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# Idiom Understanding and Teaching: Do We Need to Assume a Target Culture?

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**Abstract**—This paper argues that learning idioms can be more effective when assuming first language cultural contexts because easier access to relevant contextual assumptions from first language context reduces processing loads and makes learning easier. This is also consistent with Winkler's (2012) view that learning can have better results when it takes place in an environment that corresponds to learners' needs. This paper reports on results from a pilot study with participants in the UK and Algeria who are teachers and learners of English as a second and foreign language. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with UK and Algerian teachers to know about their current teaching practice. Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with learners who worked with some teaching materials. Learners were assigned into two groups, both taught idioms in English by the same teacher for a four-week period. In group 1, participants worked with teaching materials which assumed first language cultural contexts however in group 2 students worked with teaching materials that assumed target cultural context. All students were tested pre- and post the four-week study. The results revealed that students' and teacher's attitudes to the first language culture activities were positive but the language tests did not provide evidence of significant differences between the two groups.

**Index Terms**—idioms, home culture, target culture, cognitive processing, contextual assumptions

## I. INTRODUCTION

Teaching language and idioms in particular is not an easy task for teachers in class. Despite the various teaching strategies of idioms which are used, it is sometimes puzzling for teachers to choose what best fit their class because of, maybe, multi-cultural ethnicities they are teaching or some other times the teaching materials used in class.

If we suppose that learners of second language are beginners and from different cultural backgrounds, teaching them a second language could be a challenge. This could be even harder if the teacher does not speak learners' first language. Interaction at that stage could be made on peers' level more than learner-teacher interaction. On the other hand, if teachers speak learners' first language, this might be of a good help to learners. Based on relevance theory's idea of effects and efforts, interference of first language and home culture of learners might help learners to speed the process of learning a second language in general. If teachers could use the first language and also bits of learners' home culture in class, it means that they are providing many cognitive effects to their students and instead learners are also minimizing their cognitive efforts. It is not just about cognitive efforts but also about maximization of relevance. Wilson and Sperber (2012) assert that the human cognition in processing language is always directed toward the maximization of relevance of the speaker. Learners are always waiting to hear something that is relevant to them and save them much cognitive efforts to process. This idea could be also applicable to teaching idioms. Using home culture to teach idioms of second language could be of beneficial effects to learners. Learners do not have to go through imagining themselves in a target culture in which they have never been to but twisting that a bit by editing the cultural context to suit their local or home culture.

## II. FIRST LANGUAGE CULTURE AND TEACHING OF IDIOMS

Learners and some teachers in class use first language to explain some parts of second language, but not all teachers allow the use of first language in class. This practice is done in an unsystematic manner. Daily-O'Cain and Liebscher (2009) argue that students in second language class use codeswitching in ways that are not instructed by the teacher. Students may use the cognitive loads they are familiar with to understand language and idioms in particular even if the teacher does not use first language or home culture.

### *First Language Culture and Effects/Efforts Processing*

To explain the effect and effort idea, Sun Song (1998) defines this by stating that the speaker has to think of an utterance that shares many effects and with less processing efforts for the listener to understand. For example, (1) an old man needed to buy coffee but instead of going around and looking for which section it is, he directly asked one of the employees there, '*excuse me, where are you putting coffee?*'

First of all, asking the employee directly means saving time and seeking a shortcut road to get coffee and leave. He communicated something of relevance and waited to receive something of relevance too. This example may not show effects/efforts idea of relevance very clearly but it manifests humans' tendency to go for a low cost of cognitive efforts by providing many effects as possible and getting a low cognitive processing answer. Asking about coffee means that

the person in the shop did not know where it is, it also means that he needed help and maybe he did not want to go and fetch it by himself. All these effects were communicated in one sentence to the store employee to save him time and effort of moving around the store. This is exactly what would happen when first language culture is used to teach idioms to second language learners. Platt and Brook (1994) (as cited in Ife, 2008) argue that learners of second language do have only one mediational tool to help them solving different kinds of problems they are facing in second language which is using L1. Quite far from the second language acquisition view on that, I display some other arguments that have to do with the psycholinguistic aspects of learners who are learning a second language.

In terms of effects and efforts, using L1 is seen as providing more effects at low processing efforts. Let's consider this example; when the English teacher ask his students to share their point of views on some mythical creatures that does not exist in reality but are quite popular, he gives an example of the bogeyman. Learners from Arabic backgrounds would think of 'El-Ghol' to build their understanding of the bogeyman and say what they think about it from their cultural point of view. Though this is an inner cognitive process, it still has some effect over L2 learning. Learners who were asked to share their views on bogeyman thought of 'El-Ghol' because it is more manifested to them than bogeyman. They found more effects to process the same mythical creature in their L1 than in L2 with less cognitive efforts. However, if learners think of it through the target language, they would probably take a longer time to imagine themselves in a culture that they do not know about much and this would cost them more cognitive efforts to process the meaning. The same idea could be applicable to teaching idioms through L1 culture where learners imagine that an idiom such as (2) *a rain cheque* event could be taking place in a local environment which is familiar to them describing the cultural assumptions they know.

#### Low Cognitive Processing Efforts of Idioms:

Low cognitive efforts take place when individuals process something that is familiar and relevant to them. With regard to idioms, if we embed them in first language cultural situations, they could be processed with the least cognitive effort. In other words, the more relevant an utterance is; the more cognitive effects it produces and the less relevant, the more cognitive efforts it takes to understand (Allott, 2013). As an example, (3) is an idiom that is embedded in learners' first language culture (typically Algerian culture) which might be understood better than (4).

(3) A: *I hate Amine, whenever the teacher goes out of the class, he provides him with trouble-makers list of students.*

B: *He is such a loser; he always let the cat out of the bag.*

(4) A: *isn't that Johnny? What is he doing with a poppy bouquet in his hand at night?*

B: *everybody knows that he was an ex British soldier where all his friends died in front of him he might be off his rocker now.*

Learners studying example (3) may find it easier for them to understand than example (4). I built example (3) on first language Algerian culture because I am quite familiar with its content. Readers of (3A) can imagine the situation where teachers used to assign someone to have an eye on trouble-maker students or noisy ones and write their names down and hand the list to him when he is back. The cultural situation presented in (3) is very familiar to Algerian learners. The first sentence in (3A) sets the seen for the second sentence in (3B) where learners may not struggle much to know the meaning of '*let the cat out of the bag*' because they are already provided with a sentence that is very congruent with what is said in the second sentence. It is not just congruent but culturally relevant to their background since the cultural situation they are given is something of relevant to their culture which they do not struggle to process.

However, example (4) is different in the sense that it reveals something that is not quite relevant to learners (i.e. Algerian learners). The first sentence that sets the seen to the second sentence is problematic. If learners wants to understand what is meant by '*off one's rocker*' they have to go through the first sentence first. While the first sentence (4A) contains '*poppy bouquet*' utterance, learner would think of what a poppy bouquet is first. The meaning of a poppy would be very relevant if they also can find an explicit link between war and poppies but this is quite hard for them unless they have pre-existing information about this. Imagining themselves in a culture that is not relevant to them is little bit difficult compared to what they usually know. Once they know the meaning of a poppy, they come to realize that the time meant to celebrate the Remembrance Day is not really suitable and thus may derive a conclusion that off one's rocker means someone who is not acting logically appropriate and accordingly to the society etiquettes, there might be other scenarios as well. The meaning of craziness might not be thought of immediately but other (different) meanings might occur. In example (3), students may not get the exact meaning but the answer they deduce is more or less related to idiom's meaning. In example (3) it could be more related answer to the actual meaning of the idiom however in (4) it could be less related.

If we explain this in terms of effects and efforts, I would say that example (3) has more cognitive effects manifested to learners and thus they process that example with low cognitive efforts. Example (4) has less cognitive effects and thus learners process it with more cognitive efforts. Associating the first language culture to teaching idioms is presented as follows:

First language culture + idioms = more cognitive effects with less cognitive efforts.

Target language culture + idioms = less cognitive effects with more cognitive efforts.

### III. METHODOLOGY



This study adopts different methods of gathering data. First of all, it reports on semi-structured interviews conducted with both Algerian and UK teachers as well as Algerian learners of English. Second, it considers a small intervention of teaching with designed teaching materials which assume both target and home culture in class with pre and post testing. Interviews with learners took place also before and after they have worked with the teaching materials (i.e. post interviews were more related to the teaching materials that learners worked with). The total number of interviews conducted is 14 and that includes both teachers in the UK and Algeria and learners as well. Interviews with teachers in the UK and Algeria are meant to investigate the current teaching practice of language in general and idioms in particular. However, interviews with learners (usually post interviews, this also includes an interview with the teacher who taught both groups) are meant to find out about learners' point of views on the new teaching strategy (i.e. home culture). The number of learners who participated in the pre and post-tests is 18, 9 in each group. Both groups were taught for four weeks with the same idioms using different teaching strategies. Group 1 was taught through a home culture teaching strategy and group 2 was taught through a target culture strategy. At the end, I conducted a post-test to see if there is any difference in the performance of the groups.

#### IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study aims to find out if home culture enhances the teaching of language in general and idioms in particular. Also, it investigates and compares the current teaching practice in both Algeria and the UK. The research questions of this study are as follows:

1. Does implementing teaching materials that assume home culture help learners to learn language and idioms in particular?
2. How does the teaching practice in Algeria and the UK affect the teaching of idioms?

#### V. ANALYSING THE DATA

This section is divided into two parts. The first part discusses the results of semi-structured interviews and the second one discusses comprehension tests results obtained from the teaching materials taught for four weeks.

##### A. Analysis of Semi-structured Interviews

Each interview I analysed has three main types of themes as they appeared in the interviews I conducted. There is the global theme, basic and organising themes (Fawcett & Pockett, 2015). The global theme is the centre of each interview themes where it acts as a reference to all other types of themes. The basic themes are three themes in each interview except post interview of Algerian teachers and learners where they have only two basic themes. The organising themes are the sub-themes under each basic theme. Now, I start reporting the themes I organised in each interview.

First of all, there are three interviews with the Algerian teachers that are meant to investigate the current teaching practice. The global theme revolves around "the communicative approach" as a theoretical reference to the teaching practice in class. There are three basic themes: "language teaching", "idiom teaching practice", and "L1 and culture in teaching". The language teaching practice generally revealed that teachers I interviewed did not use any of real world materials as they think that they are not available and accessible. They also rely very much on ready-made teaching materials with the use of different teaching approaches. On the other hand, the teaching of idioms occurs often in class with wide range of activities of idioms. Teachers also use a wide range of teaching strategies including target culture context teaching strategy and the use of first language of learners in some occasions. Teachers reported that they usually compare between Algerian and target culture that occur in the teaching of idioms. The use of L1, they said, helps learners to retain the meaning and also gives them a feeling of security. L1 also is used to catch learners' attention in class. This is when the teacher says some words in L1 to attract learners' attention. In the next paragraph, I present the findings of UK teachers' interviews.

These interviews have the same interview structure with Algerian teachers' interviews. UK teachers teaching practice of English revealed that they follow the communicative approach of teaching in class. They also give great importance to the task-based in teaching and use materials that very much related to learners' interests. The use of authentic teaching materials is always present in teaching. When it comes to the teaching of idioms, UK teachers use a wide range of teaching strategies and activities of idioms. They also reported that idioms often occur with only advanced levels because it is quite difficult to teach them to lower levels. There is no separate sessions or lessons of idioms alone but most of the time teachers said that they teach them within other subjects of language like grammar and speaking. All the teachers I interviewed reported that they do not really mind using learners L1 in class to facilitate learning but due to multi-lingual classes they teach, they couldn't use this in class. They also think that using L1 in class can help learners to be more productive in class and pay more attention. Some of the teachers also reported that some course books they use in teaching present certain cultures as more salient than others as well as some teachers also have a tendency of culture superiority. On the teaching of culture they said, they don't teach them the bits of target culture that they don't need and use. In the next paragraph, I present findings of the interviews conducted with learners.

There are three interviews with learners. The interview structure is the same with the one of teachers in the previous paragraph. In language teaching practice, they reported that classes are mostly teacher-centered practice. They also

described the use of real world materials but only in oral expressions sessions where the teacher uses some videos and audios. Learning idioms is usually taught with other subjects of language (grammar and speaking more often). There is a wide range of teaching strategies that teachers use in class to teach idioms. One of these teaching strategies is the use of target culture teaching strategy. In terms of using L1 in class, learners reported that teachers sometimes are less flexible with using L1 in class but they usually make a link between L1 and L2. All students said that using L1 helps them in understanding and retaining idioms. In the next paragraph, I present results of post-interviews with learners.

There are three post-interviews (i.e. interviews conducted after the teaching) with learners and one with a teacher that is discussed in the next paragraph. The difference between pre and post interviews with teachers and students is that post-interviews do not have the basic theme of “language learning” because these interviews are about the teaching materials of the study. That is, post interviews do not discuss language teaching practice but specifically the teaching practice of idioms through some teaching materials of the study. The global (i.e. central) theme in these interviews is “home culture” teaching strategy. Home culture strategy links both basic themes of “idiom teaching practice” and “L1 and culture teaching”. Learners said that they liked the new teaching materials because they learnt new idioms especially the example that they consider quite easy to guess within the context given by the teacher. All of them agreed to recommend those teaching materials to other students however they reported that there should be more examples for them to understand idioms clearly. They needed additional examples or even further explanation on the cultural bits used with those idioms. When it comes to the use of home culture in learning idioms, some students reported that target culture is better when learning idioms and those equivalents of L1 do not really help them with idiom comprehension. However, they expressed their views in favour of making a balance between L1 and L2 cultures teaching in general. They also reported that L1 culture used in the lessons they were taught helped them to understand idioms, to activate schemas that are relevant to them and made learning of idioms easier. The post-interview conducted with the teacher has some similar views to these as well.

The post-interview with the teacher was conducted after she finished teaching the teaching materials with both groups. She reported that the home culture strategy is very effective. She also said that group one was more active compared to group two which faced some difficulty understanding idioms. She follows a communicative approach in teaching and said that both strategies (home and target culture) reflect the communicative approach of teaching. With regard to L1 and home culture teaching in class, she claimed that she uses both cultures in her class depending on the objectives and type of lessons she teaches. She also said that L1 culture should appear more often with lower level classes because it helps them with understanding the meaning. When teaching both groups, the teacher reported that group two, which was taught through a target culture, asked sometimes for first language examples while they were supposed to use only target culture examples. The comprehension tests (pre and post) results are reported in the next paragraph.

### B. Analysing Comprehension Tests of Idiom

The comprehension tests are analysed using two different statistical tests. The first one is used to measure the difference between the pre and post-tests and it is called the paired samples T-Test. The second one is applied to measure any significant difference between group one and group two and it is called ANOVA (also the independent samples T-Test).

To start with, tables 1, 2, and 3 present the difference between pre and post-test through revealing the correlation, the standard deviation, the standard error, and the significance of both tests.

Table 1 presents the Mean difference between the pre and the post tests. The Mean of the pre-test is more than 5 ( $\bar{x} > 5$ ). It is ( $\bar{x} = 5, 5.2778$ ) to be exact and this is before learners got exposed to the teaching materials. This is very low compared to the Mean of the post-test which is more than 9 ( $\bar{x} > 9$ ). It is ( $\bar{x} = 9, 6.111$ ) to be exact and this is after learners worked with the teaching materials in both groups. The Mean difference between pre and post-test is ( $\bar{x} = -4.3333$ ). This also gives 0.03 different between the standard deviation of the Mean in both tests where the post-test has a Standard Deviation of ( $SD = 1.33$ ) compared to the pre-test with a Standard Deviation of ( $SD = 1.36$ ).

TABLE 1  
THE MEAN DIFFERENCE

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-test	5.2778	18	1.36363	.32141
Posttest	9.6111	18	1.33456	.31456

Table 2 presents the correlation of pre and post-tests that is ( $\text{Corr.} = .321$ ) and this is significant at ( $P = .193$ ). This is to say that the larger the correlation is, the less standard error is and thus less statistic number in the significant column.

TABLE 2  
CORRELATION BETWEEN PRE AND POST TEST

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Pre-test & posttest	18	.321	.193

Table 3 presents the Standard Deviation of the T test for each individual before and after the teaching process and it is ( $SD = 1.57181$ ) with also a Standard Error of the Mean at ( $\sigma_{\bar{x}} = .37048$ ). The T value is ( $T = -11.697$ ). This is not very

big number compared to the number of participants I had in this study. The T value correlates to a significance of  $P < .001$ . The next tables reveal the difference between group 1 and group 2.

TABLE 3  
T VALUE

	Paired differences			T	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean		
Pretest-posttest	-4.33333	1.57181	.37048	-11.697	.000

Tables from 4 to 8 are the output of the ANOVA test to measure the significance between the two groups. To start with, table 4 presents the number of the groups and the number of participants in each group.

TABLE 4  
NUMBER OF GROUPS AND PARTICIPANTS

	Value Label	N
1.00	Group 1	9
2.00	Group 2	9

Table 5 reports the Mean and the Standard Deviation of both groups. The Mean of group 2 is slightly larger than the Mean of group one with a difference of 0.66. Standard Deviation is roughly the same in both groups with a difference of 0.15 higher in the second group.

TABLE 5  
MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION

Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Group 1	4.0000	1.50000	9
Group 2	4.6667	1.65831	9
Total	4.3333	1.57181	18

The Standard Error of the Mean is displayed in table 6 and is exactly the same in both groups at ( $\sigma_{\bar{x}} = .527$ ).

TABLE 6  
MEAN AND STANDARD ERROR

Group	Mean	Std. Error
Group 1	4.000	.527
Group 2	4.667	.527

Table 7 presents the significant level of both groups which is ( $P = .747$ ) using Levene's test.

TABLE 7  
LEVENE'S TEST OF EQUALITY OF ERROR VARIANCES<sup>a</sup>

F	Df1	Df2	Sig.
.108	1	16	.747

In table 8, there is the group row which presents the output needed about this study. It contains the Mean Square which is very low ( $s^2 = 2.000$ ) and can roughly explain the difference between groups. The Mean Square here represents between subjects variance (i.e. between groups). In the same table, there is also the significance column that is ( $P = .384$ ) which is a way over the significance level of this study ( $\alpha = .05$ ). In the next part, I present my interpretation of the results I obtained from interviews and comprehension tests of idioms.

TABLE 8  
BETWEEN-SUBJECTS EFFECTS

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power <sup>a</sup>
Corrected Model	2.000 <sup>a</sup>	1	2.000	.800	.384	.048	.800	.134
Intercept	338.000	1	338.000	135.200	.000	.894	135.200	1.000
Group	2.000	1	2.000	.800	.384	.048	.800	.134
Error	40.000	16	2.500					
Total	380.000	18						
Corrected Total	42.000	17						

## VI. DISCUSSING THE RESULTS

This section presents the discussion of the results displayed in the previous paragraphs.

### A. Discussing Semi-structured Interviews Results

In this sub-section, I discuss interviews conducted with Algerian teachers, UK teachers, and Algerian learners. I also discuss interviews conducted after the teaching process with Algerian learners and their teacher. To start with,

interviews conducted with Algerian teachers revealed that the practice of teaching idioms lacks the essential use of authentic materials. This is, as a matter of fact, a huge challenge facing teachers of English in Algeria. Instead, teachers use excessively ready-made teaching materials in class. This teaching practice, I would say, has serious implications on the teaching process. The use of foreign ready-made teaching materials can result into teaching “other” values that most often do not fit into the cultural context of students. Also, there is no clear teaching approach that most teachers follow. There is a mixture between teaching approaches as they reported or sometimes there is the use of eclecticism. This gap that exists between the theory and the practice of teaching can affect teaching negatively. Bader and Hamada (2015) claim that some teachers in Algeria are unable to link the theoretical knowledge of communicative approach with its teaching practical context in class. This teaching practice affects also the teaching of idioms in two ways. First, the most of the teaching approaches teachers follow do not provide essential focus on idioms. Second, there is an excessive use of target culture to teach idioms which (as I explained earlier) makes learning idioms difficult. Despite the use of target culture when teaching idioms, there is also the use of L1 and direct translation. This is because there is a difficulty in teaching idioms that sometimes requires the use of L1. Sometimes, the use of L1 precedes the use L1 culture. Teachers compare the target culture with L1 culture because of the need to make students feel that they are in an environment where their L1 culture functions to a large extent. This gives learners a feeling of security. Relevance theory explains this teaching practice as Cummings (2005) claims that communication is guided by relevance principle. This also supports the idea given by teachers that the use of L1 expressions in class helps to catch learners’ attention as well as in the retention of meaning. Teachers’ practice of teaching is quite different from that of UK teachers.

UK teachers’ interviews showed quite different responses compared with the Algerian teachers. To start with, the use of communicative approach of teaching with the use of authentic teaching materials explains that the teaching practice in the UK is very congruent with the communicative teaching approach. The use of authentic materials that are related to learners needs implies that those teaching materials are developed by UK teachers in a way that cope with the cultural context learners live in (target cultural context) and this is how teaching should take place within communicative approach framework. Consequently, this teaching practice of language affects teaching idioms. Idioms are taught using a target culture in the UK. Idioms are given much importance but they only occur with advanced level students because UK teachers face difficulty teaching idioms with lower levels. This is mainly because lower level students rely very much on their L1 and home culture that most teachers are not familiar with. When it comes to the teaching of culture in class, English classes are very target culture-based classes. Course books promote the teaching of target culture which is a normal practice when we consider that learners are in a target culture society. Despite the fact that the teaching practice is a target culture-based, teachers, in the other hand, teach culture that is only specific to learners needs. One of the teachers reported that he does not teach learners bits of culture that they do not need. For example, ordering a beer in a pub might not be what learners from Islamic backgrounds want to know about. This is to emphasis on the relevance theoretic view of comprehension and cognition that learning takes place better in an environment that is relevant to learners. Learning also is better when teachers include teaching materials that learners need. Teaching practice in the UK is very congruent with communicative approach and relevance theory principle of cognitive effect and effort.

There is a tendency among both UK and Algerian teachers to use L1 and home culture of learners in class but not in a systematic way. However, the teaching practice of language is a somewhat different. The problem that still exists in many English classes in Algeria revolves around the teaching materials. This teaching practice affects the teaching of idioms as well as the comprehension and the uses of such expressions. The UK teaching practice, on the other hand, may seem more effective and relevant to learners’ needs. Next, I discuss interviews related to the teaching materials taught to the two groups.

The interviews conducted with Algerian learners revealed that the classes they are having are most of the times teacher-centred classes which may not reflect communicative approach principle of teaching of teachers who use communicative approach very often. The use of real world materials is essential in class as Mideros Camargo (2010) claims that communicative approach always stresses the importance of using real world materials in class. Authentic materials exist only in oral expressions where learners come across some target culture audios or videos. However, the use of real world materials as recommended by the communicative approach should be of interests to learners at first place. That is, materials should reflect learners’ needs and represent their contexts of learning. This does not seem exactly what teachers are selecting as a teaching material in classes of oral expression. Most of what teachers teach may not be described as authentic but rather target culture-oriented materials. This language teaching practice also affects the teaching of idioms. Learners also reported that idioms are taught by using a variety of teaching strategies and activities among which there is the use of target culture teaching strategies of idioms. That is, assuming that the interaction of teaching idioms is taking place in a target culture (British or American). This also explains the use of L1 in class. Because learners find learning idioms difficult, they have a tendency to shift to L1 or find equivalents of idioms that correspond to those of target culture. This helps; as learners reported; also to understand and retain idioms meaning. Relating this to relevance theory principle, I would say that the principle of effects and efforts (Clark, 2013) is best described here. That is, learners tend to go for information that is relevant and salient to them. The next paragraph discusses interviews conducted with Algerian learners after the teaching.

Interviews with learners and their teacher after they worked with the teaching materials are quite different; in terms of structure; to the previous interviews mentioned earlier. They revolve around home culture teaching strategy and the teaching materials they worked with during four weeks. Interviews with learners were a bit different from what I have expected. Learners I interviewed stated that idioms were easy to guess with the home culture context provided by the teacher. This confirms the relevance theory principle of relevance about effects and cognitive efforts in teaching idioms as explained in the previous paragraph. Learners tend to follow and better learn what is relevant to them and pay less attention to information that is less relevant to them. They also said that L1 culture context helped to understand idioms with activated schemas which correspond to idiom equivalents they know and participate to meaning understanding. This is very clear evidence that learning takes place better when assuming a home culture context. However, some learners reported that they needed more examples that clearly explain idioms as the examples provided by their teacher were not enough for them. They also said that L1 equivalents of idioms do not really help them with idiom understanding and they would prefer a target culture context teaching strategy in learning idioms than home culture. This has some reasons that might explain participants' views on using target culture in teaching. One of the reasons is that a considerable minority of some families' interaction at home (in Algeria) is with French language and not even with vernacular Algerian Arabic. This kind of attitudes has its roots from the 1950s (even before) when Algeria was colonised by France. The only education provided on that time was by French teachers who decided what to teach and how to teach it. This tendency of speaking French among many parents has been developed since ages and now passed to many generations. Thus, there is always a tendency to embrace what is foreign and have an inferior view to what is local. When learners said that L1 equivalents do not help us with idiom comprehension, this also means that they have not heard of such expressions (i.e. Arabic idiom equivalents) and they have not used it before but instead they use French equivalents. One of the interviewees has told me that when the teacher mentioned "bone of contention" she thought of "pomme de discorde" in French because she heard her father using it a lot at home. Thus, the tendency to use target culture in class may not be explained by academic reasons rather than other social reasons instead. In the next paragraph, I discuss the post interview of the teacher who taught both groups during the study.

The interview with the teacher who taught the teaching materials to both groups revealed that home culture teaching strategy was more effective and this can be seen in group one that was more active compared to group two that found difficulty understanding idioms. This gives another support to the assumption that home culture teaching strategy can result in better learning of idioms to learners of English as a second/foreign language. She also said that both teaching strategies (target and home culture) reflect the communicative approach of teaching which she follows. Target culture may reflect communicative approach when learners are taught in target culture settings. However, using a target culture strategy to teach learners who are not in a target culture context reflects a teaching practice that is not in line with learners' interests and needs. In communicative approach, teachers need to place learners in an environment that corresponds to their needs and interests (Farmer, 2006). Thus, target culture does not reflect learners needs in Algeria (but it might be elsewhere e.g. UK) and might not reflect the communicative approach teaching context in Algeria as well. When it comes to using L1 or home culture in class, the teacher said that she uses both cultures in class and this depends on the objective of the lessons she teaches. This means that there is a balance between assuming target and home cultures in teaching in general. Besides this, there was a need to use L1 culture sometimes in a target culture group. That is, there is a tendency to shift to L1 and home culture whenever learners feel the difficulty to understand idioms, sentences, and expressions. Again, this supports the assumption of this study and confirms the principle of relevance in teaching language in general and idioms in particular. In the next part, I discuss findings of the comprehension tests.

### *B. Discussing Idiom Comprehension Tests Results*

The results obtained from comprehension tests are discussed on two levels. First, I discuss the pre and post-test differences. Second, I discuss if there is any significant difference on the level of the groups. To start with, there is the Mean of both tests which is significantly different. The Mean of the pre-test is ( $\bar{x} = 5.2$ ) which is less than idiom comprehension competency scores of post-test (which is  $\bar{x} = 9.6$ ) on an average of four weeks. The Standard Deviation (SD) of both tests is roughly the same number. This is because the sample of the study is small. The small sample of the study also gives small correlation which is ( $\text{Corr.} = .321$ ). As explained in the analysis section, the more correlation is, the less statistical number of significance can be. This also explains the significance of the tests which is ( $P = .193$ ). The third table shows a significant difference between the Means of the tests which is ( $\bar{x} = -4.33$ ). The T statistic shows a value of ( $T = -11.697$ ) which correlates to a significance of ( $P = .000$ ). I would say that this is statically significant at ( $P > .001$ ) compared to the significance character of this study ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) which is very significant. Thus, there is a significant difference between the pre and post-test in this study which means that learners in post-tests scored high on idiom comprehension than in the pre-test. Next, I discuss the difference between the groups.

As stated previously, the number of participants is nine in each group. The Mean of both groups is roughly the same statistical number ( $G1 \bar{x} = 4.000$ ,  $G2 \bar{x} = 4.666$ ). The Standard Deviation is ( $G1 \text{SD} = 1.500$ ,  $G2 \text{SD} = 1.658$ ), however, the Standard Error of the Mean is exactly the same in both groups ( $\sigma_{\bar{x}} = .527$ ). This means that the difference between the groups can barely be seen. Levene's test provides a statistical significance number of ( $P = .747$ ) which is way over the significant character of this study ( $\alpha = .05$ ). This clearly indicates that the difference between groups performance on idiom comprehension is statistically insignificant. Table 6.8 shows more details about the difference between groups

performance. The Square Mean is very low ( $s^2 = 2.000$ ) which describes again a small tiny difference between the Means of both groups. The F Ratio statistic shows that the amount of variance observed between the two groups is also very low ( $F = .800$ ). The F Ratio correlates with a significance of ( $P = .384$ ) which is over the significance level of alpha ( $\alpha = .05$ ) of this study. This means that the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is not rejected. The null hypothesis of this study suggests that home culture teaching strategy of idioms does not provide further or extra beneficial effects compared with target culture teaching strategy.

## VII. CONCLUSION

It seems that first language and home culture function in second language classes of English but there are no clear boundaries to when and how they are used. In other words, there are no specific rules or even a systematic manner in using first language and home culture in teaching. Interviews with teachers and learners revealed that using L1 and home culture of learners has a positive effect on understanding language and idioms in particular. This paper is meant to reveal the positive effects of using home culture in teaching English idioms and language in general but does not provide a methodology on how to implement this strategy in a teaching curriculum. This, I believe, is for further research and recommendations in the future.

For the comprehension tests, the results provided about comprehension tests may not be due to the correlation of the dependent and the independent variables. Instead, there might be other extraneous variables that interfered with the study. To start with, the small number of participants in the study may have affected the results in some ways. Second, there were some issues in teaching and in conducting the study. The groups should be completely isolated from each other before and after the teaching. However, this couldn't happen because both groups formed one class and I divided them only for the sake of the study. Interference of both groups together after they had the teaching lessons affects the validity of the study. Also, some of the teaching practices were indirectly subjective to one group of the study. This could have biased somehow the teaching process in favour of one group than the other. If other intervening variables were controlled, I might have obtained different results.

## APPENDIX A. UK AND ALGERIAN TEACHERS AND LEARNERS INTERVIEW

### Interview guide for (teachers/learners)

This interview is meant to discover some point of views of how second language (teachers/learners) think of the process of teaching a second language in general and idioms in particular. Their point of views would enhance the process of teaching and learning. For participants who gave their consent to participate in this study, all anonymity/ethical issues have been explained to them. The interview will take approximately 20 to 30 minutes.

#### I. Language

1. How do you find teaching/learning English as a foreign language?
2. (Are you taught through/Do you use some) real world materials in teaching, such as; newspapers, magazines, radio talks... etc.?
3. If you do, why do you think these materials should be in class of English?
4. What are the teaching approaches that you are implementing in class? (i.e. communicative approach, audio lingual approach ... etc.) (For teachers only).
5. In your session/class mainly, you (receive/help) (students/from teachers) to enhance (their/your) speaking skills. So, what kind of topics do you usually discuss?
6. Do you think cultural topics would bring some sort of a good discussion?
7. What do you think a good speaker of English should acquire to sound more fluent?
8. Do you think idioms are important in speaking? Why?

#### II. Idioms

1. How often do you (teach/learn) idioms?
2. Do you think idioms are difficult or easy to (teach/learn)? Why?
3. What sort of activities do you (use/give students) to practice idioms in class (e.g. filling the gaps, matching idioms with their meaning, dialogues... etc.)?
4. What are the strategies (e.g. using pictures, using context guessing, explaining the origins of idioms, direct translation to your first language...etc.) that you use to (teach/learn) idioms in class?
5. Do you feel the necessity to use first language to explain idioms or any other saying or quote that (learners/you) don't quite understand?
6. If you do, how do you think that helps (you/them)?

#### III. Culture

1. Do you focus a lot on the target culture in class?
2. If you do, do you find that useful?
3. Do you use home culture to explain (or compare with target culture) some cultural situations (i.e. eating etiquettes, dressing ...), proverbs...etc. when (learners/you) seem not to understand what (you have/teacher) said?
4. Do you usually (ask your students to) find an equivalent idiom, proverb or saying in (their/your) first language?

5. Some people say that using first language in class should not be permitted because the more you use first language in class; the more you lose control over what you are supposed to teach. What do you think about that?

6. Some other people say also that none of the home cultural aspects should be used in class because the more you refer to students' culture; the more you tend to neglect the target culture. What do you think about that?

#### APPENDIX B. ALGERIAN TEACHER AND LEARNERS INTERVIEW AFTER TEACHING

##### Interview guide for (teachers/learners)

This interview is meant to discover some point of views of how second language (teachers/learners) think of the process of learning a second language in general and idioms in particular. Their point of views would enhance the process of teaching and learning. For participants who gave their consent to participate in this study, all anonymity/ethical issues have been explained to them. The interview will take approximately 20 to 30 minutes.

##### I. Language

1. Which strategy you think was more effective?
2. How was (students' reaction in each group) to the new lessons (i.e. did you like the new lessons/which group was active and willing to learn more)?
3. Did you face any difficulty in (teaching/learning) idioms (in both groups)? What was it?
4. What kind of teaching approach are you adopting in class (i.e. is it communicative approach, audio lingual approach ... etc.)? (For teachers only)
5. Which strategy you think may reflect the teaching approach you are following in class? Why? (For teachers only)
6. What do you think of culture in language teaching, is it a must? Then, what sort of culture are you looking at in (teaching/learning)?

##### II. Idioms

1. In what context do you think idioms should be embedded in to facilitate the process of (teaching/learning) them?
2. Some idioms were embedded in historical cultural contexts, others were embedded in religious cultural contexts and some others simulated the environment, which one of these cultural bits was very effective in terms of comprehension and accessibility of idiom's meaning when you (taught/learnt) them (in group one and two)?

##### III. Culture

1. Did you feel the necessity to elaborate a little bit on the cultural context used in those idioms or was it clear for (learners/you)? Why?
2. Were you somewhat obliged to use (learners' home culture in target culture group)? If you were, is that helping learners with something? (For teachers only)
3. Some teachers claim that we need to move forward from target culture teaching based-practice and we need to balance that with home culture based-practice? What do you think?

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# Processing of English Sentences Consisting of Frequency Adverbs by Japanese EFL Learners

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**Abstract**—Previous studies suggest that, adverbs can have comparatively free positioning to that of other parts of speech in English language. This study focused on frequency adverbs which represent number of occurrences of an action or a condition. Since different positioning may produce relatively different meaning (or focus) of given sentences, processing of such sentences is assumed to be complex especially for L2 learners. Therefore, this study investigated how L2 learners process English sentences consisting of adverbs in different positions. The main goal of this study is to reveal which information-structure is mostly identified among Japanese EFL learners. A sentence-correctness-decision task was conducted with a group of 30 students. Stimuli were selected via a free-production written task. The data were analyzed using SPSS statistics with repeated measures (i.e., ANOVAs). A simple comparison between alternative ordering showed that, the sentences consisting of adverbs in between-positioning were processed faster to that of initial-positioning, assumable due to the different information flow. Thus, according to this study, English sentences consisting of frequency adverbs with the between-positioning [S (A (VO))] is likely to possess a high acceptability among Japanese EFL learners to that of initial-positioning sentences [A (S (VO))].

**Index Terms**—English frequency adverbs, Japanese EFL students, initial-positioning, between-positioning, information structure

## I. INTRODUCTION

Generally, English language disallows flexibility in word order (Karimi, 2003). Though, some previous studies suggest that adverbs, among other parts of speech, illustrate relatively different positioning, however, not exclusively free (Dehham, 2014; Ogura et al., 1997; White, 1991 among others). This flexibility of positioning is expected producing potential process-ability problems especially for second language learners (i.e., EFL learners). Thus, the main purpose of this research is set to reveal Japanese EFL learners' processing mechanism of English sentences consisting of adverbs where word order is said to be comparatively inconsistent. In addition, a secondary goal is set to seek if there is any identical tendency in processing between L1 & L2, since L1's involvement cannot totally be mitigated especially in acquisition and also in processing (Pienemann, 1998). L2 learners are experiencing difficulties in adverb acquisition and mastering notably from two aspects; flexible positioning and intervention of L1. Previous studies (Dehham, 2014; White, 1991), have surveyed EFL and ESL students' usage of English sentences consisting of adverb expressions utilizing questionnaires and grammaticality judgment tasks. Although such tasks provide information whether learners have properly acquired expressions consisting of adverbs, evidence on processing mechanism cannot be acquired directly due to methodological issues. Thus, this study aims to contribute evidence on processing mechanism from a psycholinguistic view. In particular, this study focuses on the processing mechanism of Japanese EFL learners.

In the followings, section 2 will provide in-depth information on the main concepts of this study. This section will deliver information on the word orders of Japanese and English languages with relation to sentences consisting of adverbs. Next, the third section, methodology, will provide experiments' details on data gathering, analysis and findings etcetera. Finally, the last section, conclusion, will provide an overall summary of the study.

## II. CLASSIFICATION AND WORD ORDER OF ADVERBS IN L1 (JAPANESE LANGUAGE) AND L2 (ENGLISH LANGUAGE)

This research intends to reveal the mostly identified word order for English sentences consisting of adverbs. First, it is important to grasp a basic idea on adverb classification and positioning in English language and Japanese language. Thus, next part will provide information on classification and positioning of both English and Japanese in this regard, and look in to the information of sentence structures consisting of frequency adverbs.

### A. Classification and Positioning of English Adverbs

There are two main important facets about English adverbs. First, adverbs classification indicates a complicated pattern in its nature. Second, adverb placement in English language is relatively free due to its multiple functioning (Cambridge dictionary, (2017); Ogura et al., 1997; White, 1991). According to Cambridge dictionary, (2017), adverbs can modify nouns, verbs, adjectives, other adverbs, noun phrases, clauses, and sentences. Following, a study conducted by Ogura et al., (1997) reports that, adverbs can be classified into 41 different classes according to grammatical functions, meaning, and their default positioning. For example, according to grammatical functions, adverbs can be



utilized as adjuncts, subjuncts etc. while meaning may illustrate a process, time, space etc. The default positioning is said to be initial, medial, end, pre & post. Furthermore, White, (1991), similarly reports that, despite semantic and syntactic restrictions, English adverbs still demonstrate relatively free positioning. For example, although English adverbs do not appear between the verb and its direct object (SVAO<sup>1</sup>), they may occur at the end of the verb phrase (VP) as in 'Kanda writes his paper slowly (SVOA)', pre-subject position as in 'slowly he got sick (ASVO)', between the subject and the verb as in 'Kanda often reads books (SAVO)' etcetera. Accordingly, these studies are evidential that, English adverbs demonstrate a complex condition. As a result, it has produced many difficulties for L2 learners during acquisition. For instance, in a study conducted by Dehham, (2014), Iraqi EFL college students have illustrated difficulty in acquiring adverbs due to the complexity in syntax and semantic structures. Results of this study suggest that, frequency adverbs tend to produce higher difficulties for Iraqi EFL students. Following, White, (1997), also reports that, alternative positioning causes potential learnability problems in acquiring English adverbs for EFL students (which also includes a parametric difference between L1 (French) and L2 (English) as another cause). The present study set a secondary goal to seek if there is any similar tendency on L1 & L2 processing. Thus, a brief explanation of Japanese sentences consisting adverbs is provided in the next section.

### B. Classification and Positioning of Japanese Adverbs

The nature of classification and positioning of Japanese adverbs are identical to that of English adverbs, in which they also demonstrate a diverse classification and relatively free in word order positioning (Koizumi and Tamaoka, 2006; Namba and Tamaoka, 2014). Koizumi and Tamaoka, (2006), has investigated the canonical positions for four kinds of adverbial expressions (i.e., modal, time, manner, and resultative) via a sentence plausibility judgment task. This study provides evidence that, sentences consisting of modal adverbs resulted a possible ASOV order while time adverbs resulted with two possibilities; ASOV and SAOV as illustrated in 1a & 1b. However, manner and resultative adverbs have demonstrated SAOV and SOAV orders in the same regards. According to this study, the canonical order for Japanese time adverbs remains ambiguous and requires a further inquiry in order to reveal which order is mostly accepted. However, it provides a starting point for the present research with significant evidence.

1. a. しばしば サラは 映画を みる  
 shiabshiba sara-wa eiga-wo miru  
 Often (Adv) Sarah (Sub, anim) movie (Obj, inam) watch (V, PRE)  
 Sarah often watch movies.
- b. サラは しばしば 映画を みる  
 sara-wa shiabshiba eiga-wo miru  
 Sarah (Sub, anim) Often (Adv) movie (Obj, inam) watch (V, PRE)  
 Sarah often watch movies.

### C. Alternative Ordering and Disconnection of Information Cues

The study conducted by White, (1991), has experimented focusing on two kinds of English adverbs; frequency (i.e., time) and manner. According to this study, the order of these two types illustrates a variety of positions in a sentence as ASVO, SAVO, SVOA, but not SVAO. On the other hand, the study conducted by Koizumi and Tamaoka, (2006), reports that, Japanese sentences consisting of time adverbs can have a higher acceptancy in either ASOV or SAOV as possible word orders. Thus, despite the conventional canonical word orders of English and Japanese languages which are different, this study assumes that, frequency adverbs demonstrate identical movements in positioning manner [as in (A(S(VO))) and (S(A(VO))) orders in English, and (A(S(OV))) and (S(A(OV))) in Japanese]. It is said that, L1 interferences can't totally be mitigated during acquisition either in ESL or EFL situations (Brown, 1998; Pienemann, 1998). Similarly, L1 can intervene L2 processing as extended similarities or over generalizations. For instance, the processability theory (proposed by Pienemann, 1998), provides information on L1 role during L2 processing stating, despite L1 transfer is severely constrained by the hierarchical procedures, still L1 features and structures will be transferred if the procedures appear to emerge in some corresponding points, which in turn suggest a probability of L1's interferences in L2 processing. Accordingly, this study assumes that, the typological aspects between Japanese and English may lead the learners to promptly identify one of the alternative orders.

The alternative positioning of both languages raises an interesting point of sentence's information flow. First, English language is generally known to possess a Subject-Verb-Object canonical order while Japanese language possesses a Subject-Object-Verb canonical order (Hopp, 2005; Iwasaki, 2003). It is identical that both languages format sentence structure with subject noun (either an animate / inanimate) proceeding a predicate [Verb (action), Object (goal/instrument)] / Object (goal/instrument), Verb (action)]. This produces a chain of information in a manner where an actor is mainly focused, and a secondary attention is given to the predicate phrase (either action + goal/ instrument, or goal/ instrument + action respectively). The canonical SVO and SOV in both languages are widely accepted by many native and non-native speakers due to this information flow. Since adverbs positioning is said to be unrestricted in

<sup>1</sup> The abbreviation stands for Subject-Verb-Adverb-Object.

accordance with previous studies (Cambridge Dictionary, 2017; Ogura et al., 1997; Urano, 2012; White, 1991), this study assumes that, this chain of information breaks its structure when an adverb is placed with extra information in either word order as in [English (Actor, Time (Action + Goal/Instrument)) / Japanese (Actor, Time (Goal/Instrument + Action))], or [English (Time, Actor (Action + Goal/Instrument)) / Japanese (Time, Actor (Goal/Instrument + Action))]. This extra load of information may trigger for a longer processing time in comprehension. The question is, which structure is heaviest for processing? As aforementioned, this study assumes that both languages are identical in adverb positioning manner as in [A (S(VO))] & [A (S(OV))] where an adverb is placed in the initial position of the sentence (hereafter, initial-positioning), and in [S (A (VO))] & [S (A (OV))] where an adverb is placed between the subject and the predicate (hereafter, between-positioning). Based on this assumption, there is a high possibility that, processing between L1 & L2 maybe identical. Needless to mention, the structural complexity and information flow of both word orders have their different points in favor. Thus, this study conducted an experiment to discover which structure will uphold by the Japanese EFL learners. The details are explained in the methodology section.

### III. METHODOLOGY

The main purpose of this survey is to discover which information-structure (initial-positioning / between-positioning) is mostly identified by Japanese EFL learners during processing. Two experiments (EX#1 & EX#2) were conducted to gather data. First, EX#1 is conducted focusing on English frequency adverbs. This will provide evidence on which structure that Japanese EFL learners process faster. Second, EX#2 is conducted focusing on Japanese frequency adverbs as referential with the expectations of seeking evidence on any relativity. The details are explained below.

#### A. EX#1 Processing of English Sentences Consisting of Frequency Adverbs

Since alternative positions are consisted with different information flow, EX#1 is limitedly focused on the processing of two different word order patterns. The results of this experiment will provide the answers to the main research question of this survey. The details are explained followingly.

##### 1. Materials

Adverbs applied for the main examination were selected via a free-production written task conducted by 10 Japanese language native speakers who are university students. Participants were instructed to produce 5 sentences consisting of frequency adverbs. However, no instructions were provided on which adverbs they should use. A total of 50 sentences consisting of frequency adverbs were collected as a result. Four adverbs were selected based on higher frequency; definite frequency adverbs [always (26%) and every day (18%)], indefinite frequency adverbs [usually (12%) and normally (8)], others (36)], which three were identical with the study conducted by White, (1991). A total of 32 stimuli were built for EX#1. Stimuli for correct 'Yes' responses and correct 'No' responses were built in order to avoid side effects of repetition. Only the responses for correct 'Yes' stimuli were taken into main analysis. This study employed the word orders SAVO and ASVO as proposed by White, (1991). For example, the SAVO order for selected four frequency adverbs are presented as [Tom always reads books, Sarah everyday eats pizza, Neel usually drinks coffee, Michel normally wears jeans]. As a result, two word order patterns were built for each adverb; for SAVO as Tom (Sub, anim) always (Adv) comes (V+PRE) home (Obj, inam), for ASVO as always (Adv) Tom (Sub, anim) comes (V+PRE) home (Obj, inam). Thus, a total of 8 sentences were prepared for actual testing. Then, another 8 sentences were prepared as dummy sentences which were not included in the main analysis. Additionally, another 16 sentences were used to prepare correct 'No' responses stimuli in the same manner. As a result, the experiment was prepared consisting of 32 stimuli. A counter-balanced designed is applied to avoid repetition of the stimuli.

##### 2. Participants

A group of thirty EFL learners (Japanese language native speakers) took part in the present experiment (19females & 11males). The ages were ranged from 17 years 2 months to 20 years 6 months with an average age been 18 years 6 months on the day of testing. The English proficiency level was equivalent to points 45 - 60 of TOEFL IBT scores.

##### 3. Method of Survey

The experiment was conducted on a laptop computer using DMDX program (version 5.1.0.0). All the participants were given a practice trial before the actual experiment with different stimuli. The stimuli were randomly presented as a wave sound file for 600 milliseconds after the appearance of red marked 'LISTEN' which indicated attention prior to the stimuli presentation. Participants were instructed to respond either 'Yes' or 'No' by pressing either left shift key for correct 'Yes' answers or right shift key for correct 'No' answers as quickly and as accurately as possible to determine whether the sentence shown on the screen is 'acceptable' or not, meaning whether presented stimuli are at use or not. The reaction times (RTs) and error rates (ERs) are illustrated in table 1. Only correct 'yes' responses will be taken into considerations for discussion.

##### 4. Results

Table 1 depicts overall results for processing English sentences consisting of adverb expressions in two different word orders. The table illustrates the differences on reaction times and error rates respectively.

**Table1. Reaction times and error rates for English sentences consisting of adverbs**

Response Type	Adverb position	Sentence Type	Reaction times (ms)		Error rates (%)	
			M	SD	M	SD
'Yes'	<i>Initial</i>	A-S-V-O	4008	1103	34.17%	33.14%
Responses	<i>Between</i>	S-A-V-O	3248	1693	28.33%	30.61%
	<i>Difference on reaction times</i>		<b>761</b>			
'No'	<i>Initial</i>	A-S-V-O	3732	1569	27.50%	31.72%
Responses	<i>Between</i>	S-A-V-O	3548	1593	48.33%	32.12%

Note : M stands for mean. SD stands for standard deviation.

The results suggest that, for correct 'yes' responses, SAVO ordered sentences were processed faster in participant analysis [ $F(1,29)=7.588, p<.01$ ] and item analysis [ $F(1, 3)=12.653, p<.05$ ], while correct 'no' responses illustrated no significance in the same regard [ $F(1,29)=0.27, n.s$ ] and [ $F(1,3)=9.289, p<n.s$ ]. However, the error rates depicted the reverse in error rates, where correct 'yes' responses illustrated no significance both in participant analysis [ $F(1,29)=0.582, p<n.s$ ] and item analysis [ $F(1,3)=1.000, p<n.s$ ] while correct 'no' responses has resulted with significant difference between ASVO order and SAVO order [ $F(1,29)=10.042, p<.01$ ] and [ $F(1,3)=30.857, p<.05$ ].

#### B. EX#2 Processing of Japanese Sentences Consisting of Frequency Adverbs

An additional experiment is conducted to seek information if the processing illustrates any congruence between L1 & L2. The details are explained below.

##### 1. Materials

A total of 32 stimuli were built for EX#2. Japanese stimuli were created based on English adverbs; Always いつも (itsumo), everyday まいにち (mainichi), usually たいてい (taitei), normally つうじょう (tsuujou). This study applied the word orders ASOV and SAOV as presumed by Koizumi & Tamaoka, (2006). First, a sentence consisting of an adverb with a transitive verb was built according to ASOV order as いつも太郎は家へ帰る itsumo (Adv) tarou-ha (Sub, anim) uchi-he (Obj, inam) kaeru (V+DIF) meaning 'Taro always comes home'. Then, SAOV order is derived based on above ASOV sentence as tarou-ha (Sub, anim) itsumo (Adv) uchi-he (Obj, inam) kaeru (V+DIF<sup>2</sup>). As a result, 8 stimuli were built for correct 'Yes' responses. Another, 8 stimuli were built for the correct 'No' responses. Then, another 16 stimuli were created as dummy sentences. As a result, a total of 32 sentences were prepared for the examination of Japanese adverb word order. It should be noted that, since the Japanese stimuli are based on English stimuli, the number of words and phrases remain identical. A counter-balanced design was applied as list 1 and list 2, in order to avoid effects of repetition. Reaction times and error rates were recorded simultaneously.

##### 2. Participants & method

Refer to EX#1 information.

##### 3. Results

Table 2 summarizes the results for processing Japanese sentences consisting of adverb expressions. The reaction times and error rates are displayed respectively.

**Table2. Reaction times and error rates for Japanese sentences consisting of adverbs**

Response Type	Adverb position	Sentence Type	Reaction times (ms)		Error rates (%)	
			M	SD	M	SD
'Yes'	<i>Initial</i>	A-S-O-V	4179	1260	20.83%	26.33%
Responses	<i>Between</i>	S-A-O-V	3532	1185	25.00%	25.43%
	<i>Difference on reaction times</i>		<b>647</b>			
'No'	<i>Initial</i>	A-S-O-V	3716	1707	39.17%	38.66%
Responses	<i>Between</i>	S-A-O-V	3302	1889	31.67%	37.10%

Note : M stands for mean. SD stands for standard deviation.

The results for EX#2 conversely suggest that, for correct 'yes' responses, SAOV ordered sentences were processed faster only in participant analysis [ $F(1, 29) = 6.483, p<.05$ ] but not in item analysis [ $F(2, 3) = 6.917, p<n.s$ ] while correct 'no' responses has resulted with no significance in the same regard [ $F(1, 29) = 0.749, p<n.s$ ] and [ $F(2, 3) = 3.193, p<n.s$ ]. Error rates on the other hand, depicted no significant difference either in correct 'yes' responses [ $F(1,$

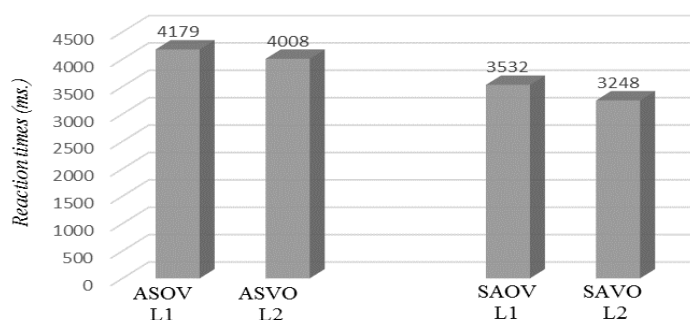
<sup>2</sup> DIF stands for dictionary form.

29) = 1.000,  $p < n.s$ ] and [F2 (1, 3) = 0.122,  $n.s$ ], or correct 'no' responses [F1 (1, 29) = 0.710,  $p < n.s$ ] and [F2 (1, 3) = 2.400,  $p < n.s$ ].

### C. Discussion

This study examined the acceptability of different word order for the sentences consisting of adverb expressions in English language and Japanese language via two experiments. The primary goal was to seek information on the most acceptable word order for English sentences consisting of frequency adverbs among Japanese EFL learners. Experiment#1 was conducted to gather evidence for this purpose. The results provided evidence that; English sentences consisting of frequency adverbs with the between-positioning [S (A (VO))] were processed faster (with 761ms difference in this case) to that of initial-positioning [A (S (VO))]. A previous study conducted by White, 1991, has suggested that, native speakers prefer sentences where subject noun proceeds the adverb. Results of the present study resembles the idea presented by White, (1991), between-positioning (SAVO) word order illustrated comparatively a high acceptance among Japanese EFL learners. Following, the results of EX#2 for Japanese sentences consisting of adverb expressions resemble the results to that of EX#1, between-positioning sentences (SAOV) have processed faster to that of initial-positioning (ASOV) ordered sentences. However, these results are somewhat contrastive to the data provided by Koizumi and Tamaoka, (2006), which suggested that, the Japanese time adverbs resulted with two possibilities; ASOV and SAVO.

The results of this study also reconfirmed that, for both English and Japanese languages, the conventional canonical word order; S (A) V O for English, and S (A) O V, remains unchanged despite excelled information. As aforementioned in section 2.2, although the alternative positioning provided information in a different flow, participants have reacted faster to the order where an actor proceeds the sentence in both languages; [English (Actor, Time (Action + Goal/Instrument)) and Japanese (Actor, Time (Goal/Instrument + Action))], than to the other where an adverb provides a major focus to the whole sentence as in [English (Time, Actor (Action + Goal/Instrument)) / Japanese (Time, Actor (Goal/Instrument + Action))]. These results also suggest that, human's sentence processing tend to prioritize animate nouns (human in the present case) compared to inanimate nouns (frequency adverb in this case).



**Fig.1 Processing difference between L1 (JAP) & L2 (ENG)**

This study setup a secondary goal as to seek if there is any similar tendency on L1 & L2 processing. Experiment#2 was conducted, first to gather information on L1 sentence processing with the same regards, and then to examine if there is any relationship between the processing mechanism. Figure 1 illustrates a simple comparison between L1 & L2 processing differences pertaining correct 'Yes' responses for both initial-positioning and between-positioning. The reaction times for correct 'Yes' responses in tables 1 & 2 are evidential that, both English and Japanese sentence processing show an identical tendency on having a subject noun proceeding to an adverb and then a predicate followed. A further analysis using ANOVAs was conducted to see if the processing times demonstrate any statistical significance between processing times. The results showed that, for English ASVO and Japanese ASOV word orders, reaction times were insignificant both in participant analysis [F1 (1,29) = 1.184,  $n.s$ ] and in item analysis [F2 (1,3) = .040,  $n.s$ ], while for English SAVO and Japanese SAVO word orders, reaction times were insignificant only in participant analysis [F1 (1,29) = .824,  $n.s$ ] but significant in item analysis [F2 (1,3) = 61.162,  $p > .05$ ]. This suggests that, the Japanese EFL learners of this study illustrate no difference in processing L1 and L2 sentences consisting of frequency adverbs with initial-positioning. As for the reaction times on between-positioning sentences, since participants' analysis showed no significant difference, it is likely that these learners consequently possess similar characteristic in processing mechanism to that of initial- poisoning, though requires a further inquiry with additional stimuli as the item analysis confirmed slight difference. Overall, it is difficult to draw any exact assumptions on the relation between L1 processing and L2 processing mechanism as noted in processability theory (Pienemann, 1998). Moreover, the reaction times between L1 processing and L2 processing of this study illustrated an unprecedented phenomenon, (usually L1 reaction times are faster comparatively to the L2 reaction times). It can be assumed that, the participants required longer to process Japanese sentences consisting of frequency adverbs due to the fact of free word ordering in Japanese language

as also noted in previous studies e.g., Koizumi and Tamaoka, 2006; Namba and Tamaoka, 2014. However, it is necessary to conduct further research on this regards in order to reveal hidden factors.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

This study was conducted with the main purpose of revealing the most identified information-structure for English frequency adverb word order among Japanese EFL learners during processing. An experiment was conducted having 30 Japanese native speakers utilizing a computer-based program. The main analysis was focused on the reaction times of the processing of alternative ordering. Two different word orders were examined; initial-positioning and between-positioning. The results suggested that, Japanese EFL learners process the sentences faster with a Subject-Adverb-Object-Verb order to that of Adverb-Subject-Object-Verb order proving sentences initializing with animate nouns can easily be processed. Thus, according to this study, English sentences consisting of frequency adverbs with the between-positioning [S (A (VO))] is likely to possess a high acceptability among Japanese EFL learners to that of initial-positioning sentences [A (S (VO))].

An additional experiment (EX#2) was also conducted to seek information on any relation between the processing mechanism of L1 & L2. The results of EX#2 also depicted a tendency to that of L2 processing having the between-positioning sentences [S (A (VO))] processed faster to that of initial-positioning sentences [A (S (VO))]. However, a general tendency on the mean times cannot be revealed due to unprecedented data between L1 & L2 processing times.

Although the main question of this research is answered, there were number of limitations in methodological issues. First, the examined number of English frequency adverbs can be pointed out as a major limitation. This study only was focused on four frequency adverbs; definite frequency, (always and every day), indefinite frequency (usually and normally). A further study with a higher number of frequency adverbs including with other types is necessary to generalize the conclusions drawn in this study. Second, this study could not examine participants with different English knowledge due to unavoidable circumstances. Therefore, it may also be important to multiply the number of participants focusing on English language ability as beginner, middle, advanced etcetera. Furthermore, figure 1 is evidential that the participants have taken longer to process L1 sentences to that of L2 sentences. It is generally known that processing of L1 sentences usually take shorter comparatively to the L2 sentences. A primary factor for this phenomenon can be pointed out as the free word order phenomenon in Japanese language. In addition, the order of stimuli presentation can also be considered as another gauge, however, needs further examination.

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# The Impact of the CEFR on Teaching and Testing English in the Local Context

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**Abstract**—The paper presents communicative language teaching and testing in Slovakia. In the late 1990s, Slovakia as many other Central and Eastern European countries being involved in piloting the first draft of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment (2001) started the reform of the school-leaving examination to change the traditional approach of testing structural aspects of foreign languages. The reform was induced by foreign language teachers who were not satisfied with the imbalance between teaching and testing as using books published in Great Britain changed their attitude to teaching. Based on a long-term study, the author of the article will discuss problematic issues concerning the changes in teaching and testing, focusing on the impact of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and its model of language use. The article underlines the importance of being familiar with CEFR descriptors and illustrative samples in order to implement the CEFR effectively. The study reveals the extent to which the CEFR has generated change and how the framework might be further exploited to improve the effectiveness of teaching and testing English.

**Index Terms**—the CEFR, an action-oriented approach, communicative teaching, communicative testing, language competence

## I. INTRODUCTION

In Slovakia, English Language Teaching (ELT) went through several significant changes in the 1990s as English used to be taught in the same way as Russian (an obligatory language in the country) when Slovak teachers focused too much on ‘native-like’ pronunciation, memorising isolated words and grammatical patterns similar to English teachers in other countries of Central and Eastern Europe (politically designated as the socialist block). Traditional teaching of target languages was oriented on teachers rather than students who were passive observers of teachers’ explanations and frightened of being corrected all the time when they wanted to say. The safest way of learning was memorising the material presented by a teacher. Despite the fact that the country had a uniformed system in which everything was managed centrally, for example, syllabuses, methods, the same course books, learning outcomes were not measured centrally. The report concerning the reform of language examinations in Central and Eastern Europe describes oral testing in schools as based on centrally devised topics that enabled teachers to set questions reflecting their own teaching and omitting entire content areas without any external check (West & Crighton, 1999).

In the mid-1990s, 11 countries participated in the regional conference in Vilnius focused on secondary education. The participants came to the conclusion that teaching should meet the demands of the marketplace and competence-based skills should be measured more reliably following the trends (throughout Europe) towards convergence in the requirements for European school-leaving qualifications.

In 1991 the outcome of the Rüşchlikon intergovernmental symposium ‘Transparency and Coherence in Language Learning in Europe’ was the setting up of an authoring group and an international working party. The authoring group made up of Joe Shiels, the head of the Language Policy Division, and John Trim, Brian North and Daniel Coste focused on language teaching and testing as the concern was on language education with the following key aims: to establish a useful tool for communication enabling practitioners in diverse contexts to talk about objectives and language levels in a coherent way and to encourage practitioners to reflect upon their current practice as far as objectives are concerned and in tracking the headway of learners in language acquisition with the aim of improving language teaching and assessment all over Europe (Cambridge ESOL, 2011).

The Common European Framework of Reference: learning, teaching, assessment (Council of Europe, 2001) introduced a general model of language use, based on an action-oriented approach. The traditional four skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing) were replaced by communicative language activities, such as reception (aural and visual), production (oral and written), interaction (oral and written) and mediation, completed by strategies that are important for language processes and necessary for accomplishing the language performances. In ELT, approaches to defining language proficiency are influenced by theories of language and language teaching. Since the 1970s, various models of language competence, proposed by a number of applied linguists such as Carole and Swain (1981), Bachman (1990), Weir (2005), Heyworth (2009), etc., have influenced teaching and testing English. According to the CEFR (2001), the learner’s competences comprise general competences (and communicative language competences (linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic) that include intercultural competence, strategic competence and existential competence.

The convention on recognition of qualifications (Council of Europe, 1997) became a challenge for Central- and Eastern-European countries developing their new democracies, in which learning languages, especially English, became a priority for the governments as it was demanded by parents who could see future of their children in mastering languages appropriately, accurately and naturally. In Slovakia, the pilot version of the CEFR (1996) encouraged English teachers to change their approach to teaching English, and subsequently to testing.

The model of language use presented by the CEFR is based on the action-oriented approach as well as socio-cognitive approach, highlighting the cognitive processes in language learning and use as well as the role of social context in how language is learned and used (Weir, 2005). Language user's developing competence reflects various kinds of cognitive processes, strategies and knowledge. Any time a language learner is expected to perform a task, he needs to use language that is contextualised in a certain domain. To complete a task, a learner needs to be engaged in language activities, which requires learner's cognitive skills. This leads to learning. Language activity is based on using language naturally – integrating the four skills (reading, listening, speaking and writing) in their integration – to solve problems in real life situations.

Common reference levels are articulated in Can Do statements, which enable language learners to be assessed or self-assess a level of proficiency. As descriptors in the common framework scale were suggested to be context-free in order to accommodate generalizable results from different specific contexts, Slovakia decided to incorporate them into the newly-developed national curriculum, according to which English school-leaving examination tests were expected to be designed at two levels: B1 and B2. On the other hand, descriptors in the common framework scale need to be context-relevant, relatable to or translatable into every relevant context – and appropriate for the function they are used for in that context. Since the CEFR is not language or context specific and does not include the checklists of learning points or lists of specific language features, it is necessary to adapt its use to fit a particular language and context (Cambridge ESOL, 2011). The descriptors used in the Slovak national curriculum are formulated as Can Do statements and influenced the development of the test specification for school-leaving examinations in English, taking into account the local context and educational history.

## II. THE STUDY (METHODOLOGY)

The process of reform in teaching and testing English was initiated from the bottom as Slovak teachers of English using English course books, printed in Great Britain, changed their way of teaching, focusing more on communicative language activities. The teachers were intensively trained by lectures from the British Council or by local teacher trainers who were engaged in the projects related to the CEFR.

The first test in English was designed in 1997 and piloted on March 12, 1997 at 40 secondary grammar schools (1,000 students). The results were presented at a conference in Trnava on April 12, 1997. English teachers from all over the country participated in the conference that was very well supported by head teachers who became involved in the process very actively and due to whom, later, the reform got an enormous attention of the authorities. The achievements, supported by statistical analyses, raised national discussion on the necessity of introducing a valid and reliable examination in English (Béřešová, 2005).

Since then, each year a valid and reliable test in English was designed, which convinced the Ministry of Education that such a process required the changing of language policy in the country, which happened in 2004, when the Ministry of Education officially recognised language tests as part of the school-leaving examination. In spite of several changes that occurred in legislation from 2004 till now, it is possible to conclude that students' language competence in English is tested in the language tests that are available at three CEFR levels (B1, B2 and C1). Their structure and content is different as well as a number of items, taking into account the level of proficiency.

TABLE 1  
A COMPARISON OF THREE EXAMINATIONS IN ENGLISH AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF PROFICIENCY

Level	Listening	Language in Use	Reading
B1	20	20	20
B2	20	40	20
C1	30	30	30

As Table 1 shows three tests in English have the same sections concerning listening, language in use (grammar and vocabulary) and reading. Each language skill is measured as authentically as possible, using authentic texts and realistic tasks. Authentic texts are chosen due to their level of difficulty and are accompanied by the items that are attempted to be related to the CEFR Can Do statements.

To justify using the CEFR while constructing national language examinations or tests, a comparison of different tests designed for local purposes seemed to be logical. The first steps were taken in identifying constructs in particular test sections in English. Working actively with item-writers in these countries as well as searching for exact English tests on the ministerial websites, the analysis of four different tests from four different European countries such as Croatia, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia became reasonable as these countries have gone through similar developmental stages and used to have quite a similar educational history. All these countries test English at two levels: B1 and B2, only Slovakia introduced a C1 test in 2017 for those learners who study at bilingual schools.



TABLE 2  
ENGLISH TESTS AT LEVEL B2 – FOUR EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Country	Listening	Reading	Writing	Language in Use
Croatia	4 tasks	5 tasks	1 task	-
Hungary	3 tasks	4 tasks	2 tasks	4 tasks
Slovakia	3 tasks	3 tasks	1 task	3 tasks
Slovenia	2 tasks	3 tasks	2 tasks	3 tasks

Table 2 depicts slight differences between the tests of the mentioned four countries. The Croatian reading part consists of 5 tasks, including two tasks measuring language in use. Their English tests do not include an extra section that concerns to test grammar and vocabulary. Other countries use cloze tests based on gap-filling of functional words (rational cloze) as the learners need to process the text at various levels (e.g. grammar, discourse) in order to fill in the gaps, whereas the Croatian cloze test focuses on notional words, which needs a very demanding process of test design and choice of a proper text (Bérešová, 2017).

More recognisable differences are in testing productive skills. The tasks for writing are officially announced, but in some countries the students' performances are assessed directly at schools by two independent English teachers (e.g. Slovakia). In other countries, despite the fact that papers are marked by local teachers, quality of this process is assured that marking is done together, led and checked by one leading assessor.

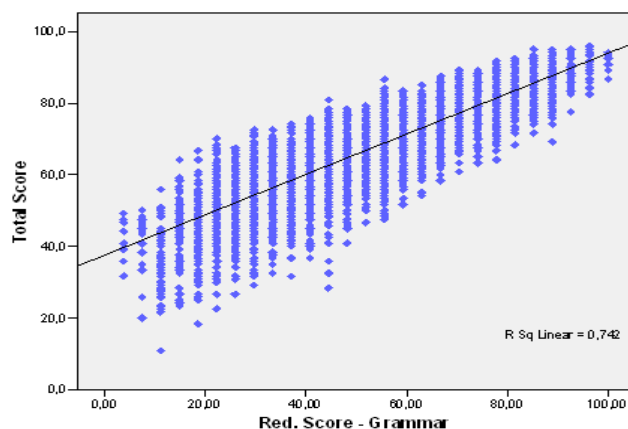
Due to the thoroughly written catalogue of requirements, Slovenian secondary-school students are trained to write argumentative essays and their tests comprise two tasks. The first task can be selected from the presented topics. The second task is based on a B2 descriptor related to reading contemporary literary prose. Therefore, students are given a list of books they are expected to read, being aware of the fact that they must be prepared to express their opinions or comments on the main characters' attitudes or actions, each time with reference to the exact book (Bérešová, 2017). Other three countries do not officially support reading books in the original language, which likely results in limited vocabulary of their English learners.

### III. THE FINDINGS

Comparing the tests designed in four above-mentioned countries, it shows that texts chosen for 18-19-year olds contain topics that are not attractive for teenagers. The tests still need trained professionals (item writers) that should be systematically led towards quality and improvement. The support from the ministries of education is a necessity, as all the processes related to test development are money consuming. Other issues that cost money are statisticians whose job is closely connected with training item-writers to help them avoid problematic issues either in testing techniques or language. Quality of English should be assured by highly educated language professionals, both local teachers of English and native speakers working as language teachers or acting as teacher trainers.

Comparing tasks design revealed that the same section names cover different constructs. For example, the test constructed in Croatia included one task concerning testing vocabulary, despite the fact that the action-oriented approaches was adopted. Three other countries had one extra section referring to testing grammar and vocabulary. This decision is based on their local policy-makers and teachers who spend a lot of time teaching grammar and vocabulary as their goal of teaching contains fluency as well as accuracy and a B-level language user is an independent user of a particular language who needs to communicate with reasonable accuracy but still using a repertoire of frequently used patterns associated with more predictable situations at level B1 and with a high grammatical control and being able to correct his/her mistakes at level B2.

One supportive argument for including testing grammar and vocabulary seems to be regression analysis that proves the relationship between language in use scores and total scores of students' performances.



Picture 1 Total score versus language in use score - regression analysis

Picture 1 shows that the relationship between one dependent variable (total score) and one independent variable (language in use scores) is strong as the coefficient of correlation between language use in scores and students' total scores is high. This relationship is not so strong between other variables (listening comprehension and reading comprehension) when using multiple linear models in a regression analysis.

The last comparison of testing English in the above-mentioned countries reveals that testing spoken production and spoken interaction still needs a lot of reform. Speaking is tested at schools without any special check and despite the fact that teachers of English are trained to be raters and use marking criteria, the content and level of proficiency is still in hands of school teachers. Teachers' judgements of students' performances are not officially recorded as are not performances of students. There is no evidence about objectivity and fairness or ethical behaviour of raters.

Despite the fact that the CEFR was supplemented by the Manual called Relating Language Examinations and Tests to the CEFR: Learning, teaching, assessment (2009), in which a set of five inter-related stages of the linking process are clearly presented and supplemented by professionally compiled different approaches to different aspects, many gaps are recognisable in the linking processes between the countries. These gaps can be summarized as follows:

- a lack of quality assurance in high-stakes testing in local contexts
- insufficient application of the action-oriented approach
- limited awareness of the CEFR descriptors and illustrative samples
- excessive focus on grammar and vocabulary rather than communicative language skills
- insufficient statistical data
- no training for raters
- no marking criteria.

Two issues from the list need commenting. Insufficient application of the action-oriented approach means that language teachers are aware of the philosophy that is behind the CEFR but they still focus on grammar and vocabulary too much. And when grammar and vocabulary teaching is predominant in class work, it is the focus of testing as well. Many sections of the test were intended to test communicative language skills have more tasks based on testing grammar and vocabulary, so the construct is not related to reading but to mastery of language. The second issue that needs to be mentioned is the limited awareness of the CEFR descriptors and illustrative samples that results in teachers' judgements of learners' performances based on teachers' experience in their own classes rather than done on descriptors provided in the CEFR.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

One of the most important ways of adapting the CEFR is the production of language-specific Reference Level Descriptions. These are frameworks for specific languages where the levels and descriptors in the CEFR have been mapped against the actual linguistic material (i.e. grammar, words) needed to implement the stated competences. Reference Level Descriptions are already available for several languages.

Despite the fact that descriptors are presented for various illustrative scales in communicative language activities, there are trends to link words and grammar to particular CEFR levels. English Profile helps teachers and educationalists understand what the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) means for English. It does not only describe what aspects of English are typically learned at each CEFR level, but it tells teachers, curriculum developers, course-book authors and test writers what is suitable for learning at each level (<http://www.englishprofile.org>). English Vocabulary Profile Online and English Grammar Profile Online are searchable databases are based on work that has been carried out as part of a project, supported by the Council of Europe. The aim of the project was to collect enough information on what English grammar and vocabulary is suitable for teaching and testing at each CEFR level. Despite the fact that findings are based on learners' performances all over Europe, is it possible to link words and grammatical structures to particular CEFR levels?

Users of English come from different language backgrounds, and it is easier to acquire a target language from the same language family of the mother tongue, such as Romance or Germanic languages. Therefore, words or grammatical patterns officially linked to one of the CEFR levels do not have to work properly in other languages due to other their closeness to each other or their distance from each other (when the mother tongue is completely different from the target language).

The most frequent question among language professionals is a question about consistency of common understanding of one particular level. Competence of a B2 learner in one country should be very similar to competence of a B2 learner in another country, despite the fact that they can be different in different communicative language skills as they have different preferences for their future studies or jobs. Different contexts that need to be taken into consideration are, for example, related to their age and experience. Adults and teenagers should acquire English at the same level, however, they are expected to perform effectively in their own contexts.

Apart from the introduction of an action-oriented approach, the CEFR changed the linguists' view on authenticity that is perceived with its two important aspects. While situational authenticity concerns the accuracy with which language tasks represent language activities from real life (e.g. listen to the weather forecast for Dubai), interactional authenticity refers to the naturalness of the interaction between a language user and a language task and the mental processes which accompany it (you travel to Dubai for a trip and need to know what to pack). Contextualisation plays

an important role in language learning, therefore classroom activities and test tasks and items should be presented in a particular context that influences language use and enables language learners to indicate what kind of language they intend to use is accurate, appropriate and natural.

What is more, the concept of validity has been broadened. The Council of Europe focus on the concept of validity claiming that “a test or assessment can be said to have validity to the degree that it can be demonstrated that what is actually assessed (the construct) is what, in the context concerned, should be assessed, and that the information gained is an accurate representation of the proficiency of the candidate(s) concerned” (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 177). If the construct is clearly stated in the specification of the test, then it is not possible that different areas of the language are tested.

In the process of reporting test results in terms of the CEFR, validity serves for demonstrating that what test developers or those responsible for test administration claim is true: that students of English reported at level B2 actually are B2 users of English according to the evidence test developers or those responsible for test administration can provide. The CEFR's model of language use is called socio-cognitive as language is viewed as an internalised set of competences and an externalised set of social behaviours. If the test focuses more on use, then validity evidence will relate to language actually being used for a range of communicative purposes, for example, a test for immigrants would probably weight ability to use language effectively to get their messages through or to comprehend others' messages. If the test focuses more on competence, then validity evidence will relate to cognitive skills, strategies and language knowledge that support inference about potential ability for language use, for example, a school-leaving examinations, when test tasks should engage the same skills, strategies and language knowledge that would be needed in the target language use domain.

## V. IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

A large number of European countries incorporated CEFR descriptors and an action-oriented approach into their curricula or syllabi. In testing English, item-writers are encouraged to use the CEFR scales and illustrative descriptors to construct appropriate tests that fit their context and maintain standards. In the national contexts, the views of validity in testing English and different methods of assessing validity are promoted in most European countries as tests should be validated in as many ways as possible. English language testing influences English language teaching and therefore tests of high quality can mirror current trend in teaching English. The goal of ELT in various European countries is the same – to prepare learners of English to be able to communicate in English efficiently, using accurate, appropriate and natural language.

Language users of English can differ in their profile scale skills as most students are usually better at reading rather than listening or speaking rather than writing. A great advantage of the CEFR is that skills can be tested separately and then linked to a particular level as well as skills-specific ability levels can be defined on the basis of specific-specific descriptors (Council of Europe, 2011). This philosophy has not been broadly accepted in European countries as students commonly apply for tests that are designed for a particular level, in which all the sections of the national test are obligatorily of the same level of proficiency.

Despite the fact that an action-oriented approach encourages language professionals to focus predominantly on communicative language activities and strategies, many teachers of English in different European countries do not agree about avoiding the assessment of grammar and vocabulary. They invest a lot of their time practising different grammatical patterns and words in different contexts as they have experienced how difficult it is to acquire English having a limited number of English classes per week without any other exposure to English, e.g. films in the original language. In Slovakia, all the films are dubbed and the only activity during which Slovak children do not mind being exposed to English in their free time is playing games on the Internet. Most students are engaged in communicative language activities in English three times a week during their English class.

Sharing the results achieved in the countries where native languages are quite similar to English as they are from the same family group and comparing them with the results achieved in the countries where mother tongues are different from English might provide more relevant list of words and grammatical patterns that seem to be important for Reference Level Descriptions.

However, the CEFR as an open system can be used in different local contexts. Once the national governments decide to claim that their examinations in English are aligned to the CEFR, there are several steps they need to follow:

- focusing on learning English rather than learning about English
- applying the CEFR descriptors and illustrative samples in the national curriculum design
- constructing reliable and valid tests that provide useful information about test-takers' knowledge, skills and abilities to use English appropriately in a variety of situations and settings
- benchmarking their test-takers' performance samples to the levels that were intended in designing the test
- establishing a decision rule to allocate test-takers to one of the CEFR levels on the basis of their performances in the English examination

To improve testing English, it would be useful to conduct surveys of relevant, CEFR-based tasks and items for assessing listening, reading, spoken production and interaction, and written production and interaction that would be available for those that would like to link their national examinations and tests to the CEFR. Collaboration between

national test developers or providers, and teachers of English should be more intensive to enable them to share the results achieved in local contexts and learn from each other. Examples of good practice can serve those who intend to demonstrate the validity of their claims.

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# English Language Teaching Approaches: A Comparison of the Grammar-translation, Audiolingual, Communicative, and Natural Approaches

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**Abstract**—This work compares four of the most widely used teaching approaches in foreign language contexts; Grammar-Translation, Audiolingual, Communicative, and Natural Approaches. For the comparison, seven features were considered; supporting theories, creation purpose, materials and techniques used, and the roles of teachers, students, and students' mother tongue in the teaching-learning process. A checklist was created to provide a visual representation of the characterization of the features compared in each approach. Several texts and articles were reviewed to be accurate in the characterization of the information. The results show that the characteristics of each approach were determined for the epoch in which they were proposed and promoted. Some characteristics such as the use of books overlapped all approaches compared in this work; others were unique to certain approaches, supporting theories, for instance; and, others were common in two or three approaches, as in the case of the use of conversations and the role of learners as active learners, to cite some examples.

**Index Terms**—ELT approaches, materials, techniques, ELT theories, teacher's role, students' role, mother tongue, L1

## I. INTRODUCTION

The increasing interest in understanding how languages are learned have led linguists and psychologists like Chomsky, Skinner, Krashen, Vygotsky, and others, to study and develop theories that suggest explanations for this intellectual process. These theories, in turn, have become the foundation of language teaching approaches that attempt to provide a framework for the teaching of languages such as English, in both foreign and second language contexts. The emergence of language teaching approaches date back from the early nineteenth century. In that century, linguists of western European countries proposed the Grammatical or Grammar-Translation Approach to teaching dead languages, such as Greek and Roman. Individuals learned these languages through translation of classic literature.

The nature of the Grammar-Translation Approach made it to center on the written form mainly, paying little attention to the oral form (Mondal, 2012; Canale & Swain, 1980). With the introduction of the Grammar-Translation Approach, language learning became of interest not only for European countries but for the United States as well. Indeed, as a strategy to defeat their enemies in the World War II, the U.S. government decided to supply its troop with staff fluent in different languages. Therefore, the government requested American universities to prepare foreign language programs for military, resulting in the setup of the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) in 1942. The ASTP aimed at developing the militaries' conversational proficiency in different foreign languages. This training program had a duration of around two years. However, since it was determinant in the triumph of the United States in the World War II, it had great influence in the academic community of this country. As the United States developed into a significant international power, American universities became popular and students from all over the world wanted to enroll in

their academic programs. These universities established rules for foreign students to be admitted in their programs such as the compulsory completion of English language training. These factors made way for the positioning of a new language teaching approach, the Audiolingual Approach, which was based on the methodology applied to teach the military forces (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

Soon, the field of language learning gained major interest. Linguists criticized the methodology and doubted about the efficacy of approaches that existed in that period. Therefore, they proposed new models for their teaching, emphasizing language comprehension. It is in this time then that James Asher (1969/1981) as well as Stephen Krashen (1981/1982) along with Tracy Terrell (Krashen & Terrell, 1983) introduced two teaching approaches that emphasized language comprehension. They are the Total Physical Response and the Natural Approach (NA). The latter was proposed in the late seventies by Stephen Krashen and Tracy Terrell. Krashen argued that language acquisition required meaningful and natural interaction in the target language (Krashen, 1981). He noted that speakers should be concerned with the messages they were conveying and understanding instead of the form of their utterances. In other words, the learner must be able to make the meaning clear but not necessarily be accurate in all details of grammar (Krashen and Terrell, 1983). The NA, in fact, aimed at fostering the communicative competence the same way a baby learns his mother tongue. This approach was framed within the behaviorist philosophical current (Saville-Troike, 2006) and grounded on Krashen's five hypotheses for second language learning (Krashen, 1982; Krashen & Terrell, 1983).

Another approach that emerged in those days was the Communicative Approach, also known as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). It appeared in the 1980's as a response to *Progressivism*, the philosophical current that modified the conception of the student's role in the learning process from a receptive individual to an active participant. Therefore, passive grammar-translation practices in language learning were overruled by active social interaction through CLT (Mitchell, 1994). According to Savignon and Berns (1984), it was David A. Wilkins who made one of the first contributions to CLT with his notional syllabus and its focus on linguistic function. In addition, Anthony Howatt (1984), also highly known for his experimentation with CLT, developed one of his most valuable concepts by making a clear distinction between teaching the language through structured communication and through the spontaneous discovery of the language itself. The second one being regarded as more effective than the first one.

Each of these approaches has made important contributions to second and foreign language teaching and learning. They have been proposed considering the constraints of former approaches and as a response to the needs of the society of each time. At the beginning, language was learned only as part of the common practices of wealthy people. Then, it was learned due to the necessity of survival in wartime and as an academic requirement. Times changed and language learning passed from being a privilege, survival mechanism, or an academic requirement for some people to become a practice for any person who wanted to learn a second/foreign language.

In the upcoming sections of this work, we compare seven features of four of the most widely used teaching approaches in foreign language contexts; *Grammatical*, *Audiolingual*, *Natural*, and *Communicative Approaches*. The characteristics contrasted refer to the theories that support each approach, the reason that motivated the creation of these approaches, the resources, and techniques used for teaching a class within these approaches, as well as the role of teachers, students, and the learners' mother tongue in the language teaching-learning process. For this purpose, we have created a checklist that illustrates the attributes of each approach (See Table 1), accompanied by a discussion of their features.

TABLE I  
CHECKLIST FOR COMPARING ELT APPROACHES

CRITERIA AND PARAMETERS		ELT APPROACHES			
		Grammatical	Audiolingual	Communicative	Natural
1	Supporting Theories				
	Behaviorism or Conductism		X		
	Krashen's Hypotheses about Second Language Acquisition			X	X
	Universal Grammar (Innatist)			X	X
	Socio-Cultural			X	
	None	X			
2	Creation Purpose				
	To teach classical languages	X			
	To teach people who needed to travel/study in other countries		X		
	To teach people from the army to communicate in wars		X		
	To teach European languages and allow Europeans to communicate			X	
	To teach any person willing to learn				X
3	Materials Used				
	Realia				X
	Physical objects				X
	Observable actions				X
	Books	X	X	X	X
	Audio		X	X	X
	Visuals		X	X	X
	Audio-visuals		X	X	X
	Language laboratory		X		
	Worksheets	X			
	Authentic materials			X	X
4	Techniques Used				
	Drills	X	X		
	Translation	X			
	Memorization	X	X		
	Role-plays			X	X
	Dialogues / Conversations		X	X	X
	Reading and comprehension activities			X	X
	Vocabulary exercises	X		X	
	Games			X	X
	Hands-on activities			X	
	Oral presentations			X	X
	Pair and group work			X	X
	Mind engaging tasks			X	
	Listening activities		X	X	X
5	Teacher's Role				
	The teacher is accountable for creating an appropriate environment (full of comprehensible input) for language learning				X
	The teacher is the center of the class at certain grade		X		
	The teacher is the center of the class. All the class turns around him.	X			
	The teacher is a guide.			X	
6	Student's Role				
	Active learner		X	X	X
	Passive learner	X			
	Goes from passive to active, depending on the stage of language learning				X
7	Students' mother tongue role				
	Students are banned from using it		X		
	Students can use it as a support			X	X
	It is important in the learning process	X			
	The teacher speaks only in the target language		X		

Elaborated by the authors

## II. SUPPORTING THEORIES

Behaviorism or conductism is the base for language teaching approaches such as the *Audiolingual*. This theory promotes language learning through the formation of habits in the new language. In this respect, Larsen-Freeman (2003) notes that within behaviorist approaches, teachers require students to memorize or immediately recall the target

language without thinking. "Language learning is a process of habit formation. The more often something is repeated, the stronger the habit and the greater the learning" (Larsen Freeman, 2003, pp. 43). Richards & Rodgers (2001), on their part, state that, according to the behavioral psychology, there are three important elements in learning. These elements correspond to stimuli that elicit behavior, a response caused by a stimulus, and a reinforcement when the response is appropriate.

Following other pedagogical currents, we find the *Natural* and *Communicative Approaches*, which were grounded in the innatist theory called Universal Grammar and Krashen's Five Hypotheses about Second Language Acquisition. The Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis and the Comprehensible Input Hypothesis are two of the hypothesis mainly emphasized. Universal Grammar (innatist) theory was promoted by *Avram Noam Chomsky*, who stated that a linguistic competence underlies in the Generative Grammar, a principle of rules that studies, among others, syntax, phonology, morphology, and semantics for the production of grammatical sentences of a language (White, 1989). Universal Grammar theory also points out that language notions are built-in the human brain and provide individuals with the ability to communicate. According to this theory, a child is aware of the function of nouns and verbs. It means that a child possesses notions of linguistic functions that will allow him to acquire a language (Chomsky, 1986). Humans possess an inherited mechanism; the inner grammar is innate and that is the reason why a language is learned. It was the inherent ability of an individual to understand and communicate, therefore, one of the factors that gave rise to the *Natural* and *Communicative Approaches*.

Regarding, Krashen's Hypotheses about Second Language Acquisition, the Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis states that second/foreign language learning should be identical to the way children develop skills in their native language. This hypothesis claims that acquiring a language is an unconscious process and its outcome is unconscious as well. Therefore, language acquisition includes informal and natural learning (Krashen, 1982). The other hypothesis that lays the foundation for the *Natural* and *Communicative Approaches* is the Comprehensible Input Hypothesis which points out that "we acquire a language when we understand messages when we understand what people tell us and when we understand what we read" (Krashen, 2004, p. 1). Here, the *silent period* plays an important role. In Herrera's (2010) words, language learners going through the *silent period* produce little or no language at all; within this stage, they try to internalize the language they are being exposed to – words, sounds, and patterns of the language. In other words, in the initial phase of language learning through *comprehension approach-based methods*, the learners experience a state of silence until they feel ready to start producing the language. In this case, teachers who teach a foreign language following the *Natural* and *CLT Approaches* do not promote habit formation through stimulus. On the opposite, these educators give language learners opportunities to interact with the new language in situations similar to those they experienced when developing their mother tongue.

The Sociocultural theory was also fundamental in the development of the *CLT Approach* through the concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) developed by Vygotsky (Herrera & Murry, 2016). The ZPD concept indicates that an individual possesses the ability to learn. However, to fully master a skill, said individual requires the support of a more knowledgeable peer. This concept had a high implication in the conception of how a language should be learned. Linguists took advantage of this advance in education and used interaction and communication as the foundation of language teaching. Therefore, Vygotsky's work, widely known and respected up to this date, contributed with one of the fundamental aspects that brought about the *CLT Approach*.

Each of these approaches is funded in well-known pedagogical currents developed according to leading pedagogical orientations of each time. In the case of the *Grammar-Translation Approach*, there is no evidence of the language learning theories that would support its functionality (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). This approach just followed a set of defined teaching and learning techniques, but no theories laid the foundation to prove that these techniques had a, said, neurological effect on the learner.

### III. CREATION PURPOSE

All of the language teaching approaches mentioned in this article had a specific creation purpose aimed at fulfilling the needs of the time in which they were developed. For instance, the *Grammar-Translation Approach* was created in order to teach students traditional languages and the literature written in those languages. Tradition, culture, and knowledge were highly relevant components in the early nineteenth century and previous centuries. Therefore, the Grammar-Translation method was developed to give individuals access to those components. However, different times require different measures. The 20th century arrived and World War II came along. This gave origin to *Audiolingualism*, which was intended to teach U.S. military personnel the languages spoken by the countries that fought in this war. Not many years later, the *Audiolingual Approach* was used to teach people who wanted to travel and study in the USA. Later on, the economic integration of European countries came across. In the case of the *Communicative Approach*, it was the need of communication among Europeans what allowed it to emerge (Chang, 2011; Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

Two important events took place in the 20th century. The United States became a world referent and globalization took place in this century, resulting in people willing to learn a second language, mainly English, to be up to date with the changes. Therefore, language teaching became an important area of discussion worldwide. The need of theories that truly developed the language in functional ways was required. As a result, American theorists such as Krashen and



Terrel conducted a lot of empirical studies to determine which aspects accurately influenced the acquisition of language. Their research resulted in the creation of the widely known *Natural Approach* as part of the comprehension current (Krashen and Terrel, 1983).

#### IV. MATERIALS AND TECHNIQUES USED

The nature of each approach and the techniques suggested in each of them have delimited the types of materials needed to teach either a second or foreign language following the notion. In this sense, books have been one of the most widely used materials throughout history. They have complemented the teaching-learning process of the four approaches compared in this work. In the *Grammar-Translation Approach*, the learner was expected to develop reading skills, writing skills and knowledge of grammar in the target language. To achieve this objective, learners traditionally used books as the base for the translation of words, phrases, or complete texts from one language to another (Natsir & Sanjaya, 2014). Students also used books to complete grammar and vocabulary exercises. The memorization of grammar rules and vocabulary played an important role in this approach as well. Teaching practices have changed with the past of the time; however, even though the *Grammar-Translation Approach* has been replaced by other approaches, we can still see some of its practices in EFL classes today. For instance, in some cases from time to time and in others on a daily basis, EFL teachers have their students complete worksheets containing vocabulary and grammar exercises. Teachers also prompt their students to work on the memorization of grammar structures and repetition of written structures (written drills).

The *Audiolingual Approach*, which, as we may remember, was grounded in the Behaviorist current. Practitioners of this approach viewed that repeating phrases through controlled practice of common language patterns and language chunks would lead to mastery of the target language (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). This pedagogical viewpoint made of drills a key feature of this approach (Larsen-Freeman, 2003). But unlike the *Grammar-Translation Approach*, in the *Audiolingual Approach*, the application of drills emphasized the repetition of oral structural patterns. According to Machado, Ramos, & Ramos (2016), this approach focused on improving the knowledge level of the students through the correct pronunciation and grammar, enabling the learner's capacity to respond quickly and precisely. To accomplish its goal, besides books, the *Audiolingual Approach* also utilized audio materials. Audio recordings provided learners with listening practice and books the written input. Students had to listen, read, and memorize structures, chunks of phrases, and even complete dialogues. In addition to its basic practice, these days, EFL teachers also use visuals, songs as audio materials, or a combination of both visual and audio resources to make drills more interactive. Likewise, to support the practice of drills, teachers regularly make use of language laboratories, aiding the learners to achieve a better listening and repetition practice.

The *CLT Approach*, on its part, promotes the use of a wide variety of techniques and materials to achieve the development of communicative competence in language learners and make them more actively involved in their learning process. From the beginning of this approach, oral production has been highly emphasized (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Therefore, teachers who demarcate their classes under the *CLT Approach* position have students participate in activities where they put their language knowledge into practice through interaction with their peers. Peer interaction contributes with the encouragement of peer support, an important factor in *CLT-driven* language classes. Role-plays, dialogues/conversations, games, hands-on activities, pair and group work are just some of the possible examples of the techniques used in this approach. Oral presentations and vocabulary exercises are used for this purpose as well. Reading and comprehension activities are also used to motivate speaking discussions. The number of techniques used in this approach is unlimited. It depends on the teacher's creativity and imagination. In this sense, Littlewood (1981) as cited in Richards & Rodgers (2001) add other examples of *CLT-driven* techniques such as "comparing sets of pictures and noting similarities and differences; working out a likely sequence of events in a set of pictures; discovering missing features in a map or picture; one learner communicating behind a screen to another learner and giving instructions on how to draw a picture or shape, or how to complete a map; following directions; and solving problems from shared clues" (p. 76). Overall, any mind engaging activity aimed at promoting students' functional communication, social interaction, and their speaking skills development is welcome in this approach.

In terms of materials employed in *CLT-driven* classes, we identified the use of books, audio resources, visuals, audio-visuals, and authentic materials. Some teachers use audio, visual, audio-visual materials that are included in the course books. Other teachers go further and use authentic resources, while others a combination of both. Larsen-Freeman (2003) considers that to achieve the communication goal of the *CLT Approach*, simple texts and advanced reading found in books or other authentic sources are important. According to this author, the level of difficulty of these materials should be in accordance to the English level proficiency of the students. In this respect, students will be encouraged to read to gain knowledge of the language to accomplish communicative competence meaningfully, rather than reading texts that are not understood by them. Audio and visual materials and the combination of both are used to prompt language usage and generate discussions in the target language. These materials enable the construction of connections between physical objects or abstract information and the target language. Authors make emphasis in the use of visuals. For instance, Larsen-Freeman (2003) argues that the use of visuals such as picture strip stories elicit speaking. Pomavilla, Villavicencio, & Soto (2015) suggest that in order to discuss text content, it is necessary to use visuals because these materials boost comprehension of the information in the L2. In this sense, Ramírez (2012)

mentions that visuals can be used to practice everyday phrases. This author highlights that the communication ability increases through asking and answering questions among the teacher and students; visuals help students to get acquainted with new vocabulary.

To conclude this section, we analyze the *NA*. This approach, like the *Audiolingual* and *CLT Approaches*, aims at fostering communicative skills, but in this case, the foreign language is learned through natural communicative situations, like when a baby learns to speak his mother tongue. The *NA* was grounded in the notion that both first and foreign language learners “need an extended period of receptive learning to comprehend the language they are learning before they begin producing in that language.” (Gary & Gary, 1981, p. 332). Such phase is what Krashen named as the silent period (Gibbons, 1985). During this period, teachers are expected to provide the learners with plenty of comprehensible input through a variety of materials so that they can grasp the language and be able to develop the tasks planned by the teacher. Richards & Rodgers (2001) argue that this approach does not have its own techniques. According to these authors, the techniques used in *NA*-driven classes have been adopted from other approaches and methods such as the *CTL Approach* and Total Physical Response. Accordingly, the *NA* promotes the use of role-plays, dialogues/conversations, reading and comprehension activities, games, oral presentations, and group and pair work like in the *CLT Approach*. It also favors the use of listening activities as in both the *Audiolingual* and *CLT Approaches*, but with a marked difference.

Regarding resources, similar to the other three approaches, the *NA* also promoted the use of books as they provide reading sources. Terrel & Krashen (1995) mention that reading is an important academic skill. Therefore, language learners should be prompted to do pleasure reading to aid them to develop the target language naturally. Realia and physical objects available in the classroom and its surroundings, as well as observable actions, are key materials in the *NA*. English teachers use these materials to provide students with comprehensible input without having to translate the language into the students’ L1 (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Krashen, 1982). In the natural approach, it is necessary to have students involved in real-life-like situations where they can experience the target language naturally. In this sense, audiovisuals help students to listen and observe actions related to different activities performed in a given situation. Terrel & Krashen (1995) assert that performing tasks that resemble daily-life situations with authentic materials such as reading notes, signs, advertising, and personal letters are helpful to develop the target language. Reports, essays, lectures or movies with academic content, textbooks, and literature are also authentic materials that can be used to reach the purpose of the *NA* in academic settings. All these materials help the instructor to prepare the context so that the learner can acquire the target language spontaneously.

## V. TEACHER AND STUDENT’S ROLE

The role played by teachers and students in the teaching-learning process differs according to the essence of each approach as well as customs and ideological conceptions of the decades in which they were proposed. The *Grammar-Translation Approach* was promoted in a period when the teacher was seen as the center of the class; all the class turned around him instructing the language (Larsen-Freeman, 2003; Liu & Shi, 2007). In this approach, the teacher was the main source of information, therefore, he needed to have a profound knowledge of the target language. The student, on the other hand, had no opportunities to actively participate in his learning process. His role was limited to listening to the teacher, memorizing grammar structures and vocabulary, translating, and completing activities assigned by his instructor.

In *Audiolingualism*, the teacher was positioned as the center of the class at a center grade. He needed to be a good model for imitation and provide students with tape recordings of native speakers for utterance accuracy. The teacher directed the language learning process, but in this case, students’ participation was motivated. Students were required to follow and respond to the teacher’s instructions (Larsen-Freeman, 2003; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Therefore, only in such sense, students were given opportunities to be actively involved in their learning process.

As time passed, the conception towards the roles of teachers and students experienced significant variations. Within the *CLT Approach*, the teacher left the role of authority to guide students and students transitioned to a more independent role. Littlewood (1981) situated the teacher in an observant position ready to provide assistance and enable interaction among students. Students, in their part, interact actively to convey meaning, solve problems, or accomplish tasks (Luzón & Soria, 1999).

The *NA* directed the role of the teacher as the provider of an environment where learners would have opportunities to experience the language through comprehensible input (Asher, 1969:1981; Krashen & Terrel, 1983; Larsen-Freeman, 2003). The teacher is accountable for getting the materials needed for the students, being the main resource the teacher himself. Through commands and observable actions (acted out and spoken by the teacher mainly), students get acquainted with the language. Regarding the learners, in this approach, they are expected to go from a passive to an active role. It means, when they undergo the silent period or pre-production stage of their learning, they have a passive role (Krashen, 1982). During this stage, they are only listeners and they try to understand and internalize the language. Once the students feel confident enough to start producing the language, they switch to a more active role. In this phase, speech emerges (Krashen, 1982) and students start participating in the class more actively (Larsen-Freeman, 2003) in activities such as role reversal, short dialogues, among others.

## VI. STUDENTS' MOTHER TONGUES' ROLE

Like the other features of the approaches compared in this work, contrasting the function of the mother tongue in each of these approaches is also fundamental. The use of the student's L1 in the language teaching-learning process was determined by the foundations of each approach. For example, the leading force of the *Grammar-Translation Approach* was developing the student's ability to read in the target language as well as translate information from the L1 into the target language and vice versa (Larsen-Freeman, 2003). If learners were able to perform these actions, they were considered successful learners. Consequently, in this approach, the use of the student's L1 was central.

*Audiolingualism* tried to solve the need of developing language learners' oral skills by immersing the learners in listening activities in the target language and participation in drills. To accomplish this immersion goal fully, the teachers only spoke in the target language and banned students from using their L1 (Celce-Murcia, 1991; Larsen-Freeman, 2003). The *CLT Approach*, on the other hand, saw the need of applying students' mother tongue as a form of support for students (Celce-Murcia, 1991). This approach supports interaction, giving the students opportunities to negotiate and ask for meaning with more knowledgeable peers as well as with the teacher.

Finally, comprehension approach-based methodologies such as the *NA* view the use of the mother tongue from two perspectives; students can use it as a support to demonstrate that they have grasped what is being taught as well as to monitor their learning process (Krashen, 1982, Krashen & Terrel, 1983), however, in latter stages, they are expected to use the target language only. As for the teacher, he is expected to exclusively speak in the target language as he is the only source of contact between the language and the students (Krashen, 1982); body movements, actions, gestures as well as other materials are mainly used to convey meaning and support the students' comprehension process.

## VII. CONCLUSIONS

Each language teaching approach has emerged to provide a solution to the needs of society based on the social, economic, and academic requirements as well as pedagogical perspectives featuring in different epochs. Founded on such requirements and perspectives, and the analysis of the gaps of previous proposals, each approach has been developed with unique and common characteristics. The purpose of this work was to compare seven of features of *Grammatical*, *Audiolingual*, *Natural*, and *Communicative Approaches*, including the theories that supported each approach, the reason that motivated the creation of these approaches, the resources and techniques used for teaching, as well as the role complied by teachers, students, and the students' L1 in the language teaching-learning process.

From the data collected, we can conclude that the characteristics of each approach depended on the how the language was going to be used and the theoretical considerations that framed these approaches. Some characteristics overlapped the four approaches compared here, like the use of books. Other features were unique to a specific approach as in the case of the supporting theory of the *Grammatical* and *Audiolingual Approaches*; the creation purpose was also unique to each approach. *Grammatical* and *Audiolingual Approaches* shared certain characteristics; the same happened with the *NA* and the *CLT Approach*. As stated before, such features depended on the theoretical foundation of the approaches, the epoch, and the historical context in which they were developed.

In the field, sometimes, foreign language teachers proclaim themselves as devoted to a specific approach, however, their teaching practice indicates the opposite. Therefore, for future works, we consider that it would be interesting to dig into today's teachers' awareness of the features of each approach discussed in this work and learn to what extent, these characteristics are reflected in their teaching practice in foreign language contexts.

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# *Cecimpedan*: Semantic-cognitive Process on Balinese Children

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**Abstract**—*Cecimpedan* is a kind of riddle in Balinese language. *Cecimpedan* can be classified into two types, namely onomatopoe and associative *cecimpedan*. The classification is based on linear cognitive development with the linguistic competence of children. Onomatopoe *cecimpedan* is used by children who are in the preoperational cognitive developmental period whereas associative *cecimpedan* is used by children who are in formal operational period. The hierarchy of cognitive development motivates the difference of syntactic and semantic constructions within those two kinds of *cecimpedan*. The semantic process of onomatopoe *cecimpedan* involves the logic of inductive analogy that holds on the actual similarity between rhyme and sound resonance of a word. Rhyme and sound resonance are formed through abbreviation process by maintaining the final syllable of a word. It is in opposite with associative *cecimpedan*. This second type of *cecimpedan* was developed by using declarative analogy logic. It is constructed through lexical choices that can lead to semantic disparity. This semantic disparity becomes the core of associative *cecimpedan*. Therefore, each participant must be able to clarify the answer of associative *cecimpedan* logically and empirically.

**Index Terms**—*cecimpedan*, semantic process, onomatopoe, associative, cognitive development

## I. INTRODUCTION

*Cecimpedan* is one of the Balinese proverbs used by children when playing in opposition, both between individuals and between groups. *Cecimpedan* can be classified into a riddle through syntactic and semantic construction games. The use of *cecimpedan* involves two parties that alternately act as speaker and hearer. The speaker encodes the meaning into a question, while the hearer decodes the question into meaning. The speaker reveals a construction of *cecimpedan* and becomes the hearer's duty to interpret its meaning. The interaction of speaker and hearer involves different cognitive processes, namely the process of speech production and understanding (Tantra, 1992). The winner is determined through the number of *cecimpedan* that can be interpreted correctly by the opposing party in a given time unit. The cognitive semantic process that occurs at the time of production and understanding of the *cecimpedan* becomes the focus of this study.

Example 1.

*Cecimpedan*: *Apa cing kong?*

‘What is *cing kong*?’

Answer: *Cicing ngongkong*.

‘Dog is barking’

Example 2.

*Cecimpedan*: *Apa mirah asibuh?*

‘What is one ruby’

Answer: Buah delima.

‘Pomegranate (Latin : *punica granatum*).

The *cecimpedan* pattern as in Example 1 is commonly used by children at the end of the pre-operational cognitive development phase until the concrete operational phase; Whereas the *cecimpedan* as in Example 2 is commonly used by children in the formal operational cognitive development phase. The difference in construction illustrates that there is a complexity hierarchy of cognitive role. Besides those two *cecimpedan* constructions as examples 1 and 2 above, there is another riddle in the Balinese proverb which is expressed through a poem by using *pupuh pucung*. This enigmatic poem is called *cecangkriman* commonly used by adult speakers. As this study focuses on the cognitive semantic processes of children, they will be examined on other occasions.

As a form of a Balinese proverb, the *cecimpedan* is contained in the Balinese language curriculum at the Elementary School; Therefore, the teacher must teach it. The problem arises in the learning process. *Cecimpedan* is taught by memorizing the syntactic and semantic constructions. Such way of learning *cecimpedan* does not actively involve children cognitive. As a result, children fail to produce new *cecimpedan* and seems like a recycling process. To solve this issue, the active involvement of children's cognitive is important. The way is by explaining the semantic-cognitive process that occurs in *cecimpedan*. This is the focus of this study.

## II. THEORETICAL CONSTRUCTION

Based on the basic concepts of structural linguistics developed by Saussure (1988) and Bloomfield (1995), each lingual unit consists of signs and markers. *Cecimpedan* can be seen from both aspects. The construction of a question in a *cecimpedan* is a sign aspect (*signifiant*) while its semantic interpretation is a marker aspect (*signifie*). Sign and marker relationships are tied up by decoding and encoding processes played by the participants alternately. Cognitive processes in encoding and decoding *cecimpedan* are the focus of this study.

The cognitive process can be viewed as a mental activity to connect, assess, and consider something in a person and his/her environment. Cognitive process is thoughtful activities to recognize and give a rationale reason for a stimulus so that one can make decision. The accuracy of the taken decision is based on the human primary ability, which includes: language skills, recall, reasoning or logical thinking, space understanding, number comprehension, word usage, and quick and thorough observation. All elements of primary ability are blended used to take the conclusion (Sujiono, et al., 2009). As a cognitive process, thinking is the most important basic potential that distinguishes human beings from other livings. Thinking is an activity of organizing information obtained from the environment to solve problems encountered through formal reasoning to the decision-making process. Listening and observing skills based on consistent logic are the implementation of formal reasoning. Formal reasoning allows one to identify to produce a classification of something (Crider, et al., 1983). This mechanism of formal reasoning is expected to explain the semantic processes that occur in children when using *cecimpedan*.

*Cecimpedan* is also often seen as a Balinese language game for children. In language games, speakers manipulate linguistic forms at various levels (Sherzer, 1976). In the case of *cecimpedan*, the speaker manipulates the lexical level. Manipulation is done in two ways. First, the omission of one or several syllables so that only retain one last syllable. The defense of last syllable is intended to obtain the final rhyme as a basis of semantic interpretation. For example, the noun *kocor* 'water container made of coconut shell' is manipulated into *cor*; as well as the verb *megantung* 'hanging' is manipulated into *tung* so it produces a construction of *cecimpedan* 'Apa cor tung?' 'What is cor tung?' Second, hide a lexical, phrase, or clause by constructing it into a question. Questions are constructed based on a formal analogy. For example, 'Apa panakne jejek, memene slelegang?' 'What is it, the children are trampled while the mother is propped up?' The meaning is 'a man stepped up the stairs'. As one form of language play (speech play), *cecimpedan* relies on the accuracy of keyword guess that speakers have manipulated. *Cecimpedan* requires the speaker to select the vocabulary and knowledge behind the use of everyday language (ordinary language). The speaker must be able to accurately predict the implicature of verbal forms that have been manipulated by the speakers through sound changes and other linguistic characteristics (Gimblett, 1976, Hall, et al., 1977).

The language game by children is very different from the adult language. The study of children's language games is closely related to cognitive development. Piaget formulates the four stages of child cognitive development. The first is the sensorimotor period that occurs in children aged 0-2 years. The cognitive development of sensorimotor period is characterized by the change of reflex motion into a coordinated body motion as a response to the received stimulus. In this period, the child's memory is not perfect yet. Language development is characterized by the ability to produce sentences of one to two words and still be telegraphic. In this phase, Balinese children cannot play *cecimpedan*. The second is the preoperational period that is happened in children aged 2-7 years. The cognitive development in this period is characterized by concrete thinking. Since children of 4 or 5 years, they experience a rapid development of language which is characterized by mastery of basic grammatical construction. This language skill encourages wider thinking skills. At the end of this period, Balinese children can already be invited to play *cecimpedan* of pattern 1. The third is concrete operational period that is happened in children aged 7-11 years. In this period, children have the ability to classify things into groups or subgroups. The child has been able to compare something to something else. Simple reasoning begins to develop that is characterized by the ability to understand conversions, and the language development has led to adult grammar. In this period, Balinese children have been able to play *cecimpedan* both pattern 1 and pattern 2. The fourth is formal operational period that is lasted at the age of 11-14 years. In this period, children can already think abstractly and logically, like adults, including in language (Chaer, 2003; Sund, 1976). In this period, children often participate in *cecimpedan* competition of pattern 2. The study of *cecimpedan* is expected to be a model of children's language game research in a traditional cultural frame. This study is directed on cognitive semantic mechanism as children produce (encode) and understand (decode) *cecimpedan* by focusing on manipulated linguistic instruments as well as associative reasoning.

The cognitive process of producing (encoding) utterance consists of four stages, namely message level, functional level, positional level, and phonological level. At the message level phase, children determine the meaning of conveyed utterance. This phase is often called the initial semantic graph. At the functional phase, the children choose the linguistic devices, such as lexical and syntactical structure to be used to explain meaning. This phase is relevant to the principle of inner speech in children. Furthermore, the positional level phase is the cognitive process of arranging the words order to be sentences according to the rules of morpho syntax. This cognitive process is the utterance plan. Finally, the phonological phase is the process of encoding the concept into a real utterance that can be heard by the hearer. At this stage, the child has done the formation of an expanded speech utterance (Dardjowidjojo, 2003; Luria, 1982).

The comprehension of utterance meaning is a mental activity when a child or group of children perceives the utterance that he or she hears. In this study, comprehension is defined as a comprehension of utterance being heard.



Comprehension is based on the child's ability to perceive the deep structures and the surface structure of the sentence. Comprehension of the deep structure and surface structure of the sentence leads the child to the conclusion that the meaning of a sentence is not only determined by the choice of used words but also by background knowledge and psychological reality, syntactic factors, and semantic strategy (Dardjowidjojo, 2003).

Based on the basic concepts of cognitive process, the study examines the cognitive mechanism that children use when encoding and decoding *cecimpedan*. The explanation of cognitive process when encoding and decoding becomes very significant to describe the semantic process occurred in the *cecimpedan*. Comprehension of cognitive and semantic processes is expected to create construction and interpretation of *cecimpedan* in a more creative and dynamic way as one of the language characteristics that is alive and used by its speaker community.

*Cecimpedan* is a speech culture (oral) in Balinese society. As a form of speech, the semantic interpretation of *cecimpedan* also involves the study of discourse and pragmatics. Discourse theory can frame the natural context of *cecimpedan* construction that is tied to its text and context; Whereas the concept of locution, illocution, and perlocution of pragmatic theory can guide the speaker's mind when giving his semantic interpretation.

Based on the above explanation, the theory construction of this study can be visualized as follows.

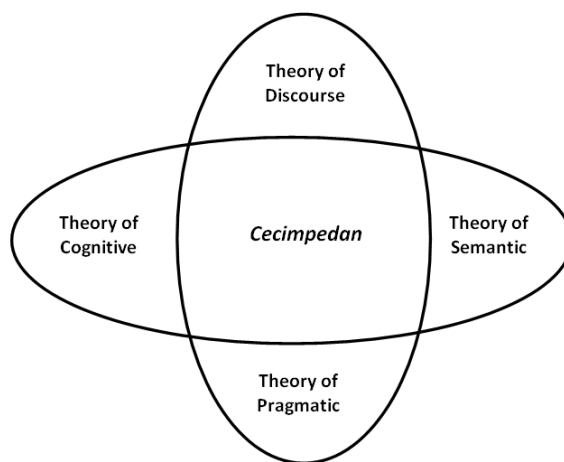


Diagram 1. Theoretical Construction

### III. METHOD

This study is designed in qualitative research design which emphasis on syntactic and semantic aspects of a natural language context. The research procedure is carried out inductively and oriented on the cognitive process. Data were collected by document recording method through field notes, video recording, and written documents (Samarin, 1988; Sudaryanto, 1993; Djajasudarma, 1993; Mashun, 2005). The data are taken from: (1) video recording with 120 minutes duration of *cecimpedan* competition held by PGRI Foundation Denpasar in 2014; recording with 120 minutes duration, *cecimpedan* competition at the 37th of Bali Arts Festival in 2015; and written documents of Balinese proverbs from various books, such as (Tinggen, 1995; Ginarsa, 1985; Simpen, 1988). From the data source, it was collected 30 units *cecimpedan* patterned as example 1 and 121 units patterned as example 2. Selection of data is done purposively so it produces core corpus. From all data which are collected randomly, classification is done by considering the syntactic and semantic construction patterns. Based on the classification, the data are selected and the unit of *cecimpedan* are assigned as a representation of the corpus totality. The core corpus validation process is done by triangulation technique through exclusive interviews to Balinese language experts, Balinese language teachers in Elementary School, and children. Data ws analyzed based on the comparison of morpho-phonological constructions and the syntactical of *cecimpedan* unit with its referential semantics. Based on the comparison, it can be expressed the cognitive processes that occur at the time of *cecimpedan* production and comprehension.

### IV. DATA ANALYSIS

#### A. The Classification of *Cecimpedan*

Balinese practitioners generally classify *cecimpedan* based on the age group of its users, so it is identified as a *cecimpedan alit-alit* 'children *cecimpedan*' used by children under 10 years and *cecimpedan biasa* 'regular *cecimpedan*' used by children over 10 years (Tinggen 1995, Gautama 1995, Simpen, 1988, Ginarsa, 1985). Against this classification, the following critical views can be given. First, there is no sufficient explanation to the use of age 10 to be a barrier. The development of semantic and language is not merely related to age, but is more related to the cognitive developmental phases. Moreover, in practice, the age limit is often unclear or ruled out. Second, the terminology used is not symmetrical, i.e. *cecimpedan alit-alit* 'children *cecimpedan*' and *cecimpedan biasa* 'regular *cecimpedan*'. The word



*alit-alit* refers to age whereas the word *biasa* does not. It shows that the basis of classification is not clear. Therefore, this study develops different classification bases. In this study, *cecimpedan* are classified according to word construction and its syntactical structure, so they are identified as onomatope and associative *cecimpedan*.

Onomatope *cecimpedan* has a single pattern. The syntactic construction tends to be the same, i.e. *apa + x y*; *x* and *y* are the final term (abbreviation) of two words. The defense of word last syllable is based on intimate style of Balinese oral language culture. The defense of word last syllable will produce rhyme as a semantic interpretation. In a relaxed and intimate atmosphere, Balinese speakers often make abbreviation on certain word pronunciations. In this linguistic event, the final syllable of the word is usually retained, as the following examples.

*Dija kejang?* → *Ja jang?*

'Where is it placed?

*Pesu akejep.* → *Su jep.*

'Going out for a while'

*Idih besik!* → *Dih sik!*

'Ask for one!'

Besides those examples, the defense of word final syllable also occurs in the Balinese greeting. The word *bapa* 'father' is shortened to be *pa*; *meme* 'mother' to be *me*; *dadong* 'grandmother' to be *dong*; *kaki* 'grandfather' to be *ki*; *wayan* '1st child' to be *yan*, *nengah* '2nd child' to be *ngah*, *nyoman* '3rd child' to be *man*, *ketut* '4th child' to be *tut*, and others. The final syllable defense of a word is a latent inherent from the first language acquisition. From the age of two years, the child is able to produce a single word utterance by maintaining the final syllable and deleting the syllable in front of it (Dardjowidjojo, 2000, Garman, 1991). Genetically, the Balinese language belongs to the western Austronesian language family. In this language family, final intonation is often used as a determinant of meaning. This historical fact, linguistics and culture give the reason of the final syllable defense in the process of onomatope *cecimpedan* formation. The following is presented some data of onomatope *cecimpedan*.

TABEL 1.  
THE COMPARISON OF ONOMATOPE *CECIMPEDAN* AND ORDINARY LANGUAGE

No.	Onomatope <i>Cecimpedan</i>	Ordinary Language
1.	<i>Apa cor tung?</i> 'What is <i>cor tung</i> ?'	<i>kocor magantung</i> 'shell is hanged'
2.	<i>Apa jog keng?</i> 'What is <i>jog keng</i> ?'	<i>bojog mapangkeng</i> 'monkey is caged'
3.	<i>Apa cing kong?</i> 'What is <i>cing kong</i> ?'	<i>cicing ngongkong</i> 'dog is barking'
4.	<i>Apa pung ceng?</i> 'What is <i>pung ceng</i> ?'	<i>capung makonceng</i> 'dragonfly is flushing'
5.	<i>Apa deg tung?</i> 'What is <i>deg tung</i> ?'	<i>bedeg magantung</i> 'bamboo basket is hanged'

In contrast to onomatope *cecimpedan*, associative *cecimpedan* has varying constructions. This *cecimpedan* does not use word abbreviations, but the full word, either with or without morphological processes. The number of words in each unit can be more than three. The questions used can be single or plural clause; even can be constructed into short paragraph therefore associative *cecimpedan* can be paraphrased. It is called associative *cecimpedan* because it involves cognitive links to people, events, or something else that results in the linking of ideas. The linking of ideas occurs because of a matching exposure of one idea to another idea (Alwi, et al. 2001; Hari and Indrayani, 2010). The association process is supported by declarative reasoning which allows an explanation of the association. Some data of associative *cecimpedan* can be presented below.

TABEL 2.  
ASSOCIATIVE CECIMPEDAN AND ITS MEANING

No.	Associative <i>Cecimpedan</i>	Meaning
1.	<i>Apa anak cenik maid cacing?</i> 'What is it, a child is pulling a worm?'	<i>jaum</i> 'needle'
2.	<i>Apa lipi gadang mroko?</i> 'What is it, a green snake is smoking?'	<i>Ubad legu</i> 'mosquito repellent'
3.	<i>Apa yen tolih ngajohang?</i> 'What is it, if it is seen so it becomes farther?'	<i>kuping</i> 'ears'
4.	<i>Apa medil tanah kena cungh?</i> 'What is it, shoot the ground but hit the nose?'	<i>entut</i> 'fart'
5.	<i>Apa anak cerik mabaju liu?</i> 'What is it, small person is wearing many clothes?'	<i>jagung</i> 'corn (Latin: <i>zea mays</i> )'
6.	<i>Apa dugasne cerik mapusungan, nanging sasubane kelih magambahan?</i> 'What is it, when it was small its hair was twisted, when it was adult its hair was parsed?'	<i>paku</i> 'fern (Latin: <i>diplazium esculentum</i> )'
7.	<i>Apa yen majemuh belus, nanging yen maembon tuh?</i> 'What is it, when it is sunbathing it is wet, when it is sheltering it is dry?'	<i>lengar</i> 'bald head'

In table 2, there are 7 data of associative *cecimpedan*. *Cecimpedan* number 1 - 5 use a single clause whereas numbers 6 - 7 use a plural clause.

#### B. Semantic-cognitive Process of Onomatope *Cecimpedan*

Onomatope is one of the semantic motivation through sound. Onomatope is a stylistic device based on sound modulation reinforced by alliteration, rhythm, assonance, and rhyme. According to many experts, onomatope is often paired with sound replicas, so the relation between meaning and name (word) is interpreted based on an echo according to an acoustic experience which is similar to the phonetic structure of a word (Ullman, 1977; Sumarsono, 2007; Frederiksen, 1977).

Onomatope *cecimpedan* is constructed by using abbreviation technique that is abbreviate the word by maintaining final syllable of word (like data in table 1 column 1). The final syllable defense aims to produce rhyme (poetry) as the interpretation basis of meaning and word. Bloomfield (1995) asserts that in various languages there is a morphemic rule based on the beginning or final syllables as a significance system of meaning. For example, in Indonesian language, there are some words with final syllable *sah*, such as: *resah* 'restlessness', *gelisah* 'anxiety', *susah* 'difficulty', *desah* 'sigh'; as well as the word ending with the final syllable *pit*, such as: *sempit* 'narrow', *jepit* 'pinch', *apit* 'wedge', *impit* 'press', and so on. This linguistic fact also occurs in the Balinese language, such as those with the final syllable *dag* to form the word *undag* 'ladder of the building', *bodag* 'big basket', *dagdag* 'pig fodder', *bebedag* 'foal', *kodag* 'capable'; or that resonates sound with [ag], such as: *degag* 'arrogant', *papag* 'pick up', *ugag* 'unload', *jegagag* 'look up', *lempag* 'hard hit by using stick'. Such syllabic and sound resonance patterns become the basis of forming onomatope *cecimpedan*. To strengthen the following analysis, there are some data of it.

TABLE 3.  
ONOMATOPE CECIMPEDAN AND SEMANTIC INTERPRETATION

No.	Onomatope <i>Cecimpedan</i>	Semantic Interpretation
1.	<i>Apa cing dag?</i> 'What is <i>cing dag</i> ?'	<i>Cicing medem di undag</i> 'Dog is sleeping on stairs' <i>Cicing medemin bodag</i> 'Dog is sleeping in a big basket'
2.	<i>Apa pi suk?</i> 'What is <i>pi suk</i> ?'	<i>Sampi matehusuk</i> 'Nose-tied cow'
3.	<i>Apa nyu luh?</i> 'What is <i>nyu luh</i> ?'	<i>Penyu mataluh</i> 'Turtle lays her eggs'
4.	<i>Apa krik pa?</i> 'What is <i>krik pa</i> ?'	<i>jangkrik kipa</i> 'one legged cricket'
5.	<i>Apa kung kek?</i> 'What is <i>kung kek</i> ?'	<i>enggung ngokek</i> 'frog is voiced'

The onomatope *cecimpedan* as the data shown in Tables 1 and 3 prove that phonological instruments are a strong support for semantic interpretation. The production and understanding processes of the onomatope *cecimpedan* are based on an analogy logic referring to the rhyme and the resonance of the final sound. The production process begins with the targeting of semantics and lexical. In this phase, children select and define two words which is in local culture often pair in a single phrase or core clause. This phase is the utterance plan (Lauria, 1982). The second is the abbreviation phase. In this phase, children delete one or more syllabics of selected words. The result is an abbreviation of the final syllable with the aligned resonance of the sounds. This phase is intended to make semantic gap. In this phase, sound alignment often occurs through phonetic manipulation with the principle of allophones (such as data 5 in table 3). The data shows that the final syllable of word *enggung* 'frog' should be *gung* but for the resonance is changed with *kung* so that the consonant [g] changes to [k] are both velar consonants. Consonant replacement of [g] with [k] is intended to

obtain a resonance alignment with the syllable *kek* that follows it. The third, the syntactic phase of canonical sentence formation. In this phase, the *cecimpedan* is constructed in a sentence according to Balinese syntax rules. This third phase is an inner speech. The fourth is articulation phase, namely *cecimpedan* pronunciation as a stimulation for speakers and audience. The articulation phase is controlled by lexical and semantic targets. The production process of onomatopoe *cecimpedan* can be visualized in the following diagram.

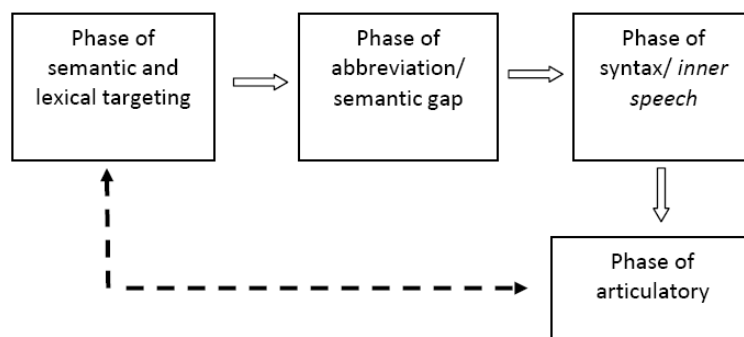


Diagram 2. Semantic-Cognitive Process of Onomatopoe *Cecimpedan* Production

Unlike the production process, the comprehension begins with the mental process of onomatopoe *cecimpedan* perception that is heard by the children. In this phase, there is a hearing process of *cecimpedan*. The *cecimpedan* is a stimulus that encourages cognitive process to compare rhyme or sound resonance with the vocabulary. The second phase is memory evocation to select relevant semantic and lexical. The consideration is based on empirical and cultural knowledge. The third phase is an inductive analogous thinking process, which compares the similarity of rhyme and sound resonance with the vocabulary presented in the cognitive of children. In this phase, there is a sound mapping with its lexical meaning. The fourth phase is the determination of choice and the conclusion of semantic and lexical based on the rhyme and the resonance of the reference sound. The fifth phase is syntax, i.e. constructing selected semantic and lexical into the core of sentence structure. In this phase, children construct the core sentence in response to the *cecimpedan* that is presented to them. In this phase, a double conclusion is possible, i.e. an onomatopoe *cecimpedan* can represent more than one meaning resulting in polysemy, such as data 1 in table 3. Onomatopoe *cecimpedan* 'Apa cing dag?' Can be interpreted as *Cicing medem di undag* 'Dog is sleeping on the stairs' or *Cicing medemin bodag* 'Dog is sleeping in big basket'. This polysemy occurs because of the final syllable of *dag* corresponds to the lexicon of *undag* and *bodag* which both exist empirically in Balinese culture. The sixth phase is articulation, which provides answers to questionable *cecimpedan* construction. This final phase is controlled by the perceptive phase. The cognitive process of onomatopoe *cecimpedan* understanding can be visualized as follows.

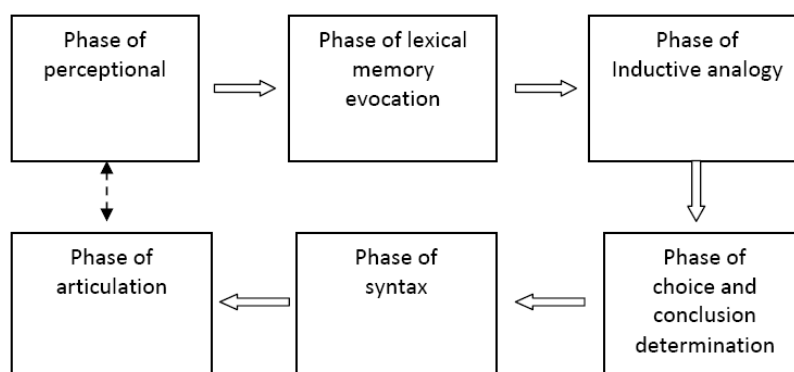


Diagram 3. Semantic-Cognitive Process of Onomatopoe *Cecimpedan* Understanding

Diagrams 2 and 3 illustrate the different processes that occur in the production and understanding of onomatopoe *cecimpedan*. These findings prove that *cecimpedan* production and understanding involve different cognitive processes (Tantra, 1992, Lauria, 1982). However, the production process and the understanding of onomatopoe *cecimpedan* are both based on the same point, that is the meaning based on the echo. Echoes in *cecimpedan* are used to construct semantic gap; and echoes also become the basis of its interpretation. This linguistic fact suggests that the semantic process of onomatopoe *cecimpedan* involves the inductive analogy logic based on the echoes similarity and sound resonance as the production and interpretation basis.

### C. Semantic-cognitive Process of Associative *Cecimpedan*

Association is a comparative way of thinking through the attribution of one thing to another. The relationship results in cognitive link. Associative *cecimpedan* development is based on a declarative analogy (Sumarsono, 2004: Arnawa,

2016). This model is developed through descriptive paraphrasing techniques, i.e. something is explained into speech or discourse to describe the replaced things, such as the data in table 2. This paraphrase results in a lexical semantic gap that will be guessed by the participants. The production process of associative *cecimpedan* can be visualized in the following diagram.

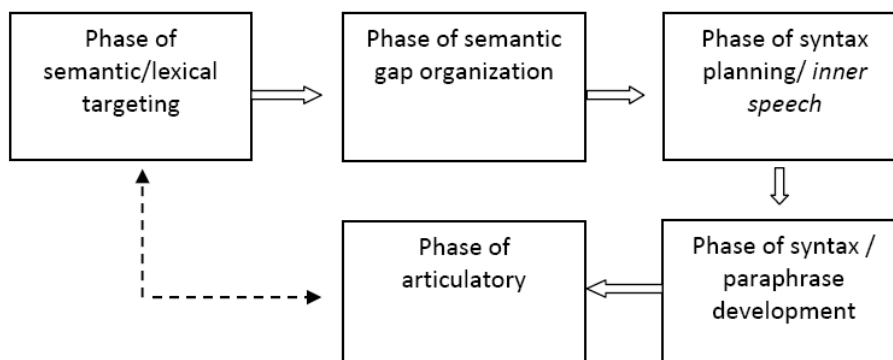
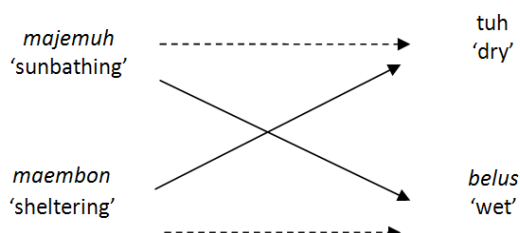


Diagram 4. Semantic-Cognitive Production Process of Associative *Cecimpedan*

Diagram 4 can be explained as follows. In the first phase, something is set to be the guessing target by children. It can be expressed through a single word, phrase, or core clause. In the second phase, the message is processed by the children to create a cognitive gap, such as data 7 in table 2, i.e. *Apa yen majemuh belus, nanging yen maembon tuh?* 'What is it, when it is in the sun, it is wet, but when it takes shelter, it is dry? In this *cecimpedan*, there is the following gap.



In ordinary language, the adjective *majemuh* 'sunbathing' is paired with the word *tuh* 'dry' and *maembon* 'sheltering' is paired with the word *belus* 'wet'. The word *majemuh* and *maembon* and the word *tuh* and *belus* are two pairs of anonymous words. However, the associative *cecimpedan* is logically reversed. This reversal of logic causes semantic gap. In the third phase, the words selection will be assembled into a sentence or organized utterance. Each diction is designed to contain a meaning. This phase is the preparation of sentences or utterances production that will be expressed externally. In the fourth phase, the development of sentences is done by using the selected diction. In this phase, it is designed and defined the construction of the sentence to be used. The fifth phase is an action of pronouncing associative *cecimpedan* in accordance with a defined syntactic pattern. The spoken sentences are stimulus for the listener to guess the meaning of associative *cecimpedan*.

The understanding process of *cecimpedan* is a cognitive activity to interpret the meaning exactly. Therefore, careful understanding of semantic gap and relating them to the daily knowledge and experience is the key of associative *cecimpedan* interpretation. The meaning understanding of associative *cecimpedan* begins from the perceptive phase of the heard stimulus. The stimulus understanding leads to the discovery phase of the semantic gap. The semantic gap understanding encourages the thought process of declarative analogy as empirical inequalities explanation. The precision of analogy frames and limits the lexical choice which is likely to be the answer to an associative *cecimpedan*. Based on the ability to perform a declarative analogy, a lexical is also selected and assigned to be an answer which is further articulated to the *cecimpedan* producer and other audiences. The understanding process of associative *cecimpedan* can be visualized as the following diagram.

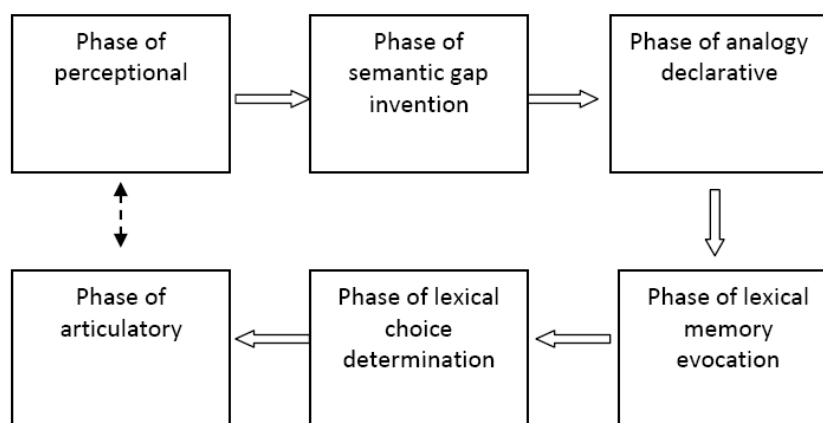


Diagram 5. Semantic-Cognitive Process of Associative *Cecimpedan* Understanding

Based on diagrams 4 and 5 it is known that the formation and understanding process of associative *cecimpedan* depend on the ability of children to think declarative analogy. This ability is a cognitive activity of comparing something to another to express its similarity. The description of something similar is used to describe something else. Therefore, in the competition of *cecimpedan*, each answer must be explained by the analogy logic of it; For example, data 4 and 7 in table 2 below.

*Cecimpedan*: *Apa medil tanah kena cungh?*

‘What is it, shoot the ground but hit the nose?’

Answer: *entut* ‘flart’

Reason: The anus hole leads downwards so that when farting the exit gas is assumed towards the ground, however the smell towards the nose.

*Cecimpedan*: *Apa yen majemuh belus, nanging yen maembon tuh?*

‘What is it, when it is sunbathing it is wet, when it is sheltering it is dry?’

Answer: *lengar* ‘bald head’

Reason: If the bald person is sunbathing so he/she will sweat so the bald head will be wet; whereas if he/she is sheltering so the sweat bald will be dry.

## V. DISCUSSION

*Cecimpedan* is one of the Balinese proverbs commonly used by children in familiar and relaxed situations. *Cecimpedan* is developed based on the analogy-associate logic so that its semantic interpretation involves cognitive process. Based on the cognitive process, *cecimpedan* is classified into two, i.e. onomatope and associative *cecimpedan*. Onomatope *cecimpedan* is formed and interpreted based on rhyme and sound resonance. Its semantic interpretation involves the reasoning of the inductive analogy, that is comparing the similarity of the final syllable morphological form with the morphological form of a word. Comparison of the word form indicates that the child thinks concrete as the cognitive development of the preoperational phase (Tarigan, 1985; Dardjowidjojo, 2000). Syntactically, onomatope *cecimpedan* is constructed in a simple question consisting of three words. Based on psycholinguistic studies, the length of utterance can be used as an indicator of children's language development that is an integral part of cognitive development. Based on the utterance length, the linguistic competence of children who is the user of onomatope *cecimpedan* can be identified in the grammatical development period or phase III. This limitation of linguistic and cognitive competence causes the simplicity of the semantic form and process of onomatope *cecimpedan*. In lexical semantic theory (Ulmaan, 1977) it is explained that onomatope is an interpreted meaning based on an echo that is heard. The meaning based on this echo becomes the basis of *cecimpedan* onomatope development. This onomatope phenomenon is often used by children in daily Balinese-speaking activities, such as dog is called *kong*, pig is called *guik*, and cat is called *ngeong*, according to the sound or echo that animal produced.

Associative *cecimpedan* construction is more complex. This *cecimpedan* involves a more complex linguistic competence and higher cognitive development. Associative *cecimpedan* uses a broad sentence, or complex clause, even it is often expressed in paragraph. The average length of the sentence is more than 4 words. The length of this sentence indicates that the users of associative *cecimpedan* have complete linguistic competence or phase V, and the cognitive developmental level is in the formal operational phase. This development of linguistic and cognitive competence underlies the ability to think logically on the basis of declarative analogy that becomes the meaning process of associative *cecimpedan*. The use of sensory knowledge and experience is an integral part of the semantic process of this type, so it cannot be separated with a more complex cognitive process. The involvement of development level of the linguistic and cognitive competence causes the production and understanding process of onomatope is different to

associative *cecimpedan*. Differences in linguistic competence and cognitive development are often associated with the age of children. However, age is not an absolute barrier to the use of both types of *cecimpedan*.

## VI. CONCLUSION

In Balinese language, there are two types of *cecimpedan*, namely onomatopoe and associative *cecimpedan*. Its classification is based on a cognitive development hierarchy. The level of cognitive development determines the linguistic competence of children. Onomatopoe *cecimpedan* is used by children who are in the preoperational cognitive development period whereas the associative *cecimpedan* is used by children who are in formal operational period. Differences in the cognitive phase lead to differences in semantic-cognitive processes in those both types. The semantic-cognitive process of onomatopoe *cecimpedan* involves the reasoning of an inductive analogy that is based on the actual equality of sounds; whereas associative *cecimpedan* uses declarative analogy logic constructed through word choices that can describe logical gap. Thus, the classification of *cecimpedan* is not solely based on the age of the speaker, but also based on cognitive development.

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# An Empirical Study of Ecuadorian University EFL Learners' Comprehension of English Idioms Using a Multimodal Teaching Approach

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**Abstract**—The present study investigated the effect of using a multimodal teaching approach toward teaching English idioms to Ecuadorian EFL students. The control group was taught 20 English idioms using a traditional teaching method and the experimental group was taught the same 20 English idioms using a multimodal teaching approach. An idiom comprehension quiz was administered to both groups with the experimental group scoring significantly higher than the control group. The study provides pedagogical suggestions on using a multimodal approach to teaching English idioms.

**Index Terms**—English idioms, teaching idioms, language teaching, multimodal teaching

## I. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

### A. Introduction

Idioms are a part of every language. Native speakers use idioms spontaneously and often. Idioms are used in all forms of discourse: conversations, movies, radio, television shows, lectures, and so on (Fotovatnia & Khaki, 2012). It has been estimated that about 7,000 idioms are used by native speakers each week (Cooper, 1999). There have been various attempts in the research at defining idioms, such as “fixed expressions” (Carter, 1998), “phraseology” (Howarth, 1998), “multi-word items” (Moon, 1997), and “multiword expressions” (Yi, 2006); however, Larson’s (1984) definition seems more applicable for this study, “a string of words whose meaning is different from the meaning conveyed by the individual words” (p. 20).

The English language is noted for being a language of idiomaticity. It is “rich in metaphors, similes, phrasal verbs, and figurative speech, conventionally referred to as ‘idiomatic expressions’” (Al-kadi, 2015, p. 513). Since idiomatic expressions mean one thing literally but are taken to mean something different, they are notoriously difficult for English language learners; however, in order for English language learners to function effectively with English communication, learning English idioms is essential. Understanding and applying idioms requires language learners to go beyond a simple word-by-word comprehension strategy and to integrate figurative meaning into contextual information (Cornoldi & Colpo, 1998). Several language researchers agree that a sound knowledge of idioms is undeniable for English proficiency and fluency and there is a positive correlation between idiom acquisition and communicative competence (Wray, 2002, Liu, 2008, De Caro, 2009, Aljabri, 2013, Liontas, 2002). Communicative competence is “the mastery of the linguistic, cognitive, effective, and sociocultural aspects of the related language, and it is also the capacity to use the language with maximum attention to communication and minimum attention to form” (Cakir, 2011, p. 372).

### B. Characteristics of Idioms

Idioms are complex linguistic configurations. Langlorz (2006) suggested “idioms are peculiar linguistic constructions that have raised many eyebrows in linguistics and often confuse newcomers to a language” (p. 1). Idioms have specific linguistic characteristics. They have “three aspects of language: form, meaning, and usage, i.e. they have syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic dimensions” (Al-kadi, 2015, p. 514). Fernando and Flavell (1981) summarized the syntactic and semantic features of idioms with the following five properties:

- a. Its meaning is not the compositional sum of its constituents.
- b. It is a unit that has either a homonymous literal counterpart or at least individual constituents that are literal, although the expression as a whole would not be interpreted literally.
- c. It is transformationally deficient in one way or another.
- d. It forms part of a set of expressions in a given language.
- e. It is institutionalized. (p. 48)

Fernando & Flavell (1981) proposed that idioms are non-compositional because their meaning cannot be concluded from the sum of the individual elements. However, other researchers, such as Gibbs & Nayak (1989) proved that some



idioms are decomposable, or analyzable. Their research proved that the component parts of idioms can contribute individually to their figurative meaning, with some idioms being classified as more decomposable than others (Zyzik, 2011). According to Gan (2014), idioms “range along a continuum of compositionality or analyzability” (p. 935).

According to McCarthy & O’Dell (2002, p. 6) there are seven types of idioms:

“Form	Example	Meaning
1. verb + object/complement (and/or adverbial)	kill two birds with one stone	produce two useful results by just doing one action
2. prepositional phrase	in the blink of an eye	in an extremely short time
3. compound	a bone of contention	something which people argue and disagree over
4. simile (as + adjective + as, like + noun)	as dry as a bone	very dry indeed
5. binomial (word + and + word)	rough and ready	crude and lacking sophistication
6. trinominal (word + word+ and + word)	cool, calm and collected	relaxed, in control, not nervous
7. whole clause or sentence	to cut a long story short	to tell the main points, but not all the fine details”

Idioms also fall into a category of transparent or opaque. Transparency is a measure of how closely related the literal and figurative meanings of the idiom are. When they are related closely, the idiom is regarded as transparent, but when the literal and figurative meanings are unrelated, the idiom is regarded as opaque. Nippold & Rudzinski (1993) put forth the “Metasemantic Hypothesis” to show the discrepancy in difficulty between transparent and opaque idioms. This hypothesis suggested that idioms are learned through an active analysis of the words that make the idiom; therefore, high-transparency idioms are easier to understand than low-transparency idioms. Idiom familiarity is also an important characteristic. Idiom familiarity is a measure of how frequently the idiom occurs in the language (Nippold & Taylor, 2002). The familiarity (or frequency of exposure) of idioms play an essential role in learning idioms.

A question remains: What are idioms used for? To answer this question, McCarthy & O’Dell (2010, p. 8) listed seven reasons:

- “For emphasis, e.g. The singer’s second album **sank like a stone**. (failed completely).
- To agree with a previous speaker, e.g.  
A: Did you notice how Lisa started listening when you said her name?  
B. Yes, that certainly made her **prick her ears up**. (started listening carefully).
- To comment on people, e.g. Did you hear Tom has been invited for dinner with the prime minister?  
He’s certainly **gone up in the world!** (gained a better social position- or more money- than before).
- To comment on a situation, e.g. The new finance minister wants to **knock** the economy **into shape**. (take action to get something into a good condition).
- To make an anecdote more interesting, e.g. It was just one disaster after another today, a sort of **domino effect**. (when something, usually bad, happens and causes a series of other things to happen).
- To catch the reader’s eye. Idioms- particularly those with strong images- are often used in headlines, advertising slogans and the names of small businesses. The writer may play with the idiom or make a pun (a joke involving a play on words) in order to create a special effect, e.g. *a debt of dishonor* instead of the usual **debt of honor**. (a debt that you owe someone for moral rather than financial reasons).
- To indicate membership of a particular group, e.g. surfers **drop in on** someone, meaning to get on a wave another surfer is already on.”

### C. Idiom Teachability

The teaching of idioms has been a controversial subject and has been researched from different contexts. One of the issues is whether idioms are acquired in social contexts or obtained in more formal settings, such as in the same way vocabulary and grammar are taught in schools (Al-kadi, 2015). Since idioms are arbitrary and non-literal, teachers often experience difficulty when teaching idioms. Pimenova (2011, p. 117-11) gave five reasons why the learning of idioms is so difficult:

- a. Unknown vocabulary and unfamiliar idioms.

- b. No analog idioms in L1.
- c. Cultural differences.
- d. Lack of experience dealing with idioms.
- e. Lack of the broad context of a given idiom.

Idioms are perplexing and sometimes even ungrammatical. Knowing the meaning of an idiom's compositional parts does not mean it is sufficient enough to understand its full meaning. There is no definitive answer in the research as to the best way to teach idioms; however, researchers have proposed differing methods to approach them. Cakir (2011) opined the easiest idioms to teach and learn are those which have exact counterparts in the first language and suggested teaching the most frequently used idioms in meaningful contexts, such as pictures, video clips, dialogues, drawings, and role plays. Wu (2008) suggested using a variety of collaborative activities using story contexts, rich illustrations, and role-play to teach idioms so the students interact with each other and have fun while learning. Guduru (2012) recommended techniques such as memorization, using an idiom notebook, and displays on the classroom board. Researchers Azar and Talebinezhad (2013) proposed using poetry as an authentic source to teach idiomatic expressions and to improve students' metaphorical competence. Mahmoodi-Shahreabaki and Mahmoodi (2015) endorsed using movie clips to teach idioms. Irujo (1986) pointed out that the grouping of idioms into categories according to topic will not only make them easier for students to learn, but also will make it easier for teachers to relate the activities to topic-based units.

In the teaching of idioms, a teacher must also consider culture, as idioms are often culture specific. According to Cakir (2011), since idioms are culture specific, it is not always possible to find their counterparts in every language. To understand the meanings of idioms, it is necessary to learn about the target culture and also the intercultural differences (Taki & Soghady, 2013). Learning idioms is an exceptional opportunity to learn about a language's culture (Glucksberg, 2001). If students lack cultural references then the learning of idioms becomes even more of a challenging task. Boer and Demecheleer (2001) and Chen and Lai (2013) also investigated the impact of cross-cultural variation on learners of idioms and suggested that teachers must give extra attention to the figurative language that relates to metaphoric themes as it relates to culture. Giving extra attention to idioms not only teaches students some cultural aspects of the target language, but it also can give them confidence in using and understanding them.

#### *D. Multimodal Approach*

A multimodal teaching approach can be a source of creativity and flexibility and can enhance the learning environment. The New London Group (1996), composed of eleven linguists, conceived the term "multimodality" when they discussed the changing ways of communication due to new technologies. They argued for a much broader view of literacy than the traditional printed text and advocated for a new approach to engage students and use all available resources, especially multimedia technologies (New London Group, 1996). Kress (2003) claimed that very soon the screen will govern all of our communication practices. Jewitt (2006) defined modalities as different modes of expression- aural, visual, gestural, spatial, and linguistic. These different modalities come together in a digital environment in ways that reshape the printed word and image or sound (Jewitt, 2006). This combination allows for creativity, meaning making, and can strengthen the learning environment.

When a teacher presents material through a variety of modes, then students are encouraged to develop a more versatile approach to learning (Morrison, Sweeney, and Heffernan, 2003). Through technology induced interactions, multimodality provides resources and opportunities that challenge the traditional forms of teaching. Examples of multimodal teaching may include, but not limited to: digital storytelling, virtual gaming, kinetic typography, hyperlinked texts/stories, blending visual and print media, audio recordings, and writing and editing wikis. According to the New London Group (1996) the view of traditional literacy, relying on the printed text, is a limited and restrictive approach and teachers must expand to new forms that focus on a pedagogy of multiliteracies, "by contrast, focuses on modes of representation much broader than language alone" (p. 64). Xerri (2012) argued "The notion of multimodality redefines pedagogy because learning itself is reconceptualised, partly because of the impact of new technologies" (p. 508). A multimodal teaching approach can and should be incorporated into EFL classrooms.

## II. RESEARCH PURPOSE

Idioms are a complex phenomenon in languages and can be very arduous for second language learners. Most of the studies on English idioms have been conducted with native speakers and concerned with the effects of familiarity and transparency. Very little research has been conducted with foreign language learners and their comprehension of English idioms. Little to no research has been directed toward using a multimodal approach to teach idioms to EFL students. This study aims at investigating Ecuadorian university students' comprehension of English idioms using a multimodal teaching approach in English language class.

#### *A. Participants*

The participants of this study were 81 university students at a small private university in Ecuador in a B2 level English class. All students were undergraduate students with majors in business, mechatronics, engineering, biology, diplomacy, or tourism. There were 41 female students and 40 male students, ranging in age from 18 to 25 years. All of

the students speak Spanish as their native language. There were 4 English classes in total, with two as experimental groups and two as control groups.

### B. Instrumentation

Two instruments were used to gather the data for this study. Both instruments were an idiom comprehension quiz that consisted of 20 multiple choice questions with one correct answer. One was the pre-quiz and the other was the post-quiz. The post-quiz was the same questions but in a different order than the pre-quiz. The 20 English idioms selected for the quizzes were selected from the book "Speak English Like an American" (2004) by Amy Gillett. The idioms were selected because they showed a wide range of familiarity and transparency levels. To guarantee the validity of idiom comprehension quizzes that were prepared by the researchers, they were given to three university English language professors to examine their accuracy and adequacy.

### C. Procedures

The pre-quiz was given to both the control groups and the experimental groups. The main purpose of the pre-quiz was to ensure the homogeneity of the groups. Using the results from the pre-quiz, an independent samples t-test was carried out, which showed that there was no statistically significant mean difference in test scores between the two groups ( $t = -.78, p = .44$ ), suggesting that the control group ( $n = 37, M = 11.43, SD = 2.94$ ) and the experimental group ( $n = 44, M = 10.87, SD = 3.29$ ) were homogeneous samples in levels of comprehension and achievement. Next a list of the 20 idioms with definitions and examples was given to the students. The control group was advised to study the list for the post-quiz to be given a week later. In contrast to this traditional teaching approach, the experimental group was informed of the upcoming multimodal activities.

First the students in the experimental group were shown YouTube videos of idioms in movies and television shows. YouTube integrates meaning-making capabilities through images, audio, visual, and textual. Students were able to see and hear the vast usage of idioms in the English language and culture through some of their favorite television shows and movies. Students were also shown comics about some of the idioms and were asked to interpret the comics' idioms. For the next exercise, students were asked to work with a partner to produce an artistic interpretation of one of the idioms selected at random by means of a digital collage. Having students compose in a digital, multimodal landscape can present "not just a new way to make meaning, but a different kind of meaning" (Hull and Nelson, 2005, p. 225). Students had to guess which idiom was being represented by each digital collage.

The final activity for the experimental group was to create a digital video role play in groups of two to three. Each group selected two idioms at random to include in their digital video role play project. Role play is a way of bringing real life situations into the classroom (Doff, 1990). With performing a role play, students need to conceptualize a role, a situation, or both and invent a conversation using the two selected idioms. According to Magos and Politi (2008), role play activities help students "communicate, express their feelings, enrich their vocabulary and appraise their existing knowledge" and role-play offers a more engaging language-learning experience, creating a "safe environment where learners are relaxed, creative and inventive" (p. 101-102). By constructing the role plays as digital videos the students must combine a variety of traditional and new literacies to create their multimodal project. The students also engage in higher-order thinking (e.g., critical, reflective, and creative thinking) to understand, synthesize, evaluate, and make use of the information to create the digital video role play content (Sadik, 2008).

At the end of the idioms unit, both the control groups and the experimental groups were given a multiple-choice post-quiz on the 20 idioms studied. An independent samples t-test was carried out to examine possible differences in overall means of posttest scores.

### D. Findings

**Results from Independent Samples t-test:** An independent samples t-test was carried out to determine the presence of a significant difference in overall mean posttest scores between the control and experimental groups. The following hypotheses were tested:

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There will be no significant difference in test scores between university students who were taught idioms the traditional way and those who were taught using a multimodal approach.

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There will be a significant difference in test scores between university students who were taught idioms the traditional way and those who were taught using a multimodal approach.

The result from the independent samples t-test showed that there was a statistically significant mean difference in test scores between the two groups ( $t_{(59)} = -6.97, p = .00, CI -6.55 - -3.63$ ), suggesting that the multimodal group ( $M = 18.39, SD = 2.46, n = 44$ ) has a significantly higher mean on test scores ( $M_{diff} = -5.09, SE(M_{diff}) = .73$ ) compared to the group of traditionally taught students ( $M = 13.30, SD = 3.83, n = 37$ ). The null hypothesis is rejected. Thus there is a significant difference in test scores between university students who were taught idioms the traditional way and those who were taught using a multimodal approach. *Cohen's d* of 1.58 indicates a large difference in overall mean posttest scores between both groups.

Treatment	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE</i>
Traditional (control)	37	13.30	3.83	0.63
Multimodal (experimental)	44	18.38	2.46	0.37

Independent -samples t-test	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>MD</i>	<i>CI</i>
	-6.97	59	.00	-5.09	-6.55 - -3.63

### III. CONCLUSION

Many language researchers agree that a substantial knowledge of idioms is essential for English proficiency and fluency and there is a clear correlation between idiom acquisition and communicative competence (Wray, 2002, Liu, 2008, De Caro, 2009, Aljabri, 2013, Lontas, 2002). Idioms contain linguistic features that are challenging to EFL learners and for idiom teachability. There is no conclusive answer in the research as to the best way to teach idioms; however, this study presents a modern multimodal approach to teaching idioms. When instruction is presented through a variety of modes, then students are encouraged to develop a more resourceful approach to learning (Morrison, Sweeney, and Heffernan, 2003). Through technology induced interactions, multimodality provides resources and opportunities that challenge the traditional forms of teaching. Examples of multimodal teaching may include, but not limited to: digital storytelling, virtual gaming, kinetic typography, hyperlinked texts/stories, blending visual and print media, audio recordings, and writing and editing wikis. The present study used YouTube videos, digital artistic collage interpretations, and digital video role plays. The results from the study indicated that the group who received the multimodal teaching approach scored significantly higher on the idioms quiz than the group that received a traditional teaching approach. To improve EFL learners' idiomatic proficiency, teachers should adopt more multimodal activities in the classroom in order to give learners better chances at understanding idioms.

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# The Effectiveness of Jurisprudential Inquiry Learning Model in Developing the Students' Competence in Writing Analytical Exposition Texts

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**Abstract**—The purposes of this exploratory mixed method research are to describe the implementation of Jurisprudential Inquiry Learning Model in developing the students' competence in writing analytical exposition texts and the students' motivation in learning writing. The subject of this study is the fifth semester students of English Department of Tidar University in 2016/2017 academic year. This study employed in-depth interviews, and on-site observation in collecting the data of the effectiveness of this model in developing the students' motivation in learning writing. In addition to that, the writer used writing test of analytical exposition text to know the improvement of the students' writing skill. Following Milles and Hubberman's theory (1994: 10-11), the writer analyzed the qualitative data through data reduction, data display, conclusion and verification. For the quantitative data, the writer used descriptive statistics. The triangulation was employed in checking the validity of the data. The results show that the implementation of Jurisprudential Inquiry Learning Model is an effective way to develop the students' motivation in learning writing. Besides, it develops the students' competence in writing analytical exposition text.

**Index Terms**—analytical exposition text, exploratory mixed method research, jurisprudential inquiry learning model and writing skill

## I. INTRODUCTION

Writing is a productive skill. It means that writing serves as a means of learning, thinking, and organizing knowledge or ideas. It is a complex activity which involves some stages. Writing is really a form of thinking using the written word. As a powerful tool for organizing overwhelming events, it must be mastered by the English Department students. Since 30 years ago, the status of writing as a productive skill in language teaching has accelerated tremendously (Widodo, 2007: 109). As Handoyo (2008: 101) states that besides as a tool for communication, writing also serves as a means of learning, thinking, and organizing knowledge or ideas. In line with Widodo, Temporal (2016: 194) argues that writing, as a language skill, is a power instrument of thinking because it provides learners with a way of gaining control over their thought. As stated by Batin in Temporal (2016: 194), the learner's understanding of the use of language can lead to writing competence. It is a vital component of academic success especially at a university level as the content courses.

In fact, conveying written message through written texts is not simple. It is based on previous observation the writer did in conducting the research. It is also in line with Widodo's statement (2006: 173) that it is approving that the most difficult skill to master foreign or second language learner is writing. It has been considered as one of the most difficult skills for learners to master particularly in an EFL context (i.e., Indonesia). The ability to generate and organize the ideas using appropriate choice of vocabulary, sentence and paragraph is one of the difficulties found by students in writing text. In addition, turning such ideas into a readable text along with a particular rhetoric pattern is another difficulty the students found (Richards & Renandya, 2002: 51)

In addition, the students of writing class still found difficulties especially in organizing a paragraph. It was found that some students were confused in starting the messages. The writer often found that the students of English Department of Tidar University lose their ideas whenever they are expected to write. Based on the above reasons, the students of English Department of Tidar University need to know how to organize the texts in a paragraph writing. As stated by Farikah (2015: 327), writing is a compulsory subject. It belongs to productive skill. This course provides the students with the knowledge and skill of writing. As a skill course, it is a must for the students of English Department of Untidar (Tidar University) to take writing subject. It is an important skill besides the other three skills. As stated by Brown (2004: 218), writing is very significant skill, because almost every aspect of daily life uses written form.

In teaching and learning process of writing, the lecturer plays a key role. It is in line with John's statement that his role is helping the students to develop viable strategies for getting started (finding topics, generating ideas and information, focusing and planning, structure and procedure), for drafting, (encouraging multiple drafts of reading), for revising (adding, deleting, modifying and rearranging ideas), and for editing (attending to vocabulary, sentence, structure, grammar, and mechanics) (John, 1997: 12). In addition to that, lecturer/teacher in that case must be

responsive to the classroom context. He/she must be able to give good demonstration on specific type of writing, to motivate/provoke the students into having ideas, to support and help them overcome difficulties, to respond and make suggestion for their improvement and evaluate the students' work.

Based on the above consideration, the writer applied Jurisprudential Inquiry Learning Model in teaching paragraph writing of analytical exposition text. Referring to Joice and Weil's statement (2008: 78), Jurisprudential Inquiry Model (JIM) is a value clarification approach given by Oliver and Shaver. JIM is a problem solving technique that enhances connection between science, technology and society (Nwafor, 2014: 63). In implementing Jurisprudential Inquiry Model (JIM) in teaching-learning activities of paragraph writing class, it consists of six stages. The stages are orientation to the case, identifying the issues, taking positions, exploring the stance (patterns of argumentation), refining and qualifying the positions, and testing factual assumptions behind qualified positions. In stage one, the lecturer/the teacher gives the students orientation to the case by introducing them the materials and reviewing the facts. Following the stage one, the lecturer/the teacher identifies the issues. It is the second step of the JIM. In this stage, the lecturer/the teacher asks the students to synthesize facts into a public policy issue, select one policy issue for discussion, identify values and value conflicts and recognize underlying factual and definitional questions. Taking the positions is the third step of JIM. In this stage, the students articulated a positions and stated the basis position in terms of social value or consequences of the decision. The fourth step is exploring the stance, patterns of Argumentation. It was done by establishing the point at which value is violated (factual), proving the desirable or undesirable consequences of a position (factual), clarifying the value conflict with analogies and setting priorities. It means asserting the priority of one value over another and demonstrating lack of gross violation of second value (Nwafor, 2014: 63).

In line with the previous steps, the fifth stage is refining and qualifying the Positions. In this occasion, the students stated positions and reasons for positions, and examined a number of similar situation. Finally, they qualified positions. The last stage of JIM is testing factual assumptions behind qualified positions. The students identified factual assumptions and determined if they were relevant. At last, the students determined the predicted consequences and examined their factual validity (Nwafor, 2014, 63-67).

Based on the above phases, it can be inferred that JIM is research-based learning model since through this model, the students research, discuss, debate, and the lecturer encourages them to commit themselves to one side of the issue. The lecturer's role during the teaching-learning process is very important. This model helps the students to think systematically about contemporary issue. This model requires the students to formulate these issues as public policy questions and to analyze alternative position about them (Joice & Weil, 2000: 78). The basic model of Jurisprudential Inquiry Learning includes orientation to the case, identifying the issue, taking positions, exploring the stances underlying the positions taken, refining and qualifying positions and testing assumptions about facts, definitions, and consequences as well (Joice & Weil, 2000: 78).

Based on Singh's opinion, the basic assumptions underlying this model are: (i) in society, people differ in their views and priorities in which social values legitimately conflict with one another (ii) controversial issues are not simple and there is no one right solution for them, (iii) the differences in values can be negotiated through free and open debate by making it process of rational consent (Singh, 2010: 45-71). This study is aimed to investigate the implementation of Jurisprudential Inquiry Learning Model (JIM) in developing the students' competence in writing analytical exposition texts especially in organizing the message in a paragraph. In addition to that, it is expected that through JIM, it can also develop the students' motivation in learning writing. Motivation is an essential component of successful language acquisition and is a dynamic process subject to continuous flux (Dörnyei 2001a:56).

## II. METHODOLOGY

The present study can be classified as mixed method research. Discussing this research paradigm, Creswell (2009: 168) states that the mixed method research paradigm is an approach to inquiry that combines or associates both qualitative and quantitative forms. It involves philosophical assumptions, the use of qualitative and quantitative approaches, and the mixing of both approaches in a study. In line with Creswell, Sugiyono (2013: 16) supports his theories by stating that the mixed method research is based on pragmatism paradigm. This paradigm does not recognize the world as an absolute unity. In other words, in mixed methods, the researchers look for various methods for collecting and analyzing data. It does not use one way only (e.g quantitative or qualitative). Thus for the mixed method research, researcher opens her or his views to multiple method, different worldviews, and different assumptions, as well as different data collection and analysis.

Sequential exploratory mixed method procedures as a part of mixed method research was applied in this research. As stated by Creswell (2009: 175), the characteristics of exploratory strategy mixed method research procedure is collecting and analyzing the qualitative data in a first stage then following them by collecting and analyzing the quantitative data in the second one that build on the results of initial quantitative results. It means the writer has to elaborate on or expand the findings of one method with another method. This study began with a qualitative method in which the writer examined the effectiveness of Jurisprudential Inquiry Learning Model in teaching the students how to develop a paragraph. The writer took qualitative data based on observation and interview then conducted experimental research to elaborate the results of qualitative data analysis.

The data was analyzed in two stages: qualitative and quantitative analyses. Milles and Hubberman's theory (1994: 10-11) was used in analyzing the qualitative data. The writer analyzed the qualitative data through data reduction, data display, conclusion and verification. Reducing the data is the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data that appear in written-up field note or transcription. Displaying the data is organizing, compressing assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and action. In designing the display, what to make are the rows and columns of a matrix of qualitative data and deciding which data, in which form, should be entered in the cell. Conclusions are also verified as the analyst proceeds. Verification may be as fleeting second thought crossing the analyst's mind during writing with a short excursion back to field notes (Milles and Hubberman, 1994: 10).

For the quantitative data, the writer used descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics is the procedure used to organize and present the data in a convenient, summary form. Descriptive statistics in this study was employed to describe the profiles of the students' competence in writing analytical exposition texts before and after the implementation of Jurisprudential Inquiry Learning Model. The triangulation was employed in checking the data validity. The writer applied investigator triangulation as one of the ways in checking the validity and reliability of the data. Investigator triangulation is one of the types of triangulation. In this type of triangulation procedure, more than one observer contributes to the finding (Allwright and Bailey, 1991: 73). In this type of triangulation, the researcher involved other investigator to observe the research data to check its validity and reliability.

### III. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The results of implementation of Jurisprudential Inquiry Learning Model in teaching paragraph writing of analytical exposition text in the academic year of 2016/2017 was effective. It can be seen in two aspects. They are the students' learning motivation and whether or not there is significant difference of the students' competence in developing the paragraph before and after the implementation Jurisprudential Inquiry Learning Model.

#### A. *The Students' Motivation in Writing*

Motivation plays a role in second language acquisition. Discussion on motivation and second language teaching, referring to Gardner's theory (1985: 47), motivation is a combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favorable attitudes towards learning the language. To support Gardner's theory, Dörnyei states that motivation can help majority of the learners to learn a language if they are motivated (Dörnyei, 2001a: 56). The learners' sense of agency and feelings of mastery influences the learner's motivation and controls over the learning activity and their interest (Julia Lo and Hyland, 2007: 219). In other words, motivation refers to "the reasons underlying behavior" (Guay et al., 2010, p. 712). In line with Gredler, Broussard and Garrison broadly define motivation as "the attribute that moves us to do or not to do something" (Broussard and Garrison, 2004: 106).

There are four indicators of motivation. They are choice of tasks, effort, persistence and achievement (Schunk, Pintrich & Meece 2008:11-13). Choice of task means that the student chooses an exercise, and since the exercise is chosen voluntarily it would seem natural that there exists a high level of motivation to complete the task. If the task is difficult the effort and persistence put into completing the task by the student would also be an indication of high motivation, and students who spend time and effort on difficult tasks should achieve greater proficiency. Choice of task can indicate in what areas the student's motivation lies but is ironically a poor guide since free choice is rare or limited in school. Effort is a clear indicator of motivation. A student that is eager to learn will spend more effort on understanding instruction and solving tasks. The student is also more likely to adapt old knowledge to the new task in order to solve it. Constructive feedback that links students' effort to achievement has a positive effect on motivation. Persistence is a good way to measure motivation. Learners that persist at solving exercises despite difficulties are often highly motivated and persistence often leads to better results.

The observation of the student's motivation in learning writing was done to observe the process and the aspects of teaching-learning process using Jurisprudential Inquiry Learning Model (JIM). The on-going learning process, the class performance and the students' performance were monitored using an observation sheet. The recorded data includes the processes and aspects to be observed. In this observation stage, the collaborator was involved to observe the process of teaching-learning activities. He scored on each of the indicator (1= poor, 2= enough and 3= good) and wrote a brief description about the process as well as the subjects of interest which are worth denoting. The aspects of each indicator of the observation before and after the implementation of Jurisprudential Inquiry Learning Model (JIM) can be seen in the following table.



TABLE 1  
THE RESULTS OF INTERVIEW AND OBSERVATION ON THE STUDENTS' MOTIVATION

NO.	Indicators	Pre-treatment (number of the students)			Post-treatment (number of the students)		
		1	2	3	1	2	3
1.	I enjoy writing	15	12	3	0	20	10
2.	I like the composition topic	15	10	5	0	10	20
3.	I like to write down my thoughts	18	7	5	1	11	18
4.	I put a lot of effort into my writing	19	6	5	2	5	23
5.	The things I've written are very important	9	18	3	2	6	22
6.	I enjoy writing about the topic	14	13	3	0	5	25
7.	I like to get feedback from an instructor on my writing	22	8	0	2	19	9
8.	I am able to clearly express my ideas in writing	19	8	3	2	19	9
9.	I enjoy writing assignments that challenge me	14	13	3	1	10	19
10.	I am motivated to write in my class	19	8	3	2	19	9

Based on the above table, it can be seen that the students' motivation in joining teaching-learning process of writing class of the fifth semester students of English Department of Tidar University in 2016/2017 academic year before the implementation of Jurisprudential Inquiry Learning Model (JIM) was in a poor category. Almost all of the indicators are in poor category. After the implementation of, almost all of the indicators are in an enough and a good category.

Based on the data, it can be concluded that after the implementation of Jurisprudential Inquiry Learning Model (JIM) in teaching-learning process of writing class of the fifth semester students of English Department of Tidar University in 2016/2017 academic year, almost all of the students enjoy writing class activities. It means that they like writing, composition topic, writing assignments and are motivated to join the writing class. In other words, the implementation of implementation of Jurisprudential Inquiry Learning Model motivated the students to enjoy writing class activities.

Based on the above data, it can be seen that the implementation of Jurisprudential Inquiry Learning Model is effective for writing of analytical exposition text for the fifth semester students of English Department of Tidar University in 2016/2017 academic year. In addition to that the implementation of Jurisprudential Inquiry Learning Model models encouraged the students to have high order of thinking since through this model, it motivates the students to be creative and innovative ones. The activities became a competitive interaction. Through these models, it gives the students opportunities to talk, listen, write, read, and reflect meaningfully on the content, ideas, issues, and concerns of an academic subject. Besides, this construction of a relaxed environment was naturally smooth since this technique permits free-stress learning. The students felt safe and accepted taking not only risk, but also receiving rewards.

#### B. The Competence in Organizing the Paragraph

To support the qualitative data, the writer gave test to the students to investigate the effectiveness of Jurisprudential inquiry learning model in developing the students' competence in organizing the paragraph of analytical exposition text. Referring to the data analysis, there was a significant improvement of the students' competence in developing analytical exposition texts of the English Department of Untidar in 2016/2017 academic year after the writer implemented Jurisprudential Inquiry Learning model in teaching of paragraph writing.

Based on the above data, it could be seen that Jurisprudential Inquiry Learning model was effective model for teaching paragraph writing. There was an improvement of the students' paragraph writing skill after the implementation of the model. The focus of the improvement can be seen in the students' skill in developing a paragraph. The writer focused this research on organization aspect. Organization here dealt with the students' ability in organizing the paragraph including introduction, body and conclusion. The organization aspect here dealt with how the students develop topic sentence, some supporting sentences and concluding sentence of the paragraph; and because it was a text-based writing, the focus of this research here was also on the application of schematic structures or generic structures of the texts (Farikah, 20015: 64). Since the type of text the writer implemented for this research was an analytical exposition text, the generic structures of the texts were thesis which states the position about the issues, arguments to support the issues and reiteration which summed up the position on the issues. The summary data of the results of the students' competence in organization aspects can be seen in the following table.

TABLE 2.  
THE SUMMARY OF THE ORGANIZATION SCORE OF PRE-TEST

Number of the Students in each Category				
excellent to Good (20-18)	Good to Adequate (17-15)	Adequate to fair (14-12)	Unacceptable (11-6)	Not College Level Work (5-1)
0	0	3	27	0

Referring to the above result, it can be concluded that there are 27 students or 90% from all students belong to the poor category (unacceptable category). The Students who are in fair category (adequate to fair) are three students or 10%. No student who got good to adequate or excellent to good category. Based on the pre-treatment test data, it could be summarized that the ability of the students in organization was still in unacceptable category since the mean score was 11 or 11-6 (unacceptable). Referring to Brown's theory, it means there was shaky or minimally recognizable

introduction; organization can barely be seen; severe problems with ordering of ideas; lack of ideas; lack of supporting evidence; conclusion weak or illogical; inadequate effort of organization (Brown, 1994: 244-245).

Based on the previous facts, the writer conducted the research by implementation of jurisprudential inquiry learning model to develop the students' competence in organizing the paragraph of analytical exposition text. After the implementation of jurisprudential inquiry learning model, it could be inferred that there was some improvement, especially on the number of the students who got score 20-18 or excellent to good category. No student or 0% of the students got excellent to good category in pretest stage into 1 student or 3.33% and 23 students or 76.67 belong to Good to Adequate, 5 students or 16.67 are in adequate to fair category and 1 student or 3.33 belong to unacceptable category in the post test. There is no student belongs to Not College Level Work category In other words, based on the previous explanation, it can be concluded that the implementation of Jurisprudential Inquiry learning model is effective model of teaching to improve the students' competence in writing supporting sentences to develop the paragraph. In other words, it can be summed up that the implementation of jurisprudential inquiry learning model significantly improves the students' competence in developing the paragraph of the English Department students of Tidar University in the academic year of 2016/2017. The Results of post test of writing skill can be seen in the following table.

TABLE 3  
THE RESULT OF POST TEST OF WRITING SKILL

Category	Good to Adequate	Adequate to fair	unacceptable	Not College Level Work
1	23	5	1	0

The comparison between pre-test and post-test of writing skill can be seen in the following graph.

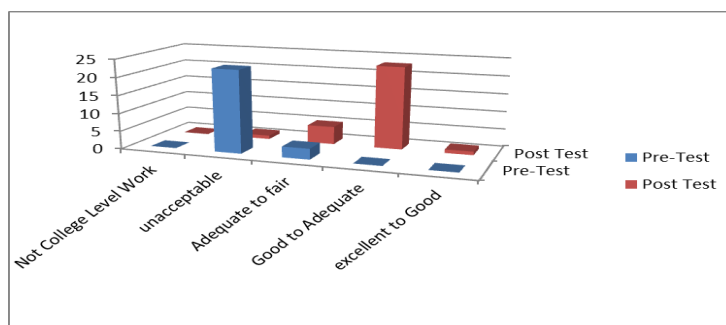


Figure 1 Comparison of Pretest and Posttest Score

Based on the data, it could be inferred that there was some changes, it deals with the increase in number of the students who got good to adequate category, from no student or 0% in pretest of pre-treatment phase into 23 students or 76.67% in post-test of pre-treatment phase. Based on the previous statements, it can be concluded that the implementation of Jurisprudential Inquiry learning model gave good effects on the students' ability in developing the paragraph. In other words, it can be summed up that there is significant improvement of the students' competence in developing a paragraph of the English Department students of Tidar University in the academic year of 2016/2017 before and after treatment by implementing Jurisprudential Inquiry learning model. This model trains the students to have critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration skill.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the data analysis, it can be concluded that there is a significant improvement of the students' writing skills before and after the implementation of jurisprudential inquiry learning model. In addition to that, the implementation of this model improves the students' motivation in joining teaching-learning activities of writing class. Through this model, the students are trained to have a high order of thinking skill. This model is a research-based learning model so the students are expected to be able to analyze, synthesize, evaluate and create a project (text).

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# A Study on Zeng Hu's Translation of *The Thorn Birds* from the Perspective of Chesterman's Norm Theory

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**Abstract**—Based on the norm theory of Toury and Hermans, Chesterman makes a further development on the study of translation norms. In his theory, translation norms fall into two categories: expectancy norms and professional norms. Expectancy norms are from the expectations of target readers and influenced by the economic, political and cultural factors of the target society. Professional norms manipulate the translation process and are subject to expectancy norms. Professional norms can be further divided into accountability norms, communication norms and relation norms. Chesterman's norm theory covers the ethical, social and skill norms during the whole translation process, which has great significance for translation studies and practice. The author of this paper has conducted an overall study on *The Thorn Birds* translated by Zeng Hu from the perspective of Chesterman's norm theory, aiming to analyze the translator's conformity to these norms and how these norms influence his translation. It can be concluded that translation is a norm-governed activity. During the translation of *The Thorn Birds*, the translator Zeng Hu has, in his own way, ingeniously conformed to the translation norms by Chesterman: he not only conforms to the expectancy norms by adopting different translation strategies and styles according to the target readers' needs, but also applies professional norms to make his translation work well accepted by readers and enjoy lasting popularity. Thus, it can be seen that the instructional and normative effects of translation norms is of vital importance to the success of a translation.

**Index Terms**—*The Thorn Birds*, expectancy norms, accountability norms, communication norms, relation norms

## I. INTRODUCTION

Norm is a key concept in descriptive translation studies and an effective tool for the analysis of translation phenomena. The norm theory by Chesterman provides a systematical and historical perspective to analyze both translation product and process, which is a significant development in descriptive translation studies.

*The Thorn Birds* is an English novel by the well-known Australian author Colleen McCullough. Since its publication, this novel has won great popularity among readers and is praised as the Australian version of *Gone with the Wind*. The famous Chinese translator Zeng Hu spent nearly ten years translating this novel into Chinese and revising it over and over until it was finalized in 1989. His translation version is greatly welcomed by Chinese readers due to its high quality.

Many scholars in China have studied Zeng Hu's translation of *The Thorn Birds* from different angles, but none from the angle of Chesterman's norm theory. So the author attempts to conduct a systematic and deep analysis on Zeng's translated version of *The Thorn Birds* from the perspective of Chesterman's norm theory, aiming to analyze the translator's conformity to translation norms and how these norms influence his translation.

## II. CHESTERMAN'S NORM THEORY

### A. Expectancy Norms

Expectancy norms, corresponding to the product norms in sociology, are target readers' expectations of a translation (of a given type) about what a translation (of this type) should be like (Chesterman, 1997). Target readers are not passive receptors of a translation. Rather they influence a translation product from aspects of text type, style and register, lexical choices and so on. To a certain extent, the expectations of target readers should be a standard of translation.

These expectations developed partly because of the prevailing translation tradition in the target culture, and partly because of the form of a similar text type in the target language. Besides, they can be influenced by the economic, political and cultural factors of the target society (Chesterman, 1997).

Chesterman's expectancy norms have provided a comprehensive way to evaluate and compare translation works as well as to describe and explain translation phenomena. At a given time and in a given culture, the more closely a translator conforms to readers' expectancy, the more popular his or her work will be.

### B. Professional Norms

Professional norms are actually “process norms” in sociology, which regulate the whole process of translation, including the translation methods and strategies used during translation process. Chesterman subsumed all professional norms under three general high-order norms: accountability norms, communication norms and relation norms.

(a) Accountability norms: They refer to a translator’s responsibility to relevant parties of translation, including the original author, the potential readers and so on. It is an ethical norm, for translators are supposed to be appropriately loyal to these parties mentioned above. In case of conflict among different parties, translators are allowed to have their own choices about which party should be given the primary loyalty.

(b) Communication Norms: Translation is not just about language, but also has its certain communicative function. So the communication norm requires translators to optimize communication between all the parties involved in a given situation. Under this social norm, a translator functions as a communication expert, who mediates the intentions of others and also plays a role as a speaker of his or her own

(c) Relation Norms: This is a linguistic norm. Translators are supposed to set up and maintain a proper relation of similarity between source text and target text.

As for relations between texts, there’s a wide variety of them. To decide what kind of relation is proper in a given situation, translators should refer to the type of text, demands of the commissioner and so on (Chesterman, 1997).

### III. CASE STUDY ON *THE THORN BIRDS* TRANSLATED BY ZENG HU

As translation is a norm-governed activity (Han, 2004a), any translation phenomena can be partly explained by norms. Therefore, in this section, *The Thorn Birds* translated by Zeng Hu will be analyzed under the framework of Chesterman’s norm theory. The author of this paper aims to find out how Zeng Hu’s translation has conformed to Chesterman’s norm theory and how these norms have influenced his translation so that an overall understanding of Zeng’s translation of this novel can be got.

#### A. Expectancy Norms in Zeng’s Translation of *The Thorn Birds*

Zeng Hu finalized his translation of *The Thorn Birds* in 1989. It had been over 10 years since the policy of reform and opening up was implemented. China’s door was opened to the outside world, which resulted in great changes in various fields. There’s more and more frequent communication between China and the rest of the world in the fields of politics, economics, culture and so on. China was gradually becoming globalized. In the aspect of culture, lots of foreign literature works were introduced and translated. People were eager to know the outside world and learn about foreign cultures from all aspects. What’s more, with the enhancement of people’s education level, their cultural taste also improved and their horizon broadened. People’s mind were advanced and open, which made foreign cultural elements were easy to be accepted.

Against such social background, people’s expectations towards translated literature works can be easily got. That is to learn about foreign culture as much as possible. So in Zeng’s translation of *The Thorn Birds*, the translator fully displays the exotic scenery and adequately exposes readers to foreign culture, which can be seen in the following examples:

##### Example 1:

“.....steam gushed howling out of cracks in the sides of innocent hills, volcanoes summed smoke into the sky and the alpine streams ran warm. Huge lakes of mud boiled oilily, the seas lapped uncertainly at cliffs which might not be there to greet the next incoming tide, and in places the earth’s crust was only nine hundred feet thick.” (McCullough, 2007, p.6)

“在那无害的山峰边缘的裂缝里,蒸汽咆哮着奔涌而出,火山的浓烟直抵云天,山间的河川淌着热气腾腾的水流。巨大的泥浆湖油锅似地沸腾着。海水神出鬼没地拍击着悬崖峭壁,当下一个浪潮席卷而来的时候,这些峭壁或许已经不复存在,而不能前来迎候了。在某些地方,地壳表面的厚度只有 900 英尺。” (Zeng,2008,p.4)

##### Example 2:

“Kangaroos in flocks of thousands streamed leaping through the trees, taking fences in their stride, utterly lovely in their grace and freedom and numbers; emus built their nests 96 in the middle of the grassy plain and stalked like giants about their territorial boundaries, taking fright at anything strange and running fleetly than horses away from their dark-green, football-sized eggs; termites built rusty towers like miniature skyscrapers; huge ants with a savage bite poured in rivers down mounded holes in the ground.” (McCullough, 2007, p.80)

“成群结队的袋鼠蹦蹦跳跳、络绎不绝地穿过树林,不费吹灰之力地越过篱栅;它们那种优雅健美、自由自在之态以及数量之多,使人心旷神怡。鸸鹋在平展展的草地中筑巢,像巨人一样在它们的领地里高视阔步;任何陌生的东西都会使它们大吃一惊,一溜烟地从它们那深绿色的、足球大小的蛋旁飞逃而去,比马还跑得快。白蚁构筑的棕色的蚁冢是小小的摩天大楼;咬啮东西极其凶猛的巨蚁源源不断地顺河而下,在地下营造洞穴。” (Zeng, 2008, p.70)

The first example is a brief description of the natural environment in New Zealand, which shows readers the living environment of the Cleary family as well as the unique scenery of New Zealand. While the second example is a short depiction of Drogheda in Australia, where the Cleary family later moved to. Actually, there is a large number of such detailed depictions of natural scenery in the original text.

Instead of omission, Zeng Hu faithfully translated all of them. His graceful language successfully leads readers into

the exotic world and shows them the life of people in New Zealand and Australia from the beginning of 20th century to the end of the 1960s. This greatly meets readers' demands and expectations of foreign culture and gains their preference.

Zeng's preservation of exotic culture was embodied not only by the translation of scenery depictions, but also by the translation of names. The following table contains the names of the main characters in the novel and their translation.

Example 3:

Names	Translation
Meghann "Meggie" Cleary	梅吉·克利里
Ralph de Bricassart	拉尔夫·德·布里克萨特
Padraic "Paddy" Cleary	帕迪·克利里
Luke O'Neill	卢克·奥尼尔
Fiona "Fee" Armstrong Cleary	菲奥娜·阿姆斯特朗·克利里
Dane O'Neill	戴恩·奥尼尔
Justine O'Neill	朱丝婷·奥尼尔

It can be seen from the above table that the translator adopts transliteration to deal with the English names in the original text. The characteristics of English names are presented and readers can thus learn about the form and feature of foreign names. In this way, the translator makes his work more acceptable and more popular.

What's more, readers tend to favor translations that are learnable and understandable. Due to the language difference between English and Chinese, sometimes translating according to the sentence structure of the original text may make readers confused. Chinese features the four-character structure, which has a beauty of phonology. Chinese readers are used to this kind of expression for they are short and pithy. In *The Thorn Birds* translated by Zeng Hu, the translator attaches great importance to this point and uses the four-character structure to meet readers' expectation.

Example 4:

"He looked sincere, upset, anxious, contrite. And very like Ralph de Bricassart." (McCullough, 2007, p.291)

"他看上去显得很诚恳, 心烦意乱, 焦急如焚, 追悔莫及, 和拉尔夫·德·布里克萨特十分相像。" (Zeng, 2008, p.255)

Example 5:

"It was like having a ticket of admission to a whole new planet, peering through the glass down into that teeming, exquisitely fragile world, where delicate forms were buoyed and bolstered by the loving intimacy of water." (McCullough, 2007, p.323).

"透过玻璃钢看着下面那 千姿万态、精巧优美、脆而易碎的世界, 就好象买门票进入了一个 耳目一新的陌生的星球。 令人神爽、亲切宜人的海水中漂浮着各种 精美优雅的生物。" (Zeng, 2008, p.283)

Example 6:

"She had hoped to see the only girl married on Drogheda with flags flying and cymbals clashing, days of celebration." (McCullough, 2007, p. 261)

"她本来希望在德罗海达唯一的姑娘结婚之时, 能看到 彩旗飞扬, 锣鼓喧天, 狂欢数日的场面。" (Zeng, 2008, p.227)

As can be seen from the above examples, the translator fully uses the four-character structures in Chinese. The meaning and style of the original text are vividly and accurately conveyed to readers with concise and rhythmic expressions. This helps to increase the literary elegance of the writing as well as makes the text easy for the target readers' reading.

In a word, in this work, the translator satisfies readers' requirements and expectations in different ways, including remaining the exotic flavor of the original text and using Chinese four-character structures. And this conformity to expectancy norms makes his work popular among more and more people.

#### B. Accountability Norms in Zeng's Translation of *The Thorn Birds*

According to Chesterman, the value behind accountability norms is trust (Han, 2004b). First of all, a translator should trust the author of the original text and that the original work is worth translating. Then, others should also trust the proficiency of a translator and believe he or she is capable of translating the work. Meanwhile, the translator should undertake the responsibility, make efforts to translate the work well and establish his or her reputation as a translator.

In the case of *The Thorn Birds*, the translator conforms to the accountability norms very well. Undoubtedly, Zeng Hu trusts the original novel and its author Colleen McCullough, for he chooses this novel to translate. This can also be seen from the preface of the Chinese version of this novel. In the preface, detailed introduction as well as high remarks about the original work are presented. "In a word, *The Thorn Birds* is a rare best-selling novel with well-knit structure as well as fluent and vivid language. It is full of passion and poetic flavor, with epigrammatic words scattering in the whole text. *The Thorn Birds* is a very readable novel. I'd like to recommend it to any literate person (Zeng, 2008)."

Meanwhile, Zeng Hu shows his responsibility as a good translator through the repeated revision of his translation. The first draft was finished in 1980, after which he revised twice until 1989. The whole translation process went through almost 10 years. However, in his epilogue, Zeng Hu said that there still might be some defects in his translation. Such rigorous scholarship is exactly a manifestation of the translator's conformity to accountability norms.

### C. Communication Norms in Zeng's Translation of *The Thorn Birds*

Communication norms emphasize a translator's responsibility to maximize communication between all the parties involved in a given situation of translation. The value governing the communication norms is understanding (Han, 2004b: 47). The aim of communication is to change non-understanding to understanding and avoid misunderstanding. Here, the author of this paper mainly focuses on the communication between the original novel and the target readers via translation.

One embodiment of Zeng Hu's conformity to communication norms is his use of footnotes. Due to cultural differences, there are inevitably some "cultural barriers" existing during the translation process. Some source-culture-bound features in the original text may cause difficulties for target readers' comprehension and thus lead to misunderstanding. So translators ought to remove or at least weaken the cultural barriers assuming that the target readers don't have the cultural knowledge of the source text. Adding footnotes is a good way to explain and make clear the contents. There are totally 189 items of footnote in Zeng's translation. The followings are some examples:

#### Example 7:

"I'm not gifted with Promethean foresight, and emotional involvement makes one a poor judge." (McCullough, 2007, p.364).

"我没有普罗米修斯那样的先见之明，卷进狂热之中使一个人的判断力极低。" (Zeng, 2008, p.320)

"注：希腊神话中的神祇，因把天火偷给人类而受到了宙斯的惩罚，被锁在高加索的悬崖上，每天有一只鹫鹰啄食他的肝脏，然而他的肝脏旋即长成，直到有人自愿替他受罪为止。" (Zeng, 2008, p.320)

Promethean is from the word "Prometheus". Prometheus is a character in Greek mythology, who was the creator of mankind. However, Chinese readers may know little about Prometheus and thus may feel confused about the meaning of the sentences in discussion. To help readers figure it out, Zeng Hu adds a footnote to introduce some background information of Prometheus and the communication between the original text and readers is successfully achieved.

#### Example 8:

"In the days before the Fall, it is said Eve didn't menstruate." (McCullough, 2007, p.135)

"在亚当犯原罪以前的时代里，据说夏娃是不行经的。" (Zeng, 2008, p.119)

"注：《圣经·创世纪》称，亚当是上帝用泥土造的第一个男人，上帝又用亚当的肋骨造出其妻夏娃，同置于“伊甸园”中。后因两人同时吃了禁果，遂相爱，被逐出“伊甸园”。此后，作为亚当与夏娃后代的人类便有了与生俱来的男女之爱，基督教称此为原罪。" (Zeng, 2008, p.119)

The story of Eve and Adam is recorded in the Bible. It's the western version about human being's origin. Chinese readers may be unfamiliar with it. So the addition of this footnote is helpful for readers to understand the text. Meanwhile, readers' needs for exotic flavor and foreign atmosphere are met by translator's preservation of foreign cultural characteristics. Their horizon is also widened by being directly exposed to foreign culture.

Another embodiment of the translator's conformity to communication norms is his application of domestication strategies during translation process. Although readers expect exotic color, foreignization can't be brought to extreme. Otherwise, it may cause over-foreignization and make readers confused. In this translated work, to make readers easily understand the text, the translator in some cases render English expressions into Chinese idiomatic expressions to express the same meaning as the original text. Let's look at the following examples:

#### Example 9:

"She shook her head, laughed. What's the use? It's like talking to a brick wall." (McCullough, 2007, p.351)

"她摇摇头，大笑起来，这有什么用？就像是在对牛弹琴。" (Zeng, 2008, p.309)

"Be like talking to a brick wall" is an English idiom. If talking to someone is like talking to a brick wall, the person you're speaking to doesn't listen, which makes you have a feeling of wasting time and energy. However, Chinese readers do not have this expression habit. As a mediator in translation, the translator Zeng Hu translates this phrase to "对牛弹琴", which is a Chinese idiom having the same meaning as "talking to a brick wall". Thus, readers can get the meaning immediately and achieve communication with the original text. The followings are other such examples:

#### Example 10:

"No chance of that, I'm afraid..." (McCullough, 2007, p.58)

"我恐怕没这个造化..." (Zeng, 2008, p.50)

#### Example 11:

"Well, let's cross that bridge when we come to it, eh?" (McCullough, 2007, p.275)

"唔，船到桥头自然直，好吗?" (Zeng, 2008, p.240)

#### Example 12:

"We're supposed to lick her boots." (McCullough, 2007, p.31)

"她认为我们该舔她的靴子、拍她的马屁的。" (Zeng, 2008, p.26)

#### Example 13:

"Admit it, Luke, you're a miser." (McCullough, 2007, p.143)

"承认吧，卢克，你是个守财奴。" (Zeng, 2008, p.309)

#### Example 14:

“Lord help us, it's herself! the maid said clearly from the reception room opposite.” (McCullough, 2007, p.141)

“老天爷呀，是她！女仆的说话声从对面的客厅里清晰地传了过来。” (Zeng, 2008, p.124)

It's obvious that such kind of words and phrases like “造化”，“船到桥头自然直”，“拍马屁”，“守财奴”，“老天爷” are typical Chinese expressions. It's easy to translate the above English sentences into Chinese. But it's difficult to make these translations impressive. If the translator just renders these sentences literally, it may be rigid and hard for readers to understand. By such an ingenious translation, Zeng Hu accurately keeps the original meaning without retaining the original expressions. Most importantly, these words and phrases with Chinese cultural characteristics are easy for readers to understand and win their acceptance.

From the above analysis, it can be seen that in order to prompt target readers' understanding of the original text and realize the optimal communication, the translator not only adds footnotes to make explanations to readers and bring them exotic culture, but also adopts the strategy of domestication to close the distance between readers and the original text. The aim of communication is well achieved in his translation.

#### D. Relation Norms in Zeng's Translation of *The Thorn Birds*

Here, the author of this paper mainly focuses on the influence of text types on the translator's conformity to relation norms.

According to the famous translation Theorist Peter Newmark, source language texts can be divided into six types based on their functions. They're respectively expressive texts, informative texts, vocative texts, phatic texts, aesthetic texts and metalingual texts (Zhang, 2014). Different from other literary works, a novel contains various text types to serve for the development of plot.

So is the case of *The Thorn Birds*. Large numbers of dialogues between characters and depictions of the environment as well as figures are presented in the novel. Besides, testament, news, cable and speech are also contained. So it can be seen that the major text of this novel is expressive text, while the informative text and vocative text occupy a small part of it.

In the following parts, the translator's conformity to relation norms in translating these three text types will be analyzed respectively.

##### 1. Relation Norms in Translating Expressive Texts

In *The Thorn Birds*, there are a lot of descriptions of natural environment, the characters and the conversations between figures, which are all expressive texts. They aim to not only bring some information or facts to readers, but also more importantly, to bring a certain emotion or feeling to them and depict the characters' personalities. Thus, in translating expressive texts, translators are supposed to explore the intention of the original texts and maintain a proper similarity with the original text in style and meaning. Here come some examples:

Example 15:

“It had been a dry winter, and the summer rains didn't come. Knee-high and lush, the tawny grass dried out in the stark sun until even the inner core of each blade was crisp. To look across the paddocks required slitted eyes and a hat brim drawn far down on the forehead.” (McCullough, 2007, p.190).

“冬天干旱，夏天就没有雨水。茂盛的、没膝高的草在炎炎赤日的照射下变成了茶褐色，甚至连叶片心都焉了。要想放眼瞭望一下牧场，就得眯起眼睛，把帽洞低低地压在前额上。” (Zeng, 2008, p.168)

This paragraph describes the natural scenery of Australia in winter. The writer uses the words like “dried out” “stark” “crisp” “slitted eyes” and so on to show the dry climate and lack of vitality. In the Chinese version of this paragraph, “dried out” is not literally translated into “干枯”. Rather, it is rendered into “变成了茶褐色”，which vividly presents the image before readers and makes them feel the aridity of winter in Drogheda. Thus this free translation successfully gets the effect of the original text. Meanwhile, for other words “stark” “crisp” and “slitted eyes”，Zeng Hu translated them respectively into “炎炎赤日”“焉了”“眯着眼睛”. These detailed and vivid translations accurately convey the style of the original text and thus maintain a similarity as it.

##### 2. Relation Norms in Translating Informative Texts

In translating expressive texts, language and writing styles are the focus; while for the translation of informative texts, content and information should be emphasized. In *The Thorn Birds*, informative texts include testament, news, cable and logbook. Here comes an example:

Example 16:

“Born on September 23, 1893, in the Republic of Ireland, Cardinal de Bricassart was the second son of a family which can trace its descent from Baron Ranulf de Bricassart, who came to England in the train of William the Conqueror. By tradition, Cardinal de Bricassart espoused the Church. He entered the seminary at the age of seventeen, and upon his ordination was sent to Australia. His first months were spent in the service of the late Bishop Michael Clabby, in the Diocese of Winnemurra.” (McCullough, 2007, p. 411)

“德·布里克萨特红衣主教于1893年9月23日生于爱尔兰共和国，是一个血统可以追溯到拉诺夫·德·布里克萨特的家庭的次子。这个家族是随征服者威廉一世的队伍到了英国来的。根据传统，德·布里克萨特红衣主教加入了教会。他在17岁时进入神学院，受委任派至澳大利亚。最初几个月，他在温尼穆拉的迪奥西斯为前主教迈克尔·克莱比服务。” (Zeng, 2008, p.363)



This extract is a part of a piece of news on newspaper from the novel, which introduces the Father Ralph. The intention of the news is to provide some information about Ralph and let readers of the newspaper know about him. The language of the original text is plain, direct and easy to understand. So in the translated version, the translator also adopts literal translation and renders all the detailed information into simple words. Therefore, it can be seen that in translating informative texts, translators are supposed to pay more attention to the completeness of information than to the polish of language.

### 3. Relation Norms in Translating Vocative Texts

Vocative texts aim to appeal to or encourage receivers to do something. So the language of vocative texts is inspiring, persuasive and infectious. Such texts include notices, speeches, propaganda and so on (Zhang, 2014). The following is an example of vocative text in *The Thorn Birds*.

Example 17:

“Our staying power, and that of the Mother Country, will be best assisted by keeping our production going, continuing our avocations and business, maintaining employment, and with it, our strength. I know that in spite of the emotions we are feeling, Australia is ready to see it through.” (McCullough, 2007, p.368)

“我们赖以支持的那个政权，亦即我们的祖先之邦，将通过我们生产的继续进行，我们以副业和商业的继续进行和保证就业——这就是我们的力量——得到最好的援助。我知道，无论我们现在正在体验着什么样的感情，澳大利亚已准备把战争进行到底。” (Zeng, 2008, p.323)

The above example is a part of the speech by the PM of Australia on the radio. This political speech is addressed to stimulate listeners' fighting will and encourage them to join the Second World War to fight against the Hitler. In the original text, words like “mother country” and “be ready” are used to create a kind of inspiring atmosphere. So in the translated version, the translator is not only faithful to the meaning of the source text, but also recreate the original feeling for target readers, which is shown from the expressions “祖先之邦”, “进行到底” and so on. This is the way in which the translator retains similarity with the original text.

From the above analysis, it can be seen that even in a literary work, there are different text types. During his translation, the translator Zeng Hu conforms to the relation norms in different ways according to different text types, which makes his translation more readable and close to the original text. Thus the same feeling gained by the original readers can be brought to the target readers.

## IV. CONCLUSION

Based on Chesterman's norm theory, the author of this paper has conducted an overall study of *The Thorn Birds* translated by Zeng Hu. Through the detailed analysis of examples, it can be found that during his translation, the translator has in his own way conformed to the norms in Chesterman's theory. For expectancy norms, the translator Zeng Hu takes the social background and readers' needs into account during his translation process, bringing exotic flavor into his translation work and making it easy for people to understand. Under the accountability norms, he revises his translation again and again and makes great efforts to offer readers a good work. Besides, he also adopts various translation strategies and methods to flexibly meet requirements of relation norms and communication norms, which helps his work win preference of readers. Thus it can be concluded that the translator's conformity to these norms plays an important role in his success of translation.

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# Effects of Lexical Simplification and Elaboration on Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners' Learning and Retention of Phrasal Verbs

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**Abstract**—This study aimed at investigating the effect of lexical simplification and elaboration on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' learning and retention of phrasal verbs. In order to achieve this goal, a PET test was run into 130 learners. When target participants were chosen, they were assigned into three groups including two treatment groups and one control group. Through a multiple choice test, 40 out of 60 phrasal verbs were selected as target phrasal verbs. Through 8 sessions of treatment, each group received a reading comprehension text that contained 5 phrasal verbs. But the way the phrasal verbs in two experimental groups were modified was different. One of them received elaborated input and the other group received simplified input; meanwhile, the control group received unmodified input. After eight sessions of treatment, an immediate multiple choice test was administered to find out which techniques had stronger effect on participant's learning and retention of phrasal verbs. After one month, the same test, with a different order of items, was administered as delayed posttest to check the participants' level of retention. According to the results of the study simplified input group significantly outperformed the control and elaborated group on both learning and retention of phrasal verbs.

**Index Terms**—lexical elaboration, lexical simplification, phrasal verbs

## I. INTRODUCTION

In learning a second language, we should take into consideration that language input is a necessary and key factor in learning a second language, but more important than that is being exposed to comprehensible input which means that learners should be able to understand the essence of what is being said or presented to them. What seems essential in here is not only the presence of target language input, but also that the learner understanding of target language. As Corder (1967) originally pointed out and it has also been underlined by Krashen's input hypothesis (1980), any input must be comprehended if it is meant to assist the acquisition process. Different studies have been done in the area of input comprehension (Carroll 1999, Eliss1991, block 2003, Gass and Mackey 2007), most of these studies have developed from two important hypotheses first, Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1982) which emphasized the importance of comprehensible input in second language acquisition and second, long's interaction hypothesis (1996) which is related to the role of interaction in second language criteria.

There are various strategies and methods in second language acquisition that have a contributor role in making input more easily understood and comprehensible, among them, input modification can be referred. To be more specific, input modification has its own subdivisions including input simplification, input elaboration, input enhancement, etc. Input modification is based on premise that "input must be comprehensible to become intake" (Watanabe, 1997, p, 287).

The input modification is motivated by Krashen's input hypothesis (1981, 1985 and 1987) and Long's interaction hypothesis (1983a, 1983b, 1996). "The input hypothesis states that an important condition for language acquisition to occur is the acquirer understand input language that contains structure a bit beyond his or her current level of competence, for instance if an acquirer is at stage or level I, the input he or she understands should contain i+1" (Krashen, 1981, p.100). In parallel to Krashen's input hypothesis, the interaction hypothesis argued that comprehensible input is essential for language learning. Moreover, interaction hypothesis states that the effectiveness of comprehensible input is considerably enhance when learners have to negotiate for meaning.

Even though there are several studies that relate interaction with language acquisition, not all researchers advocate for the idea that interaction is the main means by which language proficiency develops. Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991), believe that interaction is not necessary for language acquisition and it only aids in certain conditions. Furthermore, Ellis, (1997) notes that interaction is not always positive. He stated that sometimes it can make the input more sophisticated and therefore learners might confuse. In accordance with Ellis (1997), long paraphrases and complex, confusing definitions of a word which is not understood should be avoided; otherwise, learners may come to the

conclusion that the role of interaction in language acquisition is hard for them. In the similar path, this study endeavored to examine two types of input modification (simplification and elaboration) on learning and retention of phrasal verbs by Iranian EFL intermediate level students. To be more specific, the researcher of this study investigated the best way to modify or manipulate the input in a way which is best for learning and retention. The input for the current study is Phrasal verbs. Phrasal verbs are two-word or three word idiomatic expressions, consisting of a verb and a particle or combination of a particle and a preposition (Lewis, 1993). Recently, there has been much attention paid to avoidance of phrasal verbs by EFL learners. (Chen, 2007; Liao, 2004). Having magnified the importance of phrasal verbs in many curriculums, some learners still have considerable problems applying them. Many EFL teachers wonder why their students do not show comprehensive improvement in using phrasal verbs. Although English learners including Iranian EFL learners, encounter some of the phrasal verbs such as go on, get out, point out, wake up etc. from very early stage, they still have considerable problems in applying them. Native speakers tend to use phrasal verbs in their speech a lot. On the contrary, non-native speakers of English tend to avoid phrasal verbs when communicating in the foreign language (Liao & Fukuya, 2004). Although most of English learners have desired to use language as native speakers, they don't use phrasal verbs as much as native speakers. This shortcoming may come from the complexity of phrasal verbs or maybe because of learners' needs for more illustration to get the meaning of that specific phrasal verb.

### **Input Simplification and input Elaboration**

One of the major types of modifications that have been used to make incoming input more understandable for learners is input simplification. Simplification refers to those changes that make input to have less lexical and syntactical complexity. In lexical simplification, a word with a low frequency is substituted with higher frequency equivalent word; and in case of no synonymous word is found a low frequency word with a short phrase including higher frequency word will be use (brewer, 2008). Similar definition for input simplification is suggested by Urano (2000, p. 4) as controlling the text which is targeted for second language learners by removing unfamiliar linguistic items, in order to increase their comprehension level.

Another major type of modifications that has a great effect on comprehensible input is elaborative modification. In the process of input elaboration, extra information is added to the text in order to make it less difficult in terms of lexical or syntactic complexity. Yet on the input simplification mechanism, syntactic or lexical complexity is omitted from the text. Different researchers presented different definition as Brewer (2008) defined lexical elaboration as "adding a short parenthetical definition (composed of high frequency words) after a low frequency word" (p.4). On the other hand in some other studies lexical elaboration is defined as adding definitions or synonyms instead of difficult lexical items (Kim, 2006).

Elaboration is defined in a bit different way by Parker and Chaudron (1987). They suggested another definition for elaboration as "the addition of redundancy, and the explicit realization of underlying thematic relations" (p.110). It is believed that elaboration is created to facilitate language learning by means of restatement, paraphrases, and synonyms (Chaudron& Parker, 1987, p.110).

A number of researches in the area of text modification have been done. A study conducted by Shirinzarii and Mardani (2011) investigated the effect of two different text modification including simplification and elaboration, on Iranian EFL learners' incidental vocabulary acquisition. The result indicates that, the learners who read the simplified text, gained higher score in comparison with those who received elaborated and baseline texts.

Mousapour Negari (2012) attempted to investigate the effects of lexical modification on incidental vocabulary acquisition of Iranian EFL students. In Mousapours' study four versions of experimental text containing 20 target words were created including baseline and simplified versions, as well as elaborated version with two types of parenthetical elaborated and non-parenthetical elaborated version. The result revealed the superiority of elaboration over simplification and also the superiority of parenthetical elaboration over non-parenthetical elaboration. They also assumed that supplying synonyms or short definition exactly next to the lexical items can help the learners acquire the second stage of vocabulary learning considerably easier.

Blae (1982) presents ineffectiveness of simplification as he believes that input simplification leads to comprehension, but clearly not consistently, he also state that input simplification omits the input linguistic items from baseline text that students need to acquire.

Chung (1995) investigated the effect of input simplification and input elaboration on reading comprehension of second language learners and came to conclusion that both input simplification and input elaboration would facilitate the process of reading comprehension in second language learners. In Chung (1995) study five different version of reading passage were presented as unmodified version, simplified version, structurally elaborated version, lexically elaborated version and structurally and lexically elaborated version. In simplified version, some changes may occur to simplify the text as an example, a compound sentence substituted with several simple declarative sentences and each of them represent only a single main idea, in this version a low-frequency word substituted with high-frequency word also active voice sentences are more preferable in simplified version. Lexical elaboration was achieved by definition of unknown elements. The aim of structural elaboration is to increase redundancy of the text in order to make it clarify. The combination of lexically elaborated and structurally elaborated made the last version which is lexically & structurally version. Data obtained from this study indicated that a significant difference between the simplified and

baseline version of the text also No significant differences were appeared between the elaborated conditions and the baseline form.

Pica (1987) investigates the effects of modified interaction on Comprehension and the acquisition of word meaning. He found that internationally modified input resulted in better comprehension, furthermore new words acquired better in compare to pre-modified group in his study.

Various researches in the area of text modification have been examined the effects of input elaboration on second language learners' comprehension. Moradian and Adel (2011), attempt to investigate the effect of elaborated text and unelaborated text on vocabulary learning of Iranian EFL learners in Lorestan University. They tried to find out whether explicit elaboration or implicit elaboration have any effects on vocabulary acquisition of learners, and can they be used as an independent tool for increasing learners in recognizing the meaning of new vocabularies in a text. Moradian and Adel (2011), choose three groups of EFL learners that each group contains 45 students and they were exposed to 30 low-frequency words by reading one of the three versions of an experimental text which contains those verbs. The outcome indicate that explicit lexical elaboration, compared to implicit lexical elaboration, was the most effective kind of lexical elaboration in vocabulary learning of Iranian EFL learners. Urano (2000) examined the effect of lexical simplification and lexical elaboration on second language sentence comprehension and incidental vocabulary acquisition. Forty sentences were presented in a way which one target word was included in three version of simplified, elaborated, and distracted then the test distributed to forty native speakers of Japanese. After reading the sentences, two vocabulary tests were administered and showed that the mean score in the baseline version and elaborated version were higher than in the simplified version. On the other hand, some studied came to this conclusion that none of the techniques have positive effects on learners' learning. In this regard, Nemat tabrizi (2016), attempt to investigate the effect of input-based instruction on the speaking ability of Iranian EFL learners. The results reveal that the students who received input -based instruction outperformed the other students in the control group. This led to the conclusion that input-based instruction influences total speaking ability of EFL learners.

Modifying input with the aim of making it more comprehensible for language learners is one of the most common phenomena in the second language area. Input modification is based on premise that that "input must be comprehensible to become intake" (Watanabe, 1997, p, 287). Guided by theoretical perspective of modifying input with the aim of making it more comprehensible for language learners, much current second language research has focused on identifying what makes input more comprehensible to the learner (e.g., Blau 1980, Chaudron 1983, 1985, Johnson 1981, Krashen 1980, Long 1985). Rubin (1987) believes that educators need to be aware of a number of techniques and strategies which can be set into students existing criteria. Use of input simplification and input elaboration as techniques of input modification, to enhance comprehension has gained attention of SLA researchers.

It is commonly believed that simplifying input will enhance L2 comprehension; however, several researchers have presented against its use as a result of simplifying input does not necessarily help Comprehension (e.g., Blau, 1982), also it removes from the input linguistic items that L2 learners need to learn (e.g., Yano, Long, & Ross, 1994).

Input elaboration as well as input simplification improves comprehension by adding extra information to the text and make it less complicated. In the following section, this study is going to illustrate each technique.

Long believes that, input in second language area can be modified in its linguistic form such as morphemes deletion, also input modification can take place during interaction which a proper example of it would be confirmation checks and self-repetition. Moreover, it is likely that modification occur in both linguistic form and interaction or neither of them.

Long's study (1981, 1983) indicates that in the interaction of native speaker and non-native speaker, native speakers tend to modify their interaction more often than they did the input.

A few researchers (Long, 1982; Ellis & He, 1999; Gass & Varonis, 1994) have supported the input hypothesis by suggesting modified input, internationally modified input and modified output as three rich sources of comprehensible input for SLA. On that account, modified input refers to those input that has been altered in order to make them more simplified before the language learners confront them, internationally modified input, on the other hand, originates from input modification that occurs when language learners experience difficulty comprehending a message in their communication with interlocutors, and modified output refers to language learners' efforts to modify their output to make it more comprehensible to the interlocutor (Long, 1996).

Similarly, in this area, long (1983), however, has propose the interaction hypothesis according to which it is the modifications that make input comprehensible through the process of negotiating a communication problem that are especially beneficial for second language acquisition. Long refers a number of these modifications such as self-repetition, confirmation checks, clarification requests, clarification request and other repetitions; he claims that he assists to make unfamiliar linguistic input, more comprehensible and consequently more acquirable by the learner.

## II. METHODOLOGY

As already elaborated in the first chapter, the current study investigated which type of input modification; either input elaboration or input simplification had a better effect on learning and retention of phrasal verbs. To move forward this study the researcher needed to determine who the participants were and what kind of materials were going to be used and more importantly what method was going to be applied. In addition, a control group needed to be selected to

contribute to the validity of the research. This approach was possible by implementing pretest posttest control group design.

A quantitative method was used in this study to analyze the problem by generating numerical data that could lead to usable statistics. By the end of chapter three, the design section will represent how the general plan of this research was retained.

### Participants

It is said that, selection of participants has always been a crucial factor since it has strong effect on external validity of research (Hatch and Farhady, 1981). Therefore, considerable care is devoted in the process of drawing them out of population; however, in order to heel the external validity of the research and have better random sampling, the participants that were taking part in this study were those who studied English as a Foreign Language at two English institutes in different parts of Tehran. The participants of this study were intermediate level students who were chosen from 130 Iranian EFL learners of English by means of proficiency test of PET. Those learners whose scores on the language proficiency test fell within 1 standard deviation above or below the mean score were selected as the target participants of the study. The participants' age ranges were between 13 and 16 years old. Both genders were included in the study.

### Procedure

Before the treatment sessions started, all the participants needed to be homogeneous in terms of their proficiency level; this is the first and foremost matter that should be taken into consideration. To accomplish this goal, the researcher administered a preliminary English Test to 130 learners, on the basis of the results of language proficiency test, those participants whose scores on the test fell within one standard deviation above and below the mean score were selected as target participants for this study and they were randomly assigned to three groups including two treatment groups and one control group. After the pretest, 40 phrasal verbs out of 60 phrasal verbs which gained the lowest scores were selected as target phrasal verbs of the study. Through 8 sessions of treatment, each group received a reading comprehension text on every session; every reading comprehension text contained 5 phrasal verbs. But the way the phrasal verbs in two experimental groups were modified was different. One of the experimental groups received elaborated input (a brief elaboration or definition of the term comes into parentheses) and the other group received simplified input (replacing an input with synonymous word) meanwhile, the control group received unmodified input in the exactly the same circumstances as the other two experimental groups. The samples of both elaborated and simplified texts are brought in the Appendices. After eight sessions of treatment, an immediate multiple choices test was administered to find out which techniques of modification had stronger effect on participants' learning of phrasal verbs.

As one line of the study linked to the retention of the phrasal verbs, after one month of no treatment the same test with the same amount of time and condition was administered as delayed posttest to check out the participants' level of retention. One month duration had been chosen based on what Mackey and Gass (2005) knew best for retention of acquired knowledge.

## III. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Based on the results displayed in Table 1, it can be claimed that the simplified ( $M = 23.23$ ,  $SD = 7$ ), elaborated ( $M = 21.53$ ,  $SD = 6.31$ ) and the control ( $M = 20.97$ ,  $SD = 4.85$ ) groups had close means on the PET test.

TABLE 1  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS; PET GENERAL LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY TEST BY GROUPS

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Simplified	30	23.23	7.001	1.278	20.62	25.85	10	36
Elaborated	30	21.53	6.312	1.152	19.18	23.89	7	38
Control	30	20.97	4.853	.886	19.15	22.78	11	32
Total	90	21.91	6.129	.646	20.63	23.19	7	38

The non-significant results of one-way ANOVA ( $F(2, 87) = 1.11$ ,  $p = .333$ ,  $\omega^2 = .003$  representing a weak effect size) (Table 2) indicated that there were not any significant differences between the three groups' means on the PET test. Thus, it can be claimed that they were homogenous in terms of their general language proficiency prior to the main study.

TABLE 2  
ONE-WAY ANOVA; PET GENERAL LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY TEST BY GROUPS

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	83.489	2	41.744	1.114	.333
Within Groups	3259.800	87	37.469		
Total	3343.289	89			

Note. Eta-square = .02 and Partial eta-squared = .02 both represented weak effect sizes

A t test was run to compare the means on pretest/posttest and delayed posttest (simplified input) in order to probe the first and second null-hypotheses.

Paired-samples t test was conducted to determine whether the performance of simplified group significantly changed from pretest to posttest and also from posttest to delayed posttest. Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics.

TABLE 3  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: PRETEST, IMMEDIATE AND DELAYED POSTTEST (SIMPLIFIED INPUT GROUP)

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	22.9	30	6.565	1.199
Immediate posttest	32.50	30	5.740	1.048
Delayed posttest	28.67	30	6.619	1.209

Table 3 shows that there was an improvement in the performance of the learners from the pretest to the posttest. However, the mean on delayed posttest decreased; Paired sample test (table 4) was conducted to find out whether these changes were significant or not.

TABLE 4  
PAIRED SAMPLES TEST: PRETEST/POSTTEST; POSTTEST/DELAYED POSTTEST (SIMPLIFIED INPUT GROUP)

		Paired Differences			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Posttest – Pretest	9.567	2.029	.370	8.809	10.32	25.8	29	.000
Pair 2	Posttest – Delayed	3.833	1.663	.304	3.212	4.45	12.6	29	.000

a. Group = Simplified

Table 4 shows that there is a significant difference between the performance of the learners in pretest/posttest and posttest/delayed posttest of phrasal verbs therefore the first and second null hypotheses were **rejected**.

In order to probe the third and fourth null-hypotheses a t-test was run to compare the means on pretest/ posttest in elaborated input group and posttest/ delayed posttest of phrasal verbs in order to probe the third and fourth null-hypotheses; the t test also determines whether the performance of elaborated group has significantly changed from pretest to posttest and also from posttest to delayed posttest. Table 5 indicates the descriptive statistics.

TABLE 5  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: PRETEST, IMMEDIATE AND DELAYED POSTTEST (ELABORATED INPUT GROUP)

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pretest	22.47	30	6.2906	1.148
Posttest	28.83	30	6.773	1.236
Delayed	27.33	30	6.370	1.163

Table 5 shows that there is an improvement in the performance of the learners from the pretest to the posttest in elaborated input group. However, the mean on delayed test has decreased; Paired samples test (table 6) was conducted to find out whether these changes were significant or not.

TABLE 6  
PAIRED SAMPLES TEST: PRETEST/POSTTEST; POSTTEST/DELAYED POSTTEST (ELABORATED INPUT GROUP)

		Paired Differences			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Posttest Pretest	6.36	7.57	1.383	3.539	9.194	4.60	29	.000
Pair 2	Posttest Delayed	1.50	8.60	1.570	-1.712	4.712	.955	29	.347

a. Group = Elaborated

Table 6 shows that there is a significant change in the mean score from pretest and posttest therefore the third null hypothesis was **rejected**. Results also showed that there is a no significant change from posttest to delayed posttest which means the learners retained their knowledge of the phrasal verbs from immediate posttest to the delayed posttest and the null hypothesis related to this research question was therefore **retained**.

The following table indicated that there were not any significant differences between the three groups' means on the pretest of phrasal verbs. Thus, it can be claimed that they were homogenous in terms of their knowledge on English phrasal verbs prior to the main study.

TABLE 7  
ONE-WAY ANOVA; PRETEST OF PHRASAL VERBS BY GROUPS

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	8.267	2	4.133	.103	.903
Within Groups	3506.133	87	40.300		
Total	3514.400	89			

Note. Eta-square = .269 and Partial eta-squared = .269 both represented large effect sizes

Table 8 indicated that there were significant differences between the three groups' means on the posttest of phrasal verbs. The fifth null-hypothesis as there is no significant difference between students' learning in lexical simplification and lexical elaboration **was rejected**.

TABLE 8  
ONE-WAY ANOVA; POSTTEST OF PHRASAL VERBS BY GROUPS

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1267.467	2	633.733	15.987	.000
Within Groups	3448.633	87	39.639		
Total	4716.100	89			

Note. Eta-square = .269 and Partial eta-squared = .269 both represented large effect sizes

Table 9 indicated that there were significant differences between the three groups' means on the delayed posttest of phrasal verbs.

TABLE 9  
ONE-WAY ANOVA; DELAYED POSTTEST OF PHRASAL VERBS BY GROUPS

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	820.467	2	410.233	10.504	.000
Within Groups	3397.633	87	39.053		
Total	4218.100	89			

Note. Eta-square = .195 and Partial eta-squared = .195 both represented large effect sizes

#### IV. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Based on the result of the study, students who received simplified input significantly outperformed the elaborated group as well as control group on the posttest and delayed posttest of phrasal verbs. It is worth mentioning that elaborated group showed better performance in comparison to the control group. The results also indicated that there was not any significant difference between the simplified and elaborated groups' means score on the delayed posttest of phrasal verbs as well as posttest of phrasal verbs.

Many similar studies have been done in the area of input modification; some of them were in favor of input simplification while many others came to the conclusion that input elaboration outperformed the input simplification. One of the studies that came to similar results with the current study is Shirinzarii and Mardani's (2011). They investigated the effect of two different text modification methods including simplification and elaboration, on Iranian EFL learners' incidental vocabulary acquisition. The results indicated that the learners who read the simplified text, gained higher scores in comparison to those who received elaborated and baseline texts. Another study by Birjandi, Alavi and Najafi Karimi (2015) indicated rather similar results as simplification may increase the comprehensibility of the text, but it removes low frequency item and structure that the learners need to acquire.

Another study that shows similar results as both input simplification and input elaboration have facilitating role in the process of language learning is Chung (1995), who investigated the effect of input simplification and input elaboration on reading comprehension of second language learners. Data obtained from this study indicated a significant difference between the simplified and baseline version of the text.

In contrast to the above mentioned results, Moradian and Adel's (2011) study indicated that explicit lexical elaboration, compared to implicit lexical elaboration, was more effective in vocabulary learning among Iranian EFL learners.

Previous studies of input modification methods on EFL learners indicated different results. Some of them were not in favor of modifications and they believed that input modification omits the input linguistic items from baseline text that students need to acquire Blae (1982). Many others concluded that input modification could facilitate the process of reading comprehension in second language learners; however, based on the results of the study, one can argue that both modifications' methods were significantly effective in learning of phrasal verbs. Although input simplification method showed better result, the elaborated method was effective in comparison to the control group.

Since, the other line of the study was concern with retention of phrasal verbs among learners; the result revealed that simplification method outperformed the elaborated method. It is worth mentioning that elaborated group showed better result in compare to the control group.

Consequently, it can be concluded that input modification methods can be helpful in both learning and retention of phrasal verbs.

#### APPENDIX A

##### Meeting a Dentist

Little Johnny hated going to see the dentist. It wasn't that his dentist was nasty. It was Johnny was too fond of sweets. His dentist had told him that his teeth would **fall out**, (drop) if he continue eating candy.



Time and time again, the dentist had told him to stop eating sweet food or at least **cut down on** (reduce) the amount he ate as he lay in the dentist's chair, all the horrible memories from his last visit **came back** (recall) to him. On that occasion, the dentist had to pull one of his teeth! The pain was terrible, even with the painkiller the dentist had given him. When the medicine **wore off** (disappear) it was difficult for him to eat or chew almost anything.

Fortunately this time the **checkup** (examination) was much better because the dentist made Johnny to wash his mouth with pink liquid. This time Johnny was delighted and so his dentist.

## APPENDIX B

### Meeting a Dentist

Little Johnny hated going to see the dentist. It wasn't that his dentist was nasty. It was Johnny was too fond of sweets.

His dentist had told him that his teeth would **fall out**, (when a thing separate from another thing) if he continue eating candy.

Time and time again, the dentist had told him to stop eating sweet food or at least **cut down on** (to consume or use something less) the amount he ate as he lay in the dentist's chair, all the horrible memories from his last visit **came back** (when someone remembered something again) to him. On that occasion, the dentist had to pull one of his teeth! The pain was terrible, even with the painkiller the dentist had given him. When the medicine **wore off** (when the effect of something like drug or medicine gradually stop) it was difficult for him to eat or chew almost anything.

Fortunately this time the **checkup** (when someone wants to inspect something) was much better because the dentist made Johnny to wash his mouth with pink liquid. This time Johnny was delighted and so his dentist.

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# The Effect of English Movies on College English Listening Teaching

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**Abstract**—It is commonly acknowledged that listening plays an important role in language learning. Researchers at home and abroad have been diligently pursuing various approaches on teaching listening to improve students' listening proficiency. Among them, teaching English listening through movies is regarded as one of the effective ways to fulfill the need. However, most of the studies on teaching listening through English movies are theory recounting. What's more, researchers just consider the change of listening achievement in their experimental studies, almost pay no attention to anxiety and motivation, which are believed to be two important determinants of second language learning achievement. The present study explored the effects of utilizing English movies on teaching college English listening with considering anxiety, motivation and achievement.

**Index Terms**—college English listening, English movies, listening anxiety, motivation

## I. INTRODUCTION

Listening is an important skill which requires active engagement in language teaching. Researchers conducted many studies to explore ways of College English listening teaching to correspond its importance. Wang and Miao (2003) believe that video materials can benefit students with different learning styles in teaching listening. Studies on the effect of movies in listening teaching were conducted later both theoretically and experimentally. Long (2003) discussed the prospects of using films in teaching college listening refer to the advantages, feasibility, film selection, problems and possible solutions. Jiang (2006) analyzed the status of college English listening and the role of English films in listening teaching. Shen (2011) carried out an empirical study in Lanzhou Jiao Tong University to prove that English movies had a positive effect on both learner's motivation and achievement.

Researchers and teachers both at home and abroad come to realize the importance of listening and they have made large quantities of studies on listening, many of which related to teaching listening through movies. However, few studies about the teaching listening through movies mentioned the effect on the listeners' motivation and anxiety of this teaching method. In this study, the author conducts a study about the effect on the listeners' motivation and anxiety of teaching listening through movies, concerning variables of participants' listening anxiety, motivation and listening achievement, in the hope of offering meaningful implications for the teaching and learning of listening.

The study tries to identify the effects of English movies on teaching college English listening. To be more specific, this study is trying to answer the following research questions:

1. Can teaching college English listening through movies reduce anxiety compared with traditional ways of teaching listening?
2. Can teaching college English listening through movies promote motivation compared with traditional ways of teaching listening?
3. Can teaching college English listening through movies improve students' achievement compared with traditional ways of teaching listening?

The study aims at investigating the effect of teaching listening through movies in improving students' listening achievement and in its capacity to promote their motivation and reduce anxiety, the findings of the study will surely contribute to college English listening teaching in China as an empirical study of the effect of English movies on college English listening teaching.

## II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### A. Subjects

Ninety students participated in the study from September, 2011 to January, 2012. All of the subjects were sophomores and most of them have been exposed to listening comprehension activities ever since they were in junior middle schools, and some even in primary schools; therefore, each of them has had the experience of learning English for at least 7 years. Among these ninety students, forty of them majored in accounting were assigned to the experimental group while the other forty majored in marketing management were assigned to the control group.

### B. Instruments

To find out how students feel about English listening and how they are motivated to improve their listening ability, the author adopted two questionnaires in his study: Foreign Language Listening Anxiety Scale (FLLAS) and Motivation for English Listening Questionnaire (MELQ). Two tests were conducted to measure the subjects' listening skill before and after the experiments were conducted.

### C. Teaching Process

The current study had been conducted from September, 2011 to 2012, January, students in control group got the traditional ways of teaching English listening with the second edition of New Horizon College English (Listening and Speaking Course, Book 3), while students in experimental group took English movies as their main content of English listening. The teaching process of experimental group were carried out with three movies: *The Lion King*, *Sleepless in Seattle* and *Forrest Gump*.

#### 1. Background Introduction

Before watching *The Lion King*, a brief introduction including the background, main characters and rewards of the movie was given to students. The following questions were listed:

- 1) Have you watched the Lion King?
- 2) Do you know the characters in this film? Who are they?
- 3) Do you know Simba in the movie? Try to describe it using one word.

Then the students will have a discussion and give their answers. Additional contents can be filled up by the teacher as the students didn't have enough knowledge about the movie.

#### 2. While-watching

For the playing of the movie, the teacher can decide whether the students should watch the whole movie or segment it into several parts to play according to different teaching aims and the difficulty levels of videos.

##### 2.1 Watching the Movie With No Interruption

A movie can be played with no interruption if it is within or a little beyond students' linguistic and contextual competence. Through classroom observation, the author noticed that most students are reluctant to be interrupted while watching the movie, and they just want to have an overall impression about the movie and needn't to pay much attention to details. After watching, several questions were listed for them. The students are required to answer these questions with one or two sentences, even several words are OK. Then they are asked to have a discussion about these questions to have a better understanding of the movie.

##### 2.2 Scanning Certain Part for Certain Activity

If a movie is much beyond students' linguistic and contextual competence, it should be played by segmenting it into several parts, it can be divided by its scenes or time. In this part, the students need to finish some assignments after scanning several segments of the movie.

##### 2.3 Dubbing

Dubbing means showing students only pictures on the screen without any sound, and the students are required to add the sound. If they want to do this part well, they should be accurate performers. First, they need listen to the actors and actresses carefully and remember the exact words. To have a better job, they also have to imitate the pronunciation and intonation. This part seems to be the students' favorite, that's because they can learn a lot in the form of entertainment. So we can say dubbing is one of these ways to stimulate students' interest to learn English.

##### 2.4 Role Play

Students were required to work in groups to carry out role play. Role play should be based on a short scene which can be situational dialogues in the movie. It appeared to be that some shy students are more active in this part.

### D. Data Collection and Treatment

The listening proficiency pretest was held in September, 2011 while the post test was held in January, 2012. The collected data of the questionnaire were analyzed by the software SPSS 17.0. Quantitative data analysis was carried out in the study. The descriptive statistics was employed to find sums and means of tests and questionnaires. Independent samples t-tests were performed to find out the differences between same variables of the two classes, and the purpose of paired-samples t-tests was to discover the changes of each variable in the pretest and post test for both classes.

## III. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

### A. Results and Analysis about Anxiety

#### 1.1 The Anxiety Comparison Between Control Class and Experimental Class in the Pretest

The 33 items in FLLAS were scored on a five-point scale. A higher score may indicate a relatively higher level of listening anxiety. Table 3-1 tells us that before the experiment, the students from the two groups share a roughly equal level of listening anxiety (average value: 3.1245 to 3.1786; sum: 103.1081 to 104.8947), and it's also true for these four categories of anxiety items. Besides, Table 3-2 shows a result of  $p > .05$  for each item of listening anxiety, which indicates that the anxiety differences between the control and experimental classes are not significant.

TABLE 3-1  
THE ANXIETY OF CONTROL CLASS AND EXPERIMENTAL CLASS IN THE PRETEST

	class(con=1;exp=2)		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
average value	dimension1	1	37	3.1245	.33431	.05496
		2	38	3.1786	.44824	.07271
sum	dimension1	1	37	103.1081	11.03224	1.81369
		2	38	104.8947	14.79187	2.39956
tension and worry	dimension1	1	37	3.1541	.51402	.08450
		2	38	3.3079	.51903	.08420
lack of confidence	dimension1	1	37	3.0372	.34844	.05728
		2	38	3.1447	.48849	.07924
prior knowledge insufficient	dimension1	1	37	3.0565	.44657	.07342
		2	38	2.9928	.58206	.09442
other items	dimension1	1	37	3.4122	.58694	.09649
		2	38	3.4342	.49211	.07983

TABLE 3-2  
THE T-TEST OF ANXIETY OF CONTROL CLASS AND EXPERIMENTAL CLASS IN THE PRETEST

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
average value	Equal variances assumed	4.35	0.041	-0.592	73	0.556	-0.05414	0.0915
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.594	68.406	0.554	-0.05414	0.09115
sum	Equal variances assumed	4.35	0.041	-0.592	73	0.556	-1.78663	3.01949
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.594	68.406	0.554	-1.78663	3.00788
tension and worry	Equal variances assumed	0.118	0.733	-1.289	73	0.201	-0.15384	0.11931
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.29	72.978	0.201	-0.15384	0.11929
lack of confidence	Equal variances assumed	1.577	0.213	-1.095	73	0.277	-0.10757	0.09821
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.1	66.976	0.275	-0.10757	0.09778
prior knowledge insufficient	Equal variances assumed	3.879	0.053	0.531	73	0.597	0.06369	0.12002
	Equal variances not assumed			0.532	69.248	0.596	0.06369	0.11961
other items	Equal variances assumed	1.163	0.284	-0.176	73	0.86	-0.02205	0.12494
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.176	70.164	0.861	-0.02205	0.12524

From the analysis above we can see that though there is small difference of anxiety level between the two classes (average value: from 3.1245 to 3.1786; sum: from 103.1081 to 104.8947), students in the two classes shared the same listening anxiety level, which is one of the basic principles for us to choose the subjects.

### 1.2 The Anxiety Comparison of Control Class between Pretest and Posttest

In order to find out whether the participants in the control class show differences in their listening anxiety in a semester's time, the paired-samples t-test was run. As can be seen in Table 3-3 and Table 3-4, for the 37 subjects in control class, the mean score of average value in the posttest ( $M=3.2228$ ) was greater than the mean score of average value in the pretest ( $M=3.1441$ ), but the difference was not significant ( $p=.420$ ), except for other items ( $p=.000$ ), none of other types of anxiety was significantly different from each other, though the mean scores of prior knowledge insufficient and tension and worry in the posttest were greater than what in the pretest but lack of confidence was on the opposite.

TABLE 3-3  
THE ANXIETY OF CONTROL CLASS IN THE PRETEST AND POSTTEST

pretest=1 posttest=2		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	average value1 of anxiety	3.1441	37	0.34583	0.05685
	average value2 of anxiety	3.2228	37	0.47136	0.07749
Pair 2	lack of confidence1	3.1182	37	0.37609	0.06183
	lack of confidence2	2.9493	37	0.35778	0.05882
Pair 3	tension and worry1	3.1541	37	0.51402	0.0845
	tension and worry2	3.2946	37	0.62714	0.1031
Pair 4	prior knowledge insufficient1	3.0565	37	0.44657	0.07342
	prior knowledge insufficient2	3.1032	37	0.67968	0.11174
Pair 5	other items1	3.4122	37	0.58694	0.09649
	other items2	3.9189	37	0.43722	0.07188

TABLE 3-4  
THE T-TEST OF ANXIETY OF CONTROL CLASS IN THE PRETEST AND POSTTEST

pretest=1 posttest=2		Paired Differences		Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation		Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	average value1 of anxiety - average value2 of anxiety	-0.07862	0.58636	0.0964	-0.27413	0.11688	-0.816	36	0.42
Pair 2	lack of confidence1 - lack of confidence2	0.16892	0.56074	0.09218	-0.01804	0.35588	1.832	36	0.075
Pair 3	tension and worry1 - tension and worry2	-0.14054	0.83015	0.13648	-0.41733	0.13624	-1.03	36	0.31
Pair 4	prior knowledge insufficient1 - prior knowledge insufficient2	-0.04668	0.78835	0.1296	-0.30953	0.21617	-0.36	36	0.721
Pair 5	other items1 -other items2	-0.50676	0.78503	0.12906	-0.7685	-0.24501	-3.927	36	0

Judging from the statistics and the analysis, we can know that after a four-month listening learning, participants' listening anxiety level became higher at the end of the third semester unexpectedly. This is quite against the author's expectation, as the anxiety level of the students is predicted to be a positive change at first. So the result of experimental class is expected to be different.

### 1.3 The Anxiety Comparison of Experimental Class between Pretest and Posttest

Participants in the experimental group received one semester movie-aided teaching in their listening class. As displayed in Table 3-5 and Table 3-6, for anxiety of the 38 subjects in experimental class, the mean score of average value in the posttest ( $M=3.2142$ ) was greater than the mean score of average value in the pretest ( $M=3.1818$ ), but the difference was not significant ( $p=.748$ ), and no types of anxiety were significantly different from each other, though the mean scores of lack of confidence, prior knowledge insufficient and other items in the posttest were greater than that in the pretest. But the result tension and worry category was on the opposite.

TABLE 3-5  
THE ANXIETY OF EXPERIMENTAL CLASS IN THE PRETEST AND POSTTEST

pretest=1 posttest=2		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	average value1 of anxiety	3.1818	38	.45090	.07315
	average value2 of anxiety	3.2142	38	.41572	.06744
Pair 2	tension and worry1	3.3079	38	.51903	.08420
	tension and worry2	3.2474	38	.51346	.08329
Pair 3	lack of confidence1	3.1579	38	.50478	.08189
	lack of confidence2	3.2110	38	.47525	.07710
Pair 4	prior knowledge insufficient1	2.9928	38	.58206	.09442
	prior knowledge insufficient2	3.0120	38	.48850	.07924
Pair 5	other items1	3.4342	38	.49211	.07983
	other items2	3.6579	38	.47370	.07684

TABLE 3-6  
THE T-TEST OF ANXIETY OF EXPERIMENTAL CLASS IN THE PRETEST AND POSTTEST

		Paired Differences			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	average value1 of anxiety – average value 2 of anxiety	-0.0324	0.61662	0.10003	-0.23507	0.17028	-0.324	37	0.748
Pair 2	tension and worry1 - tension and worry2	0.06053	0.71529	0.11604	-0.17458	0.29564	0.522	37	0.605
Pair 3	lack of confidence1 - lack of confidence2	-0.0531	0.68886	0.11175	-0.27953	0.17332	-0.475	37	0.637
Pair 4	prior knowledge insufficient1 - prior knowledge insufficient2	-0.01914	0.77519	0.12575	-0.27394	0.23566	-0.152	37	0.880
Pair 5	other items1 - other items2	-0.22368	0.73703	0.11956	-0.46594	0.01857	-1.871	37	0.069

Statistics and analysis show that, after one semester's teaching, just as the control class, the listening anxiety level of participants in the experimental class also became higher at the end of the third semester.

#### 1.4 The Anxiety Comparison between Control Class and Experimental Class in the Posttest

Table 3-7 tells us that after the experiment, students' anxiety level of the experimental classes (average value=3.2094; sum=105.5789) is lower than that obtained from the control class (average value=3.3014; sum=108.9459). And it's also true for the three types of anxiety: *lack of confidence*, *prior knowledge insufficient* and *tension and worry*. Table 3-8 shows us that p-value is bigger than .05 for every item of listening anxiety, so we can say that the anxiety differences between control and experimental classes in the posttest are not significant.

TABLE 3-7  
THE ANXIETY COMPARISON BETWEEN CONTROL CLASS AND EXPERIMENTAL CLASS IN THE POSTTEST

	Class (con=1 exp=2)	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
average value	dimension1	1 37	3.3014	.56983	.09368
		2 38	3.2094	.43034	.06981
sum	dimension1	1 37	108.9459	18.80447	3.09144
		2 38	105.5789	14.27269	2.31534
lack of confidence	dimension1	1 37	3.4155	.59370	.09760
		2 38	3.2110	.47525	.07710
tension and worry	dimension1	1 37	3.2838	.61487	.10108
		2 38	3.2743	.51006	.08274
prior knowledge insufficient	dimension1	1 37	3.1032	.67968	.11174
		2 38	3.0120	.48850	.07924
other items	dimension1	1 37	3.6351	.56395	.09271
		2 38	3.6579	.47370	.07684

TABLE 3-8  
THE T-TEST OF ANXIETY BETWEEN CONTROL CLASS AND EXPERIMENTAL CLASS IN THE POSTTES

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
average value	Equal variances assumed	1.66	0.202	0.79	73	0.432	0.09199
	Equal variances not assumed			0.787	66.986	0.434	0.09199
sum	Equal variances assumed	1.632	0.205	0.875	73	0.384	3.367
	Equal variances not assumed			0.872	67.155	0.386	3.367
lack of confidence	Equal variances assumed	1.762	0.188	1.649	73	0.103	0.20454
	Equal variances not assumed			1.645	68.857	0.105	0.20454
tension and worry	Equal variances assumed	0.411	0.524	0.073	73	0.942	0.00951
	Equal variances not assumed			0.073	69.88	0.942	0.00951
prior knowledge insufficient	Equal variances assumed	3.737	0.057	0.669	73	0.506	0.09123
	Equal variances not assumed			0.666	65.258	0.508	0.09123
other items	Equal variances assumed	1.05	0.309	-0.189	73	0.85	-0.02276
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.189	70.212	0.851	-0.02276

From the analysis, we can know that after a semester's learning (from September, 2011 to January, 2012), a non-significant improvement of the average value of anxiety appeared in both classes (which can be indicated in 2.1.3 and 2.1.4). And more specifically, the control class got an increase of 0.0787 (3.2228 in posttest and 3.1441 in pretest), while the experimental class got 0.0324 (3.2142 in posttest and 3.1818 in pretest). Analysis of the two average values with independent samples t-test showed no significant difference. Thus, it can be seen that both the traditional ways of teaching college English listening and the way of teaching college English listening through movies can not reduce

students' listening anxiety, which just denied the first experimental hypothesis totally and answered the first research question.

Actually, the researcher was really confused about the changes of anxiety level of the two classes, for the researcher had expected the participants' anxiety level would be a positive change after a semester's learning, but the result was on the opposite. Anyway, the following research was carried on all the same and an increase of motivation was expected by the author.

### *B. Results and Analysis about Motivation*

#### **2.1 The Motivation Comparison between Control Class and Experimental Class in the Pretest**

Descriptive statistics of the subjects' listening motivation obtained is displayed in Table 3-9. As can be observed in the table, the participants in the experimental class (class 2) got a bigger mean value (3.3355) than students in the control class's (class 1) motivation (3.2483). In addition, the experimental group has also got bigger mean scores on 6 categories of motivation, including aspects of competition, decision, professional learning, value, working and achievement.

TABLE 3-9  
THE MOTIVATION COMPARISON BETWEEN CONTROL CLASS AND EXPERIMENTAL CLASS IN THE PRETEST

	class(con=1;exp=2)		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
average value	dimension1	1	37	3.2483	.37642	.06188
		2	38	3.3355	.34462	.05590
competition motivation	dimension1	1	37	4.1243	.70766	.11634
		2	38	4.4737	.54509	.08843
abroad motivation	dimension1	1	37	2.6014	.76707	.12611
		2	38	2.5855	.73585	.11937
interest motivation	dimension1	1	37	3.4865	.63176	.10386
		2	38	3.4013	.72256	.11721
decision motivation	dimension1	1	37	3.2455	.54183	.08908
		2	38	3.3092	.38745	.06285
sense of self efficacy	dimension1	1	37	2.3896	.64581	.10617
		2	38	2.3750	.65438	.10615
atmosphere motivation	dimension1	1	37	2.9189	.69569	.11437
		2	38	2.5702	.67074	.10881
professional learning motivation	dimension1	1	37	3.5135	.53630	.08817
		2	38	4.0175	.58483	.09487
avoidance motivation	dimension1	1	37	2.9640	.69293	.11392
		2	38	2.6491	.76306	.12379
value motivation	dimension1	1	37	3.7838	1.11518	.18333
		2	38	4.2500	.56652	.09190
working motivation	dimension1	1	37	3.2838	.71240	.11712
		2	38	3.5789	.73085	.11856
achievement motivation	dimension1	1	37	3.5405	.77619	.12761
		2	38	3.8289	.63964	.10376

In order to find out whether all the above-mentioned differences are significant or not, the independent samples t test was performed. According to the result listed in Table 3-10, the mean scores of the two classes don't differ from each other significantly ( $p=.298$ ), and except for competition motivation, atmosphere motivation, professional learning motivation and value motivation, all the other seven types of motivation don't differ from each other significantly.



TABLE 3-10  
THE T-TEST OF MOTIVATION IN THE PRETEST BETWEEN CONTROL CLASS AND EXPERIMENTAL CLASS

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std. Error difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
average value	Equal variances assumed	0.567	0.454	-1.048	73	0.298	-0.08726	0.0833	-0.25327	0.07875
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.046	72.048	0.299	-0.08726	0.0834	-0.25351	0.07898
competitio n motivation	Equal variances assumed	2.702	0.105	-2.399	73	0.019	-0.34936	0.14563	-0.63959	-0.05913
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.391	67.644	0.02	-0.34936	0.14613	-0.64098	-0.05774
abroad motivation	Equal variances assumed	0.032	0.859	0.091	73	0.928	0.01583	0.17355	-0.33005	0.3617
	Equal variances not assumed			0.091	72.659	0.928	0.01583	0.17364	-0.33027	0.36192
interest motivation	Equal variances assumed	0.258	0.613	0.543	73	0.589	0.08517	0.15689	-0.22751	0.39785
	Equal variances not assumed			0.544	72.178	0.588	0.08517	0.15661	-0.22701	0.39735
decision motivation	Equal variances assumed	3.067	0.084	-0.587	73	0.559	-0.06372	0.10854	-0.28004	0.15261
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.584	65.076	0.561	-0.06372	0.10902	-0.28143	0.154
sense of self efficiency	Equal variances assumed	0.049	0.825	0.097	73	0.923	0.01464	0.15016	-0.28463	0.31391
	Equal variances not assumed			0.098	72.986	0.923	0.01464	0.15014	-0.28458	0.31386
atmospher e motivation	Equal variances assumed	0.028	0.867	2.21	73	0.030	0.34874	0.15778	0.03428	0.6632
	Equal variances not assumed			2.209	72.707	0.030	0.34874	0.15786	0.03411	0.66338
profession al learning motivation	Equal variances assumed	0.094	0.76	-3.887	73	0.000	-0.50403	0.12967	-0.76246	-0.2456
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.892	72.743	0.000	-0.50403	0.12952	-0.76217	-0.24589
avoidance motivation	Equal variances assumed	0.862	0.356	1.869	73	0.066	0.31484	0.16844	-0.02087	0.65055
	Equal variances not assumed			1.872	72.652	0.065	0.31484	0.16823	-0.02046	0.65014
value motivation	Equal variances assumed	10.27	0.002	-2.292	73	0.025	-0.46622	0.20345	-0.87169	-0.06074
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.273	53.103	0.027	-0.46622	0.20508	-0.87753	-0.0549
working motivation	Equal variances assumed	0.163	0.688	-1.771	73	0.081	-0.29516	0.16671	-0.62741	0.03709
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.771	73	0.081	-0.29516	0.16665	-0.6273	0.03697
achieveme nt motivation	Equal variances assumed	1.058	0.307	-1.758	73	0.083	-0.28841	0.16404	-0.61535	0.03853
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.754	69.698	0.084	-0.28841	0.16447	-0.61645	0.03964

The analysis above indicates that though there is small difference of motivation level between the two classes (average value: from 3.2483 to 3.3355), students in the two classes shared the same listening motivation level, which is another principle for choosing the subjects.

## 2.2 The Motivation Comparison of Control Class between Pretest and Posttest

A paired-samples t-test in Table 3-11 and Table 3-12 was run to find out whether the participants in the control class show differences of their listening motivation after the experiment. As we can see from these two tables, for the 37 subjects in control class, the mean score of question items' average value in the posttest ( $M=3.1047$ ) was significantly lower at the  $p<.05$  level (note:  $p=0.028$ ) than that in the pretest ( $M=3.2666$ ). And the mean scores of abroad motivation, interest motivation, decision motivation and atmosphere motivation in the posttest ( $M=1.9865$ ,  $3.0878$ ,  $2.8378$ ,  $2.5676$ ) were significantly lower than that in the pretest ( $M=2.6014$ ,  $3.4865$ ,  $3.8356$ ). By contrast, the mean scores of value motivation and achievement motivation in the posttest ( $M=3.2973$ ,  $4.2703$ ) were significantly higher than that in the pretest ( $M=2.9459$ ,  $3.5405$ ). It also needs to point out that differences of other types of motivation also existed, but none of them was significant.

TABLE 3-11  
THE MOTIVATION OF CONTROL CLASS IN THE PRETEST AND POSTTEST

pretest=1 posttest=2		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	average value1 of motivation	3.2666	37	0.3826	0.0629
	average value2 of motivation	3.1047	37	0.28204	0.04637
Pair 2	competition motivation 1	4.1297	37	0.70587	0.11604
	competition motivation 2	4.3027	37	0.55901	0.0919
Pair 3	abroad motivation1	2.6014	37	0.76707	0.12611
	abroad motivation2	1.9865	37	0.69957	0.11501
Pair 4	interest motivation1	3.4865	37	0.63176	0.10386
	interest motivation2	3.0878	37	0.66983	0.11012
Pair 5	decision motivation1	3.8356	37	0.79288	0.13035
	decision motivation2	2.8378	37	0.56278	0.09252
Pair 6	sense of self efficiency1	2.3896	37	0.64581	0.10617
	sense of self efficiency2	2.25	37	0.48233	0.07929
Pair 7	atmosphere motivation1	2.9189	37	0.69569	0.11437
	atmosphere motivation2	2.5676	37	0.65671	0.10796
Pair 8	professional learning motivation1	3.5135	37	0.5363	0.08817
	professional learning motivation2	3.5766	37	0.64141	0.10545
Pair 9	avoidance motivation1	2.964	37	0.69293	0.11392
	avoidance motivation2	3.2252	37	0.86443	0.14211
Pair 10	value motivation1	2.9459	37	0.63228	0.10395
	value motivation2	3.2973	37	0.7403	0.12171
Pair 11	working motivation1	3.2838	37	0.7124	0.11712
	working motivation2	3.3378	37	0.67756	0.11139
Pair 12	achievement motivation1	3.5405	37	0.77619	0.12761
	achievement motivation2	4.2703	37	0.52168	0.08576

TABLE 3-12  
THE T- TEST OF MOTIVATION OF CONTROL CLASS IN THE PRETEST AND POSTTEST

THE T-TEST OF MOTIVATION OF CONTROL CLASS IN THE PRETEST AND POSTTEST									
pretest=1 posttest=2		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	average value1 of motivation-average value2 of motivation	0.16192	0.43099	0.07085	0.01822	0.30562	2.285	36	0.028
Pair 2	competition motivation 1 - competition motivation 2	-0.17297	0.94064	0.15464	-0.4866	0.14065	-1.119	36	0.271
Pair 3	abroad motivation1 - abroad motivation2	0.61486	1.03346	0.1699	0.27029	0.95944	3.619	36	0.001
Pair 4	interest motivation1 - interest motivation2	0.39865	0.88282	0.14513	0.1043	0.693	2.747	36	0.009
Pair 5	decision motivation1 - decision motivation2	0.99775	0.9318	0.15319	0.68707	1.30842	6.513	36	0
Pair 6	sense of self efficiency1 - sense of self efficiency2	0.13964	0.68495	0.11261	-0.08873	0.36801	1.24	36	0.223
Pair 7	atmosphere motivation1 - atmosphere motivation2	0.35135	0.8125	0.13357	0.08045	0.62225	2.63	36	0.012
Pair 8	professional learning motivation1 - professional learning motivation2	-0.06306	0.74053	0.12174	-0.30997	0.18384	-0.518	36	0.608
Pair 9	avoidance motivation1 - avoidance motivation2	-0.26126	1.09188	0.1795	-0.62531	0.10279	-1.455	36	0.154
pair 10	value motivation1 - value motivation2	-0.35135	1.04659	0.17206	-0.7003	-0.0024	-2.042	36	0.049
pair 11	working motivation1 - working motivation2	-0.05405	1.00543	0.16529	-0.38928	0.28117	-0.327	36	0.746
Pair 12	achievement motivation1 - achievement motivation2	-0.72973	0.96892	0.15929	-1.05279	-0.40667	-4.581	36	0

### 2.3 The Motivation Comparison of the Experimental Class between Pretest and Posttest

As displayed in Table 3-13 and Table 3-14, after one semester movie-aided teaching in listening class, for the 38 subjects in experimental class, the mean score of average value in the posttest ( $M=3.1518$ ) was significantly lower at the  $p<.05$  level (note:  $p=0.004$ ) than the mean score of average value in the pretest ( $M=3.3173$ ), and the mean scores of

abroad motivation, professional learning motivation, working motivation and decision motivation in the posttest ( $M=2.1328, 3.5088, 3.0921, 2.9123$ ) were significantly lower than those in the pretest ( $M=2.855, 4.0175, 3.5789, 4.0197$ ), while the mean score of avoidance motivation in the posttest ( $M=3.2544$ ) was significantly higher than that in the pretest ( $M=2.6491$ ). In addition, differences in other types of motivation also existed, but none of them was significant. To sum up, the motivation of the experimental class got a decrease in the posttest.

TABLE 3-13  
THE MOTIVATION OF EXPERIMENTAL CLASS IN THE PRETEST AND POSTTEST

pretest=1 posttest=2		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	average value1 of motivation	3.3173	38	.24675	.04003
	average value2 of motivation	3.1518	38	.28089	.04557
Pair 2	competition motivation 1	4.4737	38	.54509	.08843
	competition motivation 2	4.2303	38	.62402	.10123
Pair 3	abroad motivation1	2.5855	38	.73585	.11937
	abroad motivation2	2.1382	38	.63325	.10273
Pair 4	interest motivation1	3.4013	38	.72256	.11721
	interest motivation2	3.4145	38	.75846	.12304
Pair 5	atmosphere motivation1	2.5702	38	.67074	.10881
	atmosphere motivation2	2.5877	38	.64577	.10476
Pair 6	professional learning motivation1	4.0175	38	.58483	.09487
	professional learning motivation2	3.5088	38	.55202	.08955
Pair 7	value motivation1	3.0921 <sup>a</sup>	38	.56777	.09211
	value motivation2	3.0921 <sup>a</sup>	38	.56777	.09211
Pair 8	working motivation1	3.5789	38	.73085	.11856
	working motivation2	3.0921	38	.61353	.09953
Pair 9	achievement motivation1	3.8289	38	.63964	.10376
	achievement motivation2	3.9342	38	.88662	.14383
Pair 10	avoidance motivation1	2.6491	38	.76306	.12379
	avoidance motivation2	3.2544	38	.78436	.12724
Pair 11	decision motivation1	4.0197	38	.54951	.08914
	decision motivation2	2.9123	38	.52916	.08584
Pair 12	sense of self efficiency1	2.3750	38	.65438	.10615
	sense of self efficiency2	2.5197	38	.51130	.08294

TABLE 3-14  
THE T-TEST OF MOTIVATION OF EXPERIMENTAL CLASS IN THE PRETEST AND POSTTEST

		Paired Differences			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	average value1 of motivation – average value2 of motivation	0.16546	0.32697	0.05304	0.05798	0.27293	3.119	37	0.004
Pair 2	competition motivation 1 - competition motivation 2	0.24342	0.80322	0.1303	-0.02059	0.50743	1.868	37	0.070
Pair 3	abroad motivation1 - abroad motivation2	0.44737	0.82846	0.13439	0.17506	0.71968	3.329	37	0.002
Pair 4	interest motivation1 - interest motivation2	-0.01316	1.15511	0.18738	-0.39283	0.36652	-0.07	37	0.944
Pair 5	atmosphere motivation1 - atmosphere motivation2	-0.01754	0.80145	0.13001	-0.28097	0.24589	-0.135	37	0.893
Pair 6	professional learning motivation1 - professional learning motivation2	0.50877	0.58375	0.0947	0.3169	0.70065	5.373	37	0.000
Pair 7	working motivation1 - working motivation2	0.48684	0.9041	0.14666	0.18967	0.78401	3.319	37	0.002
Pair 8	achievement motivation1 - achievement motivation2	-0.10526	1.18069	0.19153	-0.49335	0.28282	-0.55	37	0.586
Pair 9	avoidance motivation1 - avoidance motivation2	-0.60526	1.09833	0.17817	-0.96628	-0.24425	-3.397	37	0.002
Pair 10	decision motivation1 - decision motivation2	1.10746	0.68825	0.11165	0.88123	1.33368	9.919	37	0.000
Pair 11	sense of self efficiency1 - sense of self efficiency2	-0.14474	0.82534	0.13389	-0.41602	0.12655	-1.081	37	0.287

#### 2.4 The Motivation Comparison between Control Class and Experimental Class in the Posttest

Comparison of the change in the motivation level of the participants from the two groups would also shed light on the answer of the current topic. The findings (Table 3-15) indicate that average value of the experimental class's (class 2) motivation is bigger ( $M=3.2488$ ) than that of the control class's (class 1) motivation ( $M=3.2140$ ). In addition, for abroad motivation, interest motivation, decision motivation, sense of self efficiency and atmosphere motivation, participants from class 2 showed a bigger mean value. In order to find out whether all those differences are significant

or not, the independent samples t test was performed. As it can be seen in Table 3-16, the average values of the two classes don't differ from each other significantly ( $p=.298$ ). Besides, except for achievement motivation (Levene's Test for Equality of Variances,  $P=.013$ ; t-test for Equality of Means,  $P=.049$ ), all other ten types of motivation don't differ from each other significantly.

TABLE 3-15  
THE MOTIVATION COMPARISON BETWEEN CONTROL CLASS AND EXPERIMENTAL CLASS IN THE POSTTEST

	class(con=1;exp=2)		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
average value	dimension1	1	37	3.2140	.31799	.05228
		2	38	3.2488	.31759	.05152
competition motivation	dimension1	1	37	4.3027	.55901	.09190
		2	38	4.2303	.62402	.10123
abroad motivation	dimension1	1	37	1.9865	.69957	.11501
		2	38	2.1382	.63325	.10273
interest motivation	dimension1	1	37	3.0878	.66983	.11012
		2	38	3.4145	.75846	.12304
decision motivation	dimension1	1	37	3.8243	.60053	.09873
		2	38	4.0351	.65118	.10564
sense of self efficiency	dimension1	1	37	2.1014	.60799	.09995
		2	38	2.3180	.68687	.11143
atmosphere motivation	dimension1	1	37	3.0541	.53584	.08809
		2	38	3.0789	.48666	.07895
professional learning motivation	dimension1	1	37	3.5766	.64141	.10545
		2	38	3.5088	.55202	.08955
avoidance motivation	dimension1	1	37	2.8288	.54784	.09007
		2	38	2.7105	.50920	.08260
value motivation	dimension1	1	37	3.2973	.74030	.12171
		2	38	3.1184	.59768	.09696
working motivation	dimension1	1	37	3.3378	.67756	.11139
		2	38	3.0921	.61353	.09953
achievement motivation	dimension1	1	37	4.2703	.52168	.08576
		2	38	3.9342	.88662	.14383

TABLE 3-16  
THE T-TEST OF MOTIVATION BETWEEN CONTROL CLASS AND EXPERIMENTAL CLASS IN THE PRETEST

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	t-test for Equality of Means							95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.		df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference		Lower	Upper
average value	Equal variances assumed	0.001	0.969	-0.474	73	0.637	-0.03482	0.0734		-0.1811	0.11145
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.474	72.942					-0.18111	0.11146
competition motivation	Equal variances assumed	0.099	0.754	0.529	73	0.598	0.07244	0.13693		-0.20045	0.34533
	Equal variances not assumed			0.53	72.504					-0.20008	0.34496
abroad motivation	Equal variances assumed	0.244	0.623	-0.985	73	0.328	-0.15167	0.154		-0.45859	0.15525
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.984	71.856					-0.45909	0.15574
interest motivation	Equal variances assumed	0.424	0.517	-1.975	73	0.052	-0.32664	0.1654		-0.65627	0.003
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.978	72.322					-0.65577	0.0025
decision motivation	Equal variances assumed	0.9	0.346	-1.456	73	0.150	-0.21076	0.14475		-0.49924	0.07772
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.458	72.789					-0.49894	0.07742
sense of self efficiency	Equal variances assumed	0.114	0.737	-1.445	73	0.153	-0.21663	0.14993		-0.51545	0.08218
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.447	72.353					-0.515	0.08174
atmosphere motivation	Equal variances assumed	0.156	0.694	-0.211	73	0.834	-0.02489	0.11814		-0.26034	0.21055
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.21	71.914					-0.26071	0.21092
professional learning motivation	Equal variances assumed	1.267	0.264	0.491	73	0.625	0.0678	0.13806		-0.20735	0.34296
	Equal variances not assumed			0.49	70.814					-0.20805	0.34366
avoidance motivation	Equal variances assumed	0.338	0.563	0.969	73	0.336	0.1183	0.12209		-0.12502	0.36162
	Equal variances not assumed			0.968	72.278					-0.1253	0.36191
value motivation	Equal variances assumed	1.394	0.242	1.153	73	0.253	0.17888	0.15516		-0.13036	0.48811
	Equal variances not assumed			1.15	69.111					-0.13154	0.48929
working motivation	Equal variances assumed	0.109	0.742	1.647	73	0.104	0.24573	0.14918		-0.05158	0.54304
	Equal variances not assumed			1.645	71.862					-0.05206	0.54352
achievement motivation	Equal variances assumed	6.501	0.013	1.994	73	0.050	0.33606	0.16856		0.00012	0.672
	Equal variances not assumed			2.007	60.171					0.00111	0.67101

From the analysis we can know that after a semester's learning (from September, 2011 to January, 2012), a non-significant reduction of the average value of motivation appeared in both classes, the control class got an reduction of 0.1619 (3.1047 in posttest and 3.2666 in pretest) while the experimental got 0.1655 (3.1518 in posttest and 3.3173 in pretest). Analyzing the two average values with independent samples t-test, the researcher find no significant differences; that is to say, both the traditional ways of teaching college English listening and the way of teaching college English listening through movies can not promote students' listening motivation, which just denied the second experimental hypothesis totally and answered the second research question.

Until now, we can draw to the conclusion that after one semester's teaching, both the anxiety level and motivation level of these two classes turned out to be a negative change in the posttest, and both of the first two experimental hypotheses were denied. The change of the students' listening achievement will be discussed in the following research.

### C. Results and Analysis about Achievement

#### 3.1 The Achievement Comparison between Control Class and Experimental Class in the Pretest

Before the experiment was conducted, the subjects were asked to take a listening proficiency test. As Table 3-17 and Table 3-18 show, the 37 students in control group had an achievement mean of 42.11, while the 38 members in experimental group had an achievement mean of 41.95, and the mean of achievement did not differ significantly at the

$p < .05$  level (note:  $p = .888$ ). Levene's Test for Equality of Variances indicates variances for control and experimental groups do not differ significantly from each other (note:  $p = .755$ ).

TABLE 3-17  
THE ACHIEVEMENT COMPARISON BETWEEN CONTROL CLASS AND EXPERIMENTAL CLASS IN THE PRETEST

Class (con=1 exp=2)			N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
ach	dimension1	1	37	42.11	4.618	.759
		2	38	41.95	5.204	.844

TABLE 3-18  
THE T-TEST OF ACHIEVEMENT BETWEEN CONTROL CLASS AND EXPERIMENTAL CLASS IN THE PRETEST

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower Upper
ach	Equal variances assumed	0.098	0.755	0.141	73	0.888	0.161	1.137	-2.105 2.427
	Equal variances not assumed			0.142	72.386	0.888	0.161	1.135	-2.102 2.424

From the analysis above we can see that though there is small difference of achievement between the two classes (from 42.11 to 41.95), students in the two classes shared the same listening proficiency level, which is also one basic principle for choosing subjects.

### 3.2 The Achievement Comparison of Control Class between Pretest and Posttest

In order to find out whether the participants in the control class show differences in their listening comprehension proficiency in a semester's time, the paired-samples t-test was run. As can be seen in Table 3-19 and Table 3-20, for the 37 subjects in control class, the mean score of achievement in the posttest ( $M = 45.16$ ) was greater than the mean score of achievement in the pretest ( $M = 42.11$ ), and the difference is significant at the  $p < .05$  level (note:  $p = 0.013$ ).

TABLE 3-19  
THE ACHIEVEMENT OF CONTROL CLASS IN THE PRETEST AND POSTTEST

pretest=1 posttest=2		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	ach1	42.11	37	4.618	0.759
	ach2	45.16	37	6.436	1.058

TABLE 3-20  
THE T-TEST OF ACHIEVEMENT OF CONTROL CLASS IN THE PRETEST AND POSTTEST

		Paired Differences		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
pretest=1 posttest=2		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower Upper			
Pair 1	ach1 - ach2	-3.054	7.137	1.173	-5.434 -0.674	-2.603	36	0.013

Judging from the statistics and the analysis, we can know that after a four-month listening learning, participants' listening level improved a lot, which is in accord with the author's prediction.

### 3.3 The Achievement Comparison of Experimental Class between Pretest and Posttest

Participants in the experimental group received one semester movie-aided teaching in their listening class. As displayed in Table 3-21 and Table 3-22, for the 38 subjects in experimental class, the mean score of achievement in the posttest ( $M = 46.26$ ) was greater than the mean score of achievement in the pretest ( $M = 41.95$ ), and the difference is significant at the  $p < .05$  level (note:  $p = 0.008$ ).

TABLE 3-21  
THE ACHIEVEMENT OF EXPERIMENTAL CLASS IN THE PRETEST AND POSTTEST

pretest=1 posttest=2		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	ach1	41.95	38	5.204	.844
	ach2	46.26	38	7.800	1.265

TABLE 3-22  
THE T-TEST OF ACHIEVEMENT OF EXPERIMENTAL CLASS IN THE PRETEST AND POSTTEST

		Paired Differences		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
pretest=1 posttest=2		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower Upper			
Pair 1	ach1 - ach2	-4.316	9.419	1.528	-7.412 -1.22	-2.825	37	0.008

Statistics and analysis show that, after one semester's teaching, the situation about the experimental class was almost the same as the control class: their listening level improved in a significant way but with a significant decrease of motivation and a little increase of anxiety. The difference is that participants in the experimental class find significant decreases of motivation in aspects of going abroad, professional learning, working, and decision-making. And only avoidance motivation increased in a distinct way.

It is normal to get an increase of achievement in the post test, but the researcher was really confused about the changes of motivation and anxiety level of the two classes at first, for the researcher had expected the participants' motivation and anxiety level would be a positive change after a semester's learning, but the result was on the opposite.

### 3.4 The Achievement Comparison between Control Class and Experimental Class in the Posttest

To further explore the topic, the researcher conducted independent samples t test to find out that, after one semester's learning whether significant changes could be found in participants from the experimental class and control class. Table 3-23 and Table 3-24 indicate that the 38 students in experimental class had an achievement mean of 46.26 while the 37 members in control class had an achievement mean of 45.16, and the mean of achievement did not differ significantly at the  $p < .05$  level (note:  $p = .508$ ).

TABLE 3-23  
THE ACHIEVEMENT COMPARISON BETWEEN CONTROL CLASS AND EXPERIMENTAL CLASS IN THE POSTTEST

class (con=1 exp=2)		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
ach	dimension1	1	37	45.16	6.436
		2	38	46.26	7.800

TABLE 3-24  
THE T-TEST OF ACHIEVEMENT BETWEEN CONTROL CLASS AND EXPERIMENTAL CLASS IN THE POSTTEST

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
ach	Equal variances assumed	3.622	0.061	-0.666	73	0.508	-1.101
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.667	71.101	0.507	-1.101

From the analysis, we can know that after a semester's learning (from September, 2011 to January, 2012), a significant improvement of listening proficiency occurred in both classes (which can be indicated in 5.2.1 and 5.2.2). The control class got an increase of 3.05 (45.16 in post test and 42.11 in pretest), while the experimental got 4.31 (46.26 in posttest and 41.95 in pretest). Apparently, the experimental class got a bigger increase, but analysis of the two achievement means with independent samples t-test showed there is no significant difference. That is to say, compared with traditional ways of teaching college English listening, it can not do better to improve students' achievement by the way of teaching college English listening through movies, which just denied the third experimental hypothesis and answered the third research question.

## IV. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

### A. Major Findings

Many factors influence listening comprehension, including types and authenticity of listening materials, interest of the learners and their background knowledge, which makes teaching listening a challenging task. Teaching listening through movies is claimed as an effective way in the literature to improve the situation, but we need more empirical evidence to support this assumption. The attempts to explore this issue made in this study may not present favorable results apparently, but in a way has again witnessed the complexity of the situation in nature.

Firstly, the study indicates that students participated in the experiment didn't show a significant difference in their listening anxiety level after receiving one semester's listening teaching under different conditions, which indicates teaching listening through movies didn't bring significant reduction in students' anxiety level, compared with the traditional teaching approach. And the same group of students receiving the same treatment in their teaching didn't gain significant reduction in their anxiety level, either.

Secondly, this research witnesses some differences in students' motivation intensity after one semester's different teaching interference. Significant differences can be found in four types of motivation: competition, atmosphere, professional learning and value while all other seven types of motivation, including aspects of going abroad, interest, decision, self-efficacy, avoidance, work, and achievement, don't differ from each other significantly. But the identified difference in student subjects' mean score of motivation is not significant. Moreover, the researcher found a significantly lower mean value of motivation items in students who received traditional approach of listening teaching. The similar situation can be found in another group of students who received listening teaching through movies.

Favorable findings have been found in subjects' improvement in their listening proficiency. Students from both the experimental group and the control group have demonstrated improvement in this aspect, though at different levels. Furthermore, the researcher found a significant greater improvement in student subjects who received movie-aided listening teaching.

### B. Implications for Teaching and Learning College English Listening

According to the literature review and the findings, some meaningful and significant implications are provided for teaching and learning college English listening respectively.

Though there are an increasing number of experts and teachers at home and abroad have come to realize the value of teaching listening through movies in ELT with the development of psycholinguistics and teaching methodology, teachers should realize the challenge in teaching listening through movies to non-English majors. Factors like selection criteria of the movie, instructional activities during the class, the student's level of English proficiency and the interests of learners will all affect the result of teaching listening through movies. So the teachers should take all of them into account to make sure that students can get a significant increase of listening proficiency.

As for the students, the following suggestions may be helpful for their English listening learning: First, students should try every means to cultivate interest in learning, that's the basement of language learning. Then, proper learning goals are also important for learners, the goals should be challenging and within the reach of learners' effort. Last but not least, the building of self-confidence is essential for students in language learning. So learners should try their best to keep self-confidence in language learning.

### C. Limitations of the Study

Several limitations of this study need to be recognized in interpreting the results. First of all, the number of the subjects is apparently small, compared with the great number of all the non-English majors in the university.

Second, the experiment was performed in a limited time, actually the author needs to spend many extra hours to prepare and negotiate with students about the contents and activities of the class. If it could last longer, more teaching strategies would be adopted, and more work would be conducted and the result would be different.

Though both the control group and experimental group were taught by the author in the study, it seems there is no variation in terms of the teacher's factor, but in fact we can hardly say that the author executed the two ways of teaching equally well in the study.

Due to all the limitations above, probably the reliability of the data and the validity of the research could be compromised, so as the findings.

### D. Suggestions for Further Study

All limitations exist in this study should be avoided in future research. For instance, since the sample of the subjects is quite small in size which makes the results are not very convincing, future research can carry out the study with a larger sample of learners to obtain more accurate and complete information. We should carry out the study in a longer period and try every means to make sure the consistency of same variables in different groups.

In spite of all these limitations above, empirically, there are still some possibilities of using movies to teach English listening for non-English majors. Student subjects in this study are influenced by the university culture. The relatively lower level of English and the longing for further studies give them impetus to make efforts to gain a better result in performance, which may influence their anxiety level and motivation intensity. In this sense, teachers and researchers could further explore strategies to carry out anxiety interference with a focus on positive and task-based guidance, which can help students gain sense of achievements. Meanwhile, efforts could also be made to provide students with positive emotional, professional and cognitive support, meaningful teaching materials and guidance on the development of autonomy and creativity. What's more, whether their speaking is also improved in the study is not mentioned, which suggests that there is much potential for future research using English movies in the language classroom.

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# The Effect of IELTS Listening Strategy Use on the Reduction of IELTS Listening Test Anxiety and on IELTS Listening Performance

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**Abstract**—The study investigates the impact of IELTS listening strategy use on the reduction of listening test anxiety and on the listening performance of the IELTS test takers in light of the data of 80 participants on the pretest and post-test IELTS listening along with the participants' score on pre-anxiety and post anxiety scale. So, drawing on the instruments including a proficiency test, pre/post-test, anxiety questionnaire, materials for strategy instruction, the participants were randomly divided into two groups: Control Group and Experimental Group, each including 40 participants. As per the procedure, after tackling their pre-listening performance and pre-anxiety score, one group was treated with IELTS-Listening related strategies and the other group was not treated, but both were administered listening test. The results of the study indicated that those treated with IELTS strategy outperformed ( $t(78) = 4.57, p = .000, r = .460$ ) those receiving no listening-related strategy. Furthermore, the results of a t-test run on the post-test of the groups anxiety arrived at a statistically significant difference ( $t(78) = 5.77, p = .000, r = .547$ ), representing that the control group outperformed the experimental group. Also, Pearson Correlation done for finding out a potential relationship between anxiety and listening performance indicated a negative and weak to moderate relationship ( $r(78) = -.26, p = .020$ ). The pedagogical implications of the study are in detailed argued.

**Index Terms**—IELTS, strategy use, anxiety, anxiety reduction

## I. INTRODUCTION

For many years, listening skill did not receive any attention in language teaching, so that teaching methods focused only on productive skills rather than on the receptive ones, i.e., listening, and the relationship between productive and receptive skills was not noticeable or was poorly regarded (Richards & Renandya, 2002). Therefore, as they state, until recently, the application of listening was neglected; it was often thought that listening is not needed to be instructed. Listening is a crucial skill for second language (L2) learners and has received substantial attention in L2 assessment literature (e.g., Aryadoust, 2013), but it is the least examined skill in L2 assessment literature (Lynch, 2011).

In support of the note made, Carter and Nunan (2001) state that listening in language teaching has too much changed, as the result of developments in anthropology, education, linguistics, sociology, and global politics. They follow to trace the significance of listening during the late nineteenth century Reform Movement, so that the accuracy of perception and the clarity of auditory memory became focal language learning skill, then several models for listening have appeared.

Present models explain the complex nature of L2 listening comprehension as a set of cognitive processes needed for perceiving and building meaning, and interpreting the message by establishing its relevance to the social context as well as determining its communicative function (Vandergrift, 2007). This understanding of L2 listening structure, however, does not lead to a definite definition of a listening construct that would in general welcomed by the majority of L2 assessment experts; thus, when a listening test is designed, it becomes the test developer's responsibility to provide a definition to it, as L2 listening test engages the required cognitive processes (Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010).

However listening is a receptive skill, this does not carry the sense that it is a passive skill, because the listener can be either passive or active (Lindsay & Knight, 2006). They continue with their explanation that when we are in a conversation, we listen, respond appropriately, and sometimes stop the conversation to ask the speakers as to the produced message. This means that the listeners are involved in the process of decoding the message. This is what is called active listening because the listeners have some control of what they are listening to (Richards & Renandya, 2002; Carter & Nunan, 2001).

In a setting associated with foreign language learning, the learners learn through the medium of formal instruction with little exposure to the language input outside the learning context. The learners' ability to comprehend spoken input is limited and a vast variety of factors associated with affective elements, such as anxiety, influence the learners' oral proficiency and performance (Chen & Chang, 2004). Some researchers (e.g., Xu, 2011; Liu, 2006; In'nami, 2006;

Moyer, 2006) argue that one of the skills affected by affective elements, i.e., anxiety, is listening, which had been neglected in the L2 literature until recently: A deep investigation into the history of language learning reveals this lack of attention to the skill of listening. They follow that the neglect of the listening skill was in line with the debate that which of the four language skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) is deemed significant. According to them, research so far proves the listening skill to be the most important skill for language learning due to the fact that it is the most globally used language skill in everyday life. Persisting on the significance of the listening skill, they are on the status that listening skill can facilitate the process of other language skill development (Cassady, & Johnson, 2001; Ching-Shyang Chang, & Read, 2006; Elkhafaifi, 2005; Goh, 2008; Yeldha & Gruba, 2014).

By definition, the mental processes on which listeners use to understand, learn, or to retain new information from the aural input are related to listening comprehension strategies (Yeldha & Gruba, 2014). As they follow, previous L2 listening research revealed that learners need to develop certain listening strategies that help them capitalize on the oral language input they are receiving and overcome those difficulties. These strategies are classified into three main types: cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective strategies (Goh, 2008; Richards & Renandya, 2002; Swan, 2008). When learners were taught those strategies, their listening performance has considerably improved. L2 listening research has also showed that more-skilled learners tend to rely on a repertoire of strategies to regulate their listening processes. Not only do they employ more metacognitive strategies than their less-skilled learners (Goh, 2008).

Furthermore, listening strategies, in addition to developing listening comprehension ability, can also help the language learners cope with listening anxiety. Bachman and Palmer (1996) are on the position that emotional elements exert their own effect on the performance of the learners. Plenty of researchers (Bachman, 1995; Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Dunkel, 1991), hold the view that lots of factors can affect the test takers' performance, such as the setting, the input text, the speaker, the test-taker and the response task.

The present study does not happen in the vacuum, rather it happens in the context of IELTS; to be more brief about IELTS, it is anecdotal as well as well-documented that IELTS took the place of the earlier English Language Testing Service (ELTS); it was first understood in 1976 and was then introduced in 1980 by the British Council; the ELTS test was originally designed as a test for prospective postgraduate students, but there was a growing demand from other student groups and institutions, especially in Australia (IELTS Annual Review, 2007); it is argued that, nowadays, there lies more need to this international test, i.e., IELTS, so that USA also said YES to IELTS. In the review of literature, more explanation will be explained on IELTS. Since the thesis is on strategy use and test anxiety, a lot of factors pose difficulty for the listeners; these factors include unfamiliar vocabulary and topic, speed of speech, and unfamiliar accents. It should be also noted that in intensive listening, the listeners hear the spoken language only once so that this provides limited opportunity for the listeners to process the information in short time (Goh, 2008; In'nami, 2006; Liu, 2006); this can put the listeners under pressure and hence lead to anxiety. To compensate for this, some strategies are needed to overcome the problem. In the current study, thus, strategy use is considered to be seen either it reduces the listening anxiety or not (Cross, 2009). Therefore, for the purposes of the current study, listening comprehension ability is the ability to understand and process a realistic spoken language happening in real time (Jakeman & McDowell, 2006). But, to do the study, the aim is to see that either IELTS listening anxiety will be reduced with a view to strategy use or not and that either strategy instruction affects the performance of the groups or not. Therefore, the following research questions are investigated.

1. Does IELTS-Listening-related strategy instruction reduce the IELTS-listening-related anxiety of the test takers?
2. Does IELTS-Listening-related strategy instruction develop the performance of the IELTS listening test takers?
3. Is there any relationship between the performance of the group with high anxiety and a group with low anxiety on IELTS listening test?

## II. METHODOLOGY

### *Participants*

The participants in the study were 90 EFL learners; in reality, out of the whole population of 90, 80 participants – divided into two groups of experimental and control- were asked for participation, taking an IELTS preparation course at Iranian English Language Institute in Ardebil. The learners, randomly selected, were English language learners at upper-intermediate and advanced level, which were specified with use of a listening proficiency test. Added to that, the learners were selected to be high school students, ranging at age from 15-20, attending the mentioned center for approximately three years and for the purpose of attending IELTS class.

### *Instruments*

In the present study, the following instruments will be employed:

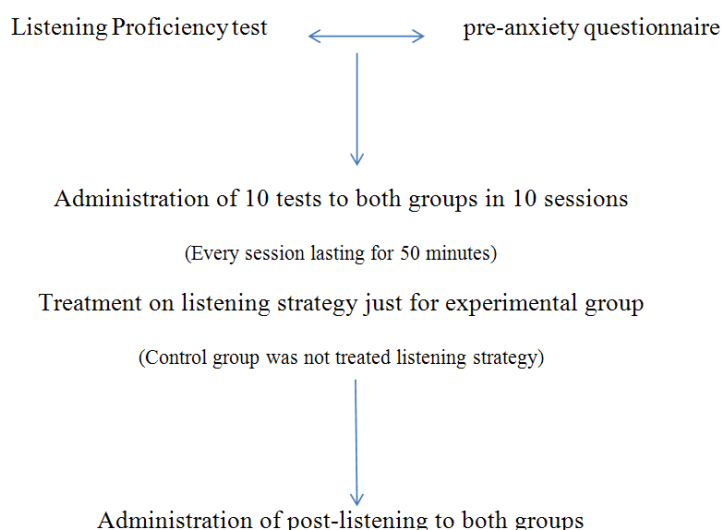
1. An anxiety questionnaire associated with listening (Innami, 2006; Xu, 2011) was adopted and adapted and the reliability of which was also examined with use of Cranbach Alpha. The questionnaire was in likert-type form, i.e., agree, strongly agree, disagree, strongly disagree and neutral, numbered 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, respectively; totally, 22 statements was included in the test.
2. Listening-strategy-related materials associated with IELTS listening (McCarter, 2006; Jakeman & McDowell, 2006) - 10 common strategies - were employed for instructing the experimental group.

3. The pre-test and post-test, both being a form of the IELTS listening (Cambridge University, 2005) and including 40 questions were used in the present study. In effect, both post-test and pre-test were IELTS listening tests administered to IELTS applicants in mock test situation.

#### **Procedure and Design**

To do the present study, the following procedures were considered; first of all, an anxiety questionnaire- a self-developed questionnaire adopted from the work of two researchers (adapted and adopted from Innami, 2006; Xu, 2011) was administered to 90 learners and based on their score, 80 learners were randomly selected and assigned into two groups of 40, i.e., experimental group with 40 learners and control group with 40 learners; both groups were first given one similar anxiety questionnaire before treatment. Second, both groups' listening knowledge was pre-tested with one IELTS listening proficiency test (Cambridge IELTS, 2005) to assess their entry performance which needed a t-test; this was done for the objectives of the pre-test performance of the groups with their post-performance. Given this procedure, their pre-anxiety test performance and their pre-listening performance were recorded for analysis. Then, both groups were given 10 tests of IELTS listening in 10 sessions, every session one test: every session lasting for 50 minutes; during this 50 minutes, the experimental group was given, taught and explained strategy hand-out, i.e., treatment, associated with IELTS listening strategies, but the control group was not given, taught and instructed strategy hand-out. After collecting their score on post-anxiety questionnaire, they were given one final listening test including 40 questions in 30 minutes. In the end, the post-anxiety and post-listening of experimental and control groups were compared. Also, the relationship between their anxiety and their listening performance were found out in the study.

The schematic representation of the procedure and design appears below:



#### **Data Collection and Data Analysis**

The data for the present study were collected at Iranian Institute of English language including two branches in Ardebil Province, Iran. The required data were collected from the performance of 90 participants. With respect to data analysis, the homogeneity of the subjects was proved by ANOVA and then t-test and Pearson Correlation were used; a t-test was used for the purpose of analyzing the data associated with experimental and control groups' performance on the post-anxiety and post-listening and Pearson Correlation was used for finding the relationship between their anxiety and listening performance.

### **III. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

To start the analysis, first, the present data were analyzed through independent-samples t-test and Pearson correlation, both of which assume normality of the data.

TABLE 1  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS; TESTING NORMALITY OF DATA

Group		N	Skewness			Kurtosis		
			Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Ratio	Statistic	Std. Error
Experimental	Pre-Listening	40	.273	.374		0.73	-.469	.733
	Post-Listening	40	-.076	.374		-0.20	-.730	.733
	Pre-Anxiety	40	-.725	.374		-1.94	-.444	.733
	Post-Anxiety	40	-.443	.374		-1.18	-.455	.733
Control	Pre-Listening	40	.406	.374		1.09	-.434	.733
	Post-Listening	40	.118	.374		0.32	-.719	.733
	Pre-Anxiety	40	-.492	.374		-1.32	-.689	.733
	Post-Anxiety	40	-.658	.374		-1.76	-.977	.733

As displayed in Table 1, the ratios of skewness and kurtosis over their respective standard errors were lower than  $\pm 1.96$ ; hence normality of the data was observed.

### **Pretest of Listening Proficiency**

As Table 2 indicates, an independent-samples t-test was run to compare the experimental and control groups' performance on the pretest of listening proficiency in order to prove that the two groups were homogenous in terms of their listening ability prior to the administration of the treatment. As displayed in Table 2, the experimental ( $M = 24.73$ ,  $SD = 4.39$ ) and control ( $M = 23.98$ ,  $SD = 4.01$ ) groups had almost the same means on the pretest of listening proficiency.

TABLE 2  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS; PRETEST OF LISTENING PROFICIENCY BY GROUPS

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-Listening	Experimental	40	24.73	4.391	.694
	Control	40	23.98	4.010	.634

As it is clear in Table 3 below, the results of the independent-samples t-test ( $t(78) = .798$ ,  $p = .427$ ,  $r = .090$  representing a weak effect size, 95 % CI [-1.12, 2.62]) indicated that there was not any significant difference between the experimental and control groups' performance on the pretest of listening proficiency, so the two groups were homogenous.

TABLE 3  
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST: PRETEST OF LISTENING PROFICIENCY BY GROUPS

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.406	.526	.79878		.427	.750	.940	-1.122	2.622
Equal variances not assumed			.79877	364.427		.750	.940	-1.122	2.622

The results of the Levene's test ( $F = .406$ ,  $p = .526$ ) (Table 3) indicated that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met. That was why the first row of Table 3, i.e. "Equal variances assumed" was reported.

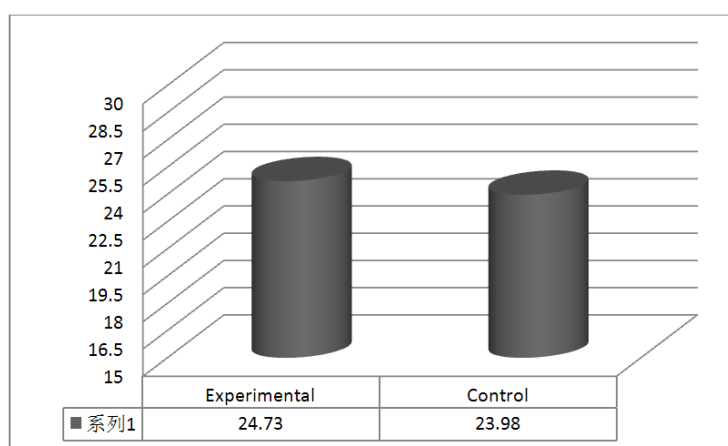


Figure 1. Means on pretest of listening proficiency by groups

### **Pretest of Listening Anxiety**

According to Table 4, an independent-samples t-test was run to compare the experimental and control groups' means on the pretest of listening anxiety and the result showed that the experimental ( $M = 69.45$ ,  $SD = 8.23$ ) and control ( $M = 67.83$ ,  $SD = 8.65$ ) groups had almost the same means on the pretest of listening anxiety.

TABLE 4  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS; PRETEST OF LISTENING ANXIETY BY GROUPS

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-Anxiety	Experimental	40	69.45	8.230	1.301
	Control	40	67.83	8.655	1.369

As Table 5 reveals, the results of the independent-samples t-test ( $t(78) = .860$ ,  $p = .392$ ,  $r = .097$  representing a weak effect size, 95 % CI [-2.13, 5.38]) indicated that there was not any significant difference between the experimental and control groups' performance on the pretest of listening anxiety.

TABLE 5  
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST: PRETEST OF LISTENING ANXIETY BY GROUPS

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.340	.561	.86078	.392		1.625	1.889	-2.135	5.385
Equal variances not assumed			.86077	803.392		1.625	1.889	-2.135	5.385

The results of the Levene's test ( $F = .340$ ,  $p = .561$ ) (Table 5) indicated that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met. That was why the first row of Table 5, i.e. "Equal variances assumed" was reported.

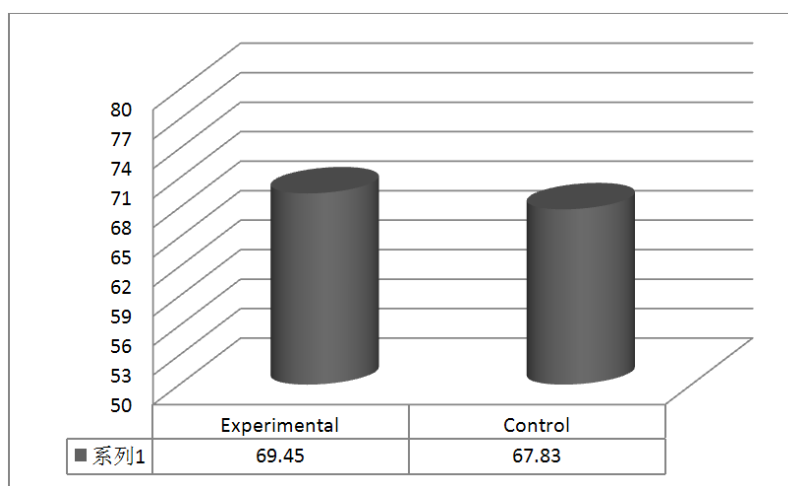


Figure 2. Means on pretest of listening anxiety by groups

### The first Research Question

IELTS-Listening-related strategy instruction does not reduce the IELTS-listening-related anxiety of the test takers. An independent-samples t-test was run to compare the experimental and control groups' means on the posttest of listening anxiety in order to investigate the effect of IELTS-Listening-related strategy instruction on the reduction of their listening anxiety. As displayed in Table 6, the experimental group ( $M = 53.45$ ,  $SD = 10.79$ ) had a lower mean than the control group ( $M = 66$ ,  $SD = 8.51$ ) on the posttest of listening anxiety.

TABLE 6  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS; POSTTEST OF LISTENING ANXIETY BY GROUPS

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post-Anxiety	Control	40	66.00	8.518	1.347
	Experimental	40	53.45	10.792	1.706

The results of the independent-samples t-test ( $t(78) = 5.77$ ,  $p = .000$ ,  $r = .547$  representing a large effect size, 95 % CI [8.22, 16.87]) (Table 7) indicated that there was a significant difference between the experimental and control groups' performance on the posttest of listening anxiety.

TABLE 7  
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST: POSTTEST OF LISTENING ANXIETY BY GROUPS

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	1.604	.209	5.77378	.000		12.550	2.174	8.222	16.878
Equal variances not assumed			5.77374	009.000		12.550	2.174	8.219	16.881

The results of the Levene's test ( $F = 1.60$ ,  $p = .209$ ) (Table 7) indicated that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met. That was why the first row of Table 7, i.e. "Equal variances assumed" was reported.

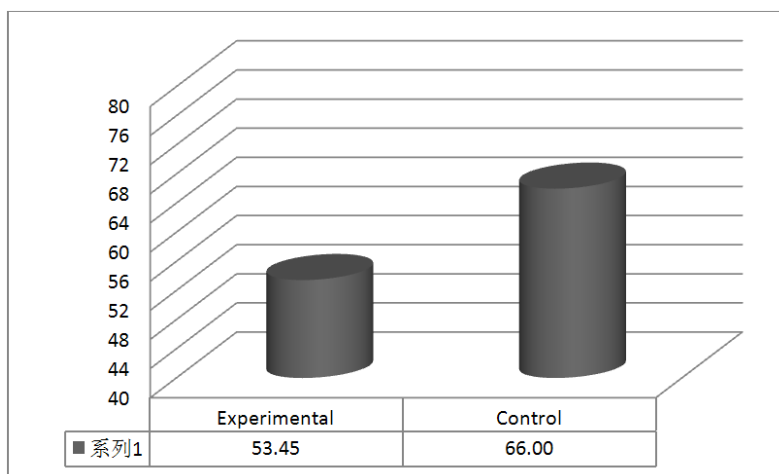


Figure 3. Means on posttest of listening anxiety by groups

### Second Research Question

IELTS-Listening-related strategy instruction does not develop the performance of the IELTS listening test takers. An independent-samples t-test was run to compare the experimental and control groups' performance and as is displayed in Table 9, the experimental group ( $M = 29.60$ ,  $SD = 4.29$ ) had a higher mean than the control group ( $M = 25.05$ ,  $SD = 4.59$ ) on the posttest of listening proficiency.

TABLE 9  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS; POSTTEST OF LISTENING PROFICIENCY BY GROUPS

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post-Listening	Experimental	40	29.60	4.295	.679
	Control	40	25.05	4.596	.727

The results of the independent-samples t-test ( $t(78) = 4.57$ ,  $p = .000$ ,  $r = .460$  representing an almost large effect size, 95 % CI [2.57, 6.53]) (Table 10) indicated that the experimental group after receiving IELTS-Listening-related strategy instruction significantly outperformed the control group on the posttest of listening proficiency. Thus the second null-hypothesis was rejected.

TABLE 10  
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST: POSTTEST OF LISTENING PROFICIENCY BY GROUPS

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.040	.842	4.57478	.000	4.550	.995		2.570	6.530
Equal variances not assumed			4.57477	645.000	4.550	.995		2.570	6.530

The results of the Levene's test ( $F = .040$ ,  $p = .842$ ) (Table 10) indicated that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met. That was why the first row of Table 10, i.e. "Equal variances assumed" was reported.

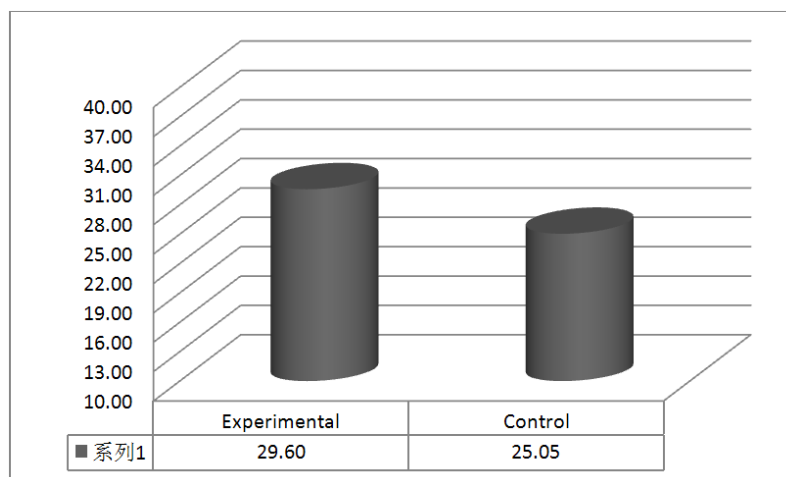


Figure 4. Means on posttest of listening proficiency by groups

### Third Research Question

There is not any relationship between the performance of the group with high anxiety and a group with low anxiety on IELTS listening test. Before discussing the results it should be mentioned that the subjects were divided into two groups of high and low anxiety based on the median score of 32 on the posttest of listening anxiety. Then an independent-samples t-test was run to compare the high and low anxiety groups' performance on the posttest of listening proficiency in order to probe the third null-hypothesis. As displayed in Table 11, the low anxiety group ( $M = 28.21$ ,  $SD = 4.86$ ) had a higher mean than the high anxiety group ( $M = 26.49$ ,  $SD = 5.02$ ) on the posttest of listening proficiency.

TABLE 11  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS; POSTTEST OF LISTENING PROFICIENCY BY ANXIETY LEVEL

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Post-Listening	Low	39	28.21	4.841	.775
	High	41	26.49	5.021	.784

The results of the independent-samples t-test ( $t(78) = 1.55$ ,  $p = .124$ ,  $r = .173$  representing a weak effect size, 95 % CI [-.48, 3.91]) (Table 12) indicated that there was not any significant difference between high and low anxiety groups' means on the posttest of listening proficiency. Thus the third null-hypothesis was supported.

TABLE 12  
INDEPENDENT SAMPLES T-TEST: POSTTEST OF LISTENING PROFICIENCY BY ANXIETY LEVELS

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.211	.648	1.55678	.124	1.717	1.104		-.480	3.914
Equal variances not assumed			1.55877	984.123	1.717	1.103		-.478	3.912

The results of the Levene's test ( $F = .211$ ,  $p = .648$ ) (Table 12) indicated that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was met. That was why the first row of Table 12, i.e. "Equal variances assumed" was reported.

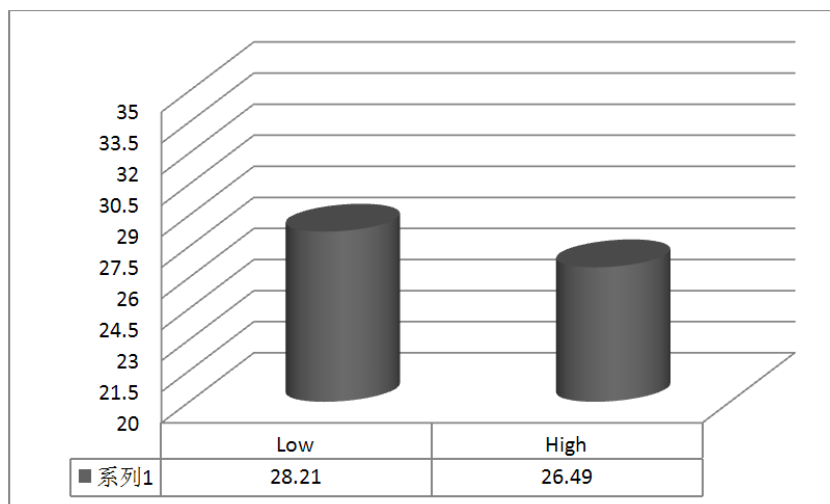


Figure 5. Means on posttest of listening proficiency by anxiety level

The Pearson correlation was run to probe any significant relationship between the subjects' performance on the posttests of listening proficiency and listening anxiety. The results ( $r(78) = -.26$ ,  $p = .020$ , representing a weak to moderate effect size) indicated that there was a negative and weak to moderate relationship between the two test.

TABLE 13  
PEARSON CORRELATION; LISTENING PERFORMANCE WITH LISTENING ANXIETY

		Post-Anxiety
Post-Listening	Pearson Correlation	-.260*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.020
	N	80

#### Cronbach's Alpha Reliability

The Cronbach's alpha reliability for the pretest and posttest of listening anxiety questionnaires were .51 and .73 (Table 13).

TABLE 14  
RELIABILITY STATISTICS; PRETEST AND POSTTEST OF LISTENING ANXIETY

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Pretest	.514	22
Posttest	.730	22

#### KR-21 Reliability Indices

The Cronbach's alpha reliability for the pretest and posttest of listening proficiency were .76 and .93 (Table 15).

TABLE 15  
KR-21 RELIABILITY INDICES; PRETEST AND POSTTEST OF LISTENING PROFICIENCY

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	KR-21
PreListening	80	24.35	4.195	17.597	.76
PostListening	80	27.33	4.978	24.779	.93

#### Construct Validity

A factor analysis using varimax rotation method was run to investigate the underlying construct of the pretests and posttests of listening proficiency and listening anxiety. The correlation matrix used to extract the factors should not suffer from identity and singularity. That is to say; there should be neither zero nor perfect correlations among all tests. The significant results of the Bartlett's test (Chi-square (6) = 18.68,  $p = .005$ ) (Table 16) indicated that the correlation matrix was an identity one, i.e. one in which there were correlations among tests.

TABLE 16  
KMO AND BARTLETT'S TEST

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.424
Approx. Chi-Square		18.682
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Df	6
	Sig.	.005

The correlation matrix is displayed in Table 17. The determinant value of .784 was higher than the minimum acceptable value of .00001. Based on these results it can be claimed that the correlation matrix did not suffer from singularity, i.e. perfect correlations among all variables.



TABLE 17  
CORRELATION MATRIX<sup>a</sup>

		PreListening	PostListening	PreAnxiety	PostAnxiety
Correlation	PreListening	1.000	.282	-.040	-.061
	PostListening	.282	1.000	.223	-.260
	PreAnxiety	-.040	.223	1.000	.092
	PostAnxiety	-.061	-.260	.092	1.000

a. Determinant = .784

Two factors were extracted as the underlying constructs of the pretests and posttests of listening proficiency and listening anxiety. This two-factor model explained 63.40 percent of the total variance (Table 18).

TABLE 18  
TOTAL VARIANCE EXPLAINED

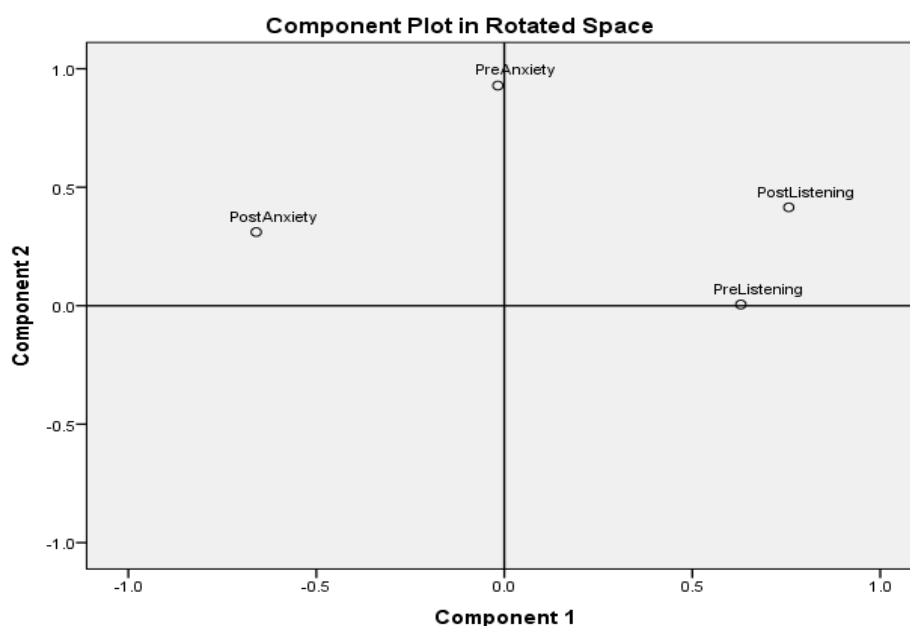
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	1.435	35.863	35.863	1.435	35.863	35.863	1.404	35.101	35.101
2	1.102	27.538	63.401	1.102	27.538	63.401	1.132	28.300	63.401
3	.931	23.271	86.672						
4	.533	13.328	100.000						

And finally; as displayed in Table 19, the pretest (.62) and posttest (.75) of listening proficiency had significant and positive contributions to the first factor. The posttest of listening anxiety (-.66) negatively loaded on this factor, while its pretest (.92) loaded on the second factor. Since all factor loadings were higher than .50, there was no need to check the sampling adequacy assumption (KMO index in Table 16).

TABLE 19  
ROTATED COMPONENT MATRIX

	Component	
	1	2
PostListening	.757	
PostAnxiety	-.660	
PreListening	.629	
PreAnxiety		.929

Rotated Factor Plot 1 displays the above mentioned results. The pretest of listening anxiety loaded on the positive side of the y-axis (first factor) alone. The pretest and posttest of listening proficiency loaded on the positive side of the x-axis, while the posttest of listening anxiety fell on the negative side of the x-axis.



Rotated Factor Plot 1. Factor loadings in rotated space

#### IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Before the discussion is run, a note to be minded is that our main job as teachers of foreign language listening is to assist our language learners develop procedural knowledge, i.e. knowledge about how to process spoken language with ease and automaticity (Takeuchi, Ikeda, & Mizumoto, 2012; Khatib, & Nikouee, 2012); that is to say, it hedges on the way to easily comprehend whatever listening input we hear (Krashen, 1988); similarly, both learners and teachers are required to make an effective use of strategy employment for developing listening performance as well as reduction of listening anxiety; put more clearly, we likewise need to devote some time teaching students some declarative knowledge (Khatib, & Nikouee, 2012), such as comprehension skills and strategies. Therefore, the statistical and numerical data available are more in-depth discussed below.

To detail the discussion, some key issues were elaborated on: normality of the data was examined in light of the ratios of skewness and Kurtosis (See Table 1); a factor analysis was conducted so as to investigate the underlying construct of the pre-tests and post-tests of listening proficiency and listening anxiety and the result indicated a relatively perfect correlation among all the variables (See Table 15 and Table 16). Furthermore, to analyze the reliability of questionnaires associated with listening and anxiety, Cronbach Alpha indicated their being less or more reliable (See Table 12). With these in mind and required for the coming procedure, the null hypotheses are more vividly discussed below.

To start with the first problem, the learners were expected to lower their anxiety upon being instructed IELTS listening strategy; that is to say, the experimental group which was instructed strategies together with listening 10 tests expecting that this will reduce their listening anxiety was surprising. Therefore, both groups, i.e., experimental and control group, were instructed 10 tests of Cambridge IELTS (Cambridge IELTS, 2005); the former was done together with an explanation and instruction of related strategies, but the latter was performed without strategy instruction. With a view to the first null hypothesis, an independent-samples t-test was run so as to investigate the statement that IELTS-Listening-related strategy instruction does not reduce the IELTS-listening-related anxiety of the test takers. The hypothesis was rejected: as displayed in Table 6, the experimental group ( $M = 53.45$ ,  $SD = 10.79$ ) had a lower mean than the control group ( $M = 66$ ,  $SD = 8.51$ ) on the posttest of listening anxiety. This indicates that strategy instruction did not reduce the anxiety of the experimental group, but a lack of strategy instruction for control group seems to have reduced the anxiety of the test takers. Based on this statistical finding, some possibilities are open to discussion. This result can first be accounted for by the fact that every learner is different, every context is different and every educational context is different (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). The outcome can also be related to the nature of strategy and that either strategy instruction causes the test takers to be anxious or not. This can be another research question to be further investigated.

Along approximately this line, Bensoussan (2012) has done a research into reducing anxiety associated with reading, as diametrically in association with listening we could not find any. He suggests some guidelines for coping with anxiety affecting score; However, he follows to stress that it might be disappointing as to realizing the fact that there lies test anxiety; no point worrying as it sounds natural to observe anxiety in the test takers; so, that test anxiety can more frequently make an interference with reliable evaluation of learning and that it can also frustrate the educators as well as the test takers are norm. From brief perspective, this section of the finding is in disagreement with – at least in terms of listening- whatever Bensoussan (2012) has stated: "When teachers focus on students' needs and coping strategies, anxiety can be reduced." As Bensoussan (2012) indicates, involving students in the testing process may increase their motivation and decrease anxiety in language learning. This is opposite the present research findings, so requiring further replication with big population size.

With a view to the second statement that IELTS-Listening-related strategy instruction does not develop the performance of the IELTS listening test takers, an independent-samples t-test was run (Table 9) and the experimental group ( $M = 29.60$ ,  $SD = 4.29$ ) had a higher mean than the control group ( $M = 25.05$ ,  $SD = 4.59$ ) on the posttest of listening proficiency. So, the experimental group after receiving IELTS-Listening-related strategy instruction significantly outperformed the control group on the posttest of listening proficiency. Thus the second null-hypothesis was rejected. This finding is in line with the research findings (e.g., Ching-Shyang Chang, & Read, 2006; Elkhafaifi, 2005; Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Vandergrift, 2007; Vandergrift, et al. 2006) that strategy instruction affects the performance of the test takers.

Furthermore, in support of this, Gipps (1994) puts the view that a good number of construct irrelevant variances can affect the performance, so that Bachman (1995) follows to be more specific that task characteristics, such as setting, rubric, input, response, and the relationship between input and response and affect test performance. Likewise, in a confirmation to this, Weir (1990) holds the status that factors, such as background knowledge, personal experience and individual characteristics, can dramatically affect the performance.

Moving on the next statement that there is not any relationship between the performance of the group with high anxiety and a group with low anxiety on IELTS listening test, some points are argued. First, the subjects were divided into two groups of high and low anxiety based on the median score of 32 on the posttest of listening anxiety and then an independent-samples t-test was run to compare the high and low anxiety groups' performance on the posttest of listening proficiency; as it is clear in Table 11, the low anxiety group ( $M = 28.21$ ,  $SD = 4.86$ ) had a higher mean than the high anxiety group ( $M = 26.49$ ,  $SD = 5.02$ ) on the posttest of listening proficiency. So, based on this statistical finding, the third null hypothesis is supported. Of course, should be treated with caution because some findings indicate

that high anxiety and low anxiety can affect the performance of the test takers (e.g., Matsudaa, & Gobel, 2004; Suleimenova, 2013; Khattack, Jamshed, Baig, 2011). The finding associated with this section of the thesis is opposite what Saito and Samimy (1996) state in connection with the reality that anxiety can dramatically affect the performance of the language learners and test takers. The results of their study indicated that the performance of the language learners with a view to the level of their anxiety as well as the level of their language, i.e., either they are elementary, pre-intermediate, intermediate or upper-intermediate, differed. Their findings finally displayed that anxiety is the best predictor of the performance of the language learners.

Finally, the fourth problem that there is not any significant relationship between the performance of the test takers on IELTS listening and their anxiety level is tackled and discussed. Previous findings have indicated that there is a relationship between performance on listening and anxiety level. But the present study indicated a negative and weak relationship between the two, so the null hypothesis is rejected; of course, the disconfirmation of the hypothesis should be considered cautiously due to the weak and moderate effect size (See Table 13).

This paper has made an attempt to provide pedagogical insights into promoting autonomous listening development outside the classroom through employing the effect of strategy use as well as anxiety tackling strategies; in effect, these all help the learners enhance their metacognitive capacity and cope with the problems of IELTS listening comprehension. However the current research did not display the possible relationship between anxiety and listening performance, there lies a vast number of research supporting the effect of anxiety on language learning and the effect of anxiety on listening needs further research. The nature of anxiety is itself debilitating, so that high level of anxiety can possibly lead to low performance in the foreign language, but in the case of listening, the present research indicated no effect and more replication needs to be done.

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# A Cross-cultural Contrastive Analysis of Views on Friendship in Chinese and English Proverbs

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**Abstract**—By applying a contrastive analysis, this paper aims at presenting the differences of the views on friendship between China and Americans reflected in proverbs about friendship and friends under the guidance of Cultural Dimensions Theory. Differences are found in the acceptance of the hierarchy in human relations, expectations of loyalty and long-term commitments from friends, and inclination of independence. Power distance dimension, individualism versus collectivism dimension and long-term versus short-term orientation dimension are exploited to account for the differences.

**Index Terms**—views on friendship, proverbs, power distance, individualism versus collectivism, long-term versus short-term orientation

## I. INTRODUCTION

The desire for friendship is engraved in human nature. However, the pursuit for such a desire is often impeded during cross-cultural interaction because of the cultural differences, especially those concerning the values and ideologies. Different views on friendship, which are part of the values, lead to different definitions on friends and friendship, varied expectations on friends, assorted means to maintain the friendship, etc. Understanding the differences in views on friendship from cultural perspective, therefore, is both necessary and important for the amelioration of cross-cultural communications.

Proverbs can mirror “a whole tradition of wisdom and beliefs shared by members of their cultural community” (Gibbs, 2001, p. 173). Focusing exclusively on the differences in views on friendship between Chinese and Americans, this paper therefore chooses proverbs as the research subjects. The theoretical framework of this study is three of the six dimensions of Geert Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory, a framework for cross-cultural communication that describes the influences of a culture on the values of its members and the how the values associate with behaviours (Adeoye & Tomei, 2014). Till 2010, six dimensions are proposed: power distance, individualism versus collectivism, long-term orientation versus short-term orientation, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity versus femininity, and indulgence versus self-restraint (Minkov & Hofstede, 2011). Power distance depicts how individuals perceive the power relations among people (Minkov & Hofstede, 2011). Individualism/collectivism dimension is about how an individual relates with the society (Minkov & Hofstede, 2011). Long-term orientation versus short-term orientation dimension associates with the ways in which a society deals with the past, the present and the future (Minkov & Hofstede, 2011). Low/high uncertainty avoidance dimension relates to the ways of coping with uncertainty (Minkov & Hofstede, 2011). Masculinity versus femininity dimension is about the dominant values in a culture (Minkov & Hofstede, 2011). Indulgence versus self-restraint dimension is essentially about the extent to which a person attempts to control the emotions (Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G.J. & Minkov, 2010). The last three dimensions are not too relevant to views on friendship and therefore will not be employed in present study. Details about power distance, individualism versus collectivism, long-term orientation versus short-term orientation will be introduced in chapter four.

Chart 1 is adapted from an official website (<https://geert-hofstede.com/united-states.html>) of Geert Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory. It compares China and United States from six dimensions. It shows that Chinese score higher in terms of power distance and long-term orientation and lower in terms of individualism. The present study will examine the views on friendship reflected in proverbs and try to account for the differences based on Hofstede's model.

The second chapter reviews the studies on views on friendship between Chinese and Americans. The third chapter illustrates the methodology employed in this paper and chapter four reports the findings and analyses reasons by resorting to the theoretical framework. Chapter five concludes this paper and points out the limitations of the present study and suggestions for future research.

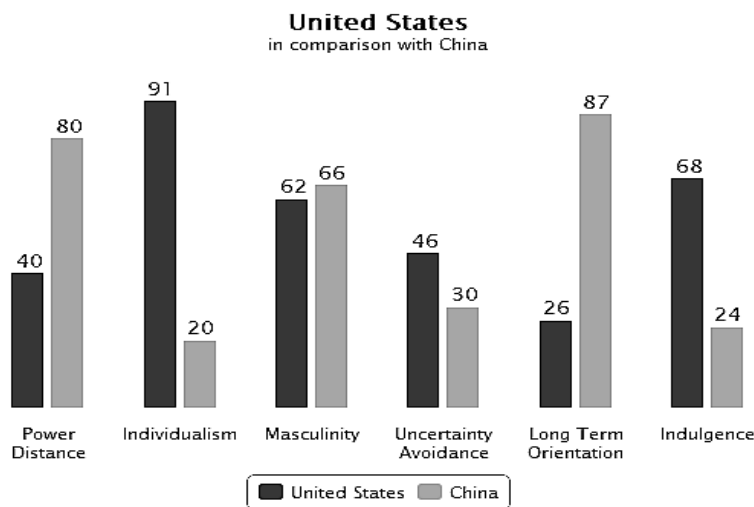


Chart 1

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The contrastive studies between China and the America are enormous while research on views of friendship between Chinese and Americans are relatively fewer. Relevant studies can be categorized into three groups:

First, direct analyses the differences of the views of concepts of friendship between Chinese and Americans. In these studies, researchers focus mainly on the analyses of the distinctive features of Chinese and Americans' views on friendship and provide reasons for such a discrepancy. Some scholars analyze the differences and reasons based on well-established theories, such as Geert Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory and Edward T. Hall's High-Context and Low-Context Communication Theory (Xu, 2009), basic theories of human relations (Huang, 2008) and Markus & Kitayama's Self-Construal Theory (Shen, 2009). Other researchers like Yang (1993) and Gao (2011) instead turn to traditional cultures and historical backgrounds and elucidate their points from cultural perspective. These studies have merits in their collaboration between arguments and theoretical supports. However, their arguments and conclusions are often too general. Either concrete and detailed materials or empirical evidences are required to further support their illustrations so as to enhance the credibility of their analyses and the applicability of their conclusions. The current study will instead provide specific evidence and materials by probing into the proverbs.

Second, analyses focusing on linguistic symbols. Studies of this category endeavour to explore the differences by observing the idioms or aphorisms concerning friendship (Yang, 2011; Zhang & Tian, 2014), by examining the Olympic slogans (Wang, 2011), by studying the songs about friendship (Yan & Chen, 2003) cross-culturally or by analyzing the dialogues in American films or drama (Li, 2008; Wang, 2013; Guo, Ji, & Yang, 2014) so as to discuss implications for cross-cultural communications based on the features of views on friendships of Americans. By adding the elements of language, their analyses are more reliable than those of the first group. All these studies hold that "language and culture are closely interrelated" (Nedergaard-Larsen, 1993) and believe in Sapir-Whorf hypothesis about language and thought. These are also underpinning principles of the present study. The author tries to analyse views on friendship cross-culturally from the perspective of proverbs exclusively. It should be noted that previous research like Zhang & Tian (2014) seems to have confused the notion of idioms and proverbs: though claiming that they centre on idioms, the examples also contain proverbs. According to The New International Webster's Dictionary and Thesaurus of the English Language, a proverb is "a pithy saying, especially one condensing the wisdom of experience" (780) while the idiom is "an expression peculiar to a language, not readily analyzable from its grammatical construction or from the meaning of its component parts" (481).

Third, contrastive studies based on empirical evidence. Studies of this type usually produce their conclusions based on the findings generated from experiments or interviews. Huang (2008) conducts in-depth interviews with 24 Chinese international students and U.S. nationals to explore their conceptualizations of friendship. Luo (2013) carries out case studies of friendship among students in Chengdu. Shi (2007) holds in-depths interviews of 17 students both from home and abroad and illustrates her points by applying to the theory of "third culture", a kind of culture with special form that arises when people with various cultural national backgrounds communicate with each other for a specific common goal (Adair, Tinsley & Taylor, 2006). These studies have advantages in their empirical evidence. Nevertheless, most of these studies focus on the views of students, which limit the applications of their findings to a more general context. The current study instead will not be confined in this respect by taking proverbs as the subjects.

### III. METHODOLOGY

The present study aims to explore the differences in views on friendship reflected by Chinese and Americans proverbs under the guidance of part of Geert Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory.

The research questions are as follows:

- (1) What are the differences in views on friendship between Chinese and Americans as suggested by the proverbs?
- (2) How can the differences be explained based on power distance dimension, individualism versus collectivism dimension and long-term orientation versus short-term orientation dimension?

#### A. Data Collection

To collect as many proverbs as possible and to ensure that the expressions were indeed proverbs, the author turned to specialized dictionaries. A Dictionary of American Proverbs (1992) was chosen for its extensiveness and exclusiveness in terms of American proverbs. Based on the same standard, a proverb dictionary first published by Shanghai Lexicographical Publishing House in 2011 and another first published by Shanghai People's Publishing House in 2004 were picked to stand as the base of Chinese proverbs.

Next, a thorough search was conducted to pick out relevant proverbs. 272 American proverbs (variants not included) and 109 Chinese proverbs (variants not included) were selected for further analysis.

#### B. Data Analysis

Then, these proverbs were thoroughly read through and classified according to their meanings and themes. 25 themes were discovered while 53 Chinese proverbs (variants not included) and 68 American proverbs (variants not included) were found to illustrate the differences. They were then put under three dimensions based on the relevance with the dimensions. The last step was the contrastive analysis. Under each cultural dimension, views on friendship reflected in the proverbs were decoded and differences were elaborated. Reasons for differences were provided by applying the theory of power distance dimension, individualism versus collectivism dimension and long-term orientation versus short-term orientation dimension. English translations for Chinese proverbs are provided for reference.

### IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### A. Power Distance

Power distance depicts people's views on power relationships between people. It is defined as "the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations accept that power is distributed unequally" (Hofstede & Bond, 1984, p.419). Individuals in cultures with a high power distance are more likely to conform to the belief that everybody has a place and there is a chasm between persons who are powerful and persons who are not and that the chasm cannot be filled. While in cultures demonstrating a low power distance, individuals are less likely to accept the unequal distribution of power and hold that everyone is equal in spite of their positions based on power. In terms of views on friendship, two differences are most evident: views on chasm and views on similarities of power among friends.

##### Chasm Between the Powerful and the Powerless

As the economic basis determines the superstructure, more money may ensure more power. Therefore it is quite understandable to find that most of the relevant proverbs concern the wealth.

Table 1 illustrates that both cultures accept the fact that more money and power will bring more friends, be it true or not. However, the Chinese proverbs are inclined to place the rich and the poor in conflicting positions. The sharp contrast illustrated by proverbs suggests that Chinese tend to believe that there are huge gaps between the rich and the poor and that people with different power are treated differently by the society. The unequal distribution of power is admitted among Chinese.

TABLE 1

American proverbs	Chinese proverbs	Translations for Chinese Proverbs
A full purse has many friends. (Mieder, 1992, p. 491)	有钱千里通，无钱隔壁聋。 (Wen, 2011, p. 1263)	Money brings friends from afar, poverty brings ignorance of the neighbours.
They are rich who have friends. (Mieder, 1992, p. 239)	富贵多士，贫贱寡友。 (Wen, 2011, p. 229)	The rich have many friends while the poor, little.

Table 2 suggests that making friends or the desires to be friends with powerful and wealthy figures are despised by Chinese. Such actions and cravings are snobbish and utilitarian and are equal to fawning on the rich and the powerful. Friendship between people with different social status is less likely to be accepted by Chinese because they tend to believe that it is to prey on the wealth and power that the less powerful ones approach to the powerful ones. As a result, such friendship can never be true and long lasting. Although Chinese also contend that "结交须胜己，似我不如无" (Wen, 2011, p. 385) (Friends must be better than I am; if not, I'd rather have no friends.) and that "挂棍要挂长，结伴要结强" (Wen, 2011, p. 1368) (One should befriend with who is strong just like one should choose a long stick to hold.), the "better" or "strong" here refer to anything else but power and wealth. By contrast, no despise is shown in

American proverbs. They think being utilitarian is nothing wrong and they are willing or even are encouraged to establish friendship with powerful and wealthy individuals regardless of their positions in society. They admit an unequal power distribution but they do not accept that. For Americans, power relations among individuals are not hierarchical. A more widely accepted view is that everyone is equal regardless of their social status.

TABLE 2

American proverbs	Chinese proverbs	Translations for Chinese Proverbs
A rich friend is a treasure. (Mieder, 1992, p. 234)	富贵有亲朋，穷困无兄弟。 (He, 2004, p.112)	Relatives and friends come around when one is rich and leave when one is poor.
It is better to have one friend of great value than to have many friends of little value. (Mieder, 1992, p. 237)		

One should never forget and neglect friends with less power and money when one is rich and influential: it is what both cultures consent to according to the proverbs in Table 3 below. The difference is that the second American proverb specifically points out the equality between friends while no Chinese one does so.

TABLE 3

American proverbs	Chinese proverbs	Translations for Chinese Proverbs
Never drop the friends you make on the way up; you may need them on the way down. (Mieder, 1992, p. 238)	贫贱之交不可忘，糟糠之妻不下堂。(Wen, 2011, p. 578)	Never forget friends made in adversity and your wife who accompanies you through adversity.
	富贵不忘贫贱友。 (Wen, 2011, p. 228)	Forget not friends made in poverty when you are rich.
2. He is a friend that helps me, and not he that pities me. (Mieder, 1992, p. 236)	贫贱相为命，富贵毋相忘。 (Wen, 2011, p. 578)	When you are rich, do not forget friends who support you and are supported by you in adversity.

### Power Similarities among Friends

Proverbs in Table 4 show that both cultures admit that the similarities are crucial in terms of friendship. People are more likely to make friends to whom they are similar, including the similarities in power and wealth. Americans are also encouraged to make friends similar to them in terms of money and power. However, American proverbs such as “it is good to have some friends both in heaven and in hell” (Mieder, 1992, p. 237) and “little friends sometimes prove to be big friends” (Mieder, 1992, p. 237) demonstrate that friendships among people with different backgrounds (social status and financial status included) are promoted as well. Believing in universal equality, Americans view friendships between two power levels as a commonplace. No Chinese proverbs are found to express the same encouragement.

TABLE 4

American proverbs	Chinese proverbs	Translations for Chinese Proverbs
Bird of a feather flock together. (Mieder, 1992, p. 205)	鱼找鱼，虾找虾。 (Wen, 2011, p. 1281)	Fishes look for fishes while shrimps look for shrimps.
Have no friends not equal to yourself. (Mieder, 1992, p. 236)	富攀富，穷帮穷。 (He, 2004, p. 113)	The rich make friends with the rich while the poor make friends with the poor.
Make not your friend too cheap to you, nor yourself too dear to him. (Mieder, 1992, p. 237)		

### B. Individualism versus Collectivism

Individualism/collectivism dimension deals with the relationship between an individual and the society. Individualism acclaims a loosely knit social structure while collectivism upholds a tightly knit one. The former lays stress on individual rights and freedom while the latter emphasizes group interests and harmony among group members. “The basic anthropological / societal issue to which it relates is the individual’s dependence on the group.” (Hofstede & Bond, 1984, p. 419) According to Hofstede, the relationships in an individualist society are “voluntary” (Hofstede, 2001, p. 353) while in the collectivist society, they are not. When it comes to friendship, the differences in views are manifested in two aspects: amount of friends and assistance among friends.

#### Amount of Friends

Both cultures acknowledge the hardship of finding a true and fast friend. In America, people maintain that “it takes half of our lives to learn who our friends are and the other half to keep them” (Mieder, 1992, p. 237) while the Chinese complain that “交遍天下友，知心有几人” (He, 2004, p.207) (True friends are rare even when one has friends all over the world.) and that “千金易得，知音难求” (Wen, 2011, p. 609) (It is easy to get thousands pieces of gold but hard to find a true friend.). Nevertheless, according to the proverbs presented in Table 5, two cultures diverge in terms of the number of friends they desire to hold. Compared with the American counterparts, Chinese tend to believe the more, the better. The latter attach great importance to the interactions and interdependence among individuals and hope to be closely linked with more individuals in communities. The hope for a tightly knit social structure is reflected, a cardinal feature of collectivism. The Americans, on the contrary, lay less stress on the quantity of friends. The do not believe



that more friends will certainly bring more convenience to them. Independence and a loosely knit social structure are acclaimed in American culture, exhibiting individualism.

TABLE 5

American proverbs	Chinese proverbs	Translations for Chinese Proverbs
Have few friends, many acquaintances. (Mieder, 1992, p. 236)	多个朋友多条路, 多个冤家多堵墙。(Wen, 2011, p. 175)	One more friend means one more solution; one more enemy means one more obstacle.
He who has many friends has no friends. (Mieder, 1992, p. 236)	朋友千个少, 冤家一个多。(He, 2004, p. 331)	One thousand friends are not enough; one enemy is too much.
Many friends, few helpers. (Mieder, 1992, p. 238)	朋友越多越好, 冤家越少越好。(Wen, 2011, p. 569)	Better to have more friends and fewer enemies.
Real friends are few and far between. (Mieder, 1992, p. 238)	朋友是个宝, 多个朋友多条道。(Wen, 2011, p. 569)	Friends are treasures. One more friend means one more solution.
Choose your friends like your books---few but choice. (Mieder, 1992, p. 235)	在家靠父母, 出门靠朋友。(Wen, 2011, p. 1313)	Count on parents when at home and on friends when out.
	一人为仇嫌太多, 百人为友嫌太少。(He, 2004, p. 636)	One enemy is too many while one hundred friends are too few.
He that has a thousand friends has not a friend to spare. (Mieder, 1992, p. 236)	海内存知己, 天涯若比邻。(He, 2004, p. 146)	A bosom friend afar brings distance near.
	四海之内, 皆为朋友。(He, 2004, p. 504)	Everyone is a friend to anyone else.

### Assistance among Friends

Table 6 proves that both cultures value the assistance from friends and loathe fair-weather friends. Friendships that can go through thick and thin are highly praised.

TABLE 6

American proverbs	Chinese proverbs	Translations for Chinese Proverbs
A friend in need is a friend indeed. (Mieder, 1992, p. 233)	患难见朋友。(Wen, 2011, p. 328)	A friend in need is a friend indeed.
	人到难处显宾朋。(Wen, 2011, p. 699)	True friends are there in adversity.
Fall sick and you will know who is your friend and who is not. (Mieder, 1992, p. 235)	遇急思亲戚, 临危托故人。(Wen, 2011, p. 1292)	When in danger, one think about his relatives and friends.
True friends share both the bad and the good. (Mieder, 1992, p. 239)	有福同享, 有难同当。(Wen, 2011, p. 1246)	True friends go through thick and thin.
	甘泉知于干渴时, 良友识别于患难日。(He, 2004, p. 114)	Sweet spring is known in thirst; a good friend is known in adversity.
A friend is best found in adversity. (Mieder, 1992, p. 233)	遇旱知甘泉, 患难见真友。(He, 2004, p. 666)	Sweet spring is known in drought; a good friend is known in adversity.
A long spell of illness is apt to point out your best friends. (Mieder, 1992, p. 234)	战场上识别骏马, 患难中了解朋友。(He, 2004, p. 679)	A good horse is known on the battlefield; a good friend is known in adversity.
	贫贱见交情。(He, 2004, p. 577)	Poverty tests friendship.
Strife makes friendship stronger. ((Mieder, 1992, p. 241))	酒肉弟兄千个有, 落难之中无一人。(He, 2004, p. 402)	A thousand false friends never stand out for you in adversity.
	打出来的朋友, 杀出来的交情。(He, 2004, p. 95)	Friends and friendship are acquired in adversity.
Don't be a fair-weather friend. (Mieder, 1992, p. 235)	一生一死, 乃见交情。(He, 2004, p. 639)	Friendship is known in a life-and-death situation.
A true friend is one that steps in when the rest of the world steps out. (Mieder, 1992, p. 234)	生死关头识真交。(He, 2004, p. 870)	Friendship is known in a life-and-death situation.
	朋友落难, 烧饼当饭。(He, 2004, p. 331)	Stand by your friends' sides when they are in adversity.

Differences emerge when it comes to how far one should go to assist a friend. Indeed, both cultures mention that there should be a limit, as can be shown in the followings examples in Table 7.

TABLE 7

American proverbs	Chinese proverbs	Translations for Chinese Proverbs
If your friend is honey, do not lick him up altogether. (Mieder, 1992, p. 237)	靠亲戚吃饭饿死, 靠朋友穿衣冻死。(He, 2004, p. 235)	You'll starve to death if you rely totally on relatives for food and will be cold to death if you rely totally on friends for clothes.
He who asks more of a friend than he can bestow deserves to be refused. (Mieder, 1992, p. 239)	亲友救急不救贫。(He, 2004, p. 373)	Relatives and friends should help you but not rescue you from poverty.

But views on material assistance from friends are divergent. Proverbs in Table 8 demonstrate that people in both countries accept that friendship cannot be built on money or other material supports.

TABLE 8

American proverbs	Chinese proverbs	Translations for Chinese Proverbs
A friend whom you can buy can be bought from you. (Mieder, 1992, p. 234)	朋友莫交财，交财仁义绝。(Wen, 2011, p. 568)	Friendship should never be established based on wealth, or there will be no friendship at all.
Bought friends are not friends indeed. (Mieder, 1992, p. 235) A friend won with a feather can be lost with a straw. (Mieder, 1992, p. 234)	酒朋饭友，没钱分手。(He, 2004, p. 219)	False friends flee away when you have no money to spare.
When you buy friends with anything other than friendship, they don't stay bought long. (Mieder, 1992, p. 239)	酒肉朋友，难得长久。(He, 2004, p. 219)	Friendship based on money never last for long.
Friendship is not to be bought at a fair. (Mieder, 1992, p. 241) It's a poor friendship that needs to be constantly bought. (Mieder, 1992, p. 241)	有茶有酒兄弟多，疾难来了不见人。(He, 2004, p. 652) 君子结交不为财，小人结交专为嘴。(Wen, 2011, p. 417)	Friendship based on money disappear when one is ill or in trouble. The noble make friends based not on money while the villains do.
Choose not friends by outward show, for feathers float while pearls lie low. (Mieder, 1992, p. 235)	君子之交淡如水，小人之交浓若醴。(Wen, 2011, p. 225)	Friendship between noble men is light like water while friendship among villains is thick like wine.
	生前如水，死后如醴。(Wen, 2011, p. 469)	Friendship between noble men is light like water when they are alive but last longer after they die like the wine.

Nevertheless, after the establishment of friendship, situations change, as can be seen in the following examples in Table 9. Although Americans also believe that “friends tie their purses with spider's thread” (Mieder, 1992, p. 236), they tend to be more cautious with the material assistance than Chinese. The latter believe that once friends, one is supposed to supply assistance as best as one can, including provide material assistance. No fuss should be made about the material gains and losses among true and fast friends. In American culture, by contrast, the material objects, especially money, are not supposed to be shared among friends; otherwise, the friendship will be damaged. Chinese culture even speaks highly of the sacrifice for a friend when necessary. The proverbs “舍命陪君子” (Wen, 2011, p. 464) (I will sacrifice my life to accompany my friends), “为朋友两肋插刀” (Wen, 2011, p. 543) (I'm willing to stab knives between my ribs for my friends) and “为朋友者生，为朋友者死” (Wen, 2011, p. 543) (I'm willing to live for my friends and die for them) all suggest that people will do whatever they can to help friends, even at the cost of their lives. No similar American proverbs are found.

TABLE 9

American proverbs	Chinese proverbs	Translations for Chinese Proverbs
Lend money, lose a friend. (Mieder, 1992, p. 237)	交情似水淡长浓。(Wen, 2011, p. 379)	Friendship light like water lasts longer.
If you want to keep a friend, never borrow, never lend. (Mieder, 1992, p. 237)	朋友朋友，只朋得个友。(Wen, 2011, p. 568)	Friendship based on money and power is workable only when both parties are rich.
When two friends have a common purse, one sings and the other weeps. (Mieder, 1992, p. 239)		
Pay your debts or lose your friends. (Mieder, 1992, p. 240)	朋友有通财之义。(Wen, 2011, p. 569)	Friends should not make fuss about material gains and losses.
Short accounts make long friends. (Mieder, 1992, p. 240)		

Such differences actually can be elucidated by the notion of loyalty to a group or a community. Chinese value the loyalty to a group and group members so that they are more willing to or at least obliged to do anything to show their loyalty in exchange for the loyalty from other group members. Interdependence among group members is also stressed. The way of demonstrating loyalty reflects a culture valuing collectivism. By comparison, Americans cherish independence and are inclined to stick to self-reliance. They are not accustomed to trading loyalty for loyalty. Help from friends is appreciated but at the end of the day, they maintain that it is they that should face the music and tackle the problems by themselves. Neither material cost nor life-relating sacrifice is approved, let alone encouraged. The undestimations of loyalty of any community and the belief of independence reflect a culture valuing individualism.

The fact that independence is cited to account for both the differences in this section suggests that it is actually “central to individualism” (Harkness, Super & Tijen, 2000, p30). More American proverbs are provided in Table 10 below.

TABLE 10

American proverbs
There is no friendship without freedom, no freedom without the friendship of brothers. (Mieder, 1992, p. 241)
A hedge between keeps friendship green. (Mieder, 1992, p. 295)
True friends never run deep. (Mieder, 1992, p. 239)
Friends are lost by calling often and calling seldom. (Mieder, 1992, p. 235)
It is easier to visit friends than to live with them. (Mieder, 1992, p. 237)

### C. Long-term versus Short-term Orientation

Long-term orientation versus short-term orientation dimension associates with the degree to which a society values long-term commitments and respect for tradition. The former values the virtues and actions that will bring future rewards while the latter prefer the virtues and actions that are past or present related (Hofstede, 2001, p. 359). The related differences of views on friendship are reflected in two aspects: preferred time length of friendship and views on old friends.

#### Long-term Friendship vs. Short-term Friendship

Relevant proverbs are shown in Table 11 below. These proverbs show that the hope for a long-term friendship is actually shared between Americans and Chinese. However, it should be noted that the long-term friendship in Americans proverbs always goes hand-in hand with the term “true”. Only true friendship is expected to be life-long in America while in China, no special requirements are demanded. The difference suggests that Americans do not always expect that the friendship could last for a long time while Chinese do. The reason concerns the length of commitment to the friendship. Chinese people value long-term commitment and contend that friendship survives the time is most precious. The virtue called perseverance is also stressed, a virtue championed by cultures with a long-term orientation. Although like American counterparts, Chinese believe that friends will part on day and rejoin at another day, they tend to be more sentimental and usually express their reluctance to be away from each other when friends have to part for fear that long distance between friends will erode friendships, in which case the hope for a long-term friendship will be dashed.

On the contrary, Americans tend to believe that such a commitment will constrain them from freedom and independence. They are therefore more cautious with the notion “life-long” and feel more at ease with a short-term friendship, though they also crave for a long-term one.

TABLE 11

American proverbs	Chinese proverbs	Translations for Chinese Proverbs
A true friend is forever a friend. (Mieder, 1992, p. 234)	结交要像长流水，莫学杨柳一时青。(He, 2004, p. 210)	Friendship should last like water flows but not like willows that turn green temporarily.
A true friend is the wine of life. (Mieder, 1992, p. 234)	好铁不生锈，好友不忘情。(He, 2004, p. 160)	Good iron never rusts and good friends never give up the friendship.
A true friend loves at all time. (Mieder, 1992, p. 234)		
True friends, like ivy and the wall, both stand together and together fall. (Mieder, 1992, p. 239)	千里相送，归于一别。(He, 2004, p. 613)	I have send you away for a thousand li but have to say goodbye in the end.
Flowers of true friendship never fade. (Mieder, 1992, p. 240)	送君千里，终须一别。(He, 2004, p. 971)	I have send you away for a thousand li but have to say goodbye in the end.
The best of friends must part. (Mieder, 1992, p. 238)	山水尚有相逢之日。(He, 2004, p. 453)	Even mountains and rivers will greet their friends one day.
Friends may meet but mountains never greet. (Mieder, 1992, p. 236)		

#### Old Friends

Both cultures value old friends as can be interpreted from proverbs in Table 12. Chinese consider old friends are always better than the new ones. Americans by contrast, state old friends are the best but still claim that “old friends are the best, but new ones are the most fun” (Mieder, 1992, p. 238) Chinese think old ones are better due to the long-term commitment. There is a larger investment of time involved in the friendship concerning the old friends than the new ones. By comparison, with less care for and more fear of the long-term investment, a cardinal feature of a culture with a short-term orientation, Americans do not believe that old friends are forever better than new friends.

TABLE 12

American proverbs	Chinese proverbs	Translations for Chinese Proverbs
Old friends and old wine are best. (Mieder, 1992, p. 238)	人惟旧，物惟新。(He, 2004, p. 414)	Old friends and new clothes are cherished.
New friends are like silver, but old ones are like gold. (Mieder, 1992, p. 238)		
No friend is like an old friend. (Mieder, 1992, p. 238)		
One old friend is better than two new ones. (Mieder, 1992, p. 238)		
To see an old friend is as agreeable as a good meal. (Mieder, 1992, p. 239)		
While you seek new friendships, cultivate the old. (Mieder, 1992, p. 241)	衣不如新，人不如故。(He, 2004, p. 644)	New clothes are better and old friends are better.
Make new friends but keep the old. (Mieder, 1992, p. 237)		
An old friend do(es) not forsake. (Mieder, 1992, p. 235)		
An old friend is a mount for a black day. (Mieder, 1992, p. 235)		
An old friend is a new house. (Mieder, 1992, p. 235)		

## V. CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this paper is to conduct a contrastive study of the views on friendship between Chinese and Americans reflected in proverbs based on three dimensions of Hofstede's cultural dimension theory: power distance, individualism vs. collectivism and long-term orientation vs. short-term orientation. Theoretically, this paper provides evidence to support cultural dimensions theory from the perspective of proverbs, by which enriches relevant studies. Practically, it offers guidelines for cross-cultural friendships between Americans and Chinese by analysing and summarizing the differences on the views of friendship between Americans and Chinese, thus facilitating cross-cultural communications. The major findings, limitations of this study and future suggestions are presented below.

### A. Major Findings

(1) Chinese's views on friendship reflect a culture with a high power distance. A chasm among different power levels is emphasised and accepted. The power relations among individuals are hierarchical. Consequently, Chinese doubt and even despise friendships across power levels. Americans' views on friendship reflect a culture with a low power distance. They reject the unequal power distribution and act on the principle that everyone is equal when establishing friendships. Friendships across power levels are nothing different from friendships within one power level.

(2) Chinese views on friendship reflect a collectivist orientation. Desires for a closely linked society or community and dependence drive Chinese to make friends as many as possible and do anything necessary to assist friends in exchange for loyalty. Americans' views on friendship reflect an individualist orientation. Americans find no urgent need for more friends and loyalty from others due to the desires for a loosely linked society or community and independence.

(3) Chinese views on friendship reflect a culture with a long-term orientation. Chinese always cherish old friends and long-term friendship more due to their appreciations of long-term commitment which include large amount of time investment and perseverance. Americans do not always speak highly of old friends. The time investment in friendship is not that valued as the Chinese counterparts do. Despite life-long friendship is also treasured by Americans, they usually prefer short-term friendships for fear that their freedom and independence will be threatened.

### B. Limitations of the Present Study

The major limitation of the present study concerns the comprehensiveness of relevant proverbs. It is impossible to claim that the author has examined all relevant proverbs although for a perfect research, it is a must. However, while relying mainly on one dictionary for American proverbs and two for Chinese ones, the author has consulted several other dictionaries specifically centred on proverbs to ensure that most of the relevant proverbs are considered, which weakens the negative effects on credibility due to not being inclusive.

### C. Suggestions for Future Research

First, further studies can focus on other linguistic forms. Views on friendship reflected in poems, moments on social networks or daily communications can be recruited as the subjects for a cross-cultural comparison.

Second, this study compares two cultures considered to be quite different from each other in terms of cultural dimensions. Future studies can focus on what differences in views on friendship can there be between Chinese and people from a culture that is similar to Chinese one in terms of cultural dimensions.

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# The Relationship between Big-Five Personality Traits, English Language Proficiency Scores on IELTS, and Academic Success of Iranian Foreign Students

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**Abstract**—There is a potential to supply personality as a psychological factor in terms of the Big-Five Model including Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Openness to Experience, and Neuroticism. This study was an attempt to examine the relationship between Big-Five personality traits, English language proficiency scores on IELTS, and academic success of Iranian foreign students. The participants of the study included 202 Iranian students (126 males and 76 females) who studied at English speaking universities in different countries including Armenia, Austria, Australia, Canada, Cyprus, Germany, Hungary, India, Italy, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Sweden, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, Ukraine, and the United States of America. The necessary data for this study were collected from participants' first-semester academic reports to measure the degree of academic achievement, academic IELTS certificates to determine the language proficiency of candidates, as well as International Personality Item Pool Big-Five inventory to identify the participants' personality traits. The data were gathered via different communication tools. The correlational analyses showed that there were significant relationships amongst personality traits and Iranian foreign students' language proficiency. Neuroticism was the only psychological trait, negatively correlated with both language proficiency and academic success of Iranian foreign students. The study also revealed that there was a high correlation between the scores on IELTS and academic success of Iranian foreign students. Finally, multiple regression analysis indicated the causality among the Big-Five personality traits, English language proficiency score on IELTS, and academic success of Iranian foreign students. These bear testimony to the idea of cognitive approach in that one's underlying mental processes are in charge of second language learning process.

**Index Terms**—academic success, big-five personality traits, IELTS, language proficiency

## I. INTRODUCTION

Annually, thousands of learners from various cultural, economic, educational, social, and psychological backgrounds intend to study in other countries. Continuing the academic education in a foreign country provides learners with opportunities to experience a new type of culture, meet different people, study novel perspectives or utterly different subjects, and better prepare for an occupation in an increasingly globally integrated world.

In recent decades, psychologists have recognized factors such as personality traits and learning styles involved in individual academic performances (Busato, Prins, Elshout, & Hamaker, 2000; Chamorro-Premuzic, & Furnham, 2003). This is in accordance with the cognitive psychology which is concerned with the ways information is processed in human mind. Turning to cognitive theory, learning a language is the result of internal mental activity that takes place in the same manner as learning in the other general human tasks. This involves cognitive skills to be acquired in a very complex way (Ausubel, 2012; Anderson, 1992; Ellis, 2008; McLaughlin, 1987; Tarone, 2007).

There is a body of evidence suggesting that nearly all personality measures can be put and simplified under the section of Five-Factor Model (FFM) of personality, which as a result has been named the "Big-Five" (Goldberg, 1990). The flexibility of the Big-Five is known to communalize right through all cultures and stay quite constant (McCrae, & Costa, 1997).

On the other hand, the validity criterion for ability tests is related to academic performance for over a century, and the number of studies showed that it is possible to explain individual differences in academic performance by personality traits (Brody, 2000; Cronbach, 1949).

International English Language System (IELTS) is one of several English proficiency tests used by tertiary institutions in Australia, Britain, Canada and New Zealand who assess the English language proficiency of international students. The relationship between English language proficiency and the academic success of international students in

different context in other words, the issue of predictive validity of the test such as IELTS has its importance as there have been recently giant leaps in the number of applicants from non-English speaking countries that take IELTS as the gate way to international universities (Seyed Erfani, 2011).

## II. PROBLEM AND PURPOSE

The growth in the number of international students has led to controversies on the requirements of English language proficiency and higher education. From the teaching point of view, most universities have more international and non-English speaking students than ever (Woodrow, 2006). IELTS, then, is an applicable tool to assess the types of skills usually needed in tertiary settings and offers outlined scores on subtests of speaking, writing, listening, and reading.

During the last decades, Iranian students have been increasingly willing to study abroad. In accordance with the Tabnak News in April 2014, there are around 120000 Iranian students who study abroad at undergraduate, postgraduate, philosophy of doctorate, and other levels. The major struggle for them would be to obtain the required IELTS score to promptly apply for a university course and to have improved academic performance in their programs. To make such goal come true, there are numerous factors one critical of which is individuals' personality. If well aware of their personality traits and the relationship they have with the test performance, the learners could apply appropriate strategies to heal the personality and boost test performance eventually. However, the assumed advantages of personality traits should be empirically verified. As Arnold (1999) argues, personality traits and the affective side of human being in general are always expressed through the human knowledge and in particular second language learning.

There are many personality and affective factors which have queued to be explored in terms of their relationship with language learning, test performance, and academic performance. Among such factors is the Five-Factor Model made up of the aspects of Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Openness to Experience, and Neuroticism. (Ehrman, Leaver, & Oxford, 2003).

The question to be addressed here is if there does any significant relationship exist between personality traits, IELTS results, and academic performance of Iranian foreign students studying at English speaking universities abroad. The main objective of the present study was to look at the degree of the relationship between Big-Five personality traits, English language proficiency scores on IELTS and academic success of Iranian foreign students who have studied abroad.

The present study aimed to investigate one of the controversial topics in the domain of cognitive psychology, Big-Five personality traits, to see how they could be applied as a tool for improving and predicating how Iranian foreign students could perform on language proficiency tests especially IELTS and their later academic courses. This study was conducted in order to support the claims made concerning the educational values of Big-Five personality traits through exploring their relationship with the IELTS as an English language proficiency test. As a result the variables of the study were assigned as the Big-Five personality traits including Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Openness to Experience, and Neuroticism as the predictor variables on one side and Iranian foreign students' Language Proficiency scores on IELTS as well as their academic success as the dependent ones on the other side. Finally, the study was an attempt to introduce a rather potential way to predict the scores on IELTS and the academic success of the Iranian foreign students through a psychological tool that is hidden inside a learner, and is mostly unknown to the teachers, material developers, and curriculum developers.

## III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) Is there any significant relationship between Big-Five personality traits and language proficiency scores on IELTS of Iranian foreign students?
- 2) Is there any significant relationship between Big-Five personality traits and academic success of Iranian foreign students?
- 3) Is there any significant relationship between academic success and language proficiency scores on IELTS of Iranian foreign students?
- 4) Is there any significant causality among Big-Five personality traits, language proficiency scores on IELTS, and academic success of Iranian foreign students?

## IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Cognitive psychology deals with the question how human mind tends to think and learn. It takes learners as active participants who rely on different strategies to become involved in learning processes which naturally take place as complex phenomena interconnected with a network of factors that internationally come into operation. Learners bring strategies learning strategies to the classrooms. This originates from the particular learning styles learners do possess. In term, the individual differences are woven with the personality traits that altogether determine the way of learning and the ups and downs the learners might come across based on their personal features. With respect to the cognitive psychology, the rate of such traits varies cross-individually; then it is of great importance to see how far students might differ in such traits.

The cognitive perspective of personality is the idea that people are who they are because of the way they think, including how information is attended to, perceived, analyzed, interpreted, encoded and retrieved. In this regard, the major objective of research on individual differences was to forecast which learners would succeed (Ellis, 2004). According to Dörnyei (2005), one of the most important reasons for being more successful is personality or 'enduring personal characteristics that are assumed to apply to everybody and on which people differ by degree'. Here, personality is an important item for describing individual differences in second language learning. Based on another definition, personality refers to the unique characteristics of an individual person; display of characteristic adaptations; unique identifications about life and cultural differences (Hogan, Hogan & Roberts, 1996; McAdams & Pals, 2006).

A general agreement can be found within the personality and individual difference literature that personality is best depicted by a five-factor model (e.g. Costa & McCrae, 1992, 1995; De Raad & Schouwenburg, 1996; Furnham, 1996). The Big-Five factors are usually marked as Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Openness to Experience, and Neuroticism (Duff, Boyle, Dunleavy & Ferguson, 2004).

The Big-Five taxonomy has never been proposed as an inclusive personality theory; it was rather developed to build structural associations among personality traits (Goldberg, 1993). Hence, as quiet normal with structural models, it introduces a version of personality that is more descriptive than explanatory, tends to stress the predictabilities in behavior rather than inferred dynamic and developmental processes, and focuses on variables instead of individuals or types of individuals (John & Robins, 1993, 1998).

Besides, the Big-Five taxonomy of trait represents a conceptual basis to support investigating these theoretical issues. Funder (2001) asserts that extraversion copes with activity and sociability. Extraverts are usually quite sociable (friendly and sociable), but are also domineering (dominant and aspirant) and active (contumelious and assertive). Agreeableness refers to reflecting likeability and friendliness. Agreeable people are cooperative (trusting of others and caring) as well as being likeable (good natured, cheerful, and gentle) (Judge, Higgins, Thoresen & Barrick, 1999). Conscientiousness deals with dependability and will to achieve. Conscientiousness is unfolded in three related angles – achievement orientation (hardworking and persistent), dependability (responsible and careful), and orderliness (planful and organized). Openness has to do with imaginativeness, broad-mindedness and artistic sensibility. Openness to experience is characterized by intellectance (philosophical and intellectual) and unconventionality (imaginative, autonomous, and nonconforming). Neuroticism, or the nervous system is the most universal feature among personality measure, as Costa and McCrae (1988) note. It is distinguished in nearly every dimension of personality. It is concerned with adjustment vs. anxiety. It points to at least two related orientations. One deals with unrest (inconsistency and stress ability) and other deals with one's health and well-being (low self-confidence and depression). However, neuroticism usually refers to a negative or sometimes no psychological adjustment and emotional instability (Judge et al., 1999).

Language proficiency refers to the degree of skill with which a person can use a language, similar to how well a person can read, write, speak or understand a language. IELTS stems from the notion of communicative competence which targets the students' knowledge of how to use the linguistic, sociolinguistic, lexical, and grammatical aspects of a language. Academic performance has been one of the main factors of interest in education and psychology. Some of the earliest modern psychological research is conducted with the aim to identify the factors that predict academic performance (Poropat, 2011). Academic performance is mostly measured by Grade Point Average (GPA) of the first and subsequent semester (Woodrow, 2006). The question regarding whether IELTS marks can be used as a predictive score for a student's academic success has been debated by various academics in the past (Bayliss & Ingram, 2006).

## V. METHOD

This study sought to investigate whether Iranian foreign students' big-five personality features were correlated with their IELTS score and academic performance, and if so, which traits brought about more relationship and more prediction ability. On the other hand, the study looked at not only the relationship between IELTS scores and academic success of Iranian foreign students but also the causality among the personality traits, IELTS scores and academic success of Iranian foreign students.

### Participants

The participants of this study included 202 Iranian foreign students in which 126 of them were male and 76 were female, aged over 18 year-old, where 109, 73, and 20 of the students were at undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate levels respectively. They were Iranian students from different majors (Figure 1) studying in English speaking universities in Armenia, Australia, Austria, Canada, Cyprus, Germany, Hungary, India, Italy, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Sweden, UAE, UK, Ukraine, and USA.



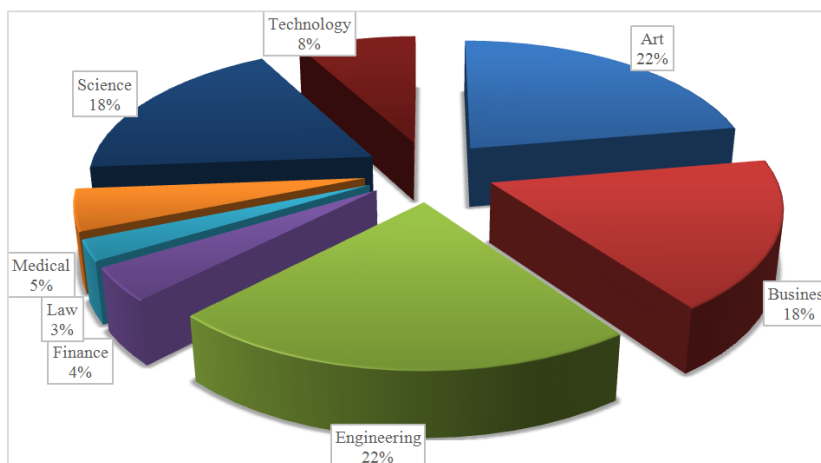


Figure 1. Participants' majors

Figure 2 shows the countries in which the participants were studying or graduated from with their percentages.

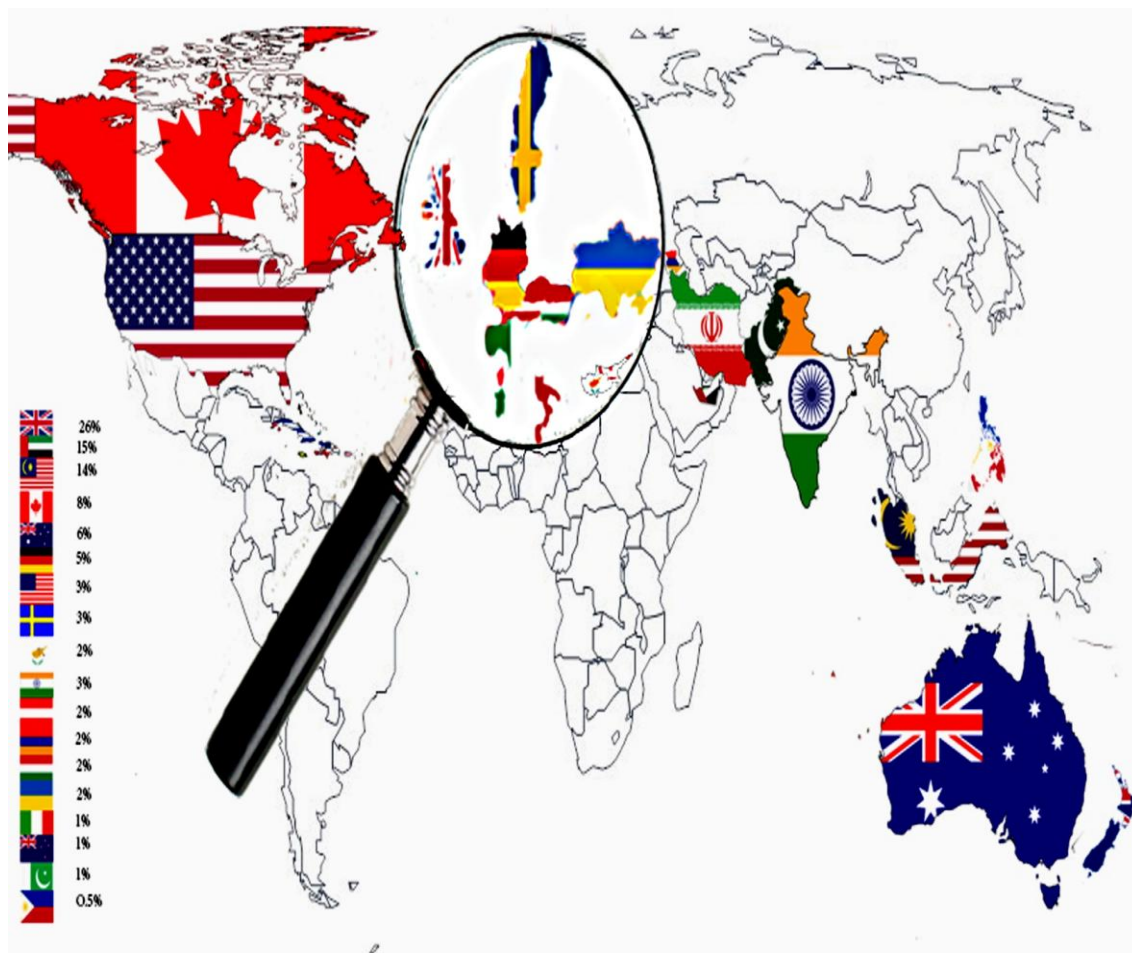


Figure 2 Countries in which participants are studying or graduated

The participants had already taken the academic IELTS and obtained the required score for the universities, they were also required to pass the first year of the program at the related universities.

#### Instruments

*International Personality Item Pool Big-Five*: The International Personality Item Pool Big-Five personality factor IPIP (Goldberg, 2001) was employed to operationalize the personality traits of the participants. The questionnaire included the 50-item version including 10 items for each of the Big-Five personality factors which are in sentence fragment form on a Likert scale of agreement: Extraversion (e.g., I am the life of the party), Agreeableness (e.g., feel little concern for others), Conscientiousness (e.g., I am always prepared), Emotional Stability (e.g., I get stressed out

easily) and Intellect (e.g., I have a rich vocabulary). It aided the participant to understand why they acted the way they did and how their personality was structured.

Below is a description of each trait and scoring procedure according to Goldberg (1992) and theoretical perspective of the study.

a. Extroversion (E) is the personality trait of attempting to find fulfillment from sources outside the self or in community. High scorers tend to be very social while low scorers prefer to work on their projects alone.

b. Agreeableness (A) shows how much candidates adjust their manner to suit others. High scorers are commonly polite and like people. Low scorers tend to 'tell it like it is'.

c. Conscientiousness (C) is the personality feature of being honest and hardworking. High scorers tend to follow regulations and prefer clean homes. Low scorers may be untidy and trick others.

d. Openness to Experience (O) is the personality feature of searching new experience and intellectual pursuits. High scores may day dream a lot. Low scorers may be very down to earth.

e. Neuroticism (N) is the personality feature of being emotional.

*Academic IELTS Certificate:* English Language proficiency measured by the academic IELTS test score appeared on the certificate was utilized in this study. Academic IELTS score was selected inasmuch as in terms of the course the Iranian students are required to obtain the required score of language proficiency level to be accepted in a foreign university.

*Academic Report:* In order to prove the academic performance, the participants' first-semester academic reports were used to measure the degree of academic achievement. Academic achievement of the participants was measured via GPA in the first academic year. Some students had only one mean GPA statistic for one semester. The students' semester academic reports in each university were different. There were in numerical marks, letter grades or percentage. In order to compare the GPA's, all of the outcomes were coded into scores of 0-5 as shown in table 1; they were hidden to coded scores.

TABLE1  
CODED SCORE OF ACADEMIC REPORTS

Numerical Mark	Letter Grades	Percentage	Coded Score
85-100	High Distinction HD	85-100	5
75-84	Distinction DI	75-84	4
65-74	CR Credit	65-74	3
50-64	PA, PX, APL,T,TT (Pass, Approved prior learning or Credit Transfer)	50-64	2
0-49	N,NN (Fail), DNS (Did not sit), RWT (Result withheld)	0-49	1
	W,WI(Withdrawn)		0

*Communication tools:* What's app and Viber as instant messages applications and social networks of Facebook and LinkedIn were used to connect to the Iranian foreign students.

### Design

This descriptive research had an ex-post-facto design with a survey method in which the existing relationships between the Big-Five personality traits, academic IELTS scores, and academic success of Iranian foreign students were investigated.

### Procedure

At the first place, it was necessary for every participant to be an international student out of Iran. In this regard, there was a hardship as it was not that easy to access them. Second, the participants were supposed to take part in academic IELTS, while there had been many sitting different versions of TOEFL.

However, the most challenging area was to persuade the participants with the above requirements to provide the researcher with both their academic IELTS certificate and academic report. The participants of the present study were invited randomly from the universities of the above mentioned countries via emails sent to Iranian student groups and asked to attend the orientation sessions in person by traveling to the UAE and the UK in which they were studying different majors.

Prior to taking any steps, any participant had to undergo an orientation session which was to introduce the project, explain the purpose, elaborate on how important it was to fill out the questionnaire accurately, and answer the questions frequently asked on the items of the questionnaire. Upon receipt of the acceptance email from volunteer candidates, they were asked to fill out the IPIP Big-Five, and send a copy of their academic IELTS certificates and first year academic reports. Instant messaging applications were used to contact and call the candidates who were studying abroad via communicative tools requesting they fill out the questionnaire online. The participants were called by some companies like Armansis, Hamta Rah Iliya, UK Study, and K1SPUK that work as recruitment agents and advise students in the UK. In addition, a part of them were gathered from International companies like Ava Trading Company, Avrand Plastic, Arzesh Holding, DIDI Water and MazMaz with employees who graduated from English speaking universities. Also, they were contacted via social network sites and email by offering gift cards and free online English sessions. On the other hand, some of the data were collected directly by traveling to the UAE and the UK in person by an orientation among Iranian students communities.

At the outset of the study, a pilot study was conducted. To meet the requirement of the pilot, first, 50 participants were chosen from three countries namely UK, UAE, and Malaysia. The purpose of this pilot survey was to get direct feedback from respondents. At this stage, for the questionnaire, it was necessary to assure a feasible, valid and reliable indication of participants' personality traits. In the main study, the process of data gathering was completed in which the filled questionnaires, academic IELTS certificates, and academic reports of the participants were collected.

## VI. RESULTS

In pilot study, while Cronbach's Alpha of 0.740 was achieved for the reliability of the questionnaire, the result of factor analysis led to the elimination of items 14, 38, 40, 42, and 49 to increase the validity of the questionnaire. In addition to the reliability estimation of the questionnaire in the pilot study, in the main study, the Point Biserial correlation was also used.

As there were parametric and non-parametric correlation studies available, it was deemed fit that tests of normality should be carried out. Thus, the Shapiro-Wilk test of normality was carried out on participants' answers to the questionnaire. In order to ensure the sampling adequacy of the Five-Factor personality questionnaire in the main study, the calculations went through the KMO and Bartlett's Test. According to the sampling adequacy requirements, a KMO measure higher than 0.55 is the accepted level of adequacy of any sample. As depicted in table 2 the KMO measure indicated 0.712, therefore the requirement of the sampling adequacy was met.

TABLE 2.  
KMO AND BARTLETT'S TEST

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.712
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	12769.564
	Df	1225
	Sig.	.000

### Hypothesis One

In order to investigate the predictive power of the components of the Big-Five questionnaire, a standard multiple regression test was put into use. The correlation results amongst the independent variables are presented in table 3. As the results displayed, the correlation between the independent variables is so high that according to Pallant (2011), it is better not to include the variables that have bigger than 0.7 correlation coefficients. Under these circumstances, "you may need to consider omitting one of the variables or forming a composite variable from the scores of the highly correlated variables" (p. 158). In this way, it was appropriate to form a composite variable of Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness. Then, the only resulting variables were the composite variable and Neuroticism.

TABLE 3.  
CORRELATIONS AMONGST THE COMPONENTS OF THE BIG-FIVE

		IELTS	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Extroversion	Neuroticism	Openness
Pearson Correlation	IELTS	1.000	.869	.825	.866	-.736	.744
	Agreeableness	.869	1.000	.878	.908	-.736	.798
	Conscientiousness	.825	.878	1.000	.884	-.744	.828
	Extroversion	.866	.908	.884	1.000	-.845	.833
	Neuroticism	-.736	-.736	-.744	-.845	1.000	-.744
	Openness	.744	.798	.828	.833	-.744	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	IELTS	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	Agreeableness	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000
	Conscientiousness	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000
	Extroversion	.000	.000	.000	.	.000	.000
	Neuroticism	.000	.000	.000	.000	.	.000
	Openness	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.
N	IELTS	199	199	199	199	199	199
	Agreeableness	199	199	199	199	199	199
	Conscientiousness	199	199	199	199	199	199
	Extroversion	199	199	199	199	199	199
	Neuroticism	199	199	199	199	199	199
	Openness	199	199	199	199	199	199

After making the changes to the components of the Big-Five, a linear multiple regression was used to assess the ability of two control measures (composite traits and Neuroticism) to predict levels of English proficiency. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. The findings of the regression (Table 4) indicated that the composite personality traits had a large and positive predictive power in participants' English proficiency as measured by the IELTS (beta= 0.847,  $p < .001$ ). Meanwhile, Neuroticism had a negative and small predictive power in participants' English proficiency as measured by the IELTS (beta= -.041,  $p < .001$ ).

TABLE 4.  
LINEAR MULTIPLE REGRESSION AMONG COMPOSITE TRAITS, NEUROTICISM AND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.852	.647		4.411	.000	1.577	4.127					
	Neuroticism	-.010	.014	-.041	-.700	.485	-.037	.018	-.736	-.050	-.024	.327	3.062
	Composite	.031	.002	.847	14.330	.000	.026	.035	.881	.715	.484	.327	3.062

a. Dependent Variable: IELTS

In this way, it can be stated that the **first null hypothesis was rejected**; that is, there is a significant relationship between Big-Five personality traits, except for Neuroticism, and language proficiency scores on IELTS of Iranian foreign students, and each of the four traits had a direct relationship on the overall proficiency of the Iranian students as measured by the IELTS scores. It means that out of Big-Five personality traits only Neuroticism was found not to be directly related to the improvements of language proficiency scores on IELTS.

The relationship between each trait with Iranian foreign students' proficiency scores on IELTS was investigated using Spearman rho correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed, and it was concluded that a non-parametric correlation test put into use. The results indicated that:

1. There was a high, positive correlation between the two variables of extroversion and IELTS scores;  $\rho = 0.870$ ,  $n = 202$ ,  $p < .0005$  with scores in the Extroversion items explained 75% of the variance in the participants' scores on the IELTS. It means that the more Extroverted students the higher scores on IELTS they got.

2. There was a high, positive correlation between the two variables of Agreeableness and IELTS scores;  $\rho = 0.860$ ,  $n = 202$ ,  $p < .0005$ , with scores in the Agreeableness items explaining 73% of the variance in the participants' scores on the IELTS test. In other words, the students enjoying the high level of Agreeableness could achieve higher scores on the IELTS.

3. There was a high, positive correlation between the two variables of Conscientiousness and IELTS scores;  $\rho = 0.832$ ,  $n = 202$ ,  $p < .0005$ , with scores in the Conscientiousness items explaining 67% of the variance in the participants' scores on the IELTS test. The results indicated that the more Conscientious the students the higher scores received on the IELTS.

4. There was a high, positive correlation between the two variables of Openness to experience and IELTS scores;  $\rho = 0.735$ ,  $n = 202$ ,  $p < .0005$ , with scores in the Openness to experience items in the Big-Five questionnaire explaining 54% of the variance in the participants' scores on the IELTS test. It could be stated that when open to experience, students scored higher on IELTS.

5. There was a high, negative correlation between the two variables of Neuroticism and IELTS scores;  $\rho = -0.706$ ,  $n = 202$ ,  $p < .0005$ . In this way, participants' answers to the questionnaire items on Neuroticism were negatively correlated with their IELTS scores. It means that students with emotional stability did not necessarily score well on the IELTS.

### Hypothesis Two

In order to investigate the predictive power of the components of the Big-Five questionnaire, a standard multiple regression test was put into use. The correlation results amongst the independent variables are presented in table 5. As displayed by the results, Given that the correlation between the independent variables is so high as testing the first hypothesis, here it was also appropriate to form a composite variable of Agreeableness (V1), Conscientiousness (V2), Extroversion (V3), and Openness (V4). In this way, the only resulting variables were the composite variable and Neuroticism.

TABLE 5.  
CORRELATIONS AMONGST THE COMPONENTS OF THE BIG-FIVE

		Success	v1	v2	v3	Neuroticism	v4
Pearson Correlation	Success	1.000	.780	.797	.816	-.686	.659
	v1	.780	1.000	.878	.908	-.736	.798
	v2	.797	.878	1.000	.884	-.744	.828
	v3	.816	.908	.884	1.000	-.845	.833
	Neuroticism	-.686	-.736	-.744	-.845	1.000	-.744
	v4	.659	.798	.828	.833	-.744	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Success	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	v1	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.000
	v2	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000
	v3	.000	.000	.000	.	.000	.000
	Neuroticism	.000	.000	.000	.000	.	.000
	v4	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.
N	Success	199	199	199	199	199	199
	v1	199	199	199	199	199	199
	v2	199	199	199	199	199	199
	v3	199	199	199	199	199	199
	Neuroticism	199	199	199	199	199	199
	v4	199	199	199	199	199	199

After making the changes to the components of the Big-Five, a linear multiple regression was used to assess the ability of two control measures (composite traits and Neuroticism) to predict levels of English proficiency. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. The findings of the regression (Table 6) demonstrated that the composite personality traits had a large and positive predictive power in participants' academic success ( $\beta = 0.774$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Meanwhile, Neuroticism made no significant, unique contribution to the prediction of participants' academic success ( $\beta = -.051$ ,  $p > .001$ ).

TABLE 6.  
LINEAR MULTIPLE REGRESSION AMONG COMPOSITE TRAITS, NEUROTICISM AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-.804	1.001		-.804	.423	-2.778	1.169					
	Neuroticism	-.015	.022	-.051	-.711	.478	-.058	.027	-.686	-.051	-.029	.327	3.062
	Composite	.036	.003	.774	10.723	.000	.029	.042	.816	.608	.442	.327	3.062

a. Dependent Variable: Success

Therefore, it can be stated that the **null hypothesis** as there is not any significant relationship between Big-Five personality traits and academic success of Iranian foreign students **was rejected** as four of the Big-Five traits had a direct relationship with the overall academic success of the Iranian students. Then, according to the results students with high level of Extroversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness to experience were able to achieve higher levels of academic success.

The relationship between each trait with academic success of Iranian foreign students was investigated using Spearman rho correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed, and it was concluded that a non-parametric correlation test had to put into use. There results indicated that:

1. There was a high, positive correlation between the two variables of Extroversion and academic success;  $\rho = 0.808$ ,  $n = 202$ ,  $p < .0005$ , with high scores in the Extroversion items explaining 65% of the variance in the participants' academic success. Thus, extroverted students could have higher levels of academic success.

2. There was a high, positive correlation between the two variables of Agreeableness and academic success;  $\rho = 0.738$ ,  $n = 202$ ,  $p < .0005$ , with high scores in the Agreeableness items explaining 54% of the variance in the participants' academic success. As a result, students with better traces of Agreeableness had higher academic success.

3. There was a high, positive correlation between the two variables of Conscientiousness and academic success;  $\rho = 0.779$ ,  $n = 202$ ,  $p < .0005$ , with high scores in Conscientiousness items explaining 60% of the variance in the participants' academic success. It means that the more Conscientious the students were, the higher did they achieve the academic success.

4. There was a high, positive correlation between the two variables of Openness to experience and academic success;  $\rho = 0.599$ ,  $n = 202$ ,  $p < .0005$ , with high scores in Openness to experience items explaining 36% of the variance in the participants' academic success. Subsequently, the students who were open to experience did have higher academic success.

5. There was a high, negative correlation between the two variables of Neuroticism and academic success,  $\rho = -0.706$ ,  $n = 202$ ,  $p < .0005$ . In this way, participants' answers to the questionnaire items on Neuroticism were negatively correlated with their academic success. Put another way, students with Neuroticism could not take benefit from such a trait to obtain better academic success.

### Hypothesis Three

The relationship between academic success and language proficiency of Iranian foreign students was investigated using Spearman rho correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed, and it was concluded that a non-parametric correlation test put into use. There results (Table 7) illustrated that there was a strong, positive correlation between the two variables,  $\rho = 0.794$ ,  $n = 202$ ,  $p < .0005$ , with high scores in the Big-Five test explaining 63% of the variance in the participants' academic success. As a result, the **null hypothesis** as there is not any significant relationship between academic success language proficiency scores on IELTS of Iranian foreign students **was rejected**. That is to say, the learners who had received better test performance in language proficiency had higher academic success.

TABLE 7.  
CORRELATION TEST BETWEEN ACADEMIC SUCCESS AND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

			IELTS	Success
Spearman's rho	IELTS	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.794**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	202	202
	Success	Correlation Coefficient	.794**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	202	202

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

### Four

To investigate the causality among Big-Five personality traits, the IELTS scores and academic success of Iranian foreign students a canonical model of correlation was put into use. Five predictor variables were Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Openness to Experience, and Neuroticism. The dependent variables were the English proficiency scores on IELTS and academic success. Wilk's test of significance (Table 8) indicated the general fit of the model for this purpose (Sig. <0.05).

TABLE 8.  
WILKIN'S TEST FOR THE GOODNESS OF FIT

Test Name	Value	Approx. F	Hypoth. DF	Error DF	Sig. of F
Pillais	.89217	31.56924	10.00	392.00	.000
Hotellings	4.61331	89.49828	10.00	388.00	.000
Wilks	.16751	56.28804	10.00	390.00	.000
Roys	.81932				

Note. F statistic for WILKS' Lambda is exact.

Table 9 reports the canonical correlation coefficients and the eigenvalues of the canonical roots. The first canonical correlation coefficient was .90516 with an explained variance of the correlation of 98.29% and an eigenvalue of 4.53474. Thus, the **null hypothesis** as there is not any significant causality among Big-Five personality traits, language proficiency scores on IELTS, and academic success of Iranian foreign students **was rejected** indicating that generally the Big-Five personality traits, the IELTS test scores, as well as academic success of Iranian foreign students were positively correlated in causality mode. Then, regarding the results of the study, the Big-Five personality traits could predict the quality of performance of Iranian foreign students on both IELTS and academic success.

TABLE 9.  
EIGENVALUES AND CANONICAL CORRELATIONS

Eigenvalues and Canonical Correlations					
Root No.	Eigenvalue	Pct.	Cum. Pct.	Canon Cor.	Sq. Cor
1	4.53474	98.29677	98.29677	.90516	.81932
2	.07858	1.70323	100.00000	.26991	.07285

Table 10 tests the significance of each of the roots. We found that the two possible roots were both significant with  $p < .05$ . Since our model contains the two test scores (the IELTS and the academic success) and five personality traits in Big-Five, SPSS extracts two canonical roots or dimensions. The first test of significance tests both canonical roots of significance ( $f = 56.289$   $p < .05$ ), the second test excludes the first root and tests root two. In our model the first root is and second roots are significant  $p < .05$ .

TABLE 10.  
DIMENSION REDUCTION ANALYSIS

Dimension Reduction Analysis					
Roots	Wilks L.	F	Hypoth. DF	Error DF	Sig. of
1 TO 2	.16751	56.28804	10.00	390.00	.000
2 TO 2	.92715	3.85019	4.00	196.00	.005

Table 11 provides the report on the standardized canonical coefficient (mean = 0, st.dev. = 1).

TABLE 11.  
STANDARDIZED CANONICAL COEFFICIENTS FOR DEPENDENT VARIABLES

Variable	1	2
Conscious	-.33366	1.42467
Agreed	-.16678	-1.37049
Extroverted	-.59625	.88865
Neurotic	.03349	.01777
Openness	.09202	-1.19082

Table 12 provides information on the predictive power of each of the components of the Big-Five on the dependent variables, the IELTS and academic success. In what follows, the predictive power of each component of the Big-Five with the IELTS test and the academic success test is reported.

TABLE 12.  
VARIANCE IN DEPENDENT VARIABLES EXPLAINED BY CANONICAL VARIABLES

CAN. VAR.	Pct Var DEP	Cum Pct DEP	Pct Var COV	Cum Pct COV
1	80.40403	80.40403	65.87687	65.87687
2	4.66616	85.07018	.33993	66.21680

The degree of prediction of each trait was also tested. Findings of the regression indicated that:

1. Extroversion had a high and positive correlation with participants' English proficiency as measured by the IELTS ( $\beta = 0.597$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In this way, Extroversion can explain 59% of variance of the IELTS scores. By the same token, Extroversion had a large and positive correlation with participants' academic success as measured by the academic success index ( $\beta = 0.332$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In this way, Extroversion could explain 33% of variance in academic success scores. In other words, extroverted foreign students were predicted to get higher IELTS scores and succeed in their academic programs.

2. Agreeableness had a high and positive correlation with participants' English proficiency as measured by the IELTS ( $\beta = 0.696$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In this way, Agreeableness could explain 69% of variance of the IELTS scores. By the same token, Agreeableness had a positive correlation with participants' academic success as measured by the academic success index ( $\beta = 0.134$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In this way, Agreeableness can explain 13% of variance in IELTS in academic success which means that Agreeableness could predict the IELTS test scores and the academic success of Iranian foreign students. Therefore, foreign students with the ability to agree with the others were predicted to score better on IELTS and get successful in their academic education.

3. Conscientiousness had a high and positive predictive correlation with participants' English proficiency as measured by the IELTS ( $\beta = 0.537$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In this way, Conscientiousness could explain 53% of variance of IELTS scores. By the same token, Conscientiousness had a large and positive correlation with participants' academic success as measured by the academic success index ( $\beta = 0.362$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

In this way, Conscientiousness could explain 36% of variance in academic success. Thus Conscientiousness was the predictor of the IELTS test scores and the academic success of Iranian foreign students. In other words, Conscientious foreign students were predicted to achieve better scores on IELTS and do succeed in their academic education.

4. Openness to experience had a high and positive correlation with participants' English proficiency as measured by the IELTS ( $\beta = 0.630$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In this way, Openness could explain 63% of variance of the IELTS scores. Meanwhile, Openness cannot explain any of participants' academic success variation as measured by the academic success index ( $\beta = 0.148$ ,  $p < .059$ ) which is indicated that Openness to experience was able to predict the IELTS scores but not the academic success of Iranian foreign students. Therefore, foreign students with the ability to being open to experience were predicted to score better on IELTS. However, it was not a predictor of their academic success.

5. Neuroticism had a large and negative correlation with participants' English proficiency as measured by the IELTS ( $\beta = -0.513$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In this way, Neuroticism could explain 51% of variance of the IELTS scores. By the same token, Neuroticism had a large and positive predictive power on participants' academic success as measured by the academic success index ( $\beta = -.270$ ,  $p < .001$ ). In this way, Neuroticism could explain 27% of variance in academic success scores. In this regard, Neuroticism was not the predictor of the IELTS test scores and the academic success of Iranian foreign students. In other words, foreign students who were analyzed to have Neuroticism could not be predicted if to achieve better scores on IELTS and do succeed in their academic education.

## VII. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results showed that there were significance relationships amongst four of the Big-Five personality traits and Iranian foreign students' language proficiency scores on IELTS. The findings also revealed that there were significance relationships amongst the Big-Five personality traits and Iranian foreign students' academic success. Finally, it was found that Big-Five personality traits had positive and strong predictive power for both IELTS scores and academic success. However, in all cases Neuroticism or emotional stability was the only component of the Big-Five which was negatively correlated with IELTS scores and academic success and that had no predictive power.

The students who were open to new experiences, able to agree, extroverted, and well careful achieved higher scores on IELTS, and higher levels of academic success. The same four traits were able to predict the scores achieved on

IELTS and academic courses. Being energetic, optimistic, sociable, kind and enthusiastic, purposeful and determined as well as creative, and imaginative could assist the students to achieve higher scores on language proficiency tests such as IELTS. Findings of the study emphasized that sociable, optimistic and cheerful students could take benefit from such traits when performing the proficiency tests, IELTS in particular. The findings are parallel with Ghapanchi, Khajavy, and Asadpour (2011), Furnham, Chamorro-Premuzic, and McDougall (2002). However, Pazouki and Rastegar (2009) found that being friendly and active, but domineering does not necessarily lead the candidates in proficiency tests to get higher scores. In addition, Zabihi (2011) found possessing such traits (sociable and optimistic) would not make a meaningful difference in students' test performance.

As found in this study, the Big-Five personality traits were directly related with the overall academic success of the Iranian students which is in agreement with the findings of the results of the study of Komaraju, Karau, Schmeck, and Avdic (2011), and Poropat (2009), by which academic performance was found to correlate significantly with Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness. However, the study by Nofle and Robins (2007) reported Openness was totally weakly associated with academic performance and Zabihi (2011) who found Extroversion to be negatively related though.

Among the findings of the study was the predictive ability of IELTS proficiency test regarding the academic success due to the significant relationship found between language proficiency and academic success of students. This is aligned with the findings of the studies by Dooley and Oliver (2002), Feast (2002), Woodrow (2006), and Yen and Kuzma (2009).

In theoretical respects, the conclusion safely arrives here is that the significant relationship exist between the Big-Five personality traits (Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Openness to Experience, and Neuroticism) and language proficiency scores on IELTS as well as their academic success of Iranian foreign students. Besides, the study showed the same traits would be able to stand as the predictors of both higher scores on IELTS and academic courses. At practical level, it could be concluded that once the students are more open to experience, ready to agree with the others, prepared to perform more conscientiously, and able to act extrovertly, they achieve higher scores both in IELTS and their academic education, and holding such personal traits would be considered as a predictor for better performance on IELTS and academic education.

In terms of this conclusion, reference must be made to Constructivists' points of views as they put forward how an individual learner connects and understands his/her learning conditions is totally personal and these are the learners who determine the quality of learning by their individual features (Williams & Burden, 2000). The conclusion is also supported by Dornyei & Skehan (2003) who explain, in terms of learning styles, cognitive sides or the preferred or habitual patterns of mental functioning are important in how well one learns. This is also parallel with Roberts and Meyer (2012) believing in that in order to pick out and direct learners as well as detect those who may need especial types of intervention, it would be really fruitful to be able to foretell how well and how fast an individual learner will learn a second language and which type of teaching would suit them best.

The study concluded that the relation exists between the Big-Five personality traits and academic success of Iranian foreign students. The conclusion is supported by Ellis (2004) who asserts that individual difference research was to foretell which learners would succeed. Such conclusion coupled with Gass and Selinker (2008) maintaining that some students are more successful in learning a second language than others owing to various reasons most of which are not linked to language or psycholinguistic factors, but to the individual him/herself.

This also advocated by Ellis (2008) in that personality traits largely motivated by the needs of learners in need of foreign language instruction as such traits are able to predict which learners would be successful.

It seems that Iranian EFL classes should not take the individual differences for granted and instead to rely on them as predictive tools in recognizing appropriate learning strategies to promote the personality traits and to boost IELTS scores and academic success eventually.

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# The Theoretical Interpretation of EFL Teacher's Professional Development from the Perspective of Sociocultural Theory

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**Abstract**—The sociocultural theory offers a theoretical and methodological ways to explore the relationship between the macro-structure of sociocultural model and the micro-structure of individual context of EFL (English as a foreign language) teachers. It provides a unique perspective to investigate the dialogic processes on the construction of EFL teachers' professional development. Thus, the article focuses on the four core concepts of sociocultural theory that mediation, internalization, the zone of proximal development and activity theory to interpretate the EFL teachers' professional development.

**Index Terms**—mediation, internalization, the zone of proximal development, activity theory

## I. INTRODUCTION

During the past decade, sociocultural theory has been widely applied to second language teacher education in China and western countries (For example, Wertsch, 1985; Johnson & Golombek, 2003; Johnson, 2009; Lantolf & Thorne, 2012; Xun yang, 2012; Li Yun & Xu Jinfen, 2015). Sociocultural theory emerges most directly from the seminal works of Vygotsky (1978, 1986). The primary concepts within sociocultural theory including the mediation, internalization, the zone of proximal development and activity theory (Lantolf & Thorne 2012), which provides a theoretical lens to explore the professional development of EFL teachers from the relationship between the micro-structure of individual context and the macro-structure of sociocultural model. It provides a unique perspective on the construction of EFL teacher's leaning and professional development.

## II. MEDIATION

### A. The Theoretical Interpretation of Mediation

As one of the core concepts of sociocultural theory, mediation means human being' activity and cognitive development do not act directly on the world, but mediated by all the kinds of artifacts, such as language, numeracy, books, computers and so on. Vygotsky(1978, 1986) points out that higher forms of human mental activity are mediated by culturally constructed auxiliary means, and the psychological mechanism is not generated by the individual's internal, but from external mediated activities to internal mediational control by individual, which results in the internalization of both the individual and activity. Vygotsky (1999, p.41) describes that "human development is the product of a broader system than just the system of a person's individual function, specifically, systems of social connections and relations, of collective forms of behavior and social cooperation", which means human being' activity and cognitive development do not act directly on the world, but mediated by all the kinds of artifacts, and the psychological mechanism is not generated by individual's internal, but from external mediated activities to internal mediational control of individual. Mediation can be divided into physical tools, cultural symbols, human behavior and abstract complex mind etc., such as language, numeracy, computers and so on, it assumes that the construction of the high level cognitive function of human (such as memory, rational thinking, conceptual thinking, sense of responsibility, etc.) are mediated by historical and qualitative aspects of symbolic artifacts, material artifacts and social relationships (Lantolf & Thorne, 2012, p.19).

Mediational means can be divided into object-regulated, other-regulated and self-regulated, object-regulated refers to individuals seek help from cultural artifacts in their circumstance; other-regulated means individuals seek help from other people or cultural artifacts; and self-regulated, in which individuals gain control both their cognition and activity. The process of choose mediation is not static or linear, but dynamic and dialogic, in that individuals can move from being object-regulated to self-regulated and then back to object-regulated (Johnson & Golombek, 2003, p.733).

### B. The Theoretical Interpretation of EFL Teacher's Professional Development on Mediation

Sociocultural theory believes that the interrelation of individual and the external society is regulated by mediation. This article is based on object-regulated, other-regulated and self-regulated to analyze EFL teacher's professional development.

Firstly, object-regulated, in which EFL teachers construct new knowledge and learning by cognitive tools. For

example, EFL teachers take English video, loudspeakers, listening teaching equipment and other physical tools as physical mediations to connect both the external activities and internal activities of EFL teachers, and EFL teachers can take shape an efficient, real and situational classroom on the process of interaction by physical tools. School provides books and databases which about English teaching, language teaching theory as well as network account for EFL teachers to facilitate their professional development; Education sector equip enough teaching hardware, such as a sufficient number of computers for listening teaching ; EFL teachers using modern teaching techniques in teaching practice to enhance their new skills; EFL teachers can communicate and share teaching cases or strategies with each other by the use of Wechat, blog as well as digital university and so on. Therefore, the effective physical intermediaries can fully transform external knowledge of EFL teachers into internal knowledge, stimulate EFL teachers' positive consciousness and reflection, and promote the higher quality as well as professional development in teaching practice.

Secondly, other-regulated, in which EFL teachers seek help from other people or cultural artifacts. Vygotsky (1978) argues that the individual cognition is constructed and developed by participating in meaningful social activities. Thus, the development and promotion of EFL teachers' competencies can not be separated from the support of collectives, institutions and organizations. For example, the EFL teachers carry out intra-group cooperation and share professional experience with each other to discuss the confusion of teaching; Education administrative department send EFL teachers to the source and target language country to establish communication and cooperation with other teachers in second language teaching; School employs language teachers who come from the source language context country to train oral English of EFL teachers to enhance their oral expression and communicative competence; Schools can implement the model of "the old guide the new" that the experts help the novices based on their own situation. Therefore, EFL teachers can take senior experts, important others those who more capable than themselves as an intermediary to enhance their new knowledge and new skills.

Thirdly, self-regulated, in which EFL teachers gain control both their cognition and activity. EFL teachers need having a positive response to their work environment, reflecting on classroom teaching actively, and learning on foreign language teaching materials at home and abroad; EFL teachers can adopt flexible, vivid, innovative teaching model so as to improve the participation and communication of student; EFL teachers through the recall or narrative way to re-understand their past experience, integrated with the current experience to warn themselves by mistakes and failures that they made before. The externalization of EFL teachers' thoughts enabling them to reconceptualize and recontextualize what they knew, and eventually reconstructing and regaining their professional expertise by self-regulate in new instructional circumstance.

### III. INTERNALIZATION

#### A. *The Theoretical Interpretation of Internalization*

Internalization is a valid concept as one of the core concepts of SCT, Vygotsky (1978, 1986) proposes that internalization is the process through which interpersonal and person-environment interaction forms and transforms one's internal mental functions, in his account, the advanced mental function of individuals appears twice, first between individuals on the interpsychological plane and then within the people on the intrapsychological plane. Leont'ev (1981, p.57) argues that the process of internalization is not the transformation of an external activity into a preexisting internal "plane of consciousness", but a process of in which the plane is formed. Winegar (1997, p.31) describes the internalization is a negotiated process of development that is co-constructed both intra-and interpersonally, it is a process of reorganization of the person-environment relationships that itself emerges with person-environment relationships, immediate person-environment relationships are reorganized, and some aspects of this reorganization may carry forward to contribute to future reorganization through this process. Therefore, internalization involves a process in which a person's activity is initially mediated by the other people or cultural artifacts but later come to be controlled by the person who appropriates resources to regulate the activity (Johnson & Golombek, 2003, p.731).

Thus, internalization is a process that the psychological mechanism of social interaction transform into the psychological mechanism of the individual by the symbolic intermediary, it is a dialogic process of transformation of self and activity with complex and dynamic characteristics rather than simply the replacement of skills.

#### B. *The Theoretical Interpretation of EFL Teachers' Professional Development on Internalization*

The internalization describes that the development of individual knowledge is the result of the interaction between internal and external causes. Therefore, the function of internalization can construct a new psychological mechanism to enhance EFL teachers' professional development. This article described the EFL teacher's professional development on internalization from three aspects as follow:

Firstly, the change of EFL teacher's procedural knowledge into procedural knowledge. The narrative knowledge which teachers created in teaching practice is an abstract, subjective knowledge with the nature of spontaneous concept, however, EFL teachers take part in all sorts of activities, such as exchanging the millions of thoughts with other teachers in their practice community, which make they enable to transform the interpersonal activities into interpsychological gradually. EFL teachers change the procedural knowledge into procedural knowledge by the internalization process so as to transform social level to the psychological level of individual. Anderson (1983) argues that procedural knowledge play a more important role in solving problems of specific areas.

Secondly, EFL teachers imitate and innovate instructional strategy in their teaching practice. According to Vygotsky (1987, p. 211) that imitation is “the source of instruction’s influence on development”, and development based on collaboration and imitation is the source of all the specifically human characteristics of consciousness. Imitation has the characteristics of selective, innovative and proactive, therefore, EFL teachers can imitate the teaching management, teaching strategies and teaching skills of expert teachers on purpose in teaching practice; EFL teachers can innovate teaching with the characteristics of personal style and teaching ideas in classroom to enhance professional satisfaction and self-confidence. The external knowledge which they have learned has been transformed into their own activities on the process of imitation and innovation, ultimately, the psychological function with personal characteristics has been innovated by the complex and dynamic internalization process. The imitation and innovation of EFL teachers in practice can improve their professional satisfaction and self-confidence. Huberman (1993) points out that stimulate teachers to explore a more effective teaching model is beneficial for their professional development.

Thirdly, on the one hand, carry out the effective training in teacher education with specific and targeted advice. The indoctrination training model and “top-down” model have been unable to meet the needs of teachers’ self-development, in addition to centralized theoretical training, educational trainers can implement participatory training or “shadow” training model to implement the effective training. For example, EFL teachers observe the case of excellent teachers in a state of meticulous, persistence and roundly; EFL teachers participate in practical activities positively, such as collective lesson preparation, public courses, teaching and research activities, group discussions and classroom observation; Education sector should listen to the views and feedback of EFL teachers who participated in the training; Education sector can establish an open and interactive teacher training system to achieve the internalization of EFL teacher’ knowledge. On the other hand, the empowerment of EFL teachers, in which EFL teachers have the power and qualifications to take part in the design of curriculum teaching, teaching objectives, teaching plan and school personnel elections to adapt and innovate teaching content, school curriculum reform and semester teaching plans. The effective use of teacher empowerment can enhance teachers’ competence and enthusiasm. EFL teachers participate in external behaviors such as make curriculum outline, teaching tasks and so on, to produce a series of professional autonomy, decision-making power as well as professional development rights etc., the process through which interpersonal and person-environment interaction forms and transforms EFL teachers’ internal mental functions such as self-confidence, efficacy and so on.

#### IV. THE ZONE OF PROXIMAL DEVELOPMENT

##### A. *The Theoretical Interpretation of the Zone of Proximal Development*

The zone of proximal development is one of the core concepts of sociocultural theory, which is defined that the difference between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers (Vygotsky, 1978, p.86). It means a person can achieve with the collaboration with other or with someone who more capable. According to Lantolf and Thorne (2012, p. 267), the ZPD is the difference between the level of development already obtained and the cognitive functions comprising the proximal next stage that may be visible through participation in collaborative activity, it is not only a model of development process, but a conceptual tool that educators can use to understand aspects of students’ emerging capacities that are in early stages of maturation. Vygotsky (1978, p. 57) states that teaching should aim at development, only the learning content and tasks occur ahead of the development of learners, can the learners’ development be developed effectively, the rational teaching should ahead of development, guide the development, and promote the mature mechanism that located within the zone of proximal development. The ZPD is a dynamic and complex stage of development in which connect both the current state and next. In this stage, the leaping of ZPD is that individual transform their external knowledge into inner knowledge by the guidance of someone more capable to promote the development of individual cognitive level.

There are two ways to leap the ZPD are scaffolding teaching as well as social interaction patterns. Wertsch (1979a) describes that scaffolding is a dialogically produced inter-psychological process through which learners internalize knowledge they co-construct with more capable peers. Thus, scaffolding teaching means that if the learners can not complete task independently in the current situation, someone more capable can take a “scaffolding” (such as the collaboration) to help learners build their own knowledge and ability system gradually, the scaffolding can be removed while the learners have been achieved the internalization process that transformed the external adjustment into self-adjusting, the learners can raise the current cognitive level to the higher under the effect of scaffolding in the end.

##### B. *The Theoretical Interpretation of EFL Teacher’s Professional Development on the Zone of Proximal Development*

The zone of proximal development describes the gap between “the actual level of development” and “potential level of development” of the individual, which argues that a lesser level of learners can across the ZPD to promote the growth of learner’ ability by the guidance of expert, peer cooperation and collective cooperation. In this way, the EFL teachers using the concept of ZPD as a diagnostic have the potential to create conditions that may give rise to specific forms of development in their teaching practice. This article described the EFL teachers’ professional development on the zone of proximal development from the mentor and social interaction.

On the one hand, the function of scaffolding in zone of proximal development on the process of professional

development can be expressed by the mentor, in which the process of cooperation that the senior teachers or the experts provide guidance to the novice teachers (Richards & Farrell, 2005). The senior teachers provide novice teachers with demonstration, management classroom strategy etc., to help their find the root causes of confusion; The experts provide teaching content design, teaching demonstration, the display of case, emotional support for novice teachers to help their across the ZPD. The teacher educators provide teachers with teaching content design, emotional supports, teaching demonstration and other strategies to help their across the ZPD. The senior teachers or experts take strategies as an imitation to stimulate the mature psycho- logical mechanism of the ZPD, resulted the actual development level of novice teachers develop to the potential level of development. Therefore, the mentor can help novice teachers achieve the leap of the actual development level to potential level of development through activity of social interaction.

On the other hand, social interaction in zone of proximal development, which refers to the dynamic process where the interaction and mutual effect in behaviors between individuals and groups, groups and groups (xu zhi xin, 2015, p. 51). Individuals and groups, means the interaction between individual and collective. Individual teacher participates in activities of collective teaching and research, such as lesson preparation, group discussion, assessment and so on, to share different opinions within the group members, achieved the cross of the ZPD by the guidance of experts and excellent backbone teachers within their practice community. Groups with groups, refer to the collective research activities which occurred in EFL teachers' working environment. For example, the leaders of English teaching and research team lead EFL teachers to observe and experience other schools' instructional strategies. EFL teachers transform psychological mechanism of social level into internal mental functions to achieve the leap of The ZPD by the intermediation of physical or symbolic mediation, resulted in the development of their ability and cognitive.

## V. ACTIVITY THEORY

### A. The Theoretical Interpretation of Activity Theory

Activity theory has become a well-established approach to contemporary research in fields of applied linguistics, education and workplace studies. It is a subsequent close relative to sociocultural theory, a concept initiated by Vygotsky, A.N.Lenont'ev and Engeström.

The development process of activity theory can be divided into three stages. The first stage is centers on Vygotsky(1978), he put forward the theory of cultural mediation that an individual is mediated by concepts and cultural entities, the mediation can be divided into physical tools and symbolic tools. The second stage is represented by Leont'ev (1981), who shifts emphasis from cultural mediation toward a more doctrinal interpretation of activity by hierarchy theory that divided the activity into "activities - actions – operations", in which activities are at the highest level, followed by operations, and operations are final, actions are made up of a series of operational stage, it is more closer to activities while the action reaches a certain stage. The third stage of activity theory is, at the time of this article, still a work in progress, is the work of Engeström (1987,1993, 1999b, 2001), a Finnish scholar who is best known for the schemata that extends Vygotsky and Lenont'ev's models to graphically represent a collective activity system. Within a collective activity system, the actions of individual occur at the nexus of three factors: the symbolic and material artifacts, the community and its rules, and the division of labor in their community- settings. As Engeström defines the conceptual framework of activity system(1987, 1993), a "subject" is an individual or group whose agency is; "Object" describes the orientation of the activity and arises from the motive for an outcome, as Engeström(1993, p. 67) explains that the object refers to the raw material or problem space at which that activity is directed and which is molded or transformed into outcomes with the help of physical and symbolic, external and internal tool; The "rules" means historical and institutional ones and those that arise from a local set of social-material conditions; The "community" is the participants who share the "objec" that shapes and lends direction to the individuals and shared activity at hand; The "division of labor" refers to the horizontal actions and interactions among the members of the community ( Lantolf & Thorne, 2012, p. 222). As is in SCT, the subject adjusts the activity of object by the mediator, and eventually transform into the result, then form the organic activity system model (Figure 1.1)

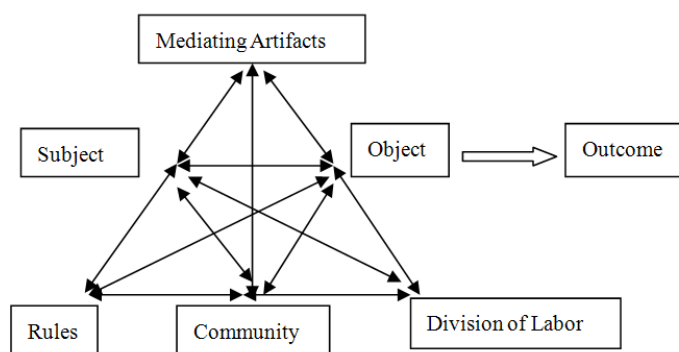


Figure 1.1 Activity system( Lantolf & Thorne, 2012, p.222)

The significance of theory activity emphasize the key idea of mediation, connect individual mind with the social and cultural environment where it is located, explain the change of individual psychology, and advocate the activity with multiple types and levels on the process of interaction between individual and external context. Activity system is not static or purely descriptive, rather, it implies transformation and innovation with the characteristics of heterogeneous and multi-voiced, and may include conflict and resistance as readily as cooperation and collaboration (Engeström, 1993, 1999b, 2001; Lantolf & Thorne, 2012). Activity theory combines the activities of individual teacher with the social and cultural structure, and fully expounds the construction of EFL teachers' professional development.

#### *B. The Theoretical Interpretation of EFL Teacher's Professional Development on Activity Theory*

The theoretical interpretation of EFL teacher's professional development on activity theory should meet the following conditions: First, there is a positive subject, an individual who has the motivation of development in social activities. For example, EFL teachers participate in the activities of curriculum construction, teaching mode innovation with a sense of ownership and emotional responsibility; EFL teachers work in their practical community with a firm teaching beliefs and correct values. Second, an object in EFL teachers' activity theory is the development of EFL teachers' professional, which is the goal of all the activities. As Engeström (1999b, p.31) describes that the object determines the horizon of possible action, and gains motivating force that gives shape and direction to activity, thus the object is a nexus of power and resistance in EFL teacher's professional development. Third, exist a positive practical community, which means those who share the professional development as the same object that shapes and lends direction to the individual, such as research group members, colleagues and students etc. Fourth, the rules refer to the teaching rules and regulations that EFL teachers need comply with in the social practice activities. For example, provide EFL teachers a positive and comfortable development platform instead of offer the cumbersome administrative constraints. Set the comfortable rules and environment which is beneficial to promote the teacher professional development. Fifth, implement the efficient division of labor, such as various roles, assignments and organizational relationships of EFL teachers and their practice community. The division of labor within community involves regulational norms, which support and constrain the goings on within activity system. Sixth, an effective intermediate tool can be divided into physical tools, symbolic tools or behavioral tools and so on. For example, physical tools mean the use of courseware, lesson plans, computers and other physical tools; symbols tools refers to the demonstration, assistance of someone more capable and so on.

Thus, the theoretical interpretation of EFL teachers' professional development on activity theory can be described as follow: EFL teachers are the subject who participate in social activities zealously to take classroom settings, teaching materials, lesson plans and other mediational means as an intermediary to develop the professional development under the constraints of school rules and other norms. On this process, members of the teaching and research group, colleagues, school environment, students and other members of practice community are involved in the division of labor, for example, EFL teachers encouraged and communicated by colleagues, supported by school environment, cooperated by student and so on. The external recognition transforms into individual awareness and individual psychological mechanism by the function of internalization to achieve the cross of the ZPD, improved the EFL teacher's professional development ultimately under the intermediary role of the positive factors on the process of teachers participating in social activities.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The article focuses on the four core concepts of sociocultural theory that mediation, internalization, the zone of proximal development and activity theory to interpretate the EFL teacher's professional development in detail. It provides a unique perspective on the construction of EFL teacher's professional development from the relationships between micro-structure of individual context and macro- structure of sociocultural model.

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# A Contrastive Study of Conceptual Metaphor in Chinese and American Courtroom Discourse

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**Abstract**—Based on the corpora of 20 Chinese cases from *Court Insession* and 20 American cases from *Famous Trials*, the current study aimed to apply Conceptual Metaphor Theory to carry out a contrastive analysis of the main conceptual metaphors between the two countries' corpora and further explore the reasons for selecting the same and different conceptual metaphors in the two courtroom discourses. By analyzing the two countries' corpora, the result showed that life experience and the way of thinking are the main reasons for similarities of the conceptual metaphors between Chinese and American courtroom discourses, while cultural connotation and social environment account for the dissimilarities of the conceptual metaphors in Chinese and American courtroom discourses.

**Index Terms**—conceptual metaphor, critical discourse analysis, courtroom discourse

## I. INTRODUCTION

Metaphors have been studied continuously for a long time. In traditional view, metaphors are treated as a rhetorical figure of language. However, in contemporary theories, metaphors are in fact a matter of thought and action. As Lakoff and Johnson published the book *Metaphors We Live By*, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) hold that metaphors are no longer just a way of expressing ideas by means of language, but a way of perceiving, thinking and acting; they are pervasive in our daily life regardless of culture, race, society, status etc., and they are the important way that we live by.

In legal scholar's view, legal language has the property of professionalism, objectivity and accuracy. Therefore, any use of rhetoric is a kind of damage to legal language which will lose its authority and binding force. Jeremy Bentham (1931) holds that metaphors are not rational, but the opposite of the law. Lord Mansfield warns there is no more easily mislead people than metaphors in the law (Ross, 1989).

Regardless of the objections of some legal scholars, metaphors are pervasive in our language. "Metaphors are not simply rhetorical devices but are fundamental to the way we think" (Smith, 2007, p. 919). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) state that we define our reality in terms of metaphors and then proceed to act on the basis of the metaphors. Thus it can be seen that metaphors, as a critical way of thinking, is just as important to lawyers as it is to others (Oseid, 2010). No matter what opinions the scholars hold, there is an increasing study on metaphors in legal language from the perspective of cognition abroad.

Tsai Robert L. (2004) conducts a detailed analysis on the metaphors "speech is fire" in American legal judgments, believing that metaphors have special cognitive and constructive effect in legal discourse. Berger Benjamin L. (2002) focuses upon the explanatory and persuasive powers of the metaphors when used in judicial decision making. Hibbitts Bernard J. (1994) discusses the nature of metaphors, analyzes the importance of metaphors in thinking and legal reasoning and highlights the thriving of audibility in American legal discourse. Steven Winter (1988) discusses the metaphors of standing and the problem of self-governance. Moreover, Adams Arms and Elizabeth Thornburg (1995) hold that the metaphors of fight, sports and gender greatly influence the leading roles in legal discourse, especially in litigation and women's subordinate status. In the case of technology and law, Harmeet Sawhney, Venkata Ratnadeep Suri and Hyangsun Lee (2003) add a new dimension – metaphors help establish precedents. They find out that "metaphors are the only conceptual tool we have for understanding the development of a new technology". Thomas W. Joo (2002) and Jeffrey M. Lipshaw (2012) pay attention to the role of metaphors in contract law.

According to the cognitive linguistic view, metaphors are essentially a cross-mapping. Metaphors pervade everywhere, regardless of their nation, culture, social status, educational background, sex, etc. Courtroom discourse, as a natural part of law in our times, plays an important role in our daily life. Courtroom discourse is rather abstract for most people to understand. To improve the situation, the abstract notions in the law are expressed via the metaphors. Berger (2002) remarks that the metaphors are an instrument used in the persuasive project of judicial decision making, an undertaking to arbitrate disputes and interpret legal principals while maintaining and asserting the legitimacy of the law.

## II. RELATED THEORETICAL BASIS FOR THE RESEARCH

Conceptual metaphor includes two domains: the source domain and the target domain. The source domain is more concrete whereas the target domain is more abstract. Based on the source domain, we can understand the target domain. As Lakoff and Johnson (1980) note, because a large amount of concepts which are significant to us are not abstract and familiar, or ambiguously explained in our experience like the feelings, thinking, time, etc., it's a must for us to understand on them based on other concepts that we realize in clearer terms such as spatial orientations, objects, etc. For example, in the metaphor LOVE IS JOURNEY, the source domain is JOURNEY and the target domain is LOVE. Based on the cognitive functions, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) divide conceptual metaphors into three categories: structural metaphors, ontological metaphors and orientation metaphors.

**Structural Metaphors:** Structural metaphors mean that the structures of the source domain are systematically mapped onto the target domain. For example, LOVE IS JOURNEY. LOVE and JOURNEY have some certain similarities between them. We conceptualize this concept LOVE which is more abstract compared with the concept of JOURNEY by projecting some characters from JOURNEY to LOVE, such as “travelers” and “lovers”, “vehicle” and “love relationship”, “obstacles and difficulties experienced”, etc.

**Ontological Metaphors:** Ontological metaphors can be considered as “ways of regarding events, activities, feelings, thoughts, etc, as entities and substances” (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, p. 25). Based on this view, the metaphors allow the comprehension of our experiences in terms of concrete entities or substance. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) further divided the ontological metaphors into three types: entity and substance metaphors, container metaphors and personification.

**Oriental Metaphors:** Oriental metaphors are grounded in the physical experience of people dimensional, and provide a concept a spatial direction. Thus, it's very normal for us to use orientational metaphors to understand or describe more abstract concepts like emotion, psychological state, health condition, and so on.

### III. ANALYSIS OF TYPES OF METAPHOR IN THE TWO COURTROOM DISCOURSES

#### A. Types of Conceptual Metaphors in Chinese Court Discourse

There are twenty cases in the Chinese corpus. The cases mainly are drawn from *The Court Is Now In Session*, which consists of a lot of exciting courtroom debates and arguments. The objective, truthful and rich language forcefully reflects the usage of conceptual metaphor in courtroom; as such, seven main conceptual metaphors are discovered, including journey metaphors, war metaphors, plant metaphors, human body metaphors, building metaphors, circle metaphors and chess metaphor.

##### *Journey Metaphors*

Journey metaphor is a model example in Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory. For example, they once put forward the conceptual metaphor LOVE IS A JOURNEY to explain. Then Lakoff and Turner (1989) proposed a more famous conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY. Lakoff (1993) formulated the THE JOURNEY metaphor as PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY IS TRAVELING ALONG A PATH TOWARD A DESTINATION. Journey metaphor usually contains such key words like bear, burden, obstacles, destination, etc. Journey metaphor is used to describe the development or progress of the cases or the trials in the courtroom. A CASE IS A JOURNEY and A TRIAL IS A JOURNEY. The plaintiff and the defendant can be considered as “travelers on the journey of the trials”. the progress they have made is expressed by the “distance they have covered”. The troubles they meet can be treated as “obstacles in the case”. The destination they want to reach can be seen as “the rights they need to protect”, and at the same time, they should also “bear” the obligations. Journey metaphors belong to structural metaphors. The elements of a journey are systematically mapped onto cases or trials.

TAB.4-1  
A CASE OR A TRIAL IS A JOURNEY

source domain	Mapping	target domain
Journey		case or trial
Traveler		the plaintiff and defendant
Distance		progress
Obstacles		troubles
destination		Rights and obligations

The following examples are found in the Chinese corpus:

C1<sup>1</sup>: 但最后的结果使我走到了今天，给股民、给自己都造成很大的经济损失，我向股民表示歉意，也希望法官和股民给我一次将功补过的机会。

C2: 这是非常痛苦的，我终身也不忘掉，用我老伴的生命去冒这个险。

<sup>1</sup> Note: C represents Chinese examples in the Chinese corpus, while E (see below) represents English examples in American corpus.

C3: 我国法制建设的现实情况及法律教材编写修订的自身规律决定了法学教材既不可能超前于现行的法律、法规，也不可能与现行法律、法规同步。

In example C1, “走” means the destination you choose to go in the source domain which can be projected onto the target domain “turn him on the journey of crime”. Examples of C2 indicates that people may meet many difficulties, obstacles or risks to acquire truth during the journey of justice. In example C3, the source domain “超前”, “同步” expresses the metaphorical meaning of law and the legal textbooks as travelers on the journey.

#### **War Metaphors**

War is the inevitable topic in the world from ancient times. The key words associated with war metaphors are rivals, war, win, weapons, etc. THE LITIGATION IS A WAR OR A FIGHT. THE ARGUMENT IS A WAR. The judge prosecutor, plaintiff, defendant and their respective lawyers can be considered as “rivals in litigation or in argument”. The evidence can be seen as “weapons used by parties”. The winner is One party that beat the other party called the loser. Beating the enemy is the aim of the war and the purpose of litigation or argument is to win the other party and protect their justice or acquire their rights. War metaphors are considered to be structural metaphors. We can find that most of the characteristics of a war are systematically mapped onto litigation or argument.

TAB.4-2  
THE LITIGATION OR THE ARGUMEN IS A WAR

source domain	Mapping	target domain
War		the litigation or the argument
Rivals		the judge, prosecutor, plaintiff, defendant and their respective lawyers
Weapons		evidence
Triumph/win		rights, justice, interest
Failure/lose		obligations, duties responsibilities

The following examples will be proved.

C4: 他认为，日本丰田自动车株式会社要在中国市场奋起直追，就要甩开吉利这个对手。

C5: 客户确实是以王林岩销售时有误导行为，以夸大回报的行为来公司投诉的，当时客户就误导这一块没有相关证据来支持，用一句白话说就是没有什么硬伤。

C6: 正因为有王岩林的代签字，公司已经作出很大让步了，只追回她的佣金已经是很客气了，这个代签字导致了公司还有其他很多损失。

In examples C4 and C5, “对手” and “硬伤” respectively refers to the defendant and the evidence. In examples C6, “让步” belongs to the category of war. Since these words are grounded in people’s mind, and the features of war are projected onto litigation or argument, people can understand these words in legal relationship easily.

#### **Plant Metaphors**

Metaphors from the domain of plant are the conceptual metaphor, e.g., A CASE IS A PLANT. Plant metaphors are ontological metaphors. The developing process of the case is just like the growing process of plant. A strong root deep in the earth can make plant growing. In this domain, the keywords “根”, “源” and “本”, which have the meaning of, or are closely related to “root”, appear most frequently in the Chinese corpus.

TAB.4-3  
A CASE IS A PLANT

source domain	mapping	target domain
Plant		case
Fruits		the results or the consequences of the case
Roots		the reason of the case

We can find the following:

C7: 我理解 52 户居民的心理，理解噪音对他们造成的危害后果，所以我非常赞同他的观点。

C8: 本案的最终处理结果有待于有关执法部门对众阳公司销售的“香武仕”产品是否构成欺诈作出结论。

C9: “香武仕”这个品牌是真还是假, 根源在哪里, 根源就在刘燕生这里。

From the above conceptual metaphors, “后果” indicates that the damage fact has created some harmful consequences. “结果” shows that the case will have an ending finally. “根源” implies the legal relationship and logic relationship in the cases where people should find the basic reason.

### ***Human Body Metaphors***

Our body consists of many different kinds of organs, and our bodies also need to take part in the legal activities. If one involves in the case or a legal relationship, the part of body will represent themselves. For example, MORALITY IS HEART, THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT IS HEART, and LAW IS EYES. Human body metaphors also belong to ontological metaphors. Therefore, people are accustomed to these expressions that contain the organ of the body.

C10: 尤其是发生在小孩身上, 我觉得他们在良心上也会过不去的, 就算是父亲给女儿挣个脸面, 讨个说法也是应该的。

C11: 上述事实足以说明第二被告宇天能利用人们对中科院院士的信任与尊敬, 以达到其误导消费者购买产品的目的, 用心何其良苦!

C12: 作为小倩的母亲, 原告是在不忍心让女儿幼小的心灵再受创伤。

In Examples C10, “heart” is an important organ of people. Once heart stops working, people will die. “heart” is always used by people to realize the concept of morality, like “良心”, “忍心” and “用心”. The “heart” also refers to the psychological effect, like in example C12, “心灵”. Without eyes, people can hardly do anything. How People view the world is also through the eyes, too. Therefore, “Eye” is a very important organ for human beings.

### ***Building Metaphors***

Chateris-Black proposed that building metaphors stem from a conceptual metaphor SOCIETY IS A BUILDING. In Chinese courtroom discourse, the domain of building can be projected onto the process of legal relationship development. Here we have the top-level conceptual metaphors: THE CASE IS A BUILDING, A CRIME IS A BUILDING. Building metaphors are ontological metaphors. A key revealing this metaphor is the word “建”, and under this keyword, there are a great number of derivative words such as “建设”, “创造”, “改造”, “建立”, “构成”, and so on. What follows are some examples:

C13: 因为这个案子是在集资建房合同的基础上成立的, 在房屋建成前所有权归开发商所有。

C14: 他的行为不正当, 是采取符合敲诈勒索罪构成要件的行为来进行的。

Just as a building needs a solid basis, the legal relationship needs a stable foundation. As for examples C13 and C14, the contract is the foundation of the case building, and his wrongfulness is the basis of the crime building.

### ***Circle Metaphors***

Circle is deeply rooted in Chinese ancient culture, which means sky, the sun, the earth, the unity, etc. And it symbolizes good things. When we refer to the success of some activities or events, we always say “圆满成功”. However, in legal relationship, circle always refers to the fraud, so we have the key word “圈套”. Apart from that, circle means the segment of the link of the whole case. Sometimes, circle refers to arguments, for people make arguments around the focus of events. Therefore, we have following conceptual metaphor: THE FRAUD IS A CIRCLE, THE SEGMENT OF A CASE IS A CIRCLE and THE ARGUMENT IS A CIRCLE. Circle metaphors are ontological metaphors.

C15: 辩论意见主要是围绕着双方争议的焦点, 即精神损害赔偿问题进行。

C16: 每一个被认定涉嫌犯罪的行为都应具备独立的完整的犯罪构成要件, 不见要看某个环节, 更要看全过程。

C17: 李爽被指控犯罪是其丈夫设下的一个圈套。

In example C15, “围绕着” means the arguments made by people is like a circle, which circle round the central point. In example C16, “环节” refers to the part of the act which committed the crime. In example C17, we can easily find that the fraud is a circle.

### ***Chess Metaphors***

Chess playing is familiar to us, and many of us know the term like “大局”, “全局”, “布局” and “设局” very well. Under the chess metaphor, the whole case or the country is conceptualized as a chessboard. Therefore, the conceptual metaphors here are A CASE IS A CHESSBOURD, and A COUNTRY IS A CHESSBOARD. Chess metaphors belong to ontological metaphors.

C18: 所谓的丹麦产的“香武仕”音响只是一个骗局，已经成为众所周知的事实，无需举证。

C19: 处理好改革、发展和稳定的关系是全国的大局。

In example C18, “骗局” refers to the law breaker who wants to gain some benefits take some illegal measures to design and create the fraud. In example C19, “大局” means people take the whole situation into consideration and sometimes can make sacrifice when necessary.

#### B. *Types of Conceptual Metaphors in American Court Discourse*

In American, legal system is based on the case law. Unlike the previous Chinese model, in which the proof-taking and fact-finding processes are officially conducted, the American judicial system contains a very important litigation procedure, the cross-examination in the criminal procedures, thereby creating an antagonistic atmosphere in the courtroom which makes litigation procedure more adversarial. Berger holds that “The judicial opinion is not just a reflection of a opinion and a representation of authority but also a device that must persuade while maintaining the legitimacy of the legal system” (Berger, 2002, p. 30). He also believes that “a critical component of the judge’s linguistic toolbox is metaphor and that this device is most necessary and effective at these turning points in the law” (ibid). Therefore, in this part, we should pay attention to the kinds of metaphors used in American courtroom, and how the metaphors mold the future development of jurisprudence.

There are twenty cases in the American corpus. The cases are mainly drawn from *Famous Trials* by Douglas O. Linder on the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) School of Law website. Famous trials went on line in November, 1995, which is older than more than 99.96% of all websites. Therefore, the cases that the author selected are very classical. A large quantity of metaphors in these cases can bridge the gap between the abstract and the concrete.

Similar to those in the Chinese corpus, metaphors are also from a great number of domains that are closely related to our personal experience and social activities in everyday life. In the American corpus, seven main conceptual metaphors are found, i.e., journey metaphors, war metaphors, plant metaphors, human body metaphors, building metaphors, religion metaphors, and fire metaphors.

##### ***Journey Metaphors***

In American corpus, journey metaphors usually contain such key words like “travelers”, “distance”, “starting point”, “speed”, “go head”, “obstacles”, “destination”, etc. As in Chinese courtroom discourse, journey metaphors are used to describe the development or progress of the cases or the trial in the courtroom. Therefore, the conceptual metaphors are A CASE IS A JOURNEY and A TRIAL IS A JOURNEY. The following examples are found in the American corpus.

E1: When Judge Huxman replied, “All right, go ahead and tell it.”

E2: We doubt that the time has arrived when Americans can be “gotten” for the crime of telling the truth.

E3: The crime was more an escape from the ordinary.

In example E1 and E2, “go head” and “arrive” are used to mean the process and the development of the case or the trial in the courtroom. In example E3, the source domain “escape from” expresses the metaphorical meaning of crime as travelers on the journey.

##### ***War Metaphors***

In American corpus, the key words associated with war metaphors are “attack”, “defense”, “fight”, “controversy”, “rival”, “struggle”, “dispute”, “competition”, “occupy”, “violate”, “damage”, “strike”, etc. Like war metaphors in Chinese courtroom discourse, THE LITIGATION IS A WAR and THE ARGUMENT IS A WAR also come into being in American courtroom discourse. However, compared with war metaphors used in Chinese courtroom, the antagonistic atmosphere which war metaphors create is more obvious in American courtroom, as can be evidenced by the following examples:

E4: “Well, let’s begin,” the Chief Justice announced, adding, “Fight fair”.

E5: He was investigating me, not defending me.

E6: Both sides have spoken in absolutes while it strikes many of us as a closer call.

In example E4, the judge uses the word “fight” to describe this litigation as a fair competition. In examples E5 and E6, “defend”, “strike”, which aim to defend the rights of the defendant himself or herself, are presented by the commissioned defender under the scope of means of attack and defense according to the phrase of the litigation or the argument.

##### ***Plant Metaphors***

Compared with the high percentage of metaphors in the American corpus, plant metaphors make up a relatively smaller proportion. Plant is a very general and concrete source domain of natural world. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) have described the conceptual metaphor of plant as IDEAS ARE PLANTS. In American corpus, the conceptual metaphor of plant can be generalized as A CASE IS A PLANT. And the most frequent keywords are “root”, “growth”, “ground”, etc., which are usually used to express the development of cases. Here are some examples about plant metaphors in the American corpus:

E7: The prosecution objected on the ground of hearsay.

E8: The public looked for a response to the growing violence in their city.

In example E7, “hearsay” has become the plant which the prosecution is based on. In example E8, “violence” is seen as the plant which is on the increase continuously in the city.

### **Human Body Metaphors**

In American legal discourse, there is a large quantity of human body metaphors, especially “heart” metaphors. A metaphor can have the ability to bridge the abstract and the concrete. Therefore, people always use the concrete heart to symbolize the abstract concept. THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT IS HEART. Besides, brain always refers to the thought of people. THOUGHT IS BRAIN. Therefore, people are accustomed to these expressions which contains organs of the body.

E9: Goodell’s heart was really in this case.

E10: To look into the heart of Zimmerman and remember that if he had done what he should have done – stay in his car and wait for the police to arrive – Trayvon Martin would still be alive.

Example E9 expresses that Goodell’s attention has not focused on the case. In example E10, the heart also refers to the psychological effect, or the true feeling of the person. “Brain” is also an important organ of human being.

### **Building Metaphors**

Comprehending our experience in terms of objects and substances make us to choose sections of our physical experience and regard them as individual entities or substances of a homogeneous kind (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Therefore, we can treat our physical experiences as entities, so we can group them, quantify them and categorize them. In both corpus, people employ the building metaphors. The crime or the case can be conceptualized as a building, thus we have the conceptual metaphors, e.g. “A CRIME IS A BUILDING”, and “A CASE IS A BUILDING”. There are a great number of relevant key words such as “establish”, “door”, “bridge”, “build”, and so on. What follows are some examples:

E11: Simpson’s guilt that the prosecution would establish during the trial.

E12: Ito’s decision opened the door for the defense to offer its rather fantastic theory.

E13: J. Edgar Hoover urged his Bureau employees to aggressively attempt to build a triable case against Ethel.

In examples E11 and E12, “establish” and “build” express the case or the crime which are conceptualized as the outcome of a staged process. In the domain of building, the most frequently used metaphors in the corpus that refer to the types of building are “door” and “bridge”. Obviously, in example E13, people make their arguments more persuasive and understandable by application of such metaphors.

### **Religion Metaphors**

Every stage of people’s life is influenced by religion, so that it plays an important role in western culture. In western countries, as a kind of cultural phenomenon, religion affects people’s ideology in a unique way. It’s no surprise to mention that religion metaphor is a familiar role in the history of America. In American courtroom discourse, people use religion metaphors to exert religious ideological function. Religion metaphors are structural metaphors. The most frequently used metaphors of religion domain are “god”, “belief”, “evil” and “hell”, which derive from the conceptual metaphor of LAW IS RELIGION.

TAB.4-4  
LAW IS RELIGION

source domain	mapping	target domain
religion		Law
God		spirit of law
Evil/satanic stuff		crime
believe in/belief		faith in law

For example:

E14: Whatever happens, it is God’s will.

E15: This is not a case of hear no evil, see no evil. This is a case where there was no evil.

From the above expressions, we can find that words like “God”, and “evil”, in the domain of “religion” are projected onto the domain “law”. Understanding these words is dependent on people’s common knowledge.

### **Fire Metaphors**

Fire symbolizes burning and passionate. In a series of controversies in the wake of World War I, fire and law become fatally entwined (Tsai, 2004). Oliver Wendell Holmes has become a promethean fire-giver who believes in the conceptual metaphor “SPEECH IS FIRE”, which is projected from the source domain fire to the target domain speech. Fire metaphors belong to ontological metaphors. Fire signifies the key characteristics of speech that the justices wish us to contemplate. We can find numerous examples in the American famous trials:

E16: There was another man not too long ago in this world who had those same views, who wanted to burn people, who had racist views, and ultimately had power over people in his country.

E17: A single revolutionary spark may kindle a fire that, smoldering for a time, may burst into a sweeping and destructive conflagration.

Speech is like fire, ignited by the speaker. In example E16, speech is fire which can burn people. In examples E17, Frohwerk's "little breath" becomes "Gitlow's spark". When sacred flame is invoked in this way, we become afraid. Our danger instinct is immediately engaged.

### C. Comparative Analysis and Findings

The above examples demonstrate that there are similarities and dissimilarities of the conceptual metaphors between Chinese courtroom discourse and American courtroom discourse. The table below clearly shows similarities and dissimilarities between the Chinese courtroom discourse and American courtroom discourse.

TABLE 4-5  
SUMMARY OF MAIN CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS IN CHINESE AND AMERICAN CORPUS

Source Domain	Conceptual Metaphors in Chinese Corpus	Conceptual Metaphors in American Corpus
Journey	1. A CASE IS A JOURNEY 2. A TRIAL IS A JOURNEY	
War	1. THE LITIGATION IS A WAR. 2. THE ARGUMENT IS A WAR.	
Plant	A CASE IS A PLANT	
Building	1. A CASE IS A BUILDING 2. A CRIME IS A BUILDING	
Human body	1. MORALITY IS HEART 2. THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT IS HEART 3. LAW IS EYES	1. THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT IS HEART 2. THOUGHT IS BRAIN
Circle	1. THE FRAUD IS A CIRCLE 2. THE SEGMENT OF A CASE IS A CIRCLE 3. THE ARGUMENT IS A CIRCLE.	
Chess	1. A CASE IS A CHESSBOARD 2. A COUNTRY IS A CHESSBOARD	
Religion		LAW IS RELIGION
Fire		SPEECH IS FIRE

From the above table, we can see that the conceptual metaphors employed in both Chinese and American courtroom discourse have some similarities and dissimilarities. Meanwhile, we can conclude that the way Chinese people and American people view, understand and involve in the law is different. Living in the same world, Chinese people and American people's physical experience and culture background are somewhat similar. Because of the life experience, Chinese people and American people all convinced that A CASE OR A TRIAL IS JOURNEY, and hold that THE LITIGATION OR THE ARGUMENT IS A WAR. They treat A CASE as PLANT, and view THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT as HEART. They agree that A CRIME OR A CASE IS A BUILDING.

However, differences also exist. For example, ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES IS BLACK, MORALITY IS HEART, LAW IS EYES, A COUNTRY IS A BUILDING, THE FRAUD IS A CIRCLE, THE SEGMENT OF A CASE IS A CIRCLE, THE ARGUMENT IS A CIRCLE, A CASE IS A CHESSBOARD and A COUNTRY IS A CHESSBOARD, are specially used by Chinese legal courtroom discourse. ATTENTION IS HEART, THE CENTER IS HEART, LAW IS RELIGION and SPEECH IS FIRE are specially employed by American legal courtroom discourse. Because of different courtroom culture, history background and religious belief, people from China and America view the same thing differently. Conceptual metaphor is powerful. Oseid (2010) proposes that Metaphor has been eternally criticized for its inability to capture every nuance and delicacy contained in abstract concepts. Yet, metaphor is the way all human, including lawyers, make sense of difficult ideas. We should choose concrete, creative, and analogic metaphors. The way two people in two countries use metaphors is different. Take A CASE IS A CHESSBOARD for example. This metaphor is used by Chinese people, for in Chinese history, people like playing chess very much. They often see the chessboard as their life. In legal actions, people also prefer to treat the chessboard as the case to analyze the legal relationship.

## IV. CONTRIBUTING FACTORS FOR THE SIMILARITIES AND DISSIMILARITIES

The reasons for the similarities and dissimilarities of the conceptual metaphors used in Chinese courtroom discourse and American courtroom discourse are explored as follows:

### A. Underlying Reasons for the Use of Same Conceptual Metaphors

Lakoff & Johnson (1980) once claim that our communication is dependent on the same conceptual system which we use in thinking and acting. People live in one world, so their way of thinking and life experience sometimes are similar.

#### (1) Way of Thinking

Conceptual metaphors present great similarities in different languages. The way of thinking also shows that how people think about law, and reflects the similarities in different countries.

Lakoff & Johnson (1980) holds metaphor is a cognitive process by which we understand one conceptual domain in terms of another. In spite of great difference between Chinese and English, they consider the law in the same way, so both languages can produce similar metaphorical expressions. For instance, same conceptual metaphor A CASE OR A

TRIAL IS A JOURNEY in Chinese and American courtroom discourse is used. A CASE OR A TRIAL is the target domain, while A JOURNEY is the source domain. The target domain is consistent with the source domain. The plaintiff and defendant can be considered as “travelers on the journey of the trials”. Their journey is not smooth. The troubles they meet can be treated as “obstacles in the case”. The destination they want to reach can be seen as “the rights they need to protect”, and at the same time, they should also “bear” certain obligations. The elements of a journey are systematically mapped onto cases or trials. every matching system is well played and organized in this mapping.

In other words, the plaintiff and defendant correspond with travelers; the aim of the cases or trial is consistent with the destination of the journey; and they treat the frustration of the case or the trial as the difficulties of the journey. So they relate the knowledge of the case or the trial to the knowledge of the journey in their mind. Based on the common thought, the knowledge of the journey is able to make people have a better understanding of the concept of case or trial. Therefore, both Chinese people and American people choose the same conceptual metaphor: A CASE OR A TRIAL IS A JOURNEY.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) think that metaphors are to realize and experience one thing through another thing. The common thought or sense of the two countries' people produces the similar conceptual metaphors in both Chinese courtroom discourse and American courtroom discourse. The system of conceptual metaphor, which is rooted in people's thought, is the mechanism which makes us understand the abstract or unfamiliar things by means of concrete and familiar things to us. The same cognitive process can cause the similar metaphorical expressions in both China and American courtroom discourse. Therefore, in the Chinese courtroom discourse and American courtroom discourse, people also conceptualize THE LITIGATION or THE ARGUMENT as WAR, and PLANT as CASE. The two countries' people also regard THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT as HEART.

## (2) Life Experience

It's no doubt that similar life experience is the other main factor which leads to the choice of the same conceptual metaphor by people in two country. Most ontological metaphors treat things or activities as journey, because it could help us better understand the abstract concept through the concrete concept, journey. Therefore, we can find that the traveler of the journey, the obstacles encounter, and the destination of the journey, etc. in Chinese and American courtroom discourse. We can also conclude that both two countries' people consider case or a trial as journey. The similar perspective makes both two countries' people conceptualize the same conceptual metaphor: A CASE OR A TRIAL IS A JOURNEY.

Meanwhile, war is another familiar phenomenon to us in our daily life, regardless of sex, social status, culture and educational background. They all learn some knowledge about wars in history textbooks or on TV. For instance, the book “Sun Tzu's The Art of War” is well known to Chinese people, and the idioms from that book is over worn by us in our daily life. While in America, war also makes a great impression on American people, because of Iraq War, 911 Terrorist Attack, and so on. In social life, legal measures against crimes are as important as the victory in military warfare. Though Chinese people and American people have their own knowledge of war, they all know that war is full of characteristics, like blood, rights, struggle, weapons, fight, protection, etc. Therefore, both two countries' people use the conceptual metaphor THE LITIGATION OR THE ARGUMENT IS WAR.

Similarly, both Chinese and American people consider PLANT as CASE. No matter whether in Chinese or American culture, plants always need water, sunshine, soil and people's good care to grow up. At the same time, Chinese people and American people both think that the developing process of the case is just like the growing process of plant. Plant metaphors used by two countries' people to make a connection between the relations of things which can produce an outcome in the cases. So in the Chinese courtroom discourse and American courtroom discourse, both two countries' people make the conceptual metaphor of “A CASE IS A PLANT”.

## B. Underlying Reasons for the Use of Different Conceptual Metaphors

Although the use of metaphors is universal, the choice of explicit metaphors for illustrating the world is frequently culture-specific. Therefore, people from different cultures would find it difficult to understand complicated metaphors in another culture.

### (1) Cultural Connotation

The cultural connotation is the main reason for American people and Chinese people to choose different conceptual metaphors. The religion culture and chess culture that all belong to the cultural connotation will be discussed below:

Religious culture plays an important role in human culture, and it refers to the one kind of culture that formed by a nation's belief, ideology, consciousness, and religion. America is a highly religious nation, and religion nearly covers every aspect of social life. Most of Americans have a deeply faith in Christianity, which also has a deep influence on language, so it is no exception for metaphors. Many metaphors are formed through the spreading of Christianity, and these metaphors are vivid and lively. Bible is the classic in Christianity to the whole world, so there are many metaphors in the Bible and some metaphors derive from Biblical stories. In such cultural environment, it's not difficult to find why there exist so many religion metaphors in the American courtroom discourse. In contrast, in Chinese culture, most people do not believe in religion because of the wide publicity of materialism, thus there are nearly no metaphors in Chinese language. So, it is easy for us to understand why religion metaphors are so popular in American courtroom discourse.

In ancient China, piano, chess, calligraphy and painting are important cultural activities for scholars and literati to



improve and perfect themselves. In modern society, playing chess is also one of the most important entertainment activities for Chinese people, especially the old in their daily lives. However, in America, people usually talk about the weather, sports, films and other entertainment activities in their spare time. Thus, it can easily explain why chess metaphors are unique to the Chinese corpus.

## (2) Social Environment

SPEECH IS FIRE is a conceptual metaphor, which belongs to the Ontological Metaphors. The ontological metaphors allow the comprehension of our experiences in terms of concrete entities or substance. Conceptual metaphors are conceptualized from our experience, and use the conceptualized experience to explain the abstract concept.

At the beginning of the 20th century, American big cities, like San Francisco, Chicago and New York caught city fire which destroyed the whole big communities. In 1906, the earthquake and the fires in San Francisco make 25000 buildings razed to the ground, 500 people were killed and hundreds of people homeless. San Francisco then gains the name of "hell city". This metaphor has broad-based cognitive force, not only because of citizens' experience with fire in daily life, but also because of an important source of the visceral sensations associated with war abroad, dissent and occasional violence at home, and the ideological challenge of socialism.

Individualism is the most important factor and most marked feature in American culture. American prefer to run after freedom and self-improvement, so the heart of American ideology is "freedom, equality and democracy of the individual". Americans focus on human right and individualism, so personal benefits occupy an important position in American culture. In American, people believe in law, and root their faith in law. American people can solve their problems by using the weapon of law. Morality can not solve anything. Nowadays, China is also likely to encourage people to pursue freedom and independence. As a representative of socialist countries, China emphasizes the realization of people's self-development, freedom and equality under the situation of the whole country's development. Besides, communism is the ultimate goal of China, and we should hold on socialism as the current central value system. Therefore, China emphasizes that the rights of democracy, freedom and equality are public. Chinese are unlikely to solve problems in the courtroom. So we can easily understand why MORALITY IS HEART takes a large proportion in the heart metaphors in Chinese corpus.

## V. CONCLUSION

This study has made a contrastive study of conceptual metaphors in 20 Chinese cases from *The court is now in session* and 20 American cases from *Famous Trials* in terms of Conceptual Metaphor Theory and the approach of Critical Discourse Analysis. Similarities and dissimilarities of the conceptual metaphors in the two countries' courtroom discourse are explored, and reasons why two countries' people use these conceptual metaphors are analyzed. The use of metaphor is a very popular phenomenon in legal courtroom discourse. Despite the conceptual metaphor is proposed in the English language, but the abundant existing in the Chinese has illustrated the universality of conceptual metaphor. The major conceptual metaphors in the two corpora are: Journey Metaphors, War Metaphors, Human Body Metaphors, Building Metaphors, Plant Metaphors, Circle Metaphors, Chess Metaphors, Religion Metaphors and Fire metaphors. Additionally, based on the contrastive study, the similar conceptual metaphors are: Journey Metaphors, War Metaphors, Building Metaphors, and Plant Metaphors. In addition, according to the classification, some conceptual metaphors share the same name, but the content is different, that is to say, although they derive from the same source domain, they have different content, such as Human Body Metaphors. Moreover, there are some metaphors unique to each country, for example, in this thesis, Circle Metaphors and Chess Metaphors are unique to Chinese corpus and in American corpus, Religion Metaphors and Fire Metaphors are unique. This study explores the factors why people chose the same or different conceptual metaphors employed in the two countries' courtroom discourse. The research showed that life experience and way of thinking are the main factors contributing for similarities of the conceptual metaphors used in Chinese and American courtroom discourse. The findings also highlighted that cultural connotations, as well as social environments, are the main factors which influence the choice of source domain to express law.

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# The Relationship between Linguistic Intelligence and Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic Preferences of Iranian EFL Learners

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**Abstract**—Many factors including the learners' individual personality factors and their sociocultural backgrounds, attitudes to learning the new language, intelligence quotient, and personal learning styles and preferences are involved in the process of second/foreign language learning. The present study attempted to examine the relationship between learners' linguistic intelligence and their visual, audio, and kinaesthetic (VAK) preferences by formulating three null hypotheses. In order to test the hypotheses, a total number of 100 Iranian female high school-level EFL learners in Tabriz were selected through cluster sampling. The participants took a linguistic intelligence test and responded to a VAK preference questionnaire to obtain data about their linguistic intelligence and VAK preferences. The statistical analysis of the obtained data led to the rejection of all three null hypotheses indicating a significant relationship between the learners' linguistic intelligence and their VAK preferences. The relationship between linguistic intelligence and auditory preferences turned out to be negative and reverse. These results indicated that in order to increase teaching efficiency, the language educators should try to prepare and use instructional materials suiting the learners' visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic preferences, indicating the need for individualized language instruction. The findings have implications for curriculum developers and syllabus designers as well as educational policy makers.

**Index Terms**—linguistic intelligence, VAK preferences, Iranian EFL learners

## I. INTRODUCTION

By definition, learning, including learning a foreign language, means, "The process by which change in behaviour, knowledge, skills, etc. comes about through practice, instruction, or experience and the result of such a process." (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, P. 298). However, learning a foreign language is more than just a boost to your CV or a handy tool for travelling. It will make you smarter, more decisive, and even better in English, says Merritt (2013). Although, there are individual differences across learners in learning a new language (Ellis, 1994), there are other crucial learning factors including internal (age, personality, motivation, experiences, cognition, and native language) and external (curriculum, instruction, culture and status, and access to native speakers) parameters over which learners have no control. Moreover, every human being has got different kinds of intelligences, and we cannot consider anybody as purely intelligent or unintelligent. In fact, the theory of multiple intelligences challenges the traditional notion of intelligence which has been defined in terms of intelligence quotient (IQ) (Christison, 1998; PoYing, 1999; Saeidie, 2007).

Besides, representational systems also known as sensory modalities and abbreviated to VAK is a postulated model from neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) regarding how the human mind supposedly processes and stores information. The central idea of this model is that experience is represented in the mind in sensorial terms, i.e. in terms of five senses. Moreover, we all process information in three distinct ways, these are called: Visual, Auditory, and Kinaesthetic. These are ways we re-present the world through our five senses and how we typically communicate them back to the world. When information reaches our brain, it is given meaning and forms a subjective experience of the world. This is our representation otherwise known as our perception. Although we use all of the representational systems, we tend to have a preference, just like there are people who prefer certain types of food (Ellerton, 2015). Specifically speaking, some learners are labelled as visual learners who learn better by being exposed to visual instructional stimuli; some others prefer learning through hearing, and they are rightly categorized as the learners who have a preference for audio stimuli. Meanwhile there are a third group of learners who have a natural preference for learning through doing activities, and they are labelled as kinaesthetic learners (Najjari, 1996 as cited in Dehghan Harati, 2011). Exploring the VAK preferences of the learners may provide insights for the language educators and teachers in order to be able to match their own teaching methods and techniques to the individual preferences of the learners, leading to more accurate planning and more economical use of the valuable teaching time.

On the other hand, finding the probable link between linguistic intelligence and VAK preferences of the learners may prove to be highly illuminating for language educators generally and second or forging language educators, particularly. The researcher assumes that by identifying VAK preferences of the learners, the language teachers would be in a better

position to decide on the type of linguistic and non-linguistic stimuli to bring about better learning outcomes for the learners.

Some studies have focused on the role of VAK preferences in learning generally and second or foreign language particularly. For example, Farooque, Mustafa, and Mohammad (2014) investigated the learning style preferences of first year undergraduate medical students. The results of this study showed that there was no significant difference in learning preferences between the genders. In a similar study conducted by Marwah, Bhagat, and Kapoor (2015) the learning preferences of undergraduate dental students of a north Indian dental college was investigated. The results showed diversity in learning styles or preferences of the learners. Furthermore, Alavinia and Ebrahimpour (2012) investigated the correlation between emotional intelligence and learning styles of Iranian academic EFL learners. A significant difference was found to be at work with regard to the performance of different genders. Pourhossein (2012) investigated VAK preferences and their effects on English language teaching. The Findings showed that Iranian EFL university students preferred learning style was visual. Finally, Shahi (2009) investigated the relationship between multiple intelligence and learning styles. The results of the study showed that there was a strong correlation between learning styles and multiple intelligences.

Already, some studies have been conducted on both multiple intelligence and VAK preferences of second or foreign languages learners. For example, in Iranian EFL context. Davoudi and Chavosh (2016) conducted a study on the relationship between multiple intelligence and listening self-efficacy among Iranian EFL learners. Some of the studies have attempted to find out either the effect of MI or its relationship with learning language skills and components. For instance, Mohammadi and Mousalou (2012) studied the relevance of emotional and linguistic intelligence to speaking anxiety of EFL learners. Their results showed that there was a correlation between speech anxiety and emotional intelligence (EI). They also found that there was a relationship between speech anxiety and the learner's first language. Furthermore, Sajjadi Rad, Khojasteh and Kafipour (2014) investigated the relationship between multiple intelligences and the writing skill of the medical students in Iran. The mentioned researchers came to the conclusion that there is no significant relationship between the Iranian EFL learners.

A review of related literature indicated that almost no study has ever attempted to focus specifically on the relationship between linguistic intelligence and VAK preferences of Iranian EFL learners at high school level, and the present study was an attempt to fill this gap. Specifically speaking, facing every kind of learners in each class, as a teacher, the researcher decided to conduct this study to classify learners in three groups (VAK) according to their preferences and prepare teaching methods, materials, and lesson plans to meet the needs of each type of learner despite the fact that traditional methods focus just on limited methods and make the lessons boring for almost of learners.

In the present quantitative survey-based correlational study there were two variables, linguistic intelligence and VAK, and the researcher wanted to find out if there is a relationship between linguistic intelligence and VAK preferences. In line with this purpose, the following null hypotheses were proposed:

H01: There is not any significant relationship between linguistic intelligence and visual preferences of Iranian EFL learners?

H02: There is not any significant relationship between linguistic intelligence and auditory preferences of Iranian EFL learners?

H03: There is not any significant relationship between linguistic intelligence and kinesthetic preferences of Iranian EFL learners?

The validity of the assumptions in the mentioned hypotheses was empirically tested through the process described in the following sections.

## II. METHODOLOGY

### *Participants*

The population of this study included all female senior high school EFL learners in Tabriz. The sample size was about 100 learners selected through cluster sampling. All the participants were female students studying in state schools and had the same cultural background. Their age ranged from 14 to 16. In terms of proficiency level, participants were all placed at lower intermediate level according to their school books (Prospect 3 written by the authorial group of Iran Ministry of Education).

### *Instruments*

In this quantitative survey-based study VAK preference questionnaire (Appendix II) and linguistic intelligence test (Appendix I) were administered. The linguistic intelligence test included 10 questions which were selected out of 80 questions of Multiple Intelligence questionnaire developed by Gardner (1983). To make the questionnaire comprehensible to the respondents, it was translated into Persian. The questionnaire was originally reviewed by 5 other M.A. colleagues in order to eliminate the faulty items. It was, then, revised, and validated through a pilot study with 20 respondents, which revealed a reliability coefficient of .846 indicating acceptable reliability level. Each item in the questionnaire is ranked as 1-5 in which 1 indicates the lowest interest of the learner and 5 shows the highest interest of him/her.

The VAK questionnaire developed by Victoria Chislett (2005), includes 30 multiple choice questions tagged as A, B, and C (Appendix II). Those who choose mostly A's have a visual learning style, those who choose mostly B's have an

auditory learning style. Those who choose mostly C's have a kinesthetic learning style. A pilot study with 20 sample respondents was conducted in order to ensure the validity of the questionnaire. The reliability analysis of the questionnaire revealed a reliability level of .887, .910, and .724 for visual, auditory, and kinesthetic preferences questions, respectively.

#### **Procedure**

##### *a. Pilot Study on the Questionnaires for Checking their Validity*

A pilot study was conducted with 20 sample respondents in order to ensure the validity of the questionnaire. The reliability analysis of the questionnaire revealed a reliability level of .887, .910, and .724 for different VAK indexes of the questionnaire, indicating an acceptable range of reliability. This indicated that the questionnaire was a valid measure of the learners' VAK preferences.

Moreover, the linguistic intelligence test items were reviewed by 5 other colleagues. Then it was piloted with 20 EFL learners at the same high school. The reliability analysis revealed a reliability level of .846 indicating its acceptability. Therefore, the linguistic intelligence questionnaire could be safely used for measuring the participants' linguistic intelligence.

##### *b. The Main Study*

Having selected the respondents through cluster sampling, the already-validated 10-item linguistic intelligence questionnaire was administered to the main participants of the study. The test was administered by the researcher in four classes which included a total number of 100 learners. It took 20 minutes for the respondents to answer the questions. The questionnaire items were in Persian, so the respondents need not much explanation. The respondents were supposed to check the options which best suited them. There were 5 options for each question. The options were tagged as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, in which 1 shows the respondents lowest interest, and 5 shows their highest interest. Having finished the responding process, the researcher added up the obtained scores for each participant. The higher the total score, the higher the linguistic intelligence would be.

The VAK questionnaire which includes 30 multiple choice questions, was also given to the same respondents in the next session of the class, and completing it lasted 70 minutes. The researcher translated each item into Farsi whenever it was needed to solve any probable problems. This questionnaire includes a total number of 30 questions each of which has 3 options of as A, B, and C. The respondents were supposed to choose the option which best suited them. After finishing the responding process, the researcher identified the respondents' preference by counting As, Bs, and Cs. Those who chose mostly A's have a visual learning style; those who chose mostly B's have an auditory learning style. Those who chose mostly C's have a kinesthetic learning style.

### III. RESULTS

#### **Reliability Analysis of the Research Instruments**

In order to examine the reliability of the items in linguistic intelligence test and VAK preferences questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha was used. The results of the reliability analysis for both instruments are summarized in Table 4.1.

TABLE 4.1  
RELIABILITY RESULTS FOR LINGUISTIC INTELLIGENCE AND VAK QUESTIONNAIRES

	Item	case	Cronbach's Alpha
Visual	30	20	0.887
Kinaesthetic	30	20	0.724
Auditory	30	20	0.910
Linguistic intelligence	10	20	0.846

As the reliability values reported in Table 4.1 indicate, the reliability coefficient for Visual, Kinaesthetic, and Auditory preferences of the participants in the pilot study turned out to be .887, .724, and .910, respectively all of which are greater than the acceptable range of .7. Moreover, the reliability coefficient of the linguistic intelligence in the pilot study was obtained as .846. Therefore, both instruments can be considered as completely reliable tools for eliciting the needed information from the main participants of the study.

#### **Descriptive Statistics for VAK Preferences Scores**

Table 4.2 shows descriptive statistics for Visual, Audio and Kinaesthetic Preferences scores.

TABLE 4.2  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR VISUAL, AUDIO AND KINAESTHETIC PREFERENCES SCORES OF THE RESPONDENTS

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Visual	100	8.77	1.96	5	13.00
Kinaesthetic	100	15.85	2.31	10	20.00
Auditory	100	5.45	2.66	1	12.00

Table 4.2 indicates that the mean for Visual, Auditory, and Kinaesthetic preferences are 8.77, 15.85, and 5.45, respectively, and the standard deviation for the same items are 1.96, 2.31, and 2.66, respectively. Moreover, the descriptive statistics for the same participants in linguistic intelligence test are shown in Table 4.3.

TABLE 4.3  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR LINGUISTIC INTELLIGENCE SCORES

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Linguistic Intelligence	100	34.83	8.01	20	48.00

Table 4.3 shows that the mean and standard deviation for linguistic intelligence are 34.83 and 8.01, respectively.

#### **Testing the First Research Null Hypothesis**

In order to test the first hypothesis claiming that there is not any significant relationship between linguistic intelligence and visual preferences of Iranian EFL learners, Pearson's correlation analysis was adopted the results of which are reported in Table 4.4.

TABLE 4.4  
CORRELATION BETWEEN LINGUISTIC INTELLIGENCE AND VISUAL PREFERENCES OF THE RESPONDENTS

	Visual preference	
Linguistic Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	.228*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.023
	N	100

As Table 4.4 indicates, there is a significant relationship between linguistic intelligence and visual preferences of Iranian school-level EFL learners ( $r=.228$ ,  $p=.023 < .05$ ). In other words, the higher the level of linguistic intelligence, the greater the learners' visual preference will be. Therefore, the first null hypothesis is safely **rejected**, meaning that there is a significant relationship between linguistic intelligence and visual preferences of Iranian EFL learners.

#### **Testing the Second Null Hypothesis**

As Table 4.5 shows, to test the validity of the second null hypothesis claiming that there is not any significant relationship between linguistic intelligence and auditory preferences of Iranian EFL learners, Pearson's correlation analysis was conducted too.

TABLE 4.5  
CORRELATION BETWEEN LINGUISTIC INTELLIGENCE AND AUDITORY PREFERENCES OF THE RESPONDENTS

	Auditory preference	
Linguistic Intelligence	Pearson Correlation	-.486**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	100

Table 4.5 shows that there is a negative relationship between linguistic intelligence and auditory preferences of the respondents ( $r=-.486$ ,  $p=.00 < .05$ ). In other words, the higher level of linguistic intelligence, the less the learners are likely to have auditory preferences. Therefore, the second null hypothesis is **rejected** as well, and there is a **reverse significant relationship** between linguistic intelligence and the auditory preferences of the respondents.

#### **Testing the Third Correlational Hypothesis**

To test the validity of the assumption in the third null hypothesis claiming the existence of no significant relationship between linguistic intelligence and Kinaesthetic preferences of Iranian EFL learners, the researcher conducted another Pearson's correlation analysis between the linguistic intelligence and the kinaesthetic preferences of the respondents the results of which are reported in Table 4.6.

TABLE 4.6  
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN LINGUISTIC INTELLIGENCE AND KINAESTHETIC PREFERENCES OF THE RESPONDENTS

	Kinesthetic Preferences	
linguistic intelligence	Pearson Correlation	.404**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	100

Table 4.6 shows that there is a significant relationship between linguistic intelligence and kinaesthetic learning preferences of the respondents ( $r=.404$ ,  $p=.00 < .05$ ). In other words, the higher level of linguistic intelligence, the more the learners will have kinaesthetic preferences. Therefore, the third null hypothesis is **rejected** as well.

## IV. DISCUSSION

The present study was launched with the purpose of examining the relationship between linguistic intelligence and the visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic preferences of Iranian EFL learners. Finding out about the mentioned issues is expected to have a beneficial effect on improving learning a new language since as stated by Fasold (1991), the ultimate purpose is helping the learners improve in any way possible.

The three null hypotheses on the non-existence of a significant relationship between linguistic intelligence and visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic preferences of Iranian EFL learners were rejected. It was found that linguistic intelligence is highly correlated with VAK preferences of the learners indicating that attending to personal preferences styles, and preferences of learners can play an accelerating role in improving the learners' linguistic intelligence. This is the point already endorsed by Brown (1987), Ellis (1994), Walqui (2000), Hoekstra (2009). All of the mentioned authors have emphasized the importance of attending to the learners' personality or learning styles in improving their learning. This also calls for the consideration of individual learning factors and individual instruction as stressed by Lyal (2002) and Dunn and Burke (2006) besides the others.

Although the second null hypothesis on the correlation between linguistic intelligence and auditory preferences of Iranian EFL learners was rejected, the correlation turned out to be negative, and the two variables had a reverse relationship with each other. In other words, with higher linguistic intelligence, the auditory preference scores were lower. This result, despite being surprising, has already been reported by Dilts, Epstein, Dilts (2011), Cetin (2009), Cronin and Myers (1997), and Canning (2000). Moreover, statistics have already shown that learners learn through visual modes of data about 60% of the times while learning through both auditory and kinaesthetic modes happens 20% of the times. This necessitates greater attention to the learners' visual preferences than their auditory or kinaesthetic preferences. Cetin (2009) endorses the point by saying that auditory learners exercise their vocal cords a lot; therefore, in one sense, they use kinaesthetic mode of learning as well.

In terms of the existence of a correlation between linguistic intelligence and VAK preferences, the findings of this study are in line with the findings of the study by Ahmadian and Hosseini (2012), Saricaoglu and Arikan's (2009), and Derakhshan and Faribi (2015). Alavinia and Ebrahimpour (2012) conducting a study on the relationship between emotional intelligence and learning styles of freshman Iranian EFL learners pointed to a positive meaningful relationship between emotional intelligence and learning styles. The significant correlation between different types of MI and the learners preferences has also already been pinpointed by some other authors including Prashnig (2005) and Shahi (2009).

The results of this study were also in line with the findings of Vaezi, (2015) who studied the relationship between Iranian EFL learners' and teachers' sensory preferences (visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic (VAK) and the learners' achievement in speaking. Results of the study indicated that matching Iranian EFL learners' and teachers' sensory preferences (VAK) had a significant effect on the learners' achievement in speaking. Similarly, the results of the study by Ahmadian and Hosseini (2012) showed that only linguistic intelligence and interpersonal intelligence had a statistically significant correlation with the participants' writing scores. Based on the results, the researchers showed that linguistic intelligence remains the best predictor of writing performance.

However, surprisingly enough, the results of the present study did not confirm the results obtained by Razmjoo (2008), and Sadeghi and Farzizadeh (2012) who found no significant correlation between linguistic intelligence and writing performance of Iranian EFL learners. Since in writing the learners do some sort of kinaesthetic activity, it is naturally expected that the higher the level of linguistic intelligence, the better writing performance; however, this expectation runs counter to the results obtained by the above-mentioned authors. This mismatch may result from difference in the language proficiency or age of the learners. This is endorsed by Pourhossein (2012) who found that Iranian EFL university student's preferred learning style was visual.

## V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

As a conclusion, it can be suggested that the teacher should not refrain from exercising any effort to improve learning in his/her own particular situation within the post-method limitations of 'particularity', 'practicality', and 'possibility' (Kumaravadivelu, 2007). As emphasized by Carbo (1981), in this way the teacher will be in a better position to account for the needs of all learners. One way to address, individual learner needs is the use of individualized instruction (Dunn & Burke, 2006). By matching the learners' different intelligence types (linguistic intelligence in this study) with their learning styles or learning preferences, the teacher can create a learning environment in which every individual learner flourishes. Furthermore, the results of the present study are still another confirmation for the fact that in this post-method era of testing teaching should be shifted towards rather individualized form of education in which the educators cater for the needs, styles, and preferences of each individual learner. Finally, as the results of the present study clearly showed there is significant relationship between the Iranian EFL learners' level of linguistic intelligence and their visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic preferences. As such, the level of linguistic intelligence can serve as a good indicator of the learners' success in various visual, audio, and kinaesthetic learning tasks, and a teacher can opt for the learning activities that best suit the learners VAK preferences. It should be reiterated again that there is a negative relationship between the learners' linguistic intelligence and their auditory preference. In other words, the learners with higher linguistic intelligence are likely to have less interest on auditory input for their learning.

By implication, language educators and teachers are advised to first estimate their learners' linguistic intelligence and adapt their teaching/learning tasks in a mood or style that suits their learning preferences. Parents should also attune their expectations of their learners' to their personality type features, learning styles, and preferences, and their expectations of their children should be realistic based on their learners' preferred learning styles. Moreover, school administrators should provide all the necessary equipment and facilities for the class and the EFL teacher to be able to tap each individual learner's preferred learning style. Furthermore, the local and global language education policy making bodies, curriculum developers, and syllabus designers are recommended to try to invest on the idea of individualized instruction. The one-size-fits-all approach to curriculum development and syllabus design fails to account for the needs of all types of learners having different learning styles and preferences. Last but not the least, the learners, with the help of their teachers, should develop an awareness of their own learning strategies, learning styles, and learning preferences so that they will opt for the learning techniques and strategies that correspond to their linguistic intelligence. This will be especially useful for the learners who learn the new language on a self-study basis.

Finally, the prospective researchers can focus their attention on some yet unexplored aspects of the title of this study. For example, this study just focused on the relationship between the learners' present level of linguistic intelligence and their VAK preferences; another study can be conducted to investigate the effect of linguistic intelligence training on VAK preferences of the learners. The relationship between personality type and VAK preferences of the EFL learners is another promising area of study. Predictability of VAK preferences through different types of intelligences is another path of research.

#### APPENDIX I. LINGUISTIC INTELLIGENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

نام و نام خانوادگی: .....

بیا توجه به راهنمای زیر برای هر یک از جملات یکی از خانه های 1 تا 5 را علامت بزنید.

- ✓ خیلی کم شبیه من است. (1) -- (خیلی کم)
- ✓ یک کمی شبیه من است. (2) -- (کم)
- ✓ تا حدی شبیه من است. (3) -- (متوسط)
- ✓ شبیه من است. (4) -- (زیاد)
- ✓ خیلی شبیه من است. (5) -- (خیلی زیاد)

1	2	3	4	5	
					1. به کتاب و کتابخوانی علاقه فراوان دارم
					2. من اغراقهای زبانی ایهام هنگامی بی معنی و کلمات دو پهلو را دوست دارم.
					3. دروس ادبیات و اجتماعی از ریاضی و علوم برایم اسانتر هستند.
					4. از آموزش دادن دانسته هایم به دیگران لذت میبرم
					5. اغلب در مکالماتم به چیزهایی اشاره میکنم که قبلا دیده یا شنیده ام.
					6. اغلب افراد معنی کلمات را از من میپرسند.
					7. من یک دفتر خاطرات روزانه دارم تا اتفاقات زندگی ام را یادداشت کنم.
					8. اخیرا چیزی نوشته ام که به آن افتخار میکنم.
					9. قبل از نوشتن خواندن یا گفتن کلمات آنها را در ذهنم میشنوم.
					10. در هنگام صحبت کردن تمایل دارم دستهای خود را تکان دهم و از زشت ها مانند تغییر چهره استفاده کنم.

#### APPENDIX II. VAK PREFERENCES QUESTIONNAIRE

##### VAK Learning Styles Self-Assessment Questionnaire

Circle or tick the answer that most represents how you generally behave.

It's best to complete the questionnaire before reading the accompanying explanation.

- When I operate new equipment I generally:
  - read the instructions first
  - listen to an explanation from someone who has used it before
  - go ahead and have a go, I can figure it out as I use it
- When I need directions for travelling I usually:
  - look at a map
  - ask for spoken directions
  - follow my nose and maybe use a compass
- When I cook a new dish, I like to:
  - follow a written recipe
  - call a friend for an explanation
  - follow my instincts, testing as I cook



4. If I am teaching someone something new, I tend to:
  - a. write instructions down for them
  - b. give them a verbal explanation
  - c. demonstrate first and then let them have a go
5. I tend to say:
  - a. watch how I do it
  - b. listen to me explain
  - c. you have a go
6. During my free time I most enjoy:
  - a. going to museums and galleries
  - b. listening to music and talking to my friends
  - c. playing sport or doing DIY
7. When I go shopping for clothes, I tend to :
  - a. imagine what they would look like on
  - b. discuss them with the shop staff
  - c. try them on and test them out
8. When I am choosing a holiday I usually:
  - a. read lots of brochures
  - b. listen to recommendations from friends
  - c. imagine what it would be like to be there
9. If I was buying a new car, I would:
  - a. read reviews in newspapers and magazines
  - b. discuss what I need with my friends
  - c. test-drive lots of different types
10. When I am learning a new skill, I am most comfortable:
  - a. watching what the teacher is doing
  - b. talking through with the teacher exactly what I'm supposed to do
  - c. giving it a try myself and work it out as I go
11. If I am choosing food off a menu, I tend to:
  - a. imagine what the food will look like
  - b. talk through the options in my head or with my partner
  - c. imagine what the food will taste like
12. When I listen to a band, I can't help:
  - a. watching the band members and other people in the audience
  - b. listening to the lyrics and the beats
  - c. moving in time with the music
13. When I concentrate, I most often:
  - a. focus on the words or the pictures in front of me
  - b. discuss the problem and the possible solutions in my head
  - c. move around a lot, fiddle with pens and pencils and touch things
14. I choose household furnishings because I like:
  - a. their colours and how they look
  - b. the descriptions the sales-people give me
  - c. their textures and what it feels like to touch them
15. My first memory is of:
  - a. looking at something
  - b. being spoken to
  - c. doing something
16. When I am anxious, I:
  - a. visualise the worst-case scenarios
  - b. talk over in my head what worries me most
  - c. can't sit still, fiddle and move around constantly
17. I feel especially connected to other people because of:
  - a. how they look
  - b. what they say to me
  - c. how they make me feel
18. When I have to revise for an exam, I generally:
  - a. write lots of revision notes and diagrams
  - b. talk over my notes, alone or with other people
  - c. imagine making the movement or creating the formula

19. If I am explaining to someone I tend to:
  - a. show them what I mean
  - b. explain to them in different ways until they understand
  - c. encourage them to try and talk them through my idea as they do it
20. I really love:
  - a. watching films, photography, looking at art or people watching
  - b. listening to music, the radio or talking to friends
  - c. taking part in sporting activities, eating fine foods and wines or dancing
21. Most of my free time is spent:
  - a. watching television
  - b. talking to friends
  - c. doing physical activity or making things
22. When I first contact a new person, I usually:
  - a. arrange a face to face meeting
  - b. talk to them on the telephone
  - c. try to get together whilst doing something else, such as an activity or a meal
23. I first notice how people:
  - a. look and dress
  - b. sound and speak
  - c. stand and move
24. If I am angry, I tend to:
  - a. keep replaying in my mind what it is that has upset me
  - b. raise my voice and tell people how I feel
  - c. stamp about, slam doors and physically demonstrate my anger
25. I find it easiest to remember:
  - a. faces
  - b. names
  - c. things I have done
26. I think that you can tell if someone is lying if:
  - a. they avoid looking at you
  - b. their voices changes
27. When I meet an old friend:
  - a. I say "it's great to see you"!
  - b. I say "it's great to hear from you"!
  - c. I give them a hug or a handshake
28. I remember things best by:
  - a. writing notes or keeping printed details
  - b. saying them aloud or repeating words and key points in my head
  - c. doing and practising the activity or imagining it being done
29. If I have to complain about faulty goods, I am most comfortable:
  - a. writing a letter
  - b. complaining over the phone
  - c. taking the item back to the store or posting it to head office
30. I tend to say:
  - a. I see what you mean
  - b. I hear what you are saying
  - c. I know how you feel

Now add up how many A's, B's and C's you selected.

A's =            B's =            C's

If you chose mostly A's you have a VISUAL learning style.

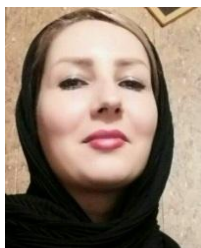
If you chose mostly B's you have an AUDITORY learning style.

If you chose mostly C's you have a KINAESTHETIC learning style.

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# Different Associations of Animal Words in English and Chinese and the Relevant Translation Strategies

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**Abstract**—There are a large number of phrases containing animal words both in English and Chinese. However, many associative meanings concerning animal words existing in English and Chinese cultures are different or even opposite due to historical and cultural differences. In order to translate relevant phrases correctly, translator should know the different associations of animal words in English and Chinese. This paper aims at pointing out associative differences of a large quantity of animal words in English and Chinese as well as dealing with translation of animal idioms and relevant phrases with domestication, foreignization, and domestication or foreignization plus explanation so as to reach dynamic equivalence of source language and target language in translation.

**Index Terms**—animal words, differences in association, domestication, foreignization

## I. INTRODUCTION

Human beings have been acquainted with animals and animals' habits since the primitive times. During human beings' knowing and utilization of animals, animals are gradually integrated into human beings' cultural activities and play a great role in human beings' culture. We often consider animals like dogs, cats as our intimate friends in every corner of the world. That may explain the reason why human beings use relevant animal phrases to express their emotions, experiences and feelings and use animal idioms to explain complicated rules and phenomena vividly.

It is worldwide acknowledged that animal names, relative phrases have acquired many established associative meanings in various languages with the development of language, therefore animal names, relative phrases and idioms are attached great importance in every country with great significance in each language. However, Chinese and English nations are different in terms of geographic locations, histories, ecological surroundings, religious beliefs, customs, aesthetic values and the ways of thinking, which make people produce different associative meanings about same things. English and Chinese nations are abundant in idioms of animals' names while animal words in different countries acquire different associative meanings, which lead to misunderstanding of true meanings of animal idioms between English and Chinese culture. With increasing intercultural communication and globalization, having a good knowledge of correct associative meanings of animal words between English and Chinese culture becomes the first step toward excellent translations and a perfect translation of animal idioms between English and Chinese not only brings readers of target language a vivid cultural and exotic picture but also enriches the language of each country.

This paper is on associative differences and translation of animal words between Chinese and English culture, aiming at pointing out associative differences of a large quantity of animal names between Chinese and English culture as well as dealing with translation of animal idioms and relative phrases with domestication, foreignization, and domestication or foreignization plus explanation so as to reach dynamic equivalence of source language and target language.

## II. ASSOCIATIONS OF ANIMAL WORDS IN CHINESE AND ENGLISH

### A. The Same Animal Words with Identical Meanings

Although in the world there are remarkably different cultures and various nations as well as extremely various languages, people may endow some natural objects with corresponding or similar humanoid feelings, so they often share similar cultural connotations, aesthetic and moral values. As the common features of humanity are reflected in different cultures, it is bound that similar connotations of animal words exist in different languages. The following are some animal words with corresponding or similar implications in English and Chinese.

① “wolf”: Wolf in Chinese and English cultures have the same meaning. It refers to somebody fierce, cruel or greedy, such as “as cruel as a wolf”(像狼一样凶残)

② “Sheep”: Sheep in both Chinese and English cultures are analogous to someone who is meek and tender, such as

“as gentle as a sheep”(温顺的像只绵羊)

③ “Ass and donkey”: Ass and donkey in Chinese and English languages have negative meanings which indicate that someone is stupid, foolish and stubborn, such as “make an ass of oneself”(使自己出洋相), as stubborn as a donkey(非常固执).

④ “Monkey”: Being naughty and lovely is the associative meaning both in Chinese and English, such as “monkey around”(胡闹).

⑤ “Parrot”: Parrot has the ability to imitate what people say, so people in China and English-speaking countries use this animal name as a metaphor to describe those who always imitate others' words, which makes people feel unpleasant. For example, “Don't parrot my words”(别模仿我的话).

⑥ “Dove”: No matter in Chinese mythology or in Biblical stories, dove is applied to symbolize peace and good fortune.

⑦ “Snake”: It is widely acknowledged that snake in Bible enticed Eva into breaking rules to eat apples in the tree in the paradise. Finally, Adam and Eva were expelled from the paradise by God because they didn't resist snake's temptation. “Snake” in Chinese culture also refers to sinister people. For example, “as evil as a snake”(像蛇一样邪恶).

⑧ “Chameleon”: Both in Chinese and English people and things which are remarkably changeable are described as chameleon(变色龙).

⑨ “Bee”: Bee possesses the same associative implication of being industrious and busy in both languages. For example, “as busy as a bee”(像蜜蜂一样忙碌).

#### B. The Same Animal Words with Different Associative Meanings

In English and Chinese, we often find that the same animal words have extremely different associative connotations in which case some animal words are commendatory in Chinese while derogatory in English or vice versa. It is different cultural backgrounds that make the same animal words endowed with different associations. The following examples are about the same animal words which are given different associative meanings.

① “Dragon”: In *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English* this imagined animal is described as a fabulous creature which is like a crocodile or snake, often with wings and claws, able to breathe out fire, often guarding a treasure, symbolizing a fierce person. In western mythology, dragon is a kind of monster spouting fire with a pair of wings and snake-like tail. It symbolizes being cruel and evil. In Bible, Satan is called the huge dragon. In contemporary English, if you use this word to describe a person, there is derogatory meaning in it. If you call a woman a dragon, you mean that she is cruel, fierce or unfriendly. However, we, Chinese people, call ourselves the descendants of dragon. In fact, in Chinese mythology, dragon is a deity animal which could produce clouds and rain. Chinese people all regard dragon as a symbol of good fortune and best wishes.

② “Bat”: The Chinese character “蝠” has the same pronunciation with “福”, so “bat” has the meaning of good luck in Chinese culture, while in English, bat makes people have the association of ugliness and sin. When referring to bat, western people think of it as vampire. The legend goes like that vampires drink the living's blood.

③ “Owl”: In Greek and Roman myth, owl often perches beside Athena-the Goddess of wisdom, therefore owl is a kind of bird symbolizing wisdom or brilliance. It is asked to solve conflicts among animals and is consulted in emergency. On the contrary, the image in Chinese culture is unfortunate. Chinese folk legends go like that if someone hears yelling of owl or an owl stands on somebody's tree, a member in his family would be doomed to die, or something inauspicious will befall this family, so people associate this animal with death and bad luck, considering it the sign of ill omen.

④ “Whale”: Whale is large in size with incredible amount of fat. Once captured, whale can bring abundant profits. Therefore, in English culture whale is dubbed as advantageous stuff or extraordinarily beautiful persons, such as “a whale of a chance”(极好的机会). In Chinese culture, people attach more importance to its great appetite instead of its value in use, so whale is usually used to refer to the strong who devour or prey upon the weak.

⑤ “Cat”: In Chinese the cultural connotation of cat is usually thought of as cuteness and relaxation. In western countries cat is the embodiment of demon and the patron saint of witches in middle ages. Especially, the black cat is the most disgusting in English culture.

⑥ “Phoenix”: According to Chinese legends, phoenix is the queen of birds, so the saying goes like all birds paying homage to the phoenix. Chinese people hold the opinion that the appearance of phoenix indicates the peace of the whole world. In Chinese culture, phoenix not only brings auspiciousness but also symbolizes the virtue of human beings. In ancient times phoenix was compared to people with holy virtue, such as “凤毛麟角” which refers to rare valuable things and people who are of exceptional talent or virtue. However, in English culture, it was said that phoenix lived in Arabic desert for five and six hundred years and built a nest that was carpeted with spice before its death. After singing a piece of bleak elegy, it stirred up fire with wings and burned itself into ash, finally, another new phoenix came into being. Therefore, English people endow the phoenix with the implication of rebirth.

⑦ “Magpie”: In Chinese culture, magpie's chirping not only brings good messages but also indicates the foreboding of fine weather. However, magpie in English culture is referred to as chattering, such as “she is a magpie of a woman”

(她是个饶舌的女人).

⑧“Petrel”: In Chinese culture, as brave bird Petrel has the confidence to overcome obstructions with perseverance. It is the symbol of brave warrior undauntedly struggling with fierce wind and torrential rain. However, westerners have no favorable impression on petrel. They usually associate it with catastrophes and disasters.

### C. *The Same Animal Words with Both Similar and Different Associations*

Examples above demonstrate different associations of the same animal words in Chinese and English cultures. Searching many professional papers, the author finds that there are many contradictions on the same animal words, for example, many experts put “dog”(狗) in the category of “the same animal words with different associations in Chinese and English”, however, besides differences, “dog” has the corresponding implication in both languages. Examples below show the same animal names with both relatively corresponding and different associations.

① “Dog”: Dog has quite different values in both traditional cultures. Under more circumstances, Chinese people think a dog is horrible with a symbol of being filthy and dirty, such as “狗杂种”(son of bitch). However, English people pay more attention to dog’s brilliance and loyalty. But, there are also derogatory meanings for “dog” in English culture, such as “that/this dirty dog”(那个狗东西); “They say the villain is going to the dogs”(他们说这个恶棍快完蛋了).

② “Bull”: In history, Chinese Peasants from one generation to another generation depend on the cow or the bull to plough farmland, so Chinese people hold great affection for them. In a Chinese legend “*The Cowboy and the Weaver*”, the bull and the cowboy relied on each other and helped with each other. The bull dedicated himself to his master. Therefore, bull and cow have the implication of dedication and diligence as well as serving for the masses.

However, in English culture, there are many shortcomings in cow or bull, such as “a bull in a china shop”(鲁莽闯祸的人). Although there are different associations of cow and bull in both languages, there are relatively corresponding meanings, such as “bull market”(牛市) which refers to a generally rising stock market.

③ “Cuckoo”: Chinese people consider the cuckoo as the harbinger of spring. The first singing of cuckoo means spring comes. Chinese people cherish the singing of cuckoo and Chinese poets in ancient times often eulogize cuckoo’s ability to herald spring with poems. But westerners show mixed attitudes toward cuckoo. When hearing its call before April 6, they regard the call as a taboo, but on April 28 an auspicious one. Besides, cuckoo is also the symbol of ruining other people’s happiness, for example, “a cuckoo in the nest” (a person who usurp the parental love of others)

④ “Fox”: Chinese and English people connect the identical connotations to fox like being greedy and sly or cunning. For instance, he is a fox, as cunning as a fox(他很奸诈). However, people curse coquette as “fox”(狐狸精) and people who like flattering as “fox”(狐媚, hu mei) in china. Although people in English-speaking countries consider that fox is cunning, they also speak highly of its charming appearance and shrewd inheritance. On some occasions, many westerners surname their family name as “Fox”, which indicates their preference to fox.

⑤ “Peacock”: According to *Webster’s Third New International Dictionary of English Language*, the figurative meaning of this word is “one making a proud or arrogant display of himself”. Thus it can be seen that peacock has derogatory meanings in English culture. Similarly, in Chinese peacock is considered as an animal with strong vanity with the love of beauty, such as “孔雀炫羽”( peacock displays its feather ). More often than not, peacock is the symbol of beauty and propitiously in Chinese culture. People in Dai ethnic group located in Yunnan like to dance peacock dance to show their charm and express their aspirations for happiness. However, English culture emphasizes the word’s connotation of “pride” instead of “beauty”.

⑥ “Fish”: In English, fish can be used figuratively to describe a human. for example, “Not knowing a foreign language, he felt like a fish out of water among so many foreigners”. Correspondingly, fish in Chinese culture is also compared to people , such as “鱼龙混杂”(good people and the evil mix up). Moreover, “鱼”(fish )and another Chinese character “余” are a pair of homophonic words. “余” means abundance. So fish is also used to express the meaning of being auspicious in Chinese.

### D. *Different Animal Words with Identical Cultural Meanings*

This category refers to those Chinese and English animal idioms and relative phrases which share the similar meanings and differ in the adaption of animal words. There are loads of Chinese and English idioms and proverbs that can be classified into this category. Some examples are as follows.

① English idioms: A **small bird** wants but a small nest.

Chinese idioms: 燕雀无鸿鹄之志.(How can **swallows and sparrows** understand the ambitions of wild swans?)

② English idioms: Take not the musket to kill a **butterfly**

Chinese idioms: 杀鸡焉用牛刀.(How can one use an ox-slaughtering knife to kill **chickens**?)

③ English idioms: Carrion crows bewail the **dead sheep**, and then eat them.

Chinese idioms: 猫哭老鼠假慈悲. (Cats bewail the **mice** and eat them).

④ English idioms: A baited **cat** may grow as fierce as a lion.

Chinese idioms: 狗急跳墙. (Desperation drives a **dog** to jump over wall)

⑤ English idioms: The scalded cat fears cold water.

Chinese idioms: 一朝被蛇咬, 十年怕井绳. (Once bitten by a **snake**, one fears rope for the next ten years)

⑥ English idioms: If you sell your **cow**, you sell her milk too.

Chinese idioms: 杀鸡取卵. (Kill the **hen for eggs**)

⑦ English idioms: Where the **deer** is slain, some of her blood will lie

Chinese idioms: 麻雀飞过留个影. (A **sparrow** makes a shadow when it flies by)

⑧ English idioms: Love me, love my **dog**.

Chinese idioms: 爱屋及乌. (Love the house and the **crow** on it)

#### E. *Unique Cultural Connotations in One Language While Vacant in the Other Language.*

Just as mentioned above, different values drawn from the same object exist due to different cultures. It is not a rare thing that people in one country endow certain objects with cultural connotations which is void in another country. Meanwhile, the same animal word possesses remarkably abundant cultural connotations in one country, while in another country it lacks relatively associative meanings thus causing a phenomenon of vacancy in cultural connotations.

① “Buffalo”: there is a phrase called “to buffalo” in English countries while there is no such usage in Chinese culture. The idiom initially meant “making somebody lose bearings or confused”. Then it extended into “threatening others or frightening others”. This idiom is connected with American history of western development. At that time, people in western America started to hunt buffalo to make a fortune, but they found hunting wasn’t easy because buffalo was too strong to be conquered for them, so someone complained that we are “buffaloed”. In Chinese culture, there are no relative implications of this animal.

② “Beaver”: Beaver is a kind of industrious animal and it is famous for being good at constructing dams. It uses branches, stone and ooze to build a dam which can intercept water into lair. So “eager beaver” describes hard-working people. It has also a derogatory meaning that someone endeavors to work excessively in order to ingratiate the superior. However, in Chinese culture, the associative meaning of this animal word is vacant.

③ “Silkworm”: Silkworm originated in China. Silk spins and weaves silk fabrics that are favored by people from home and abroad. The Silk Road has been prevailing for centuries. Chinese silkworm boasts a profound history with its spirit of dedication and has been engraved in Chinese people’s heart. However, silkworm is just a kind of worm in English culture.

④ “Tortoise and Crane”: In China people think tortoise and crane have the implication of longevity. Crane is regarded as a bird that the immortal ride in Chinese culture, so it is also called immortal crane. When Chinese people celebrate the elderly’s birthday, they often give a picture of crane as a present which symbolizes good health and longevity. And “鹤立鸡群” is a metaphor referring to those who are superior to others. However, there is no associative meaning in western countries. In English, “crane” only means “large bird with long legs, neck and beak.” (Hornby, 1997, P.330) Therefore, they are often confused by delivering a picture of crane as a birthday gift in Chinese. Tortoise symbolizes longevity as well. There are always tortoises in the front of ancient architectures such as palaces and temples. In Chinese, the word “tortoise” also symbolizes cuckold: if a person is called “王八”(tortoise), it is extremely insulting, while the associative meanings of tortoise and crane are vacant in English.

### III. THE AVAILABLE TRANSLATION STRATEGIES FOR ANIMAL PHRASES

In dealing with the translation, two effective strategies-domestication and foreignization- are attracting scholars’ attentions. Domestication and foreignization, two terminologies used by Lawrence Venuti in 1995, originated from the German thinker Schleiermacher’s speech *On the Different Methods of Translating in 1813*. In Schleiermacher’s perspective, “There are only two methods of translation, either the translation does not bother the original author and leads the reader to approach the author or the translator tries not to bother the reader and leads the original author to approach the reader” (Schulte & Biguenet, 1992, p.42). In this part, the author will use these two strategies to deal with the translation of animal-related phrases.

#### A. *Domestication*

Domestication is target culture-oriented. And it refers to the translation strategy in which a transparent style is applied so as to minimize the strangeness of the foreign text for target language readers.

Eugene A. Nida is one of the representatives of the translation theory of domestication. He puts forward the concept of “functional equivalence” and advocates that readers should be put in the priority in considering translating the cultural dissimilarities and discrepancies. (Nida, 1993, P.121)



When the cultural meanings in the source text is unfamiliar to the target language readers, the translator will replace that cultural meanings with what is familiar to the target language readers thus achieving the same effect to the target language readers as to the source language readers.

Domestication is usually used in animals with different implications in both cultures or in animal words with unique meanings in one country but with void connotations in another country.

Here are some examples: the English idiom “to talk horse” is translated in “吹牛” instead of “吹马”; “a rat in the hole” is put into “瓮中之鳖” instead of “洞中之鳖”; “a dead lion” is translated into “纸老虎” instead of “一只死狮子”; “to place oneself in the lion’s mouth” is translated into “置身虎口” instead of “置于狮子口中”; “a bull in a china shop” is translated into “爱闯祸的人” instead of “瓷器店里的一头公牛.” The Chinese idiom “落汤鸡” is translated into “a drowned rat” instead of “a drowned hen”, “指鹿为马” is translated into “to talk black into white” instead of “to talk a deer into a horse.”

When the translator makes efforts to transfer the source cultural elements into the target language, he is supposed to take into accounts the cultural connotations or associative differences of animal words and then make the source language culture close to the target language culture so as to avoid misunderstanding and conflicts.

### B. Foreignization

Foreignization is source culture-oriented. And it designates the type of translation in which a target text “deliberately breaks target conventions by retaining something of the foreignness of the original” (Shuttleworth & Cowie, 1997, P.59).

Lawrence Venuti is one of the representatives of the foreignization. He puts forward the concept of ‘anti-translation’ which aims at resisting target language domination and emphasizing cultural differences.

In general, foreignization is less commonly used unless the same animal word has an identical meaning in both countries just as the animal words mentioned before —the same animal words with identical meanings. Sometimes, an English proverb containing animal word has an equivalent saying in Chinese. In such case, it is better to use the translation strategy of foreignization to translate it from source language into target language. For example, “he is merely parroting what others have said”(他只是在鹦鹉学舌); “he is as gentle as a sheep” (他像小绵羊一样温顺); “he is as busy as bees”(他像蜜蜂一样忙碌).

### C. Domestication plus Notes and Foreignization plus Explanation

The strategy of domestication and the strategy of foreignization are used complementarily in practical translation. On certain and necessary occasions, we should use foreignization or domestication plus explanations to translate animal related phrases to preserve original cultural connotations, avoiding the loss of original style and flavor.

#### 1. Domestication plus Notes

It is hard to translate the Chinese-featured or English-featured idioms and phrases in respective masterpieces, mythologies, allegories or legends, the omission of them will make the target version dull and abrupt. In such a case, domestication plus notes can be used to explain the cultural background informations the reader do not have.

Here are two examples: “he is crying wolf” can be translated as “他在说假话”. In order to let the target readers know the origin of this idiom, the translator can add a Chinese note the main idea of which can be as follows: The original idiom is from Aesop’s Fables. A young shepherd pastured sheep on the mountain and he cried falsely that wolves came for there times just for fun, and all villagers put their own farm work aside to help him, but they found there was no wolf. When wolves really came, the shepherd called for help desperately but every farmer turned their back on him because of his lying.

“He can be relied on, and he eats no fish” can be translated as “他为人可靠，他很忠诚”. To fulfil his duty fully, the translator should better add a Chinese note the content of which is like this: “to eat no fish’ is an English allusion, it means that loyal Jesus Christians declined to obey the custom of only eating fish on Friday of Roman Catholic in the age of Queen Elizabeth, rather, they advocated and practised total prohibition of eating fish.”

#### 2. Foreignization plus Explanation

In some cases, foreignization cannot fully convey the true meaning of the original, especially the implied meanings. In such cases, The translation strategy of foreignization plus notes seem to be quite necessary to make the translation easier to be understood. For example, shed crocodile’s tear’s is translated as “鳄鱼的眼泪假惺惺”. The last three characters acting as further explanation clearly state the connotative meaning of this animal phrase.

Other examples: the Chinese idiom “猫哭老鼠” is translated into “the cat crying over the mouse, **merely a false pity**”; the English idiom “To lead a cat-and-dog life” can be translated as “过着猫和狗的生活, **吵吵闹闹**”. The bold-faced parts are necessary explanations

To an excellent translator, these four feasible translation strategies should be all took into consideration. When

translating idioms or phrases with animal words, translators are supposed to use domestication, foreignization, domestication plus notes or foreignization plus notes if necessary.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

This paper makes a comparative study of animal words in Chinese and English cultures. The comparative categories are as follows: the same animal words with identical meanings; the same animal words with different cultural meanings; the same animal names with both corresponding and different meanings; different animal relative phrases with identical cultural meanings and unique cultural connotations in one language while vacant in the other language. Animal words are the treasure of the language and culture for all countries, and they have their own characters or features with geographical, religious, literary, and psychological color. It is important and essential to have a comprehensive knowledge of animal words in cross-cultural communications.

When it comes to translation of animal relative phrases, the symbols of some animals coincide fully or partially in Chinese and English due to cultural similarity and particularity. The cultural gap can be narrowed by perfect translation so as to diminish the cross-cultural misunderstanding. This paper deals with translation of animal idioms and relative phrases with domestication, foreignization, and domestication or foreignization plus explanation so as to reach dynamic equivalence of source language and target language.

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# On the Strategy to Enhance the Efficiency of the Cooperative Learning Method in the College English Teaching in China

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**Abstract**—The cooperative learning, which is also called the collaborative learning, is one of the most important learning theories nowadays, which promotes learning cooperation between teacher and students, students and students. The cooperative learning method is a kind of teaching mode which takes students as the center and takes groups as the form. It changes the teaching mode and it is conducive to cultivating students' cooperative awareness and autonomous learning ability. The article first illustrates the connotation, theoretical base, and elements of cooperative learning method, then explains the four typical problems arising in the cooperative learning, and finally puts forward seven methods to cope with the problems in order to enhance the efficiency of the cooperative learning method.

**Index Terms**—the cooperative learning method, interdependent, assessment, interaction, efficiency

## I. INTRODUCTION

Although there is a long history of thousands of years that group cooperation learning is applied in teaching, yet not until the works of vygostky were published in 1970s is the cooperative learning method widely considered the key teaching method in the learning process (Swain, 1995; Slavin, 1996; Johnson, 1998; Ferris, 2005; Lian, 2012; Ma, 2017). The cooperative learning method emerged in 1970s and it made substantial achievement in the middle of 1980s. At the beginning of 1990s, scholars and experts had done a lot of research on the cooperative learning method and accomplished greatly. The cooperative learning method is also called "group study", which is a learning mode in which students achieve their learning goal together through their cooperation and teamwork (Wu, 2011; Hu, 2012; Liu, 2012; Li, 2015; Li, 2016; Liao, 2017).

The cooperative learning method is a teaching approach which organizes classroom activities into academic and social learning experiences. It emphasizes structuring positive interdependence. Students must cooperate to complete tasks together toward academic goals. Unlike individual learning, students learning cooperatively can capitalize on one another's resources and skills (asking one another for information, evaluating one another's ideas, monitoring one another's work, etc.). Moreover, the teacher's role changes from supplying information to facilitating students' learning. Everyone succeeds when the group succeeds. Ross (1995) describes successful cooperative learning tasks as intellectually demanding, creative, open-ended, and involve higher order thinking tasks. Cooperative learning is also related to heightened levels of student satisfaction. The cooperative learning method can create a relaxing learning atmosphere for students, activate the social psychological atmosphere in class, improve students' academic scores greatly, and can also promote students to form good meta-cognitive qualities. But because of some factors such as the management of the teacher's ability, students' different ages and characters and so on, various problems may come up in the implementation of the cooperative learning (Nam, 2011; Sorden, 2013; Wu, 2014; Qin, 2007; Zhao, 2011; Xu, 2012; Zhang, 2015; Zhu, 2017).

## II. THE CONNOTATION OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING METHOD

The cooperative learning is also called the collaborative learning, which is based on the modern social psychology, educational sociology, and cognitive psychology, studies and uses the interpersonal relationship in the classroom teaching as the starting point and goal, taking the cooperation between teachers and students, students and teachers as the center, with the team activities as the basic teaching methods, with group performance as evaluation standard, and with the standard quasi-reference evaluation as the basic means to improve students' learning achievement, and its ultimate goal is to improve the social psychological atmosphere in the class, to make the students form a good psychological quality and social skills. In the cooperative learning classroom, students are divided into groups according to their gender and abilities, and the group is the learning unit. Team members work together and each student does his best to master what he has learned and make his contribution to the group's common learning goals. In this teaching model, teachers are the designers, promoter, facilitator of classroom instruction. The classroom teaching is student-centered and takes group activities as the main form of teaching.

The basic process of the cooperative learning is to present teaching objectives--collective teaching (classroom

teaching)--group cooperation activities--test--evaluation and reward. The goal of cooperative learning teaching is not only academic, also includes cooperation skills: not only cognitive, but also affective (such as mutual respect, mutual help, and etc.). The Cooperative learning has a positive impact on students' cognitive development and motivation, and also on students' intelligence and non-intelligence factors.

### III. THEORETICAL BASE

Theoretical base is social interdependence theory, which claims that social interdependence exists when the outcomes of individuals are affected by their own and others' actions. There are two kinds of social interdependence: positive (when the actions of individuals help the achievement of common goals) and negative (when the actions of individuals hold back the achievement of each other's goals). Social interdependence may be different from social dependence, independence, and helplessness. Social dependence exists when the goal achievement of Person A is affected by Person B's actions, but the reverse is not true. Social independence exists when the goal achievement of Person A is unaffected by Person B's actions and vice versa. Social helplessness exists when neither the person nor other can influence goal achievement.

Another important theoretical foundation is motivation theory, which focuses on the reward or goal structure of learning activities. Deutsch divides the target structure into three types: cooperative structure, competitive structure and individual structure. On cooperative learning theory, the competitive structure is for individual construction, which successfully weakens the peer's chances of success and it is not conducive to community cohesion instead; Cooperative structure is suitable for the construction of good interpersonal relationship of cooperative learning group "sharing weal and woe". From this perspective, the most effective means of stimulating motivation is to establish a community of interests in English learning activities, the "community of interests" can be achieved through the common learning goals, learning tasks, learning resource sharing, role assignment and play groups, reward and recognition. The "sharing sorrow and happiness" relationship among team members which bounds them together in a common cause is an important guarantee of motivation.

### IV. ELEMENTS

Johnson (2009) put forward five variables that mediate the effectiveness of cooperation. Brown & Ciuffetelli Parker (2009) and Siltala (2010) discuss the five basic and essential elements to the cooperative learning.

#### A. *Positive Interdependence*

Students must fully participate and put forth effort within their group. Each group member has a task /role/responsibility therefore must believe that they are responsible for their learning and that of their group

#### B. *Face-to-face Interaction*

Members promote each other's success. Students explain to one another what they have or are learning and assist one another with understanding and completion of assignments

#### C. *Individual and Group Accountability*

Each student must demonstrate mastery of the content being studied. Each student is accountable for their learning and work, therefore eliminating "social loafing"

#### D. *Social Skills*

Social skills that must be taught in order for successful cooperative learning to occur. Skills include effective communication, interpersonal and group skills. Detailed Skills include leadership, decision-making, trust-building, friendship development, communication, conflict-management skills.

#### E. *Group Processing*

Group processing occurs when group members reflect on which member actions were helpful and make decision about which actions to continue or change. The purpose of group processing is to clarify and improve the effectiveness with which members carry out the processes necessary to achieve the group's goals.

### V. THE TYPICAL PROBLEMS ARISING IN THE GROUP ACTIVITY

There are two sides to everything, and the cooperative learning is not everything. It also has some shortcomings in its implementation. Due to the nature of working in groups, group members can sometimes find that they are not working effectively, which negatively impacts on their progress, and their ability to be successful. Some typical problems identified by individuals working in the cooperative learning are as follows.

#### A. *Uneven Participation of Students in the Group Work*

In cooperation learning, many students have a weak sense of initiative and lack cooperative participation. Because the ability of team members is not the same, in the group activities, some outstanding students dominate the cooperation

learning, many other students merely passive listen and even escape the task. There are two reasons why some students are passive. One is that the students are inward or unconfident and reluctant to participate in the activity. In this case, the teacher should illustrate the advantages and necessity of the cooperative learning. And at the same time, the teacher can make them act as the group reporter or group leader and encourage them and eradicate their psychological obstacle. Besides, the teacher can put them into one group, help them finish their learning task, in order to help them build up their learning confidence and gradually adapt to the cooperative learning. And the teacher can assign some activities such as group game, pair work, information exchange task, which is helpful to develop students' cooperative learning ability. Another reason is that the task is too difficult for the students to accomplish. As for this, the teacher can offer some reference and help in order to lower the task difficulty.

#### *B. Unreasonable Division of Groups*

Teachers often group according to the "nearest" principle, ignoring differences of gender, personality, knowledge, ability, and achievement of students. In the class teaching, the teacher often groups students causally based on their seats, normally four neighbor students grouped together. This is a simple and rough way, although it is convenient. It is not good for students of different personalities and levels to improve together. The unbalanced grouping will certainly cause the level gap among groups. Some students are silent and could not express any word, and the exchange in some other group is like listening to mumbo-jumbo. If things go on like this, the gap will be widening, and the cooperative learning becomes inefficient. Students can be flexibly grouped in many ways according to different cooperative tasks. Normally speaking, there are two to six in one group, as this is good for students to interact with each other and every student has opportunities to present his ideas. Besides, the teacher should let students choose their own group first and then do some small timely adjustment. When grouping students, the teacher should also consider students' gender, learning ability, interest, and personalities.

#### *C. Unclear Rules of Group Work*

In the English class, it is a common phenomenon that the teacher raises a question for students to discuss, and then the class is very hilarious and excited. If we observe carefully, this is only a superficial "fake hilarity". Actually it is disorderly. Some teachers issued a cooperative learning instruction, and then students are just sitting by in the seat together, without the correct division of study group, some students with good academic performance in a group, and some students with poor academic performance in a group, and there is no clear division of labor among the team members. In some group, two or three students speak up together, they say their own ideas and never listen to each other. And in some group, there are only one or two people speaking, while others are quiet and sit absent-mindedly. Some groups try to escape delivering speech. And some groups grasp the opportunity to chat, laugh or do some other things. The classroom is noisy, but they cannot solve the problem and the learning is not efficient. The reason for all these is that the teacher does not set clear rules for the group work.

#### *D. Improper Assessment Method*

In the cooperative learning, we often think it is correct that group cooperative learning takes the achievement of group as evaluation standard. However, this may lead to the misunderstanding of teachers who work in group cooperative learning: teachers often put evaluation and reward on the whole of the group in the course of teaching, thus ignoring the development of individuals. In the cooperative learning, there is often a report for each group. But the reporter often says, "I think..." or "I suppose..." and so on. Their opinion cannot stand for the whole group, but can only represent their own idea. The teacher often makes an assessment like "You're right!", "Good!", "What a good idea!" and etc. The teacher often tends to assess individual students other than the group and often assess the result of group cooperative learning rather than the learning process and method. The teacher seldom makes assessment on students' learning attitude, learning habit, participating degree, creative awareness or practical activity. And the teacher often ignores the inward and silent students. The impartial, incomplete assessment easily frustrates students.

### VI. THE STRATEGY TO ENHANCE THE EFFICIENCY OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING

#### *A. To Establish Active Interdependent Relationship among Group Members*

One key character of efficient group activity is the interdependence relationship. Once the active interdependence is formed, students realize their own success is closely related with other group members. The task structure requires every member to make their own contributions. And the students realize that if they want to finish the common goal, every group member is necessary. They not only need depend on other group members, but also responsible to others. Only in this case, the condition of group cooperative learning is mature. One result of high efficient group cooperative learning is learners can acquire macro meta-cognitive awareness. They know how and when they acquire new knowledge and skills. The teacher can establish interdependence relationship among group members through the following two ways, a) to create different learning experience through assigning different tasks to different group members; b) to guide students to engage in student-centered interactive study.

#### *B. To Increase Students' Face-to-face Interaction*

Only when students have face-to-face interaction, can they offer help to each other in their academic study and personal development. When students are actively involved in their group work and help their group members, they also practice some skills required in the effective learning group. Although the teacher can help students, yet the interaction among groups can help students strengthen their understanding of themselves. When the teacher offers help, students often come to consensus in concept easily. But in the student-centered discussion, there are more meta-cognitive narration and problems. The students' face-to-face interaction process enables students to have deeper understanding of how to study. There are some ways to foster students' face-to-face interaction ability, for example, note-taking, pair discussion, role play and situation simulation. Respect the ideas of other group members. Students should show that they have heard other member's ideas and when disagreeing do so politely and respectfully. Students should know that understanding that working in a team requires some negotiation and compromise. Besides, Students can take a break to diffuse the situation and recollect thoughts at a later meeting.

#### *C. To Cultivate Students' Inter-personal and Group Communicative Skills*

The teacher can create some rules, demonstrate some social communicative skills, offer opportunities for students to practice, and design some group tasks to help students foster and expand their inter-personal communicative skills. There are some ways to promote students' inter-personal communicative skills as follows: a) To have a clear mind/ idea. Before presenting their own thoughts, students should be able to organize and clarify them. Thought Map is an efficient tool to help students organize their thoughts before presenting them. b) To be involved in some activity listening to others' ideas. In order to realize the interaction in the group and learn from each other, students must listen and understand their group members. Active listening means that the listener listens attentively, the teacher should encourage speakers and make sure that the listener can understand what the speaker says. c) To respond to group members. Students should put forward constructive comment on their group members and they should not be absent-minded. d) To think from different angles. In order to make group work more efficient, the teacher should train students to consider situation and problems from different angles and create chances for them to present different points as to a certain topic. The concept of cooperative learning is to enable students to get in touch with different ideas and construct students' ability to understand others' ideas and form their own ideas.

#### *D. To Be Clear about the Responsibility of Individual and Group*

In the high efficient group activity, we should establish duty system of two layers: individual duty system and group duty system. Individual should make contributions to the common task, and all the group members should also be responsible for the efficiency and result of the whole task. The teacher can make students clear about the responsibility of individual and the group through the following ways. a) To integrate duty system to the task. There should be a time limit to every period of the task as to individual and the group. Students should make assessment on their own work and the group work. Every group member will get two kinds of scores, one is for individual work, and the other is for the performance in the group work. The teacher should assign specific roles to students in each group to structure their role and participation. b) To set the expectation of group task. The teacher should give feedback centering on the task, for feedback is the core of the duty system. And the teacher should also use a team contract to establish roles and expectations, and Teach students how to give feedback to each other. If the teacher want to cultivate students' sense of individual duty and the whole group duty, we must establish assessment system, encourage group members, teachers and students to give feedback to each other.

#### *E. To Develop Students' Positive English Learning Self-efficacy*

The English learning self-efficacy is the learner's expectation of whether he can accomplish their English learning tasks successfully, which is a subjective judgment of the individual's ability to learn English. Many studies have shown that self-efficacy is a predictor of the successful use of various autonomous learning strategies in the learning process. Self-efficacy has a great influence on the learners' ability to complete their tasks effectively, and their mental states and the use of learning strategies in their learning activities. Students with high self-efficacy are usually experience more fun in learning English, full of confidence, participate actively, set higher learning goals, can put more effort and time in face of difficulties, have a more positive attitude and emotion and he has less anxiety and low self-efficacy. In the cooperative learning, the teacher should encourage students to have a correct and positive English learning self-efficacy and participate the group work actively and devotedly. The teacher should establish why a member is quiet or not participating and tell students that all opinions will be valued and Ensure that each member gets their turn to contribute.

#### *F. To Group Students Reasonably to Promote Cooperative Learning*

Grouping is a very important factor in cooperative learning. At present, the following two cooperative learning grouping models are widely adopted both at home and abroad. a) Jigsaw model. In this model, each student is enrolled in two groups. After determining the learning goals, the team members go to their respective group to study and analyze the problems. After the task is completed, the members return to their study group and the study groups share their results. b) Survey model. The model can be grouped in three ways: one is according to interests, another is grouped by friendship, and the third is grouped by special skills. After the grouping, the teacher introduces the contents of the lesson to the students, and the class discusses the content and draws up a set of propositions to be discussed further.

Each study group selects a proposition and divides this large proposition into a number of branch issues assigned to each member of the group. Each member is responsible for studying his own problems and writing the results of the study. The group sums up each member's report, forms a general report, and shares his findings with the whole class. Each group presents its findings and gives time for the class to discuss it.

#### G. To Adopt Various Assessment and Award Ways

The teachers' assessment is of great importance in stimulating students to participate in the activity and improving the learning quality. Therefore the teacher's assessment should be supportive, targeted, guiding and all-around. On the one hand, the teacher should combine personal comment and group collective assessment. It can promote group members to learn, help, compensate and learn from each other. On the other hand, the teacher should combine the process assessment and result assessment together. In the evaluation of cooperative learning, teachers should not only pay attention to the result of study, but also pay more attention to the process of learning. The teacher should not only make comments on the group learning result, but also should make comments on students' cooperative attitude, cooperative method, participating degree, and pay more attention to students' listening, communicating and cooperative ability. Besides, in the cooperative learning, teachers should pay attention to every student, offer timely supervision and guidance, carry out active and effective learning evaluation, otherwise, the cooperative learning will become a "mess". Teachers can improve students' learning enthusiasm, promote mutual supervision, cohesion and morale, and achieve the goal of cooperative learning by way of comparison and evaluation. At the same time, teachers need to pay attention to the evaluation strategy, and combine the guidance and motivating. This kind of learning evaluation can improve students' learning motivation and cooperation achievement.

### VII. CONCLUSION

The cooperative learning method is one of mainstream learning theories nowadays. It is a creative teaching theory and strategy which is widely used in many countries in the world. As a result of its remarkable effectiveness, it has been hailed as the most important and successful teaching reform in the past decades. And in China, it has been attracting a lot of concern of scholars, experts and English teachers. Many researches indicate that the cooperative learning method is effective to develop students' intelligence and non-intelligence. However, there are still some problems and disadvantages in the method which impede the teaching efficiency. We can try to improve the teaching efficiency through such ways as: establishing active interdependent relationship among group members, increasing students' face-to-face interaction, being clear about the responsibility of individual and the group, cultivating students' inter-personal and group communicative skills and adopting various assessment and award ways.

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# Construct Under-representation and Construct Irrelevant Variances on IELTS Academic Writing Task 1: Is There Any Threat to Validity?

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**Abstract**—The study reports on the validity of IELTS Academic Writing Task One (IAWTO) and compares and assesses the performance descriptors, i.e., coherence and cohesion, lexical resource and grammatical range, employed on IAWTO and IELTS Academic Writing Task Two (IAWTT). To these objectives, the data used were 53 participants' responses to graphic prompts driven by IELTS scoring rubrics, descriptive prompt, and retrospective, rather than concurrent, think-aloud protocols for detecting the cognitive validity of responses. The results showed that IAWTO input was degenerate and insufficient, rendering the construct under-represented, i.e., narrowing the construct. It was also found that IAWTO displayed to be in tune with cognitive difficulty of diagram analysis and the intelligence-based design of the process chart, rather than bar chart, being thus symmetrical with variances irrelevant to construct; this is argued to be biased to one group: Leading to under-performance of one group in marked contrast to over-performance of another group. Added to that, qualitative results established on instructors' protocols were suggestive of the dominance of performance descriptors on IAWTT rather than on IAWTO. The pedagogical implications of this study are further argued.

**Index Terms**—IAWTO validity, performance descriptors, construct under-representation, construct irrelevant variances

## I. INTRODUCTION

As for the merit of validity, back in 1980, the test developers have taken heed of social consequences of test and test use (Messick, 1995; Schouwstrato, 2000), i.e., the intended and unintended consequences (Haertel, 2013), and systematic evaluation of score interpretation with use of argument-relevant and evidence-based approach (Chapelle, 2012; Kane, 2013; Brennan, 2013; Sireci, 2013); therefore, application of test must be premised on testing principles and evidence not on a set of beliefs (Stevenson, 1985).

Likewise, a well-positioned point is made out by researchers (Kane, 2013, 2010; Borsboom, 2013; Stevenson, 1985; Shaw & Imam, 2013), stressing the fact that the logicity of the inferences made of the test must be firmly-advocated by valid argument and theoretical rationale. As such, a very recent emphasis has been on the issue of test validity and fair assessment by Common European Framework of Reference, raising the consciousness of the principles appropriate to test validity (Huhta et al., 2014) because validity dramatically affects other issues relevant to language testing (Davies, 2011) and is applicable to all types of assessment (Messick, 1995).

However, it is prone to threat (Bachman, 1995; Shohamy, 1997) and subject to contamination associated with misapplication of tests or misinterpretation of score meaning (Henning, 1987; Xi, 2010) or boils down to so-called score pollution, as is distinct in "Lake Woebegone effect" paralleled with teaching to the test (Gipps, 1994), e.g., university preparation courses. Alderson in 2014 (as cited in Tineke, 2014) and Xie (2013) contend that teaching to the test should be taken account of with caveat since it touches more on strategy use and narrows the content leading to just score improvement because test-wise examiners get invalidly higher score (Messick, 1995), rather than developing true knowledge in the field.

In much broader terms, the threat more cogently elaborated on by Mesick (1995) is, in the main, defined and framed two-fold: Construct under-representation (CU) and construct irrelevant variances (CIV). With respect to the former, the assessment is too narrow and limited, referring to the situation in which the content is under-sampled by the assessment tools (Schouwstra, 2000). As with the latter, also, the assessment is too broad and extensive so that too many options and variables get conducive to appreciable lack of validity (Spaan, 2007).

As a general rule, the following can affect the construct to be tested, i.e., performance of test: Knowledge of subject area (Davies, 2010), individual's background knowledge, personality characteristics, test-taking strategies or test-wiseness, general intellectual or cognitive ability, instructional rubrics (Bachman, 1995), differential task functioning favored by particular test takers, and the topical knowledge (Bachman and Palmer, 2000); Bachman, 1995), all being

the potential sources as construct irrelevant variances. A worth noticing definition is that construct refers to abstract nouns or psychological concepts, such as love, intelligence, anxiety, etc., characterized by being measurable and quantitatively observable (Bachman, 1995; Messick, 1995; Fulcher & Davidson, 2007; Newton and Shaw, 2013; Fulcher & Davidson, 2007; Bachman 1990; Bachman and Palmer, 2000; Brown, 2004; McNamara, 2006).

Clearly, the widespread reality is that the IELTS as the most favored international English proficiency test by the Australian federal government, since the early 1990s, (O'Loughlin, 2011) has been validated. It is hence expected not to bypass evidence based issues (Chapelle, 2012; Kane, 2013) emanating from the cross-disciplinary requirements of the test takers and the experiences of the IELTS instructors, both being potentially informative source of evidence, as our tenet runs.

The main incentive for the study is implicit in this fact: There lies a rarity of study addressing the true validity of IAWTO, testing the cognitive process of writing, being established on applied cognitive psychology (Yu, Rea-Dickens & Kiely, 2007) and being embedded in graph familiarity which is itself a potential source of construct irrelevant variance (Xi, 2010). Quite parallel, IAWTO requires the candidates to describe or analyze, in their own words, a graph, table, chart, diagram or a process chart (IELTS Handbook, 2007), just based on the information, i.e., of cognitive and kind of statistical nature, provided in the intended prompt. This pollutes the validity of IAWTO.

To tease apart what is at stake here, taking account of the reality that IAWTO limits the test takers to just factual content of the input diagram and does not allow any speculated explanations- and personal beliefs of the test takers- outside the given data (IELTS Handbook, 2007) sounds to us to construct under-represent. The case in attention runs diametrically counter to Harsch and Rupp's (2011) stance, holding the view that for measuring the full writing abilities of the test takers, the writing task must be open rather than limited. Therefore, a moment of reflection indicates that limiting the test takers' ability to display their full performance and too-narrowing the construct to be measured are what the present investigation taps into. Therefore, the current study sets out to report our practical experience in conjunction with IAWTO validity through the lens of introspection-driven data and descriptive protocols. By adopting a mixed-methods approach and by being situated in the context of IELTS, this study intended to investigate the following research questions:

1. Is there any poverty of input, as a construct irrelevant variance, on IAWTO affecting the performance of the test takers? In other words, to what extent does IAWTO interact the test takers' underlying construct with respect to the performance descriptors including coherence and cohesion, lexical resource and grammatical range?
2. Triangulated approach considered, i.e., interpretation of descriptive protocols of testees and experienced IELTS instructors, "Do different task types, bar chart and process chart, display the differential performances on the part of the different test takers"? Put another way, which diagram is cognitively demanding and intelligence-design based, eventually biased sampling of the content domain by the assessment instrument to the disadvantage of one group vs. another group?

## II. METHODOLOGY

### Study Sample

Participants (N=53) taking part in the present study included three groups. Group one included forty four test-takers, at upper-intermediate level, with various age groups, selected from two branches of Iranian English language center, in Ardebil, Iran and without any reference to differential performance related to gender. They had voluntarily registered for general English courses for either communicative objectives or potentially for academic ambitions, following IELTS certification. The logic for the selection of examinees from the cited-level is two-fold: 1) To cautiously assure that the test takers must not have any introductory familiarity with the test format which may invalidly exert impact on test score interpretation 2) The other side is connected to the limitation of the study: We could not obtain any access to IELTS participants in real test situation to investigate their introspective position towards IAWTO prompts-relevant objectives, just a simulated attempt was made.

The second group of participants consisted of four trained raters, among whom one was an experienced IELTS Instructor teaching IELTS for 13 years, training the other three raters who were experienced conversation instructors and willing to correct the writings of the test takers. This is again another potential source for the limitation of the present study since if we could gain an access to the IELTS Instructors for rating purposes, the estimated reliability would be higher.

The third group of participants was IELTS instructors corresponded though email; 85 researchers were corresponded; their email addresses were extracted from conference proceedings happening in 2014; they were expected to respond if they had at least three years IAWTO teaching experience and with relative familiarity with language testing discipline. In precise detail, some of them indicated their lack of experience with IELTS and lack of expertise in testing; others neither responded in spite of the repeated emails nor completed the questionnaire; as Dornyei (2010) put succinctly, if 50 percent of the targeted emails respond, we are lucky. Just five people out of these 85 cooperated with the research: Two of them held an M.A. in TEFL, one with three years IAWTO teaching experience and another with eight years IELTS teaching experience; the other two instructors had PhD in TEFL and were faculty members of university with their dissertation in testing, one with seven years and another with two years teaching experience. Finally, the fifth instructor affiliated with London Teacher training college and as a PhD candidate in TEFL, with four years teaching

experience and with IELTS overall band score 8.5 out of 9 completed the questionnaire. A demographic representation of IELTS instructors appears below.

IELTS Instructors	Education	IELTS Teaching experience
1	3 years	M.A in TEFL
2	8 years	M.A in TEFL
3	7 years	PhD in TEFL
4	2 years	PhD in TEFL
5	4 years	PhD candidate in TEFL

### Instruments

In the present study, the following instruments were employed:

1. Four graphic prompts, i.e., two bar charts and two process charts, extracted from Cambridge IELTS were administered to the examinees. Two of the charts were administered at the beginning of training as exercise charts in non-test situation and the other two at the end of the course in test situation for independent writing purposes. A word worth citing is that the first two charts, in addition to being explained to the examinees, had also sample analysis which was supposed to be advantageous in the consistency of the score on the part of raters in rating process and on the part of examinees in the writing process.

2. One writing prompt for IELTS academic writing task two for placement purposes. The prompt was extracted from Cambridge IELTS (2011).

3. Five IAWTO-related eliciting prompts, i.e. descriptive questionnaire, were designed and administered both to the test takers and to the IELTS instructors; the purposes of these prompts were to extract the introspective attitudes of the test takers towards poverty of input on IAWTO, clarity of instruction, cognitive load, similarity of performance descriptors and the intelligence based design of the tasks.

4. A consent letter indicating that the test takers agreed with participation in the project was also made use of.

5. Scoring rubrics sheet called performance descriptors sheet typical of analytical rating, extracted from IELTS Handbook (2007) were given to both raters and examinees. It was submitted to the raters in order mainly to avoid rater's bias (Henning, 1987; Weigle, 1999; Eckes, 2012; Ecks, 2008) and to free them from evaluative personal judgment (Weigle, 1994, 1998) and background variables (Johnson & Lim, 2009) potentially affecting their scoring process. In the case of the examinees, the objective was to engage them in the related prompts (Bachman & Palmer, 2000) and to keep them cognizant of the underlying construct to be tested. More tangibly, a use was made of a set of scoring rubrics being taken account of both holistically and analytically; as regards the former, IELTS Organization scale (IELTS Handout, 2007) considers kind of a holistic scale, however four areas of assessment system have been specified, i.e., task-achievement, coherence and cohesion, grammatical range and lexical level for IAWTO; but to make the rating process more homogeneous and that so as to reduce the variation among raters, holistic frames were analyzed into concrete elements; that is to say, the lexical and grammatical features characterized by range and level, passive voice and active voice, conditional sentences, conjunctions and connectives were all among the linguistic elements.

A caution in order was that so as to put more trust in the process of scoring rubrics and to move in approximately exact line with the simulated criteria of IELTS assessment, in explaining the details to the raters, some samples of IAWTO and IELTS academic writing task two extracted from Cambridge IELTS (2011) and IELTS Test Builder were analyzed in the short training course. Moreover, an appropriate language-related handout (McCarter & Ash, 2003) including two pages was administered and instructed to both raters and examinees; the former took account of these appropriate language in their rating process, as the scoring rubrics on IELTS (IELTS Handbook, 2007) suggest and the latter was to be instructed the language-appropriate materials of handout during training session, based on which they analyzed the bar chart and process chart.

### Procedure

To accomplish the objectives of the present study, the following procedures were undertaken. At the outset, the test takers signed a letter of consent for cooperation with the study; they were also appraised of the significance of IAWTO so as to be motivated for interaction with the trait to be measured (Bachman & Palmer, 2000). They then were placed into a suitably homogeneous level. Of course, the examinees were invited from a context, i.e., English language Educational department, where term-by-term achievement test serving the purpose of placement test for shift of level objectives was routinely administered. For putting more confidence in the interpretation of the findings and in order to deter from the potentially intervening and confounding variables, IELTS academic writing task two taken from Cambridge IELTS (2011) was administered to the examinees for the surety of their homogeneity.

In the second phase, the study was informally piloted for a small number of examinees for controlling the possible intervening and confounding variables and also for ironing out any sources of confusion in connection with instruction, etc. Then, the examinees were given and instructed two graphs for four sessions, every session lasting for 90 minutes. Next, the examinees were given and instructed both the handout related to IELTS task one for strategy training objectives and the performance descriptors. The reason why training sessions – for graph training – were conducted is traced evidentially back to the IELTS Organization advice that “it is a good idea to thoroughly prepare for the test” (IELTS Handbook, 2007, p. 3).

In the third phase, the examinees were administered two writing charts, each lasting for 20 minutes, as is IELTS Chart analysis time (IELTS Handout, 2007), with five minutes break time between. The examinees were recommended to pay attention to the performance descriptors in their analysis. Then, they were given five introspection eliciting prompts immediately after their writing was over and they went through the retrospective, rather than concurrent, process of think-aloud protocols. The fundamental rationale for the use of retrospective think-aloud protocol is traced back to an attempt to control some variables since it would otherwise affect their writing invalidly and on the other hand, the time-time variable- allocated for the task, i.e., 20 minutes, could have been more carefully controlled (IELTS Handbook, 2007). The point in case has been well elaborated by Green (1998) who contends that concurrent protocols less prone to confounding variables than are retrospective ones, but for the purposes of study, the retrospective protocols can also be used. A noteworthy point is that the participants who sufficed for yes/no answers without providing any reasons for their claim, were excluded from the study.

In phase four, the four raters were invited to cooperate with scoring process. Then, they were given and explained the handout and scoring rubrics. Next, they were delivered the writings of the test takers for scoring. In phase five, the IELTS instructors were asked to complete the researchers' self-designed descriptive questionnaire so as to get assured of their perceptions and attitudes towards the prompts mentioned in the questionnaire.

### III. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

As Table 1 indicates, a statistically significant difference was observed at the  $P=.05$  level for the four groups of raters:  $F(3,189) = 3.23$ ,  $p=.02$ . Despite reaching statistical difference, Post-hoc comparisons using Duncan test, as is indicative in Table 2, revealed that the actual difference in mean scores between groups 1, 2, 3, and 4 was quite small, standing at 4.78, 4.58, 4.16 and 4.12, respectively.

TABLE 1  
ONE-WAY ANOVA RESULTS FOR COMPARING THE SCORING OF THE RATERS ON PLACEMENT TEST

Source	Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	14.254	3	4.751	3.235	.02
Within Groups	277.585	189	1.496		
Total	291.839	192			

Table 2 indicates that a higher degree of consistency is observed in the scoring system of the raters (4.78; 4.58; 4.16; 4.12). As afore-cited, the raters were provided with both detailed guidance and holistic instruction in connection with rating system: analytical scale and holistic scale both presented in a checklist so as to make sure of the inter-rater consistency.

TABLE 2:  
POST HOC TEST INDICATING THE AREAS OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE RATERS' SCORING

Raters	Mean of scores out of 9	Test takers
1	4.78	44
2	4.58	44
3	4.16	44
4	4.12	44

As Table 3 suggests, 27 test takers (61.4%) agreed with the insufficiency of input task, but regarding the clarity of task rubrics, moderate dissatisfaction was observed. A noteworthy point is that in connection with task input, two missing responses were observed and also concerning task rubrics, one missing response was evidenced.

TABLE 3:  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE ATTITUDES OF TEST TAKERS TOWARDS TASK INPUT AND TASK RUBRICS

Prompts	Response	Frequency	Percent
Task input	Yes	15	34.1
	No	27	61.4
Task rubrics	Yes	20	45.5
	No	23	52.3

As Table 4 reveals, 63.6% of the test takers stated the the first task of IELTS Academic Writing is cognitively demanding; 61.4% of the test takers indicated that is potentially possible to use the performance descriptors on task two of IELTS academic writing rather than on task one. Additionally, 70.5% of the test takers' introspected response indicated that chart analysis is of intelligence-based design, as this has been evidentially advocated by Yu, Rea-Dickens and Kiely(2007).

TABLE 4:  
THE ATTITUDES OF TEST TAKERS TOWARDS COGNITIVE LOAD, PERFORMANCE DESCRIPTORS AND INTELLIGENCE-BASED DESIGN

Prompts	Response	Frequency	Percent
Cognitive load	Yes	28	63.6
	No	10	22.7
Performance descriptors	Yes	7	15.9
	No	27	61.4
Intelligence-based design	Yes	31	70.5
	No	10	9.1

Table 5 indicates that our participants were not real participants on IELTS and that there are a range of higher and lower scores, i.e. those for more proficient and less proficient test takers, are not typical of lack of confidence in the attitude-driven data. The analysis of the attitude-relevant data in light of the sufficiency of diagram input, thus, indicated that Group A and B, i.e., those getting a score of relatively 3.5-4.5 and those relatively with score of 4.5-7, both agreed with the insufficiency of diagram input. Statistically, as regards the former group, 41.7% and 58.3% disagreed and agreed, respectively, with the poverty of input in the diagram. On a similar scale, Group B viewed that 27% the diagram is informative and 72% the input is insufficient, both groups' attitude being in line with poverty of input on the diagram.

TABLE 5:  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR THE LOW/HIGH SCORING TEST-TAKERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS POVERTY OF INPUT, COGNITIVE LOAD, AND INTELLIGENCE-BASED DESIGN OF THE CHART

	Poverty of input		Cognitive load of chart		Intelligence-based design	
Band scores out of 9	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
3.5- 4.5	10	14	17	5	16	3
	41.7%	58.3%	77.3%	22.7%	84.2%	15.8%
4.5 - 7	5	13	11	5	15	1
	27.8%	72.2%	68.8%	31.3%	93.8	6.3%

As regards cognitive load of chart, no statistically significant difference was observed between the attitudes of more proficient and less proficient test takers; that is to put, 77.3 percent indicated that the chart is cognitively demanding and the other 22.7 disagreed with the cognitive load of the chart. On the other hand, those getting higher scores on IELTS writing, i.e., 68 percent agreed with the cognitively demanding nature of the chart with the exclusion of the 31.3 percent disagreeing with the cognitively demanding load of chart. As it was mentioned in the analysis of Table 5, the logic behind the inclusion of this comparison is traced back to the validation evidence providing us with the relative certainty of the attitudes compared to the proficiency level of the test takers.

With respect to intelligence-based design, as Table 5 stands, two groups of test takers have less or more similar attitudes towards the intelligence-based design of the test. That is to say, 84.2 percent of the group performing lower (3.5-4.5) on writing came to the consensus that chart analysis has an intelligence-based design and in the same vein, 93.8 percent of the test takers agreed with the intelligence-based design of the test, both being statistically on the logic that both more proficient test takers and less proficient ones had similar attitudes concerning prompt design. On the opposite hand, just 15.8 and 11.4 percent of the test takers, a very negligible number, stated that the chart does not have intelligence-based design.

TABLE 6:  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR COHESION AND COHERENCE AND LEXICAL RESOURCE

Scoring rubrics	Frequency	Percent
Cohesion and coherence		
Task 1	2	4.5%
Task 2	32	72.7%
Task 1 and 2	10	22.7%
Range and level of words		
Task 1	2	4.5%
Task 2	42	95.5%

As it is clear in Table 6, 72.7% of test takers have indicated that it is feasible to have a coherent and cohesive performance on writing associated with task two rather than task one. Clearly, 4.5% of the test takers have advocated task one being coherent and cohesive and on the contrary, 22.7% have associated the coherence and cohesion with both task one and task two, keeping a neutral stance. Added to that, 95.5% of test takers have advocated the fact that task two is more engaging with respect to the use of range and level of the words than task one, so that just 4.5% of the test takers have agreed with easy use of word range and word level in task one.

TABLE 7:  
GRAMMATICAL RANGE, CONDITIONAL SENTENCES AND CONNECTIVES/ CONJUNCTIONS

Grammatical range	frequency	Percent
Passive voice		
Task 1	5	11.4%
Task 2	33	75%
Task 1 and 2	6	13.6%
Conditional sentences		
Task 1	4	9.1%
Task 2	36	81.8%
Task 1 and 2	4	9.1%
Connectives/ Conjunctions		
Task 1	4	9.1
Task 2	23	52.3
Task 1 and 2	17	38.6

As it is clear in Table 7, the results obtained from the test takers' response prompted by stimulated recall indicated the following: 75% of the test takers-33 test takers- agreed with the fact that it is more feasible to use passive voice on task two rather than on task one. On the contrary, just five test takers addressed the practicality of using passive voice on task one and furthermore, 6 test takers held stated that it is possible to use passive voice on both tasks. Also, just four of the test takers addressed that it was feasible to use connectives/conjunction in task one. As regards conditional sentences, as with the stances towards passive voice, 36 test takers indicated the possibility and dominance of employing conditional sentences on task two. By marked contrast, the other two groups-just four of them- agreed with the feasibility of using conditional sentence in task one. With respect to the use of connectives and conjunctions, as Table 7 illustrates, 17 test takers stated the possibility of connectives/conjunction use in both task one and task two, while 23 test takers' position stood at their use in task two.

So far we have reported the qualitative result; now, the qualitative result is reported: The attitudes of the test takers and IELTS Instructors. As regards the former, the responses were simplified and were then adapted to the framework of performance descriptors elaborated on before; the genuine format of their descriptive protocols were, of course, kept untouched for qualitative report. Since the test takers were not well-acquainted with the design of IELTS writing, they were orally explained and non-technically presented with the prompts required, in the main, to motivate their introspective and cognitive attitudes towards the performance descriptors present in task one and task two. Some of the responses are reported below.

With respect to the first question that either input included in the chart is informative enough to motivate the test takers' to write and to use their lexical resources and grammatical range or not, we suffice for some of the responses appearing below.

1. I think the information in the chart is not enough, it could be more.
2. The chart is not related to writing; it just includes some statistics with little information to motivate me to write.
3. The chart provides me with nothing to write about. Since you told us not to write our idea, what could we write about?
4. I cannot interpret the chart and I have to write repeated sentences that I have learned for chart analysis.

The descriptive responses of such kind are typical of the test takers' dissatisfaction (61.1%) with the amount of information required for written performance. On the contrary, some test takers, as it is clear in Table 3, have viewed the chart of enough input. With relation to the second question that either the guideline or instruction of the chart is clear or not some sample responses are more illuminating:

1. I need another person to explain the chart to me because it confuses me.
2. It is not clear at all.
3. It I was clear.
4. If there were more explanation, it would be better.
5. I did not know what to do.

The responses continue in this form so that as it is clear in Table 3, the attitudes of those agreeing with the clarity of test rubrics are less or more closer to those of the disagreeing ones. Sample responses for question three that either the chart was cognitively demanding or not, the following randomly selected responses, among many, appeared:

1. "It challenged my mind", eight test takers had written.
2. It took my time more since I had to just think.
3. Like statistics I did not know what is what; because I am weak at math.
4. Process chart was more challenging than the Table charts, seven test takers responded.

With a closer attention to Table 4, the marked comparison of these sample responses shed light on the fact that it statistically and descriptively looks to be cognitively demanding. Furthermore, as it is explicitly interpreted from the last response, process chart sounds to be more cognitively demanding and is based on reasoning and intelligence than the other kinds of charts. As with question four that either we can use the same grammatical and lexical elements in IELTS academic writing task one and task two similarly or not, more clear-cut responses were provided:

1. The grammatical structures I knew I could not use because I was just thinking of what to do with the chart and how to organize the data on chart. But in task two, I could easily use the structure and vocabulary I had learned.

2. In task one, I could use repeated words and phrases I had memorized before; but in task two I needed extensive number of grammatical and lexical points", eleven test takers gave an answer similar to this one.

3. Task one needed finding the relation between the numbers and memorized words and phrases, but task two needed a real witting. I could easily use my knowledge in task two.

The samples of descriptive responses coming from the very cognitive reservoir of the test takers are compatible with those quantified in Table 8 and Table 9. What these all lead us to are more explicitly manifested and specifically summarized in the responses to the question that either task one is of intelligence-based design or not? The descriptive responses below cast light on:

1. Task one was related to math and I think it wanted to check how intelligent I am.

2. Task one puzzled me like math because I hated math always.

3. Whatever was difficult for me was task one however I had practiced it during training session.

4. Process chart was more difficult than bar chart.

5. I couldn't understand the use of statistics and IELTS writing.

The above protocols lend support to the fact that task one has intelligence-based design. These points are made from the view of test takers. Along the same line, descriptive protocols of well-experienced IELTS instructors reported their response below as to whether the diagrams were biased or not.

Subject A: Yes, it is biased. Based on my studies on test method facet, the specific content of charts can function as a facet and affect students' performance differently...

Subject B: Yes. Due to specific nature of charts 1 and 2, some test-takers will be more advantaged....

Subject C: It demands world knowledge. Hence, it is biased.

Subject D: I think, yes. It is biased..... since they are already familiar with the so called jargon in their major they can write more confidently.

Subject E: Yes; since the topic falls within the expertise of the test taker...

More attentively considered, the IELTS instructors responses all indicate the fact that the diagrams are biased to particular test takers; they have less or more set the logic for world knowledge, their major or expertise, familiarity with the content, etc. Moreover, regarding the second research question that either the test takers can use the same range and level of the words and grammar, i.e., passive voice, conditional sentences, connectives and conjunctions in the prompts-task one and task two-similarly or not; the following responses cast light on the fact.

Subject A: Yes. I think both require almost the same range of lexical and grammatical resources.

Subject B: To me, the test takers are most likely to utilize higher range of grammar (e.g. coherence, cohesion, and passive voice) in the first writing task while higher range of vocabulary in the 2nd academic writing task.

Subject C: Due to the nature of argumentative writing, task 2, is more challenging than task one. So, it needs higher grammatical range and level.

Subject D: No..... Each feature of task needs different students' repertoire; students may utilize various lexis and forms. It's claimed that the similar content is not the sole factor to be considered for employment of the same vocabularies and structures.

Subject E: I suppose task two demands different lexical and structural resources

On closer scrutiny, the responses are quite illuminating; with the exception of one instructor, the others have indicated that task two needs much richer range and level of grammar and lexis; this is in parallel line with whatever the test takers indicate in both qualitative responses resulting from protocols and descriptive prompts. In conjunction with the fact that either there lies any poverty of input or not, the responses read below.

Subject A: No. Unlimited abilities of test takers cannot be measured by restricted characteristics of input. The extent of interaction relies on students' repertoire which can be used to activate their language knowledge, topical knowledge, schema, and cognitive processes... the input as one indicator is not sufficient.

Subject B: I think.....the test taker is in need of more language resources for the chart analysis.

Subject C: Task1 intends to measure the examinees ability in interpreting diagrams and illustrations and does not focus on the examinees potential to argue for or against a certain issue.

Subject D: As far as I am concerned, despite their proficiency in English, some test takers ..... may not be able to excel the ones who depend on the prefabricated and pre-planned patterns while doing the first writing task.

Subject E: What is included in the prompt can easily be revealed by looking closely at the charts.....Regarding eliciting a full range of language ability, it truly depends on the type of the prompt.

As the responses illustrate, the answers are various, but lean more towards incomplete information pyramid associated with task one. All subjects support the fact that the input on task one is degenerate and cannot interact the full range of the test takers in written competence. To also follow the fact that which chart is of intelligence based design, the following protocols are more evidential:

Subject A: It may seem that chart 3 is more intelligence-based,.....the

examinees need to draw on their cognitive resources to initially find a logical relationship between different segments of the illustrations.

Subject B: Again table 3 includes intelligence design.....

Subject C: The chart 3 is mostly based on the pictorial intelligence instruction while the table 5 measures the mathematical intelligence profile of the test takers. However, the test-takers with higher spatial intelligence profile may not be able to cognitively interpret the chart. This is due to the fact that this intelligence has something to do more with learning than interpreting (to my humble option). In contrast, the mathematical intelligence, to me, can facilitate both learning and interpreting abilities. Therefore, the test takers would outperform table 5.

Subject D: I think Table five seems to be more cognitively demanding due to some computations which test takers need to do, having intelligence-based design.

Subject E: Chart 3 is more cognitively demanding and of intelligence-based design. To be explained appropriately, it puts more burdens on test taker's shoulder applying more technical vocabulary and needs more strategic competencies.

More attentive consideration of the protocols at hand reveals that that process chart taps more into the cognitive ability of the test takers and is of intelligence-based design rather than bar chart. This is in line with whatever the test takers have stated. To address the other question as to either the diagrams are useful for academic purposes or not, the following is more informative.

Subject A: I guess so. Each section of the test has been designed for a particular reason. This part of the test, in my opinion, does discriminate between an individual knowing how to interpret illustrations and someone who doesn't.

Subject B: Yes. The test calls for different skill and ability categories....required for success in all academic settings. In other words, the students of most, if not all, majors need to have such knowledge and skills at their disposal.

Subject C: Yes, it surely does. As afore-mentioned, the test takers with different intelligence profile are most likely to perform differently while interpreting and analyzing the diagrams and the tables.

Subject D: Interpretation of data is an integral and natural part of academic writing. However, the extent to which the IAWTO mirror academic writing in target language use domains is not quite clear to us.

Student E: Yes it depends on learners' topical knowledge.....For example, students are able to use their biology knowledge learned at school to respond such tasks.

From the perspectives of the IELTS instructors, task one seems to be academically effective and instructive; acceptance of the academic value of the task one is taken with reservation as it is implied from the responses. As regards the fact that either task one is strategic-competence based or knowledge based, the responses appear below.

Subject A: Yes, it is strategy based. What is tested is the ability to decode nonverbal information regardless of the content.

Subject B: Surely they do. To be able to analyse diagrams and write reports require different strategies....

Subject C: They can be appropriate for the test -takers who are some kind familiar with the relevant knowledge and have sort of background information.

Subject D: I think yes; they should employ specific strategy to interpret the data.

Subject E: I accord with the statement. It is the strategic competencies of the learners enabling them to carry out the task....

The responses are much clearer. All instructors agreed with the fact that the task one of IELTS needs strategy more than knowledge. So, this can also lend support to the bias-relevant issues of the task one and it can also lend support to the fact that input is not enough to engage them. The last issue to be tapped into is framed within the lines of Gipps<sup>3</sup>(1994) statement that teaching to the test pollutes score as score polluting variance. The following responses indicate that either task one of IELTS can contaminate the performance of the test takers or not, giving support to or weakening the previous issue relevant to use of strategic competence on task one.

Subject A: Diagrams require the knowledge of decoding illustrations and interpreting them. Knowledge, if the content is considered, is not the assessment element...

Subject B: I agree to the idea that intensive courses, i.e. teaching to the test, teach strategies at the expense of content.

Subject C: I think some kind of background information can pave the way for the outperformance of the test takers. The strategies can be more fruitful when analyzing the tables.

Subject D: If test takers are oblivious of IELTS task requirements they might not be at their best in IELST test..... it is believed that the nature of IELTS writing is predictable and can easily be achieved by introducing the so called pre-fabricated sentences. I suppose in such courses light be shed on this issue.

Subject E: I believe that strategic competence (metacognitive) is a part of language knowledge. Therefore, instructing learners how to perform strategically in IELTS exam do not interfere with the knowledge they have to be taught.

As it is directly inferred, the responses are in consonance with the fact that IELTS intensive course instruction leads to score pollution since content is sacrificed to strategy use or so. What is more significant, with some pre-fabricated patterns and techniques the test takers can achieve a score under-representing the true level of test takers.

#### IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study set out to investigate the debated validity of IAWTO-related amount of input on IAWTO, being designed as a follow-up to an earlier study by Yu, Rea-Dickens and Kiely (2007). Two major issues in the current study are: The



use of think-aloud protocols driven by stimulated recall to extract cognitively existing attitudes of the test takers towards the performance descriptors in task one and two framed in comparison and evaluation and tapping into the cognitive process of well-experienced IELTS instructors and their perception of task one and two of IELTS.

With an eye towards the design and administration of the task one testlet of IELTS, no denial of the validity of the before-design nature of the test is made. Rather, we stand on the position that a test of whatever essence should be on a continued cycle validated, being so will assist the stakeholders to gain productive results from the safe and valid inferences of the test. That is why the present study has considered both test takers and IELTS instructors' perception and experience of the case at issue. This is what has been evidentially advocated by researchers (Moss, 2013), contending that for making a decision, evidence of students' performance is not per se sufficient; one must consider information about the conceptual and material resources, the teaching and learning process, material resources, etc., considering the attitudes of the stakeholders.

More apparently, both test takers and IELTS instructors have agreed with the poverty of input, the biased and intelligence-design based nature of task one and the cognitively demanding nature of task one. More significantly, as is axiomatic in the protocols, use of lexical range and level as well as grammatical level sound to be more pragmatically and suitably evaluative in task two rather than task one. Namely, the majority of test takers have addressed the fact that use of passive voice, conditional sentences, advanced vocabulary level, etc., for instance, seem to be more practical in task two since task one does not include the needed input to interact these abilities. On the other hand, as it comes from the instructors cognition as well as experience, task one of IELTS demands strategy more than knowledge and content, hence the curriculum gets reduced and narrowed (Gipps, 1994) to a situation where drawing parallel between test situation and non-test situation ( Bachman & Palmer, 2000) may seem unlikely.

With a view to Table 7, for instance, it gets vivid that characteristics of task design exert some dramatic influence on the nature of teaching and test preparation (Green, 2006); this indicate that the intelligence-based design will push the teachers to teach those content relevant to intelligence. This is in effect misuse of the test and the reason for the misuse should be tackled (Fulcher, 2009). Alderson states that in designing our test, we are required to consider the needs of the test takers and courses... (as cited in Davies, 2014). So, the table indicates that there is a hidden trace of the fact that the chart has intelligence-based design, with more sample Size, more confidence can be put in the investigation: An expert task left to the testers. Otherwise, the design of the test will follow its chaotic life, more likely not suitable for the intended purpose; as Fucher (2012) views, there will be a design chaos and this will lead to the validity chaos. Therefore, if the test takers under-perform on task one due to biased nature of task and poverty of input as well as for the intelligence-based design of the tasks, since the tasks are interdependent in terms of the reality that performance on one task can emotionally affect the performance of the test takers on another task, thus they may even underperform on task two by the agency of task one. Our reservation is implicit in the reality that either the method associated with IELTS Academic Writing Task One- measuring the cognitive process of thinking and demanding a description and analysis based on the chart- can meet the requirements of basic testing practices or not. The point is well addressed by Reath(2004), stating that the testing methods used should meet the standards of testing practices.

To exert elaboration on the matter more concretely, let's take as an example the response that "It took my time more since I had to just think..."; it is inferred that thinking took the test taker's time more than writing because it was based on reasoning and the numbers need to be more organized in the form of a content; since the test taker thinks of connecting the ideas, how can he/she think of form? So, this is more suggestive that taking account of lexical range and level as well as grammatical resource will limit the test takers to use their full range of ability. This is what can be a potential source as construct irrelevant variance leading to construct under-representation.

What our belief pursues is that without taking account of IELTS instructors' experience and test takers' introspective evidence- those working practically and being involved in the field, tests will stand at risk in terms of validity, use and score interpretation. The point is well-argued by Mathew (2014) and Wall (2000), viewing the fact that involvement of stakeholders in the validation-relevant and evidence-needed issues is crucially in requirement since the test takers and test users as well as the whole stakeholders ( Wall, 2000) are affected by the test results.

On the ground of whatever has been addressed so far, caveat in order lies with the very nature of IAWTO design, demanding further triangulated investigation: It should be believed that IELTS instructors and test takers' cognitive way of thinking and perception towards IAWTO can provide the testers with evidence which is not provided otherwise; since piloting the items in the corner of the simulated context without calling the attention of the teachers and learners into work is different from just designing some items without considering the social consequences.

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# The Seas in *The Bible* and (Early) Modern Literature—*Robinson Crusoe*, *Moby Dick* and *The Life of Pi*

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**Abstract**—The connotations of religion and literature of *the Bible* have been greatly expressed by the image of water which contains multiple meanings and fickle qualities. There are lots of forms of water, such as the drop, vapor, river and ocean, presented in the British and American literary works. Although different forms of water in different works are endowed with all kinds of implications due to the writers' unique creative backgrounds and purposes, they are based on the implications or symbolic meanings of the water in *the Bible*. This paper, based on the implications of the image of water in *the Bible*, by horizontal contrast and longitudinal comparison, is going to analyze the image of water in *Robinson Crusoe*, *Moby Dick* and *The Life of Pi* which contain similar psychology, religion concept and social problems with *the Bible*, and the symbolic meanings of image of water in (early) modern British and American literary works under the influence of *the Bible* are going to be explored.

**Index Terms**—*The Bible*, water, sea, mother, father, birth, punishment, rebirth

## I. INTRODUCTION

As a Chinese saying said that the wise love water; the benevolent love mountain. The image of water is so popular in lots of literary works which are from different writers who are from different time and nations. Therefore, learning and analyzing the image of water in literary works has become a systematic study for students and scholars all over the world.

Taking the vision to the ocean literature of western countries, it is inevitably necessary to firstly take *the Bible* into consideration. The connotations of religion and literature of *the Bible* have been greatly expressed by the image of water which contains multiple meanings and fickle qualities. The four rivers located near Eden, the Flood, Red Sea, the rainbow and so on, all of them are the different expressions of water which carry the implications and play different roles in the stories of *the Bible*. There are lots of forms of water, such as the drop, vapor, river and ocean, presented in the British and American literary works (T.S. Eliot, 1991). Although the waters in different works are endowed with all kinds of implications due to their unique creative backgrounds and purposes, it is based on the implication or symbolic meaning of the water in *the Bible*. Therefore, this paper, based on the implication of the image of water in *the Bible*, by horizontal contrast and longitudinal comparison, is going to analyze the image of water in *Robinson Crusoe*, *Moby Dick* and *The Life of Pi* which contain similar psychology, religion concept and social problem with *the Bible*, and the symbolic meanings of image of water in (early) modern British and American literary works under the influence of *the Bible* are going to be explored. The aim of the study is help non-western readers better understand the culture, literature even society of western countries through the angle of a drop of water.

This paper consists of four parts. The first part is introduction about the topic, the reason why the topic is selected, and the aim of the paper. The second part is the analysis of the image of water in *the Bible*, which is clearly and directly proved by the text in *the Bible*. The third part is the analysis of the image of water in the *Robinson Crusoe*, *Moby Dick* and *The Life of Pi*, and this part is the important part for claiming the functions of and roles played by water in *the Bible* even in the (early) modern literature.

## II. WATER IN *THE BIBLE*

### A. *Water Is the Symbol of Life*

Life as the first and most obvious implication of water in *the Bible* is accepted by most of the scholars. No matter in *the Bible* or in the tradition of western countries, water is always compared to the source of life. From the Bible, Genesis 1:6 And God said, "let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water." (The Bible, Gen. 1:6) The quoted line shows that while God creates the world, water is being created. In Genesis 1:9 And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." (1:9) God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." (1:10) And God saw that it was good. That is to say, land and ocean is separated while at first they are related and connected closely. Especially in Genesis 1:20 And God said, "let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky." (1:20) it is explicit that all

the lives and living creatures can't exist without water. In short, water playing the role of a kind mother who gives birth to a baby is the symbol of life on the earth.

#### B. *Water Is the Punishment of Sin*

From the Bible, as we all know, the ancestors of human beings--Adam and Eve stole the forbidden fruit and branded the original sin to every human. In order to punish human beings, God brings floodwaters on the earth. It is claimed in Genesis 6:17 "I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heaven, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish." (6:17) what's more, in Genesis 7:23 "every living thing on the face of the earth was wiped out; men and animals and the creatures that move along the ground and the birds of the air were wiped from the earth. Only Noah was left and those with him in the ark." (7:23)

Another punishment is in the Exodus 14:28 "the water flowed back and covered the chariots and horsemen--the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed the Israelites into the sea. Not one of them survived." (Exo.14:28) After Moses divides the Red Sea to save the Israelites, the tragedy happens to the entire army of Pharaoh of Egypt. From here, giving punishment to those who are the oppressors is the function of water. As well as the water for testing the loyalty of a virgin being mentioned in *the Bible*, here the water is a punishment for those who are against ethic. In a word, water playing the role of a strict father who punishes an errant child is the punishment of sin.

#### C. *Water Is the Force of Rebirth*

Rebirth is the most highlight part of the symbols of water in *the Bible*. The major resource of this symbol is from the story which John baptizes Jesus. Before baptism, Jesus has not been called the son of God, and after that ceremony Jesus is the redeemer. When John preaches and is the Baptist along the Jordan, people accept baptism and admit their sins. That is to say, water is not only for washing dirty and sinful things, but also the symbol of pure heart and thought.

On the other hand, it is proved as being the force of rebirth in the Old Testament 9:11 "I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be cut off by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth." God brings floodwater to swallow the world, and leaves the kind, loyal creatures on the earth. It means that the aim of God is using water to purify the world, wash the dirt and sin in the air, and give the rebirth to the whole world (David L. Jeffrey, 1990). Therefore, water is the symbol of the force for making the disappearance of sin and bringing a new life.

#### D. *Summary*

In *the Bible*, water contains multiple meanings and implications in different situations. When the creatures on the earth have to rely on water, it plays the role of a kind mother who gives birth to a baby, and it is called the source of life on the earth. When human beings are branded with original sins which should be washed, water plays the role of a strict father who punishes an errant child, so does the punishment from God. When people recognize their errors and want to be pure, water plays the role of a carrier for taking sins away and bringing rebirth. The three implications of water in *the Bible* can make up a model structure as follow:

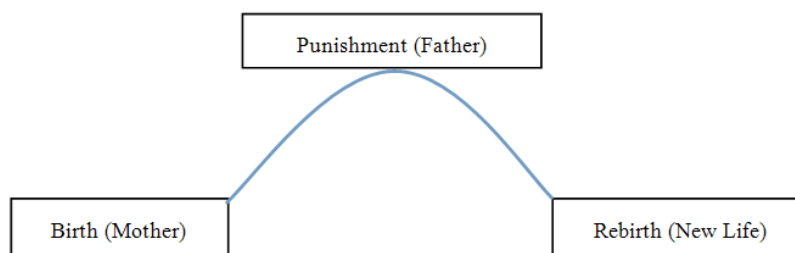


Figure1. Implications of water in *the Bible*

### III. WATER IN *ROBINSON CRUSOE*, *MOBY DICK* AND *LIFE OF PI*

The image of water is along with Robinson's whole life. It could be said that the development of the story is pushed by the sea. When Robinson does not listen to his father, and takes his curiosity to begin his sea life, the image of water is like a remote dream attracting him. When he meets danger for the first time on the sea, he begins to recognize the mistakes he has made and shows his hesitation on continuing the journey or not, and the water is the force which makes Robinson die in the old world and have birth in the new world.

"I was most inexpressibly sick in Body, and terrify'd in my Mind: I began now seriously to reflect upon what I had done, and how justly I was overtaken by the Judgment of Heaven for my wicked leaving my Father's House, and abandoning my Duty; all the good Counsel of my Parents, my Father's Tears and my Mother's Entreaties came now fresh into my Mind, and my Conscience, which was not yet come to the Pitch of Hardness to which it has been since, reproach'd me with the Contempt of Advice, and the Breach of my Duty to God and my Father." (Daniel Defoe, 2007, P.9)

After he meets some difficulties which even challenge his life on the sea, Robinson changes his mind about his father

and the past time he spent on the land, as well as recognizing his mistakes and sins. Even when he is hopeless when he is abandoned on the isolated island, he does not forget to confess, just like the Israelis who always make mistakes and ask for forgiveness from God. On Robinson's way of life, he continuously improves his recognition of God, and continuously confesses his sin, so every time he is not swallowed by water and gets survival. All of these are the reflections that Robinson is baptized and gets new life, and water here is the symbol of birth and rebirth.

Besides, water in *Robinson Crusoe* also stands for a tool of punishment of God, as well as a tool of mercy of God. God's punishment is presented in every storm on the sea, which shows that God is always here and cannot be challenged. God's mercy can be found in many details in the book. For example, in 1653, Robinson escaped from the Moor by a small ship. Thanks to the sea, he got a new place and became safe. Water here saved his life, and that is mercy. In 1959, he landed on the island and began his long-time island life. On the island, everything is from nature, so everything which helps Robinson to go on his life is the stand of God's mercy.

In short, the implications of water in *Robinson Crusoe* share commons with that in *the Bible*. Firstly, sea symbolizes a distant dream which attracts Robinson and makes him have a goal. The water gives him the meaning of life, and just like his mother gives him his life. Secondly, he is so confident that he will never fail if he goes to the sea, and water punishes him for his arrogance. Thirdly, thanks to the island, he survives, and that is the mercy of God, as well as the force of rebirth of water. In a word, the implications of water in *Robinson Crusoe* are birth, punishment and rebirth.

#### A. *Moby Dick*

As one of Herman Melville's maritime novels based on his voyaging, *Moby Dick* presents the life of the Americans who live on seizing whales in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in distinctive words and sentences. While reading the book carefully, it is easy to find that there are lots of allusions to *the Bible*, especially the image of water in *the Bible* has a perfect presentation in *Moby Dick*.

Firstly, water in *Moby Dick* implies the source of life. In the Bible, water is the embodiment of the source of life and of nature. Meanwhile, water is the force of nature. In *Moby Dick*, the existence of the big white whale is definitely a symbol of nature and a huge mysterious power of life. On the other hand, for those who want to catch the whale in the ship, especially the captain Ahab, the sea is peaceful with danger all the time, which means the sea can bring life and take life away. Therefore, the sea, the whale and the captain are the elements to imply that water is the source of life.

Secondly, water in *Moby Dick* implies the punishment. "Oh! thou clear spirit of clear fire, whom on these seas I as Persian once did worship, till in the sacramental act soburned by thee, that to this hour I bear the scar; I now know thee, thou clear spirit, and I now know that thy right worship is defiance. To neither love nor reverence wilt thou be kind; nor e'en for hate thou canst but kill ... But war is pain, and hate is woe. Come in thy lowest form of love, and I will kneel and kiss thee; but at thy highest, come as mere supernal power; and though thou launchest navies of full-freighted worlds, there's that in here that still remains indifferent. Oh, thou clear spirit, of thy fire thou madest me, and like a true child of fire, I breathe it back to thee." (Melville Herman, 2014, P.302)

From the quoted lines above, on the one hand, Puritan religious ethical order exists between Captain Ahab and Moby Dick, which means that Ahab and all the human beings should be unconditional in submission to the will of God. Moby Dick is the representative of God, but Ahab is not willing to succumb to God and even revenges to it. It is understandable that he suffers the punishment from God, which leads him to the tragic ending. On the other hand, Moby Dick is the representative of the oceans. But Ahab greedily endlessly conquers the ocean, in the process of chasing Moby Dick, he also kills a lot of innocent whales. So he is eventually swallowed by the sea. What's more, there is personal ethical order between Ahab and Moby Dick, which means that Ahab needs to deal with the relation between his rational factor and animal factor, let rational factor control animal factor, making Ahab be a man with ethic sense. Moby Dick is the representative of animal factor. But Ahab's animal factor controls his rational factor, the result is Ahab's madness and destruction (Jay Leyd, 1951).

Thirdly, water in *Moby Dick* implies rebirth. Ishmael is the narrator of the whole story, and the only survivor of the crash. In the story, the captain finally gets punishment due to his disobedience of God after many times warnings, while Ishmael becomes more and more respectful of the whale and nature, to certain extent it is confession, therefore he could get salvation. Instead of being saved by his confession, his heart is cleaned and purified by sea water.

In summary, the implications of water in *Moby Dick* share commons with that in *the Bible*. Firstly, sea symbolizes the source of life, because no matter the whales or the people have to live on the sea. Secondly, due to the arrogance, bitterness, hatred and defiance of the captain who ignores the warnings from God, water plays the role of a strict father to punish his child. Thirdly, God is merciful to those who believe in him and follow him in *the Bible*; Ishmael finally gets redemption, and the sea here is the symbol of rebirth. In a word, the implications of water in *Moby Dick* are birth, punishment and rebirth.

#### B. *Life of Pi*

Yann Martel's fantastic adventurous novel, *Life of Pi*, was published in 2001 in Canada. The protagonist, Piscine Molitor "Pi" Patel, is an Indian boy from Pondicherry. When he was at an early age, he explored issues of spirituality and practicality. Going through a shipwreck, he survived 227 days. During those days, he was stranded on a lifeboat in the Pacific Ocean with a Bengal tiger named Richard Parker. *Life of Pi* could be divided into three parts. The beginning part is mainly about Pi's life in India. The second part of the novel is the main body of the novel. This part is about the

survival of Pi on the sea. The last part is about the investigation of the shipwreck after Pi has been saved. The paper will focus on analyzing the second part to explore the implications of water in the novel.

Firstly, water in *Life of Pi* implies the source of life. When Pi was little, he made a bet with his brother to steal the water in the Christian church on the mountain. As he arrived at the church, he saw Jesus for the first time. A clergy came and asked him, "are you thirsty?" and gave him a cup of water. The water appeared in the novel for the first time. As we know, the holy water in the church is for baptism to purify. Pi was too young to understand religion and belief, and the cup of water was like a light to light up his road for chasing belief. Therefore, just like the attractive sea gives Robinson Crusoe the meaning of life, Pi got birth from the cup of water.

Secondly, water in *Life of Pi* implies the punishment. There was a crush on the sea and finally only Pi and the tiger survived. In the crash, the sea is the monster to death, which swallowed Pi's family. In the 277 days when Pi and the tiger Richard Parker struggled on the sea, the sea self is a symbol of punishment. Because the sea made Pi in track and in difficult situation for Pi believing in many Gods which is like his father said "believe in nothing". From this angle, the implication of the sea is punishment.

Thirdly, water in *Life of Pi* implies the rebirth. Differing from the survival of Robinson Crusoe and Ishmael, Pi's survival includes two aspects. One is the concrete one--his life, the other is the abstract one--his belief. It can be seen at the end of the story, "which story do you believe?" "I believe in God." Other lines in the book show the role the sea plays in the story: "here were many seas. The sea roared like a tiger. The sea whispered in your ear like a friend telling you secrets. The sea clinked like small change in a pocket. The sea thundered like avalanches. The sea hissed like sandpaper working on wood. The sea sounded like someone vomiting. The sea was dead silent. And in between the two, in between the sky and the sea, were all the winds"(Yann Martel, 2002, p. 230). By the last sentence the writer implies that between the sky and the sea, it was all the winds and Pi. He got belief and a new life when he arrived on the land. Therefore, the implication of water is rebirth.

In short, the implications of water in *Life of Pi* share commons with that in *the Bible*. Firstly, the water in the church gives Pi a chance to know Jesus. That is to say, the cup of water is the enlightenment of his belief. The water implies birth. Secondly, the sea swallows his family and makes him in difficult situation, which to some extent is punishment for his hesitation of choosing which god to follow. Thirdly, Pi survived after all with a new birth of life and belief, so the water is the implication of rebirth. In a word, the implications of water in *Life of Pi* are birth, punishment and rebirth.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The classic position of *the Bible* is undoubted and irreplaceable. On the one hand, as one of the most important ancient works in western countries, *the Bible* is the creative product of ancient Hebrews and other ethnics with many creation activities, and it contains plentiful cultural value. On the other hand, the traditional belief constituted by the concept in *the Bible* makes up the cores of cultural ideology of the occidentals, as well as restricting their cultural concept and psychic activity. As Frye said in his book *the Great Code* that *the Bible* has the nature of a literary work, but it is not only a literary work. The scholar T. R. Wright said in *Theology and Literature* that instead of using lots of literary methods such as in the Bible for embellishing, the literary techniques change the expositions which were poor and boring into brilliant and convincing, as well as delivering the understanding of life through these methods, such as metaphor, analogy, simile, symbolism...

As an old saying said that the wise find pleasure in water. The connotations of religion and literature of *the Bible* have been greatly expressed by the image of water which contains multiple meanings and fickle qualities. The image of water is so popular in lots of literary works which are from different writers who are from different time and nations. Therefore, the symbolic meanings of image of water in (early) modern British and American literary works under the influence of *the Bible* are explored.

In *the Bible*, water contains multiple meanings and implications in different situations. When the creatures on the earth have to rely on water, it plays the role of a kind mother who gives birth to a baby, and it is called the source of life on the earth. When human beings are branded with original sins which should be washed, water plays the role of a strict father who punishes an errant child, so does the punishment from God. When people recognize their errors and want to be pure, water plays the role of a carrier for taking sins away and bringing rebirth.

In the three novels--*Robinson Crusoe*, *Moby Dick* and *The Life of Pi*, the implications of water share commons with that in *the Bible*. In *Robinson Crusoe*, firstly, sea symbolizes a distant dream which attracts Robinson and makes him have a goal. The water gives him the meaning of life, and just like his mother gives him his life. Secondly, he is so confident that he will never fail if he goes to the sea, and water punishes him for his arrogance. Thirdly, thanks to the island, he survives, and that is the mercy of God, as well as the force of rebirth of water. In *Moby Dick*, firstly, sea symbolizes the source of life, because no matter the whales or the people have to live on the sea. Secondly, due to the arrogance, bitterness, hatred and defiance of the captain who ignores the warnings from God, water plays the role of a strict father to punish his child. Thirdly, God is merciful to those who believe in him and follow him in *the Bible*; Ishmael finally gets redemption, and the sea here is the symbol of rebirth. In *Life of Pi*, firstly, the water in the church gives Pi a chance to know Jesus. That is to say, the cup of water is the enlightenment of his belief. The water implies birth. Secondly, the sea swallows his family and makes him in difficult situation, which to some extent is punishment

for his hesitation of choosing which god to follow. Thirdly, Pi survived after all with a new birth of life and belief, so the water is the implication of rebirth. All in all, the protagonists in the three books are from the one who has no belief to believing in God, from the one who has no dream to having a dream, and from the one who is hopeless to being hopeful. After they know the rule of the universe and know themselves better, they are jumping from birth to rebirth, and from old life to new life. The implications of water in *Robinson Crusoe*, *Moby Dick* and *Life of Pi* are birth, punishment and rebirth. In short, the common implications of water in *the Bible* and the three novels can be presented in the following figure:

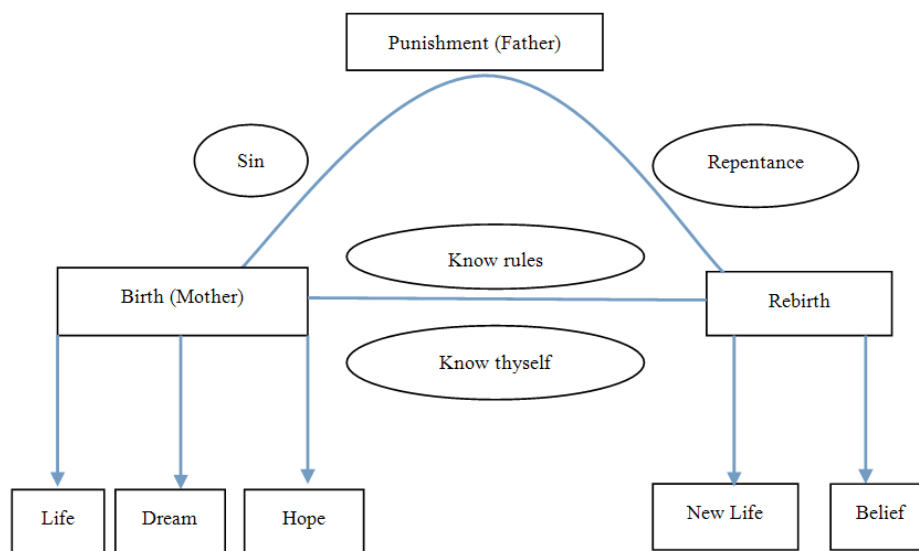


Figure2. The common implications of water

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# A Critical Discourse Study of Chinese Professors' Image Construction in Microblogging Discourse

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**Abstract**—With the aim of elaborating what and how Chinese professors' identities are constructed in microblogging discourse, through high-frequency words, collocates and concordance lines, the present study analyzes the ideologies, the academic and moral image of professor behind the collected microblogging data posted on Sina Weibo with topic of "'Mistress Gate' in Fudan University". The results suggest that: (1) Under the new media, Weibo, network catchwords are growing popular and *tucao* (revealing the inside story) is full of violence. (2) Although most of the netizens hold decent ethics and values, they go emotional easily. (3) A series of negative cases in the media have already made "professor" who usually has a relatively decent social status have a negative connotation.

**Index Terms**—critical discourse studies, corpus, Chinese professors' image, microblogging discourse

## I. INTRODUCTION

For a long time, teachers have a double responsibility of teaching and cultivating students, whose social image attracts the focus from public, students and teachers themselves. There has been a tradition called "respecting teachers and valuing education" in Chinese society where publics show great respected attitude to teachers social group. However, Xu Chong, a vice professor from Fudan University, China, attracts a hot debate on the Internet on September 10, 2015 because of his infidelity within marriage, which has arisen public's query to the personality of university teachers. The corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis is conducted to analyze professor's image in the Microblogging discourse constructed by Chinese netizens. The study reveals social ideology in the Weibo assessment to university teachers through this case, and rethinks how professors, the representation of university teachers, intensify the building of their own personality and quality.

University teachers refers to the social group trained professionally and mastering the specialized knowledge, who takes imparting knowledge and educating people, as well as knowledge creation as occupation with strong feeling of social responsibility; professors are the representation of university teachers. Sociology, communication sciences and higher pedagogy are the main research fields of university teachers' image construction. In social psychology and communication science, Wang (2007) applies the rewriting of "media representation" to "positive" stereotype to analyze the news about university teachers in mass media, and the results show that university teachers with positive stereotype are more easily rewritten by "media representation", additionally, the communication rules that mass media should followed in the process of rewriting the stereotype was proposed. Ban (2007) raises the basic idea of improving teachers' moral image in media, which aims at the phenomenon that teachers are represented with opposite moral images in media, sanctification and demonization. Wen and Xu (2014) analyzes university teachers' identity meaning, professionalism and distinctiveness from the view of sociology and higher pedagogy. On the whole, university teachers' image study mainly focuses on qualitative research, and lacks the support of large number of language data so it may be less persuasive for the research. The corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis is conducted to analyze professor's image construction in the corpus. Aiming at the large language data, corpus linguistics employs the bottom-up and data-driven induction method with the help of corpus and computer software. This kind of research method can make the qualitative study in critical discourse analysis more correct and credible because it reveals the language using change through the combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Weibo, an emerging microblogging website in China, allows its users to post short messages of up to 140 characters or pictures via client-side such as WEB or WAP and to follow the information that they are interested in. Weibo enjoys a higher popularity than other forms of SNS in China. China has been in "era of microblogging" since 2010. According to the report released by China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), by June of 2015, there were reportedly 204 million Weibo users in China in which 69.4% of them are from Sina Microblog. Users whose age is between 32-year-old and 51-year-old are the core strengths which influence public opinions on the network. Besides the large number of users, the specialty of Weibo also lies in the following aspects: the convenient posting way, the immediate and expedite communication mode, and the few entry conditions. Despite starting life as a Twitter clone, Weibo has added a number of distinct features to attract Chinese tastes. Weibo platform combined with radio, video and text makes various information presented on the network through diversified communication symbols. As a result, the real situation of the cases is recovered in a large degree, which makes more users believe the truth of the information communicated in Weibo. However, the comments in Weibo posted by netizens lack the depth in traditional media and have the

characteristics of fragmentation, grassroot and pan-entertainment. But it is these in-authoritative comments that can reflect people's ideology in a country. Due to above distinctive features, Weibo has aroused wide attention of academic scholars from a wide range of disciplines in social sciences.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Critical Discourse Analysis

Fairclough (2009) holds that discourses are the semiotic methods that construe physical world, social world and mental world, which can be identified with social actors from different groups in different positions or perspectives. Discourse analysis aims at studying the relationship between language and society and revealing the deep problems and the true underlying meanings behind the texts. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a subject of discourse analysis, which focuses on the power and inequality in language (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000). It originates from the critical linguistics proposed in Fowler and Kress's *Language and Control* in 1979. With problems as the research orientation, CDA focuses on the relationship between discourse, power and ideology (Blommaert, 2005), and the revealing of control, discrimination and power implied in the language (Wodak, 1995). Speaking more correctly, it studies the real social interactive cases presented in the form of language so it can influence society situation and social reform. In CDA, discourse practice as a important part of social practice constructs meaning when constructing social, politics and cultural reality (Khosravinik, 2014); power can influence the formation of social reality and identity, and can maintain and reconstruct the power relations of different social groups at the same time; ideology as the basis of discourse practice and social practice is the relatively stabilized beliefs and values shared by social group, which exists in people's language and practice, and influences the way people deal with social practice and discourse practice. The research themes in CDA mainly include political discourse, ideology, racial discrimination, economics discourse, advertisements and peddling culture, media languages, gender, institution discourse, education and so on. There are eight fundamental principles in CDA: (1) CDA mainly focuses on social problems; (2) Power relations are discursive; (3) Discourse constructs society and culture; (4) Discourse reflects ideology in depth; (5) Discourse is historical; (6) Discourse and society are mediated; (7) Discursive analysis has the characteristics of interpretation and explanation; (8) Discourse is the representation of social actions (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997).

A three-tiered framework is a common research frame in CDA and was proposed by Fairclough, which consists of the analysis of text, discursive practice and sociocultural practice at micro level, meso level and macro level (Fairclough, 1992). That is to say, each discursive events can be explained from three levels: at the micro level, the text can be in spoken or written form, which mainly analyzes its grammatical resources and language structures; at the meso level, it is to interpret how texts are produced, consumed, and reproduced; at the macro level, it is to explain the reason and the way that social practices influence and constitute the text and discourse construction. Textual analysis at the micro level is related to Halliday's systemic functional grammar and the analysis of ideational, interpersonal, and textual function. Transitivity and types of verbs are included in the analysis of ideational functions; The interpersonal functions analyze the social relations among social participants, which mainly analyzes the mood and the modality; The text structure are analyzed in textual functions. The analysis of discursive practice at the meso level is related to how discourses are produced, interpreted, and reproduced. It is concerned with the way texts are interpreted and reproduced. Sociocultural practice at the macro level involves the power in interdiscursivity and hegemony, and it mainly analyzes the social factors influencing the above two levels. Since CDA was proposed, awareness has been increasing because of its expansive cross-disciplinary range. However, texts in CDA is charged in a cherry-picked way, which results in the problem, such as lacking of representation, objectiveness and systematicness.

### B. Corpus-assisted Critical Discourse Analysis

As a approach combined with qualitative and quantitative analysis, corpus linguistics emphasizes that data volumes needs to be selected from the real situation (McEnery & Wilson, 2001) and computer software is used to process these language data. It's a supplement to the qualitative study of critical discourse analysis. Recent years there are more and more scholars attempting to combine corpus linguistics with CDA abroad or at home (Baker P. 2006; Baker P. & Levon E. 2015), which can testify that corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis can deal with the lack of language data in CDA. Hence, there are three advantages for this method: (1) the results based on a large body of electronically coded text can be more reliable; (2) corpus linguistics can help to avoid that data is selected casually or just the related ones because they are suitable for proving the preconceived assumption. (3) the results of corpus is generated in the pattern of frequency so it can deal with the discourse occurring in societies normally. With the approach of 'bottom-up' or data-driven, corpus linguistics analyzes the lexical patterns and grammar structures based on the concordance lines and collocates which can be processed by computer software. Therefore, the salient language features can be elaborated and the underlying meanings of discourses can be analyzed. Although corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis have been studied extensively, the data resources are still limited in traditional media and the study of the data in digital new media is rarely involved.

## III. CASE SELECTION

On Sep.10th of 2015, a bill of accuse with 8,000 Chinese characters about infidelity within marriage, written by Ms. Sheng, the wife of Xu Chong who is a vice professor in department of history of Fudan University, appeared on the Internet and was spread rapidly on the Internet forum of China, such as Tianya, Douban, the BBS of Fudan University, Tsinghua University and so on. Henceforth, a family dispute changed into a public event in a short time. On Sep. 13th, in order to confute his wife's accuse, Xu responded with a thirteen-page of PDF file written by the format of academic paper, which attracted wide attention throughout Chinese netizens. On Sep. 16th, *Toutiao News*, the official Weibo of Sina News, posted a news with the headline of "A Vice Professor of Fudan University Delivered a Thirteen-page Statement to Respond His Fornication with a Single Female Teacher". As soon as the news was released, it attracts no less than 1,100 pieces of comments from Weibo netizens. This media event was under heated debate quickly. Therefore it is appropriate for analyzing discourse analysis of professors' image construction by using critical discourse analysis.

The term "Fudan Professor" was treated as the search word on Sina Weibo to collect Weibo related to "'Mistress Gate' of Fudan University". Finally, the microblogs released by *Toutiao News* are selected as the context which contains 1,100 pieces of comments with a total number of 39,092 characters.

#### IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the three-tiered framework proposed by Fairclough, this study attempts to achieve the following research objectives:

- (1) What and how do microblogging discourse producers construct Chinese professor images in particular texts? (micro-level)
- (2) Who is involved in the discursive practices and in what role? (meso-level)
- (3) What social factors impact on the text and on discourse practice? (macro-level)

#### V. RESEARCH DESIGN

Corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis is used to conduct professors' image construction in Weibo text. Meanwhile, social ideology reflected in Weibo comments of this event will be analyzed. Netizens' comments of "'Mistress Gate' of Fudan University" on *Toutiao News* is collected and processed by the software of Antconc3.4.3, which generated the word frequency lists, collocates tables and concordances of the corpus. The language structure and its underlying meaning will be identified. As a result, language features that netizens present in the comments of the vice professor in the event, and the ideological issues about social ethics will be analyzed scientifically and quantitatively. The linguistic features of netizens' comments on the vice Professor Xu are to be discussed at the micro-level of discourse. Subsequently, the discourse practices presented by the text will be analyzed at the meso level; the social factors influenced the linguistic way in constructing professors' image will be analyzed at the macro level. In the aspect of word frequency lists, notional words with high frequency in the corpus are made according to their frequency rank in the lists and they can reflect social phenomenon. For the collocates, 28 notional collocates of "professors" ("教授") are made according to their strength of collocation. For the concordance lines, 7 pieces of concordance regarding "教授" ("professors") as the search term are chosen in the research.

#### VI. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In the microblogging environment, netizens' comment amount of a certain microblogging event can reflect its influences in the society. In the "Fudan Mistress" event, microblogs issued by Sina's *"Toutiao News"* has attracted 1,100 pieces of comments from netizens. The number of characters is 39,092 so it is sufficient to be used as a corpus for the analysis of this event.

##### A. The Analysis of High-frequency Words in the Corpus

Part of the high-frequency words ranked in top 100 (Table I ) is generated by the software of AntConc3.4.3. They are classified into three categories based on nouns, verbs, adjectives.

TABLE I  
PART OF THE HIGH-FREQUENCY WORDS RANKED IN 100

Nouns	Freq.	Verbs	Freq.	Adjectives	Freq.
复旦(Fudan)	136	是(is)	257	多(many)	86
通奸(fornication)	78	有(have)	235	错(wrong)	36
教授(professor)	70	出轨(commit the infidelity)	211	恶心(disgusted)	27
老师(teacher)	56	离婚(divorce)	116	可怕(awful)	21
大学(college)	53	没有(no)	67	贱(bitch)	13
孩子(child)	52	不是(not)	64	不好(not good)	12
婚姻(marriage)	41	微笑(smile)	34	痛苦(pain)	11
叫兽(Jiaoshou)	33	不能(cannot)	33	有理(right)	10
责任(responsibility)	29	呵呵(hehe)	33		
道德(morality)	28	结婚(marry)	28		
哺乳期(breastfeeding period)	27	分居(separate)	25		
高知(senior intellectuals)	18	应该(should)	21		
败类(scum of a community)	14	闹(quarrel)	15		
借口(excuse)	12	希望(hope)	13		
历史系(Department of history)	10	狡辩(quibble)	13		
学历(education background)	10	需要(need)	12		
教育(education)	10	破裂(break up)	11		
知识(knowledge)	10	骂(scold)	11		

Among the high-frequency nouns, "fornication", "breastfeeding period", "department of history" etc. reveal the themes of netizens' comments; What's more, "college", "responsibility", "senior intellectuals", "education" etc. show that netizens rethink the issue of Chinese higher education and the moral qualities of senior intellectuals with high academic degree in China. Among the high-frequency verbs, 8 verbs are the process of material action: "commit the infidelity", "divorce", "marry", "separate", "quarrel", "quibble", "scold", "break up", which is used to describe the behaviors of actors; 2 verbs express the verbal process: "smile", "hehe", which shows the mock and the banter expressed by netizens to the event; 2 verbs are related to the relational process: "is" and "not", which describes the behavioral features of actors; as well as the 3 mental processes: "should", "hope", "need", which reflects that netizens pay attention to the case and try to place themselves in the live situation. Among the high-frequency adjectives, "disgusted", "bitch" etc. reveal netizens' negative attitude to the event. They denounce and blame Xu's infidelity.

With the analysis of the high-frequency words, it can be found that the corpus is filled with netizens' negative attitudes to Xu's infidelity. Most netizens think that professors are people who are senior intellectuals with higher social esteem. However, Xu's behavior has seriously damaged the social status of professors. And part of netizens even hold that this case also reflects education problem in China. They believe that Chinese senior intellectuals should be the person with capability and integrity; and teachers should also be the model of academy and moral quality. Their appearance in negative news means that Chinese education should be improved. Meanwhile, some netizens realize the harmfulness of network violence, such as the behavior of "human flesh search" and introspect civil quality.

#### B. The Collocation Analysis on "教授" ("Professors") in Corpus

With the aid of the software of AntConc3.4.3., collocate tables of "教授" ("Professors") ranked in top 28 according to their strength of collocation. The results are showed in Table II.

TABLE II  
THE COLLOCATE TABLES OF "教授" ("PROFESSORS") RANKED IN TOP 28 IN CORPUS

Rank	Collocate	Stat	Rank	Collocate	Stat
1	局长(director)	8.29	15	应该(should)	4.89
2	堂堂(dignified)	8.29	16	叫兽(Jiaoshou)	4.83
3	名校(prestigious school)	8.29	17	文化(culture)	4.79
4	滚出(get out)	7.7	18	复旦(Fudan)	4.78
5	校长(principal)	7.55	19	通奸(adultery)	4.59
6	历史系(Department of History)	6.55	20	中国(China)	4.59
7	学生(students)	6.38	21	哺乳期(breastfeeding period)	4.53
8	证据(evidence)	6.29	22	[doge]	4.38
9	教育(education)	5.96	23	妻子(wife)	4.23
10	借口(excuse)	5.7	24	怕(fear)	4.2
11	哈哈(haha)	5.22	25	徐冲(Xu Chong)	4.12
12	大学(university)	5.14	26	老师(teacher)	4.06
13	流氓(ruffian)	4.93	27	渣(scumbag)	3.16
14	论文(paper)	4.92	28	出轨(commit the infidelity)	3.16

As the data in Table II, the collocation in corpus can be divided into three categories: (1) the words related to behavior(adultery; fear; commit the infidelity) (2) the words related to netizens' attitudes to Xu (get out; should;

dignified; excuse; haha; ruffian; Jiaoshou; [doge]; scumbag); (3) the words related to the theme (the words inside the event: Department of History; evidence; paper; Fudan; breastfeeding period; wife; Xu Chong; the words outside the event: director; prestigious school; principal; education; university; culture; China ; students; teacher).

First, for the words related to behavior, it can be seen that the behavior in this event is recognized as a betrayal to the marriage; meanwhile, the collocate of "fear" expresses the psychological activity of this vice professor. Second, for the words related to netizens' attitudes to Xu, it shows netizens' obvious attitude to Xu as a professor in Chinese prestigious universities; all these attitude words illustrates that Xu's behavior seriously violates the conduct standard as a teacher and a professor, and most of netizens call him "Jiaoshou", "ruffian", "scumbag"; besides, some of netizens hold sardonic attitudes, such as "haha" and "[doge] (a emoji (🐶) in web chat meaning speechless and jeer)". Third, for the words related to the theme, it reveals that in the comments netizens not only criticise Xu, but also some social groups in Chinese society who make publics disappointed because their incorrect conducts violate occupational criterions, such as "director" and "principal"; what's more, "education", "university", "China", "teacher" shows that through this events netizens even have a negative attitude to Chinese higher education.

All above the data shows that publics have a critical attitude to Xu. As the college teacher with the highest academic title and official rank, professors represent the conscience and hope in society. Professors' improper behavior will result in the drop of their influence in publics. As for this case, it is a family dispute and personal affair, however it attracts wide attention from numerous netizens. The result of such behavior is only a joke offered for the netizens to have a gossip at their leisure time, and has no advantage to relieve the rigid relationship among parties.

### C. The Analysis of Concordance of "教授" ("Professor")

The concordance lines related to the attitudes and the comments of "教授" ("professor") posted by netizens are made through the software of AntConc3.4.3.

TABLE III  
THE CONCORDANCE LINES ON THE ATTITUDE AND THE COMMENTS OF "教授" ("PROFESSORS") POSTED BY NETIZENS

1	这种人真是够了! 陶喆做 ppt (He is enough! Tao Zhe made a ppt	教授 Professor	会写论文, 可以在一起弄个交流会了 can write a paper. They can have a communication meeting.)
2	不管怎么样, 一个堂堂名校 (No matter how the situation is, a	教授 Professor	和大小一起动手打老人这点就够人大跌眼镜 in prestigious universities hitting elders is too surprising.)
3	怎么教育好学生。还北大毕业, 复旦 (How this kind of person can educate students well, although he graduates from Peking University.	教授 Professor	。中国教育的耻辱, 中国教育的笑话 in Fudan University is the humiliation and the joke of Chinese education.)
4	不管怎样错就是错了, 还这么多借口, 如此 (No matter what excuse he has, he is wrong and shouldn't seek excuse for himself. Such a	教授 Professor	能教出什么样的学生? 复旦真的完了! Couldn't educate excellent students. Fudan is really game over!)
5	就是这个畜生 (He is a beast	教授 Professor	[微笑]不配当一个老师, 最基本的师德都没有 [smile] cannot be a qualified teacher, because he doesn't have the basic teacher's ethic.)
6	这种人渣还 (Such kind of scumbag is	教授 Professor	呢, 去死吧, 别带坏了学生 Go to hell. Do not mislead students.)
7	在外面出轨也找这借口? 这个 How can he seek excuse for his infidelity? This	教授 Professor	简直可以用禽兽来形容 can be compared with beast.

In Table III, it shows netizens' negative attitude to Xu. For example, netizens use "beast", "scumbag" to refer to Xu. He is "the humiliation and the joke of Chinese education" so he "couldn't educate excellent students". Among these words, "beast" in Chinese culture refers to the six kinds of animals, that is, cow, horse, sheep, chook, dog, pig, which can be used to refer to the terrible person. Here, netizens denounce Xu's infidelity with abusive derogatory term. However, such comments also have the tendency of language violence. Additionally, in the comments of Weibo, the emoji in a piece of comment is consistent with the attitude in it, which is always respond to the surface meaning in the

information. Netizens use emoji, like "smile" (😊), "doge" (🐶), etc. to express the sneer and indignant attitude to Xu's behavior. Netizens deliver their emotion directly to people through these emoji with visualized characteristics. As a result, such action has an immediate influence to the whole atmosphere of the opinion field, which is consistent with the characteristic of Weibo that can be a platform to express personal feeling and emotion.

## VII. CONCLUSIONS

The comments in Weibo platform reflect netizens' emotion and ideology, and it also has the function of constructing professors' academic and moral image. But these data are not systematic and cannot be used as research data. However, with the interaction of corpus and computer software, it can combine qualitative and quantitative analysis to solve this problem. High-frequency word list, collocates, as well as concordances related to the key information all can work with critical discourse studies to analyze the texts and discourses. As a result, the researcher can discover the social problems

underlying the language use. The research suggests that: (1) In Weibo, the new media, network catchwords are growing popular and tucao (revealing the inside story) is full of violence; (2) Although most of the netizens hold decent ethics and values, they go emotional easily. When commenting on the infidelity of the vice professor Xu, a vast majority of netizens choose to use languages filled with violence to express their negative attitude. (3) A series of negative cases in the media have already made "professor", a profession with relatively high social status, have a negative connotation. Professors should be perfect models of academics and moral quality. However, some of them with high academic level lacking ethics make the public disappointed. In conclusion, we suggest that netizens should consider issues rationally and make their speech acts normative; professors should reestablish their social images by enhancing academic and scientific research capability.

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# The Relationship between Willingness to Communicate and Vocabulary Learning Strategies among Iranian EFL Learners

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**Abstract**—Two of the variables apparently contributing to the processes of EFL achievement are Willingness to Communicate (WTC) and Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS). They seem to be fundamental among Iranian EFL learners due to the fact that semantics and its backbone—vocabulary—as well as the incentive or motivation, Willingness to Communicate (WTC)—influence the progress and improvement of the proficiency of Iranian EFL learners. Moreover, the review of literature clarifies the fact that few studies have tried to open up the relationship between these two variables, i.e. WTC and VLS. Hence, the present study explored the relationship between the WTC and VLS among Iranian EFL learners. Based on this, 137 intermediate Iranian EFL learners who were studying in a language institute in Tehran were selected as the participants of the study. They were asked to fill out two questionnaires including WTC and VLS. The finding indicated that there is a significant correlation between the two variables. The study provided some pedagogical implications for those who are concerned with language learning and teaching including language teachers, teacher trainers, syllabus designers, and EFL learners.

**Index Terms**—Willingness to Communicate (WTC), Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS), EFL learners

## I. INTRODUCTION

Willingness to communicate (WTC) is a notion which indicates the tendency by which individuals like to participate in communication and especially talking. In fact willingness to communicate denotes a relatively permanent temperament for talking and communicating which is considered as a personality type by researchers such as McCroskey and Baer (1985) or McCroskey and Richmond (1987, as cited in Simić, 2014). Barraclough, Christophel, and McCroskey, (1988) on the other hand, considering WTC as a situational variable, argue that WTC is not a stable factor and may change in different times by different individuals.

Distinguishing between first language WTC and the one in second or foreign language, Macintyre, Dörnyei, Clément, and Noels (1998) consider a new representation and manifestation for WTC in the second or foreign language and reject the claim that the WTC in the second or foreign language is in effect, the representation of first language's WTC. Macintyre et al. (1998) also point to the association between WTC and proficiency as well as anxiety.

Considering the aforementioned issues demonstrates that WTC is a relatively complicated entity mainly affected by individual variables among which personality is paramount.

Thereupon, some individual variables which apparently manipulate the process of second or foreign language acquisition in general and WTC in particular are the sets of learning strategies including vocabulary learning strategies (VLS).

VLS is in fact a domain a domain of language learning strategies which refer to the contextualized conscious actions taken in order to tackle different language r-related problems in the process of communication. It is suggested that language learning strategies including vocabulary learning strategies may enhance language learning and acquisition (Oxford, 1996). Cohen (1998), on the other hand, refers to language learning strategies as the "processes which are consciously selected by learners, and which may result in action taken to enhance the learning or use of a second or a foreign language, through the storage, retention, recall, and application of information about this language" (p.5).

There are a number of classifications for vocabulary learning strategies among which Gu and Johnson's (1996) classification seem to be comprehensive and composed of three parts of vocabulary learning beliefs, metacognitive strategies, and cognitive strategies. Schmitt (1997), on the other hand, argues about two parts of strategies related to the discovery of the meaning of a word and strategies for strengthening the learned word.

There is no doubt about the crucial role played by vocabulary learning in the process of language learning. Here, the role played by language learning strategies in general and vocabulary learning strategies, in particular become crucial. It seems that vocabulary knowledge is important for communication which may influence the confidence and even WTC.

Based on these premises, the present research endeavor explored the direction and extent of the relationship between willingness to communication and vocabulary learning strategies among Iranian EFL learners. To this end the following two research questions were proposed:

Q1: Is there any significant correlation between WTC and VLS among Iranian EFL learners?

Q2: Is there any significant difference among female and male learners regarding this relationship?

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the late 1980s, vocabulary was regarded as heated debate which had drawn scholar's attention within the mainstream of second language acquisition (Nation, 1990). Researchers postulate that many learners' difficulties, not only receptive but also productive, is as a consequence of insufficient vocabulary, and language learners at advanced levels of both language competence and performance need to learn vocabulary.

According to Gu and Johnson (1996), a vast amount of research on vocabulary learning strategies has concentrated on multifarious methods of presenting vocabulary, and their impact on retention. Furthermore, Nation (2001) suggested that vocabulary learning strategies can be considered as part of language learning strategies in general which in their own turn classified under of general learning strategies respectively.

Oxford (1990) postulated learner of a second language employed such distinct activities called language learning strategies to make learning more pleasurable, easier, and more self-directed to new situations. Nation (2001) proposed that vocabulary learning strategies assist learners to take on responsibility for their own learning. According to Nation's point of view learners can achieve a large number of vocabularies can be obtained by adopting vocabulary learning strategies.

### A. Classification of Vocabulary Strategies

Schmitt's taxonomy (1997) is regarded as a complete inventory vocabulary learning strategies. The strategies were categorized into two groups by Schmitt: the first group is to determine the meaning of new vocabularies when language learners face new vocabulary items for the first time, the second group is to establish the meaning upon encountering the novel items of vocabulary on another occasion.

The first one encompasses determination and social strategies; the latter includes metacognitive, cognitive, memory, and social strategies (Schmitt, 1997). According to Schmitt (1997) social strategies are placed in all groups because social strategies can be used for both ends.

In Schmitt's point of view, determination strategies are applied when "learners are faced with discovering a new word's meaning without recourse to another person's experience". In the same vein, language learners attempted to guess the meaning of new words in order to find the definition of new words with the help of context, linguistic knowledge, and reference materials.

To Schmitt, language learners can discover the meaning of words by recruiting social strategies such as asking someone else to discover the meaning of new words. Discovering the meaning of a new word, language learners require applying different strategies not only to practice but also to retain words. Hence, learners employ social, cognitive, memory, and metacognitive strategies to combine their vocabulary knowledge.

In social strategies learners practice the new vocabularies in a group which is called cooperative learning, is an example of social strategy for consolidating a word. Memory strategies relate new words with previously learned knowledge with the help of some imagery or grouping. In Schmitt's taxonomy, cognitive strategies and memory strategies are partially alike. Cognitive strategies contain repetition and employs mechanical tools such as word lists, vocabulary notebooks, and flash cards to study vocabularies. At the end, metacognitive strategies defined as strategies that opted by learners to assess and monitor their own learning

According to McCroskey and Richmond (1982), more communication leads other people to have a better evaluation of a person, making him/her socially and emotionally happy. MacIntyre et al. (1998) stated that in order to be effective, a SL/FL learning curriculum needs to concentrate on encouraging the willingness to communicate, and if a program fails to do so, it is a failed program. As pointed out in McCroskey and Baer (1985), the concept of WTC has been developed from three different constructs: "unwillingness to communicate" (Burgoon as cited in McCroskey & Baer, 1985), "predispositions toward verbal behavior" (Mortensen, Arntson, & Lusting as cited in McCroskey & Baer, 1985), and "shyness esteem"; however, self-esteem was highly correlated with the general language ability.

Although the WTC construct was originally applied in L1 communication context it is now a "necessary part of becoming fluent in a second language, which is the ultimate goal of many L2 learners" (MacIntyre & Doucette, 2010, p.196). Interaction plays an important role in the development of language. Higher language proficiency leads to higher WTC and Higher WTC is an outcome of language learning. WTC has been defined by MacIntyre et al. (1998) as the aim for second language instruction which can enhance language learning and exert significant impacts on society. Kang (2005) also conceptualizes WTC as the key component of second language acquisition. Various studies have examined the role of different variables which are directly or indirectly responsible for the emergence of WTC (e.g. MacIntyre & Doucette, 2010; Kang, 2005; etc.). However, the role that a person's type of intelligence can play in his degree of willingness to communicate with others is an area that has not been explored yet to briefly summarize the main components of the term.



### *B. WTC, Social Support, and Language Learning*

Past research indicates that learner characteristics such as aptitude, attitudes, motivation, and language anxiety correlate with a many factors associated with ESL language achievement (Gardner & Clement, 1990). In a context where modern language pedagogy emphasizes real exchange of information as an essential section of acquiring the language, it would follow, then, that the observed points of departure in people in communication tendencies will play a meaningful role in language learning outcomes, both linguistic and nonlinguistic. Adopting a social psychological position on these topics, the effect of these and other factors has been described in a theoretical model (MacIntyre, Clement, Dornyei, & Noels, 1998) that proposes willingness to communicate (WTC) as a construct combining their impacts on genuine exchange of information in the second language. Some studies focus on WTC both in and out of classroom settings, more accurately as it pertains to the motivational social roles the acquisition second language learners. WTC was initially introduced to account for the case by case differences in L1 daily exchanges. The roots of WTC can be observed in a number of related constructs.

Burgoon (as cited in McCroskey & Baer, 1985) elaborated on the "lack of willingness to establish communication as a tendency to shy away from oral communication based on such personal features as low communicative competence, introversion, anomie, communication apprehension, and a sense of being alienated. Mortensen, Arntson, and Lustig (1977) postulated an overall pattern in the general characteristics of L2 communication. They considered that as general orientation to communicate orally. McCroskey and Richmond (1982) used the term "shyness" to investigate this predisposition and defined it as the propensity to be timid and reserved and to do less talking. These modules were proposed to explain frequently occurring features in communication across contexts to a certain degree.

McCroskey and Baer (1985) proposed WTC as a more definite concept, defined as the intention to initiate communication given the opportunity. This delicate modification in definition leaves room for establishing a clear path to the overall purpose behind communication research projects and directs research towards an array of factors that bring about this purpose, including the specific context of communicating in a second of foreign language.

The other main direct effect of self-confidence includes perceived level of competence and lower anxiety level (Clement, 1986). In this interpretation, WTC exercises a more straight effect on communication than does either level of anxiety or perceived communicative competence collectively. This leaves room for interpreting cases where competent learners stop using L2 and where learners try to manage with their existing level of competence they can muster as a tool for communicating so that they can boost their learning. Some proof has been found that implies WTC can regularly predict the start of communication in both the first and the second or foreign language when the impact of competence and anxiety are largely irregular. The model also suggests some aspects of lasting influences on WTC based on several variables including motivation, intergroup issues, and the social situation. Yet another contextual difference denotes the classroom compared authentic communication in the real cases, settings where WTC's role is highlighted. Many of the factors suggested to trigger WTC are exclusively pertinent to L2 communication settings.

### *C. The Pyramid Model Significance*

Macintyre et al. (1998) introduced their well-known Pyramid Model (Figure 1) of factors impacting WTC in the second or foreign language which is composed of six layers, namely, communication behavior (language use), behavioral intention (willingness to communicate), situated antecedent (desire to communicate with a specific person, state communicative self-confidence), motivational propensities (interpersonal motivation, intergroup motivation, L2 confidence), affective cognitive contexts (intergroup attitude, social context, communicative competence), and finally social and individual context (intergroup climate, personality).

It is important to realize that the presented Pyramid Model involves six layers which may be divided into two groups of variables—lasting ones (motivational propensities, affective cognitive contexts and social and individual context) and contextual ones (communication behavior, behavioral intention, and situated antecedent).

Hence, WTC is, in effect, the second layer—behavioral intention—which indicates having a purpose to communicate for which. In the same way, the third layer—situated antecedent—which involves two variables of the desire to communicate with a specific person, and state communicative self-confidence affect WTC (Macintyre et al., 1998).

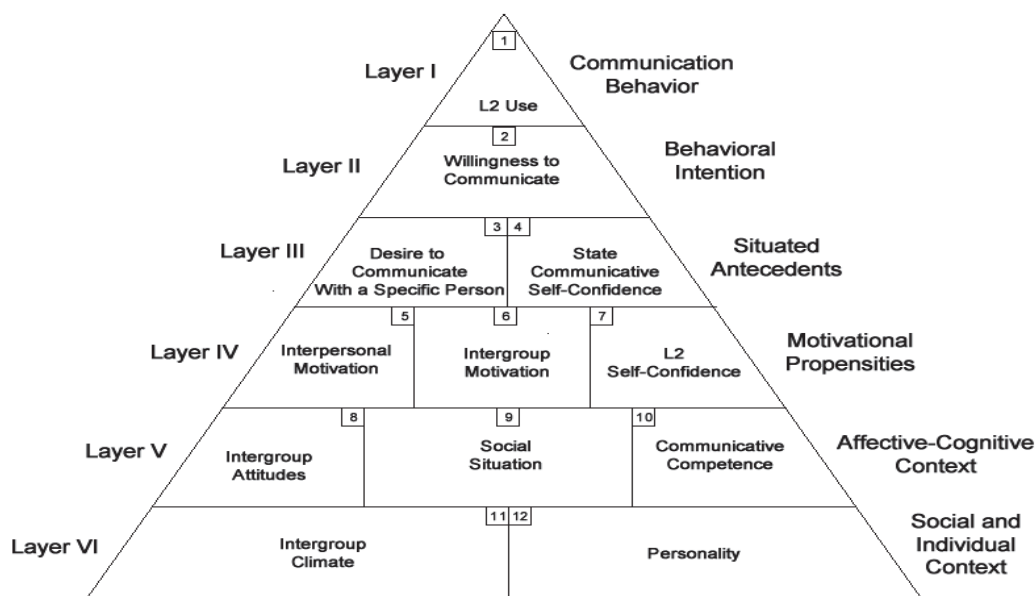


Figure 1. Schematic representation of the variables influencing WTC. MacIntyre, Clement, Dornyei, & Noels (1998).

The pyramid model puts forward an array of factors pertaining to motivation and attitude that may underlie WTC (MacIntyre et al., 1998). Gardner (1985) suggested that a crucial factor in second language learning is the type of orientation the learners adopt. Although other orientations are possible, Gardner (1985) focused on a binary model that in his opinion are behind the motivation level namely instrumental and integrative. The first type reflects a desire "to acquire the language of a valued second-language community in order to facilitate communication with that group" (Gardner, Smythe & Clement, 1979, p. 199). Integrative orientation also suggests a favorable tendency towards the speakers of the other language. The second type of orientation bears more of a direct and practical value for learning a second language (Dornyei, 1990). Adopting an instrumental orientation, the learner approaches a task since it may bring about some specific desirable result. However, it should be born in mind that such conceptualizations are very general. In other words, they are not dichotomous in nature and may not completely explain the impact of a particular linguistic setting on the learner's level of motivation (Clement & Kruidenier, 1985).

### III. METHODOLOGY

The next sections include some information on the subjects of the study, two questionnaires which were used during this research endeavor, and the steps taken in the process of research.

#### A. Participants

The participants were 137 EFL learners who were learning English as a foreign language in a language institute in Tehran. In fact, they were Iranian EFL learners between 16 and 25 years old from the both genders. Their native language was dominantly Persian. They were intermediate EFL learners studying English based on the Passages Standard Placement test. Table 1 shows the distribution of the both genders in the study. In effect, the participants were 70 (51%) female and 67 (49%) male EFL learners.

TABLE 1  
PARTICIPANTS OF THE STUDY IN TERMS OF GENDER

gender		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	=female	70	51.1	51.1	51.1
	=male	67	48.9	48.9	100.0
	Total	137	100.0	100.0	

#### B. Instruments

Two instruments were utilized in this study, i.e. MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, and Conrod's (2001) WTC questionnaire ( $\alpha=0.83$ ) which has composed of 27 Likert-scale items based on the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Schmitt's (1997) Vocabulary Learning Strategies Questionnaire (VLSQ) ( $\alpha=0.87$ ) was the other instrument. It consists of two parts—one for personal information of the participants, and the second part includes 40 items on students' vocabulary learning strategies in Likert-scale format. It is worth mentioning that the forty-item VLSQ had five main parts including Determination, Social, Memory, Cognitive, and Metacognitive strategies.

### C. Procedures

After administering the two questionnaires of MacIntyre, et al. (2001) WTC and Schmitt's (1997) Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLSQ), the data were extracted based on the scoring rubric—for the WTC counting the selected choices which means the higher the score the higher the extent of the WTC and for the VLSQ according to the dominant selected choices categorized as Determination, Social, Memory, Cognitive, and Metacognitive.

## IV. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The main purpose of the study was to explore the correlation between WTC and vocabulary learning strategies among Iranian EFL learners. Table 2 illustrates the descriptive statistics obtained from WTC questionnaire.

TABLE 2  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: WILLINGNESS TO COMMUNICATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Willingness to communicate (WTC)	Statistic		Std. Error
	Mean	Statistic	
	Mean	123.7737	.05648
	Median	123.7748	
	Variance	.437	
	Std. Deviation	.66114	
	Minimum	122.18	
	Maximum	125.30	
	Range	3.13	
	Interquartile Range	.88	
	Skewness	-.027	.207
	Kurtosis	-.383	.411

As Table 2 shows WTC has a mean of 123.88, the median of 123.77 and variance of 0.437. Likewise, the WTC demonstrates the minimum of about 122 as well as maximum of about 125 and the range of 3.13. Moreover, the results of the WTC reveals the negative skewness (-0.27) as well as the negative kurtosis (-1.268). In fact, the results of the WTC indicate that the data were not normally distributed and are a bit skewed with left tail which means that mean is lower than median and median is lower than the mode.

TABLE 3  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS: VOCABULARY LEARNING STRATEGIES QUESTIONNAIRE

Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS)	Statistic		Std. Error
	Mean	Statistic	
	Mean	175.1381	.75760
	Median	177.0000	
	Variance	78.632	
	Std. Deviation	8.86748	
	Minimum	101.92	
	Maximum	189.00	
	Range	87.08	
	Interquartile Range	7.00	
	Skewness	-4.390	.207
	Kurtosis	33.536	.411

Table 3 demonstrates the descriptive statistics for the vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) among the participants. As Table 3 reveals the VLS has the mean of 175.13, the median of 177 and variance of 78.63. Moreover, the VLS shows the minimum of about 102 as well as maximum of 189 and the range of about 87. Furthermore, the results of the VLS illustrates the negative skewness (-4.390) as well as positive kurtosis (33.539). In fact, the results of the VLS denote that the data were skewed with left long tail.

Before conducting the correlational coefficient test, the data were explored in terms of normality as table 4 shows.

TABLE 4  
TEST OF NORMALITY

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
WTC	.066	137	.200*	.991	137	.548
VLSs	.166	137	.000	.696	137	.000
*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.						
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						

Considering the fact that then number of participants is lower than 2000, Shapiro-Wilk test is preferable. According to table 4, both sets of data are skewed and not normally distributed which were also expected by paying attention to the descriptive statistics and skewness as well as kurtosis. Accordingly, a non-parametric correlation analysis, Spearman's rho, was applied as table 5 shows.

TABLE 5  
CORRELATION STATISTICS: WTC & VLS

Correlations			WTC	VLSs	gender
Spearman's rho	WTC	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.402**	-.035
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.681
		N	137	137	137
	VLS	Correlation Coefficient	.402**	1.000	.113
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.189
		N	137	137	137
	gender	Correlation Coefficient	-.035	.113	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.681	.189	.
		N	137	137	137

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

Table 5 reveals that the two variables of willingness to communication and vocabulary learning strategies are correlated significantly at the level of 0.01 (correlation coefficient=0.402, sig (2-tailed)=0.000). Furthermore, no significant correlation was found between gender and either WTC or VLS. It means that the higher the WTC the higher VLS irrespective of the fact that the students were male or female.

Considering the fact that words and lexis are backbone of language use, the significant correlation between the two variables of WTC and VLS is evident. Likewise, the vocabulary size may be affected by the learners' VLS which according to Gu (1994), highly influences language capability. Some researchers consider learners' difficulty in learning a second or foreign language including English to be rooted in their insufficient lexical knowledge (e.g. Subekti & Lawson, 2007). Subekti and Lawson (2007) point out that vocabulary learning is fundamental for both language learning and development.

Yunhao (2011) also argues that vocabulary learning strategies influence and direct the process of vocabulary learning. Nation (2005) emphasizes that the teacher should spend some part of the class' time into the instruction of vocabulary learning strategies. Likewise, learners, as stated by Nation (1990), need to learn storing, recalling, and using the new exposed words by utilizing different suitable vocabulary learning strategies.

Willingness to communicate which is generally interpreted as the tendency to participate in conversation and communication is also a factor which is affected not only by the personality characteristics but also by the proficiency level of the EFL learners and vocabulary size and knowledge is a dimension of general language ability which is also influenced by the vocabulary learning strategies and the present study reveals that is significantly correlated with the WTC. considering the complex nature of language learning and WTC as well as VLS as two variables which may influence the process of language learning justify the results of the study due to the fact that the presented Pyramid Model by Macintyre et al. (1998), whose framework consists of two categories of variables—lasting ones (motivational propensities, affective cognitive contexts and social and individual context) and changing ones (communication behavior, behavioral intention, and situated antecedent), may indicate that VLS possibly makes an interface with the both categories of lasting and changing variables.

## V. CONCLUSIONS & PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

This study was an attempt to explore whether there is any relationship between the two variables of willingness to communicate and vocabulary learning strategies. To this end, 137 EFL learners were selected as the participants of the study who took the two questionnaires of MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, and Conrod's (2001) WTC questionnaire and Schmitt's (1997) Vocabulary Learning Strategies Questionnaire (VLSQ). After summarizing, tabulating and analyzing the data, it was concluded that the two variables are significantly and positively correlated which mean increase of one is resulted into the increase of the other. Vocabulary learning strategies may facilitate the process of language ability directly or indirectly due to the fact that vocabulary is the foundation of any language and vocabulary-related errors may lead into global errors which break the communication.

However, vocabulary leaning strategies are among the individual characteristics; they are procedures which are utilized consciously which mean they can be instructed. In addition, willingness to communicate is an individual characteristic which is affected by the both changing and lasting individual characteristics. Considering the results of the study, it seems that vocabulary learning strategies affect the vocabulary size and knowledge which in turn may influence WTC (communicative self-confidence, behavioral intention and desire to communicate).

The results of the study may be of interest to language teachers to devote some part of the classroom's time into teaching VLS in order to improve students' vocabulary learning and their language ability which seem to be significantly correlated with the WTC. The curriculum developers and syllabus designers may also benefit from the results of the study to include the instruction of VLS. Students may attempt to study VLS in order to improve not only their language proficiency but also their WTC. Likewise, all people who are concerned with teaching or learning a foreign language may benefit from the results of the study to some extent especially through consciousness raising in order to understand and consider the roles played by the two variables of WTC and VLS in the process of learning or teaching a second or foreign language.

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# An Interpretation of the Chinese American Novel “*Been There, Done That*” from the Perspective of Initiation Story

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**Abstract**—Growth has always been a long, long journey, for everyone. But for one special group, the emigrants, they experience “the journey to the west” and we can have a deeper understanding of their growth by reading relevant books that have a vivid description of their life. *Been There, Done That* is an autobiographical initiation novel that is written by a young girl Katharine Wang who emigrated to the U.S.A with her parents when she was very young. This novel presents us the rich and colorful high school life of three young emigrants and their friends. These young emigrants were confronted with two diverse cultures, which made their growth tinted with unique characteristics that were quite different from those settled in native soil. The paper aims at analyzing the growth of these young emigrants through three different perspectives, that is, cognitive journey of colorful activities, emotional journey of kinship, friendship and relationship and spiritual journey of ethnic identity. A probe into their distinct cross-cultural growth will not only be conducive to the growth of countless emigrants, but also beneficial to all the teenagers’ growth on the whole.

**Index Terms**—growth, *Been There, Done That*, initiation story

## I. INTRODUCTION

We all encounter growth in different stages of our life. The growth of a person is to pass through numerous bumpy roads, to suffer traumas of either the soul or the body, and to accumulate experience and knowledge. Every one of us experiences growth in almost every stage of our life. Adolescence, especially, is a period when we stand a greater chance to taste the mixed feelings of growth. Different from us, there is a group of people who immigrate to another country to experience distinct growth far away from their mother land. Settling in our own country, we have few opportunities to get to know their private life and experiences. Nevertheless, a novel *Been There, Done That*, which is an autobiographical initiation novel written by a young girl, Katharine Wang who moved from China to America with her parents when she was three and a half, furnishes us with insight into the growth experiences of emigrants and the ups and downs of their inner world.

The novel mainly records the high school life of Katharine Wang, which is riddled with joy and tears, showing us the real life of three young Chinese Americans, Katharine Wang, Sunny Zhang and Christopher Dong. They also meet many friends like Erin, Camden and Shawn. Katharine Wang is a quiet and optimistic girl who has a keen interest in reading and writing. Born in Shanghai, Sunny moved to the U.S.A when she entered the fourth grade. As the best friend of Katharine Wang, she is a cheerful and attractive girl. Christopher Dong is an American Born Chinese who gets outstanding grades in school and wants to escape from the control of his parents because of strict parental discipline.

## II. THE INITIATION STORY

The term “Initiation” comes from the field of anthropology, which mostly refers to the experiences of teenagers get through with the result of gaining knowledge, ability and confidence which helps to independently cope with the future life. (Marcus, 1969). It originates in Germany and was named “Bildungsroman”.

In terms of Initiation novel, many researches have been done concerning the topic of growth. Rui and Liu (2005) point out the common pattern of initiation novel, that is, the awful life forces the protagonist to run away and in the end, the protagonist grows up because of the hardship and setbacks he or she suffers. For instance, the novel *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* shows the growth of Huckleberry Finn through his experiences and conflicts (Deng, 2010). The tribulation shapes a more confident and mature Huckleberry Finn. What’s more, Cao (2014) also analyzes the growth of Margaret in accordance with the pattern. Running away from home, the innocent Margaret recognized her self-identity by experiencing many difficulties.

This Chinese Americans in the novel *Been There, Done That*, are confronted with two different cultures, so they face one important issue, that is, ethnic identity. Lots of researches are relevant to the theme. In *Characteristics of the Ethnic Identity of the Second-Generation Chinese American—In Relevance to That of the First Generation*, Hu(2008) dwells on an important ethnic identity orientation: bicultural identity. Furthermore, Wang (2014) indicates that Chinese Americans are forced to explore their individual identity because of the collision of two different cultures. Other

scholars like Tang (2012), Yuan and Zheng (2009) lay their fingers on the confusion of the new generation Chinese American.

Different from traditional initiation novels that lay emphasis on the growth of the protagonist through his suffering and epiphany, the novel *Been There, Done That* dwells on daily problems in the process of these young immigrants' growth, including family relationships, peer relationships and relation between the two genders. Moreover, the novel also touches on ethnic identity. Hence, based on the content of the novel, the growth of these young emigrants in immigration will be analyzed in three different perspectives, that is, colorful activities, relationships and ethnic identity.

### III. THE GROWTH JOURNEY IN *BEEN THERE, DONE THAT*

#### A. *Cognitive Journey of Colorful Activities*

Puberty is the most memorable period of time when we acquire much of the knowledge and skills at school where sundry activities are held to expand our horizon. Katharine Wang spent her four-year high school at Susan Jones Preparatory Schools of California in which she engaged in many activities that shape her character and promote her growth.

##### 1. Growth in the Fantastic School Activities

At Susan Jones Preparatory Schools, there are various activities, like talent shows, proms and candlelight ceremony. These scenes and feelings at school are the snapshots of her four-year high school life, such as her uneasiness in the course of the interview, her joys after becoming class president, her awkwardness when signing the enrollment book. It is at this school that Katharine Wang experienced colorful activities and acquainted herself with many friends. These activities, which enrich the high school life of Katharine Wang and provide her with a platform to better herself and go farther in the path of growth are specifically selected and will be elaborated respectively in the following part.

It is difficult for American students to attend a good high school. Before hearing the good news that she was admitted into Susan Jones Preparatory Schools, Katharine Wang went through a grilling interview from which she drew lessons. The interviewer Ms. Miller asked Katharine Wang several questions related with her future targets, appetites and favorite lessons. When asked the favorite classes, instead of saying the top ones like math or science as her father told her, she said that she likes history entirely from instinct.

Katharine Wang learned from the interview that the best way to make a good impression on interviewers is to be yourself. "One thing I have learned from interviews is that the first inclination is to act like the perfect student: I love everything and want to do everything. That is appreciated in many cases, but sometimes if you are not as passionate... the best way is to be yourself" (Wang, 2004, p.7). Katharine Wang understood that in the interview, the interviewers are insightful and witty. Hence, it's better to show true self. Therefore, Ms. Miller was pleased with her performance. In contrast to Katharine Wang, many Chinese students are apt to act like the top students and even recite the so-called standard answer to please the interviewers. During the interview, Katharine Wang had her own judgments and refused to be absolutely obedient to her parents' requirements. This is a mark of her growth.

After the grilling interview, Katharine Wang started her high school life. As a freshman, she placed posters up over the school with her friends Sunny, Erin and Kiara in order to run for freshmen class president. However, unfortunately, a week before the election, all the posters they put up disappeared. But other candidates' posters remain untouched. Feeling frustrated, she still tried to make more posters. Later, she knew that Jessica, a good friend of her rival Alison, another candidate, pulled down the posters. Although it sounded like some dirty conspiracies, Katharine Wang didn't give up. She prepared for the speech the rest of the week and her friend Kiara tried to help her win the support of the boarders. After the nervous speech time, she successfully became the freshmen class president.

From the election, Katharine Wang learned that one should not doubt the potential he or she possesses. Although Katharine Wang is a plain Jane with unattractive appearance, she unexpectedly prevails over her opponents. Katharine Wang also learned that we should deal with failure rationally and face success calmly. "I have my share of failures, but I have also known what winning tastes like, too. And I think that in this world, winning and losing go hand in hand. Just like the old saying: how do you know happiness if you have never had pain" (Wang, 2004, p. 21). It's true that achieving a goal is difficult, but giving up first is even worse. She knew that winning and losing are closely bound up, so do happiness and pain. Just like the old saying: Pleasure comes through toil. Later, her second attempt to run for sophomore class president turned out to be a failure, but she still embraced it and faced it with a smile. Katharine Wang's understanding of potential, failure and success helps her grow up.

Life is saturated with possibility, failure and success, and everyone is likely to make mistakes. Katharine Wang's another experience enables her to know more about mistakes. At Susan Jones Preparatory Schools, teachers give their Chapel talks about life lessons, moralities and experiences two times a week. When Katharine Wang was a freshman, she and other students were asked to step up to the altar, sign the enrollment book when their names were called. When Ms. Moore called Katharine Wang's name, Katharine Wang made her way toward the altar and wrote down her name neatly on the old book. Nevertheless, after writing the name, she found herself spelling her name wrong. A wave of panic went up through her throat; she tried to correct the error by crossing out her name and writing it again. At the same time, she was afraid to see the mocking facial expressions of all the students. Surprisingly, her friend Sunny made a similar embarrassing mistake. However, they looked at each other and grinned. After that, Katharine Wang rapidly realized that she should not pay too much attention to such mistakes, which often upset the youngsters.

In adolescence, most teenagers place a very high value on minor mistakes or have faults magnified that they may feel embarrassed or distressed about trivial matters. Different from those teenagers, Katharine Wang tried to act more like an adult and viewed her mistakes more rationally. She deemed that such mistakes like spelling her name wrong would not prove that she was a stupid girl. "So if you one day slam into a clear, glass window or hit a pole or even use mouth wash as shampoo, just think of yourself as 100% human" (Wang, 2004, p. 43). She thought that everyone would do silly things once in a while. Don't doubt ourselves as smart people just because of some minor mistakes. Everyone is allowed to make mistakes that are brainless or natural and just consider ourselves as human beings.

Katharine participated in various activities that promoted her growth. The interview and her understanding of potential, success, failure and mistakes show us a more mature girl who is adept at experiencing life.

## 2. Learning in the Meaningful Out-of-school Activities

In addition to fantastic school activities, Susan Jones Preparatory Schools also organizes a myriad of out-of-school activities, such as trips to Museum of Tolerance and to Youth Wellness Center, which also facilitate the growth of Katharine Wang.

The sophomore class took a trip to the Museum of Tolerance so as to understand better various historical events. The exhibition was full of artworks and they stared at paintings for a long time. Ms. Cohen, associates of the Museum of Tolerance, told them a story about her life. She was branded with a code on her arm in that she used to be a prisoner of the concentration camp. When Katharine Wang saw the bar code, she thought it was the saddest sight she has ever seen. The heartbreaking story reminded her of the Nanjing massacre, which shows outrageous behavior of Japanese Imperial army. On their way back, Katharine Wang was still haunted by powerful images seen from the Museum of Tolerance, like a soldier shooting at a mother with baby in her arms.

Some Chinese students would take it for granted that various trips are just a relaxing time for playing and eating snacks. But Katharine Wang was serious about the trip and made the best of the chance to have insight into different historical events. She even had a deep understanding of humanity, tolerance and pluralism. "People are different, but they are just good as you are. I sure felt that I appreciated life more and I should reach out and help people more. It is the way of life, isn't it?" (Wang, 2004, p. 125) She found that after the trip to the museum, she was more sympathetic and sensitive about the feelings of other people. She realized that helping more people was the way of living, and that made life meaningful. She also thought that people are different, but they are equal regardless of race, color, or nationality.

Another trip to the Youth Wellness Center enabled her to learn more. The Youth Wellness Center aims at helping children with their homework, study and outdoor activities after school. Katharine Wang joined the service program to tutor kids and communicate with the elderly. The program opened her eyes to the real world and she felt that she had done meaningful things that made a difference in other people's lives and touched their hearts.

China's domestic education system lays stress on grades, different from most Chinese students who immerse themselves in studies, Katharine Wang did volunteer work with pleasure. The trip to the Youth Wellness Center enabled her to learn important lessons about richness and love.

Katharine Wang tutored a child named Angelica who came from a low-income family. The girl asked her a "powerful" question about richness, that is, what it was like to be rich. Katharine Wang didn't give her a general answer about "richness" because she considered that the girl came from a family with five other children and her parents' wage even cannot live up to the expectation of making a living, so Katharine Wang didn't want to break Angelica's heart, which showed that she really learned to be considerate of others.

From the elderly people, she learned another lesson about love. She met a retired Italian woman named Rose, who was ninety-seven years old. Katharine Wang had a conversation with Rose. Rose told her the love experience and some information about family members. Rose's words penetrated Katharine Wang's heart and stayed with her for a long time. She understood that everyone should not take for granted the life of a loved one. We must cherish each moment spent with the loved and savor the time because one day, what left with us is nothing but memory. Katharine Wang's conversation with the child made her understand the real meaning of reaching out to other people with a sincere caring and her conversation with the old made her understand the actual meaning of love and cherishing.

All the out-of-school activities Katharine Wang attended provide her with opportunities to deepen her thoughts, to reach out more empathy and concern for some seemingly "abstract" concepts.

## B Emotional Journey of Kinship, Friendship and Love

Katharine Wang not only learned a lot from colorful activities, but also grew up in the love from her family members and intimate friends. Her parents exerted great influence on her growth as they provided her with guidance. Her intimate friends played a great role in her emotional life as they helped her out of the plight. Katharine Wang, Sunny and Christopher even encountered their puppy love at school, which facilitated their growth to a large extent.

### 1 Instruction of Family

Katharine Wang's parents, deeply rooted in Chinese traditional culture, were strict with her. They even made "ten commandments" which in fact were ten rules to restrict her behaviors. Just like so many Chinese fathers, one of her father's "hobbies" was to give a lecture about everything, such as the dangers of love in school, the importance of time allocation. Her parents' guidance played a pivotal role in her growth.

In cross cultural environment, Katharine Wang still borne her parents' words in mind and carried it out earnestly



when it made sense. For example, Katharine Wang went out to study with her friends to prepare for the semester exam because she believed that study sessions were a more effective way of studying. But that day was fruitless as she spent several hours to argue with Camden about relationships. She was remorseful and thought that she should have listened to her parents and stayed at home to concentrate on test preparations. Afterwards, her semester final exam scores turned out to be a failure, so she decided not to repeat the same mistake again in her next semester because her parents told her that she was doing everything for herself. She tried to be responsible for herself and never made empty promises. Moreover, when Katharine Wang tried to run for the president in the second year, she was faced with strong opponents and the air of competition filled in each classroom and meeting. But one thing her parents taught her was: never give up. With these words in mind, she made up her mind to run again because if a person never tries, he is destined to be a loser. Though the speech was better than the first year, Katharine didn't win the class president again. However, she was optimistic and positive after a wave of overwhelming grief. Katharine Wang didn't like to lose, but she knew that losing is a kind of bump in the road of life. She believed that failing comes before succeeding and it's a valuable opportunity to learn how to cope with failures, just as the old famous Chinese proverb goes: Failure is the mother of success.

As an emigrant settled abroad for more than fourteen years, she could embrace her parents' notions that were much like the opinions of traditional Chinese parents, such as doing everything for yourself instead of for your parents and never give up. But in China, for many teenagers at this age, their parents' words seemed to go in one ear and out the other even if these words are reasonable. Katharine Wang could make her parents' guidance to lead her behaviors, showing maturity for her age.

With the help of family guidance, Katharine Wang established a correct outlook on life and values, which contributes a lot to her growth.

## 2 Nourishment of Friendship

Katharine Wang learned and grew not only from her family, but also from her friends who constantly offered help and lighted up her world when she was in a gloomy mood. She acquainted herself with many friends with diverse characteristics and also tried her utmost to support her friends.

Sunny was one of Katharine Wang's best friends because they share similar background, choice of music and sense of humor. They spent the four-year high school together and form strong partnerships. They played with each other, helped with each other and shared secrets with each other. For example, Sunny help Katharine Wang run for the freshmen class president by putting up posters and offering encouragements. Katharine Wang helped Sunny deal with love affairs and gave suggestions. For instance, they talked about Shawn in their sleeping bag and when Sunny didn't know what to do with her relationship with Shawn, Katharine Wang suggested that she should take it as it comes. "In terms of relationship, sometimes the best thing to do is let the Three Fates decide. You'll be just lying to yourself if you say you don't. And to deny yourself is to hurt yourself." (Wang, 2004, p.133) Katharine Wang's involvement in Sunny's love trouble helped her become more mature and rational.

Their friendship taught them how to deal with interpersonal relationships and enabled them to have a deeper understanding towards friendship. Katharine Wang believed that it's a kind of comfort to know that we have a shoulder to lean on no matter who we are or where we are. We are likely to receive the help of others or might be the one reaching out to help. She regarded friendship as her second family that should never be underestimated as friendship kept her awake and energetic. Sunny also realized that friendship is very important and she helped Katharine Wang with daily problems and asked her for advice.

Except Sunny, Katharine Wang also met another friend Victoria who was an odd girl with a fascination for witchcraft. The first time they met, Victoria's pale complexion and all black outfit made her look like a Gothic, which resulted in derogatory talks from some students. Different from most students who were prejudiced and unwilling to invite her over, Katharine Wang gave a warm welcome to Victoria and helped her with hiking. Influenced by traditional Chinese culture instilled in her mind through her parents' guidance, Katharine Wang holds the opinion that we should not judge a person by outer appearances or before actually getting to know her or him. As the saying goes, don't judge a book by its cover. Lots of classmates missed out their friendship with Victoria just because they could not step out of the prejudice and to really know a person. As an emigrant who had the opportunity to contact students from all over the world, Katharine Wang also believed that a mixture of people makes the world turn and makes our life taste better.

In the nourishment of friendship, Katharine Wang had a wiser thought of making friends and getting along with friends, which took her a mile on the road of growth.

## 3 First Taste of Love

It is universally acknowledged that love is a requisite part of our life from which we draw valuable lessons. These young emigrants not only influenced a lot by their family and friends, but also by their lovers although their love may be green or just puppy love of one sort or another.

Katharine Wang's relationship with Camden looked more like a kind of special love. The first time Katharine Wang met Camden, she felt awkward and even didn't know what to say. In her opinion, Camden was friendly, cute, and a good-looking distraction. She even felt uneasy at his side and tried to shift a little away. Her uneasiness and awkwardness toward Camden showed her green love, of which she may not be consciously aware. She danced with Camden like stick figures and kept a safe distance because she accepts her father's advice that students should concentrate on study and high school relationship is doomed to be an unhappy ending. Although Katharine Wang tried

to persuade herself to leave romance, she was still concerned with everything with Camden. For example, she never felt so scared in her life when she saw Camden go unconscious and almost drown in the swimming pool but can do nothing to help. The incident flashed through her head all summer, showing her concern for Camden. What's more, when she knew Camden's pains behind the smile, she tried to relieve his pain and talked with him. After knowing the sad story of Camden's mother, Katharine Wang persuaded him out of taking his own life. She (2004) said: "Life comes by once, Cam. Don't mess it up like your mother did. She didn't value the blessings of each moment; she didn't value what she had. Instead, she died of guilt for not appreciating these things. She wouldn't have wanted you to do the same thing." (p.183) Her words took effect and Camden realized that life was more important than something happened and what he needed to do was to let go of his past and looked into the future. Apparently, Katharine Wang and Camden liked each other, but both of them hesitated to say their feelings. Katharine Wang's relationship with Camden carried her further on the road of growth as she witnessed Camden's pain and knew how to deal with pains in a proper way. "Real growth is always accompanied with pain, which we have to face. Only in this way can we realize the transformation of growth." (Mo, 2016, p.188) Pain is very important to a person's growth as it can make a person become tougher. Katharine Wang's involvement in Camden's pain taught her to face up to pain and never run away from it. Actually, until the end of the novel, they are still very good friends, but both of them learn to deal with the difficulties in the life together, which helps them develop better in the future.

Different from Katharine Wang and Camden, the love between Sunny and Shawn was bolder and more passionate. Shawn used to be a naughty boy who liked playing tricks on others. Teachers had the worst time because of him and partly owing to his father's powerful background, he transferred from school to school. Sunny and Shawn met each other in physics class and later Shawn became Sunny's tutor to help her with academic improvements. At first, Sunny was unsure whether she loved Shawn or not but Shawn kissed her when one night she tried to lurk out of the dorm to protect him against school punishment. Shawn loved Sunny because she was a good girl, but he wanted her to leave him because he thought Sunny should not make friends with a bastard like himself. So, he used that kiss to push her away. However, Sunny gradually found that she was half in love with him. When Shawn apologized to her for the kiss at that night, Sunny helped him find who he really was. In order to make sure Sunny loved him, Shawn pretended to leave the school by flight. When Sunny knew the news, she hurried barefooted to find Shawn regardless of pain and tumbling. Fortunately, through the departure, they both realized that they love each other. There is more to them than what meets the eye. In few months, Sunny learned more about herself and opened up more. Sunny used to immersed herself in learning. She would be depressed if she gets a B on test. After she met Shawn, she opened up her heart to Shawn. She tried to protect Shawn from school punishment. They even went to the same summer program. When asked whether it was possible to find love in high school, the better she knew Shawn, she was more sure about the answer: Yes. The love experience made her become a better self.

Except Katharine Wang and Sunny, Christopher also experienced love in a distinctive way. When Christopher and Erin first met, they made a deal for their mutual benefits that if Erin helps Christopher get around the school, he will help her every day with soccer tricks. Because of the deal, they were chained to each other for a month. Christopher liked Erin a lot because the young American girl was appealing considering her multiple personalities like arrogance, spontaneousness and hot-headedness. Erin didn't realize that she loved Christopher until when another boy Jonathan tried to kiss her, her mind was full of scenes with Christopher like his smile, his encouragement and his help. Christopher wanted to get out of control from his parents and get rid of the planned fate that study hard to go to a good Ivy University, take over the company of his father and marry a girl who lives up to his parents' expectations. He had his own plans for his future and his dream was to become a professor. His parents paved future for him, but his sole aspiration was to be himself. Erin was a girl who helped him with self-discovery and that was the reason why he liked her so much. The love experience made him know himself better and made him become more courageous.

Love has magical power, it helps these young emigrants find the true self and walk out of the adversity. Love contributes a lot to their growth because it teaches them how to care about others, help others and perfect themselves.

### C *Spiritual Journey of Ethnic Identity*

As a Chinese American, Katharine Wang moved to America at the age of three and a half. Katharine Wang was embedded in two different cultures as on the one hand her parents were deeply influenced by traditional Chinese culture and on the other side, she received American education at an early age. Like most emigrants, she also encountered a big problem, that is, the problem of ethnic identity.

#### 1. Complex Feelings Towards Ethnic Identity

Kids of Chinese immigrants are often called "banana" because they are yellow on the outside, but they are white inside. Some new people can be Americanized in a short time. They seem to be whitewashed and consider themselves white. Katharine Wang wished that she could be like them and considered herself American. But the truth was that she wrestled with two ideals. "I wanted to be American, but there was an invisible thread that kept pulling me back. I was beginning to listen more to Chinese pop music and even conforming to the FOPLY dress" (Wang, 2004, p.27) Her thought showed that she was confused with her ethnic identity. Although she tried to behave like an American, she actually felt that she behaved like a Chinese sometimes. Her lack of self-confidence in ethnic identity made her feel that she was inferior to those Americans. For instance, the first time camping out with her classmates, Katharine Wang saw her new friends clustered by the bonfire, she buttoned up her mouth because she thought that she was a plain-looking

Chinese while her new friends were blonde white girls. But gradually, she changed her ideas and was confident of her ethnic identity.

## 2 Firm Belief Towards Ethnic Identity

As we all know, America is a melting pot that encompasses all diverse cultures and it was founded on the principles of equality and freedom. America is also a country that underscores the individualism which emphasizes that everyone is his own master and everyone should search for his own values. Katharine Wang got an education in the America for more than ten years, influenced by American culture, she realized that a true American stands for diversity and stands proud against adversity. With that definition, she was no longer puzzled for her ethnic identity. "I'm Chinese American. For that, I think I have the best of both worlds. Being Chinese American has a whole new level of meaning to itself" (Wang, 2004, p. 186). She realized that she had a bi-culture identity that can be comfortably adjusted according to different needs or situations. Her trip to the Museum of Tolerance enabled her to have a better understanding of pluralism. She believed that everyone was equal no matter which race he or she belonged to. Her belief was similar to the idea of Homi K Bhabha, a representative figure of contemporary post-colonial studies. He introduces the concept of "hybridity", which lays emphasis on multiculturalism and he believes that new cultural identities can be created through the integration of the colony's own cultural identity and the colonizer's cultural identity (Wang, 2002).

Katharine Wang's belief of ethnic identity helped her gain more confidence and became more successful. She can switch from one culture to another and find the most comfortable position between two diverse cultures.

## IV. CONCLUSION

In the novel *Been There, Done That*, three young emigrants achieved a lot from their high school life and reaped love and friendship. Going through various setbacks and trials, they became more mature and will weather other storms of life in the future.

By participating in many activities inside and outside of the school, Katharine Wang realizes the importance of showing true self, bringing potential into full play and looking squarely at success and failure. She also understands the meaning of helping others and cherishes love and people around her. Especially, in the nourishment of love and care from her family, friends and lover, Katharine Wang learns to embrace her parents' ideas and spares no effort to support and help her friends and loves. The friendship between Katharine Wang and Sunny helps Sunny to deal with interpersonal relationship better. Sunny's love with Shawn enables her learn more about herself and open up more. The love experience between Christopher and Erin help Christopher knows himself better and tries to hold on to his dream. He becomes more courageous and tries to follow his own heart. During the four years, Katharine Wang attains intelligence, ability and acuteness as she grows up. More importantly, she holds a clearer view towards ethnic identity and realizes that as a Chinese American, she has the best of both cultures. Their growth helps broaden their horizons and the world gets bigger in front of them. The life lessons they get during the adolescent years will definitely benefit them a lot.

These youngsters' growth will also be beneficial to all the other emigrants and even all the adolescents in the world.

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# Analysis on the Role and Functions of Teachers, Teaching Materials and Learners in the Multimedia-aided English Classroom—Based on the Study of Linfen No.1 Senior School

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**Abstract**—Recently, with the development of network and technologies, the traditional teacher-centered mode is gradually losing its main status. Multimedia-assisted foreign language teaching is becoming the most popular way of teaching. At present, computer based multimedia is broadly used in classrooms. Multimedia-aided English teaching can introduce video, figure, and text into teaching practice, and improve English teaching efficiency. Teachers, teaching materials and learners, as the three main elements in English teaching, play an essential part in classroom. Although relevant surveys have been done investigating English classroom under the conventional educational mode, very few people have thought the change of the three elements more specific. Therefore, the paper talks about the difference between the conventional educational model and multimedia-aided teaching method in English classroom. The author takes the teachers and students in Linfen NO.1 senior school as the research object, aiming to study the role and the interrelationship of the three. Through interviews, classroom observation and questionnaire, the thesis concisely summarizes the role and functions of the three elements in Linfen NO.1 senior school. It is a rational analysis and summary of multimedia-assisted English teaching theoretically and practically. Thus it will be helpful for the improvement of English teaching effect.

**Index Terms**—multimedia-assisted teaching, role and functions of teachers and learners, senior English class

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Study

It has undoubtedly proved that advanced technology is a most forceful tool conducting development and reforms in the human society and the network technology is such a reforming factor in the current world. Since the updated reform of curriculum with modern educational technology, the traditional role of teachers and learners has been changing bit by bit, as same as the conventional mode of foreign language teaching. Hence, more and more researchers have been facilitating exploration of new methods and new mode of classroom teaching, trying to have a new educational revolution in China. Then from the 1990s, the practical application of multimedia technology became one of the characteristics in the computer in China. Therefore the application of multimedia is the automatic result of the advancement of modern science and technology, and has become as an essential means for English teaching. In recent decades, multimedia-aided English teaching is presently becoming very common and popular with many learners and teachers. Facing the new change, people have also become conscious of the importance of multimedia in English teaching and learning. And many researchers point out that the role and functions of teachers, teaching materials and learners also changed to some extent. So it is essential for us to analyze the change of teachers and students in the multimedia-aided English teaching. The survey has a significant influence on improving our teaching effect.

### B. Purpose and Significance of the Study

Network is closely related to English teaching. Computer can be used as a tool for students and teachers to communicate in class and to stimulate the teaching effect. The paper is going to point out the major difference between traditional English educational pattern and the new multimedia-aided English teaching and learning mode. Meanwhile, the author is concentrated on studying the role and functions of teachers, teaching materials and students with the help of computers. The paper is meant to study the interrelationship of the three elements, so as to stimulating students' interest in learning and improving the quality of teaching effectively.

By a review of related theories, the author designs questionnaires for the purpose of the actual performance of media in English teaching and learning. Meanwhile, the author tries to explore the real situation of multimedia application in Linfen NO.1 senior school, aiming at finding out problems in the process of multimedia-aided instruction with the basis of relative theories on multimedia-assisted instruction. It is hoped that the research could provide us some ideas about current multimedia practices and the ideal state.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The relevant researches on multimedia-aided instruction have a long history both abroad and at home, in which the former is longer than the latter, and which will be represented in this section.

### A. Research on Multimedia-assisted Instruction Abroad

Multimedia Technology, also called media. Marshal states that “media is information”. Gayeski (1993) regards multimedia as “a kind of computer driven interactive communication system which produce, reserve, send, and retrieve textual, pictural, and acoustic networks of information.” (p. 4). Then a generic term “multimedia” refers to the continuing or by synchronous application of all kinds of media in a given presentation or self-learning program (Sharon E, 2005, p.14). In short, multimedia technology is the carrier which carries information such as tapes, films, books, computers, tapes, disks, televisions and so on.

The relevant researches abroad initiated since the 1960s. At that time computer technology developed quickly. In the 1980s and the 1990s, scholars abroad have been analyzing in such areas as whether multimedia can facilitate teaching; what kind of effect it can produce; how we can make the most of it.

In the early of 1980's, experts come to be interested in multimedia-aided instruction research. Some materials introduce the computers' usage in classrooms such as Hainline, 1987, *New Developments in Computer-Assisted Language Learning*; Higgins & Johns, 1984, *Computer in Language Learning*. Higgins and Johns (1984) generally described computer technology and the application of computer technology in classroom. Generally speaking, the researches on multimedia-aided instruction mainly focus on the development of individual processes, strategies and competencies, using measures such as motivational surveys, observations, recordings of keystrokes, and think- aloud protocols.

In the 1990s, Kozma (1991) explained his opinion that the students and media actively collaborated to construct their knowledge, which was different from those who held multimedia were only the transferring devices of teaching content. Then, Norman analyzed the interrelationship between the “carrier” and “structure” characters and the instructional aims (Dai, 2005); Monaghan and Stenning discussed whether the student differences exist in the teaching process of solving problems by learning multimedia(Dai, 2005); and Pane, Corbett and Jone implemented the comparative experimental researches between text descriptive media and animation media( Dai, 2005).

In short, with the previous development of multimedia technology, researches have made great success based on the continuous improvement of technology and educational theories abroad. Besides, these researches play an important part in applying multimedia to foreign language teaching and learning, and they are the guidance of Chinese multimedia-aided instruction researches.

### B. Research on Multimedia-assisted Instruction at Home

In China, the application of computer in education is much later than those abroad. Since 1999, multimedia technology is applied in college English teaching (Cai, 2003). It developed rapidly, and the relevant research results reflect the real features and problems of education. Recently, the researches on multimedia-aided instruction mainly place the emphasis on the following aspects:

Some scholars emphasize the significance of integration the multimedia technology into English learning and teaching, for example, An Jing (2004), Wu Min (1999). All of them hold that the integration of multimedia technology does promote the language learning process effectively and help learners to raise their overall ability to apply English.

Some give a statistical analysis and literature review of the papers concerning research on multimedia-assisted foreign language teaching in China published in 8 major linguistic journals during 1995-2006, which point out that the research methods are mainly not empirical, such as Na Min and so forth.

Some discuss the multimedia-assisted English learning and teaching under the guidance of the Constructivist theory, such as Wang Xiangling & Ning Chunyan (2002).

Nearly all the experts agree that multimedia technology is a useful method to assist teaching and it can promote the teaching effect. They realize the advantages and disadvantages as well and some of them have put forward the improving suggestions.

## III. METHODOLOGY

### A. Objects and Subjects

#### 1. Objects

The study aims at studying the role and functions of teachers, teaching materials and learners in the multimedia-aided teaching, compared with the traditional teaching mode. More specifically, there are three research questions:

- (1) What are the role and functions of teachers in the multimedia-assisted English teaching mode?
- (2) What are the role and functions of teaching materials in the multimedia-assisted English teaching mode?
- (3) What are the role and functions of learners in the multimedia-assisted English teaching mode?

#### 2. Subjects

The author chooses 5 teachers and 2 classes in Grade 1 in Linfen NO.1 senior school as the research subjects. The five

teachers all have more than 10 years teaching experience. The average size of each class varies from 55 to 65 students, and their age range from 16 to 18. Most of them have learned English since Grade 3 of primary school and some of them have learned English for 8 years. So they are treated as intermediate English learners.

TABLE 1  
GENDER AND AGE CONDITIONS OF THE SUBJECTS

	Females	Males	Average age
English teachers(5)	3	2	35
Students(80)	32	48	17

### B. Instruments

The author adopts classroom observation, after-class interview, questionnaire analysis and literature study. The author sorts, analyzes and classifies the materials in order to make it more systematic.

#### 1. Classroom Observation

Classroom observation is a formal or informal observation of teaching while it is applied in a classroom or other learning environment. In the research, the author observes about 80 students and does class record accordingly. During the process of observation, the author carefully observes the change of teachers and learners.

#### 2. After-class Interview

In the study, the author spends free time in having some interviews for teachers and students. In this way, the author can better grasp the learning effect of students. And in the process of interviewing, the author tries to create an active atmosphere as much as possible. As a result, the author can gain unexpected information.

#### 3. Questionnaire Analysis

In the study, the author designs the questionnaire about the influence of media to students in English classroom and chooses 80 students from Class 387, and Class 388 of Linfen NO.1 senior school to conduct questionnaire surveys.

The questionnaire is made up of 10 questions and all of them are multiple-choice. They are easier to answer and will not take too much time.

#### 4. Literature Study

Mainly according to the purpose and the content of the study, the theory of the paper is based on the books, the library, the internet and other resources.

## IV. TEACHERS, TEACHING MATERIALS AND LEARNERS UNDER MULTIMEDIA-AIDED TEACHING

### A. The Role and Functions of Teachers under Multimedia-aided Teaching

#### 1. Previous Researches on Conventional Teacher-centered Teaching Model

Zhang Haitao (2001) points out that some schools still follow the model of “reviewing the former lesson---introducing the new lesson---explaining the new lesson---strengthening the new lesson---assigning homework” as it did decades ago. The common teaching pattern is reading, questioning, explanation and grammar exercise. Students depend too much on the teacher and lack a sense of responsibility for their own learning (Shu, 1992, p.20). The conventional English teaching approach still involves teacher’s knowledge conveyance but there are few interaction between the teacher and the learners. Following the kind of teaching model, the teacher becomes the center and the core of the teaching activities. In other words, the teacher is the controller of the teaching process and the transmitter of the knowledge, while the learner is only the receiver of the knowledge and information, the blackboard, the chalk and the textbook are the main teaching tools. In the teacher-centered teaching pattern, if we compare the whole teaching course to the process of a play, the teacher can be identified as the director while the learners can be regarded as silent target audience.

By studying previous researches, it can be discovered the teacher-centered teaching pattern exists the following characteristics:

- (1) There is mainly one-way conveyance in the teaching model. That is, just from the teacher to the learner.
- (2) The teacher takes the grammar-translation method as the main approach when teaching.
- (3) The main teaching materials are the books and textbooks. The teacher plans teaching activities based on the points of textbook.
- (4) The students are the passive recipient of the language. They spend most of time in writing down the notes and listening to their teachers in the language teaching process.
- (5) The learners only learn knowledge in the classroom, they sit in their fixed seats while the teacher stands in the front, and the books, blackboard and chalks are the major teaching instruments.

#### 2. The Role and Functions of Teachers under Multimedia-aided Teaching

The traditional teacher-centered teaching pattern can be taken as a practical and effective teaching model in the last decades. However, as information technology and society develop rapidly in recent years, the conventional teacher-centered teaching model is already out of fashion. With more and more attention is paid to the learners’ initiative, the shortcomings of the teacher-centered teaching pattern emerge. It is important and necessary to reform the long-term teacher-centered English teaching way, for it cannot apply for the current situation any more.

Due to the distinctive features of multimedia technology, it is imperative for the teacher to take full advantage of computer and play diverse and multiple roles in line with different teaching requirements.

(1) The teacher can play the role as a planner when he makes preparations and plans for the whole teaching and learning course before class.

(2) The teacher can play the role as an organizer when he asks the learners to do some learning activities such as doing a discussion in the classroom.

(3) The teacher can play the role as a participant when he serves as an equal to participate in the activities with the learners.

(4) The teacher can play the role as a supervisor when he examines the students' homework and other learning activities.

(5) The teacher can play the role as an adviser when he wants to assess the students' learning result and offer feedback.

(6) The teacher can play the role as a source when some students ask him for some difficult questions.

(7) The teacher can play the role as a promoter when he wants to inspire the students' learning interests and performance.

TABLE 2  
RESULTS OF TEACHERS' OPINIONS ABOUT THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF TEACHERS UNDER MULTIMEDIA-AIDED TEACHING  
(1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=undecided; 4=agree; 5=strongly agree)

Teachers' Opinions										
Questions	Theoretical Agree					Practical agree				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1 A planner role	0%	6%	4%	44%	46%	0%	4%	30%	26%	40%
2 An organizer role	2%	0%	0%	35%	63%	0%	0%	13%	55%	32%
3 A participant role	0%	7%	8%	20%	65%	0%	5%	37%	30%	28%
4 A supervisor role	0%	2%	4%	25%	59%	0%	3%	29%	40%	28%
5 An adviser role	0%	0%	0%	33%	67%	0%	0%	15%	38%	47%
6 A source role	0%	0%	0%	29%	71%	0%	3%	19%	27%	51%
7 A promoter role	7%	0%	5%	18%	70%	0%	3%	25%	42%	30%

The author also has some interviews with the 5 English teachers in Linfen NO.1 senior school, which the main questions including:

(1) Do you often use multimedia in the process of English teaching?

(2) What do you think are the major difficulties and problems in multimedia assisted foreign language teaching?

(3) Compared with the traditional teaching pattern, what are the advantages and disadvantages of multimedia assisted English teaching?

(4) Are you satisfied with the courseware you are using? Do you have any suggestions on how to improve the course ware?

(5) Do you think computer assisted foreign language teaching needs to be further improved teachers, learning software, activities and so forth?

(6) In order to make use of computer assisted English teaching, do you have any suggestions?

By answering those questions, the five teachers all hold a positive attitude to multimedia. They think with the help of the multimedia, students' interest in learning is stimulated better and the teaching effect is improved effectively.

By serious empirical researches and data analysis in Linfen NO.1 senior school, the author comes to a conclusion about the role and functions of teachers in the multimedia-assisted English environment. And based on the analysis, we can say that, to some extent, the seven roles of the teacher in the multimedia-aided English classroom are reasonable and meaningful.

## B. The Role and Functions of Teaching Materials under Multimedia-aided Teaching

### 1. Characteristics of the Evolution of Teaching Materials

As one of the elements in language teaching, teaching materials play an important part. With the social-political transitions in China and the world, the evolution of teaching materials has been changing with the following characteristics:

(1) A transformation from teacher-centered instruction to student-centered exploration;

(2) A transformation from the propaganda of simple language knowledge to the training of language skills and communicative competence.

(3) A transformation from learners passively receiving knowledge to learners working independently and cooperatively.

### 2. The Role and Functions of Teaching Materials under Multimedia-aided Teaching

With the advancement of technology, teaching materials also become diversified. In the past, textbooks occupy the leading role in the process of English teaching. The teacher and learner depend on the textbooks to finish the class. And the design of teaching materials is dull, which can neither stimulate learners' learning interest nor improve teaching efficiency to some extent.

Nowadays, with the help of network and information technology, the design of teaching materials presents some new characteristics such as diversity, vitality and interactivity and so forth. At the same time, multimedia has becoming an indispensable tool in the process of English teaching. Combining textbooks and multimedia during the teaching, both the teacher and the students can enjoy the learning atmosphere better.

### C. *The Role and Functions of Learners under Multimedia-aided Teaching*

#### 1. Previous Researches on the Role and Functions of Learners

Generally speaking, the traditional teaching pattern can be described as the following method “Centering in teaching, teachers teach knowledge by taking explaining, writing on blackboard and using all kinds of teaching materials as teaching instruments and methods, while students just passively receive what teachers teach.” (Shu, 2004) In the teaching pattern, the teacher is initiative knowledge imposers while the student is passive receiver of external stimulation and objects of knowledge instillation. Materials are content being instilled by the teacher and learning media are the means for the teacher to instill knowledge to learners.

#### 2. The Role and Functions of Learners under Multimedia-aided Teaching

With the increasing use of multimedia in English teaching, it is obviously becoming more and more convenient. Meanwhile, it changed the traditional single teaching mode completely. Under the present situation, it is necessary and important to reorient the role and functions of learners. Under the environment of multimedia-aided English teaching, the student will change their role from a passive recipient to an independent learner. Multimedia technology can provide students with a variety of sound information, which is conducive to improve the students’ listening ability and is conducive to learn the standard pronunciation and intonation. Besides, students can use the multimedia courseware to learn by themselves and by learning, they can obtain a wealth of language knowledge and communicate in English. In the process of learning, students can control the process and tasks of learning, so as to realize the autonomy and exploration of the learning process.

In short, in the process of multimedia-aided foreign language teaching, the role of students should be located as independent and automatic learners, the center of teaching activities, the participants of communicative activities, and the sharing of information resources.

Through some interviews and questionnaires to 80 students in Linfen NO. 1 senior school, the author draws some conclusions which presented as follows:

TABLE 3  
LEARNER’S COMPUTER EXPERIENCE

Item 1 I began to use computer in	
Preschool (%)	0
Primary school (%)	22.54
Junior middle school (%)	45.25
Senior middle school (%)	32.21
Item 2 I can skillfully use	
Email (%)	96.5
Web browser (%)	95
Chat room (%)	98
Image editing (%)	54.21
Item 3 I can surf on the internet conveniently.	
Yes (%)	97.45
No (%)	2.55

From Item1and Item 2, we can know that the computer literacy among students is more than satisfactory. Most students began to use a computer in the middle school (Item1); almost all of the students can make good use of email, chat room as well as web browser.

TABLE 4  
A SURVEY ON LEARNERS’ APPLICATION OF INTERNET IN THE PROCESS OF LEARNING ENGLISH

Item 3 I use the Internet and courseware to learn English	
Every day (%)	2.35
More than three times a week (%)	16.38
Two to three times a week (%)	20.35
Once a week (%)	10.32
Once two weeks (%)	2.34
Once a month (%)	2.56
Only before examinations (%)	43.27
Never (%)	2.43
Item4 I use the Internet and courseware to learn English for each time.	
Two hours and more (%)	8.63
Less than two hours (%)	88.21
Zero hours (%)	3.16

From Item 3 and Item 4, we can know that the use of internet in the process of learning English vary greatly among



students. Roughly speaking, half of them use a computer to learn English after class, a portion of 43.27% use it only as a kind of preparation for exams; 2.35% use it every day and 2.43% never use it except in class.

Besides, the author also spends much time in interviewing some students after class. The students are encouraged to tell the truth during the interview. And the results and analysis of the interview are showed as follows:

Question 1: Have you ever heard the learner-centered teaching model? How do you think about it?

Interviewee 4: "Yes. I have heard the new term. As for me, it's a good way to help us to learn English. Under the student-centered pattern, the student will have more opportunities to speak out in the class and the students' learning interest can be inspired better.

Question 2: What are the problems you are faced with in English learning?

Interviewee 3: "I find I am not so interested in English learning and the English class is boring. We are occupied by watching what have been unfolded in the screen and by listening what the teachers say. Our listening and speaking abilities are still at a lower level."

Question 3: What kind of roles should a teacher play in the process of teaching? What are your opinions to the development of multimedia-aided language learning?

Interviewee 4: "I think in the future all the English class will adopt the way of multimedia assisted language learning. It will make the learning more interesting. I am happy to be taught in a computer classroom, but I don't think my English teacher can make good use of computer. As for the teacher's role, teachers should act like a director or organizer or maybe promoter in students' learning."

Question 4: In order to improve teaching quality, what are your suggestions?

Interviewee 1: "With the development of multimedia computer, the teaching focus should be transferred from the teacher to the learners. So a new learner-centered teaching pattern should be established. We students should be encouraged to learn English on our own. And learners shouldn't be the knowledge recipients but the pioneers in learning activities."

## V. CONCLUSIONS

### A. Findings of the Research

The paper takes Linfen NO.1 senior school as an example, discussing the role and functions of teachers, teaching materials and learners in the multimedia-aided English classroom and put forward some effective suggestions. After classroom observation, questionnaire and interview, the author gets the main findings about the reorientation of teachers, teaching materials and learners as follows:

(1) In traditional foreign language teaching, the teacher is the controller of the class and the teacher-centered teaching mode is applied to many schools. In multimedia computer assisted language learning environment, the role of teacher's has changed a lot. The teacher can play the role as a planner to plan the whole teaching process; as a supervisor to supervise the teaching activities; as an organizer to organize the learning activities; as a prompter to encourage the student to participate in various activities; as a participant to take part in the learning as an equal; as an adviser to offer the feedback, and as a source to provide various information.

(2) In the past, the main teaching materials are textbooks. However, in the multimedia-aided English teaching, textbooks are not the single source of knowledge any more. With the help of computers, the design of teaching materials becoming more and more popular with students.

(3) Learners just passively receive what teachers teach in the traditional teacher-centered teaching mode. However, under the multimedia-assisted environment, the teaching pattern shifts from teacher-centered to learner-centered. That is, learners become the center of teaching activities and they can be seen as independent and automatic learners.

### B. Limitations of the Study

Though the study has been carefully and seriously conducted and designed, it still has some limitations that should be paid more attention in future study. Firstly, the data collected is limited in the study. Only 5 teachers and 2 classes are chosen as observed subjects, and the teachers and learners all come from the same school. Secondly, the obtained data has not been analyzed deeply yet. Some conclusions derived from the author's observation and experience, so the paper still needs further research and investigation.

### C. Suggestions for Further Research

In recent years, the application of multimedia technology into foreign language teaching process has become a more and more popular practice in China. Besides, most high schools and senior schools have joined in the reform. Thus, the author's advice for further research is that people do experiments in senior schools and discover ways to balance the teacher, the teaching materials and the student so that multimedia-assisted language teaching may greatly improve the quality of foreign language teaching and applying to people of different ages.

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# The Effect of NLP (Accelerated Learning) on Iranian EFL Learner's Listening Comprehension

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**Abstract**—the present study was an attempt to investigate the impact of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) strategies and specifically Accelerated Learning on Iranian EFL learner's listening comprehension and detailed listening. To fulfill the purpose of this study, a total number of 30 Iranian EFL learners studying as Cambridge ESOL KET students were selected through stratified sampling procedure. They were divided in two control and experimental groups with 10 and 20 learners in each group respectively. Each group took a VAK questionnaire, a pre -test and a treatment process of 12 sessions and a posttest. In the experimental group the teacher conducted a set of short videos and mixed methods based on Accelerated Learning as one of neuro linguistic programming techniques. In control group a set of limited short videos conducted. On the last session, the participants of both groups took a post- test to measure their achievement of listening comprehension and detailed listening. This research suggests that accelerated learning is much more dynamic and has a significant effect on listening comprehension, detailed listening and, different learning styles, which hypothesizes that all VAK learner's language processing follow one another in a strictly accelerated manner. Statistically, the effect of accelerated learning on visual, auditory and kinesthetic learner's listening comprehension is 87, 93 and 85 percent respectively.

**Index Terms**—accelerated learning, listening, NLP, VAK

## I. INTRODUCTION

Pedagogical researches have shown that the perception of information according to the manner and pace of understanding, and learning conditions differs from person to person. Therefore, it is essential for teachers to attempt to find effective ways to teach their students and come up with some practical learning strategies for their English/language classes in order to place a priority on the learning preferences of their learners (Carbo, 1981). Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) was developed at the University of California at Santa Cruz in 1970's. Richard Bandler, and John Grinder were the founders and principal authors. Applying NLP techniques to Language learning processes facilitates exerting an influence on the learners mind through the use of language and other means of communication and consequently, enables learners to rearrange mentally the way the brain reacts to a stimulus, and works towards a change for the better as well as novel behavior patterns. (Tosey-2003). Dr. Richard Bandler came up with the term "Neuro-Linguistic Programming" in the 1970s. The definition of "Neuro-Linguistic Programming" (NLP) by Dr. Richard Bandler appears in the Oxford English Dictionary (Bruce; Pignotti, Monica, 2015). He defines it as:

"Neuro-Linguistic Programming is a technique of communication between people. Specifically, it's related to the connection between successful models of behaviour and personal experiences underlying them; it's a system of alternative activities to train people to be self-aware, improve their communication skills effectively, and work on their patterns of mental as well as emotional behavior "(Hastings, 2009).

Many language teachers have been using NLP and it's techniques for many years unconsciously. Since the discovery of NLP, a lot of new teaching methods which follow the NLP guidelines have been adopted, such as some elements of drama, music, and body language that are now being applied to second language teaching globally (Bergen & Soper, 1997). Pedagogical roots of NLP indicate the human brain's performance as well as the manner in which it engages in self-improvement. Such activities are attributable to Left-hand side brain that, along with visual-auditory-kinesthetic learning style, multiple intelligence (Gardner, 1991), and other fields of study investigate not only teaching models employed by teachers, but also learning tastes of each individual learner (Alan Chapman, 2017).

Many descriptive and experimental studies have investigated NLP in second language teaching to demonstrate how it can work towards a change for the more remarkable achievements in the area of education specifically, when teachers are involved in helping their learners with second language acquisition (Lankton, 1979).

Hill (1973, as cited in Bandler and Grinder, 1982) is considered a pioneer in evaluation of an individual's modes of behavior when he/she looks for meaning. He introduced sensory channels as a means of processing an individual's abilities. According to him, visual, auditory and kinesthetic channels are among the most important sensory channels. Employing all three modalities involves cognitive maturity. Traditional approaches to teaching languages such as audio-

lingual, grammar translation, communicative language teaching, and formalism have increased second language teachers and learners' workload.

One of these approaches is "Neuro-Linguistic Programming" (NLP). Although it is not considered a teaching approach, it is a new technique. The premise of NLP is that we hope for effective learning outcomes in the area of SLA. Debates about applying different NLP techniques to second language teaching has resulted in major achievements in the area of second language acquisition (Moeller, 2015).

In recent years, NLP has been in a stronger position in education due to its effectiveness in helping learners gain a better understanding of the ways they employ to acquire a new language. In 1983, the theory of multiple intelligence was put forward by Howard Gardner. According to this theory, learning styles can be classified into three main categories: visual, in which learners respond better to the visual stimuli such as watching videos, giving a demonstration, doing reading activities, and understanding charts; auditory, in which learners learn more when they have material explained to them; and kinesthetic, in which learners learn better when they perform an activity, such as conducting experiments and being involved in practical experiences. Teachers are now increasingly applying NLP techniques to their classrooms for the benefit of each individual learner. Some universities also recently have adopted NLP techniques to deal with students learning problems. (Schneider, 2017).

This new technique explains how one processes information which comes to them from the outside. Neuro-linguistic Programming is viewed as a general approach to life, including the study of language acquisition. (Frieden, 1981). The major reason for conducting the present study is to discover whether Neuro-linguistic Programming as a new supplementary teaching approach can facilitate the acquisition of English. This study also examines the effects of accelerated learning on listening comprehension and detailed listening progress/problems/process???? of Iranian EFL learners. The following research questions are set to help us conduct the present survey:

RQ1: Does accelerated learning have any effect on listening comprehension of Iranian EFL learners?

RQ2: Does accelerated learning have any effect on detailed listening of Iranian EFL learners?

The American psychologist Steven Pinker describes that imagining human life without language is scarcely possible because language is merged with human experience. Language is a system of communication used by humans everywhere and is undoubtedly one of the main noticeable and easily manifested aspects that differentiate human beings from the rest of the animal kingdom (Zoghi, 2017).

The main purpose of NLP is to help people understand and control their thoughts and feelings to build up positive changes in their lives specifically in sphere of education during learning process. It also helps teachers identify learning styles of their learners. Studies on the function of brain and learning process in different people have made NLP integrate into ELT (Darn, 2006)

In order to guide the use of rapid and effective behavioural modification, and an operational philosophy, NLP consists of a set of powerful techniques which are based on three operational principles (Daniel, 2001):

1. To know what outcome you want to achieve.
2. To step forward to the outcome.
3. To behave flexible to get the out come

To end up with specific outcomes is very important. Wandering randomly through life and not having conscious outcomes happen to many people. The importance of living with conscious purpose is stressed by NLP. It teaches a series of linguistic and behavioural patterns that help people change the beliefs and behaviours of others effectively. (Smith, 2012).

Moreover, another factor that learning a new language is significantly affected by, is Accelerated learning (A.L) which is a system to speed up and enhance both the design and the learning processes. It has proven over and over to increase learning effectiveness while saving time and money in the process according to the latest brain research. Its effectiveness comes from the way we all naturally learn. The main role of accelerated learning is to untap the potential for learning by most conventional learning methods and actively involving the whole person, using physical activity, creativity, music images, and a total mixed method which suites three kinds of learners (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) (Meier, 2017).

Many factors such as; positive learning environment, total learner involvement, collaboration among learners, variety that appeals to all preferences, make accelerated learning as an optimal learning environment to conduct the main aim which is to get the results. The following are some principles of accelerated learning:

1. To involve whole mind and body
2. To consider learning and knowledge as creation, not consumption or absorbing something.
3. To collaborate with peers.

Meanwhile, learners are naturally born with a set of intelligence types, and their intelligences vary across different individuals in a way that some learners, for example, may excel in one or more intelligence types while they may lag behind the other learners in some other types of intelligences (Stanford, 2016).

Moreover, Fleming's (1995) VAK model puts learning preferences into three main categories: visual learning style, in which learners do best when they watch videos and charts or read; auditory learning in which, the learner prefers to be explained what to do, and kinesthetic learners who learn best by touching, moving or feeling things such as doing experiments and taking part in practical lessons (Zoghi, 2017).

One of the many characteristics that make up a learners learning style is representational systems also known as sensory modalities. As already mentioned in previous parts, there are three major sensory modalities known as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic collectively abbreviated to VAK which is an inevitable model of neuro-linguistic programming in sense of processing, representing, coding, and storing information in human mind. Sensorial representation of experiences in the mind is the main domain of this model. Moreover, human being experiences the world around through his five senses: visual, auditory, kinesthetic, gustatory, and olfactory. Each individual uses all these senses all of the time but depending on circumstances may focus on one or more of them. In general, one representational system is not better than the other one and depending on the situation or the task that we are doing or learning, one representational system might be more effective than the other. (Ellerton, 2015).

Some studies have focused on the role of VAK preferences in learning generally and second or forging language particularly. For example, Farooque, Mustafa, and Mohammad (2014) investigated the learning style preferences of first year undergraduate medical students. The results of this study showed that there was no significant difference in learning preferences between the genders. In a similar study conducted by Marwah, Bhagat, and Kapoor (2015) the learning preferences of undergraduate dental students of a north Indian dental college was investigated. The results showed diversity in learning styles or preferences of the learners.

There have also been some studies on NLP, accelerated learning and listening comprehension of second or forging languages learners. For instance, in Iranian EFL context, Davoudi and Chavosh (2016), conducted a study on the relationship between multiple intelligence and listening self-efficacy among Iranian EFL learners. Some of the studies have attempted to find out either the effect of NLP or its relationship with learning language skills and components. Moharamkhani, Karimi, and Ahmadi (2016) have studied the impact of Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) on EFL learners' vocabulary achievement.. The results revealed that neuro linguistic programming had significant impact on EFL learners' vocabulary achievement. Furthermore, Moharamkhani, Karimi and Ahmadi (2016) investigated The Impact of NeuroLinguistic Programming (NLP) on EFL Learners' Vocabulary Achievement. The mentioned researchers came to the conclusion that neuro linguistic programming had significant impact on EFL learners' vocabulary achievement.

In the present experimental correlational study there are three variable, accelerated learning as independant, listening comprehension, and detailed listening as dependant variable. The researcher wanted to find out if accelerated learning has any effect on listening comprehension and detailed listening of Iranian EFL learners and consequently language learning process.

## II. METHODOLOGY

### *Participants*

To fulfill the purpose of this study, a total number of 30 Iranian EFL learners studying as Cambridge ESOL KET students were selected through stratified sampling procedure.

### *Instruments*

In this quantitative correlational experimental study VAK questionnaire, a pre -test and a treatment process of 12 sessions were conducted. In the experimental group, the teacher administered a set of short videos and mixed methods based on Accelerated Learning as one of neuro linguistic programming techniques. In control group a set of limited short videos were conducted. On the last session, the participants of both groups took a post- test to measure their achievement of listening comprehension and detailed listening.

Each group took a VAK questionnaire (Appendix I), videos and their multiple choice tests and slots of Learn English British Council Episodes (Appendix II). The VAK questionnaire developed by Victoria Chislett (2005), includes 30 multiple choice questions tagged as A, B, and C. learners with mostly A's, B's and C's have a visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning style respectively. A pilot study with 20 sample respondents was conducted in order to ensure the validity of the questionnaires. The reliability analysis of the questionnaire revealed an acceptable range of reliability for visual, auditory, and kinesthetic preferences questions.

The videos and related multiple choice, descriptive questions and slots of Learn English British Council Episodes were administered as pre\_test, treatment and post\_test. The results fed in to SPSS software.

### *Procedure*

To conduct this study each group took the VAK questionnaire. It took 40 minutes for respondents to fill it. This questionnaire includes a total number of 30 questions each of which has 3 options of as A, B, and C. The respondents were supposed to choose the option which best suited them. After finishing the responding process, the researcher identified the respondents' preference by counting As as auditory, Bs as visual, and Cs as kinesthetic learning style.

Moreover, three videos were projected at the next session, each lasted 15 minutes and then a set of difficult gap space with new vocabulary and sentence completion, five questions for each video were administered as pretest of both groups. Most of them couldn't answer half of the questions. Their listening tasks were checked and no other listening tasks were administered instead they followed the same normal process of studying their course book. Finally, at the 12<sup>th</sup> session the same videos and questions were projected again as post-test. Some of the students had already been looking for new words that were in gap space out of the class but yet they couldn't answer half of the questions.

Furthermore, same videos with same questions were administered for experimental group at first session and the results were the same. To conduct the project, the videos of Learn English British Council and their tasks were administered for 12 intensive sessions. The results indicated the learner's listening skill improvement day by day, while in each lesson the questions were more difficult than the previous session's. At the last session, same videos including the same questions for pre-test, were administered as post-test. The learners could explain what the videos were about using new vocabulary and even words from gap spaces.

### III. RESULTS

As mentioned in the previous part, the results fed in to SPSS software. To test the first research question ANCOVA was conducted. Some assumptions should be met before applying ANCOVA. The first assumption regards the normal distribution of the data. One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was used for examining the normal distribution of the data. The results are given in Table 1.

TABLE 1  
ONE-SAMPLE KOLMOGOROV-SMIRNOV TEST FOR NORMAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE SCORES IN 2 GROUPS IN PRETEST AND POST TEST

	Pre Test	post test
N	30	30
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	.748	.919
P value	.631	.367

As the results in Table 1 indicate, the significance level in both pretest and posttest is higher than the p value of .05 ( $p=.631$  &  $.367 > .05$ ) indicating normal distribution of the scores.

Moreover, Leven's Test of Equality of Error variance for 2 groups was carried out to examine the equality of variances. The results are given in Table 2:

TABLE 2  
LEVENE'S TEST OF EQUALITY OF ERROR VARIANCES FOR SCORES IN POSTTEST IN 2 GROUPS

F	df1	df2	P value
5.83	1	27	.067

As the results in Table 2 indicates, the equivalence of the variances across posttest is confirmed ( $F=5.83$ ,  $P=.067 > .05$ ) meeting the assumption of equal distribution of the scores between the 2 groups.

Moreover, regression analysis was conducted in order to examine the slope of regression for the scores in posttest which yielded the results given in Table 3:

TABLE 3  
COVARIANCE TO EXAMINE THE SLOPE OF THE REGRESSION FOR SCORES IN POSTTEST IN 2 GROUPS

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P value
<b>Group * Pretest score</b>	465.939	2	232.970	2.973	.069
<b>Error</b>	1959.345	25	78.374		

As the results in Table 3 shows, examining the interaction of experimental group Pretest score in predicting the dependent variable or post test score indicated that the interaction effect is not meaningful ( $f=2.97$ ,  $p=.069 > .05$ ). In other words, there is not a meaningful interaction between the independent variable and the intervening variable, and ANCOVA can be conducted with the assumption of the homogeneity of the slopes.

TABLE 4  
ANALYSIS COVARIANCE TO COMPARE THE POSTTEST SCORES IN EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P value	Partial Eta Squared	Observed Power
<b>Group</b>	10410.848	1	10410.848	120.898	.000	.823	1.000
<b>Pre test</b>	186.353	1	186.353	2.164	.153	.077	.294
<b>Error</b>	2238.931	26	86.113				

As the results in Table 4 show, the group effect is significant ( $F=120.8$ ,  $P < .05$ ). Eta squared is .82 and the observed power is 1.00 meaning that the analysis is 100 percent correct in exploring the significant differences.

Moreover, as the results in Table 5 show, pretest scores have been controlled. In other words, the effect of pretest scores has been eliminated from post test scores, and the 3 groups are compared with each other based on the residual variances.

TABLE 5  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR SCORES IN EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS IN PRETEST,  
POSTTEST AND FINAL ESTIMATE (POSTTEST) AFTER CONTROLLING PRETEST

	Pre test		Post test		Post test Final estimate	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Error
Control	31.30	6.515	35.20	7.842	37.53	3.337
Experimental	41.00	7.431	87.35	10.297	85.50	2.287

As the results in Table 5 show, the mean pretest score for control group is 31.3 and experimental group is 41. The mean post test scores for control group 35.2 and experimental group is 87.35.

The mean scores, after controlling the intervening variables is 37.53 for control group and 85.5 for experimental group ( $F=120.8$ ,  $P < .05$ ).

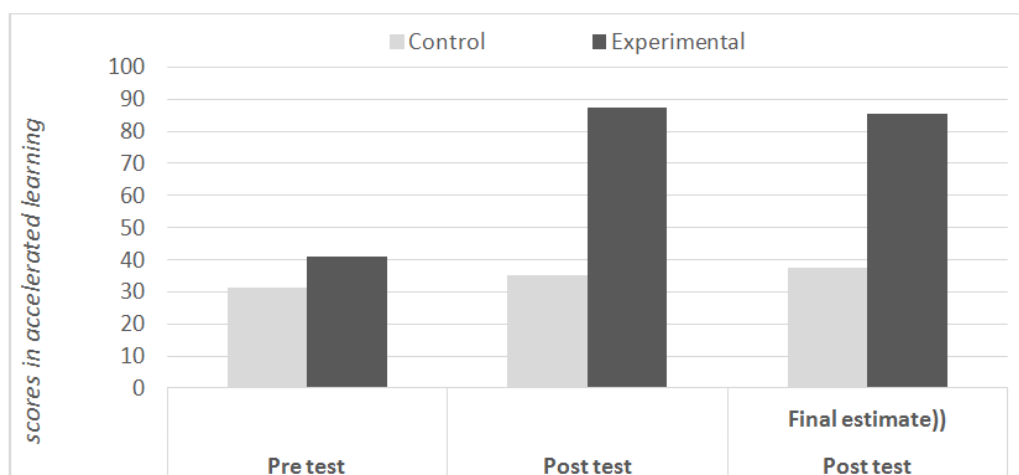


Fig1. scores of 2 groups

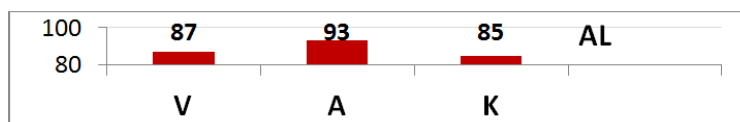


Fig2. the effect of accelerated learning on VAK preferences

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The present study was launched with the purpose of examining the effect of accelerated learning on Iranian EFL learners listening comprehension.

The two research questions on the effectiveness of accelerated learning on listening comprehension and detailed listening of Iranian EFL learners were tested. It was found that accelerated learning is highly correlated with listening comprehension and detailed listening of the learners indicating that accelerated learning is much more dynamic and has a significant effect on different learning styles, which hypothesizes that all VAK learner's language processing follow one another in a strictly accelerated manner. Statistically, the effect of accelerated learning on visual, auditory and kinesthetic learner's listening comprehension is 87, 93 and 85 percent respectively. This is the point already endorsed by Brown (1987), Ellis (1994), Walqui (2000), Hoekstra (2009). The mentioned authors have emphasized learning styles to improve learning process. This also calls for the consideration of individual learning factors and individual instruction as stressed by Lyal (2002) and Dunn and Burke (2006) besides the others (Zoghi, 2017).

In terms of the existence of a correlation between accelerated learning and listening comprehension and detailed listening, the findings of this study are in line with the findings of the study by Davoudi and Chavosh (2016), Saricaoglu and Arikan's (2009), and Derakhshan and Faribi (2015). Lashkarian and Sayadian (2015) studied the Effect of Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) Techniques on Young Iranian EFL Learners' Motivation, Learning Improvement, and on Teacher's Success. The results emphasized the importance of NLP techniques in EFL settings by enabling the teacher to communicate better with students, strengthen the learning environment, and develop positive interaction that would increase academic effectiveness, motivation and proficiency of learners.

The results of this study were also in line with the findings of Habibinezhad and Azizmalayeri (2016) who studied the impacts of accelerated learning and explicit instruction on the retention and application of lexical bundles in writing. The results of the study revealed that accelerated learning of lexical bundles did enhance EFL learners writing ability. However, it should be stated that other studies revealed the effectiveness of the explicit instruction of lexical bundles to improve the writing skills of language learners.

## V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

The present study attempted to investigate the effects of accelerated learning and listening comprehension of Iranian EFL learners. The study revealed the fact that the accelerated learning of experimental group was fruitful to language learners and had a positive effect on the dependent variable of the study, namely, the listening skill of the language learners.

The findings of the study show that the accelerated learning of mixed methods can be fruitful for language learners if it is employed in the Iran's educational system. In line with the findings of the present study, the previous studies show that the use of accelerated learning provides benefits to language learners (Rose, 2003; Silberbach, 2007). It also states that accelerated learning provides greater range of support and different activities for language learners in the process of language learning in general and four skills in particular. The study also reveals the fact that identifying the learning styles or learning preferences, the teacher can create a learning environment in which every individual learner flourishes.

Accordingly, it should be stated that the accelerated learning addresses individual learner needs and learner preferences which is suited best with this post-method era. Materials designers, language educators and teachers are advised to first estimate their learners' preferred learning style and adapt their teaching/learning tasks accordingly. The textbooks can be designed in such a way that encourages language learners to employ course books as a contributing device to accelerate their process of communication and learning process. Furthermore, more studies may be conducted with different age groups and various fields of study in different learning contexts. Other researchers may be interested also in studying the effect of other techniques of NLP on VAK preferences, focusing on other proficiency level learners, studying the effects of other techniques of NLP on four skills, and studying the relationship between personality type and VAK preferences.

## APPENDIX I. VAK PREFERENCES QUESTIONNAIRE

VAK Learning Styles Self-Assessment Questionnaire Circle or tick the answer that most represents how you generally behave.

1. When I operate new equipment I generally:
  - a. read the instructions first
  - b. listen to an explanation from someone who has used it before
  - c. go ahead and have a go, I can figure it out as I use it
2. When I need directions for travelling I usually:
  - a. look at a map
  - b. ask for spoken directions
  - c. follow my nose and maybe use a compass
3. When I cook a new dish, I like to:
  - a. follow a written recipe
  - b. call a friend for an explanation
  - c. follow my instincts, testing as I cook
4. If I am teaching someone something new, I tend to:
  - a. write instructions down for them
  - b. give them a verbal explanation
  - c. demonstrate first and then let them have a go
5. I tend to say:
  - a. watch how I do it
  - b. listen to me explain
  - c. you have a go
6. During my free time I most enjoy:
  - a. going to museums and galleries
  - b. listening to music and talking to my friends
  - c. playing sport or doing DIY
7. When I go shopping for clothes, I tend to:
  - a. imagine what they would look like on
  - b. discuss them with the shop staff
  - c. try them on and test them out
8. When I am choosing a holiday I usually:
  - a. read lots of brochures
  - b. listen to recommendations from friends
  - c. imagine what it would be like to be there
9. If I was buying a new car, I would:
  - a. read reviews in newspapers and magazines
  - b. discuss what I need with my friends



- c. test-drive lots of different types
- 10. When I am learning a new skill, I am most comfortable:
  - a. watching what the teacher is doing
  - b. talking through with the teacher exactly what I'm supposed to do
  - c. giving it a try myself and work it out as I go
- 11. If I am choosing food off a menu, I tend to:
  - a. imagine what the food will look like
  - b. talk through the options in my head or with my partner
  - c. imagine what the food will taste like
- 12. When I listen to a band, I can't help:
  - a. watching the band members and other people in the audience
  - b. listening to the lyrics and the beats
  - c. moving in time with the music
- 13. When I concentrate, I most often:
  - a. focus on the words or the pictures in front of me
  - b. discuss the problem and the possible solutions in my head
  - c. move around a lot, fiddle with pens and pencils and touch things
- 14. I choose household furnishings because I like:
  - a. their colours and how they look
  - b. the descriptions the sales-people give me
  - c. their textures and what it feels like to touch them
- 15. My first memory is of:
  - a. looking at something
  - b. being spoken to
  - c. doing something
- 16. When I am anxious, I:
  - a. visualize the worst-case scenarios
  - b. talk over in my head what worries me most
  - c. can't sit still, fiddle and move around constantly
- 17. I feel especially connected to other people because of:
  - a. how they look
  - b. what they say to me
  - c. how they make me feel
- 18. When I have to revise for an exam, I generally:
  - a. write lots of revision notes and diagrams
  - b. talk over my notes, alone or with other people
  - c. imagine making the movement or creating the formula
- 19. If I am explaining to someone I tend to:
  - a. show them what I mean
  - b. explain to them in different ways until they understand
  - c. encourage them to try and talk them through my idea as they do it
- 20. I really love:
  - a. watching films, photography, looking at art or people watching
  - b. listening to music, the radio or talking to friends
  - c. taking part in sporting activities, eating fine foods and wines or dancing
- 21. Most of my free time is spent:
  - a. watching television
  - b. talking to friends
  - c. doing physical activity or making things
- 22. When I first contact a new person, I usually:
  - a. arrange a face to face meeting
  - b. talk to them on the telephone
  - c. try to get together whilst doing something else, such as an activity or a meal
- 23. I first notice how people:
  - a. look and dress
  - b. sound and speak
  - c. stand and move
- 24. If I am angry, I tend to:
  - a. keep replaying in my mind what it is that has upset me
  - b. raise my voice and tell people how I feel

- c. stamp about, slam doors and physically demonstrate my anger
- 25. I find it easiest to remember:
  - a. faces
  - b. names
  - c. things I have done
- 26. I think that you can tell if someone is lying if:
  - a. they avoid looking at you
  - b. their voices changes
- 27. When I meet an old friend:
  - a. I say "it's great to see you"!
  - b. I say "it's great to hear from you"!
  - c. I give them a hug or a handshake
- 28. I remember things best by:
  - a. writing notes or keeping printed details
  - b. saying them aloud or repeating words and key points in my head
  - c. doing and practicing the activity or imagining it being done
- 29. If I have to complain about faulty goods, I am most comfortable:
  - a. writing a letter
  - b. complaining over the phone
  - c. taking the item back to the store or posting it to head office
- 30. I tend to say:
  - a. I see what you mean
  - b. I hear what you are saying
  - c. I know how you feel

Now add up how many A's, B's and C's you selected.

A's =            B's =            C's =

If you chose mostly A's you have a VISUAL learning style.

If you chose mostly B's you have an AUDITORY learning style.

If you chose mostly C's you have a KINAESTHETIC learning style.

## APPENDIX II

<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/listening-skills-practice>

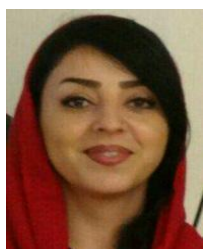
<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/starting-out/Episodes>

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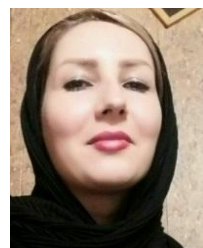
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# Call for Papers and Special Issue Proposals

## Aims and Scope

**Theory and Practice in Language Studies (TPLS)** is a peer-reviewed international journal dedicated to promoting scholarly exchange among teachers and researchers in the field of language studies. The journal is published monthly.

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*Areas of interest include:* language education, language teaching methodologies, language acquisition, bilingualism, literacy, language representation, language assessment, language education policies, applied linguistics, as well as language studies and other related disciplines: psychology, linguistics, pragmatics, cognitive science, neuroscience, ethnography, sociolinguistics, sociology, and anthropology, literature, phonetics, phonology, and morphology.

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Special issues feature specifically aimed and targeted topics of interest contributed by authors responding to a particular Call for Papers or by invitation, edited by guest editor(s). We encourage you to submit proposals for creating special issues in areas that are of interest to the Journal. Preference will be given to proposals that cover some unique aspect of the technology and ones that include subjects that are timely and useful to the readers of the Journal. A Special Issue is typically made of 15 to 30 papers, with each paper 8 to 12 pages of length.

A special issue can also be proposed for selected top papers of a conference/workshop. In this case, the special issue is usually released in association with the committee members of the conference/workshop like general chairs and/or program chairs who are appointed as the Guest Editors of the Special Issue.

The following information should be included as part of the proposal:

- Proposed title for the Special Issue
- Description of the topic area to be focused upon and justification
- Review process for the selection and rejection of papers
- Name, contact, position, affiliation, and biography of the Guest Editor(s)
- List of potential reviewers if available
- Potential authors to the issue if available
- Estimated number of papers to accept to the special issue
- Tentative time-table for the call for papers and reviews, including
  - Submission of extended version
  - Notification of acceptance
  - Final submission due
  - Time to deliver final package to the publisher

If the proposal is for selected papers of a conference/workshop, the following information should be included as part of the proposal as well:

- The name of the conference/workshop, and the URL of the event.
- A brief description of the technical issues that the conference/workshop addresses, highlighting the relevance for the journal.
- A brief description of the event, including: number of submitted and accepted papers, and number of attendees. If these numbers are not yet available, please refer to previous events. First time conference/workshops, please report the estimated figures.
- Publisher and indexing of the conference proceedings.

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

- Preparing the “Call for Papers” to be included on the Journal’s Web site.
- Distribution of the Call for Papers broadly to various mailing lists and sites.
- Getting submissions, arranging review process, making decisions, and carrying out all correspondence with the authors. Authors should be informed the Author Guide.
- Providing us the completed and approved final versions of the papers formatted in the Journal’s style, together with all authors’ contact information.
- Writing a one- or two-page introductory editorial to be published in the Special Issue.

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