoting teachers' professional growth and improving teachers' overall quality. As for Pre-service teachers, teaching practice is an indispensable period for their professional development. Therefore, reflective consciousness and ability should be trained in their practicum. This paper fully elaborates the importance of reflective consciousness for middle school pre-service teachers in the practicum from the contents of the pre-service teachers' teaching reflection: classroom teaching, student study, teacher-student interaction, teachers' development and education environment. From the research, we find pre-service teacher often reflect on classroom teaching, student study and teacher-student interaction. The other two parts are usually neglected.

**Index Terms**—teaching practice, teaching reflection, content of teaching reflection

## I. INTRODUCTION

Since the 1980s, sprang up from North America, the campaign of reflective teacher teaching has developed rapidly and had profound significance, which has been recognized by most countries in the world and swiftly becomes an international trend. A huge number of teachers' teaching slogans have rose in the global field of teacher teaching, such as reflection, reflective teaching, reflective practice, reflective teacher, and teacher as researcher and so on (Wang Chunguang 2010). There is no doubt that reflection has become a breakthrough on the reform of teacher teaching. Therefore, improving teachers' quality, and promoting teacher's professional development has become a hot point. What's more, apart from having teaching experience, teachers are required to do research as well. Their inner thinking of student, teaching process, social value and teacher professionalization etc. is of great importance. Many researchers realized reflective teacher teaching is an optimal approach to realize teacher professionalization, the best cut-point for teacher's professional development.

Teaching reflection is a critical way to promote teachers' development. By reflecting, teachers can find out the teaching problems, check their teaching behaviors and improve their teaching ability. Accordingly, teachers will have a full understanding of the teaching activity and be apt to the continuous changing needs of education. Teachers' roles alter with the development of the economy and society. It's universally acknowledged that teacher's contribution and dedication made for education and society is tremendous huge in China. Nevertheless, teachers' professional development and growth as well as creativity have been neglected for a long time. With the implementation of the new curriculum, teachers are expected to put on new roles (Wang Qiang 2006). Those who own tremendous experience and rationalized thinking can be regarded as good teachers. Teachers as researchers, who process the ability to carefully observe a problem, consider the reasons, work out probable solutions, then implement the solutions and evaluate the results finally. Since many researches mainly concentrate on the reflection condition of elementary and middle school in-service teachers, there is rarely study that concerns with pre-service teacher. The sooner teachers cultivate their reflective thinking, the better it will be. The practicum is a crucial time to establish the consciousness of reflection. Only through learning to reflect can pre-service teacher continuously correct mistakes and keep exploring to step into a new realm. In this essay, the contents of the pre-service teachers' teaching reflection will be well elaborated. Therefore, researches on the teachers' reflection, transforming the pre-service teachers into reflective teachers are equal to seizing the key point of teacher's professional development, which is of great theoretical and practical significance.

As a crucial mechanism for teacher's self-development, reflection is an important approach to promoting teacher's professional development. Teacher's professional development is a program that one goes through pre-service teacher training phase and in-service phase until he or she leaves the teaching career, during the whole period he or she must continuously keep studying and doing research, develop his or her specialty connotation and gradually march towards the level of professional maturity. As a pre-service teacher, the gaps between expert teachers in all respects are terrifically wide. Nevertheless, many pre-service teachers may ignore the importance of teaching reflection for they mainly pay attention to their live in the practicum. Accordingly, this thesis tries to delve into the content of pre-service teachers' teaching reflection, the methods of their teaching reflection and the affecting factors of their teaching reflection. There are five respects of teaching reflection: classroom teaching, student study, student-teacher interaction, teachers' development and education environment. This essay mainly endeavors to work out whether the pre-service teachers took all these five aspects into consideration, and what factors influence their teaching reflection. In order to obtain the answers, the following three questions are involved: ① What are the contents of the pre-service teachers'

teaching reflection in the practicum? ②What methods are used by the pre-service teachers in teaching reflection in the practicum? ③What factors influence the pre-service teachers' teaching reflection in the practicum?

A teacher may not be an expert teacher if he writes teaching plan for a lifetime, but if he writes reflection for three years, he could be a famous teacher. Reflective journal is of great importance for pre-service teacher to recall, consider and evaluate the problems happened in profession practicum, and then explore the methods to settle these problems. Reflective journal is usually related with the feeling and viewpoints of teachers' teaching. Therefore, through analyzing the reflective journals of pre-service teachers, the author can deeply comprehend the contents of their reflective teaching. The author collected two reflective journals, which choose randomly from the thirty-one participants. What's more, these reflective journals only applied for this research, which were also written in Chinese. After collecting the reflective journals, the author analyzed their content.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Definition of Teaching Reflection

In the western countries, as far as most experts and scholars of researching reflection were concerned, John Dewey was considered as the originator who systematically illustrated reflective question. Dewey was also regarded as the first one presented the definition of reflection in his book *How We Think*. According to Dewey (1910), reflection considers any belief and the knowledge and conclusions involved in the research field. Donald A. Schon (1987) in his book *Educating the Reflective Practitioner* identified reflection based on technical rationality. He thought that professional practice is an important process of problem solving.

Towards teaching reflection, Jack C. Richards (1996) in his book *Reflective Teaching in Second Language Classrooms* developed a reflective approach to teaching that involves in pre-service teachers collecting teaching data, checking attitudes and practices, and finally this information will be used in the teaching reflection. Kenneth M. Zeichner & Daniel P. Liston (1987) regarded a reflective teacher should be one who owns comprehensive ability in assessing the purposes and results of his or her work.

In Chinese, Confucius was regarded as the first one to propose reflection. He told us that learning without thinking is bourbons, thinking without learning is perilous. Chinese scholars gradually realized that the reflection of teaching experience was an appropriate technique to bridge the gap between new teachers and expert teachers, so they started paying attention to reflection and reflective teaching.

Xiong Chuanwu (1999) in his book *reflective teaching* defined reflective teaching as a process, with the help of action research, that teachers unceasingly explore and tackle the problems related to themselves, teaching goals, teaching tools and so on, combine 'learning how to teach' with 'learning how to learn', endeavor their best to promote teaching practice rationality and make them become expert teachers. Wang Chunguang (2010) described reflection as a process that teachers should regard solving problems in teaching as the aim, take their own teaching process as the thinking object, and examine and analyze the decision, behavior and the results produced in their teaching.

### B. Types and Levels of Teaching Reflection

Based on John Dewey's research, Donald A. Schon (1983) in his book *The Reflective Practitioner* illustrated two types of reflection, which were reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action.

As for the levels of teaching reflection, a great number of scholars shed light on their perspectives. Linda Valli (1997) concluded five models of reflection and reflective teacher education, which are technical reflection, reflection-in-action, deliberative reflection, personalistic reflection, and critical reflection. Kenneth M. Zeichner and Daniel P. Liston (1996) in the book *Reflective Teaching: An Introduction* introduced Handal and Lauvas' opinion, who divided teaching practical reflection into three levels: level one is about routine teaching behavior, which could be apparently or easily observed; level two is related with reflection and plan; level three is concerned with reflection on teaching practice from the ethical perspective. According to their opinion, what the most important is to take all aspects of every teaching practical level into consideration. Edward G. Pultorak (1996) chose an approach fashioned after Van Manen's conception of levels of reflectivity, which would be much more useful in classifying teacher reflectivity. Here is Van Manen's (1977) conception of levels of reflectivity: level one is technical rationality. Van Manen identifies this level as the empirical-analytic paradigm, which belongs to the lowest level of reflection; level two is practical action, and he identifies this level as the hermeneutic-phenomenological paradigm; critical reflection is the third level, and Van Manen (1977) labels this level as the critical dialectical paradigm and classifies it as the highest level of reflection.

In China, based on Van Manen's conception of "levels of reflectivity", Shen Jiliang and Liu Jiaxia (2004) divided the level of teaching reflection content into three parts: pre-reflection level, quasi-reflection level, and reflection level.

### C. Contents of Teaching Reflection

Some researchers hold that teaching reflection is teachers reflect on their teaching skills, techniques, methods and other related aspects, which aims to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching behavior so that they can change their teaching behavior. (Liu Jiaxia & Shen Jiliang, 2003)

Chinese scholars and practitioners research contents of teaching reflection from various aspects. Zhang Lichang (2001) divides the content of teaching reflection into two levels: general level and specific level. General level contains

the reflection of teaching aims and teacher-student relationship. The second level specific level is closed linked with the events happened in the classroom. Besides, he divides the content of teaching reflection into two respects, too. The former puts emphasis on theories, while the later concentrates on practice. Zheng Jinzhou(2000) proposes the content of teaching reflection not only includes the discussion of classroom teaching, but maybe consider the content of cases, as well as the participation of yourself and the other group's members. The critical teaching reflection is divided into four parts, which are system of belief, system of knowledge, teaching practice and background.

Liu Xudong and Meng Chunguo (2010) thought the contents of teaching reflection should include five respects: teaching, student, teacher, teacher-student interaction, and education environment. Teaching reflection should also include five respects: teaching, students, teachers, classroom management, and education environment. As far as she is concerned, many student English teachers often reflect on teaching, students and teachers, while the latter two aspects are frequently ignored.

All these researchers above conclude the content of teaching reflection from different aspects, and almost all involve three factors: teacher, student and teaching, which enrich the study of teaching reflection.

Although great progress has been made in above fields, the gaps both in quantity and quality are still deadly large. There are some existing papers referring to the historical development, background and significance of the implementation of the reflective teaching; introduction and evaluation of the reflective thought elaborated by the scholars represented by Schon and Dewey, but they are just simply analyzing it from the single aspect of teaching reflection. Researchers seldom discussed the content of teaching reflection with respect to teaching combining with our country's educational teaching practice, especially the currently new situation of curriculum reform in primary and middle schools. Though the domestic researchers did a lot in the work of summarizing and concluding, they lack of the original creativity, systemic and empirical research.

### III. RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

#### **The Contents of Pre-service Teachers' Teaching Reflection**

The author divides the content of pre-service teachers' teaching reflection into five respects: teaching reflection,It consist of classroom teaching, student study, teacher-student interaction, teachers' development and education environment. The questionnaire mainly investigates the opinions of pre-service teachers on what contents should be included in their teaching reflection, and whether pre-service teachers take the five aspects into consideration, which part they usually highlight and which part they often ignore.

Question one is about what aspects should be consisted in the teaching reflection. From the research we can find out a great number of participants maintain all the five parts, They think classroom teaching, student study, student-teacher interaction, teacher development, and education environment, are the contents of teaching reflection. All the participants believe that classroom teaching, which consists of classroom organization, classroom activities, teaching material, teaching goals and so on, is an indispensable part of their teaching reflection. No more than seven percent student English teachers ignore student study and student-teacher interaction, as well as less than thirteen percent pre-service teachers disregard teacher development. What's more, there are almost twenty percent pre-service teachers treating education environment as an unimportant aspect, so there is no need to reflect on it.

Question two is about what respects are involved in their own teaching reflection in reality. The results demonstrate that approximately all pre-service teacher reflect on classroom teaching (such as classroom organization, classroom activities, teaching material, teaching goals and so on), student study (such as behavior and attitude of student study, the use of learning methods and strategies, and academic record) and teacher- student interaction (such as cooperation and conflict between teacher and student as well as teacher-student relationship in and out of the class). Around seventy seven percent pre-service English teachers can reflect on teacher development, which is closely connected with teacher professional development, but few pre-service teachers put emphasis on education environment. We can clearly find out that these two parts are more straightforwardly overlooked aspects in the process of reflection.

Question three is the ranking of the content of teachers' reflection in terms of importance. Undoubtedly, classroom teaching is the most important part according to most of the pre-service teachers. Student study lies in the second place. Next one is about teacher-student interaction. Teacher development ranks forth and the least important part is education environment (such as reform of education system, social background and parents support, and school atmosphere).

In conclusion, according to the research results from the questionnaire, it was not hard to find out that almost all the pre-service English teachers believe that teaching reflection should comprise all the five aspects: classroom teaching, student study, teacher-student interaction, teacher development and education environment. Nonetheless, in reality, the principal contents of their reflections are related to classroom teaching, student study and teachers themselves, the other two parts teacher-student interaction and education background are always ignored. Teaching reflection is not only the simple description of events, but also tries to explain and offer evidence for the teaching events and behaviors. Education is a complicated task and contains a great number of things. Novice teachers may as well take all the things associated with their teaching into consideration. Therefore, in their future teaching career, they would pay attention to teacher-student interaction and education environment too.

By analyzing the two pre-service English teachers' reflective journals, the author endeavors to confirm the contents of their teaching reflection.

In teacher X's reflective journal, she said, *she was a little afraid to teach the two nine grades for following reasons: on the one hand, the two classes were famous for bad habits, poor grades and poor discipline, which were labeled as parallel classes; on the other hand, teacher X was not familiar with those students, teaching material and teaching methods, even worse, she hadn't made any preparation for the teaching. When she checked the answer and explained the reasons completely, there still a few minutes left, but the class discipline was terrible and even out of control. Then she stopped some students talking in the class, then introduced herself and had a basic understanding of the students. She followed the rules established by the former English teacher, as well as added several more democratic class regulations in order to get the trust and support of students.*

Analyzing from teacher X's reflective journal, we can find out that she mainly reflects on three aspects: classroom teaching, student study and teacher-student interaction. She realizes the problems of students, which may lead to the hard process of teaching, so she reflects on student behavior and attitude, and classroom management and organization as well as teaching material. In addition, she not only tries her best to understand students' feelings and bad behaviors, but also sets several more democratic classroom rules to win the cooperation of students, which belong to the teacher-student interaction. Only in this way can she establish a sound relationship with students and gain the trust and support of students. Above are the principal parts that she reflects. The other two aspects teacher development and education environment can't be found in her reflective journal.

In teacher Y's reflective journal, she said, *it was the first time that she had formally stepped to the platform, and she was a little nervous. Students of grade seven had various discrepancies in learning foundations. For example, those who transferred from country elementary school rarely owned the opportunity to have a basic knowledge of English. Besides, there was a student transferred from the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, where his learning content was totally different from ours, and he hadn't learnt any English in school. Therefore, the learning material in the starter unit one to three was of vital importance for those students who had poor basis. What's more, there were more than seventy students in the class from different primary schools, they haven't formed class consciousness, so teacher Y needed to guide them behave well and help them alter the bad habits, such as talking in low voice when teacher was teaching learning material. Lastly, pronunciation rules play an essential role in English learning, so she continuously corrected the wrong pronunciation of students and encouraged them to speak confidently.*

As we can see, teacher Y mainly reflects on two aspects: classroom teaching, student study. She has taken students' basic information of English learning into account and paid attention to their discrepancies in order to teach students in accordance with their aptitude. This part is involved in student study and classroom teaching. What's more, she also helps and instructs students to form good habits, which also belongs to student study. The other three parts teacher-student interaction, teacher development and education environment are not mentioned in her reflective journal.

Through analyzing the two student English teachers' reflective journals, it is easy for us to draw a conclusion that they often reflect on classroom teaching and student study. The other three parts teacher-student interaction, teacher development and education environment may be ignored by them. Reflection is not a purpose, but a means. It is of no meaning if reflection cannot solve the practical problems. Hence, student English teachers need to process reflection consciousness and put it into practice to settle the puzzlement and problems encountered in teaching practice.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

On the basis of previous study and discussion, the author tries her best to make use of questionnaire and reflective journals to find out the content of the pre-service English teachers' teaching reflection. According to the results from the questionnaire and reflective journals, the main findings are shown as following:

As for the content of the pre-service English teachers' teaching reflection, there are five aspects are mainly included in it. They are classroom teaching, student study, teacher-student interaction, teachers' development and education environment. Classroom teaching includes classroom organization, classroom activities, teaching material, teaching goals and teaching methods and so on. Student study contains behavior and attitude of student study, the use of learning methods and strategies, and academic record of students. Student-teacher interaction is about cooperation between teacher and students, conflicts between teacher and student and its treatment, as well as teacher-student relationship in and out of the class. Teacher development is related with teachers' self-development consciousness, teachers' conceptions and teaching behaviors, planning for professional development, as well as identity. Education environment consists of reform of education system, including the new elementary education curriculum reform, social background and parents' support, and school atmosphere of teaching reflection. Most teachers have a belief that all the five parts classroom teaching, student study, teacher-student interaction, teacher development and education environment should be included in the reflection. However, they often reflect on classroom teaching, student study and teacher-student interaction. The other two parts are usually neglected. Almost all the teachers hardly reflect on education environment.

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# A Discussion on the Curriculum Design of College English and Its Effective Implementation Based on the Need Analysis\*

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**Abstract**—Through interviews with the specific needs of English abilities of the graduates in the jobs of different industries and different units, this paper will understand whether their English ability really exceeds the post demand, and will reflect on the College English curriculum according to the actual needs of English in the work. At the same time, after summarizing the English skills required by the graduates in the interview, this paper will further understand the specific situation and implementation effect of the University's highly valued English curriculum, and understand whether it meets the needs of the individual development and social needs of undergraduate students through a questionnaire survey, and find out what problem that needs to be improved. Finally, based on the interview data and questionnaire data, we summarize the learning needs, implementation effects and curriculum problems of College English curriculum, and put forward specific policy recommendations for College English curriculum.

**Index Terms**—College English, needs analysis, curriculum design, effective implementation

## I. INTRODUCTION

Since the twenty-first Century, with the development of globalization, more and more attention has been paid to the communicative competence of students. Employers are also striving to cultivate talents that are able to adapt themselves to international development. In this process, as one of the only public English courses that all non English majors have to read in higher education, College English teaching is concerned by the society, government and universities. In order to improve the effect of the teaching of Public English, the Ministry of Education formally issued *the requirements for the teaching of College English courses* in 2007, and reformed the College English. Based on this, this article on the basis of the English curriculum objectives, teaching mode and evaluation mode of domestic university status in-depth understanding, through in-depth interviews of different industry practitioners, understand their needs for English ability in the job, combined with the investigation of the effect of English teaching and the students need to set up the curriculum, in-depth analysis college students English learning needs, existing problems in university English curriculum reflection, and puts forward corresponding policy recommendations.

## II. RESEARCH PROBLEMS

According to the understanding of the actual teaching situation of the College Public English and the analysis of the related literature, this paper puts forward the key questions to be solved from four aspects. Include:

- (1) What are the actual needs of students in English ability? From the point of view of the graduates, what is the demand for the English ability of the individual, and what kind of learning needs should the College English course meet?
- (2) How does the curriculum and implementation effect of the teaching of Public English in the university?
- (3) How is the match between the English learning needs of the students and the graduates and the training of the ability of the College English course?
- (4) What are the problems in the public English course from the perspective of the needs of students and graduates in the study of Public English? How to improve?

## III. CONCEPT DEFINITION

### A. Language Learning Needs

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\* Funding Sources: Social Science Planning Research Program of Shandong Province (Grant No. 17CWZJ38); Scientific Research Program of Colleges and Universities in Shandong Province (Grant No. J17RA054); Research Program of Young Teachers' Education and Teaching of Shandong Province (Grant No. 16SDJ232); Key Program in Art Science of Shandong Province (Grant No. ZX2015005); Youth and Adolescents Quality Education Work Planning Program of Shandong Province (Grant No. 13AJY090); Scientific Research Program of Jining Medical University (Grant No. JY2013RW032); The Visiting Scholar Funded Program of Young Backbone Teachers in Jining Medical University; College Students' Innovative Training Project of Jining Medical University (Grant No. cx2017052); Scientific Research Project of College Students in Jining Medical University (Grant No. JYXS2017RW017)

As for the definition of the concept of language learning needs, scholars at home and abroad have put forward different views. Richterich believes that language learning needs are about how to meet the needs of learners to communicate in the use of language (Cai, 2015). Widdowson puts forward the concept of “goal-oriented based” demand, and points out that demand refers to students' academic or professional needs, that is, the purpose of students learning language, the level they want to achieve and the ability they need to master. Berwick divides the demand into two aspects of cognition and feeling demand, the former is based on the factual level, and the latter is based on the subjective needs of the learners. Hutchinson and Waters argue that the learner needs can be divided into two types of target needs and learning needs, and the target demand is considered from the perspective of the curriculum designer which means learning at the end of the course of knowledge and ability to achieve, including the necessary capacity must be reached and currently lack the ability; learning needs is that learners hope to achieve. In this paper, the language learning needs includes two aspects, namely social needs and learning needs, social needs refers to the ability of English demand reflects the graduates in the work position, the learners' needs mainly refers to the students their English level on the objectives of Public English curriculum the expectations and needs of graduates in addition to English work needs (Hu & Xie, 2014).

### *B. Course Setting*

As for the definition of curriculum, scholars have put forward different views from different angles. Zhu Xun thinks the curriculum is a dynamic circulation system, including four aspects of curriculum objectives, curriculum content, curriculum implementation and curriculum evaluation. Deng Lei thinks that curriculum arrangement is an arrangement for school or educational administration institution to make school curriculum according to curriculum objectives, curriculum requirements, learners' conditions and specific conditions (Hu, 2014). Pan Yu put forward that curriculum is the general plan for training talents, including teaching objectives, tasks, contents, scopes, progress and ways of activities required by training objectives (Li, 2014). Some scholars will define courses according to the training objectives to set curriculum categories, curriculum type and course of school personnel time arrangement and time allocation, and develop specific learning objectives of the curriculum, learning and learning content, which is mainly composed of curriculum structure and the curriculum content of two parts.

This paper holds that curriculum design is an overall plan of a course, including curriculum objectives, curriculum structure, curriculum implementation and curriculum evaluation. Among them, the curriculum structure includes the classes, the nature of the curriculum, the credits of the course and so on. The implementation of the curriculum includes the teaching materials used in the classroom, the teaching resources and the teaching model and the level of teachers. Course evaluation is the teaching evaluation, which means the way to evaluate the students' learning effect in the course of the course.

### *C. Teaching Mode*

There are three main points of view on the definition of teaching model, including: (1) the teaching model is a plan or model. It emphasizes the comprehensive study of the interaction characteristics between the teaching system and the variables of variables, and has the characteristics of the system structure. (2) the teaching mode is the teaching method. The view is that the model is a special teaching method, which is suitable for certain specific teaching situations. (3) the teaching pattern is a teaching structure, which is a typical and stable teaching procedure or configuration established under certain educational ideas.

According to the above point of view, this paper defines teaching mode as a systematic teaching procedure and its strategy system based on teaching idea and teaching goal under specific teaching environment.

### *D. Teaching Evaluation*

Teaching evaluation, as an important part of teaching activities, aims to provide effective feedback for teachers and students. Through teaching evaluation, teachers can get feedback information, improve teaching methods and improve teaching quality. Students can understand their learning effects, adjust learning strategies and improve learning efficiency. Teaching assessment includes formative assessment and finality assessment. Formative assessment is a process based and developmental assessment of student learning based on teaching objectives and competency standards, including self-assessment, peer assessment, and teacher assessment of students. The finality assessment is the final and comprehensive assessment conducted at the end of the course. It should be an academic performance test based on the performance of a student's curriculum, not a level test that does not have to be studied by the students.

## IV. COLLEGE GRADUATES' PROFESSIONAL DEMAND FOR ENGLISH ABILITY

### *A. The Matching of College Foreign Language Ability Training and Professional Needs*

Compared with the degree of emphasis on the cultivation of foreign language ability in universities, the degree of foreign language ability of the graduates is not highly valued at present. At the same time, there are also differences in the degree of attention of different industries, different units are graduates of foreign language ability, international organizations, catering and accommodation industry, education, scientific research and technology and manufacturing industry to a high degree of attention in English, animal husbandry and fishery, construction industry, mining industry,

public facilities management, social organizations and other industries on the importance of English a relatively low degree. Attention has been paid to the foreign language ability of graduates from government, state owned enterprises and private enterprises.

### *B. An Analysis of the Specific Demand for English Ability of Undergraduates*

#### 1. Analysis of the entry requirements

According to interviews with graduates, it is founded that most of the positions except for some state owned enterprises and government posts require English level Four. There is no rigid demand for English when they are recruited, but applicants will mark their English level in their CVs. Foreign companies will have an English interview, read the English project materials and carry out the program, or will have a request for the candidate's graduating college. When entering the workplace, most jobs do not require high standard of English for graduates. Even if they are rigid, they only require four levels (Liu & Gao, 2016). At present, the graduates of colleges and universities can get the four grade certificate of English at the time of graduation, which can basically meet the foreign language requirements of the employment units. But graduates who apply for foreign companies need better English level, including good English reading ability and listening and speaking skills. They need to be able to read English project materials and express their ideas in English.

#### 2. The specific use of English in the job

In the work, there are great differences in the use of post English in different industries and units. English is the most frequently used in foreign enterprises. In the private sector, the government departments and the state-owned enterprises are relatively weakest. In government departments and state-owned enterprises, in addition to a small number of foreign exchanges, most posts do not involve English in their normal work. Among the most demanding tasks in English, most of them are reading ability, including sending and receiving mail, browsing related English websites, checking English protocol descriptions, reading English documents, etc. Next is listening and speaking ability. The demand for this capability is mainly reflected in the employees of foreign enterprises, including communicating with overseas personnel, participating in company internal meetings, and receiving relevant personnel from abroad (Liao & Lin, 2015). In addition, people in other units also have certain needs in terms of listening and speaking abilities, for example, government personnel in customs departments need to receive foreign visitors and communicate with foreign passengers.

#### 3. The influence of graduates' English ability on career development

After entering the workplace, the career development of graduates from state-owned enterprises and government departments is less affected by English proficiency level, but a good English level can be an advantage, to a certain extent, to promote the promotion and professional level of graduates. For example, in a state-owned enterprise, the evaluation of a title will have a hard demand for the individual's English level. In the computer industry where English is frequently used, and computer industry that needs to read advanced articles in foreign countries, English ability is a necessary condition for position promotion and future development. In foreign-funded enterprises, English ability has a very important impact on the career development of graduates. If we want to stand out from the competition among our colleagues, good English ability is a prerequisite.

#### 4. The matching of graduates' English ability and post demand

In the interview, some post graduates said they had never used in English, the rest of the graduates said their English ability can meet the basic needs of the jobs in the workplace, especially in reading, but in listening and speaking ability still needs to be strengthened, also need to improve writing ability. Writing and speaking abilities are both abilities of language output. We can see that although graduates are able to read, there are big problems in language output, but they can not be expressed in English well.

### *C. Graduates' Introspection and Suggestion to College English Course*

According to the interview results of graduates, it is not difficult to see that although most state-owned enterprises and government departments seldom use English in practical work, but graduates do not think that the setting of College English curriculum is meaningless. On the one hand, although the work is rarely used in English, but a good English level can make you have more choices in the future occupation development, and you can choose some higher requirements for English, but if your English is poor, the space will be very small, on the other hand, although the use of less English in work the but in daily life, English as a language literacy, can improve their quality of life, including more smoothly communicate with the local people in the travel, reading English original, watching English television and others.

In interviews, when asked about the satisfaction of College English courses, only a few graduates expressed satisfaction with the curriculum. They thought there was no problem in school setting, and the effect of English learning mainly depended on their choice and efforts. Most of the graduates think English curriculum has some problems, including the curriculum content boring; teaching methods are mainly taught; the nature of the course as a required, the space is too small, the examination that is more concentrated, practicality is weak, with no significant difference in high school curriculum; single assessment methods; the uneven quality of teachers; time, poor results etc.. In view of these problems, the graduates also put forward some suggestions on the setting up of College English courses, which can be mainly attributed to the following three aspects:

#### 1. To reduce required courses and increase elective courses

At present, compulsory courses are the main courses in College English courses. No matter whether the students have the need for this, they must take the English courses of the corresponding credits. This for some English level has reached its goal or some small demand for English students, to a certain extent, increased the burden of learning, taking up this time can be used to study other skills and knowledge (Ma & Zhao, 2016). Therefore, in order to better adapt to the needs of different students, the credits of English required courses can be reduced correspondingly, and the credits of elective courses should be increased accordingly, giving students more room to choose, and choose suitable courses and learning contents.

## 2. To reduce the grammatical content and increase the teaching of oral English

In interviews, many graduates mentioned that the difference between College English classroom and high school English class is very small, but reading and grammar explanation are still the main ones. Graduates also mentioned that the high school grammar content is enough, and we should pay more attention to listening and speaking and other practical communicative English learning in University, and that is the university English course teaching should focus on, which helps students master listening and speaking skills used in work and life .and is no longer blindly into a grammar point, ultimately “dumb English”.

## 3. To increase the interest of the curriculum and change the way of assessment

At present, many textbooks and classroom materials used in many college English courses follow the old textbooks a few years ago. Textbooks are outdated and lack of interest, which can not stimulate students' interest. Besides, the way of examination is also relatively simple. In the semester or at the end of term, we should examine the usage of word phrases, reading comprehension and other contents, mainly according to the examination results to evaluate the level of students. This makes students less active in English learning and less interested in learning English, and can not better understand their English level. After that, we should pay attention to the interest of curriculum content, update teaching contents, increase more materials related to current affairs or daily life, and improve students' interest. At the same time, the assessment method should be more diversified. Through the phased investigation, group evaluation, personal evaluation and other evaluation methods, we can help students understand their English level and progress better and timely, so as to make adjustments to their learning.

To sum up, most of the posts are not hard to request for the English level of the graduates, but the foreign companies will set up an investigation standard for the English level. In the actual work, the use of English for graduates in various industries is different, the use of foreign enterprises is the highest, and the government department is the lowest. Among them, reading ability is the most used skill, and listening and speaking are the second. On the one hand, due to environmental constraints, less need to communicate with people in English, on the other hand, graduates' listening and speaking abilities are weak. Generally speaking, oral communication can not be done in the form of mail and other written communication. In addition to foreign graduates' ability to speak English, it is a necessary condition for future development. Most other graduates indicate that their English level has little influence on their career development. In general, the English level of the graduates can meet the needs of the present job, but the graduates generally believe that their listening and speaking abilities are still to be strengthened. Therefore, the curriculum design of College Public English has not really met the learning needs of students, and most college graduates are still not satisfied with the current college English curriculum. In view of the existing problems, graduates think that they should increase elective courses, reduce required courses, strengthen listening and speaking training, reduce grammar teaching, increase interest in courses, and adjust examination methods.

## V. REFLECTION ON THE ESTABLISHMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PUBLIC ENGLISH COURSE IN UNIVERSITY

### A. *The Structure of the Course Is Single and the Choice of Space Is Too Small*

On the one hand, from the perspective of Public English course, in addition to individual colleges and universities offering public Japanese courses and public English courses, the students can choose one to complete the required credits, and other universities are only offering public English curriculum as a compulsory course, where students can only attend course, regardless of whether their needs, regardless of whether the interest must be take at least 12 credits of Public English course. Foreign universities will offer different language courses as general elective courses, forming a complete language curriculum system. For example, Cornell University has 50 language courses. Students can read according to their needs and improve their general knowledge. Combined with the investigation, industry demand and graduates occupation development of the data and the results of the interview graduates, some of the jobs that the students' English ability is not high, even a lot of jobs and never use English, so not all students need to enroll in public English classes to reach a certain level of ability. The results of the questionnaire also show that nearly 45% of the students think that the public English course should be offered as a general elective course. This ensures that students have more choices, and they can choose corresponding courses according to their interests and development needs, so as to effectively improve their language literacy and general knowledge.

On the other hand, from the perspective of the public English course, the public English class is still a required subject, and the elective course is too small. In most colleges and universities, the public English class is 12 credits, of which 10 credits are required for the required courses, and the elective course accounts for only 2 credits. The results of the questionnaire survey and the results of interviews with graduates showed that students wanted more English elective courses. The English level of each student is different, although each school carries out the entrance examination and

makes a stratified teaching according to the exam results. But in fact, all levels of the students learning content is still similar, and students English proficiency part better still have to attend some basic courses to improve their English ability does not help, and they also hope that according to their ability and interest in studying the corresponding courses to improve their own ability. In addition, the students have a strong demand for the professional English class, and there are not many specialized English classes set up in the University.

*B. The Course Setting Deviates from the Target and the Demand Is Not Satisfied*

In 2007 the Ministry of Education issued *College English curriculum requirements* which pointed out that the goal of College English teaching is to cultivate students' comprehensive ability of using English, especially listening and speaking ability, so that they can use English to communicate effectively in the future study, work and social activities, while enhancing their self-learning ability, improve the comprehensive cultural literacy and in order to meet the needs of China's social development and international exchanges. It is obvious that the ability of listening and speaking is the most important thing in the teaching of College English courses. However, this is not reflected in the current public English course in Colleges and universities. According to the curriculum setup of several universities involved in the survey, the credits of English listening and speaking course are still less than that of reading class. The results of questionnaire survey show that 79% of the students have read the ability of reading, which has reached the general requirements of the *Curriculum Requirements*, and nearly 60% students have achieved higher requirements. But the students' listening and speaking ability is relatively weak, and 34.3% and 31.2% can not use English for daily communication and daily English conversation. More than 3/4 of the students believe that oral English course should be added to class hours, and another 46% think that listening course should be added to class hours.

*C. The Content of the Course Is Lack of Interest and the Validity of the Assessment Method Is Insufficient*

In interviews with graduates, graduates said that the textbooks and classroom materials used in College English courses follow the old textbooks a few years ago. Textbooks are obsolete and lack interest, which can not stimulate students' interest. Similarly, in the questionnaire survey, it was also found that students' interest in the course content was very low.

The method of assessment is single, and no scientific and reasonable evaluation system has been formed. In the public English curriculum, assessment of the course grade is mainly in the course of the semester or the end of the semester to examine the use of words and phrases, reading comprehension and other content, to evaluate the students according to the examination results, although the assignments have gradually been incorporated into the total score, but the proportion of small, test scores are still in dominant position (Xu, 2014). As the four and six level examination of College Students' English level, 41.3% of the students think they can't reflect their true level. As a whole, the validity of the assessment methods of English courses is insufficient, which can not reflect the true English level of the students, and the evaluation system remains to be improved.

*D. Students Are Inadequately Invested and the Effect of Learning Needs to be Improved*

The curriculum structure is not reasonable, so the students' English learning motivation is weak, and some students in order to credit and had to study English, so they in English learning are passive, they do not focus in class and do not invest the time to consolidate learning, resulting in students' English learning effect. Although freshmen and sophomores need to take English courses every semester, 1/3 of their students haven't changed their English level since entering school, and even 27% of them didn't have the same level of English as before.

*E. The CET 4 and 6 Backwash Teaching and Course Trend Should Be Tested*

Although the creation of the subject of Public English class is the University, but the University offers courses in one hand should be in accordance with the requirements issued by the Ministry of education curriculum, on the other hand, due to the measure of the quality of personnel training, four, six pass rate is still a noticeable index, which opened in university English courses, often considered by rate of four and six grade, so the courses and contents accordingly tend to test, such as the current college reading courses accounted for a large, relatively speaking curriculum module, the highest proportion is four and six grade reading test. Although since the beginning of January 2006, four, six exam hearing the proportion rose from 20% to 35%, but for a long time, in favor of reading teaching in Colleges and universities, subject to the level of teachers, school facilities, and can quickly adjust the course content, and College English curriculum at present, reading still the dominant candidate, that still exists. In addition, due to the imbalance between Chinese college students in the region and school, the current four and six level examinations can not meet the needs of different levels of candidates. Therefore, in a sense, four and six level oriented curriculum can not meet students' learning needs.

## VI. SUGGESTIONS ON THE ESTABLISHMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PUBLIC ENGLISH COURSES IN UNIVERSITIES

In view of the above conclusions, this paper believes that measures can be taken to improve the following aspects.

*A. Increasing the Class of Courses form a Scientific and Reasonable Curriculum System*

First, the curriculum system is adjusted based on the English needs of graduates and daily life and the needs of

students in English courses. Although English is an international language, its importance in personal development is undeniable, but not all people need to have good English ability (Wen, 2014). High school and previous English learning has been able to meet the needs of some industry positions and graduates' daily life needs, and no longer need to offer English courses in public compulsory courses in universities. English curriculum can be used as a module in general elective courses. Modules can include language courses based on skill training, thematic courses based on cultural understanding and career oriented special language use courses. According to their own school running characteristics and location, each school assigns the proportion of corresponding English courses in the module, giving students more choices and improving their listening and speaking abilities (Zhang, 2014).

In addition, colleges and universities according to their own teaching level and teaching practice, set up other categories of small languages general elective course, such as Japanese, French, Italian, for with us or have different development needs of students elective, enhance students language literacy, cultivate diversified talents, and meet the individual needs of social development.

According to the actual needs of students and the particularity of their majors, proper English courses can be set up properly, so as to improve their professionalism, play the instrumental role of English, and promote the improvement of professional knowledge with the improvement of professional English ability.

#### *B. Improving the Contents and Methods of the Curriculum As Well As the Evaluation System*

In view of the problems such as lack of interest in curriculum content and outdated content, College English teachers should keep pace with the times, enrich and improve curriculum contents, and are no longer a textbook for ten years. But according to the characteristics of the students and the development of the society, we choose the materials that conform to the students' learning level and the development needs, and improve the students' interest in learning (Yang, 2014). In the course of the teaching methods, in addition to teaching the traditional teaching way mainly, can also be through group teaching, problem based teaching, based on the task of teaching and network teaching based on various teaching methods, strengthen the teacher-student interaction, students interaction, improve the degree of attention to the students in the classroom, avoid the "recessive truancy phenomenon".

On the way of assessment, the public English Curriculum in every school should strengthen the construction and improvement of formative evaluation system. Teachers should pay attention to the improvement of students' ability in the usual classroom teaching, and give feedback in time, so as to form a good incentive mechanism (Lu, 2015). To improve students' performance in classroom performance and homework evaluation in comprehensive evaluation, combined with student self evaluation and teacher evaluation, we can comprehensively evaluate students' English level. In addition, we should make scientific and reasonable evaluation standards, improve the validity of the English proficiency test, and reflect the real English level of the students.

#### *C. Enriching the Course and Creating a Language Environment*

Language learning can not achieve good results only through the teaching of classroom teachers. The essence of the existence of language is to communicate and communicate, and only through continuous practice and practice can a good result be achieved. Stanford University, Harvard University and other world-class university teaching while offering a language course are very focused on the class of language learning, the source structure diversification advantages, carry out rich social activities and academic lectures to create a good language learning environment (Wang, 2015). Although not all foreign universities in the world can have more English speaking students, they can still create good language learning atmosphere by offering English corner, giving lectures in English and giving speeches in English. Some schools that have many overseas students can also invite students to participate in class activities, strengthen interaction between foreign students and students, and improve their language proficiency and communicative competence in practice.

#### *D. Strengthening Guidance and Improving Students' Learning Motivation*

In the course of Public English learning, some students can have a good plan for their own learning and have a clear learning goal, so they have strong learning motivation, can take the initiative to do the study under the class, and have achieved good learning results. However, some students lack planning for their own learning and are also confused about the future. Therefore, with the psychology of "one step at a time", learning is always in a passive position. Although English classes have never been absent, but they are not in the classroom, and their English proficiency is not going to go backward. It was not until the senior grade did not find that his future work had a high demand for English, but regretted. Therefore, while teaching knowledge, teachers should strengthen their guidance to the students, especially for the students in the lower grade (Zhang, 2016). On the one hand, to strengthen the occupation planning education for students, guide students to develop a reasonable learning and occupation planning, improve the learning motivation; on the other hand, teachers can do learning strategies and learning guides, and guide students to do self supervision and management, to improve the efficiency of learning of students and to improve the learning effect.

#### *E. The Government Should Expedite the Reform of the English Proficiency Test and Push Back the Curriculum Adjustment of Colleges and Universities*

Although universities have greater autonomy in curriculum setting, but the existence of level four or six still affects

university curriculum and content arrangement to a large extent. So if you want to further adjust the curriculum in Colleges and universities, the government needs to carry on the corresponding reform of English listening and speaking ability, increase the proportion of the assessment, through the evaluation of candidates for English proficiency test objectively, to adjust the curriculum in colleges, and focus on students' English application ability really. In this regard, the government has made the effort, the Ministry of education is developed China English ability rating scale, and with the support of the National English proficiency test level, which will serve as the first covering our entire education English teaching, learning and assessment of ability standard, will achieve the mutual recognition of communication in English teaching a “one-stop” and a variety of learning outcomes. In addition to the description of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, the Chinese English proficiency scale constructs a pragmatic competence scale. The scale also includes the translation and interpreting ability scale, which fills the gap between the language proficiency scale at home and abroad (Zhu & Ma, 2014). In a word, it is necessary to establish a unified English assessment system to become a Chinese version of IELTS / TOEFL that everyone can participate in. The new national English proficiency test is expected to be phased out by 2020. Although the English proficiency test level has not yet introduced, from the current knowledge about the related English grade examination, the examination is different from the four, six exams, only two exams will determine the students' English level, but there is a series of test, to different levels the examinee more objective and comprehensive assessment, I also hope the government can really promote the reform of university curriculum adjustment, and college students have in the public English Curriculum in middle school, learn to use, to meet the needs of the individual development and the future occupation.

## VII. CONCLUSION

By understanding the needs of graduates in their positions and the learning effects and needs of college students in College English courses, we reflect on the curriculum design of Public English in Colleges and universities, and summarize the problems existing in the current college English curriculum. On this basis, it puts forward feasible suggestions for improvement, which is conducive to further promoting the reform of College English curriculum, improving the teaching effect of College English, and meeting the needs of individual development and social economic development.

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# The Effects of Kindness in Saadi's Bustan

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**Abstract**—This study intends to highlight the effects of kindness in one of the best literature and poetry books called "Bustan" in the world. Every poetry is a model of culture and civilization to the human world. Persian literature is one of the richest literatures over the world. Persian poetry is one of the most fruitful branches of the world literature in the area of aphorism. One of the main topics of aphorism is about kindness which is typified in its greatest mood in Saadi's Bustan. Kindness and love are good ethos which has been recommended to man in all of the moral Scriptures. Understanding the effects of kindness is the least thing a man can do to foster a spirit of love in him and others. Therefore, choosing this book, "Bustan", which is full of the effects of kindness, is one of the best choices. The main aim of this article is to investigate the effects of kindness from Saadi's viewpoint in "Bustan,".

**Index Terms**—Saadi, Bustan, advice, kindness, love, poetry

## I. INTRODUCTION

The fundamental claim of poetry is that poetry represents human culture. Poetry is one of the largest sources of human inspiration.

Khansir and Pakdel (2016) mentioned that in general, poetry is divided into three categories as follows:

1. Lyric poetry can be utilized by expressing the emotion and thoughts of a person and thus, it is short and subjective.
2. Narrative poetry can be utilized by telling a story.
3. Dramatic poetry can be utilized by employing dramatic form or technique.

It has been anticipated that poetry attract attention and interest of all concerned who would like poets and their poems as one of the most important language factors in human society. As a matter of fact, poetry is a matter of pleasure for all concerned that poem of poet has been understand its best in order to make the effect of kindness as specific and comprehensive as possible. However, the language poetry influence can thus be an example of a more intense use of language (Khansir, 2012). Language of poetry is perpetuity of any culture and poetry is almost as old as the nation of each community. There are several written records of national poetry in the history of human being.

Another indication that poetry has been usually accepted as the language of social movements of a country. On the other hand, several movements have been launched in the world have utilized the language poetry to make form the goals. It is usually acknowledged that poetry language can be used as a tool of human motivation; it plays a vital role in human development. The nationalist leaders and kings have seen poetry language as the language of social movement in order to form national slogan during the freedom struggle for independence.

Saadi is one of the greatest poets of Iran and Saadi was born in Shiraz city in the medieval period. He is famous as 'Saadi Shirazi' among Iranian people. He passed his academic works at Baghdad University (Nizamiyya University). The main books of Saadi are Bustan and Gulistan. They are written in verse and prose. One of the famous works has been translated into English Language by Richard Jeffery Newman as follows:

All men and women are to each other  
The limbs of a single body, each of us drawn  
From life's shimmering essence, God's perfect pearl;  
and when this life we share wounds one of us,  
all share the hurt as if it were our own.  
You , who will not feel another's pain,  
You forfeit the right to be called human (Wikipedia 2018).

In this work, Saadi encouraged and promoted respect for human rights without any distinction as to language, race, gender, religion and even culture.

Shiraz is one of the most ancient cities of Iran and it was the national capital of Iran, since 1334. Thus, the language of Shiraz is Persian language. The tomb of Sadi is in Shiraz. The numbers of national and international tourists visit the tomb of Sadi (as one of the greatest human heritages in the literature of the world) in and out of Iran every year.

As we have been arguing, Persian language is the official language in Iran. Khansir and Mozafari (2014) argued that Persian language is directly appertained to Indo-European language and this language was shifted from Aryans group as the first group which came to Persia location from western Asia. Persian language is one of the beautiful languages over the world and it helps the world literatures for several centuries. Many Iranian great poets appeared in the history of human being are respected by the world great scholars in literature and their works have been translated into several official languages over the world such as English, German, Indian languages, American and African languages and Arabic language and etc. In addition, Persian literature is a prosperous treasure of life's pieces of advice and lessons. The pieces of advice which each glimpse of them is required a long life, devotion to great men, and long journey and etc. The pieces of advice have been passed by the great poets for us in the form of delightful and adorable anecdotes and poems.

Thus, one of the most powerful preaching poets is Sadi Shirazi. His recommendation is appreciated in all human societies. Dabiri (2001, p. 24) mentioned that Sadi's recommendations is not only subject to Persian and Arab Muslims, but also Jewish, Christian and others". One of the unique heritages of Iranian literature is Saadi's *Bustan* book. It was written by Saadi Shirazi. In this book, he used his benefits of magical words to compose his recommendations and advises. His book is accepted by old and new generation. The users of this book are not appertained to any specific time and place, too. That's why everyone in every place and time can use the concepts of humanity in this book which is full of kindness and affection. Therefore, the kindness and affection are the main basic poems of many Iranian great poets such as Firdausi and then he liked Sadi show the goal of his city. However, to introduce his Utopia, Firdausi, too, reviewed the mythic-heroic periods and drew his readers' attention step by step, he described the elements and theme of kindness, introduced the people who are full of righteous to both motivate the readers and activate their capacities and talents to have identities and look for justice (Talabi, 2009). Saadi believes that an immortal person is the one who has good characters and ethical virtues. He, then, describes the vices and virtues ethics of man. He argues that man should his outward appearance and inner nature portrayed to kindness and leaves injustice and tyranny and immorality from the museum of the world and lights the flame of kindness in order to destroy the darkness from the world. Shamisa (2003) argued that Saadi is a poet, but he had to preach in "*Bustan* book". Hence, every time, he got a good opportunity, tried to compensate the loss of what he followed. However, without any patient, he tried to compose pieces of advice in poetic style.

To provide a more comprehensive view of this study we investigate the following issues:

- 1) What are the effects of kindness and love in Saadi's point of view?
- 2) Which manifestations of kindness does Saadi have more emphasis on life? Why?
- 3) What is Saadi's main purpose of expressing advice by focusing on kindness?

In what follows, we discuss the *Bustan* and its poet, effects of kindness, cheerfulness and kindness, hospitality, Kindness and Magnanimity with People, compassion, gratitude, sacrifice and end by describing Bounty and generosity .

## II. BUSTAN AND ITS POET

Saadi was born and grew up in city of Shiraz in Iran and spent the early primary of his education in this city. He went to Baghdad to continue his studying in Iraq. After completing his theological and educational studies in Baghdad, Saadi began to start his trips and stepped on the way that helped him become a great person with long historical reputation. "In the city of Nezamiyeh, Saadi met many great literati, including Shahab al-Din Abuhafz Omare –Suhrawardi, Abul-Faraj e-bin el-Jvzy and Sheikh Safi El-din Ardebili (Foroughi, 2004). Rezaei (2006) argued that Saadi was very busy and hard worker and liked to travel around the world in order to visit other people and get more experience and knowledge. Therefore, he started his long trip from Sham, Hijaz and Lebanon. Based on the speaking of Saadi, he got knowledge from different places. Safa (2013) mentioned that the journey of Sadi started from the years 620 or 621 and ended his journey back to the year 655 while returning to Shiraz. When he came back to Shiraz, he was one of the close persons to the Sa'd ibn Abu Bakr ben Saaied Zangi. Safa (2013) added that although he was selected as a closed person to the kings of Saljoughi Dynasty and some great men of the time, he never became a court poet. He lived in freedom and tried to advise and serve people. His works which have been translated into several languages of the world are proves of intelligence and talent. Safa (2013) argued that Saadi's reputation is the result of his several properties: first, he used his eloquent and miraculous language not only to praise and express romantic feelings but also to serve humans' welfare.

His works which have been translated into several languages of the world are proves of his intelligence and talent. Saadi's reputation is the result of his several properties: First, he used his eloquent and miraculous language not only to praise and express romantic feelings but also to serve humans' welfare. Second, he was a veteran writer and poet and he got to experience the ups and downs of life. Third, he expressed his delicate words by melodious proverbs and stories. Fourth, he made a new form in eulogium and sonnet. Fifth, although he was preaching, advising, and guiding people, Saadi was a witty, humorous and licorice poet. Saadi's works has been divided in two categories: verse and prose. Safa (2013, p. 107) argued that "on the top of his poetic works, there is one of the uncontested masterpieces of Persian poetry

which had been called Saadi's *Koliyat* in the old version, but later it was known as Saadi's *Bustan*". Therefore, Saadi has never called the name of this book "*Bustan*", but his friends called the name of this *Masnavi* book "*Bustan*" (*Masnavi* is long poem with rhymed couplets). In addition, in some sources, this book is called Saadi Name or Saadi's letters (Hassan, 2011). No one knows when Saadi started writing this book but it has been completed in the year 655 (AH). This book is written about the issues of ethics, training and advice, and it has ten chapters, namely, justice, mercy, love, humility, contentment, devotions, Education, gratitude, repentance, and praying. What is remarkable here is that Saadi completed this book, before; he came back to Shiraz (his home).

Thus, Saadi was master of literary writing and sweetness of expression. Because, he expresses the concepts and meanings along with fine stories and parables. Besides, the concepts and meanings have been mostly used in "*Bustan*". Saadi's eloquence and attractive speech should not be ignored in this great work. (Yousefi) 2011 mentioned that the language of "*Bustan*" is so simple and fluent that not only the components such as vocabularies are like the words of prose, but also in many cases the poem itself remains as harmonious as prose. That is, by changing the position of the same component, the verse comes in the form of prose.

In fact, if we as literature experts consider the causes of the effective influence of Saadi's "*Bustan*"; we will notice that the basic issue of the effective influence of Saadi's *Bustan* is that Saadi expresses his own lofty ideas through pleasant anecdotes and so that this issue, Saadi's ideas and stories have been always used affectively by the readers in all time. "*Bustan*" is full of lessons and bywords. The lessons have been mentioned by Saadi in "*Bustan*" in order to help people find the straightway and make repent. However, we can see that in this book, Saadi gives promise of penitence and argues that if one repents sincerely and God will accept his repentance. Soleimanizadeh (2011) argued that one of the most important of literary works shows utopian beautifully is Saadi's *Bustan*. This book is a wonderful gift to the people in all time.

"*Bustan*" is a sign of goodness and importance and the excellence of Saadi's *Bustan* is manifest. Saadi performed his duty well in *Bustan*. He refrained from obscene words in his book. He tried to show his romantic world well. In other words, Saadi's wishes, favorites and Utopia were manifested in "*Bustan*" more than his other works. Shamisa (2003) mentioned that *Bustan* is versified artificially and recognized by the great literature experts as a humanistic book. "*Bustan*" is the most moral *Masnavi* book (*Masnavi* is long poem with rhymed couplets) in Persian literature. It seems that it is so simple so many scholars have not pay attention deeply to its artistic structure. This book consists of the greatest examples of imagery and expression.

### III. EFFECTS OF KINDNESS

Good morality is not pertained to the specific period of time and place. However, human being should pay special attention to humanity in all circumstances and the humanity helps him to be remembered for ever. The affection of human beings toward one another sweetness the world. The action of kindness to people and yourself is sign of good morality that it is very common in many societies. (This paper cannot pretend to examine all kindnesses are common in all societies). In general, people cannot continue their life without the action of kindness and the human societies are agreed to accept kindness and humanity. However, without kindness for man, it is difficult to have a good life. It is obvious that kindness and affection are praised and admired by all people but kindness should be proved by the action of it. Proving this kindness will not be an easy task and it is needed to recognize the manifestations of the kindness. Advice is one of the issues as old as the human being itself. The recommendation of having good behavior and acting properly are very difficult, but they serve the opportunities for wise actions. They will also attract the readers to choose the desired direction of behavior (Yousefi, 2013).

In the history of human being, the Iranian great poets and writers appeared representing the values and effects of kindness and affection in order to attract their audience to this important aspect of human. We add that what is remarkable for us is that Iran has been placed of the great poets and writers blessing the human literature for centuries. We turn now to factors of kindness in the history of Iranian literature directed related to our discussion in this paper. Based on kindness, in Iran, Iranian had tried to help the war prisoners and the poor people and save somebody's life. In addition, they loved other nations and had good relationship with them and resolved the problems through negotiation. They are the outcome of kindness have also been found to relate to Saadi's *Bustan* as the heritage of humanity is available in and outside of Iran. Yousefi (2013) argued that undoubtedly, kindness and love are the basic of the good deeds which each contains different actions and effects. For example, Khajeh-Nizam al-Mulk Tusi reported in his book, "*Politics*" about moral virtues; he added good qualities such as modesty, goodness, meekness, forgiveness, humility, generosity, truth, patience, mercy, knowledge, wisdom, justice (Yousefi (2013).

What can be said from kindness is that kindness can be made of preaching. Just we face with this point; one can guide people toward the discussion about kindness and love, when people escape from listening and attending to advice, how one can explain about the effects of kindness and love to encourage them to emblazon their pure souls with their good qualities. In fact, Saadi is the great poet who could solve this problem and answered the above question. For these reasons, his outstanding ability earned him the nickname as one of the greatest human poets in the history of human being. One of the characteristics of Saadi's ingenuity is that he teaches morality from his own minor life incidents. Saadi is a moral teacher and has moral thoughts. He studied people's habits, morals and actions then presented the results of the studies through moral messages in his writings (Soleimanizadeh, 2011). He skillfully expressed subtle moral points

in the form of anecdotes and analogies. In other words, Saadi is recognized as the great eloquent for helping the human society through spirituality. Saadi appreciates kindness and considers this valuable element as a spirit in human's life. He shows the boundaries of kindness among people clearly. Those who live together and love each other kindly are gentler. Here are some important examples of kindness and friendship from Saadi's point of views: Cheerfulness and kindness, hospitality, kindness and goodness to people, etc.

#### IV. CHEERFULNESS AND KINDNESS

Cheerfulness has vital place in the human culture. But let us remember mankind follows cheerfulness and kindness that were also written by the great scholars and poets such as Saadi, so Saadi encourages people toward cheerfulness and kindness in his writing. On the other hand, one of the signs of kindness and love is cheerfulness and sociable in "Bustan". Hostility is always one of the condemned human traits which have negative reflected effects on both sides. It means that both sides (hostility) face with the same disaster. Based on this paragraph, Farzanfar (1990) composed the following poem:

By being cheerful and kind in life  
You can keep going to become gleeful at last.

Nafisi (1992) composed a poem as follows:

Anyone who tries to bother people  
He will be punished the same as his bad effort.

Saadi always attempts to describe the role of kindness and cheerfulness in all his works, the readers of his books can be imagined the ring of truth in his works. In the third chapter of his "Gulistan book", thus; he also shows the role of refreshing and smiling face as signs of kindness and cheerfulness. Foroughi (2004) mentioned that he also suggests that people should have cheerfulness to the family, friends, the poor, guests, and customers ... in every part of his book.

Yousefi (2014) composed a poem as follows:

Bad temperament will lead men to the hell  
Good ethics comes from heaven.

#### V. HOSPITALITY

Persian people have good relationship with their guests. They have respected them and they have tried to share their properties with their guests. Iranian people believe that a guest is a gift of God. Hospitality is Iran's cultural heritage came from our ancestors. Let us give an idiom about the above sentence (Hospitality is Iran's cultural heritage came from our ancestors) that is written by the poet Saadi, "If you desire your father's legacy, you should attain your father's learning". In fact, this idiom helps us to understand more about Iranian culture and the role of their ancestors as guidance in Iranian life in the history of Iran, and then we learn from history, Iranian people respect their ancestors. However, hospitality is one of sings of Iranian society and Saadi is pertained to this nation. Hospitality Customs and hosting are two of the most prominent manifestations of affection, because having good relationship with guest, will encourage widespread human relations with others. Saa'di composed a poem as follows:

Eating is forbidden  
If the host looked angrily

In this book, Saadi respects guest and tells if a guest comes your house, please go toward him and invites him kindly, because; based on Iranian culture, a guest is a gift of God.

#### VI. KINDNESS AND MAGNANIMITY WITH PEOPLE

One of the most obvious manifestations of kindness in "Bustan" is magnanimity with people. Saadi has never forgotten his magnanimity toward people in his works in general and "Bustan book" in particular. He, several times, orders people to do good works and says them never to refuse a favor (to do good works). He orders people to perform their duties in the best possible way. Soleimanizadeh (2011) mentioned that in all moral texts, helping those who are poor is something admirable. Man has always been ordered to do it. In Iranian culture, we have followed this point, helping the poor gladness the heart. Saadi learned from this ideology. Saadi is follower of righteous people and he has used every opportunity to show the value and dignity of this action as well. He believes that the goodness will help mankind get the resulted in his salvation. He adds that this goodness will help mankind go to heaven. However, based on Saadi's ideology, kindness and goodness are two precious provisions that mankind will use them in the judgment day. Saadi represents this idiom in accordance with goodness: "do good deeds and forget about them..."

In this book, Saadi composes a poem as follows:

Korah (king) who had a treasure of forty houses was perished  
Noushirvan's name remained alive due to his respectability (Azhdari, 2003).

Karimi (2010) argued that good ethics is considered essential in all religions. Imam Ali (PBUH) the first Shia Imam after governing the Muslims' society, he discharged many incompetent commanders and governors from service and replaced them with many competent ones. One of his criteria for choosing suitable commanders and governors were their appropriate moral behaviors. Yousefi (2013) composed two poems as follows:

Be kind to people/ is better than thousand times praying.

A righteous one never tries to be bad

One who thinks well will never behave badly

One of the distinctive characters of a man is his grace, because if a man is not virtuous and good, he will be as motionless as a wall. Saadi encouraged kindness and charity in "Bustan" book. He believes that just giving advice is not enough. He depicts the results of good and bad actions to the sharp-sighted addressees.

#### VII. COMPASSION

In Aryanpur Dictionary (1991), the word 'compassion' means kindness and sympathy. In Saadi's Bustan, the concept of the compassion is repeated several times. It is important for remember is that the concept of the compassion in comparison to the function of concept of kindness, the concept of the compassion is used in more special cases than the concept of kindness. From the literary texts, it is clear that Saadi used the concepts of kindness and love for all. But the notion of compassion is just used for specific groups such as the poor, the needy, and the orphans and like this. Saadi, who grew up as an orphan, he knows the concept of orphan hood, and he expressed his condolences to orphans in the poems:

I know the suffering of an orphan's pains

Because I lost my dad in childhood too

Think about those poor orphans

Be aware of their distressed hearts

Bullying and bad temper are unacceptable traits which have been condemned during all human life history. Saadi considered graciousness as one of the characteristics of competent rulers. He has never forgotten the subordinates' pains. Saadi composes poem in relation to this paragraph as follows:

Don't break the heart of your underlings

Lest, tomorrow, you become an underling yourself

We return to the role of Saadi as a master of speech and as one of the great human poet makes advice to people and he don't make differentiate between poor and rich in his speech. He addressed to the rich, and the rulers like this: Do not harass the defenseless /you will beseech them someday. Thus, Saadi points out to the other group of people who deserve compassion and mercy. He recommends the rulers and the judges to sentence them more justly. These sermons are very functional and need more self-reflection in today's era. They are nothing more than adjudicating the convicts wisely and fairly, and having pity on repentant sinners to promote the culture of forgiveness and the eradication of oppression and hatred. Besides, what we have got more advices from Saadi in his writing, Yousefi (2013) indicted that Naser Khosro as an Iranian great writer and he is closed idea to Saadi' idea in his book (Safer nameh) composes the following poems:

"When you are fierce and angry, try not to be blazing as fire

Since an abstinent person avoids being frantic

Look at the prisoners' conditions

Here may be some innocents among them

#### VIII. GRATITUDE

One of the special characteristics of kindness which is written in "Bustan" is gratitude. In Iranian culture, gratitude has special place among Iranian people and Saadi, several times, mentions it in his book. Sometimes gratitude is between people and their God and sometimes, it is among persons. However, the notion of the gratitude in relation to God by persons is meaningful and thus, the implication of this gratitude is that the persons thank God. Saadi believes that people should thank God in all life. Because, God's grace is boundless. He emphasizes that people will never forget God's grace. It seems that following God's orders will help the person is closer than the others to his God. Saadi adds that people should thank God, because; God is honorable and glorious and total submission to God's commandments will help us resolve our problems. He mentions that giving thanks God; this in itself is an added blessing. In addition, Iranian people respect this word (gratitude). There is an idiom about gratitude in Iranian culture, "A person who has lived as a guest in a family and is beholden to them." We can see many idioms about gratitude in Iranian society and many Iranian people, sometimes, talk about it. Iranian people believe that person should not break salt holder (gratitude), because; salt holder is as the same as gratitude is respected by the people and they have good idiom about it in Iranian culture such as "that ungrateful man was badmouthing his benefactor." Another idiom in relation to gratitude is "after years of eating at Ali's table, I have become deeply beholden". We can see several sentences in relation to gratitude in "Bustan book".

#### IX. SACRIFICE

In Aryanpour dictionary (1991), the word "sacrifice" has its own particular meanings such as self-sacrifice, devotion and giving abnegation. In Iranian culture, we can see many stories, movies, and books focuses on this word and define this word and show the role of sacrifice in Iranian society, thus; many Iranian by giving their lives, they guaranteed their country's independence in the history of this country. However, what is very important for us is that the role of

sacrifice is still alive in Iranian society. This word has motivated the people to do everything to help other humans and they have tried to not be cruel toward other humans. We can conclude that this word has good place in Iranian culture. In "Bustan book", Saadi, several times, mentions the word of sacrifice and invited people to help other humans. He encourages man gives his everything to help the poor. The fact that some characteristics are inborn and some others are acquired. However, sacrifice's characteristic is inborn and the inherent quality of sacrifice is different from other morality. In other morality, a person can learn from the moral lesson. Perhaps, a person empowers the soul of sacrifice, but what is important remember is that there is always sacrifice in the nature of human. Sometimes, human cannot recognize it and never reveal this secret (his sacrifice). Minoie (1990) said that human should pay attention to good advices, because; the good advices help him reveal his sacrifice. He added that if advices are repeated, they will change the mind of human.

#### X. BOUNTY AND GENEROSITY

Now, we consider the signs of kindness and love from a monetary view point is written by Saadi. So far, we discussed this paper from a spiritual love viewpoint. What is important to remember is that Saadi is a man of action and he wants to inform people that to live respectably, one should denote both his life and properties. What we can understand from Saadi's point of view is that he believes that rich people should not only use their wealth themselves, but also donate it to the poor too. He also indicates that the persons have tried to help people (poor) and the persons have tried to divide their wealth among orphans. The persons, their offenses are pardoned by God in this world and the judgment day. However, Saadi believes that this group of the people is the winning team in their life and what greater delight than all of them succeeds in the God examination. Saadi points out that if you want success in this way, you must work hard and more pay attention to orphans and poor people in society. Humanity is the best thing is introduced in "Bustan". Chopra (2014) indicated that

Saadi says that you try to learn love if you would like love. Saadi again points out that if you want attention and appreciation; learn to show respect and appreciation to others. On the other hand, Saadi never encourage the job of greedy person and refuses love of money. He believes that a greedy doesn't have a good outcome. Saadi says that a greedy person is hungry even if he owns the world, but a contented person is happy with a loaf of bread.

#### XI. CONCLUSION

As mentioned above, we investigated several conceptions of kindness and love to determine the role of "Bustan book" as one of the human heritages which was written by Iranian great poet in order to guide people towards humanity. Much of the controversy on the issue of the "Bustan" is concerned with the development of spirituality in human life and its relation to our moral values. However, the worth of our moral values surpasses anything else.

In the history of human being, the great persons have born and changed the life of people and tried to find the straight way to reach their purposes. One of them is the Iranian great poet is known Saadi or Saadi of Shiraz. To summarize to this discussion: we turn now to Iranian literature related to our topic. Iranian literature is one of the richest literatures over the world. This literature has served in this world for centuries. One of the masterpieces of Persian literature is poetry. A history of Persian literature comprises the great poets. Thus, one of the masterpieces of Saadi is "Bustan Book" "Bustan book" which was written by Saadi is also outstanding from a literary point of view. The study of this book has been particularly fruitful for understanding the spirituality in human life and distinguishes between material and spiritual. What can be concluded from this book is that reading this book is spiritually very important for us. Much of us are born with spirituality in our life, we are needed to develop it in our life. This book influences the development of the spiritual skills and the aspects of humanity may be those that are necessary for the perception of the world which shows some right ways contribution to the human life. To be sure, this book reports that goodness will finally triumph over evil. Before leaving our discussion about this nice book, what we conclude from this book is that Saadi encourages the beauty of life and informs people to accept the truth. He believes that human being has power to resolve their problems through kindness and love. In addition, this book is a wonderful gift to the world. What is certain, however, is that this book is the intangible cultural heritage of humanity and the corresponding to human and his kindness in the history of his life. There are many countries that translated this beautiful book into their languages from Persian by the eligible and elite research scholars, authors, translators and writers. The book is truly an international book. In this century, we more need this book. The authors of this paper hope that people all over the world use it.

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# Research on the Teaching Model of Reading Literary Classics from the Cross-cultural Perspective<sup>\*</sup>

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**Abstract**—College language courses in China should focus on the combination of carrying forward the excellent Chinese traditional culture and learning from foreign cultural achievements to guide students to see some aspect of the world in a world-wide sight. This paper advocates setting the curriculum which combines the introduction of the Western literary canons and the Chinese literary classics together. The purpose of this teaching model is to enhance the college students' humanistic qualities with the new teaching philosophy, new curriculum, teaching content, and teaching methods.

**Index Terms**—cross-culture, literary classics, teaching model, the other

## I. INTRODUCTION

Whether it is “经典” in Chinese or “classic” in English, the term “classic” has the meaning of “outstanding, exemplary and authoritative” in both languages. In the article *Literary Canons and Cultural Legitimacy – Literary Classics in the Field of Cultural Studies*, Dong-feng Tao (2004) mentioned that “classic” had the meaning as standard, model, law and rule of paradigms. In his definition, the word “classic” has the meaning of “role model” for people to learn and to imitate it. It embodies the norms of cultural values and has the cultural power to shape people's thought and to restrain their behavior. Classics not only refer to the time-tested authoritative texts which have been passed down in history in the form of words or other symbols, but also contain the meaning of cultural norms hidden in the texts including the restriction of human beings' thinking, emotions and behavior.

Under the background of popular culture in the current consumption era, Chinese and western literary classics have gradually faded out of the view of people and have been neglected by contemporary college students in China. In the multicultural context, people who are in the predicament of real culture need to re-understand the meanings of literary classics, to re-read literary classics, and to re-experience the energy that classics bring to human beings.

Education plays an important role in the course of human growth. University education takes on the dual responsibilities of value rationality and value guidance. And either Chinese or western literary classics have their own unique cultures and traditions, which manifest their respective cultural values of geographical image in the aspects of language, social concept, literature, art, etc.. Therefore regarding the literary classics as the teaching content is one of the ways to achieve the aim of the university humanities education.

## II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF READING LITERARY CLASSICS

Literary works need to be examined by time and history, and then to become classics. They are the accumulation of culture, the unrepeatable creations and rich in human nature. Literary classics reflect the collective memory of the nation and the capacity of the human spirit, and also provide a platform for people to communicate with each other while inheriting the traditional cultures.

Li-qun Qian (2007) believes that literary classics are the source of national spirit. He said that each country had its own classics, which could be said to be a household name, penetrating into the heart of every citizen. In his article, he mentioned that in terms of literary classics, they were the base of education, rooted in the minds of teenagers, and became the spirit of the young generations. Si-han Liu (2014) talked about that his aesthetic judgment was promoted after reading the literary classics. Since then, his aesthetic standard has been set up. And with this benchmark, he could realize the true meaning of literary classic. These two examples show that the literary classics are that wherever you are, they are the “compass” with which you find your spiritual home.

### A. *Cultivating a Sound Personality with Profound Humanistic Values of Literary Classics*

Literature is the most dynamic and splendid part of human beings' culture. Throughout the long history, literary classics have embodied the underlying spirits of the world culture, reflected the people's pursuit for esthetics and faith

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<sup>\*</sup> This study is funded by the projects “Research on the Recessive Education on the Core Values of Socialism in College English Teaching”, project No. GBE1317023 and “the Communication of Traditional Chinese Culture and the Cultivation of Core Values of Socialism”, project No. sjd18210

for ideal society, and moreover, demonstrated the diversified character of human beings. For instance, *The Analects* is the representative work of Confucianism in China, which reflects the profound influence of the mind, outlook on life, thinking mode, value orientation and ethics. Even in the contemporary society, Confucian thoughts still have their strong practical significance in China. *Comments on Ci Poetry* contains the meaning of human beings in the interpretation of Ci, which shows the three states of doing research. The criticisms on imperial examination system, social corruption and feudal moral hypocrisy in *The Scholars* still have the warnings in today's society. The struggle between nature and ego in the *Qld Man and the Sea*, as well as the never-say-die spirit, inspires people to stick to the direction of life and to realize their self-worth. The pursuit of truth in *Faust*, the thought of suffering and tribulation, and the profound insights into human nature and humanistic spirits have practical guiding significance for the contemporary impetuous college students. *Hamlet* has contradictory and decisive life choices for justice, responsibility, kinship and love, which deserve our consideration and exploration.

The author has discussed with the students about reading literary classics and found that there were few students who had read through the Chinese Four Great Classical Novels. Compared with the popular and easy to understand novels, such as *Journey to the West*, *Outlaws of the Marsh* and *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, the number of people reading *A Dream of the Red Mansions* was very small. The vast majority of students learned about the Chinese Four Great Classical Novels through films and TV series. For various reasons, films and TV series would be deleted or rewritten to the original works more or less. Therefore, they cannot faithfully reflect the author's thought. And for foreign literary classics, not only is the number of people reading less, but many students are unfamiliar with their names and even have never heard of them. The fact shows that many students prefer watching science fiction movies to reading literary classics.

Confusion, hesitation and helplessness existing in every phase of life make people lose the direction of life in the complicated world. People can find the calm and wise from literary classics. The thoughts and values conveyed in the literary classics will unconsciously influence the readers' thought, cultivate their temperament, purify their souls and arouse their strong sense of mission and responsibility.

#### B. *Improving the Literary Accomplishment with Richness and Canonization of Literary Classics*

Since the 1990s, consumerism has become one of the ideologies in Chinese society. In the era of big data and Internet, the popularization of computers and smart phones, as well as the extensive usage of microblog and WeChat, has changed the reading habits of college students. We have entered the era of "e-book", "shallow reading" and "picture reading". Bestsellers and e-books account for the main market of college students to read, thus their quantity and quality of reading present downward trend. Due to the change of social context, there is a disconnection between literary classics and the demands of the times, which leads to the crisis and marginalization of literary classics. And the prevalence of mass consumption culture has led to the deconstruction and decanonization of literary classics. The meaning and the artistic value of the literature classics have been washed out, and their authorities have been overturned. Literary classics are constantly confronted with "playful interpretation" and "rewritten" whose aesthetic values and the depth of the thought have been reduced by this consumption era to satisfy people's sense of stimulation and entertainment.

Literary classics are the must-read books for the promotion of literary accomplishment. Literary classics are the paradigms of literature in terms of language usage and layout. By reading literary classics in literature, culture and humanism, students' knowledge can be broadened. By this way, students obtain a certain literary theories, a sense of literature, creative ability and the ability to apply the texts to develop good reading habits and to have a higher level of literary appreciation. In the process of reading and interpreting the literary classics, we can understand their profound meaning, the beauty of language and artistic conception. Students' abilities to language application and writing can be improved. And there are many other benefits of reading literary classics, such as, to build a reasonable knowledge structure, to improve the knowledge level, to strengthen the study of humanities and cultural knowledge, to improve the oral and written expression abilities, to cultivate the strict logical thinking ability, and to promote students' literary accomplishments in all aspects.

In this era of information explosion, people have less room for reverie and spend less time thinking, but encounter more and more difficulties in thinking. However, one of the reasons for this phenomenon is not less in reading, but less in literary classics. The number of people reading literary classics is decreasing. One of the reasons is that the influence of literary classics on people cannot be realized in a short period of time in this utilitarian society. But the subtle influence of literary classics is the most valuable long-term investment in life. Literary classics are the essence of a country and a nation in the aspects of thoughts and culture, and the crystallization formed by time and national culture. The creation of literature is influenced by knowledge and moral standards of its time, and embodies the social ideology of the time, so different social groups in different times can revisit their values and reinterpret them by rereading. Reading literary classics not only increases knowledge and molds character, but also helps people rebuild their ideals and beliefs. People can establish and adhere to basic moral principles and value norms through reading and studying literary classics.

Each culture has its own characteristic values. So people from different cultural backgrounds have different perceptions of the same information. Because of the differences between cultures, they can absorb and learn from each other, and find themselves in the reading process.

### C. *The Meaning of Reading from the Perspective of Cross-culture*

Reading is a complex dialogue between the author, the reader and the text. In the process of cross-cultural reading, “misreading” will arise, whether it is “misreading” or “realizing”, it is a creative action for interpreting the literature classics.

In *Cultural Differences and Cultural Misreading*, Dai-yun Le (2004) mentioned that taking foreign culture as a means to help you find yourself. Only from the outside, from an unfamiliar perspective of another culture, one could learn things that couldn't understand by themselves from the inside. She said that in the process of observation and interpretation of culture, everyone was inevitably restrained by their own cultural ideologies. Some problems within the “tradition” tend to be unexpected and invisible, only from the outside or from the perspective of foreign cultures can there be new discoveries and understandings. That means only by comparing with others and examining ourselves from the perspective of others can we completely understand our own native culture. These are the advantages of cross-cultural reading.

Cross-cultural reading is a bidirectional and conversational interpretation process. It enables us to see the potential significance and values of texts that are difficult to find from a single angle. In this process, heterogeneous culture and maternal culture are equal subjects, and they are equal dialogues with each other. Cross-cultural reading is based on the recognition of the differences between cultures. That is to say, there are no right or wrong answers to questions in cross-cultural reading, and readers can have different opinions. Because there are differences between cultures, we can have different perspectives to examine the heterogeneous cultures and that of ourselves. The common topics such as people's perception of life and life experience, which are intercommunity between cultures, as well as the literature on people's emotional and spiritual care which is the most easily to communicate and understand, make cross-cultural reading have the possibility of implementation.

## III. THE CONSTRUCTION OF CROSS-CULTURAL TEACHING MODEL OF LITERARY CLASSICS

Cross-cultural teaching model of the literary classics advocates the investigative study to guide the contemporary college students to read literary classics, and cultivates their sound personalities to improve the students' humanistic quality in language courses.

### A. *Content Based on Chinese and English Literary Classics*

The greatness of literature lies in telling the story and evoking people's strong senses of mission and responsibility. The Chinese and English literary classics reflect the histories and cultures of the east and west for thousands of years. The thoughts conveyed by the works will gradually influence the readers' thinking to edify readers' disposition and purify their souls.

As compulsory courses, college Chinese and college English should balance the proportion of Chinese and English literary classics in teaching content. In college Chinese teaching, it is necessary to strengthen the reading depth of Chinese literary classics, and to increase the proportion of the classical chapters of western literature. In addition to mastering the basic knowledge of literature, students also need to know some literary theories. In the analysis and interpretation of Chinese literary classics, it is possible to make a new interpretation of them by using foreign literary theories from the cross-cultural perspective. College English should be appropriate to add the interpretation and appreciation of literary classics in teaching content which can make more students read the European and American literary classics and experience the differences between eastern and western literature, to change the phenomenon of “focusing on skills training, neglecting humanistic quality” in college English teaching. Through the study of compulsory courses, students have some basic understanding of American and European literary classics, which lays a foundation for the future improvement of their literature accomplishments. The optional courses enrich the reading categories of literary classics, covering the fields of poetry, prose, novels and other genres.

In the process of reading Chinese and western literary classics, students can improve their appreciation abilities of traditional literature and arts in the east and west. The rich forms and features of Chinese and western literary classics, the artistic styles of the different ages, geographical and ethnic characteristics can be learned. And students can also experience different local cultures and folk customs between the east and west. Reading the literary classics from the cross-cultural perspective not only spreads the human spiritual culture and inherits Chinese traditional culture with specific attachments, but also provides a new teaching model and way of thinking for the courses of college Chinese and college English. It is beneficial to the planning and development of literature courses and humanistic quality courses.

### B. *Establishment of the Curriculum on the Basis of Compulsory and Optional Courses*

In the curriculum setting of our university, language courses of Chinese and English were relatively independent, and there was a lack of exchange and reference between the two courses. The college Chinese was the central part of the literary teaching, which only for liberal arts majors. It mainly taught Chinese and western literature, but it was confined by limited periods and the beneficial area was narrow. College English focused on the cultivation of language skills and the learning of western cultural knowledge. Due to the central position of language knowledge in the course of learning, cultural teaching was marginalized and neglected in college English teaching. And English has always been regarded as

the language to be learned in order to cope with all kinds of examinations in China. Many students are tired of learning English, and regard it as time-consuming subject. In fact, this kind of teaching model is not consistent with the goal of cultivating intercultural communication competence and comprehensive cultural quality in college English curriculum. It is not beneficial to cultivate the comprehensive quality of college students.

The teaching model of reading literary classics from cross-cultural perspective is based on the combination of compulsory courses for college Chinese, college English, and the optional courses in reading literary classics. At our university, the teaching scope of college Chinese was narrow and the proportion of literature appreciation in college English teaching was low. In order to solve these problems, the optional courses become the best way to make up for a lack of literary classics teaching. Five optional courses, such as, the Chinese Literature and Life, Tang Poetry and Song Ci, Selected Readings in Chinese Modern Literature, Selected Readings in Euro-American Literature, Masterpieces in Chinese and Foreign Literature have been setting up. At the same time, these courses are supplemented by various extracurricular activities themed on literary classics, such as recitation competition of literary classics, lectures on Chinese and foreign literary classics, etc., to create a rich cultural atmosphere on campus. It is the aim of the whole teaching to improve the students' humanistic quality by using the characteristics of canonical, profound and humanistic literary classics.

### C. *Creation of Research-based Learning Classes with a Variety of Teaching Methods*

After the establishment of the new teaching model, teachers have changed their teaching concepts and insisted on the combination of language teaching and culture teaching in the compulsory courses. In particular, it is necessary to take advantage of the wide range of college English course to make a comprehensive appreciation of literary works by teaching forms and methods of vocabulary, reading, listening and writing. For optional courses, we have adopted flexible instructional modes. For instance, besides that a teacher teaches a course, it can also be the cooperation between College Chinese teachers and College English teachers cooperate with each other to teach the literary classics by stages. Or the teachers cooperate to interpret the literary classics on the same subject with different cultural backgrounds.

In learner-centered teaching activities, in order to arouse the learning potential of learners, teachers should make full use of various modern teaching methods to interpret literary classics from cross-cultural perspective. A variety of teaching methods have been adopted to create research-based learning classes. In teaching, teachers and students interpreted the literary classics "from linguistic analysis to aesthetic interpretation and to its sociological significance, and then rising to the significance of intellectual history." (En-ming Tian, 2012) In this process, teachers encouraged students to think independently, to discuss the connotation of literary classics, and to conduct critical training, so that researching classroom became one of the ways to cultivate students' innovative thinking. In this way, the traditional teaching form of "what one says goes" and "one-way inculcation" can be changed, and students form their own views on literary classics. Rich teaching contents and different angles of interpretation to promote students "want to learn the classics", "love to learn the classics", and truly "enter into" the world of literature classics, to acquire the practical abilities in both English and Chinese languages and to comprehensively improve their literature accomplishments.

## IV. MATTERS NEEDING ATTENTION IN TEACHING

On the one hand, the teaching model of literary classics from cross-cultural perspective can break the traditional independent practice of university language courses to change the bottleneck of English teaching. And on the other hand, we can further strengthen our understanding and love of our national culture through the integration of Chinese and western literary classics. In teaching, teachers could cultivate students to read literary classics from a cross-cultural perspective in the following aspects.

### A. *Cultivation of Cross-cultural Awareness*

Chinese culture is a typical historical and high-context culture, focusing on the accumulation of experience, with "nature and humanity", perception of intuitive thinking, humanistic pragmatism, etc.. And the western cultures rooted in the ancient Greek is the philosophical and low-context culture, which attaches great importance to the perception of the world, analysis as the main method, is characterized by rational metaphysical speculation. So some people think that it is unlikely to achieve real communication and understanding because of their different sources, different ways of thinking and different cultural frameworks. But in literature, there is a complementary relationship between the east and west. This kind of complementary is in contrast with "the other" to understand and highlight oneself characteristics more clearly. The purpose of cross-cultural reading is to realize the mutual absorption and complement of the eastern and western literature, but it is not to turn the other into the same or become the other. Cross-cultural reading mainly uses the way of thinking or literary theories in a culture to interpret the text of another culture, thus obtaining a new interpretation and understanding of the text.

The teaching model emphasizes the re-understanding and interpretation of Chinese and western literary classics from a cross-cultural perspective. Cross-cultural reading is a two-way, conversational interpretation process that enables us to see the potential significance and values of many texts that are difficult to find within a single culture. Reading literary classics from cross-cultural perspective puts us in a double bind. On the one hand, reading literary classics is a dialogue between history and reality. In the context of history and reality, rereading the classics makes a modern interpretation of

them. On the other hand, any culture is a result of mutual communication, and the “pure”, “original” culture is just wishful thinking. Rereading the classics in the cultural field of Chinese and western culture is to discover the new connotation of literary classics, to obtain spiritual satisfaction and spiritual care, and to reconstruct the values and moral values. The aim of reading literary classics from cross-cultural perspective is intended to release the potential meaning of the enclosed texts in the modern context.

In teaching process, teachers guide students to analyze the texts, explain the cultural phenomenon, and explore the content of the unfamiliar culture, to constantly reflect on the learning process and to sum up learning experience. Cross-cultural teaching has a very wide range of content. “To teach fishing is better than to fish”, it is better to cultivate the students’ cross-cultural awareness and sensitivity, to make them have the independent learning methods and establish the idea of lifelong learning.

#### B. *Setting up a Cultural Relativistic View*

The process of interpretation of literary classics from cross-cultural perspective is the process of constantly reflecting on the native culture and comparing with other cultures. The learners who have the open and flexible thinking mode are required to have the point of view of cultural relativity theory, and to eliminate or weaken ethnocentrism to understand their values and behavior habits objectively.

In the process of cross-cultural reading, teachers should guide students to realize that heterogeneous culture and native culture are equal. Cross-cultural reading is based on the recognition of the differences between cultures. In the process of cross-cultural reading, there are no right or wrong answers, but different opinions.

Through comparing and imitating their respective characteristics of Chinese and western cultures, teachers combine the Chinese and western literary classics as the teaching content, which can enhance the students’ rational knowledge of human cultures, to assist students to understand the rich connotation and unique humanities values implied in literary classics and the deep spiritual pursuit of the Chinese nation. They can have a more comprehensive and objective understanding of contemporary China and the outside world, to avoid the formation of extreme thoughts and cultural prejudice.

#### C. *The Necessity of “Rereading” the Literary Classics*

In the context of multiculturalism, people who are in the predicament of real cultures need to re-understand the classics and their meanings, to reread classics and re-experience the energy that classics bring to human beings.

The classics are something constantly being reread. Italian scholar Italo Calvino (1999) said in his book *Why Reading the Classics*, “The classics are those books which you usually hear people saying: ‘I’m rereading...’, never ‘I’m reading...’. A classic is a book which with each rereading offers as much of a sense of discovery as the first reading. A classic is a book which even when we read it for the first time gives the sense of rereading something we have before.” In the process of continuously rereading literary classics, their unique, unexpected, and original characteristics can be found. We put the prefix “re-” in front of the verb “read” to emphasize “read repeatedly”, just as the Chinese saying “A book is read a hundred times and its meaning is seen.” For literary classics, every reading has its own comprehension, and in each time it is different. The more you read it, the more you understand it. Literary classics can be constantly reread, showing that they have the characteristics of different interpretations by different people in different times. The content or thoughts of the classics are beyond their times which leave the deep impression to us or hidden deeply in people’s mind in the unconscious state, making readers of any cultures in every era having their own understanding.

## V. CONCLUSION

Using literary classics as the medium, combining College English and Chinese language classes together can achieve communication between the Chinese and western literature, to help learners to understand their contribution to and influence on the development of human society. This teaching model not only embodies the humanistic quality education values, but also makes Chinese culture friendlier, more attractive and British and American culture more concrete, more vivid and easier to grasp. Its teaching goals are to improve students’ autonomous learning of Chinese excellent traditional culture and exploring ability, to train students’ consciousness of cultural innovation, to strengthen students’ sense of responsibility and mission to carry forward Chinese excellent traditional culture.

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# A Symbolic Reading of *Wide Sargasso Sea*

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**Abstract**—*Wide Sargasso Sea* is acclaimed as the masterpiece of the British female writer Jean Rhys. In the novel, Rhys reshapes the mad wife of Rochester, Bertha Mason, who is imprisoned in the attic in *Jane Eyre*. With her own life experience as a white Creole and her experience living in West Indies as a blueprint, setting the abolition of slavery in West Indies in the nineteenth century as the background of the times, Rhys restores Antoinette a real state of survival under colonialism and patriarchy, with a sense of identity loss and confusion. The use of symbolism is one of the most outstanding styles in description. Owing to the use of symbolism, the historical situation of Jamaica under colonialism and patriarchy has been successfully displayed and the abstract moral themes have been vividly conveyed. This paper seeks to set symbolism as a theoretical basis, classify and analyze the symbols in the novel in accordance with their roles in revealing the themes, illustrating a complete interpretation of the complicated racial conflicts and patriarchy oppression in West Indies.

**Index Terms**—*Wide Sargasso Sea*, symbolic reading, Jean Rhys

## I. INTRODUCTION

Jean Rhys has established herself as one of the most remarkable novelists in the twentieth century. Her special personal background fosters her unique perspective of literary creation. Born in former British Caribbean colony and growing up there, Jean Rhys' novels focus on the life of Caribbean indigenous people, especially the miserable life of women under the oppression of the patriarchal society, and *Wide Sargasso Sea* is the best representative of these novels.

The unique novel, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, seeks to recreate the true story of Bertha Mason, the Jamaican mad wife of Rochester in Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (Rhys, 2001). Rhys wanted to explore the reasons why Bertha Mason went mad. In telling Bertha, or Antoinette's story, Rhys explores the colonial and patriarchal society that is conditioned by gender and race divisions, reflecting the oppression under colonialism and patriarchy and the identity crisis of the oppressed. The novel was honored with the prestigious W. H. Smith Award and the Heinemann Award of the Royal Society of Literature. It was also selected by Random House as one of the best one hundred books of fictions written in the English language during the twentieth century (Rhys, 2001).

Jean Rhys stands before her contemporaries by employing symbolism. The use of symbols, consisting of Sargasso Sea, the characters and the subjects, not only links the different parts but also intensifies the themes of the novel. Though she does get inspiration from *Jane Eyre*, Jean Rhys has surpassed it and established her reputation as "one of the most extraordinary novelists of our time. *Wide Sargasso Sea* succeeds in giving voice to a marginalized character and transforms her original tragic demise into a kind of triumphant heroism" (Gilbert, 1997, p.6-8).

The use of symbolism is one of the most outstanding styles in description. This paper attempts to focus on the symbolic technique used in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, from different angles simultaneously, in a detailed way, and somewhat systematically. Since one function of symbolism is to reveal the theme that in this particular novel is by describing Antoinette's tragic childhood and marriage failure to criticize the oppression of the colonialism, the patriarchy and compliment the resistant spirit of the oppressed. This paper tries to classify the symbols in *Wide Sargasso Sea* into three categories in accordance with their roles played in revealing the themes: the sense of identity, the racial conflicts and the patriarchal oppression. Accordingly, readers, in interpreting from symbolic perspective, could get closer to the essence of the world that the author depicted indirectly.

### **Introduction to Jean Rhys and *Wide Sargasso Sea***

Jean Rhys is described as "one of the greatest British writers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. *Wide Sargasso Sea* is the masterwork of Jean Rhys, in which she successfully corrects the wrong presentation of the madwoman in *Jane Eyre*, genuinely reflects the racial conflicts of Jamaican society in 1830s, bitterly criticizes the killing patriarchy, and narrates the embarrassing situation of the heroine who is caught between the European white and local black cultures, with a sense of identity loss and confusion.

#### **1. Jean Rhys**

Jean Rhys was born in Dominica in 1894. After her father died, she came to England aged 16 and drifted into various jobs before starting to write in Paris in the late 1920's, including chorus girl, mannequin and artist's model. She began to write while in her thirties and living in Paris following the break-up of the first of her three marriages. *QUARTET* was first published as 'Postures' in 1928. Her novels, often portraying women as underdogs out to exploit their sexualities, were ahead of their time and only modestly successful. From 1939 she lived reclusively, and was largely forgotten when she made a sensational comeback with '*Wide Sargasso Sea*' in 1966, which won the Royal Society of Literature Award and the W. H. Smith Award for that year ([www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)). Her only comment on her sudden great success was "It has come

too late". Her final collection of stories, *Sleep It off Lady*, appeared in 1976. In 1978, she was made a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in 1966 and a CBE. She died in 1979.

These novels are about how women are aliens and they represent her bitter, insecure, revengeful feeling and her life outside of the conventional society. Rhys is adept at combining her personal experience with emotional and psychological insight to examine the nature of relationships between man and woman. In her works, she concentrates on complex, intelligent, sensitive women who are dominated by men and victimized by the colonial and patriarchal society.

## 2. *Wide Sargasso Sea*

*Wide Sargasso Sea* is a 1966 post-colonial parallel novel by Dominica-born author Jean Rhys. Since her previous work, *Good Morning, Midnight*, was published in 1939, Rhys had lived in obscurity. *Wide Sargasso Sea* put Rhys into the limelight once more, and became her most successful novel (Rhys, 2001).

*Wide Sargasso Sea* is composed with inspiration from *Jane Eyre* and has been thought of as a kind prequel to *Jane Eyre*, because it describes the childhood of Bertha Mason and the early days of her marriage, which are not described in Charlotte Brontë's novel. But it also does more than this.

*Wide Sargasso Sea* is about the story of the first Mrs. Rochester, Antoinette Cosway (known as Bertha Mason in *Jane Eyre*), a white Creole heiress, from the time of her youth in the Caribbean to her unhappy marriage and relocation to England. Caught in an oppressive patriarchal society in which she belongs neither to the white Europeans nor the black Jamaicans, Rhys' novel re-imagines Brontë's devilish madwoman in the attic. As with many post-colonial works, the novel deals largely with the themes of racial inequality and the harshness of displacement and assimilation (Rhys, 2001).

The novel is divided into three parts. Part one, narrated by Antoinette, focuses on her childhood at Coulibri after the death of her father, Alexander Cosway. In this part Antoinette's vague and fragmentary memories focus on glimpses of tropical landscape, description of her mother, and examples of her childhood isolation. Racial tensions and the disapproval of the white Jamaican pervade these memories. In the second part, young Rochester describes his arrival in the West Indies, his marriage and its disastrous aftermath. The last part is once more narrated by Antoinette, now called Bertha by Rochester; but the scene is now England, and she writes from the attic room in Thornfield Hall. There Antoinette recounts a dream that forecasts her burning of Thornfield and shields the candle to light her way along the dark passage (Rhys, 2001).

## II. METHODOLOGY

It is obvious that symbolism is the main methodology in this paper. The use of symbolism is to classify and analyze the symbols in the novel in accordance with their roles in revealing the themes, illustrating a complete interpretation of the complicated racial conflicts and patriarchy oppression in West Indies.

## III. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

### A. *Symbols Revealing Sense of Identity*

The term of "identity" here is an important post-colonial conception meaning "how we define who we are". And "as the process of decolonization continues, the growth of a national identity becomes highly important, particular in such a geographically divided region." (Wisker, 2000, p.96) Jean Rhys, because of her Creole identity and life experience, alienation from self and isolation from the outside world, features her work with a sense of identity crisis. Teresa F. O'Connor once observed "Rhys, herself caught between places and cultures, classes and races, never able to identify clearly with one another, gives the same marginality to her heroines, so that they reflect the unique experience of dislocation of the white Creole woman..." (O'Connor, 1986, p.9) *Sargasso Sea* and the mirror vividly tell a difficult way of identity loss and reconstruction.

For a certain individual, especially one born to parents of different nationalities, reared and educated in a different country and integrated into different cultures, the issue of identity is of great importance and has to be confronted. Antoinette characterized in *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Rhys is just such an example of women suffering from the loss of identity. Antoinette dwells in the most marginal place in the society, which is easy to be overlooked. Jean Rhys gives us the opportunity to have a look at the poor conditions of this minority group.

#### 1. *Sargasso Sea: a symbol of the embarrassing situation of the heroine*

*Sargasso Sea*, because of the geographic location and the physical properties, stands a symbol revealing the embarrassment of our heroine. The *Sargasso Sea* is an extended region where is surrounded by ocean currents- the middle of the North Atlantic Ocean. The sea is different from the Atlantic Ocean, but it exists "in the heart of the Atlantic". The *Sargasso Sea* is the only sea without shores. It is physically defined by the "floating sargassum weed" and "a tremendous stillness". *Sargasso Sea* alludes to such embarrassing situation of Antoinette. She has no shores to harbor, as she has no particular culture or identity to pursue. She drifts between two cultures or identities.

Besides, the salty *Sargasso Sea* is usually treated as being lifeless, although it is home to some seaweed belongs to the genus *sargassum*. Because of its proximity to Bermuda, the sea is credited with some of the infamous disappearances there. That stigma is further enforced by the sometimes total lack of wind over the sea, and the possibility for modern engines to become entangled in the *sargassum*, stranding most vessels. Thus, it is sometimes called the "graveyard of ships" (Rhys, 2001, p.3). *Sargasso Sea* once more alludes to such embarrassing situation of Antoinette. She is trapped and

immobilized by a social structure and cannot escape.

Like Sargasso Sea, Antoinette drifts between two cultures. Her drifting predicament is caused by the European colonialism and the problems left by the colonialism. Sargasso Sea remains a perfect image for the impenetrable and gloomy problems of the dark voyage between West Indies and Europe. Antoinette is the Sargasso Sea that is “an image of feminine searching for autonomy and identity: although she struggles so hard, the woman never free herself from the insidious and invincible tentacles of exploiter and the patriarchal conditioning that cling to her as to try to find her way to herself.” (Barat, 2001, p.40)

## 2. *Mirror: a symbol of pursuing and losing identity*

Characters in the novel frequently refer to mirrors as an external tool to assert their identity, turn to them for reassurance and conquer their fear. Mirrors as looking glasses, meaningful gazes and clear pool of water are embodiments, symbolizing the heroine's pursuing of identity.

Looking glass is often associated with women and their relationship with the society where their social status decides their identity. By looking their reflections in it, they hope to know about themselves and confirm self-image. Annette, when the family is rejected by the European whites, Annette “still planned and hoped—perhaps she had to hope every time she passed a looking glass.” (Rhys, 2001, p.3) Dresses in fine clothing, Annette sees herself as a socialite in the looking class, hoping to identify her with the European whites and regain her lost status among peers.

In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, the physical mirror appears as an important symbol. In the first section of the novel, Antoinette is sent to the convent after experiencing the damage of the plantation, the death of her idiot brother, and the madness of her remarried mother. Without looking glass, Antoinette then has the relationship with outside cut up. There she finds “We have no looking-glass in the dormitory”. (Rhys, 2001, p.30) The girls have no alternative but to look at themselves in a cask of water to build self-image. In another sense, no looking glass in the convent is to conceal her identity.

Years later Antoinette is enjoined in Thornfield, “there is no looking-glass here and I don't know what I am like now. I remember watching myself brush my hair and how my eyes looked back at me. The girl I saw was me yet not quite myself. Long ago when I was a child and very lonely I tried to kiss her. But the glass was between us—hard, cold and misted over with my breath. Now they have taken everything away. What am I doing in this place and who am I?” (Rhys, 2001, p.116)

The statement mentions a important issue for identity again. Her English husband deprives her of chances to set up her identity by way of migrating to England and taking away the mirrors. So Antoinette totally lands herself in a predicament. The absence of a looking glass because it would offer her a reflection and a reassurance of herself. Mirrors underscore the important questions of identity. Antoinette, as her mother constantly looks for her own reflection, shows that they need to be visible in a world instead of acceptations or invitations. Antoinette was lonely put in a mirrorless prison and Rochester exacerbates her feeling of disconnection and loss of herself. Without a name, she does not know what to call herself; without a face, she becomes a ghost.

The last time Antoinette sees her reflection is in her dream, “I saw her—the ghost. The woman is with streaming hair. She was surrounded by gilt grime but I knew her.” (Rhys, 2001, p.122) Years of imprisoned life has deformed her image and deprived of her identity, therefore, Richard Mason fails to recognize her and Antoinette fails to figure out herself in the looking glass either. She takes what she sees there as a ghost. Her failure to recognize herself in the looking glass is the mark of a complete breakdown in her recognition of her own identity.

Tia, her black friend, provides Antoinette with a mirror reflection in gazing at each other. They eat the same food, sleep side by side and bathe in the same river. As Coulibri burns, Antoinette runs to Tia; she wants to live with her and be like her. She longs to be black and identify herself with the black culture. But “when I was close I saw the jagged stone in her hand but I did not see her throw it. I did not feel it either, only something wet, running down my face. I looked at her and I saw her face crumple up as she began to cry. We stared at each other, blood on my face, tears on hers. It was as if I saw myself, like in a looking glass.” (Rhys, 2001, p.23) She fails to choose Tia's identity, for she calls Tia “you cheating nigger” and Tia replies “black nigger better than white nigger”. The systematic supremacy and resentment and violence along the broader lines of contact between black and white make such a choice impossible. The stone thrown by Tia smashes the looking glass and shatters the possibility.

Tia emerges in her third dream, standing by the pool in Coulibri and beckoning to her. The pool of water is regarded as a looking glass and reflection of her image. The water is not like the glass, hard and cold, which prevent her uniting with the reflection. Antoinette becomes conscious that once she jumps into the water, she will tear up her present identity and rejoin with the black and Creole identity back in West Indies. In the end, fire symbolizes both destruction and creation. In burning Thornfield, Antoinette destroys “Bertha” but regains her original identity that has been deprived by Rochester, even at the price of life.

## B. *Symbols Revealing Racial Conflicts*

In Jamaica, there were three types of race: the whites who controlled everything but made up only one percent of the population; the blacks who were mainly former slaves and the Creoles who belonged neither to the whites nor to the blacks. The Creoles was a special group on the islands. They were descendent of the former English, French or Spanish colonizers or slave-owners. They were born on the island, but belong to a class that has disappeared. After the emancipation of slaves in 1833, slaves were not free. They have no land and become indentured servants for the whites.

The conditions of the slaves are not better off. The conflict between the white and the enslaved natives in Jamaica is very severe.

Antoinette and her mother Annette, descendants of the former French colonizers, are born on the island but belong to a class that has disappeared. The blacks hate them because their ancestry is slave-owners. The European whites estrange from them since their home countries consider them inferior, believing that their pure blood of the superior Europe has been contaminated by the natives on the island. They are regarded as outsiders by both the blacks and the whites and are caught in between. Moreover, Christophine, a representative of the blacks, is colonized and considered as inferior by the whites, but she never stop claiming her voice in front of domination. The response of Christophine tells us that women can be oppressed, but never destroyed.

### ***1. Annette: a symbol of the Creole whites***

Annette is a symbol revealing racial conflicts as her tragic life is caused by the clashes between the whites and the blacks, the European whites and the Creole whites. Annette is the second wife to Alexander Cosway and the mistress of the disused plantation, Coulibri Estate. Newly widowed, Annette Cosway has no male protector (except her retarded son, Pierre) and has no earning to support Coulibri. Whites born in England are different from the white Creoles, descendants of Europeans who have lived in the West Indies for one or more generations. What's worse, due to her beauty, just as Christophine says "because she pretty like pretty self," (Rhys, 2001, p.3) Annette has never been approved by the white Jamaican ladies.

Annette is originally from Martinique which is a French colony. At that time, French and English had struggled for control of Dominica and other islands in the West Indies and this historical background makes her inferior in the eyes of the English women on the island. However, she still hopes to identify herself with the European society, "of course they have their own misfortunes. Still waiting for this compensation the English promised when the Emancipation Act was passed." (Rhys, 2001,p.3) Nevertheless, English promises of financial restitution do not materialize for a number of years. It is the act of abandonment by their own race that adds the extra edge of bitterness and despair. The family is marooned, indeed, since they are "white niggers" in the eyes of European whites. As a result, they are completely isolated in the society of Jamaica.

Against the background that the blacks are freed from the whites, the emancipation cannot change attitudes for so many years, and in fact, it releases a hatred of the blacks for the whites that have long been suppressed. Antoinette recalls "I never looked at any strange Negro. They hated us. They called us white cockroaches." (Rhys, 2001, p.7) Burrows put it this way "West Indian plantation fell into a state of ruin. The white Creole slave-owners were disowned by England and were openly hated by the newly freed slave." (Burrows, 2004, p.28-29)

The only thing Annette is proud of is to ride her horse about every morning. Though her riding clothes grow shabby, she doesn't care. But the black people stand about in groups to jeer at her, and even poison her horse. As she is pacing on the verandah of Coulibri, she is stared and laughed at by the passing blacks. Her body reflects the pain of her estrangement with her eyes shut and her hands clenched. A frown comes between her black eyebrows, so deep that it might have been cut with a knife: She becomes inward, cold and distant. Where is her way out?

Annette's Pierre dies, which is the last straw that completely destroys her. In grief she screams at Mason "Don't touch me. I'll kill you if you touch me. Coward, Hypocrite. I'll kill you." (Rhys, 2001, p.24) So she is labeled as losing wits and sent to two black caretakers. Later Christophine tells the truth. Annette becomes "mad" because she is driven to it. When she loses her son, she loses herself for a while, then she is shut away, "They tell her she is mad, they act like she is mad. Question, question. But no kind word, no friend. They won't let me see her. I try, but no. They won't let Antoinette see her. In the end—mad. I don't know—she gives up, she cares for nothing. That man who is in charge of her takes her whenever he wants..." (Rhys, 2001,p.102) Annette dies when Antoinette is in the convent school, which foretells that Antoinette is literally and completely left at the mercy of those forces which she can't stand a chance to escape.

Helen Tiffin explained, "The white Creole is, as a double outsider, condemned to self-consciousness, a sense of inescapable difference and even deformity in the two societies by whose judgment she always condemns herself." (Tiffin, 1978,p.328)

### ***2. Christophine: a symbol of the oppressed but rebellious blacks***

Christophine belongs to a class that is exploited and oppressed. But contrary to Annette, she is rebellious and undaunted. She is a symbol, standing for the native blacks and fighting against the domination and oppression. Christophine is a wedding gift to Annette by Antoinette's father. The name of Christophine is a symbolic one which indicates she is a Christ-like figure to Antoinette. Joseph reminds us of the earthly father of Christ in the Bible. When Antoinette is rejected by her mother, Christophine gives her love to Antoinette. When Antoinette is hurt, she gives her care. When Antoinette is in trouble, she gives her advice and help. It is she that tells Antoinette the importance of financial independence.

In spite of the fact that slavery has been abolished, the oppression of the blacks lingers for quite a long time, though not exactly in the form of slavery. In the minds of the whites, the black people have always been and are still a race of inferiority, fit only for subservient roles. When Christophine serves the coffee with her dress trailing on the floor, Rochester shows no approval, thinking it not a clean habit; though according to the black culture it is a good intention of showing respect.

The superiority of the whites over the blacks, in a way, can be manifested by their abuse of the black female bodies. On

the one hand, they assert the black women are the vilest of the human kind, reducing them to animals. And any bodily contact with the blacks is thought to be threatening and disgusting; so Rochester has been wondering Why Antoinette would hug and kiss Christophine. Whereas, in *Wide Sargasso Sea* Christophine is an image of an incisive, perceptive and wise woman, whose influence permeates the entire novel. Her fierce pride and fearlessness have protected her from being appropriated by anyone, white or black. She is made to challenge and resist the European privilege and male authority.

Christophine is an image of an old woman with wisdom. She has keen intuitivism. She sees through the new methods of exploiting the workers, and the great wealth that the less scrupulous incomers could make. She sees through Rochester, knowing his intention to take advantage of Antoinette. She also forecasts Antoinette's marriage failure when the bride comes for love potion. She suggests Antoinette leave Rochester.

Christophine is portrayed as a brave fighter for justice. She denounces Rochester to his face that he is making use of Antoinette and maliciously destroys her and abandons her. When Antoinette nearly collapses after Rochester's revenge, Christophine steps up bravely and bitterly criticizes Rochester in her judge's voice, "Everybody know that you marry her for her money and you take it all. And then you want to break her up, because you jealous of her..." (Rhys, 2001, p.98) Rochester is overwhelmed by her imposing manner and in the last resort he threatens by mentioning calling the police. Even so, Christophine remains fearless and Rochester has to admit to himself her courage, "When I looked at her there was a mask on her face and her eyes were undaunted. She was a fight, I had to admit." (Rhys, 2001, p.105)

In all, Christophine and her fellow blacks, such as Daniel and Amelie, are continuously claiming their rights and fighting against the oppression. Their existence is always and forever a threat to the white colonizers.

### C. Symbols Revealing Patriarchal Oppression

In the ideology of patriarchy society, the female is supposed to be feeble, subservient, reliant and submissive to the male, they are always exiled at the edge of the society by the dominant male sex. Men are regarded strong, rational and decisive, yet women are weak, irrational and submissive. Obviously there exist the gender inequality and discrimination.

In brief, patriarchy is a part of "the social organization is marked by the supremacy of the father in a clan or family, the legal wives and children with independence, and the male line with reckoning of descent and inheritance; it is broadly controlled by men with a disproportionately large share of power." Over a long term, patriarchy has been confined within feminism. Most forms of feminism have challenged patriarchy as a social system that is adopted uncritically, due to thousands of year's human history where male physical strength was the ultimate way of settling social conflicts—from war to disciplining children. In patriarchal system, wives, daughters as well as sisters are under the power and domination of fathers, husbands and brothers.

However, patriarchy is most likely to reflect a deeper expectations of formal male who is the dominance in a wide range of social relationships. Fredrika Scarth said, "Neither men nor women live their bodies authentically under patriarchy." (Scarth,2004,p.100) So in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, both the female characters, like Antoinette, Annette, Christophine, etc. and the male characters, such as Rochester and Daniel are also sufferers of patriarchal system. The differences lie in their different positions and different levels of torture. Among the characters, Antoinette and Rochester have strong symbolic meanings. Though they struggle, they can't escape the control of patriarchal system. On the contrary, Thornfield Hall stands for the stronghold of patriarchy.

#### 1. Antoinette: a symbol of women under patriarchy

The first part of *Wide Sargasso Sea* established Antoinette's position as a marginalized and colonized people in a post-emancipation society. The second part is told from the perspective of Rochester, which is used to draw attention to the notion of the silenced female. Antoinette is pressed at the bottom of patriarchal system. She is the very typical symbol of patriarchal oppression, as it is shown in the following aspects: financial oppression and spiritual oppression. However, Antoinette doesn't stop resisting and at times she speaks out against the male power.

##### 1.1 Financial oppression

*Wide Sargasso Sea* deals with the precarious financial dependence of women on man in the patriarchal colonized society. In such society, women are excluded from the center of power, and economically dependent on those in power. The decline in women's economic activity was linked to a decline in their social status because their economic dependence on men led to their subordination. Rhys explores her female characters' financial dependence on the men around them.

Antoinette loses her financial support; she loses her independence. She is a victim of a marriage without love, which is arranged by her step-father and step-brother. Anyone can easily relate her tragedy to Rochester, who as a younger son of an uncaring father is deserted and has always been tortured by his own inadequacies and his need to possess and to dominate. To get himself out of the domestic predicament, he successfully makes a financially advantageous match according to his father's plan and wishes. Although Antoinette hesitates for a time, her will is flabby as light as a feather. With Rochester's half-serious blandishments and promises, Antoinette gives away and accepts the marriage. Her thirty thousand pound dowry, in accordance with English law, passes over to her husband. Antoinette becomes penniless and totally dependent on her husband. Without the financial independence, her independence is impossible.

According to English law, the wife relinquishes her property and all her possessions to her husband. After marriage, everything that at once belongs to the wife becomes the property of her husband. Mason gets the Coulibri Estate from Annette with the help of the law. The same way Rochester shall get Granbois from Antoinette in addition to the thirty

thousand pound dowry. Without financial independence, she loses her wings to fly.

As time goes by, Rochester's ambition to control starts to predominate. The caution during his earlier stay is giving away and he starts to show his dissatisfaction with Antoinette's way of handling money, for "she handed out so carelessly, not counting it, not knowing how much she gave..." (Rhys, 2001, p.53) And soon their relation and position are reversed, it is Rochester who has seen to everything and arranged everything. Though Christophine once tells Antoinette the importance of financial independence, it seems Antoinette has become completely dependent on her husband, for she is afraid that Rochester would be furious if she asks him for money. Antoinette, once the hostess of Granbois, now has lost control of a single penny and her independence stands no chance.

### 1.2 Spiritual oppression

Rochester has a strong desire to possess, to possess Antoinette's money and her spirit. At first, he comes all the long way to her house to beg her to marry. He deceives Antoinette by promising to give her happiness and safety, thus successfully gains her trust. Antoinette, then, can't help but love this man. She puts on the dress he likes. She cherishes the love so deep that she puts in her whole being. Bit by bit, Rochester has her in hand. But when he gets what he wanted, he totally becomes another person.

Things change when Rochester receives Daniel's letter. Daniel is the son of Mr. Cosway and a black servant. As a black Creole, he is denied the inheritance of his father, thus he has to struggle in that wicked world to find his own place. He vents out his wrath and hatred to Antoinette who marries a white man. His aim is to blackmail some money from Rochester, and vent out his wrath to the white. He tells Rochester that Rochester is tricked into a marriage with a girl of a "bad blood" and whose mother is a lunatic. This letter is the beginning of Rochester's denial of Antoinette. It is time to unfold his real feeling. He begins to alienate Antoinette, which he doesn't feel ill, for he has never loved her! Christophine sees through it: "When man don't love you, more you try, more he hate you, man like that." (Rhys, 2001, p.68)

But Antoinette has been controlled, fooled, and trapped, because she cannot leave her husband and she is chained to him by the concept that a woman should be loyal to her husband forever once she is married. She wants to clear up Daniel's rumors but is rejected by Rochester, "We won't talk about it now. Rest tonight. Not tonight. Some other time." (Rhys, 2001, p.81-82) The tone of Rochester is imperative. Antoinette is irritated, "you ask questions about my mother and then refuse listen to my answer." Therefore, as a colonial master, he suppresses the voice of Antoinette. The ability to speak for one is the power to assert one's identity and define one's existence in the world. Antoinette is constantly silenced by the dominant patriarchal and colonial power from then on. Antoinette is losing her voice.

Sandra M. Gilbert and SuSan Gubar investigated the relationship between women and madness. Meanwhile they also found that it had layers of meanings in their critical book -*The Mad Woman in the Attic: the woman writer and the nineteenth-century literature imagination*. "There were social and psychological reasons why women might go, or be considered, 'mad': women led restricted lives, their ambitions were often considered 'mad'. Their lives were in the hands of their husbands and male relatives. They could be locked up, divorced and deprived of their children and money if they were diagnosed 'mad'." (Jenkins, 2001, p.163)

### 1.3 Antoinette's resistance

Where there is oppression, there is resistance. Antoinette, however, instead of choosing to remain silent but keeps arguing with her husband to make her voice heard. Though Rochester tries greatly to conceal his dark side, he has no room to retreat under Antoinette's bitter lashing and scolding. He feels great threat and menace from her.

When Rochester and Antoinette talk about England, both insist that its own country is real while the other side is unreal. In the eyes of an English man, everything is unreal or inferior compared to Europe. However, Antoinette challenges his enrooted fallacy by refuting his country is unreal. Her voice is the voice of the other side. Rhys wants to tell us that always there is the other side and the voice of the other side should be heard.

Though confined in Thornfield, Antoinette doesn't lose her fighting will. In the end, she asserts the values of heat and light against the darkness. She sets fire to her confined prison, Thornfield Hall. The burning and destruction of this patriarchal castle symbolizes her release of preserved passion. The darkness is finally lighted by the rebellious fire. Walking towards her death, Antoinette is placid and calm. The calmness and easiness demonstrate her strength, her independence, her consciousness and spirit she will not allow Rochester to destroy or overpower.

### 2. Rochester: a symbol of men under patriarchy

It is a one-sided view that Rochester is a superior in the patriarchal system. He is victim too, for his father is superior to him and the father has the son's life in hand. Neither men nor women could live their bodies freely and independently under patriarchy. "a familial, social, ideological, system in which men—by force, direct pressure, or through tradition, law, language, determine what part shall or shall not play." (Ashcroft, 1989, p.89) The system not only "subsumes the female under the male, but also assumes the omnipotence-impotence relationship between father and son." (Yu, 2005, p.88) Rochester is no exception from patriarchal control. He is also a typical symbol, telling us another story from a perspective different from the traditional feminism.

Rochester, as the youngest son of his family, is denied his share in his father's property. According to the law of primogeniture in England, all of his father's property goes to his elder brother. Therefore, he needs money to secure his social rank and status. At this very point, his

"Dear Father" arranges for him a marriage. O'Connor put it, "he experiences what it is like to be a woman".

(O'Connor, 1986, p.98) The arranged marriage has placed him in the position of the female, without knowledge and without a sense of identity.

Rochester has no choice but go to the exotic West Indies to seek his fortune, with a great sense of loss. "Dear Father. The thirty thousand pounds have been paid to me without question or condition. No provision made for her (that must be seen to). I have a modest competence now." (Rhys, 2001, p.39) But it seems he isn't happy with the marriage, for he is kicked out of his family. He is nobody other than a burden (similar to Antoinette who is a burden to the Mason father and son). However, father's influence penetrates every inch of Rochester's world which is eating off, torturing him. Rochester, on the one hand, tries to escape from his father's effect; on the other hand, he can't keep himself away from his dependence upon it. After his talk with Daniel, he gets irritated. He takes on a mean attitude toward his "Dear Father", for he feels he is played.

He has hatred to his "Dear Father", he does want to revenge. But inside the patriarchy, he is impotent. In confrontation with his "Dear Father", he is a loser. He, thus, shifts his hatred to Antoinette, a Down in patriarchy, and transforms himself from victim into victimizer.

### **3. Thornfield Hall: a symbol of the stronghold of patriarchy**

"Thornfield Hall" comes from *Jane Eyre* where "the depiction is used by Brontë who is aim to a manner being consistent with gothic in a tone of the novel as a whole." Under Brontë's pen, it is "an isolated mansion of unspecified size, with a number of apparently unused rooms". It becomes important to the narrative after the appearance of the madwoman—Bertha Mason. The name of the Hall expresses and amplifies the sense of depression and malaise.

"Thornfield" can literally be defined as a place where thorns grow. "Thorn" has its figurative meaning as "full of trouble and difficulties", so Thornfield conveys a strong sense of trouble, misery or distress. In *Jane Eyre* it symbolizes the miseries and hardships Jane has to come through before her ultimate happiness. But to Antoinette, it turns out to be her living hell.

Thornfield is the place where Antoinette is imprisoned by Rochester. It is the symbol of Rochester's wealth and patriarchal power. It can be compared to the patriarchal system that stifles Antoinette physically and spiritually. Confined in the dark and cold attic in Thornfield, Antoinette is situated in an insane and confused state, for she is unable to follow the passage of time and recognize the location. What left in her mind are fragmentary episodes of the isolated visual images. Thornfield Halls is doomed, for Rochester puts it, "Thornfield Hall—this accursed place—this tend of Achan—this insolent vault, offering the ghastliness of living death to the light of the open sky—this narrow stone hell, with its one real fiend, worse than a legion of such as we imagine." (Brontë 1991, p.304)

In burning down Thornfield, Antoinette breaks out of the patriarchal system. The destruction of Thornfield is significant, because it is the way that leads her back to freedom. In destroying the tyranny of the patriarchy, Antoinette has taken revenge on the patriarchal society and her white oppressor and achieves her self-identity. The death of Antoinette is inevitable, she has to fulfill her job—destroying the stronghold of patriarchy, as M. Adjarian criticized, "although we know that Antoinette will leap to her death, Rhys draws us to see her active choice of death...as a liberating force of self-assertion." (Adjarian, 1995, p.90)

Contrast with Rochester's dissolution of self, Antoinette's remaining spirit is manifested by the fire of Thornfield Hall in the novel's last part. The fire is Antoinette's hope. It echoes the fire in *Coulibri*, as an outlet of hatred, and it is Antoinette's way of fighting against the patriarchal and empirical power. The fire of hatred is a proof of Antoinette's remaining spirit, which has not killed by Rochester. Thus, the fire symbolizes Antoinette's victory. In fire, Antoinette destroys the prison, burns herself and grasps the power to determine her own action and her own fate, thus she manages to express her rage, fulfill her revenge, find her identity and free her soul.

The destruction of Thornfield is highly symbolic. Since Thornfield is the place where Antoinette is imprisoned by Rochester and it is also the symbol of Rochester's power and wealth. Thornfield Hall can be compared to the patriarchal system that stifles Antoinette spiritually. In burning down Thornfield, Antoinette breaks out of patriarchal system. The destruction of Thornfield is significant, because it is the way that leads her back to her identity. Before she jumps from the roof, Antoinette sees the images of Tia. Calling Tia, she jumps to reunite with her. Thus it can be interpreted as her returning back to the local culture of West Indies. In destroying the tyranny of the patriarchal society, she has taken revenge on the patriarchal society and her white oppressor, and achieved her self-identity.

## IV. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Jean Rhys is one of the greatest British women writers in the twentieth century. *Wide Sargasso Sea* which was published in 1966 at the end of Jean Rhys' writing career and reconsidered as the most successful of Rhys' literary works. The unique novel stands with special efforts, in which the outstanding Caribbean writer successfully writes back the classic *Jane Eyre* and gives voice to the muted madwoman and takes her from the margin to the center. Its publication has far-reaching effects and has won Jean Rhys extensive attention not only for her exploration in the post-colonialism and feminism, but also for her rare intelligence, great perception and unique style.

Rhys retells the story, rectifies the stereotypes of image imposed by European culture and reinterprets a granted conception of father superiority by giving the Downs a voice, letting them to tell their own stories. In doing so, Rhys not only corrects the distorted views of European on the natives of West Indies, but also subverts the Euro-centrism and male-centrism by confronting and contesting their domination and exploration.

In this novel, as a post-colonial discourse, Rhys, by means of Sargasso Sea and the mirror, illustrates the hardship of Antoinette's losing and reconstructing her identity. Then, Rhys intends to demonstrate sharp racial conflicts in the West Indies after the Emancipation Act of Slavery, so she endows Annette and Christophine with symbolic meanings. Lastly, though Rhys once denied herself as a feminist, she is considered a pioneer to feminism. Antoinette and Rochester symbolically demonstrate the suffering of women and men in the patriarchal system and Thornfield Hall, on the contrary, is the embodiment of the patriarchy system.

The symbolic technique in *Wide Sargasso Sea* is more free, varied and meaningful, which plays a vital role in constructing and developing the plots. In this paper, the symbols are classified into groups in accordance with the functions in revealing the themes, providing a better and more explicit understanding of the novel. Thus, by virtue of symbolism, Rhys vividly depicts the historical situation of the West Indies in 1830s when people were suffering from both the imperial colonialism and the patriarchy, rendering *Wide Sargasso Sea* an admirable and worthy prequel to Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*. Symbolists believe that art should apprehend more absolute truths which could only be accessed indirectly. Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* is a case in point.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Upon the completion of this dissertation, I am indebted to many people who have offered great help in my writing of this paper. They have given me many excellent suggestions and assisted me generously with my paper-polishing. But for their invaluable advice as well as constant support, the completion of this paper would have been an impossible mission for me. Therefore, it is my pleasure to extend my gratitude to them.

My heartfelt thanks first go to my kind and encouraging supervisor, Zhu Xi, who has always been patient and instructive when I need academic advice. She has taken great pains reading different drafts of this paper and offered insightful comments and suggestions. It is Ms. Zhu who has helped me regain the confidence in myself; it is also her who set an example to me in my future life and career with her amiable disposition, professional skills and her enthusiasm for work.

I also feel obliged to my classmates and friends, whose great concerns and timely encouragement were of great importance to my paper writing.

Last but not least, I give special gratitude to my parents for their complete understanding, consistent encouragement and spiritual solace, and to those professors who dedicated their time and energy to reading my paper.

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# The Role of Intercultural Communication Competence in Iranian EFL Learners' Demotivation: An Examination of the Predicting Causes

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**Abstract**—Preparing effective language learners who are ready to engage with speakers from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds and to become internationally competent is a significant and challenging task. It is expected that language teaching programs need to provide the opportunity for learners to develop intercultural competency and learner beliefs through raising awareness about intercultural differences. Therefore, the instructional experience is prerequisite in preparing learners to become aware and supporter of the cross-cultural issues that can either facilitate or hinder learners' achievement. This study intends to explore the relationship between intercultural competence of the learners and their experienced degree of demotivation as expressed by them at the university level. Intercultural competence was operationalized as a multidimensional notion comprising the communication effectiveness, adaptation, social integration, knowledge of the target culture, and language competence. Findings of regression analysis highlighted that only the social integration and adaptation components could predict the degree of demotivation. Additionally, the correlation results revealed a strong relationship between the language competence and communication effectiveness components of intercultural competence. According to the obtained findings, the possible clarifications for the contribution of intercultural competence components to the demotivation of learners were elaborated.

**Index Terms**—intercultural communication competence, intercultural efficiency, social integration, adaptation, demotivation

## I. INTRODUCTION

In today's world, individuals pay a great deal of attention and time to successful communication across cultures with other individuals and institutes around the world (Schwarzenthal, Juang, Schachner, van de Vijver, 2017). Intercultural communication forms the way people welcome the change, deliver messages across borders and cultures, and revisit the principal aspects of time and space. As Byram (1997) mentions, intercultural competence is "the ability to see relationships between different cultures - both internal and external to a society - and to mediate, that is interpret each in terms of the other, either for themselves or for other people" (p. 29). It also comprises the ability to critically or analytically understand that one's "own and other cultures" perspective is culturally identified rather than inherent. In the case of countries where there are not opportunities for learners of the target language to speak that language outside the classroom context, resources that help them to be exposed to the target culture and language are of special importance and interest (Mascadri, Brownlee, Walker & Alford, 2017). The amount of the increase and improvement in the appropriate learning of the language and the reduction of possible culture shock and demotivation when encountered with the target culture are important issues.

The decreasing motivation and learning patterns are usually accompanied with shifts in learners' developmental and social processes. Developmental factors comprise modifications in the physiological, physical, emotional, and cognitive processes; for example, learners' experience of youth and attainment of more complicated emotional and cognitive processes (Sigelman & Rider, 2009). Developed cognitive capabilities permit learners to process multifaceted emotions and understandings of the world and apply the enlightening, yet complicated and, at times, controversial feedback from teachers, parents, peers, and the broader community (Sigelman & Rider, 2009). Learners' advanced cognitive processes and their reception of several perspectives might lead to a genuine and correct understanding of their abilities (Wigfield, Eccles, Yoon, Harold, Arbreton, & Freedman-Doan, 1997), as a result the decreasing optimism and motivation compared to younger learners. In contrast to this, developed cognitive processes might also imply that learners are more "active physically, emotionally and intellectually" with the eagerness to gain awareness about differences, controversies and a sense of agency and autonomy (Hargreaves, Earl, & Ryan, 1996, p. 136). Consequently, learning environments

that correspond with learners' learning needs keep them engaged and motivated to learn (Eccles, Midgley, Wigfield, Buchanan, & Reuman, 1993), and environments that fail to provide such a support might lead to disappointment.

With respect to the significance of a supportive environment and a need to highlight and signify the linguistic as well as the cultural issues of a target language, the present study was carried out to investigate the role that intercultural communicative competence (ICC) components play in the occurrence and management of learning demotivation, the role that seems to be unclear and under investigated.

## II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Since there have been numerous definitions for intercultural competence, Bennet, and Wiseman (as cited in Guerro, 2008) intended to shed light on the vagueness of ICC definitions by distinguishing between intercultural sensitivity and intercultural competence. From their perspective, intercultural sensitivity is "the ability to discriminate and experience relevant cultural differences" whereas intercultural competence is "the ability to think and act in intercultural appropriate ways" (p. 422). The distinction precludes to the difference between knowing and performing in intercultural competent ways. Accordingly, Bennett (1993) specifies intercultural sensitivity as the world perspectives that identify how individuals respond to cultural varieties; it is presumed that these responses can be expected since individuals learn to become more proficient intercultural communicators.

Bennett's (1993) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) explains the reactions of people to cultural differences in predictable ways to become more competent intercultural communicators. The proposed model consists of six developmental stages: denial, defence, minimization, acceptance, adaptation, and integration. Each of the stages is discussed as follows. Denial stage is the first stage in which the person denies the target culture. The second stage, namely defence, is the stage in which the person defends his or her culture against the target culture. In the minimization stage, the person tends to make the differences existing among the two cultures minimum. In the fourth stage, the person begins to accept the target culture and becomes much closer to the target people and community. And, in the adaptation stage the person sees the differences minimally and tries to adapt to the target culture. Finally, the last stage demonstrates the complete integration of the person in the social community of the target culture. Wiseman (2003) explains that, intercultural competence "involves the knowledge, motivation, and skills to interact effectively and appropriately with members of different cultures" (p. 194).

To best capture the significance of ICC, different models of intercultural competence have been suggested by numerous scholars (e.g., Porter & Samovar, 1976; Hammer, Gudykunst, & Wiseman, 1978; Byram, 1997). One of the most influential models for intercultural competence, for instance is the Intercultural Competence Model proposed by Byram (1997) which is applied in foreign language classrooms widely. The proposed model consists of four distinct but interdependent components. The first one is the skill component which itself consists of the skills of discovery and interaction, and skills of interpreting and relating. The remaining two components are knowledge and attitude. In an educational setting, "the interplay of these first three components ideally should lead to the fourth component, namely the critical cultural awareness or an evaluative orientation (Byram, p. 43) toward the examination of difference". Therefore, the learners' appraisal of the conditions is made explicit and the new evaluative inclination toward differences brings about a readiness for political engagement.

Moreover, there is Porter and Samovar's (1976) classification of effective intercultural communication which is another model for intercultural competence. Their classification consists of eight cultural variables that account for effective intercultural communication, including attitudes, social organization, patterns of thought, roles and role expectations, language, space, time, and nonverbal expression.

In another treatment of ICC, Hammer et al. (1978) suggested the intercultural adjustment model when investigating intercultural communication competence. Hammer et al. (1978) analyzed 24 personal abilities considered important in intercultural situations. The factor analysis identified three basic qualities: the capability to handle psychological anxiety, the ability to interact appropriately, and the ability to generate interpersonal relationships.

Other examinations of ICC and intercultural effectiveness have determined other communication constructs consisting of communication skills, empathy, knowledge of the target culture, and language competence (Hannigan, 1990; Kim, 1991; He, Lundgren, & Pynes, 2017; Searle & Ward, 1990; Ward & Searle, 1991).

This review of the intercultural communication competence provides six main components of communication skills, knowledge of the target culture, language competence, adaptation, communication effectiveness, and social integration.

### Intercultural Effectiveness and Demotivation

Motivation is acknowledged as a principal determinant of success in language learning. Second language researchers and teachers have traditionally focused on the positive effects of motivation that increase interest and facilitate language learning (e.g., Masgoret & Gardner, 2003; Dörnyei, 1994a, 1994b; Dörnyei & Clement, 2001; Dörnyei, 2003). In fact, the rate and success of language learning are influenced by motivation. Dörnyei (2009) believes that motivation provides "primary impetus to initiate second/foreign language learning and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process" (p. 16). Without adequate motivation, as a driving and moving force, it is very difficult to learn a second language. It is safe to say that motivation can "make up for considerable deficiencies both in language aptitude and learning conditions" (Dörnyei, 1998, p.117).

Recently, some researchers have shifted their attention to demotivation which is "another side of motivation" (e.g.,

Falout & Maruyama, 2004; Kikuchi, 2009; Sakai & Kikuchi, 2009). In contrast to the positive influence of motivation, demotivation has negative effects on language learning processes and outcomes. When learners are demotivated, the language learning target becomes more challenging and less enjoyable; therefore, the accomplishment of predicted learning outcomes gets very difficult (Hattie & Yates, 2014; Peterson, Brown, & Irving, 2010). Furthermore, students' demotivation might lead to amotivation which refers to the complete absence of any motivation and interest in learning target language (Falout et al., 2009). Amotivated language learners fail to learn second language because they consider themselves to be incompetent to acquire the language; therefore, their success in language learning is impossible (Falout et al., 2009).

Considering the above discussion, it can be argued that students' demotivation is a significant language learning problem that needs to be specifically addressed in the second language learning. In fact, this phenomenon needs to be explored in-depth in order to identify its common causes and overcome its negative effects. Therefore, the present study is conducted in order to investigate and identify the main sources of students' demotivation in second language learning from an intercultural perspective since learners' intercultural experience and their attitudes can potentially impact their successful learning (Krajewski, 2011; Jon, 2013; Barker & Mak, 2013). The study attempts to provide answer to the following research questions:

1. What is the contribution of intercultural communication competence components to the amount of demotivation as expressed by Iranian EFL learners?
2. How do the intercultural communication competence components interrelate?

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### Participants

The participants of this study (N = 48) included male and female university learners majoring in language teaching. The average age was 24 years with a range of 20 to 28 years. They were all learning English as a foreign language.

#### Instruments

The 35-item demotivation questionnaire developed by Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) was employed in this study. The questionnaire included three sections: questions about learners' demographic information, questions about demotivating factors, and open-ended questions about respondents' experience of being motivated and demotivated. The questionnaire was a 5-point Likert type scale which applied: 1) not true for me, 2) not true for me so much, 3) cannot say either "true" or "not true," 4) true for me to some degree, and 5) true for me. Therefore, the higher the score, the greater the demotivation is. And, the open-ended section included two questions: "Write your experiences about situations in which your motivation to study English was heightened" and "Write your experiences regarding times when your motivation to study English was decreased." The reliability index of the questionnaire was estimated by means of Cronbach alpha and turned out to be .83 for this study.

To investigate the intercultural communicative competence of the learners, Redmond and Bunyi's questionnaire was employed. The scale consisted of the following constructs: knowledge of host culture (4 items), language competence (3 items), communication effectiveness (6 items), adaptation (7 items), and social integration (6 items). The reliability of the scale is found as a Cronbach alpha of .89 for the present study.

#### Procedure

The questionnaires were emailed to the participants in March 2014. It took 20 to 30 minutes to complete the questionnaires. Afterwards, the data were imported to the SPSS software (version 21) for the analyses.

### IV. RESULTS

Prior to the conduction of multiple regression analyses, conditions of independency, normality, and linearity were tested and the scatter plots were depicted to corroborate that these conditions were met. In analyzing partial regression coefficients, the probability of multicollinearity between the independent variables needed to be examined. However, there were low values of Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), referring to the lack of serious multicollinearity.

Firstly, table 1 shows the results of multiple linear regression analysis for the ICC components as independent variables and demotivation as the dependent variable.

TABLE 1.  
RESULTS OF MULTIPLE LINEAR REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF ICC AND DEMOTIVATION

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
1					
	(Constant)	135.546	20.442	6.631	.000
	Knowledge of host culture	-.913	.963	-.948	.348
	Language competence	-1.248	1.433	-.871	.389
	Communication effectiveness	1.395	.921	.234	.137
	Adaptation	-.765	.571	-.225	.019
	Social integration	3.304	.650	.878	.000

a. Dependent Variable: demotivation

As the above table shows, the adaptation and social integration components of ICC had statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) impact on the demotivation of the participants. In other words, the above variables could better predict the variation of the dependent variable such that the low levels of adaptation and high levels of social integration led to demotivation. Altogether, the above mentioned independent variables could predict the 46 percent of the variation in the dependent variable.

In order to examine and provide an answer to the second research question of the study, a Pearson correlation coefficient was run. The results are reported below. Firstly, table 2 shows the descriptive statistics results and then table 3 indicates the correlation coefficient results.

TABLE 2.  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF ICC COMPONENTS' RELATION

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Knowledge of host culture	13.1875	3.65918	48
Language competence	9.7292	3.42543	48
Communication effectiveness	18.6042	5.28643	48
Adaptation	13.8958	9.26499	48
Social integration	13.8542	8.36657	48

TABLE 3.  
CORRELATION RESULTS OF ICC COMPONENTS' RELATION

		Knowledge of host culture	Language competence	Communication effectiveness	adaptation	Social integration
Knowledge of host culture	Pearson Correlation	1	-.001	-.019	-.077	-.253
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.995	.897	.605	.082
	N	48	48	48	48	48
Language competence	Pearson Correlation	-.001	1	.707**	-.030	-.145
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.995	.000	.837	.326	.424
	N	48	48	48	48	48
Communication effectiveness	Pearson Correlation	-.019	.707**	1	-.140	-.118
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.897	.000	.343	.424	.000
	N	48	48	48	48	48
Adaptation	Pearson Correlation	-.077	-.030	-.140	1	.747**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.605	.837	.343	.000	.000
	N	48	48	48	48	48
Social integration	Pearson Correlation	-.253	-.145	-.118	.747**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.082	.326	.424	.000	.000
	N	48	48	48	48	48

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

As it is obvious from table 3, the significant correlation index belongs to the relationship between language competence and communication effectiveness. Put another way, there was a strong, direct, and positive relationship ( $r = 0.70$ ) between these ICC components (Cohen, 1988). The other components were not correlated with each other.

## V. DISCUSSION

From among the ICC qualities, only the adaptation and social integration components were found to be significant contributors of the regression equation and could predict 46% of the variation in the amount of demotivation. This result has the implication that the amount of demotivation experienced by EFL learners is mostly irrelevant of their communication skills or cultural knowledge. Demotivation is clearly felt regardless of the familiarity or communicative competence of the foreign language learners.

The surprising result was that the stronger the amount of social integration a learner expressed, the more likely they were exposed to demotivation. The possible explanation for this relationship would be that an attempt for integration can in fact lead to higher levels of stress a learner experiences. A strong integrator would be more conscious of the distinctions between his/her culture and the one being learned. This consciousness might contribute to a higher amount of demotivation that was felt by those who are more inattentive to cultural distinctions. On the other hand, it has been put forward that being anxious and demotivated actually leads to better adaptation and assimilation through the procedure of stress-adaptation-growth (Kim & Ruben, 1988). Social integration could lead to efficient adaptation by boosting the amount of demotivation experienced leading to adaptation and augmentation.

Results of correlation coefficient showed that except for language competence and communication effectiveness, all the other ICC components were not significantly correlated. This finding means that Iranian EFL learners found the language competence and communication effectiveness components as the ones that are critical to the cultural adaptation process (Okazaki-Luff, 1991). In addition, communication effectiveness which refers to the learners' ability to interact with target people, to handle communication misunderstandings, and to empathize with and sense the feelings of target people is identified as both a predictor of intercultural competence (Ruben & Kealey, 1979), and an outcome (Imahori & Lanigan, 1989).

An analysis of the participants' responses to the open-ended questions determined their sources of demotivation and

motivation in the classroom. Respondents agreed that the materials, learning content, and equipment were sources causing lower motivation. In other words, the existence of uninteresting and attractive materials, the exclusive focus on academic skills of reading, writing, and grammar at the expense of other skills and abilities were found to be sources of demotivation. In fact, this finding is consistent with the results of quantitative analyses where learners' identified the linguistic competence and communication effectiveness as the fundamental components of ICC. Furthermore, the results indicated that the lack of learning facilities, such as videos, tapes, DVDs, CDs, and computers, were also demotivating. This result of the present study supports the findings of the past research which have connected the learners' demotivation to the learning materials and contents (e.g., Dörnyei, 1998; Falout & Maruyama, 2004; Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009). The findings by Sakai and Kikuchi (2009) revealed that learning subjects and materials were the one of the most prominent reasons of demotivation for language learners. In addition, results of the present study are consistent with those of prior research on language learning demotivation which have considered inadequate school facilities as one of the major demotivating factor (e.g., Dörnyei, 1998; Kikuchi & Sakai, 2009). To sum up, there needs to be enough attention paid to the teachers and learners appreciation of the intercultural issues that can bring about demotivation in learners or burnout in teachers (Sadeghi & Khezrlou, 2014; 2016). The latter is an open question that warrants further investigation.

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# On the Chinese Complex in *My Several Worlds: A Personal Record*\*

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**Abstract**—Pearl S. Buck's description on the Republic of China in the 1930s based on her own life experiences in Anhui province and Jiangsu province has created for it a complex but unique image which has been controversial since its birth. Her inclusive and understanding attitude toward cultural exchange between China and the west is very worthy of advocating. Pearl S. Buck was always inclined to her "second motherland", and took Chinese and Western folk cultural exchanges as her noble mission. She had a quite strong attachment to China in her whole life, while the West misunderstood and excluded Chinese culture, and there were major obstacles to cultural exchanges. Therefore, Pearl Buck and her works were misunderstood and criticized by Chinese readers in a quite long historical period, sharply contrasting her lifelong love for China and her tremendous contributions to the Chinese people. In the global context, we have studied Pearl Buck again, with a view to cherishing her friendship with Chinese people and emphasizing her unique cultural value and practical significance to China.

**Index Terms**—China complex, Pear Buck, *My Several Worlds: A Personal Record*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Pearl Buck was born on June 26, 1892 in West Virginia, USA, and then she was put in the cradle and drifted across the sea to China with her parents after three months of her birth, and lived there for 40 years. Based on her life experiences in China and Chinese culture attainment, she broke the limits of the understanding of the West on China and observed China and the world from the point view of Chinese people.. That is why her works accurately reflected the Chinese people's psychology, aspirations, feelings and emotions and what Chinese people really looked like. Pearl Buck sympathetically portrayed diligent and down-to-earth Chinese farmers and vividly pictured their family life in her works by using straightforward writing skills. Characters in her works are vivid and full of true feelings, and scenes and details are true and credible.

Her works transcended the gap between Chinese and western cultures, and uncovered the mysteries of China for western readers, effectively changing the image of "Chinese pagans" and "mysterious China" depicted by many western writers.

Pearl Buck completed her first autobiography in the United States, *My Several worlds: A personal Record*, which was published in 1954 and focused on her life experiences in China, but also talked about her experiences in the United States, Japan and other countries. In the book she recounted the historical realities of China history, her growth and simple but honest ties with lower classes. Although she pointed out the inadequacies of China, but her deep love for China was throughout the book.

## II. THE RESEARCHES ON PEARL S. BUCK

Pearl Buck had been in an intercultural and bilingual environment since childhood. It is no exaggeration to say that her knowledge, creative inspiration and successful career benefitted from her life experiences in China. As an American who lived in China for a long time, Pearl Buck recorded a unique China in English from her own perspective, creating a distinct image of China and setting a successful example for colliding and blending of Chinese and Western cultures. She used to being anxious about her contradictory identities, and tried her best to figure out where she belonged culturally. In fact, her anxiety stemmed from the conflict of different cultures. Therefore, she always regarded herself as a cultural practitioner who transcended Chinese and Western cultures, and considered the promotion of mutual understanding and exchanges between the Chinese people and the western people as her lofty mission. She was highly praised for this, and also received a lot of criticism and opposition.

Research on Pearl Buck in China used to attract much attention. Many translators were devoted to translating Pearl Buck's works after they were published. They also became the first critics of Pearl Buck's literary works. Consequently, most researches were based on text analysis. Most comments on Pearl Buck's literary at that time discussed whether Buck Pearl reflected China's true situation for the Western world or not.

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\* This work is one of the results of Program "Research on Missionaries in Modern China and Shandong Education" (16DJYJ01) with the support of Humanity and Social Science Youth Foundation of Shandong Province of China in 2016.

Lin Yutang (1999) highly praised Pearl Buck in *The Great of Mrs. Buck*: “I found that Mrs. Buck was a master writer but a brave and calm critic who boldly criticized preachers in China. It was more important that she criticized the Chinese nation, giving a sharp warning to Chinese people in higher social classes and patriots”. (p.109) Zhuang Xin (1999) gave Pearl Buck a more objective evaluation in his article *Mrs. Buck and Her Works*: “At least Mrs. Buck introduced the reality of China to the West in a sincere and objective manner in spite of some exaggeration and distortion. Chinese people should be grateful for that in the process of national rejuvenation” (p.22) However, not all of translators gave their full affirmation to Pearl Buck’s works. In a personal letter to Yao Ke, Lu Xun (1999) said: “What is China really looks like depends on what Chinese people write. Mrs. Buck used to be popular in Shanghai, and she also called China as her mother land. However, her works told us that she was just a female priest living in China.” (p.3)

Considering Pearl Buck’s research was associated with China-U.S. relations, it had gone to extremes after 1949 as China closed the door to outsiders and the Cold War began.

*World Literature* and *Literature Review* published in succession two review articles in 1960, Xu Yuxin’s *Pearl Buck: A Pioneer Of The Cultural Aggression Of The American Imperialism* and Li Wenjun’s *An Analysis On The Chinese Pearl Buck Made By The United States*, which strongly criticized Pearl Buck. Literary researchers had set out to pay attention to Pearl Buck since 1980s, a bridge for friendly cultural exchanges between China and the West, as the Cold War ended, China and the United States established a friendly diplomatic relationship and China launched the reform and opening up. Translations of Pearl Buck’s works reached a high record in the 1990s. Seminars on Pearl Buck and her works appeared in China as a number of translation versions were published. More and more objective evaluations on Pearl Buck have been made in the literary circles from then on. In addition, many scholars have studied Pearl Buck from various perspectives such as feminism, Chinese-Western cultural exchanges, cultural studies, comparative literature imagery, and post-colonialism. We have found that Pearl Buck’s research was no longer confined to a single field in the new century, and more researchers performed their study from interdisciplinary and cross-cultural points, comprehensively improving the recognition and evaluation on Pearl Buck’s historical status.

Most international findings on Pearl Buck focused on writing biographies for her, research papers and monographs. Peter J. Conn gave an objective on Pearl Buck in *Pearl S. Buck: A Cultural Biography*, stating that Pearl Buck was imprinted with two cultures and had a deep desire to promote the cultural integration between China and the West. Robert Spino in his *The American Literature History* made a brief introduction to Pearl Buck, a Nobel laureate. *The History of Columbia Literature*, edited by Amery Elliot, used only two sentences to introduce Pearl Buck. All above have proved that Pearl Buck was not accepted and recognized by the mainstream academic communities of the United States. Sergei Yeva in her paper, said: “However, Pearl Buck attempted to erase huge changes that were taking place in Chinese politics and society, which is a great flaw of her works.” (Yeva, 1999, p.576)

Liao Kang in his book, *Pearl S. Buck-A Cultural Bridge Across The Pacific Ocean*, adopted the acceptance theory to explain why Pearl Buck’s works were popular, and gave political reasons that Pearl Buck was criticized and neglected. He also highly praised her outstanding contributions to the cultural exchanges between China and the West, and explored the role of Pearl Buck in transforming the traditional understanding of the West on the image of China.

### III. PEARL S. BUCK’S “PARTIALITY” UNDER DUAL EDUCATION

Growing up in a bilingual environment, Pearl Buck has a strong feeling for China and the Chinese people. She once said: “My life, from a child to a young girl and then to an adult, belonged to China.”(Shang Yinglin & Zhang Zhiqiang, 1991, p.10) She learned Chinese first, and then English. She was able to speak and write in both languages at the age of 4. Pearl Buck read a large number of Chinese classical novels and modern works when she was a teacher in Nanjing Jinling University in 1921-1934, giving her deeper understanding on Chinese psychology.

Pearl Buck later recalled: “I grew up in a double world, the small white clean Presbyterian American world of my parents and the big loving merry not-too-clean Chinese world, and there was no communication between them. When I was in the Chinese world I was Chinese, I spoke Chinese and behaved as a Chinese and ate as the Chinese did, and I shared their thoughts and feelings. I am familiar with every inch of land, like familiar with the wrinkles on my face...” (Buck, 1954, p.10) The Chinese Revolution of 1911 and the May 4th Movement broke out as Pearl Buck was a teenager. Such an unusual social change and cultural trend had implications on her. She thought that the Chinese New Culture Movement created “a new force for modern China” and would release “the energy that had been suppressed for many centuries”. She obtained a unique perspective reflecting and analyzing China’s issues earlier as she knew Chinese and Chinese classical literature very well and maintained frequent contacts with many people who participated in the Chinese New Culture Movement.

Pearl Buck liked to hear stories from others when she was young. She learned Chinese culture in China’s old-style private school. Therefore, she not only mastered Chinese, but also had a sound understanding of China’s history, culture and literature. Pearl Buck took nutrients from Chinese literary works and historical culture, and had a deeper understanding on the folk customs of the ancient oriental country. She made extensive contacts with farmers. Visiting farmers had become her only way to find the real life. That helped her to accumulate a great amount of materials about village life. She found the purest feelings of mankind among those farmers, and felt their diligence, kindness, and cleverness as well as their optimistic attitude toward natural and man-made disasters. That gave her impulse to write down her indignation for Chinese farmers and the common people she beloved.

Pearl Buck began her writing career at the time of the Chinese New Culture Movement. She was very excited at the moment. "It was the best time for me to live in China, and I was young and interested in all things around me. I mastered English and Chinese..." (Buck, 1954, p.138). Pearl Buck was gradually integrated into the academic community after a dozen years of living in Nanjing. China's literary movement was subject to the revolutionary culture at home and abroad and developed. All above contributed to Pearl Buck's knowledge accumulation for creation. It is very clear for us to find that Pearl Buck used many writing skills and inspirations from Chinese classical novels and traditional art of storytelling in her works.

In *The Good Earth*, we can see that she adopted the descriptive approaches of Chinese folk storytellers; In *The Pavilion of Women*, we can clearly feel the influence of *A Dream of Red Mansions* on her writing skills and narrative style; In *A House Divide*, we can see that she was inspired by the plot description of the peasant uprising in *The Water Margin*. Pearl Buck published a total of 116 literary works in her whole life, most of which were completed in the United States but derived materials from the East, especially China. They analyzed China issues in a deeper way. "I grew up in a double world, the small white clean Presbyterian American world of my parents and the big loving merry not-too-clean Chinese world, and there was no communication between them. When I was in the Chinese world I was Chinese, I spoke Chinese and behaved as a Chinese and ate as the Chinese did, and I shared their thoughts and feelings. When I was in the American world, I shut the door between." (Buck, 1954, p.10) Georg Simmer, a famous German sociologist, had given a definition to "stranger" that "the stranger is not the wanderer who comes today and leaves tomorrow, or may be called a potential wanderer, though he has not gone, he has not forgotten the freedom of coming and going." (Simmer, 1991, p.131-37)

From a sociological point of view, Pearl Buck lived in China as a "stranger" all along even though she regarded China as her second homeland. Pearl Buck lived in China for nearly forty years. She had her own life, with Chinese dishes as her favorite. In her pictures she always wore Chinese-style clothes. She could speak Chinese as fluently as Chinese did. She attended classes with Chinese teachers. She was fond of Chinese stories. She had deeper understanding and study on Chinese culture. It seemed that Pearl Buck was a Chinese. It is due to her life experiences in China that she developed the same emotions as Chinese people.

However, Pearl Buck's high nose, blue eyes, and fluency in English told Chinese around her that she was a "stranger" who came from a different race and spoke English. Her race and American-style values she received from her mother determined that she was a "stranger". What is puzzling is that she was still an "stranger" after she returned in the United States. The key reason to that is that Pearl Buck went to China with her parents since childhood and grew up in China. To a certain extent, that helped her to be integrated into China, an oriental country quite different from the United States. Such identity as a "stranger" affected her whole life no matter which country, China or the United States, she lived in.

Pearl Buck, as a double "stranger" who lived in the East and the West for a long time, lived in the country that was quite different from the United States both in living habits and historical and cultural backgrounds, and that was new and hard to understand for her and her family. It is due to her mother, Kelly, that the United States was not at all far away from the heart of young Pearl Buck though she lived in China. Her mother described the United States as a nearly ideal country, which inspired the longing of young Pearl Buck to return to the United States. Such longing became stronger when she witnessed the Chinese society suffered so many disasters. She had a higher sense of superiority on the American culture and society. That means she still had the qualities of the western people in her inner world. In fact, Pearl Buck's inner world is involved in two heterogeneous cultures, the Chinese culture and the western culture. However, her works show what she chose and absorbed from two cultures rather than her ambiguity rising from them.

Her unique life experiences had not made her truly see into both societies of China and the United States. However, it was such life experiences that enriched her cultural backgrounds and inner world, and shaped her unique and glamorous personality as well as a distinct mental world where Chinese culture and western culture were fused together.

#### IV. PEARL S. BUCK AND CHINESE CULTURE

The traditional concepts of Western Christianity and Chinese Confucianism had main effect on Pearl Buck's cultural thoughts. The collision and integration of Christianity and Confucian thoughts laid the foundation for her thoughts in terms of her family atmosphere and the social environment. Pearl Buck was born in a missionary family. His father worked tirelessly to spread the gospel of God in his whole life. How he treated others and how he behaved were deeply imprinted in the young Pearl Buck's heart. His father was devoted to advocate helping the poor and the weak and pursuing loftiness, equality, fraternity and inclusiveness. Pearl Buck thought what her father advocating stood for the essentials of Christianity.

The ethics-based Confucian culture dominated the Chinese traditional culture. Pearl Buck once said: "Confucius developed my thoughts, behaviours, and personalities when I was young. Confucianism is my reference standard." This stemmed from the social and family environment where she grew up. She had been in China for the first dozens of years of her life when her views on world and life were formed. In addition, Pearl Buck was educated in the old-style private school. Her enlightenment teacher was typical of Confucian scholars.. That means that her living environment and education backgrounds imprinted her with the Confucianism, which produced inexhaustible energy for her in the rest of her life.

She had appreciated and respected Chinese culture in her whole life. In *My Several Worlds: A Personal Record*, she wrote: “It seems that Chinese people will have the wisdom passed down from one generation to another and a natural philosophy once they were born. They are so wise that you will get incisive and humorous philosophies even if you talk with illiterate farmers.” Confucianism advocates that brothers do not only refer to those who have blood relation, but also to friends who resonate with each other in spirit, can share weal and woe and make progress together. Such a peaceful and beautiful human relations map had generated an irresistible charm for a white young girl who lived abroad. The Confucian quote, “All men are brothers” became her creed. When she introduced China to the West, she did not choose the intellectuals who belonged to the higher social class and paid no attention to social issues but focused on ordinary but great people who vigorously lived at the bottom of the society and “fight against natural and man-made disasters “as they are brave, generous, polite, kind, wise and happy though they are illiterate, live in a simple but rough life and are separated from modern thoughts and technology.”

Acquired cultivation makes people different even if there is no obvious difference of natural qualities. The Chinese saying, “All men are brothers”, does not include the mob but noble persons who understand each other very well. Pearl Buck built her own spiritual building under the guidance of Confucianism. She practiced her contemporary religious views which were combined with humanistic care of Confucianism. Pearl Buck maintained a close relationship with China and Chinese culture. She had made outstanding contributions to the cultural exchanges between East and West, especially to cultural exchanges between China and the West. President Nixon called her as “a bridge between the civilizations of East and West”.

Pearl Buck did what she advocated in real life and did concrete things for two-way cultural exchanges between the East and the West. She founded the East-West Exchange Society in 1941, and found some Asians and asked them to show what they really were and introduced their history and civilization. At the same year, Pearl Buck took over the magazine, “*Asia*”, which played an immeasurable role in solving the Far East issue. It was the pioneer who published the world-well known reportage, “*Red Star Over China*”, which was written by Edgar Snow after his trip to Yan’an. And then the reportage had its separate version. Edgar Snow’s another work, “*Autobiography of Mao Zedong*”, was first published by *Asia*, too. Nehru, Lu Xun, Mao Zedong, Tagore, Soong Ching Ling, and Hu Shi wrote articles for it. Pearl Buck endured great hardships in pioneer work of cross-cultural exchanges and worked hard to promote exchange, complementation and fusion of heterogeneous cultures. She hoped that the Eastern and Western cultures would respect each other, seek common ground while reserving differences, and oppose cultural imperialism. She struggled to establish a multicultural identity with a view to promoting cross-cultural exchange and transmission.

Yan Lipeng in his dissertation said that Pearl Buck lived in China about for half a lifetime, and she had an inextricable Chinese complex. She was full of sympathy and love for Chinese farmers, strongly recommended and actively disseminated Chinese traditional culture. Therefore, Pearl Buck is a friend of the Chinese nation and Chinese people. It is worth of our commemoration and study. In addition, it is very clear for us that Pearl S. Buck grew up in China and had special feelings for Chinese culture and Chinese people. For example, Pearl Buck described in *The Earth* many rural customs in China from the view of Chinese in a detailed and accurate way. She expressed her sympathy and compassion to farmers. Her novels, to some extent, corrected the early stereotypes of American people about China and deepened their impressions on China. However, Pearl Buck failed to truly reflect the social reality of China in the early 20th century and China’s national liberation war. That is because her potential readership was the American public, who knew little about Chinese culture. She would lose a part of readership if she represented social conditions of China truly and accurately. Pearl Buck deliberately simplified the description of Chinese culture and diluted the social and political background of China for the sake of comprehensibility and readability of her novels. Pearl Buck used her artistic approaches rather than realistic techniques to integrate her Chinese materials into her novels with a universal theme, which was conducive to her novels’ spread in different cultures. (cf. Yan Lipeng, 2017, abstract)

Besides, we can perceive that there was misunderstanding and exclusion between East and West in the age when Pearl Buck lived, and there were major obstacles to cultural exchanges in the true sense. Therefore, Pearl Buck and her works were misunderstood and ignored by Chinese readers for quite a long historical period, sharply contrasting with her lifelong love for China and her tremendous contributions to the Chinese people. However, more and more researchers have changed their focus to Pearl Buck and her works in China today. In the global context, we have studied Pearl Buck again, with a view to cherishing her friendship with and emphasizing her unique cultural value and practical significance to China.

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# The Transition from Comprehensive to Analytical Characteristics of English Language

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**Abstract**—English belongs to the Indo-European language family. It is a language that achieves meaning expression through its own form of inflection, focusing on form, and it is one kind of comprehensive language. Analytical language expresses grammatical meaning through function words, word order, and so on. With the development of language, English has a tendency to develop from comprehensive language to analytical language. In this study, it explains the transitional characteristics of English language from comprehensive characteristics to analytical characteristics from following aspects: reduces or even disappears of English morphological change; the ability of English vocabulary meaning expansion; the multi-use of function words; the powerful grammatical function of the article; the fusion of English and Chinese language; the Chinese loanword in English; the Syntactical phenomenon of English and Chinese language, the complexity of English word formation, the theme-highlight sentence pattern.

**Index Terms**—English, comprehensive characteristics, analytical characteristics, inflection

## I. INTRODUCTION

Comprehensive language means that the language expresses grammatical meaning (grid, number, time) mainly through the morphological change of the word itself. The so-called analytical language means that the language expresses the grammatical relationship in this language is mainly not through the form of the word itself, but expresses through the function word, and word order. (Yang Siyuan, 2009) Although English is a comprehensive language, the development of English has gone through the process from Old English to Middle English to modern English. In the process of development and evolution, the inflection of English itself has gradually decreased. In modern English, some of the inflections of the original words have disappeared. In addition, the comprehensive language of English shows some of the same characteristics as the analytical language of Chinese in some respects. The following describes the analytical characteristics of English from some aspects.

## II. ANALYTICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ENGLISH FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF REDUCES OF ENGLISH INFLECTION AND MORPHOLOGICAL CHANGE

Both Old English and modern English have great differences in writing, pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar. They are generally considered to belong to the SOV-type subject-object structure. In addition, the inflections of Old English words are very rich, Nouns have positive, negative, neutral, and various "grid" changes, from the following grammatical changes in the first person of Old English. We can see this feature, of course, there are some inflections in other aspects such as plurals and suffixes. Here we only list the changes in the first person singular number, as follows:

THE CHANGES IN THE FIRST PERSON SINGULAR NUMBER

	Nominative	Objective	Genitive	Dative
Positive	min	Mine	Mires	minum
Neutral	min	Min	mines	minum
Negative	minu	mine	minre	minre

With the conquest of the British in the eleventh century, Old English gradually transitioned to Middle English. Compared with Old English, Middle English has gradually reduced the inflection of words. By the fifteenth century, Middle English had completely become the subject-verb-object structure of SVO, and the development of modern English, SVO's word order has basically stabilized. In addition to the irregular changes in modern English and the "lattice" changes of a few pronouns, the external inflections have only the following five aspects: First, in the current tense, the nouns are followed by the suffix *s* or *es*, indicating single and plural forms of nouns. When the third person singular is the subject in the sentence, the predicate verb is also suffixed with *s* or *es*. Second, after the verb, the suffix *ed* indicates the past tense and the past participle. Third, after the verb, the suffix *ing* indicates the present participle and gerund of the verb. Fourth, add the suffix *er* after the adjective or adverb to indicate their comparison level. Fifth, add the affix *est* after the adjective or adverb to indicate the highest level of the adjective or adverb. It can be said that from the development of old English to modern English, the grammatical form marks are continuously decreasing, and the inflection changes gradually disappear. (Ding Zhibin & Shi Hongmei, 2011) The disappearance of inflection and the fixation of English syntactic forms are almost simultaneous. The external inflection change of modern English is

simplified into the above several kinds. The simplification or disappearance of grammatical form marks also accelerates the process of word order fixation. The SVO structure of modern English gradually replaces the old English word order based on SOV structure, which is in line with the nature of human thinking. The logical order is also a manifestation of the analytical characteristics of modern English.

### III. ANALYTICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ENGLISH FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE STRONG ABILITY OF ENGLISH VOCABULARY MEANING EXPANSION

The ability to expand the meaning of the term is related to the analytical strength of the language. Most of the time: the analytical characteristics of language are very obvious, and meaning expansion ability of the language is strong (Dai Qingxia, 2017). The polysemy of word meaning is a common phenomenon in human language. In almost all languages, polysemy accounts for the main body of vocabulary. The proportion of monosyllabic words is far less than that of polysemous words. English is no exception. There are many polysemy phenomenon in English.. (Hu Yi, 2012) Especially the polysemy phenomenon of the words related to the body and feelings and daily life are very common in English. From the polysemy of these words, we can see that the expansion ability of English word meanings is very strong.

Here are some examples to illustrate the expansion of the meaning of some words in English. For example, the word "hand", the basic meaning is the hand, and it can be extended to the figurative meaning of "on hand" or "at hand"; it can be extended to the analogy of an old hand, meaning is the veteran; it also can extend to the metaphorical meaning "at first hand". For example, the word "eye", its basic meaning is the eye, extended to the eye of a storm, refers to the eye, extended to the metaphorical eyes and ears, and an eye for something. The above two examples illustrate the polysemy of words in English that represent body organs. The word "bitter" which expresses the feeling of body in English, its basic meaning is "bitter", which is extended to the meaning of "bitter pill", which means bitter fruit. Expanding to "bitter experience" is a painful experience. Expanding to "bitter tears" is the meaning of painful tears. Expanding to "bitter smile" means bitterness. For example, the word "bed" related to daily life, its basic meaning is the bed, which can be extended to the meaning of "seedbed", referring to the seedbed. Expanded to "a bed of rock", and it refers to the deposit. Expanded to metaphorical "hotbed", and it refers to the hotbed. Expanded to "drapes over a bed", referring to the bed.

There are many more polysemy words about vocabulary about body, feeling, and daily life in English. I will not list them here. From the polysemy of these words, it can be seen that the basic meaning of English vocabulary can be extended by many extensions and metaphors, and English has a strong ability to expand. This is an analytical feature of English.

### IV. ANALYTICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ENGLISH FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF MULTI—USE OF FUNCTION WORDS AND ITS POWERFUL GRAMMATICAL FUNCTION

In language, a function word refers to a word that has no real meaning, and cannot independently assume elements of sentence, such as a be-verb, or a preposition. Another feature of the word is that there is no change in the form. Function words have the grammatical meaning of connecting or attaching various types of content words. In English, function words include prepositions and conjunctions. But now with the constant change of language, some function words are used frequently in English, and can express some practical meanings according to different usages, reflecting the analytical characteristics of English language. The following, the author explains the analytical characteristics of English language from different aspects with prepositions and conjunctions of English function words.

Seeing the analytical characteristics of English from the use of prepositions. Prepositions, also known as "prepositions (qian zhi ci)", indicate the relationship between nouns, pronouns, and other words in a sentence. They cannot be used as separate part in a sentence. Prepositions are generally used in front of nouns or pronouns to indicate the relationship between the sentence and other components in the sentence. The noun or pronoun after the preposition is called the preposition object. The preposition and the prepositional object together form a prepositional phrase. The status of interlanguage in modern English is very important. We must not underestimate this small role, nor can we ignore its role.

There are some following prepositions in English intermediaries, and these prepositions represent different concepts. Common prepositions that represent time are at, on, in, and so on. For example, on Monday is "on" Monday. Common prepositions during the presentation period are during, for, over, within, throughout, from and to. For example, during his childhood. Prepositions that represent other time concepts are before, after, since, until, till, between, up to, etc. The prepositions indicating orientation are at, in, on, to, for, above, over, below, under, in front of, in the front of, behind, beside. It can be seen from the above that some prepositions that express time can also indicate orientation. Indicating "go", and when "go" is used as an adverbial, an English preposition can indicate an action that is "going". Example: The house is on fire! The house is on fire! Indicating the reason, commonly used prepositions are "for" and so on. Common prepositions that express "methods", and "means" are by, with, through, etc. Common prepositions that represent quantities are about (around), over, and so on.

In addition, intransitive verbs cannot directly follow with the object, and have a passive voice. However, after matching with prepositions, intransitive verbs can not only follow with objects, but also have a passive voice. From the above examples, it can be seen that although the preposition is a small word class, most of the words are small and spelled simply. However, the frequency of use is quite high, and it is complicated and varied in the English conventional structure. Whether they are prepositions or prepositional phrases, they are powerful in English sentences. They express grammatical meaning through different relationships and positions in other English sentences. This is also an analytical feature of English

Seeing the analytical characteristics of English from the multi-use of conjunctions. A conjunction is a kind of function word. It can't be a sentence component independently, but only it plays a role of connecting words and words, phrases and phrases, and sentences and sentences. Conjunctions can be divided into two main categories: juxtaposed conjunctions and subordinate conjunctions. The multi-use of conjunctions also represents the multi-purpose use of function words. Following it mainly explains the multi-use phenomenon of juxtaposed conjunctions.

Parallel conjunctions are used to connect parallel words, phrases, and clauses. For example, the word "and" has the following usages, connecting two parallel verbs, such as: They sat down and talked about something; connecting two parallel verb infinitives, the second infinitive often omits to, such as: They started to dance and sing; it can be used in conjunction with imperative sentences or noun phrases, such as: Make up your mind, and you'll get the chance. When expressing the whole or referring to the same person, the predicate verb is singular; when the "and" is connected to the singular noun, predicates are also singular when they are modified by the words "each", "every", and "no". Such as: The bread and butter is really delicious; when connecting two words with the same meaning, it means "gradual", or "strengthen the tone", such as: read it again and again. The conjunction "both..and", such as: Both he and she play the piano.

About the conjunction "neither...nor" predicate verbs adopt the principle of proximity, which is consistent with the words after the word "nor". Such as: Neither you nor he is to blame. About the example conjunction "not only, but also", such as: She plays not only the piano, but (also) the guitar. When the conjunction "not only, but also" associates two clauses, one clause must be flipped because of the negative word not. Not only does he like reading stories, but also he can even write some. The conjunction "as well as", the predicate verb is not affected by the components followed by "as well as". Such as: The teacher, as well as the students, is interested in the activity. The conjunction "or" indicates the choice of relationship, or otherwise, such as: Which do you prefer, coffee or juice? Hurry up, or you'll be late for The class. About the conjunction "either...or" predicate verb adopts the principle of proximity, such as: Either you or I am right. About the example of the conjunction "or else/otherwise" such as: Be silent, or else you will be kicked out. Another example is "I am tired, otherwise, I would play. There is a conjunction "but" that indicates a turning or contrasting relationship, such as: He is rich but unhappy. Following are another two examples about two conjunctions "while", "however", indicating a turning or contrasting relationship. such as: Some people love cats, while others hate them. About the example of the conjunction "yet", such as: Some said She would be late, yet she arrived on time. About the example of the conjunction "however" such as: She does not like him, however, I like him. About the example of the conjunction "not, but" such as: It's not my book, but is his book. The prepositions that express causality are for, so, therefore, then, etc. When the word "for" is used as the parallel conjunction, the reason for the preceding sentence is added. Only sentences and sentences can be connected, usually not at the beginning of the sentence. Such as: He is absent today, for he is ill. So, the word "therefore" means therefore, such as: He hurt his leg, so he couldn't play in the game. I think, therefore I am. About "then" such as: Run fast, then he won't catch you.

From the above conjunctions and their related examples and usages, the use of conjunctions is also a lot in English, with irreplaceable status. It expresses grammatical meaning not by changing their own form, but by the relationship between them and other elements in the sentence, and in most cases it can determine the form of other components in the sentence, such as predicate. Different conjunctions represent different relationships whether it is a parallel relationship, a transitional relationship, a causal relationship, or a comparative relationship, a conjunction has a very important position in constructing English sentences and paragraphs. This is also a major manifestation of the gradual transition of modern English to analytical language.

#### V. ANALYTICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF ENGLISH FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE COMPATIBILITY OF ENGLISH AND CHINESE

Some words in English can express Chinese vocabulary. Although English and Chinese are influenced by different cultural customs and different language features, they have striking similarities in linguistic form and stylistic image. It is becoming more and more common on phenomenon of compatibility of English and Chinese, manifested in all levels of language. Among them, the compatibility of lexical level is the most prominent. One is the transliteration of words produced by English-Chinese compatibility. When it is introduced in English vocabulary, there is no corresponding vocabulary expression in Chinese, so new words are invented by transliteration, which are both simple and exotic, such as "nylon", and "coffee". These two words are transliterated, and such words are also very prominent in the food culture, such as: salad, pudding, hamburger, chocolate, coca cola, whisky, toast, etc., there are many other words in the field, such as: ballet, salon, model, copy, AIDS, clone, gene, vitamin, fee, microphone, cool, etc. From these transliterated words, it can be seen that the pronunciation and the meaning of words are very similar. We can distinguish the

corresponding Chinese words and meanings from the pronunciation of most words. It is very similar with characteristics of using forms to express meaning of Chinese. Although we say that Chinese is a language of using forms to express meanings, English is a language of using sound to express meaning, but there are many meanings of words in English that cannot be recognized by pronunciation, and these transliteration words of English and Chinese are different, and they can be known corresponding Chinese words from their pronunciation, further, its meaning is understood, reflecting the analytical characteristics of English. In addition, the compatibility of English and Chinese vocabulary is also reflected in vocabulary borrowing and English word formation. The analytical characteristics of English are explained as the following two aspects.

Seeing the analytical characteristics of English from the Chinese loanwords in English. Most languages in the world have the phenomenon of borrowing words from other languages. (Wang Zhiqiang, 2012) The borrowing of vocabulary is also the reason of vocabulary compatibility. As the exchanges between countries become more frequent, the culture also learns from each other. As a manifestation of culture, language also appears to be borrowed from each other under the influence of frequent cultural exchanges. In addition, with the development and progress of society, many new things appear, and their own English vocabulary can not meet the needs of expressing new things, so in English many Chinese words are borrowed, such as: "fengshui", "qigong", "confucianism", "Taoism", "kowitz" (skull), "lose face" (shame face), "paper tiger", "ying", "yang", "kung-fu", "Tai chi", "silk", "kooli" (cool), "yoga" from these new words, it can be seen that these words are very similar to the pronunciation of the corresponding words in Chinese. From the pronunciation of these words, we can know the corresponding words and their meanings, and the characteristics of using the pronunciation to express meaning are very obvious. Moreover, these loan words are created according to the pronunciation of the corresponding Chinese, and are created by a special new English vocabulary to represent the Chinese corresponding words, instead of being created by inflection on the basis of English words. This is the same as the way of creating Chinese, which is also the embodiment of the analytical features of English.

Seeing the analytical characteristics of English from the complexity of word formation. There are many syllables in the English word itself, and this trend is more obvious due to the large number of compound words. At the same time, with the development of society and the emergence of new things, new concepts and new ideas are emerging, and people's thinking is becoming more and more refined. In order to accurately reflect these changes, the internal structure of English vocabulary has to be complicated, and only through the word inflection, and this way is no longer sufficient for creating English words. The complexity of English word formation is gradually similar to the complexity of Chinese word formation. Similar to the word formation of "half-ton couple" and "big belly economy" in Chinese, there are also complex words such as "talk-show campaign" and "jerry-built" project in English. From the three word formation methods of English, such as compound word formation, analog word formation, and abbreviations, we can see the similarity between English and Chinese word formation, and we can see that the English language has the same analytical characteristics as Chinese.

The compound word formation in English is also the main way of word formation, and the number of compound words in English is also quite large. The compound method refers to the method of arranging two or more words into a new word in a certain word order. In English, the frequency of compound word formation is also very high. (Yu Juanjuan & Zhang Yanling, 2009) In recent years, compound words in English such as: "petrodollar", "merry killing", "serial time sharing system", and "open heart surgery". We can see from these words composed of compound word formation that these words are not formed by inflection in the form of the word itself, but by combining two or more words. we can't see any characteristics of inflection in these new English words.

In the process of English word formation, the analogy word formation method is also the main word formation method. The analogy method refers to the use of a similar word as a model, semantically associating analogies, replacing one of the morphemes, and imitating new words corresponding to or similar. In English, this analogy is also common, such as "blue-collar" and "white-collar" analogy "pink-collar", "gray-collar", and the "gold-collar". We can see from these words composed of analogical word formation that these words are formed by analogy on the basis of existing similar words. New words are composed of two separate words, rather than through the morphological changes of words. The resulting morphological changes in English words are not seen in these words.

Abbreviation is also one of the most important means of word formation in modern languages. There are also many acronyms in English, such as: "AI" (artificial intelligence), "URL" (uniform resource locator), and "SARS". These word is formed by processing the abbreviated initials of original complete words, rather than by inflection of the words. It can be seen that although English is not an ideographic language, most words cannot be expanded or reduced like Chinese, but with very active acronym generation capabilities.

In general, whether compound words, analog words, or abbreviations, they form new words by rearranging or abbreviating two or more words to express new things corresponding to Chinese. From these words, we can't see any traces of inflection of English word form, but similar to Chinese word formation, and these words have strong ideographic functions, reflecting the analytical characteristics of English.

## VI. CONCLUSION

In summary, from old English to modern English, the change of inflectional form is reduced; some words related to body, feeling, and daily life in English can be extended from their basic meanings to extended meanings and metaphors.

These words embody the similar meaning extending features of English words and Chinese. It has strong ability to expand the meaning; English function words include conjunctions, and prepositions. These words are used in English and they have the powerful grammatical functions. English function words are no longer just as an aid way of sentence, and more is to express the actual meaning; from the transliteration words formed by the compatibility of English and Chinese language, it can be seen that the characteristics of using sound to express meaning in English are very obvious; from the Chinese loanwords in English and the complexity of English word formation, It can be seen that the related words and the complex composition of the words do not reflect the inflectional characteristics of the English words; for the purpose of special discourse or rhetoric, there are also many cases in which the subject-prominent English language it has many cases that theme-prominent sentences emerge. It reflects the analytical characteristics of modern English and shows that modern English has a tendency to develop from comprehensive language to analytical language.

From the development of the English language itself, we find that modern English has a tendency to reduce the form of inflection in the form of words and syllables, which reflects the analytical characteristics of English. From the following similarities of comprehensive English and analytical Chinese: the ability to expand the meaning, the multi-use of function words, the complexity of word formation, and the prominent features of the theme reflect the analytical characteristics of the English language. From these aspects, we realize that the comprehensive language of English has a tendency to develop analytical language, with the gradual disappearance of inflection of English and the economic principle of language, perhaps in the near future, English will become an analytical language completely. At present, as the language changes, researchers need to look at the language of English with a dynamic development, and it will provide guidance for researchers to understand and analyze English language. Further, it can also provide guidance for English teaching.

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# The Impact of Using Dynamic Assessment on Iranian's Writing Literacy

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**Abstract**—Although using Dynamic Assessment especially in educational setting has been revealed to be a useful approach in helping learners to achieve higher levels of learning, not much consideration has been given to the role of teacher mediation through Dynamic Assessment in teaching writing literacy (Persian language). This study aimed to explore possible effects of teacher mediation on Iranian students' Persian writing skills. To this end 30 Iranian Persian students were selected as participants of the study. The treatment group was taught writing skill through DA by using Flexible mediation, but the control group without receiving any mediation. A non-dynamic pre- and post-test writings were given to both groups to determine any differences in their writing performance. At the end of the treatment a semi-structured interview was used to know the experimental group's opinion about their teacher's assistance. The data was subjected to the statistical procedure of *t*-test and the results indicated that not only all the students of experimental group outperformed the students of control group but according the semi-structured interview, DA acted as low affective filter for them since they saw teacher as an assistant during their writing and their improvement increased their motivation.

**Index Terms**—dynamic assistance, writing literacy, Persian language, L1

## I. INTRODUCTION

Apart from traditional ways of assessment, dynamic assessment (DA) which lies in the work of Vygotsky (1978) and his colleagues (Feuerstein, Falik, & Feuerstein, 2003; Feuerstein, Rand, & Hoffman, 1979) is built upon the notion that instruction and assessment occur in a simultaneous way. In DA a mediator (teacher or peers) provides assistance for the learner while simultaneously examining the learner's abilities (Lantolf & Pohner, 2004; Lidz & Gindis, 2003). Lantolf (2000) points out that based on SCT framework each individual does not interact directly with the environment and uses culturally designed artifacts which are designed and created by human beings over time. Considering the differences between dynamic assessment (DA) and what is called static assessment (SA) is of great importance. Pohner and Lantolf(2003) believed that the concept of future makes distinction between dynamic assessment and static assessment. Based on DA future performance of the learner (potential level) is quite different from his/her current level of development. This is in line with learning issues where DA mainly focuses on the processes of learning and development while SA emphasizes the final product of learning mainly in the form of summative assessment.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### **Sociocultural Theory (SCT), Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), and Mediation**

Sociocultural Theory (SCT) built upon the work of Russian psychologist, Vygotsky and his colleagues, emphasizes the developmental aspect of human beings. SCT emphasizes the mediated process of individual functioning organized by culturally designed artifacts, behaviors, and notions (Ratner, 2002).

A pivot part of Vygotsky's SCT is the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).Based on Vygotsky's (1978) definition, ZPD is the distance between the current level of individual's development as attained through problem solving independently and the actual level of development through interaction with more knowledgeable ones. Regarding the concepts of sociocultural theory and ZPD, it is supposed that the developmental aspect of human beings is mediated by others. This kind of mediation provides constant feedback during the process of learning.

Lantolf and Thorne (2006) note that, the SCT defines mediation as 'the process through which humans deploy culturally constructed artifacts, concepts and activities to regulate the material world or their own and each other's social and mental activity' (p.79). The following quotation from Lantolf (2000) explains in details the importance of mediation in the process of human's mental development:

The central and distinguishing concept of sociocultural theory is that higher forms of human mental activity are mediated. Vygotsky argued that just as humans do not act directly on the physical world but rely, instead, on tools and labor activity, we also use symbolic tools, or signs, to mediate and regulate our relationships with others and with ourselves. Physical and symbolic tools are artifacts created by human cultures over time and are made available to succeeding generations, which often modify these artifacts before passing them on to future generations (p. 80).

#### **Dynamic Assessment (DA) and Static Assessment**

Historically, two forms of assessment were defined for educational purposes: formative and summative. According to Bachman (1990) summative assessments are held at the end of instructional period to see the final product of learning process whereas formative assessments are held before completion of a course. Both of these assessment techniques especially summative emphasize the final product of learning.

Some critics like Pohner and Lantolf (2005) and Torrance and Pryor (1998) note that such traditional forms of assessment lack what is called the relationship between assessment and learning. They believe that these forms regard instruction and assessment as separate entities. As a result, Sternberg and Grigorenko (2002) decided to have a fundamental change in the forms of assessments to integrate instruction and assessment into a unified entity. Mediated assistance is another feature that distinguishes DA from SA.

According to Lantolf and Pohner (2004) this kind of mediation has two forms: sandwich and cake. The sandwich form includes three stages: pre-test, mediation, and post-test. Sternberg and Grigorenko (2002) mention that the issues used for pre-tests and post-tests tasks should be in the ZPD, and creating optimal ZPD should be the goal of mediator (teacher or peers). The cake format comprises feedback on the part of the examiner during the test administration. If the learner can not accomplish the task given by the examiner, she/ he will be mediated in the form of pre-fabricated hints and prompts (Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2002, p.27).

#### **Teacher Assisted mediation**

As it was mentioned one of the main features that make Dynamic Assessment quite different from traditional assessment is the concept of mediation. Mediation is defined as the optimal assistance by the teacher or peer to the learners before or during the assessment process in order to help them develop their potential abilities and move toward their ZPD. This mediated assistance is located at the heart of Dynamic Assessment (DA) concept. Vygotsky (1986) believes that language is the most significant tool for mediation and mediates individual developmental process through what is called the process of internalization (Vygotsky, 1994). Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) present three ideal conditions for mediation. First, mediation should be graduated so that the mediator (teacher or peer) can provide help in the form of different prompts, hints, questions, gestures, or clear explanations. These forms of mediation should start from the most implicit to the most explicit ones. Second, mediation should be contingent and should be offered whenever it is needed. Third, mediation should be dialogic in the form of dialogue between the teacher or peer and the learner. Based on Lantolf and Pohner's (2004) classification, there are also two forms of dynamic assessment called interventionist and interactionist. Lantolf and Poehner (2004) note some differences between these two forms; the interventionist emphasizes the efficiency of learning and speed but the interactionist related to the ZPD, focuses on interaction between a learner and a mediator. All elements in interventionist DA are pre-scripted while in interactionist DA the role of mediator in the process of learning becomes crucial.

#### **Empirical Studies on Dynamic Assessment**

Inspection of the literature on Dynamic Assessment (DA) and mediation shows the effectiveness of mediation in learning different skills and sub-skills of English.

Antón (2003) reported the usefulness of DA in testing language proficiency of advanced L2 learners. The learners were provided with different prompts (mediation) through dialogic teacher-learner interactions. The results of the study also indicated that the inclusion of mediation resulted in an increase in the test's ability of learner's writing and speaking skills.

Lantolf and Poehner's (2011) study showed the positive effect of DA in the fourth and fifth grade Spanish classrooms. In this study, the mediator (teacher) used organized mediation prompts to assess noun/adjective agreement in Spanish.

Sadeghi and Khanahmadi (2011) investigated the role of DA based versus non-DA based activities in learning L2 grammar of Iranian EFL learners. The results mainly showed that the type of instruction based on DA (mediation) made a meaningful difference in the learning of grammar by Iranian EFL learners.

The use of teacher mediation within a DA framework to assist business students in open and distance educational contexts conducted by Shrestha, Prithvi and Coffin (2012). The study revealed the role and positive effect of teacher mediation in the context of academic writing development among undergraduate business students studied in open and distance learning, following the DA.

To summarize, a brief overview of the a few studies done in the area of Dynamic Assessment (DA) especially in educational context reveals the usefulness of this approach in helping learners to achieve higher levels of learning. Although there are series of studies whose concern is mainly about the effect of teacher mediation on the writing performance of L2 learners, (e.g., Shrestha, et.al, 2012; Alemi, 2015; Hashemnezhad & Fatollahzadeh, 2015; Sadek, 2015; Mauludin & Ardianti 2017), little research exists examining the role of teacher mediation through dynamic assessment in teaching Persian (L1) writing. This study aims to explore possible effects of teacher mediation on Iranian students' writing skill.

To achieve this goal the following research question is posed:

1. What is the effect of using Dynamic Assessment in L1 writing?
2. What are the students' attitudes towards DA for their writing skill?

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### Participants

This study was conducted with 30 weak Iranian Persian students in writing skill (males) who were selected from an available population of 75 students from three high schools in Shiraz, Iran. The participants were 16 years old. The native language of all the students were Persian.

For the teacher participants of the study, three male teachers who were 38, 42 and 32 years old with an average experience of 10 and 11 and 5 years respectively accepted to participate in the study.

#### Materials

The researchers used the high school writing 1 book by Education department of Iran, Tehran which was used as the course material for grade 10 students in Iran. The book consisted of 4 sections from which unit 2 was worked on for the students during 5 sessions on the basis of the book information. This part relates to 'exemplification', that is a technique to recreate and extend the original text. This technique of writing is effective in conveying your thought, writing more beautifully, improving the speech and writing power.

#### Instruments

Two writing tests (a pre and a posttest) were taken in which the students were asked to write about a particular topic on the basis of the topics provided in that section of their writing book for about one hour on the basis of Persian writing book scale for grade (see Appendix A)

#### Procedures

In this study, three Persian native teachers of the high school were trained how to use dynamic assessment in their teaching writing skill to students in 3 sessions. In the first session, the researchers introduced the notion of dynamic assessment to them. In the second section, they provide the instructors with more explanation of the DA and provide some theoretical examples to them. In the third session, the researchers did DA on two students' writing skill to make the issue tangible for the teachers.

Before the teachers start their treatment sessions, a non-dynamic pre-test was given to the Persian native students to see how their writing ability is. Among all the students, only the students who had the lowest grades were selected as the researchers aimed to find a way to help the native students in situations they face problems at school. The topic of their pretest was chosen from the issues in their writing book. Then, they were divided into 2 groups (experimental and control groups). As DA needs careful attention and it is more practical for small number of participants the experimental and control groups were divided into 6 classes of 5 students (3 classes with DA and the other 3 with typical way of teaching). Then, the treatment started as they were taught writing skill with DA through 5 sessions in which the teachers were turning around the students and looking at each student writing separately and used flexible mediation depending on the needs of the students for their writing to help them do their best. Flexible mediation was conducted in the form of a dialogue between the teacher and the learner. As an example, one of the students didn't know what to write about the topic of "easy come, easy go"

**Teacher:** Why do you think about the histories in your history book?

**Student:** Because I don't think there is any relation between the writing and history.

**Teacher:** But look at the topic. What is it about? Read it carefully.

**Student:** It is about "easy come, easy go".

**Teacher:** Does it remind you any story?

**Student:** . . . . (Thinking)

**Teacher:** Think a little more

**Student:** Yeah, teacher. Khosrow Parviz, one of the Sassanid king.

**Teacher:** Very good. Now you can get the ideas from his life.

Finally, the students took a non-dynamic post-test to see how effective was DA on their L1 writing.

#### Data Analysis Procedures

The pre and post-tests codified on the basis of the scale for measuring of the students' writing at the end of each unit of the book by two raters were submitted to SPSS program for analysis. The scales were designed by education department of Iran, Tehran to provide a unified scoring scale on the basis of each part's writing aim. This is helpful to avoid the subjectivity of scoring as much as possible. Pearson Correlation analysis was carried out both in pre and posttests between the two raters' scores which can be evidence for the reliability of their given scores.

TABLE 1.  
PEARSON CORRELATION BETWEEN TWO RATERS' GIVEN SCORES IN THE PRE AND POST-TEST

	Pre-test	Post-test
Pearson correlation	.848	.895
Sig	.000	.000
N	30	30

With regard to the above Table, the first and second raters' given scores to the participants' writing appeared to have very high correlation ( $r=.000$ ,  $P>.01$ ) in their pre and posttest's ratings indicating a high agreement of their judgment.

#### IV. RESULTS

##### Descriptive statistics

As for the analysis of the data, the descriptive statistics of the pre and post-test writing scores of each group (Control and Experimental groups) are presented in the following table.

TABLE 2.  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE SCORES

Groups		Pre-test	Post-test
Control group	N of participants	30	30
	Mean	12.13	13.06
Experimental group	N of participants	30	30
	Mean	11.53	17.80

As indicated in Table 2, Although both groups did better in the posttest but the control group had little improvement. Thus, the improvement of the learners can be attributed to the DA treatment.

##### Research questions

1. *What is the impact of DA on Persian Iranian L1 writing skill?*

TABLE 3.  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

Descriptives		Pre-test	Post-test
Experimental group	N of participants	30	30
	Mean	11.53	17.80
	SD	1.64	.86
Control group	N of participants	30	30
	Mean	12.13	13.06
	SD	1.76	1.53

According to Table 4, the mean scores for the pre-tests of control and experimental groups are 12.13 and 11.53 respectively which shows they are almost the same but the mean score for the post-test scores of them are 13.06 and 17.80, Respectively. The standard deviation for the former is 1.53 and that of latter is .86. On the basis of Table 2, although the learners' writing skill was developed in both groups, the mean score and the standard deviation indicate that the participants in the experimental group acted better than the control group.

TABLE 4.  
T-TEST FOR THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MEAN SCORES OF CONTROL AND EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS' POST-TESTS

Mean difference	T	Sig
-4.73	-10.420	.000

Table 4 represents the results of the t-test run for the difference between the means of the control group and experimental group. On the basis of Table 3, the difference between the two groups is statistically significant ( $t=-10.420$ ,  $P<0.05$ ). Thus, as mentioned above, the mean score of the experimental group is higher than the other group. One claim that applying DA helps the learners to develop their writing skill much more than the usual method of teaching.

2. *What are the students' attitudes towards DA for their writing skill?*

After interviewing the students, almost all agreed that their teacher's assistance helped them to write more accurately. The teacher's hints helped them to think better and remember many things they had forgotten. Teacher's assistance helped them to get better grades and motivated them to write better. They focused more on punctuation marks.

With the assistance of their teacher, they could write what they aimed to. So it led to their willingness to write. For instance one of the students said that he used to feel nervous about writing and couldn't write well but with the help of his teacher he had been able to write a coherent paragraph and motivated more to write better. Another student believed he felt closer to the teacher and it reduced his stress and led him to write easily with more confidence.

#### V. DISCUSSION

The purpose of the study was to show the effective of DA on Persian L1 writing skill. The independent samples t-test analysis of the pretest revealed that there was no significant difference ( $p<.05$ ) between the mean scores of the participants in the two groups which is an indicator of their homogeneity in terms of their writing performance at the beginning of the training. The researchers began to apply graduated prompting procedure of DA to the experimental group, but not to the control group. To see the improvement of the students' writing skill in both experimental and control groups' writing performance and compare them, they took a posttest at the end of the training.

As shown in the results, the mean scores of the experimental group were significantly different from those of the control group. In fact, students' L1 writing performance surpassed the control group (Table 3).

This finding adds to the reviewed studies revealing that graduated prompting procedure of DA was effective not only on facilitating L2 writing but also it is useful for writing improvement on L1. In fact, it confirms the effect of DA on both SL/FL proficiency skills and L1 literacy skills. In a study by Taheri and Dastjerdi (2016), the effect of DA intervention in identifying and supporting Iranian EFL learners' writing ability was shown in which DA approach could successfully improve EFL learners' writing ability. Moreover, there are a number of researchers whose findings were in line with this study in the case that DA is effective on students' writing skills (e.g. Shrestha, et.al, 2012; Alemi, 2015; Hashemnezhad & Fatollahzadeh, 2015; Sadek, 2015; Mauludin & Ardianti 2017).

Finally, in order to see the Persian Iranian high school learners' attitudes towards the use of graduated prompting procedure of DA for their writing skill, the researchers interviewed them. The students' attitude in the experimental group towards the method used was positive and result in increasing their motivation and scores.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This study aimed at investigating the effect of DA on Persian Iranian learners' L1 writing skill at high school. As it appeared in the discussion part, this method helped learners improve their L1 writing which became a trouble issue for them. In other words, the students of the experimental group outperformed the control group after the treatment. In addition, based on learners' interviews, DA acted as low affective filter for them since they saw teacher as an assistant during their writing and their improvement increased their motivation which is an essential issue for doing any job in people's life.

## VII. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Like all other studies, the current research is not simply without limitations. This study didn't take gender into account since the researcher had access to male students only.

## VIII. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In line with the above limitation, future research is required to examine the effect of DA on L1 writing skill for both males and females. Another research is also vital to investigate the effect of DA on the other L1 literacy language skill (reading).

## APPENDIX. MARKING OF THE WRITTEN EXAM

Evaluation Criteria	value	Descriptive Report	Numerical Report
Producing coherent text: • Concrete using senses • Abstract using mental creativity	5		
Avoiding redundancy	5		
Sentence structures and accuracy	5		
Readability	2		
Accurate spelling and punctuation notes	3		
Total	20		

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# Call for Papers and Special Issue Proposals

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