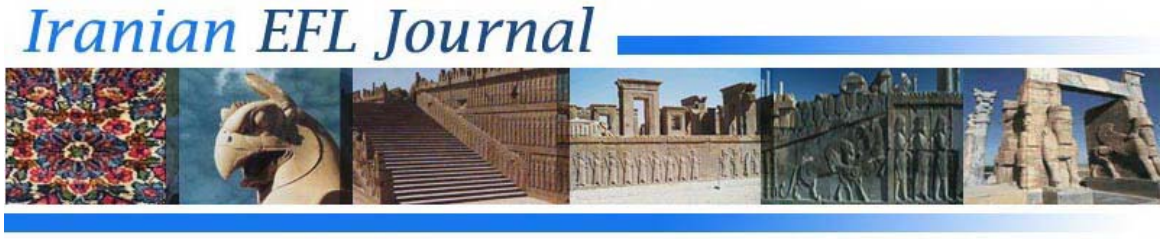

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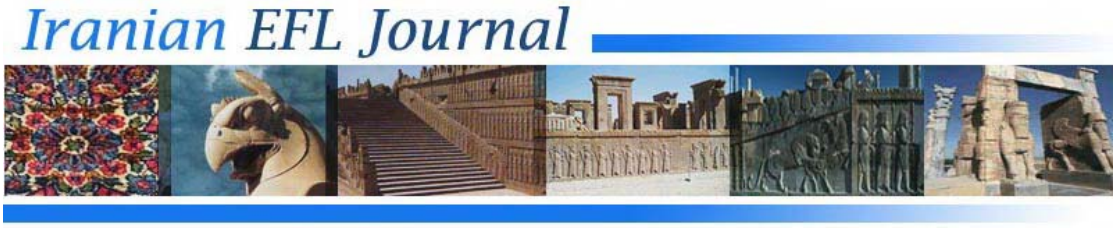

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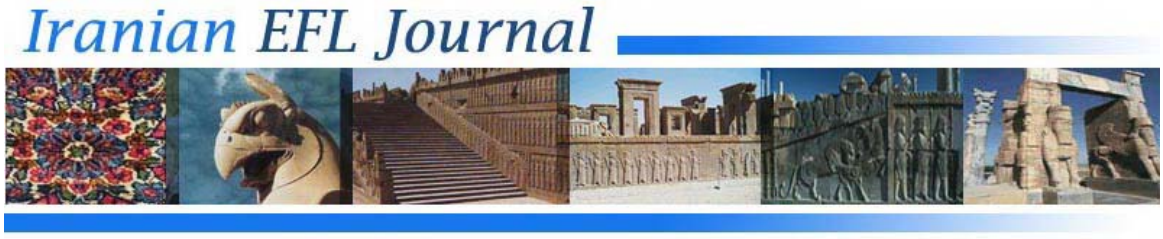

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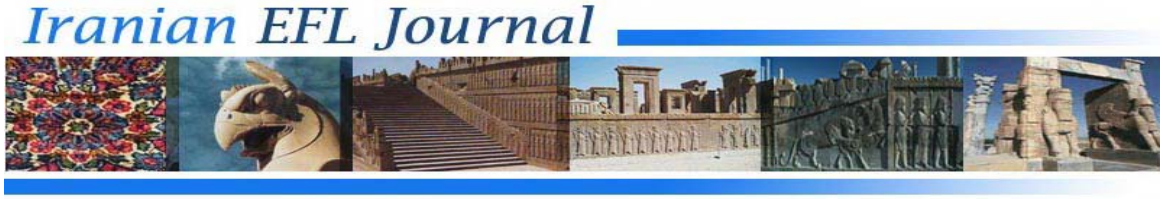

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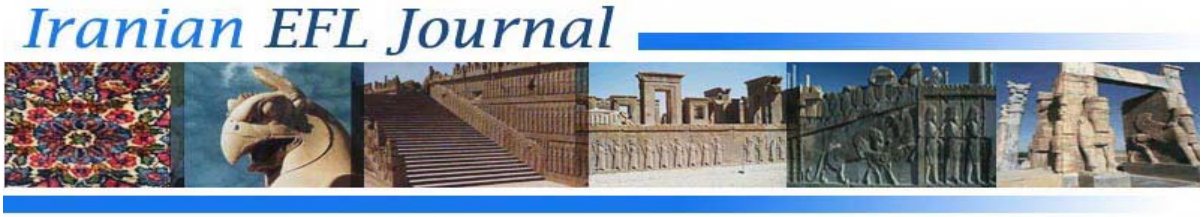

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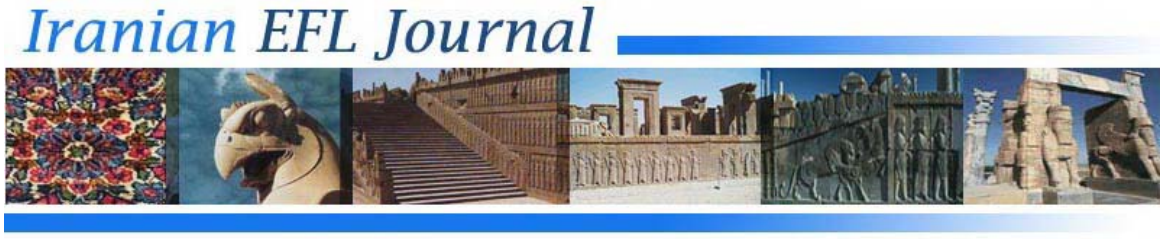
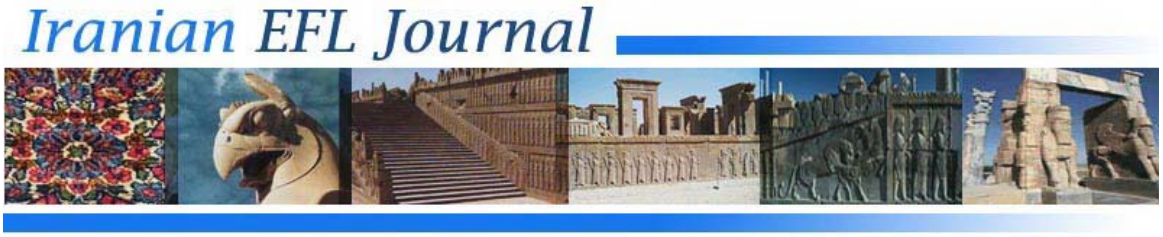


Foreword

Welcome to the first edition of the year 2012. The bi-monthly Iranian EFL Journal has attracted many readers not only from the Middle East but also from different parts of the world. The journal has also provided an opportunity for our readers to access to more articles. The journal has had strong growth over the last few years with a monthly readership now exceeding 2500 readers. For a journal examining the topic of EFL/ESL, Literature and Translation studies, the growth and readership has been pleasing. Statistically, readers are coming from almost 80 countries. In this edition, our readers can also find articles from the above mentioned domains. In the first issue of volume 8 we present 20 articles for your reading.

In the first article, the authors Jahanbakhsh Nikoopour and Mohammad Amini Farsani present depicting washback in Iranian high school classrooms: a descriptive study of EFL teachers' instructional behaviors as they relate to university entrance exam. In the second article, Reza Pishghadam and Elham Naji have done a research on applied ELT as a panacea for linguistic imperialism. In the next article, the importance of task-based teaching in second language acquisition is done by Hossein Shams Hosseini. In the fourth article, Maliheh Rezaei has studied the mediated learning experience: teacher vs. peer scaffolding modes in L2 writing classes. In the fifth paper, Rouhollah Sadeghpour has done a research on translation, to translate idioms: posing difficulties and challenges for translators. In the next paper, a corpus-based analysis of authentic audio-visual materials and its possible application in L2 teaching activities is done by Reza Ghafar Samar and Samad Hooshmand. In the seventh article, Akram Mokhtari Esfidvajani has studied the deconstructive role of environment in the process of fluidity of mind. In the next article, the impact of professional competence on choosing and using textbooks at university level is studied by Jaleh Hassaskhah and Yaghoob Salehi. In the ninth article theme-rheme patterns in English and Persian scientific texts is studied by Esmail Azizi. In the tenth article, the study of principles and techniques of bimodality



theory from ELT teachers' perspective: the case of Iranian teachers is done by Masoud Mahmoodzadeh. In the next article of the issue, Hafez Shatery has a survey on teacher vs. student-centered classroom interaction at Isfahan university. In the twelfth article of the issue, the effect of etymological elaboration on Iranian EFL learners' comprehension and retention of idioms is done by Naser Salehi. In the thirteenth article, Mahdi Rajaee Nia and Ehsan Abbaspour have studied language attitudes of Iranian junior high school students towards the English language and its use in Iranian context. In the next article, interactional metadiscourse in English and Persian research articles; a contrastive rhetoric study is done by Azar Hosseini Fatemi and Seyyed Bagher Mirshojaee. In the next article, Taher Bahrani, Abdol Majid Hayati and Bahman Gorjiyan have done a research on audiovisual mass media news and language learning In EFL context. In the next article of the issue, the effect of explicit teacher-directed noticing on learning verb + noun collocations is studied by Adeleh Heidari. In the next article of the issue, the effect of using computer-assisted language learning (CALL) on the reading comprehension of narrative texts for the Iranian university male freshmen is presented by Majid Fardy, Hossein Noori Shorabi and Yousef Mohammadi. And in the eighteenth article of the issue, Ramazan Ali Gholami has done an investigation into the emotional intelligence and the degree of success in foreign language achievement in Iranian EFL context. In the next article of the issue personal observation of three ESP classes is presented by Reza Dehghan Harati. In the last article of the issue aspects of word knowledge: receptive versus productive performances is presented by Alireza Barouni Ebrahimi and Zahra Fotovatnia.

We hope you enjoy this edition and look forward to your readership.

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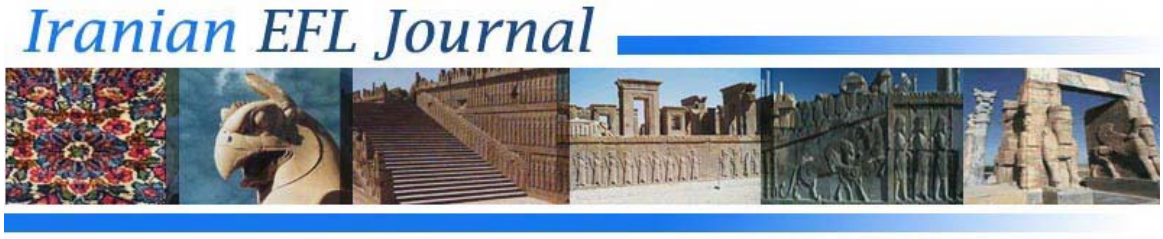

Title

Depicting Washback in Iranian High School Classrooms: A Descriptive Study of EFL Teachers' Instructional Behaviors as They Relate to University Entrance Exam

Authors

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Biodata

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Abstract

As far back as the 1980s, researchers identified many consequences of testing on curriculum and instruction. These effects included "narrowing" of the curriculum, changes in course objectives, and

revisions in the sequence of the curriculum. The current study focused on the washback effect of University Entrance Exam (UEE) in junior high school EFL classes in Iran. The researchers observed 60 high school language teachers' classes and collected data based on the above mentioned observation. The findings indicated that the NDEMT has influence on teachers` methodology, content of educational programs, students` language learning strategies, teachers' method of evaluation, students' and teachers' attitudes towards NDEMT and students' affective domain.

Keywords: Washback, Classroom observation, Iranian EFL High schools

1. Introduction

The concept of washback represents an important issue in the discussions of consequential validity and test impact. So, the notion of washback in language testing can be characterized in terms of influence which includes the potential impact on test takers, and their characteristics, on learning and teaching activities, and on educational system and society. However, it was not until recently that language testers began to take a critical look at the concept of washback and to try to determine whether it did in fact exist, whether it was predictable, what form it might take, and what explanations there were for its appearance or absence in particular settings (Alderson & Wall, 1993).

Traditionally, tests come at the end of teaching and learning process for evaluative purposes. However, with the advent of high stake public examination systems nowadays, the direction seems to be reversed. It means that testing comes first before the teaching and learning process in order to influence the learning process. Therefore, looking at the mechanisms of such a complex phenomenon by which washback works is of vital importance. Hughes (1993) discusses the mechanism by which washback works. He states that "in order to clarify our thinking on back wash, it is helpful, I believe to distinguish between participants, process and product in teaching and learning recognizing that all three may be affected by nature of the test" (p.2). To him, participants included classroom teachers, students, administrators, material developers and publishers, all of whose perceptions and attitudes toward their work may be affected by the test.

Hughes (1993) also believes that any action taken by the participants which may contribute to the process of learning. Such process includes material development, syllabus design, changes in teaching methodology, the use of learning and test taking strategies.

During the last two decades, there has been a growing interest in the phenomenon both at the theoretical and empirical levels, and the researches in this domain give an idea not only about the extent of this interest but also about the variety of directions that researchers have taken when exploring the relationship between tests and their possible impacts (Spratt, 2005; Chapelle &Douglas, 1993).While the studies on the effectiveness of preparation courses and programs for language proficiency tests are scarce, there are several studies which have concerned themselves with the washback effects of such tests on EFL/ESL classrooms (Wesdorp, 1982; Hughes, 1988; Wall & Alderson, 1993; and Alderson & Hamp-Lyons, 1996). Washback, a term popular in British applied linguistics and commonly referred as backwash in the field of general education, may be understood as the influence that a test might have on teaching and learning. The "Washback Hypothesis" as explained by Alderson and Wall (1993), assumes that "teachers and learners do things they would not necessarily otherwise do because of the test" (p. 117).Furthermore, some researchers like Swain (1985) and Alderson (1986) emphasized the potential positive aspects of test influence and urged the development of tests, which through constructive washback will have informative effects on language curriculum.

Concerns have been raised about the power of tests to affect what goes on in the classroom, the educational systems, and society as a whole, that is, the so-called washback effect. There are quite a number of studies in language education of the washback effect of large scale program on instructions, illustrating that high stake standardized tests influence teaching and learning (Pearson, 1988; Wall and Alderson, 1993; Spratt, 2005; Green,2007). In the view of instructors and students, for example, Chapelle and Douglas (1993) stated that tests contain what students must learn and therefore what must be taught. In this regard, Swain (1985) believed that teachers will "teach to a test". In other words, if they know both the content and the format of a test, they will teach their students accordingly.

2. Review of Related Literature

Wall and Alderson (1993) claimed the existence of washback and declared that tests can be powerful determiners both positively and negatively of what happens in classrooms. Also,

Andrews and Fullilow (1994) pointed out that tests have continued to exert a powerful negative washback on teaching; therefore, tests often exert a strong force which stops progress.

Moreover, recent studies have shown that high stakes testing influences teaching and learning in the following ways. Lewthwaite (2007) found that the attitudes of the teachers and students toward the usefulness of the two IELTS writing tasks. The results indicated that both IELTS task one and task two are perceived by teachers and students as having a positive effect on class-based writing skills and bearing a reasonable relationship with skills needed at faculty level.

In another study, Fournier-Kowaleski (2005), in a study of teachers' behaviors, and to a lesser extent, students' behavior, in the low stakes testing environment of an intermediate level Spanish class, found that the washback behaviors exhibited by teachers during the first quarter of teaching Spanish for the first time, and then in the subsequent quarter, teaching the course for the second time. Teachers' instructional behaviors changed during the second time teaching the course as a result of increased knowledge of the test. Factors such as past teaching experience and teacher beliefs were also found to influence changes in teachers' instructional behaviors. Secondary factors of interest such as student study habits, student perceptions of their teacher's behaviors, and the effect of tests were also investigated. The students' study and classroom behaviors appeared to change to correspond to changed behaviors exhibited by the students' teacher. The student data serves as a potential source for further investigation into the washback phenomenon.

Mizutani (2009) in investigating the washback effects of The National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) as perceived by teachers and students of Japanese, and beliefs about NCEA which contributed to the washback effects, found that participants revealed that the majority of the intended positive washback effects were promoted by the assessment, but the nature of the washback depended on beliefs about NCEA held by teachers and students. Students tended to report more negative washback of NCEA than did teachers.

Public examinations have often been used as instruments of evaluation in Iranian school system. Their relationship with the curriculum, instruction, learning, and individual chances in life is of significant importance in most societies. There is evidence to suggest that examinations may have washback effect on teaching and learning (Alderson and Wall, 1993). Positive washback, according to Bachman (1990), would result when the testing procedure reflects the skills and abilities that are taught in the course, as, for instance, with the use of an oral interview

for a final examination in a course in conversational language use. In many cases, however, "there is little or no apparent relationship between the types of tests that are used and instructional practice" (Bachman, 1990, p.283).

Language testers have very quickly entered and developed a debate on washback; the result has not been firmly justified, but a deepening awareness of the complexities of the issue, and for at least some scholars, a dissatisfaction with limiting the debate to the effects of tests on teaching and learning in classrooms (for example, Li, 1990; Raimes, 1990; Lowenberg, 1993; Shohamy, 1992; Hamp-Lyons, 1989). We must see washback as one form of impact, as suggested by Wall (1996), and impact as including every aspect of our instruments and scoring procedures. It is not enough to evaluate tests from our own perspectives; neither is it enough to evaluate them by including teachers' perspectives. Madaus' study and Smith's study both took account of teachers' views and beliefs but did not encompass students' views and beliefs. Cohen (1984) was a very early article falling within the broad construct validity approach described by Messick (1996), but regrettably it has been very little followed up. Many more studies are needed of students' views and their accounts of the effects on their lives of test preparation, test-taking and the scores they have received on tests.

A framework for measuring washback effect requires a more comprehensive model. Language testing is not limited to classrooms, and its consequences are not only educational, but also social and political. The responsibility of language testers is clear: we must accept responsibility for all those consequences which we are aware of. Furthermore, there needs to be a set of conditions and parameters inside which we are sure of the consequences of our work and we need to develop a mindful program to push outward the boundaries of our knowledge of the consequences of language tests and their practices.

This study was based on the basic model of washback proposed by Hughes (1993). The researchers considered the participants being directly influenced by the NDEMT. The participants of this study were high school teachers and those students who were about to attempt the Newly Developed English Major Test of the UEE. It is the best known examination in Iran. Due to the importance of such examination, the present study investigated some of the claims one might face about large scale exams in general and the English part of UEE in particular. To provide a reasonable answer to research questions, the researcher made use of an observation checklist to investigate the washback effect of the NDEMT in EFL classrooms.

Given the researchers` specific interest in investigation the washback effect of the so-called specialized English tests of UEE in the Iranian high schools, the following major research questions were formulated:

1. Does the content of NDEMT have any influence on the content of high school English courses?
2. Does NDEMT have any washback effect on teachers` methods of evaluation?
3. Does NDEMT have any washback effect on students` methods of evaluation?
4. Does NDEMT have any washback effect on teachers` methodology?
5. Does NDEMT have any washback effect on student learning strategies?
6. Does NDEMT have any washback effect on students` attitude?
7. Does NDEMT have any washback effect on teachers` attitude**?**

3. Method

3.1 Participants

The researchers observed 60 high school language teachers' classes and collected data based on the observations. The subjects' (teachers') age ranged almost from 25 to above years of age. 35 percent of teachers were 31-35 years old and almost 62 percent were even older. 32 percent were female and 68 percent were male EFL high school language teachers.92 percent of the sample were B.A holders and 8 percent were post-graduates. 27 percent of these teachers had 5-10 years of teaching experience while 73 percent even more years of teaching experience. They have been teaching in different grades in high school. Regarding their interest in their job, 85 percent of them expressed that they are very interested in their job. When they were asked about their level, they considered themselves to be of average (17 %), good (72 %) and very good (10 %) language level. Also, they told that they teach more than their weekly scheduled working hours.

3.2 Instrumentation

The instrument utilized in the current study is a checklist observation. The checklist consists of two parts. The first part deals with the demographic features of EFL teachers, and the second part deals with items measuring the content areas of the washback. The reliability coefficient of the observation checklist piloted was 0.82. The examination of item total correlation, however,

showed that two items, items 60 and 61 are negatively correlated with the total score. Removing these two items from the analysis did not change the value of reliability. The reliability results of the observation checklist show that the checklist seems to be reliable enough to be used as an instrument for the actual study.

3.3 Procedures

The researchers have undergone the following steps while conducting this study. First, having used a classroom observation checklist to provide adequate and genuine data about classroom language teaching, the researchers carried out a pilot study for the observation checklist. Then, based on the results of the pilot study, the researchers revised some of the items and finalized the observation checklist for the purpose of the actual study. Next, the researchers observed 60 English language teachers' classes in different educational districts of Tehran, Shahr-e Rey, and Karaj. Finally, having collected the data through observation checklist, the researchers analyzed the data using different statistical techniques and tried to answer the research questions, draw some pedagogical implications at the end of the study.

4. Results and discussion

Since observation was needed to investigate the washback effect of the NDEMT on high school English classes, the researchers considered the variables affected by the NDEMT. The NDEMT seemed to have influence on teachers' methodology, content of educational programs, students' learning strategies, teachers' methods of evaluation, students' and teachers' attitude toward NDEMT and students' affective domain. The washback –affected factors have been shown together in Table 1and Figure 1-clearly. As it is shown, the impact of the NDEMT on all these variables is statistically significant. The Figure shows that the most test impact is on students' affective domain and the least is on the content of educational programs. The washback effect of the NDEMT on teachers' methods of evaluation, students' attitude, teachers' methodology, teachers' attitude, and students' learning strategies can be sequenced due to its amount respectively. It is worth mentioning that teachers' attitude towards the NDEMT was negatively shown in the Figure.

Since the scale in the observation checklist was from -2 to +2, the statistical values are also shown in plus or minus form. There are seven important variables which have been carefully

observed to have been affected by the washback of the NDEMT in high school English language classes. It is interesting to mention that students' attitude toward the NDEMT is positive, whereas teachers' attitude toward it is negative. The effect of the NDEMT on the educational content was not so high.

Table 1.*Inferential Statistics for Observation Checklist (variables specified).*

Variable	Test of means against reference constant (value) (NikouPourCheckList.sta)							
	Mean	Std.Dv.	N	Std.Err.	Reference Constant	t-value	df	p
Teachers Methodology	0.71	0.20	60	0.03	0.00	27.45	59	0.00
Educational Content	0.25	0.09	60	0.01	0.00	22.25	59	0.00
Students Training Strategy	0.68	0.09	60	0.01	0.00	57.24	59	0.00
Teachers Method of Evaluation	1.38	0.06	60	0.01	0.00	192.22	59	0.00
Teachers Attitude	-0.75	0.33	60	0.04	0.00	-17.76	59	0.00
Students Attitude	1.23	0.11	60	0.01	0.00	90.44	59	0.00
Students Affective Domain	1.98	0.05	60	0.01	0.00	284.33	59	0.00
Check List Score	0.78	0.06	60	0.01	0.00	94.37	59	0.00

Figure 1.*The washback of NDEMT on the English classes*

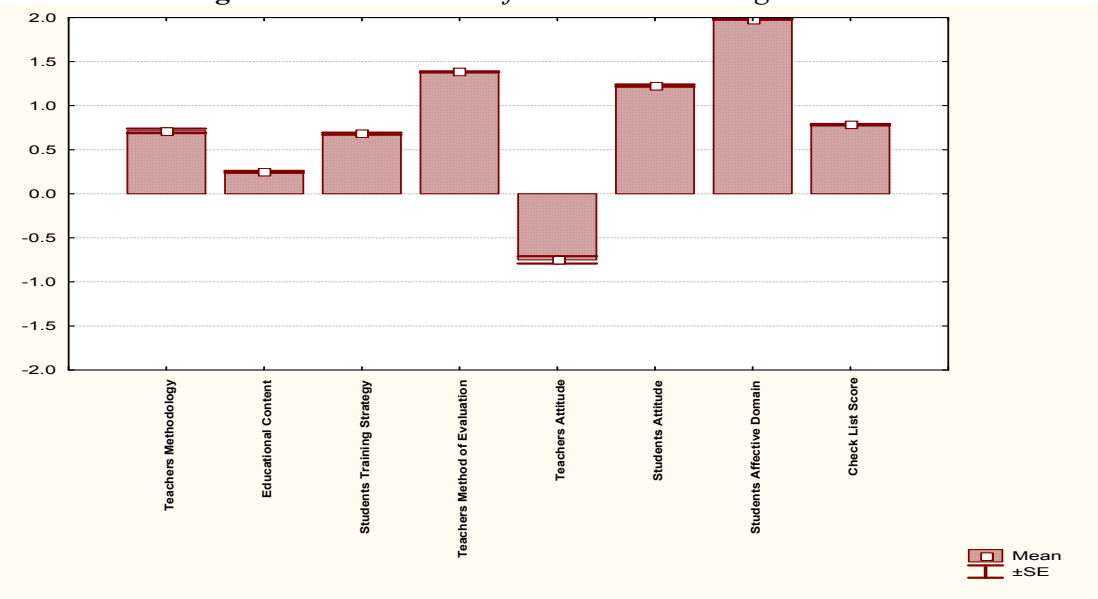

Table 2 presents data based on Friedman ANOVA and Kendall coefficient of concordance. The Friedman two-way test was used to compare dependent groups on a ranked independent variable. It is based on the Chi-square distribution. As it is shown, we can sequence the washback – affected variables observed in English language classrooms based on the results. Those variables showing higher mean and lower standard deviation indicate high agreement among subjects. As it is presented in the Table, the NDEMT has the most effect on students' affective domain and the

least on educational content. To put them in sequence according to the results, we can state them respectively as follows:

1. Students' affective domain
2. Teachers' methods of evaluation
3. Students' attitude toward the NDEMT
4. Teachers' methodology
5. Students learning strategies
6. Content of educational programs
7. Teachers' attitude toward the NDEMT

Table 2. *Friedman ANOVA and Kendall coefficient of concordance*

Variable	Friedman ANOVA and Kendall Coeff. of Concordance (NikouPou ANOVA Chi Sqr. (N = 60, df = 7) = 398.7666 p <0.00000 Coeff. of Concordance = .94944 Aver. rank r = .94859			
	Average Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mean	Std.Dev.
Teachers Methodology	3.88	233.00	0.71	0.20
Educational Content	2.06	123.50	0.25	0.09
Students Training Strategy	3.59	215.50	0.68	0.09
Teachers Method of Evaluation	6.82	409.00	1.38	0.06
Teachers Attitude	1.00	60.00	-0.75	0.33
Students Attitude	6.18	371.00	1.23	0.11
Students Affective Domain	8.00	480.00	1.98	0.05
Check List Score	4.47	268.00	0.78	0.06

Tables 3 to 8 (Appendix 1) present data analyses of the observation checklist systematically. Those items showing higher mean value and lower standard deviation indicate that subjects mostly agreed upon them. The scoring scale was from -2 to +2 to show the observers' opinions on the activities of teachers and students in English language classes observed.

Items 1 to 6 show the washback effect of the NDEMT on the teachers' method of teaching in English classes. The results show that the teachers follow a teaching-to-the-test approach and they do not utilize effective language teaching methods in their classes. Also, teachers' methods are not based on scientific theoretical foundations (Table 3, Figure 2, Appendix A).Items 7 to 19 represents the results of washback effect of the NDEMT on the content of educational programs in high school language instruction. The observation showed that teachers do not speak English in their classes, use the textbooks along with other test books, they pay attention to neither oral skills and writing nor reading comprehension and teaching reading strategies. However, they pay attention to vocabulary and emphasize structural points. They do not care teaching pronunciation

and only emphasize the lexical and structural points to be used in the NDEMT (Table 4, Figure 3, Appendix A).

Items 20 to 32 indicate data about the NDEMT's washback effect on students' learning strategies. As it has been observed, there is little creativity and innovation among students; they are not evoked to think or contemplate in the subject matter. They have rote learning and proper language learning is not encouraged in language classes. Learning objectives have been ignored and students are willing to learn some tactics for taking multiple-choice tests. They write down the points as quickly as possible. They memorize most grammatical points and have to buy test books, too. The previous exam papers are practiced in classes. Students can hardly use English in their language classes (Table 5, Figure 4, Appendix A).Items 33 to 37 show the washback effect of the NDEMT on the teachers' methods of evaluation. Teachers do not measure students' abilities. Students prefer to take the exams in written multiple-choice form. (Table 6, Figure 5, Appendix A).

Items 38 to 44 present data on the teachers' attitude toward the NDEMT. Teachers do not attempt to discover the students' talents and guide them in this regard. They have a negative attitude toward the educational system. They are not satisfied with the way the NDEMT is administered. They only prepare students for the NDEMT. They do not guide students toward playing an active part in society. They attract students' attention to superficial and classified information, whereas they do not promote creativity and contemplation in scientific matters (Table 7, Figure 6, Appendix A).

Items 45 to 53 indicate students' attitude toward the NDEMT. There is no spirit for study, research, and criticism among students. They compete with each other for being admitted in universities, and they are against any other educational mechanisms. They only think of their success in the UEE. They choose their field of study based on the reputation of the course, not based on their own interest. They have to take part in the UEE preparation classes. They can't imagine any other way other than being accepted in the UEE (Table 8, Figure 7, Appendix A). Items 54 to 59 present data on the impact of the NDEMT on students' affective domain. Students are too excited about the UEE; there is too much psychological pressure on them; and they show a lot of sensitivity toward the UEE. They have problems in affording the cost of preparation classes, and need to consult with some experts. There is a kind of phobia among them (Table 9, Figure 8, Appendix A).

5. Conclusion

Language testers have very quickly entered and developed a debate on washback; the result has not been firmly justified, but a deepening awareness of the complexities of the issue, and for at least some scholars, a dissatisfaction with limiting the debate to the effects of tests on teaching and learning in classrooms (for example, Raimes, 1990; Shohamy, 1992). We must see washback as one form of impact, as suggested by Wall (1996), and impact as including every aspect of our instruments and scoring procedures. It is not enough to evaluate tests from our own perspectives; neither is it enough to evaluate them by including teachers' perspectives. Madaus' study and Smith's study both took account of teachers' views and beliefs but did not encompass students' views and beliefs. Cohen (1984) was a very early article falling within the broad construct validity approach described by Messick (1996), but regrettably, it has been very little followed up. Many more studies are needed of students' views and their accounts of the effects on their lives of test preparation, test-taking and the scores they have received on tests.

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As a result of the data analysis, the researchers concluded that the impact of the NDEMT on all content areas was statistically significant. The most test impact was on students 'affective domain and the least was on the content of educational programs. The washback effect of the NDEMT on teachers' methods of evaluation, students' attitude, teachers' methodology, teachers' attitude, and students' learning strategies can be sequenced due to its amount respectively. It is worth mentioning that the teachers' attitude towards the NDEMT was negatively shown.

It has been proved that the Newly Developed English Major Test (NDEMT) of University Entrance Exam (UEE) in Iran has some washback effect on high school teachers and students ; it dominates language teaching and learning activities in our high schools ,and it is really the NDEMT's washback effect which imposes students to practice only those items similar in format

to those on the test, study grammar rules, apply test-taking strategies, enroll in test preparation courses, request guidance in their study, and even skip their usual classes to study for the test. It is really due to the NDEMT's washback effect that English language teachers follow a way of teaching-to-the-test in their language classes. The use of NDEMT as a variable has changed classroom teaching at the content level, or at the methodological level, or even both and also has some influence on students' and teachers' affective domain. Furthermore, the NDEMT has some positive and negative washback on the English language teaching process .Although the NDEMT has many harmful washback effects on the language teaching process; it may also have some beneficial ones.

Regarding the positive washback effect, most high school EFL teachers are determined to cover the textbooks within the expected time because they believe that students' success in their textbooks will guarantee their success in the NDEMT. There is much use of item types which have appeared on the exam when they have also appeared in the textbook. While students taking the exam, they are somehow familiar with such item types. The high school EFL teachers consider the NDEMT as a criterion for their effectiveness. If they help students pass the exam, they will be considered successful teachers. This may motivate teachers to compete and create a sense of responsibility among them. Besides, students will make a cross-comparison between their teachers, schools, materials and other university applicants' facilities. They will try to achieve more and to fill the gap. The NDEMT will encourage the students and will motivate them in learning the subject matter. All teachers do their best to provide positive classroom experiences for their students through giving tests.

Some teachers assume that the main responsibility of an instructor is to provide good instruction. As a matter of fact, good instruction cannot do much if it is not accompanied with appropriate evaluation. Appropriate evaluation provides a sense of accomplishment in the students and in many cases alleviates students' dissatisfaction, frustration, and complaints about the educational programs. The NDEMT helps the students prepare themselves and thus learn the materials. Repeated evaluations will enable students to master language. They will also benefit from the test results and the discussion over these results. Moreover, several tests or quizzes during a given term will make students better aware of the course objectives. The analysis of the test results will reveal the students' areas of difficulty and, accordingly, the students will have an opportunity to make up for their weaknesses. It is generally believed that a better awareness of

course objectives and personal language needs can help the students adjust their personal activities towards the achievement of their goals. It is quite obvious that the UEE can help us improve the quality of instruction in our educational setting. Both the test-givers and the test-takers benefit from the test results.

As for the harmful washback effect of the NDEMT, most teachers follow the textbook during the year. They work their way through the materials, unit by unit, exercise by exercise. This happens because they believe they have to "cover the book" so that their students will do well on the exam. Furthermore, less attention is paid to the development of oral skills than to written skills. This may be the effect of the exam; however, it may also be due to the fact that the textbook pays less attention to these skills, or that teachers do not know how to teach listening and speaking. Also, there is considerable exam impact on the content of reading and grammar lessons if EFL teachers use the textbook. Teachers occasionally add questions or tasks to the day's lesson, but this may be to compensate for a lack of suitable exercises in the textbooks and also because of the exam. It is important to note that the changes they do make are always changes in the direction of the exam, and it is clear that there is a "narrowing of the curriculum" as EFL teachers finish or abandon their textbooks and begin intensive work with past exam papers and commercial publications to prepare their students for the exam. At this point, there is obvious exam impact on how teachers choose their content. Many Iranian EFL teachers give extra classes to their students after normal school hours, on weekends and during holidays to work on special exam preparation materials. This implies exam impact on how teachers choose their content.

Furthermore, a number of EFL teachers consistently skip over the pronunciation part and listening part in the textbooks because they know pronunciation and listening will not be tested in the exam. Most of them do not use effective teaching methods in their classes. They follow a *teaching-to-the-test* approach in their classes. There is a kind of direction in the way they teach in language classes since they do not speak English in their classes, and students also do not show any eagerness to have interaction in class. They are only motivated to be prepared for the UEE. In addition, teachers use test books along with the students' textbook. Students are required to buy different test books. Such teachers are not willing to encourage students' creativity and innovations.

Most EFL teachers do not teach reading strategies, and only emphasize those points which will be in the exam. Pronunciation and writing skill are ignored; oral skills are not taught; only grammatical points, vocabulary items, and reading passages are taught in language classes. Students follow a kind of receptive learning in classes. They like to be spoon-fed. Discovery learning, problem solving, creativity and contemplation are not encouraged in language classes. Students ask for the points needed in attempting multiple-choice items. They believe that they need some more *tactics* and *strategies* in taking the NDEMT, so they will try to learn these points. They even prefer their final exams to be in multiple-choice form. Finally, students are dissatisfied with the way the NDEMT is prepared and implemented. Therefore, even hardworking students are disappointed with it. They compete with each other in the direction of the UEE and do not develop a spirit of research, investigation, and curiosity in their subject matter. They suffer from a psychological pressure because of the UEE. This is due to the fact that they do not consider any other success other than UEE.

The results of this study may have potentially remarkable implications for teachers, test developers, syllabus designers, and researchers. The present study investigated the washback effect of the NDEMT on students and teachers. Their views on the test content and its washback were investigated. This study showed that the NDEMT did indeed affect both what and how teachers taught and students learned. More importantly, it was found out that it is not a test alone that causes washback on testees, but the way the test is approached by administrators, material developers, and teachers themselves actually creates washback for it.

Based on the available literature on washback effect, the researcher suggests that further research on washback be needed. Such research must entail "increasing specification" of washback, and must incorporate findings in the areas of motivation and performance, as well as educational innovation, and an ethnographic perspective should be incorporated to help identify explanatory variables accounting for washback. This study was a survey study done during two years. A longitudinal research is suggested to be done to measure the washback effect of such important high-stake exams on different subject matters. Since change in high school textbook will have impact on the UEE (forwash effect), it is suggested to conduct a research on the interface between the washback and forwash effect. Further research is suggested to be done in this regard to find the extent to which test makers are aware of the washback effects of the UEE. It is important to find out the mechanism in which washback works. The UEE has washback on

students, teachers, material writers, researchers, and even society as a whole. This mechanism (investigated in this research) should be clarified to provide a reasonable basis for the measurement of UEE washback. It is suggested to conduct some empirical research to look for ways to minimize harmful washback effects and ways to promote positive or beneficial washback effects of UEE on the English language education in Iran. This study was carried out at the micro level (the effect of the NDEMT on individual students and teachers).It is suggested to do the same research at the macro level (the impact of the NDEMT or even UEE as a whole on society and on educational systems).

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Appendices

Appendix A

Table 3.*Friedman ANOVA and Kendall Coefficient of Concordance*

Variable	Friedman ANOVA and Kendall Coeff. of Concordance (NikouPo ANOVA Chi Sqr. (N = 60, df = 5) = 269.3495 p <0.00000 Coeff. of Concordance = .89783 Aver. rank r = .89610			
	Average Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mean	Std.Dev.
Q1	3.84	230.50	1.38	0.87
Q2	4.70	282.00	1.93	0.25
Q3	4.72	283.50	1.95	0.22
Q4	4.69	281.50	1.93	0.25
Q5	1.11	66.50	-1.87	0.43
Q6	1.93	116.00	-1.05	0.34

Figure 2.*Washback effect of NDEMT on teachers' method of teaching*

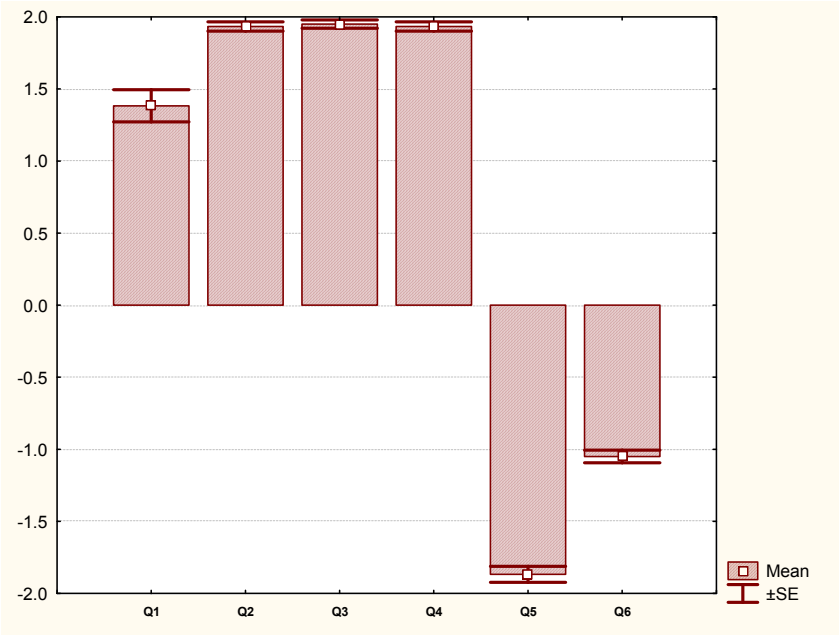


Table 4. *Friedman ANOVA and Kendall Coefficient of Concordance*

Variable	Friedman ANOVA and Kendall Coeff. of Concordance (NikouPourCheckLis ANOVA Chi Sqr. (N = 60, df = 12) = 661.9459 p <0.00000 Coeff. of Concordance = .91937 Aver. rank r = .91800			
	Average Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mean	Std.Dev.
Q7	2.98	179.00	-1.90	0.30
Q8	10.01	600.50	1.92	0.28
Q9	9.91	594.50	1.88	0.32
Q10	10.02	601.00	1.92	0.28
Q11	2.93	176.00	-1.92	0.28
Q12	10.02	601.00	1.92	0.28
Q13	2.98	178.50	-1.90	0.30
Q14	5.44	326.50	-1.03	0.37
Q15	2.98	178.50	-1.90	0.30
Q16	10.01	600.50	1.92	0.28
Q17	9.95	597.00	1.90	0.30
Q18	3.82	229.00	-1.47	0.98
Q19	9.97	598.00	1.90	0.30

Figure 3. *Washback effect of NDEMT on the content of educational programs*

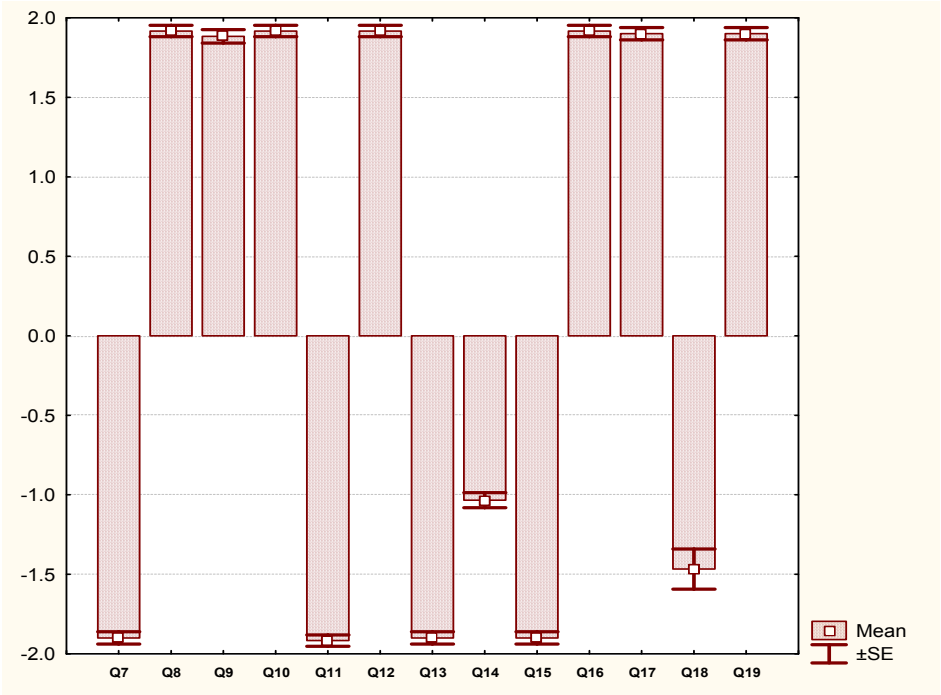


Table 5. *Friedman ANOVA and Kendall Coefficient of Concordance*

Variable	Friedman ANOVA and Kendall Coeff. of Concordance (NikouPourCh ANOVA Chi Sqr. (N = 60, df = 12) = 655.7072 p <0.00000 Coeff. of Concordance = .91070 Aver. rank r = .90919			
	Average Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mean	Std.Dev.
Q20	2.47	148.00	-1.90	0.30
Q21	2.49	149.50	-1.88	0.32
Q22	9.07	544.50	1.78	0.61
Q23	2.79	167.50	-1.73	0.45
Q24	5.67	340.00	1.08	0.28
Q25	9.32	559.50	1.90	0.30
Q26	9.40	564.00	1.92	0.28
Q27	9.47	568.50	1.93	0.25
Q28	9.47	568.50	1.93	0.25
Q29	9.40	564.00	1.92	0.28
Q30	9.40	564.00	1.92	0.28
Q31	9.78	586.50	2.00	
Q32	2.26	135.50	-2.00	

Figure 4. *Washback effect of NDEMT on students' learning strategies*

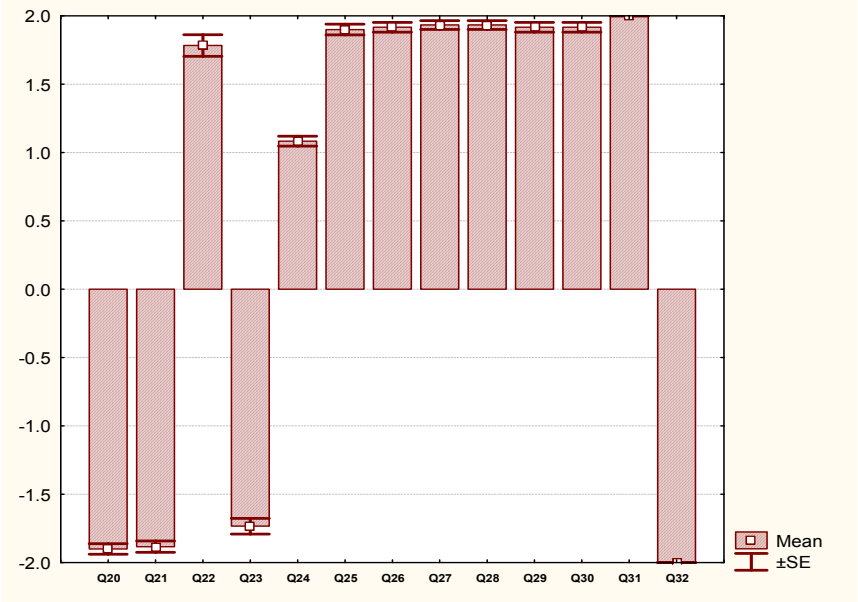


Table 6. *Friedman ANOVA and Kendall Coefficient of Concordance*

Variable	Friedman ANOVA and Kendall Coeff. of Concordance (NikouPou ANOVA Chi Sqr. (N = 60, df = 4) = 240.0000 p <0.00000 Coeff. of Concordance = 1.0000 Aver. rank r = 1.0000			
	Average Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mean	Std.Dev.
Q33	1.00	60.00	-1.08	0.28
Q34	3.50	210.00	2.00	
Q35	3.50	210.00	2.00	
Q36	3.50	210.00	2.00	
Q37	3.50	210.00	2.00	

Figure 5. *Washback effect of NDEMT on teachers' methods of evaluation*

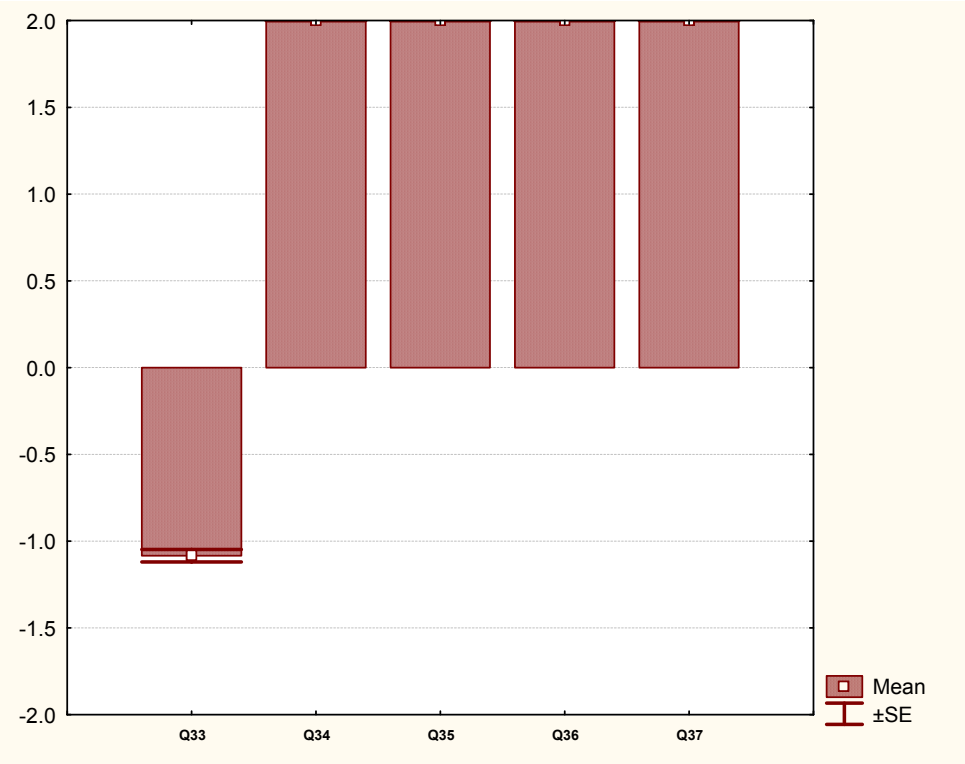


Table 7. *Friedman ANOVA and Kendall Coefficient of Concordance*

Variable	Friedman ANOVA and Kendall Coeff. of Concordance (NikouPourCheckLis ANOVA Chi Sqr. (N = 60, df = 6) = 337.5542 p <0.00000 Coeff. of Concordance = .93765 Aver. rank r = .93659			
	Average Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mean	Std.Dev.
Q38	3.13	188.00	-1.78	0.42
Q39	2.88	173.00	-1.88	0.32
Q40	3.18	191.00	-1.65	0.97
Q41	6.48	389.00	1.90	0.30
Q42	2.88	173.00	-1.88	0.32
Q43	6.51	390.50	1.92	0.28
Q44	2.92	175.50	-1.87	0.34

Figure 6. *Washback effect of NDEMT on teachers' attitudes*

Table 8. *Friedman ANOVA and Kendall Coefficient of Concordance*

Variable	Friedman ANOVA and Kendall Coeff. of Concordance (NikouPourCheckLis ANOVA Chi Sqr. (N = 60, df = 8) = 365.3970 p <0.00000 Coeff. of Concordance = .76124 Aver. rank r = .75720			
	Average Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mean	Std.Dev.
Q45	1.00	60.00	-1.88	0.32
Q46	6.95	417.00	2.00	
Q47	6.95	417.00	2.00	
Q48	5.12	307.00	1.53	0.50
Q49	6.48	389.00	1.88	0.32
Q50	2.88	173.00	0.83	0.56
Q51	6.62	397.00	1.92	0.28
Q52	5.42	325.00	1.62	0.49
Q53	3.58	215.00	1.15	0.36

Figure 7. *Washback effect of NDEMT on students' attitudes*

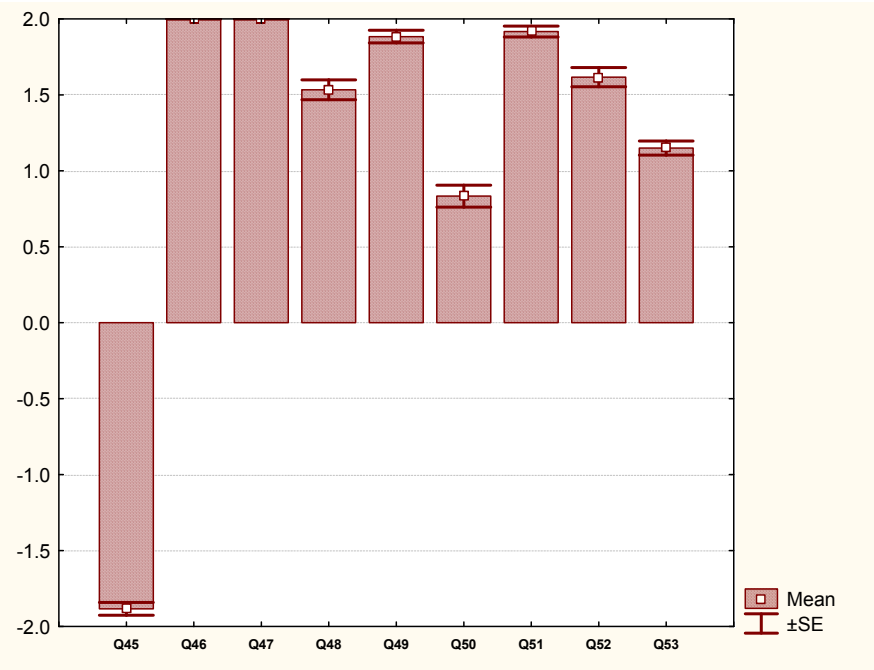
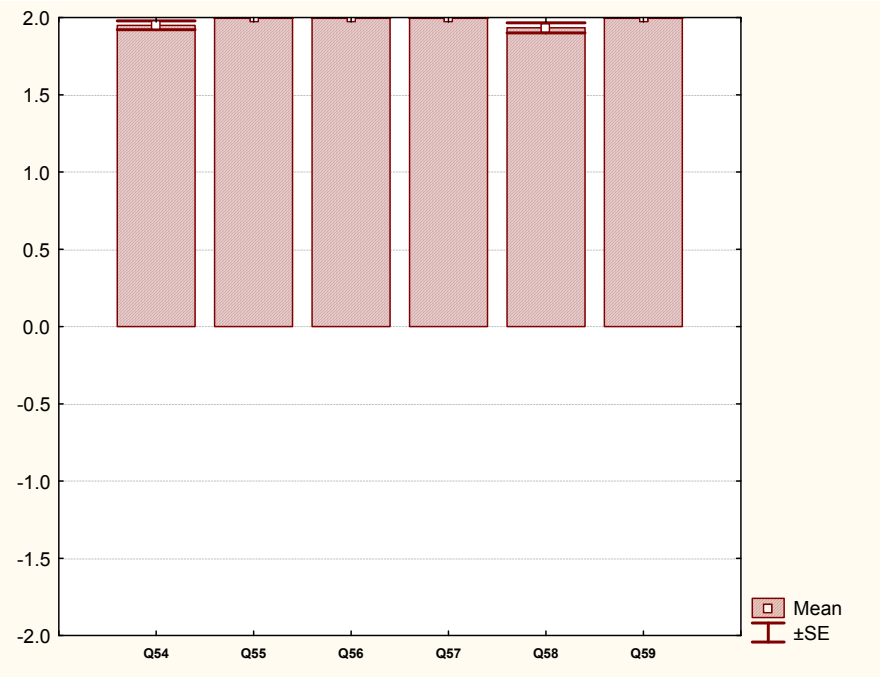


Table 9. *Friedman ANOVA and Kendall Coefficient of Concordance*

Variable	Friedman ANOVA and Kendall Coeff. of Concordance (NikouPourChe ANOVA Chi Sqr. (N = 60, df = 5) = 14.42857 p < .01311 Coeff. of Concordance = .04810 Aver. rank r = .03196			
	Average Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mean	Std.Dev.
Q54	3.41	204.50	1.95	0.22
Q55	3.56	213.50	2.00	
Q56	3.56	213.50	2.00	
Q57	3.56	213.50	2.00	
Q58	3.36	201.50	1.93	0.25
Q59	3.56	213.50	2.00	

Figure 8. *Washback effect of NDEMT on students' affective domain*



Appendix B

Observation Checklist

Part 1: Demographic features

Age:
Sex:
Educational certificate:
Teaching experience
Student grade level:
Job dedication level:
Language proficiency level:
Mean of working hours:

Part 2: EFL classroom observation

One of the most effective methods of assessing the impact of **University Entrance Exam (UEE)** on the EFL teaching program is the use of observation as a research tool. The observer is kindly and honestly requested to mark the checklist based on his/her observation of an EFL class. The observer is highly appreciated if s/he marks the checklist based on the following pattern: (strongly agree++,agree +,undecided 0,disagree -, strongly disagree--.).

		--	-	0	+	++
1	The UEE has influenced teachers' teaching methods.					
2	EFL teacher is familiar with the NDEMT.					
3	There is a special bias in English language classrooms.					
4	The teacher has a teaching-to-the-test approach in the class.					
5	The teacher uses active teaching methods in class.					
6	The teacher`s method is based on a scientific basis.					
7	The teacher uses English language in the class.					
8	There is a huge gap between the educational curriculum and students' creativity.					
9	The teacher uses student textbook for teaching.					
10	The teacher uses extra-curricular materials besides textbook.					
11	The teacher pays attention to oral skills.					
12	The teacher uses test books in class.					
13	The teacher pays attention to the writing skill.					
14	The teacher pays attention to the reading comprehension skill.					
15	The teacher teaches reading strategies to students.					
16	The teacher pays attention to vocabulary instruction.					
17	The teacher explains grammatical rules deductively.					
18	The teacher focuses on correct pronunciation.					
19	The teacher explains the vocabulary and grammatical rules used in the UEE.					
20	Students show great creativity in EFL classes.					
21	The tasks and activities used in classes lead students to deeply think about the materials taught.					
22	Mechanical learning is the desired goal in language classroom.					
23	Language classes encourage effective language learning.					
24	Learning objectives have been deemphasized in language classes nowadays.					
25	Students ask for learning tactics to answer multiple choice					

	items.					
26	Students take notes as quickly as possible what the teacher is teaching.					
27	Learning experience at school has a partial role in coaching students for the UEE.					
28	For the present time, entering university is independent from the qualitative process of learning.					
29	Students memorize many grammatical points.					
30	Students are obliged to buy English test books.					
31	The exact UEE items of the previous years are practiced in class.					
32	Students use English language easily in class.					
33	The teacher assesses students' abilities.					
34	Students tend to practice only the points similar to those included in the UEE.					
35	Students tend to learn tactics for answering multiple choice items.					
36	Language tests are administered in written form only.					
37	Students prefer their final exams to be in the multiple-choice form.					
38	The teacher tries to recognize and guide students' talents.					
39	The teacher has a positive attitude towards the educational system.					
40	The teacher is satisfied with the (English) language testing procedure in UEE.					
41	The teacher prepares students for the UEE.					
42	The teacher prepares students towards having active role in the society.					
43	The teacher attracts students' attention to superficial info and classified teaching materials.					
44	The teacher enhances creativity and contemplation towards scientific issues in students.					
45	There is a spirit of studying, research, and criticism among the students.					
46	The competition among students is in UEE direction.					
47	Students are repellent against any other educational mechanism.					
48	Thinking of success is dominant on students' minds.					
49	Students choose their field of study according to its popularity.					
50	Students choose their field of study based on their interests.					
51	Students are obliged to participate in UEE preparation					

	courses.					
52	Students do not have any contribution to the industrial and technological development of their country.					
53	Students do not see any other choices for themselves except for being accepted in UEE.					
54	Students have a fake excitement towards UEE.					
55	Students have an intense psychological sensitivity towards UEE.					
56	There is a great deal of stress on UEE applicants.					
57	It is hard for UEE applicants to afford the preparation courses.					
58	Students need an educational counselor for UEE.					
59	UEE causes fear and dread among students.					

Observer`s name(s)
Signature
More comment (if any),

Title

Applied ELT as a Panacea for Linguistic Imperialism

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Abstract

Linguistic imperialism sees the preeminence of the English language as established and consolidated through the constant reproduction of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages (Phillipson, 1992). In this line, English Language Teaching (ELT) is seen as a key player in cultural imperialism and a purveyor of Anglo-Americanization. This paper aims at presenting *Applied ELT* as a kind of solution to linguistic imperialism. This novel approach, put forward by Pishghadam (2011), takes a proactive stance towards the global spread of English. Applied ELT offers insights on how English classes can be directed towards fostering national and cultural identity and enhancing life qualities in learners. With the introduction of "Life Syllabus", based on the seven unique features of English classes, Applied ELT gives a new sense of meaning to the teaching and learning of the language.

Keywords: Linguistic imperialism, Applied ELT, Identity, Culture, Life Syllabus.

1. Introduction

The ubiquitous spread of the English language has triggered different accounts of its causes, consequences, and benefits. Some like Pennycook (1989) have interpreted it as 'colonial', while others like Crystal (1997) have termed it a 'global' language. To Phillipson (1992), the global spread of English, especially through English Language Teaching (ELT), is part of linguistic imperialism. Accordingly, Phillipson (1992) introduced the notion of 'English linguistic imperialism', and its propagation by global capitalism. He described the spread of English as a postcolonial endeavor of English-speaking countries to maintain dominance over the developing countries. Anderson (2003) called linguistic imperialism theory as the symbolic birth of an intellectual shift in applied linguistics in the 1990s due to its challenging the common assumptions in mainstream ELT.

Linguistic imperialism has left detrimental effects in many societies. English proficiency is the flagship of social and linguistic capital, American culture is seen as cultural capital, and images and identities of English-speaking people as symbolic capital (Park, 2008,). People's thinking modes, value judgments, etc. are overrun by the English language, which may result in full or partial loss of national and self-identity (Isik, 2008).

It goes without saying that the dominance of English in the world is inevitable, and of course it is not illogical to claim that with the dominance of English language and culture, local languages and cultures may get threatened. That is why; any endeavor which helps locals to maintain their own identity and status is laudable. In this line, concepts, such as World Englishes, (Kachru, 1982) Multicompetence (Cook, 1999), and Native speakerism (Holliday, 2005) have come into being. Pishghadam (2011) also proposed a new approach in second/foreign language education, which we believe it can contribute to the revival of local cultures and identities. This novel paradigm, called *Applied ELT*, looks at ELT as a full-fledged and scientific field of study ready to contribute and be applied to other disciplines.

The following article seeks to present the perspective of Applied ELT to the issue of linguistic imperialism. While this novel approach recognizes the imperialistic spread of the English language, it proposes a both critical and functional outlook towards the field. We will first give a general overview of related notions and arguments, and then present the solutions Applied ELT has to offer to the issues brought about by the global teaching of English.

2. Imperialism, Neocolonialism, and Globalization

Imperialism is a type of relationship whereby "one society or collective in more general terms can dominate another" (Galtung, 1980, as cited in Phillipson, 1992, p. 52). It manifests itself in a variety of ways: economically, politically, militarily, communicatively, culturally, and socially. From this view, the world can be divided into two domains: the Center (the powerful Western countries) and the Periphery (the developing ones). Based on Galtung's (1980, as cited in Phillipson, 1992) theory, there are four mechanisms working behind imperialism, i.e. penetration, fragmentation, marginalization, and exploitation, the latter being the most essential one.

The term neocolonialism was first coined by Kwame Nkrumah in 1965. According to him, neocolonialism is the worst form of imperialism. While formal methods of control like the implementation of administrative structures, and the use of military forces were direct, neocolonialism suggests an indirect form of control through economic and cultural dependence.

Globalization is an important phenomenon related to neocolonialism. Most efforts to identify globalization's multiple dimensions identify three broad types: economic, political, and cultural dimensions. Economic globalization includes the impact of global capitalism over local financial institutions and businesses; political globalization can be identified in the threat against national governance; and cultural globalization deals with the vivacity and viability of divergent cultures (Sifakis & Sougari, 2003). Cultural globalization has also been characterized by depictions of Western domination, American hegemony and diffusion of American goods, consumer goods and lifestyles, and the inevitability of cultural homogenization (Friedman, 1994; Barber, 1995; Latouche, 1996, as cited in Block & Cameron, 2002). Bourdieu (2001) sees globalization in this vein, as "a mask of policy aiming to universalize particular interests of the economically and politically dominant powers and to extend to the entire world the economic and cultural model that favors these powers" (p.84) by presenting it as a norm, requirement, and universal destiny. The cultural dimension of globalization is of the same importance as the sociopolitical or economic aspects of it: language, identity, life style are not abstractions but fundamental elements of our existence (Chirimbu, 2011).

As already mentioned, the spread of the English language is said to have strong ties with globalization. In Bourdieu's (2001) view, the spread of English is one manifestation of this major phenomenon. As Sweeny (2006) argues, globalization acts as a force in the cultural hegemony

that English has caused with the aid of a huge range of messages, icons, and brands. Pennycook (2007) asserts that among the languages, it is English which is closely tied to the process of globalization. Bottery (2000) holds that the development of globalization has been related to the authority of the English language. Chang (2006) indicated that cultural globalization was closely linked with the development of English as a global language. After the Second World War, US economy, technology, and culture have made English part of the linguistic ecology of most nations (Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008). Block and Cameron (2002) relate the global spread of English to the rise of transnational corporations, increasing number of world organizations and the Internet. Graddol's study (2000) suggests that in the year 2000 there were about a billion English learners-but a decade later, the numbers will have doubled. The fact that are more non-native than native users of English around the world (Crystal, 1997), bears testimony to the inseparable association between English and globalization.

A dominant explanation for the global spread of English, especially through ELT practices, is that it is a direct continuation of the imperialist or hegemonic practices and a form of neocolonialism; hence the term English linguistic imperialism has come into being.

3. Linguistic Imperialism

Language as a medium for transmitting ideas plays a crucial role in by providing the link between the dominant and the dominated groups and represents the basis upon which the notion of linguistic imperialism is built. Phillipson (1992) restricts linguistic imperialism to the English language and defines it as the way "the dominance of English is asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages" (p. 47). Linguistic imperialism sees the current dominance of English as caused by the imperialistic impulses of the "center" or capitalist countries. Phillipson (1992) states that "English linguistic hegemony can be understood as referring to the explicit and implicit values, beliefs, purposes, and activities, which characterize the ELT profession and which contribute to the maintenance of English as dominant language" (p. 73). Phillipson (1992) sees ELT as one of the main forces which have driven English forward.

Kachru (1986, as cited in Crystal, 1997) classified countries into three groups: The *Inner Circle* is formed by countries where English is the Native or major Language. The *Outer Circle* could be related to countries where English is the Second Language —ESL—, with a long

history of institutionalized functions. Finally, the *Expanding Circle*, where English is studied as a Foreign Language (EFL). The linguistic relation between the center and periphery has been and continues to be one of dominant and dominated languages (Phillipson, 1992).

According to Phillipson (1992), linguistic imperialism is based on the following arguments:

- English is best taught as a monolingual language
- An ideal teacher is a native speaker
- The earlier English is taught, the better the results
- The more English is taught, the better the results
- If other languages are used much, the standards of English will drop.

Phillipson (1992) associates linguistic imperialism with cultural imperialism, social imperialism, media imperialism and educational imperialism. The spread of English is seen as imposing Anglo-Saxon Judaeo-Christian culture and transmitting certain cultural stereotypes and values as universal and others as inferior (Richards & Schmidt, 2002). As stated by Phillipson (2009), English is projected as bringing "success, influence, consumerism and hedonism" (p.20). Sociolinguists who share this view, believe that government agencies and private enterprises in the US and the UK are doing all they can to spread their 'sphere of influence '(Modiano, 2001). Therefore, from the viewpoint of Phillipson (1992, 2009) ELT is a purveyor of Anglo-Americanization and McDonaldization around the world. The concept of McDonaldization is designed to bring the idea of rationalization into the twenty first century. According to Scott (2006), it is related to four concepts in production (the capitalist system), work (the bureaucracy), consumption (fast food restaurant) and culture (valuing efficiency, rationality and so on).

Spolsky (2004) claimed that Phillipson's (1992) book subscribed to a "conspiracy theory". He thought that Phillipson (1992) had attributed the basis for the spread of English to effective management by the core English-speaking countries and their governments. However, Phillipson (2009) critiqued Spolsky's (2004) assertion, stating that his notion of linguistic imperialism "cannot be reduced to a 'conspiracy' theory, a concept that is theoretically inadequate and often serves to deflect attention from underlying foreign policy goals and the realities of how dominance and and inequality are maintained and legitimated" (p. 72). In response to Spolsky's (2004) "did it happen or was it caused?" Phillipson (2009) states that it is

implausible to conceive of the spread of language without there being any causal factors, and thus Spolsky's argument is meaningless.

Phillipson (2009) sees the globalization of English in diverse contexts interconnected with the asymmetrical flow of products, ideas, and discourses. "Globalisation and Englishization are discreetly penetrating a mass of economic, political and cultural domains in complex ways" (Philllipson & Skutnabb, 1999, as cited in Phillipson, 2009, p. 30). By terming English "lingua frankensteina", and "lingua cucula", Phillipson gives a rather harsh critique of the language, calling it "diabolical" among other names.

4. Reactions to Linguistic Imperialism in ELT

There have been different reactions towards linguistic imperialism, by scholars from the center (e.g. Holliday, 1994; Crystal, 1997; Widdowson, 1998; Pennycook, 1998 & Cook, 1999) and the periphery (e.g. Canagarajah, 1999; Rajagopalan, 1999, 2004; Kumaravadivelu, 2006). As the literature reveals, most scholars have drawn on appropriation and localization as means of dealing with the issue.

Widdowson (1998), on the one hand, rejected the notion of linguistic imperialism He argued that there is a fundamental contradiction in the idea that language exerts hegemonic control, because if that were the case we would not have been able to control it.

Crystal (1997) related the dominance of English as a global language to the power and perceived success of the people and nations who speak it and to its being at the right place and the right time. He viewed English as a neutral and beneficial tool for global understanding, and free of any cultural, ideological and political baggage.

Taking a postcolonial and postmodern view, Canagarajah (1999) argued for a 'third way' of critical negotiation in which "periphery students will become insiders and use the language in their own terms according to their own aspirations, needs, and values … not as slaves, but as agents … creatively and critically" (p. 176). He adopted a micro-social view towards the issue and argued that teachers should develop awareness about the sociopolitical side of teaching English. English teachers carry with them the possibility of ideological domination and linguistic imperialism, so he urges teachers to critically examine their hidden curricula (Shelton, 2007) He maintained that teachers can act to change the situation by having a conscious awareness of the ideological tensions involved in ELT and turning them into conscious resistance. Therefore, his

solution to the conflict was critical pedagogy as opposed to mainstream pedagogy. Critical pedagogy recognizes that knowledge is relative and political and that teaching always entails the transfer of some values; therefore, learning should include the learners' personal background, and environmental issues, especially cultural traditions and social practices (Shelton, 2007).

In the same vein, Pennycook (1998) presented a postcolonial/postmodern perspective towards the issue. He held that ELT was a crucial part of the colonial enterprise. Concerning the association between ELT and colonialism, Pennycook identified deep links between the practices and theories and contexts of ELT and the history of colonialism, which as he states derives from broader European cultures and ideologies. He also advocated critical pedagogy as a counterattack to the problem.

Rajagopalan (1999) criticized Phillipson (1992) by stating that 'the concerted rhetoric currently being orchestrated against the pretensions of English . . . can understandably lead to an increasing unease and a nagging guilt complex among those who are involved . . . in the enterprise of spreading the English language' (p.200). Rajagopalan (2004) mainatained that English in its current status or as he calls it "World English" cannot be restricted to the native-speaker standards. He also embraced the idea of "hybridity" as an antidote to the situation. Hybridity points out to the mixing of local and global cultures in globalization (Scott, 2006). Bhabha (1994) defines these cultural spaces as the 'Third Space', "a place where we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of ourselves" (p. 56). This notion has also been termed "glocalization" (Robertson, 1995) to show a synergetic rather than a hierarchical relationship between the global and local.

Originally a Kachruvian (1982) term, the notion of "World Englishes" put native speaker standards into question and recognized the development of different varieties of English around the world. These varieties have developed or are developing their own structural features, lexis, phonology, pragmatics, and discourse practices (Mesthrie & Bhatt, 2008). The philosophy behind World Englishes argues for the importance of inclusivity and pluricentricity of these varieties (Bolton, 2004), which have deviated from American and British norms. The philosophy has now gained such leverage that in order to be functional postmodern global citizens, even Anglo-Americans, need to be proficient in negotiating a repertoire of World Englishes (Canagarajah, 2006).

In the same vein, Cook (1999) put forward "Multi-competence theory", claiming that L2 users are not the same as the monolingual native speakers because their knowledge of the second language and their knowledge of their first language is not the same, and they think in different ways. Therefore, teachers should aim at creating successful L2 users, not promoting imitation of native speakers and make systematic use of the first language in the classroom. This theory highlights the capabilities of L2 users and undermines the native speaker.

Kumaravadivelu (2006) encouraged the promotion of ELT in ways that best serve the sociopolitical, sociocultural, and socioeconomic interests of the local people and the bringing in of the elements of particularity into their professional enterprise. He called this a facilitating factor in canceling out the harmful effects of barriers to 'postmethod pedagogy'. Kumaravadivelu posed two barriers in this respect: 'pedagogical' and 'ideological', associating the latter with imperialistic (Phillipson, 1992) and colonial (Pennycook, 1998) character of English and English-language education. According to him the ideological barrier is much more important than the pedagogical because it is managed and manipulated by much larger forces with a formidable political, economic, and cultural agenda.

In the next sections, the proposals of Applied ELT towards English linguistic imperialism will be dealt with.

5. Applied ELT

According to Pishghadam (2011), the field of ELT has become established enough to be applied to other fields of study. It has nurtured from different disciplines, such as applied linguistics, sociology, psychology neurology, computer, etc and it is now fully grown to announce its independence, and to have a productive, contributing role. The argument is that different disciplines generally have two aspects of theoretical and applied. ELT has emerged out of theoretical linguistics, and now it is studied as a branch of applied linguistics. However, the bulk of literature in the area reveals the interdisciplinary nature of the field and its scientific acceptability.

From this perspective, ELT is seen as a positive enterprise, one that can play a valuable role not only in education, but also in enhancing life qualities. With the introduction of new notions such as 'Life Syllabus' (Pishghadam & Zabihi, in press) learners of English can take advantage of language classes by internalizing skills necessary for life, hence 'ELT for life'. Applied ELT

considers an evolutionary paradigm of *only-language* classes to *language-and life* classes and proposes *life-and language classes*, as a justifiable shift in the paradigm. The approach centers on seven unique features of English language learning classes:

- Discussing a large number of social, scientific, and political topics
- Holding pair work and group work in class
- Comparing two cultures
- Getting acquainted with the words and grammar of another language
- Speaking in another language in which one can show their own real self
- Taking language learning very seriously
- Having a fun, friendly atmosphere for learning.

Applied ELT sees advantages in each of these features, i.e. the freedom to express oneself, especially in another language by which one can project his/her true identity, learning grammar as a tool for enhancing the higher-order abilities of students (Vygotsky, 1978, cited in Pishghadam, 2011), and enhancing logical thinking and conveying different types of understanding of words in the two languages. Furthermore, different tasks such as watching movies, listening to songs, discussing different topics and the like create a much different classroom environment. Embracing "World Englishes" (Kachru, 1982), Applied ELT adopts a postmodern view to language teaching.

5.1. Communicative language teaching: Appropriating it to the local context

There have been attacks in the literature on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as an import of linguistic imperialism. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), CLT is an 'approach', rather than a method. It originates from Hymes (1972) concept of "communicative competence" and Halliday's (1970) functional account of language use. The exercises and activities carried out in this approach include information sharing, negotiation of meaning, interaction and meaningful use of language (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). The basic principles of this approach are the following:

1. A significant amount of pair work and group work is conducted.
2. Authentic language input in real life context is provided.
3. Students are encouraged to produce language for genuine, meaningful communication.

Phillipson (2009) claims that “the modern focus on communication skills, defined by ‘experts’, entails the dissemination of American ways of speaking” and names this “communicative imperialism.” (p.61). Holliday (1994) maintains that the 'integrationist' (or process-oriented and pedagogically flexible) methods from BANA (standing for Britain, Australasia, and North America), are difficult to employ in TESEP countries (derived from tertiary, secondary, primary; referring to the countries which respectively supply and receive ELT resources, because their educational system is 'collectionist'. He argues that the spread of English is evidence of “modernization theory” (Tollefson, 1991), which claims that Western societies provide the most effective model for underdeveloped societies attempting to reproduce the achievements of industrialization. According to Li (1998), a group of South Korean secondary school English teachers’ perceived difficulties in adopting CLT reveals that the difficulties have their source in the differences between the underlying educational theories of South Korea and those of Western countries. Hu (2002) also explains the "cultural resistance" to this "pedagogical import" by criticizing the equal relationship it imposes between teacher and student and its distortion of the conventional role of teachers as authoritative figures. As stated by Ellis (1996), “the pivotal Western notion of the 'teacher-as-facilitator' as being an ideal teacher student relationship makes its entry here” (p. 216). Viet (2008) notifies it as a type of “pedagogical imperialism”. Authors point out that education is situated in a particular cultural environment, and that within this environment, the definition of ‘good teaching’ is socially constructed (Pennycook, 1989; Holliday, 1994; Kramsch & Sullivan, 1996). Therefore, CLT is viewed as an Anglo-Saxon method of teaching, imposing its superiority in non-Western classrooms.

However, based on Applied ELT most features of a communicative approach can in fact serve beneficial in countries where the culture of learning is more traditional. Although "practicality" is an important factor, the innate contrast of a communicative approach with the habitual models of teaching and learning should not be seen as a drawback. In fact, communicatively-oriented classes can be an asset in these types of settings. For students who are bombarded with teacher-centered classes with a spoon-feeding system, holding pair work, group work and discussions helps them in developing social skills and interpersonal competencies. In a study, Pishghadam (2008) demonstrated that literary discussion in a foreign language learning

class can enhance critical thinking abilities of language learners. Hosseini, Pishghadam and Navari (2010) also revealed that ELT classes that are based on interaction and group work can increase the emotional intelligence of learners. These are all due to the unique features of English classes, in which the usual monologic pattern of learning is replaced by dialogue. Therefore, learners experience a different learning environment that helps them improve their communicative competencies by having opportunity for self-expression. Thus, those who suffer from shyness, anxiety and stress can overcome their problems with the aid of communicatively-oriented English language classes, and become more socially competent. These classes can increase learners' self-confidence and willingness to communicate. Furthermore, CLT can enhance risk taking (Richards & Rodgers, 2001), and creativity by seeing "learning as a process of creative construction" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 172).

Nevertheless, the serious drawbacks of CLT certainly need to be taken into account and appropriated to the local context i.e., the presentation of culture, 'native speakerism' (Holliday, 2005) and the use of the mother tongue (Swan, 1985). Instead of having direct presentation of target culture and extensive use of authentic texts, there should be inclusion of the local culture and texts written in English based on local material. Authentic texts should contain aspects of cultures from all around the world, since English belongs to all nations. In other words, textbooks that are "culturally authenticated" (Sifakis & Sougari, 2003) and give a sense of ownership to learners should be used. Learners should feel free to speak with an accent they are more comfortable with, as long as it is comprehensible. And finally, the learners' mother tongue should be used whenever needed.

5.2. ELT classes: Enhancing home culture identity

According to the tenets of linguistic imperialism, the "English- learning boom" has caused interest in Anglo-American culture. In fact, English is being used as a vehicle for cultural domination (Derbel & Richards, 2007). Asraf (1996) holds that the images associated with English lead to the belief that native cultures and languages are backward and incapable to deal with the modern world. Schuman (cited in Asraf, 1996) views English language teaching as a culturally imperialistic force.

For example, in Iran (the country where the authors live), teachers of English mostly have a positive attitude towards the American culture and try to imitate the American accent

(Pishghadam & Saboori, 2011). By interviewing some Iranian students majoring in English, Rahimi (2011) showed that they favored the acceptance of a global culture in lieu of the preservation of their local culture and praised the English language. Other studies have also shown that Iranian learners and teachers of English prefer the English culture instead to their home culture (Pishghadam, 2007; Pishghadam & Navari, 2009). All these are proof of the cultural imperialism that Phillipson (1992, 2009) warns about.

In line with Applied ELT, the schizophrenic nature of English classes, in which two cultures, i.e. home culture and foreign culture have dialogue is in fact one of the unique features of ELT classes, and can help learners to create or maintain identities (Pishghadam, 2011). Learners are expected to become sensitive to the differences of two cultures, trying to acquire the positive points of the foreign culture, nativizing in a way that the native culture is promoted and enriched. Thus, this two-edged sword of ELT provides an opportunity for highlighting one's native culture and inhibiting cultural derichment. Moreover, following the line of thought presented by EIL (English as an International Language), in today's world, English should be used as a language to describe one's own culture and concerns to others (McKay, 2004), paving the way for subaltern cultures to have a voice in international communication. As a matter of fact, "language education provides its participants with challenges and opportunities for a continual quest for subjectivity and self-identity" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p.175). Graddol (cited in Burns & Coffin, 2001) maintains that English has two main functions in the world: it provides a vehicular language for international communication and it forms the basis for constructing cultural identities. Regarding the relationship between an international language and culture, Smith (1976; as cited in McKay, 2003) posited some assumptions: Learners of an international language do not need to internalize the cultural norms of the native speakers of that language, the ownership of an international language becomes denationalized and the educational goal of learning an international language is to enable learners to communicate their ideas and cultures to others. Smith (1981) also notes, "language and culture may be inextricably tied together but no one language is inextricably tied to any one culture and no one needs to become more like native speakers in order to use English well"(p. 10). As stated by Pishghadam (2011), English language teachers have an important role in fostering the cultural and national identity of students and if not well-trained, they can cause cultural derichment. Hence, due to their comparative nature, English language learning classes have the potential to be sites for

developing and fostering the cultural and national identity of learners and playing an additive role in this respect.

In order to highlight home culture identity, ELT materials certainly need to include local culture. Many advantages have been recognized for the inclusion of local culture in ELT course books. Cummins (1994) states that choosing a familiar content facilitates the learning process, gives cognitive power to learners and brings in the positive contribution of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) as a gateway for identity formation and empowerment. Including international context, topics, and international varieties of English in ELT materials is a helpful step, but since they do not reflect the issues, culture, and realities of an EFL context (Canagarajah, 2006; Kumaravadivelu, 2006), high levels of mental and psychological involvement of learners cannot be realized. Dealing with familiar issues, context, and basically home culture, increases the personal attachment of both learners and teachers (Isik, 2008) by letting them "invest something personal in the learning process" (p. 140).

Another factor which can help SLA identity in developing national and cultural identity is the rejection of native-non-native speaker dichotomy. If learners see themselves as "multicompetent speakers" and not "failed native speakers" (Cook, 1999), they will comfortably use the language to project their own identity. They will see no use in imitating English native speakers or adopting their cultural norms. Therefore, the identity that they will construct by learning English will be at the service of their national and cultural identity and be a reflection of themselves, not others in them.

5.3. Moving beyond language classes to language-and-life classes

A very fresh outlook offered by Applied ELT is centering English lessons on life skills, such as emotional intelligence, creativity, critical thinking, extroversion, risk taking, ambiguity tolerance, improvisation, etc. English language learning classes have the potential to enhance these qualities in learners. Language a second/foreign language is a complex and challenging process, which demands constant testing, hypothesizing, formulating and reformulating on the part of learners. Moreover, many social and psychological factors need to be handled at the same time. This viewpoint of learning English makes room for much maneuvering in periphery countries.

Curriculum, syllabus, and material can be designed on the basis of developing essential skills, and thus direct language learning towards psychological purposes. Thus, English language classes will be seen a kind of "therapy". As Nunan (2003) states, the emergence of English as a global language will seriously influence language planning and policy making in every society. In this line, ELT policies can shift towards "language for life purposes", especially in EFL contexts, where learners may not need much to use the language for real-life purposes. In this line, "Life Syllabus" should become an alternative to traditional, communicative, and integrated syllabus models, and aim at addressing the life qualities mentioned before. This way, learners develop a new sense of interest in English language classes, one that is more worthwhile.

This trend gives English courses a new flavor. Learners do not go to English classes to become familiar with Anglo-American culture, or to learn a language for its own sake, but to boost their social competencies, become more prepared to deal with unprepared situations, and internalize life skills. This stance taken by Applied ELT gives a novel purpose to teaching and learning English and gives a new sense of meaning to the field.

6. Conclusion

The purpose of this article was to present a blended vision of ELT, by taking into account the potential threats of linguistic imperialism and the positive contribution of English language learning classes. Awareness of linguistic imperialism helps us to turn ELT into the benefit of our own local context. If teachers are cognizant of the potential threats of linguistic imperialism, they can prevent deculturation of learners. Localizing ELT material in favor of one's native culture can be a good solution not only in thwarting the cultural imperialism brought about by ELT, but also in enculturing students. Furthermore, the unique features of English classes, once appropriated to the local context, offer a great deal of opportunities.

While linguistic imperialism has brought with it the great wave of more English learning and teaching and necessitated a huge investment of time and money in the field, periphery countries can use this as a chance to their own benefit. In this respect, Applied ELT opens a new area of research. Periphery countries should come up with ways to implement systematic and scientific localization in all areas of ELT, especially in material designing. Syllabus designers can think of ways to design and implement "Life Syllabuses", by diagnosing

the areas that need to be targeted. In fact, ELT classes can be places in which some qualities of life are enhanced and promoted.

Overall, instead of leading to a "guilt complex" (Rajagopalan, 1999) among English language practitioners, ELT can be treated as a constructive discipline. Certainly, we cannot isolate ourselves from the global village or deny the important role of English in today's world. What we can do is turn ELT into our own service. This will be a great step in reducing dependency on center countries and having a voice in the globalized field of ELT.

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Title

The Importance of Task-Based Teaching in Second Language Acquisition

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Abstract

Task-Based language teaching has attracted the attention of second language learning which was coined and later developed by second language researchers and educators in reaction to other teacher-dominated, form-oriented methods. Since a better understanding of the theories of Task-Based English Teaching is a prerequisite to better understanding of the perceptions of teachers and how these perceptions affect their teaching, this paper attempts to deal with the issue of task-based in language teaching classrooms in detail.

Key words: Task-based English Teaching, Teachers' Perceptions, and SLA.

1. Introduction

During the past decade, Task-Based language teaching has attracted the attention of second language learning. The term "Task-Based" was coined and later developed by second language researchers and educators in reaction to other teacher-dominated, form-oriented methods (Long & Norris, 2000). Many researchers like Long and Crookes (1992) advocated an

approach in which students are given functional tasks that encourages their focus on the meaning and real world purposes.

A better understanding of the theories of Task-Based English Teaching (TBET) is a prerequisite to better understanding of the perceptions of teachers, and how these perceptions affect their teaching. Therefore, the literature review will focus on the development of language teaching approaches towards TBET, and basic assumptions and the theories of TBET. These changes in teaching approaches should be made explicit to teachers; so that they can understand the rationale behind the implementation of TBET or that, they may be aware of the inefficacy of the other approaches and the need to develop their knowledge and methodologies in adopting TBET.

The term task can mean different things to different people, and hence there are different interpretations of the word task. If we consider what the concept of task is and what other people have written about it, we find that the term has been defined in a variety of ways. In general education as well as other fields such as psychology, there are many different definitions of tasks. There is also quite a variety from within the field of second language teaching. A broad definition can be the following:

A task is an activity, which requires an individual, or a group of people to arrive at an outcome based on some given information. As a result, tasks include activities like cooking a meal, building a bookcase, buying a pair of shoes, filling out a form, making a hotel reservation, and finding an address. In other words, a task refers to different activities people do in everyday life.

This definition is a non-technical, non-linguistic one. In fact, it describes the sort of things that non-linguists would tell you they do if they were to be asked. In the same way as learners, if asked why they are attending a language course, are more likely to say, “So I can talk to my neighbors.” than, “So I can master the use of the subjunctive.” The Concept of “task” is defined differently among linguists advocating and researching TBLT. These definitions generally embed the criteria for task-based teaching. In fact, the differences are reflected in their scopes of coverage, which depend on the underlying assumptions of the linguists and researchers. Therefore a more specific definition, distinguishes language-mediated activities from other kinds of activities:

A task is an activity, which requires learners to use language, with emphasis on meaning, to attain an objective. In other words, a task can be considered as a piece of classroom work, which involves learners in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form.

In implementing Task-Based English Teaching, the design of the syllabus at the planning stage plays a significant role. The Task-Based approach to language teaching includes three types of syllabuses, namely the procedural, the process and the task syllabuses (Long & Crookes, 1992). Task-based needs analysis to identify target tasks to:

1. Classify into target task types:
2. Derive pedagogic tasks.
3. Sequence to form a task-based syllabus.
4. Implement with appropriate methodology and pedagogy.
5. Assess with task-based, criterion-referenced, performance tests.
6. Evaluate program.

2. Task-Based Syllabuses: Procedural, Process and Task Syllabuses

Swan (1985) stipulates that defective language learning often occurs because of faulty syllabus design, not teaching approach. He states that "the student does not learn the language properly because we do not teach the right things or because we organize what we teach in the wrong way" (p. 10).

Nunan (1989) declares that the task-based syllabus is based on "an analysis of human learning in general and/or second language in particular" (p. 55). However, it was suggested that the task-based syllabus has not received enough research interests in SLA investigation. A task-based syllabus is more dealt with the process dimensions of learning than with specific content and skills. Nunan (1989) specifies two types of tasks, real-world tasks and pedagogical tasks. Tasks form the basis of the syllabus in which these tasks can be grouped around a common theme.

2.1. The Procedural Syllabus

According to Long and Crookes (1992), an example of the procedural syllabuses is the Bangalore/ Madras Communicational Teaching Project, which was conducted by Prabhu (1987).

The project focused on "meaning, i.e., task-completion, not language" through communication. Students needed to solve a problem or complete a task in each lesson. Opinion-gap, information-gap and reasoning gap activities were used in the project. The methods included the pre-task in which teacher presented or demonstrated the task, then it was followed by the task proper which was conducted by individual student. It ended with teacher feedback.

However, Long and Crookes (1992) criticized the project for being teacher-fronted and the preset tasks were not based on an analysis of students' learning needs. In addition, it lacked the use of pair work or group work that could engage students in the experience of communication and language use. In fact, a formal evaluation was not conducted after the project.

2.2. The Process Syllabus

The process syllabus is another task-based approach to course design which looks into the learner development in terms of the learning processes and styles. Long and Crookes (1992) cite Breen (1987) suggested incorporating a content syllabus within a process syllabus which includes "a *repertoire* of communication" for learners to work on. The basic idea is that the course design should provide the resources and materials for making general decisions about classroom language learning, alternative ways for making the decisions, alternative activities and a resource bank of pedagogic tasks for students (Long & Crookes, 1992).

However, the process syllabus has received some criticism including lack of a formal evaluation, unrealistic expectations in the performance of teachers and learners, a radical teacher-student relationship in the classroom, immense requirement for materials and resource. Indeed, the process syllabus also demonstrates lacks in the following aspects - a needs analysis prior to course, criteria for grading and sequencing tasks, focuses on form and SLA theory or research base.

2.3. The Task Syllabus

Richards and Rogers (2001) illustrate the differences of a conventional syllabus and a task-based syllabus. A conventional syllabus includes the following categories: themes and topics, text types, vocabulary items, language structures, functions, macro-skills – reading, writing, listening, speaking, competencies etc. Task-based language teaching is more acceptable to SLA researchers when a focus on form is advocated. Long and Crookes (1992) favor the task-syllabus for a number of reasons.

An integrated approach to TBET ensures an integration of language and content instruction but it does not guarantee accuracy as learning outcome. The selection of tasks is the starting point that looks into learner interest and level of development. The course designer needs to pay attention to both a content syllabus and a linguistic syllabus. Prabhu (1987) points out that, "no syllabus of generalized task can identify or anticipate all the sources of challenge to particular learners" (p. 89). Thus, grading tasks cannot follow a precise algorithmic procedure but rather must proceed intuitively in accordance with a general assessment of task complexity (Ellis, 2003, p. 73-74). Tasks do not need to be graded as the same level of precision as linguistic content, so in a task-based syllabus, it is not so strict that the teaching and the learners' syllabi need to match. So, both focused and unfocused tasks are selected. The linguistic syllabus may include content obligatory language (i.e. the language that is required to learn a particular content) and content-compatible language (the language that can be usefully taught within the context of a particular content domain but which is not required for its successful mastery) (p. 76). The shortcoming of an integrated approach is that "learners may not be developmentally ready to process the linguistic forms that have been targeted for acquisition (Ellis, 2003, p. 76).

From the descriptions given by Ellis (2003), it is appropriate to conclude that teachers need to experiment with different design because as "there can be no guarantee that the links the designer establishes between form and meaning will be valid for the learner (p.78). By doing so, learners are given different designs some of which may be suitable for their learning style. They should be psychologically ready and prepared to design a TBL syllabus which will be taught by them. Their decisions on designing the syllabus, sequencing the tasks...can ultimately affect the learning outcomes. Tasks provide students with the chance to

experience real-world like language communication in the classrooms, nevertheless, teachers or syllabus designer can still incorporate a focus on form in the syllabus by using traditional instructional devices like exercises or focused tasks.

3. Types of tasks

The classification of tasks can be different depending on the perspectives of the linguists or researchers. Some classifications are general and others are more specific. The following is on the different types of tasks described in the literature.

3.1. General types of tasks

Willis (1996) proposes six task types according to knowledge hierarchies:

1. listing
2. ordering and sorting
3. comparing
4. problem solving
5. sharing personal experience
6. creative tasks

Pica, Kanagy and Falodun (1993) classify tasks according to the types of interaction in the product:

1. jigsaw tasks
2. information-gap tasks
3. problem-solving tasks
4. decision-making tasks
5. opinion exchange tasks

It is important for course designers and teachers to familiarize themselves with the ways to classify tasks. The different components of a syllabus can be fulfilled as to be made up of different types of tasks.

3.2. Real World Tasks versus Pedagogical Tasks

Richards (2001) distinguishes tasks into two types – *pedagogical tasks* and *real world tasks*. "Pedagogical tasks are based on SLA theory and are designed to trigger second language

learning processes and strategies" (p.162). Examples of pedagogical tasks are jigsaw tasks, information-gap tasks, problems solving tasks, decision-making tasks and opinion exchange tasks. According to Richards (2001), real world tasks "are designed to practice or rehearse those activities that are found to be important in a needs analysis and that turn out to be important and useful in the real world" (p.162). He further comments on the concerns teachers have on TBET including the broad definition of tasks, the unclear procedures for task design and selection and the emphasis on fluency over accuracy. The above concerns have inhibited the implementation of TBET in English teaching.

3.3. Focused Tasks versus Unfocused Tasks

Ellis (2003) distinguishes tasks into "unfocused" and "focused". In the case of unfocused tasks, no attempt is made to design the task to " trap" learners into using a specific linguistic feature...In contrast, focused tasks aim to induce learners to process, receptively or productively, a predetermined linguistic feature...Focused tasks, then, have two aims; "one is to stimulate communicative language use as with unfocused tasks, the other is to target the use of a particular, predetermined target feature in meaning-centered communication (p. 65).

In language pedagogy, there are two rather different attitudes regarding the use of tasks. "In task-supported language teaching, focused tasks have been incorporated into traditional language-based approaches to teaching. For example, the PPP approach makes use of focused tasks in the final stage of a sequence of learning activities that begins with the presentation of a pre-selected linguistic form followed by controlled practice. Learners are made aware of the linguistic focus and the task serves to provide opportunities for learners to use the preselected language item in free production. In such an approach, then, focused tasks serve as a methodological device for implementing a *structural syllabus*. In TBET, tasks whether of the unfocused or focused kind, are treated as units of teaching in their own right and serve as the basis for designing complete courses. In this case, a task is the actual means for constructing the syllabus" (Ellis, 2003, p. 65).

4. Sequencing Tasks

Appropriately, sequenced tasks are very important to the effectiveness of the task-based syllabus. The process of selection and sequencing of tasks plays an important role in a task-based syllabus. The selection of appropriate tasks, either focused or unfocused, could promote the use of focused linguistic forms. The sequence of tasks including the linguistic forms as well as content can ensure the level of difficulty is appropriate for learners at certain stages of learning. That means learners are linguistically and semantically prepared and ready to perform more challenging tasks and to achieve "maximum learning" (Ellis, 2003, p. 67).

A task-based syllabus should have focused tasks and unfocused tasks (Ellis, 2003). Ellis (2003) also attempted to identify the criteria for task sequencing in terms of complexity including task input, task conditions, the process of performing a task and task outcomes. To sequence tasks, appropriate criteria for grading their level of difficulty for the learner have to be identified. This will suffice in the preparation of a task-based syllabus consisting entirely of linguistically focused tasks or a mixture of focused and unfocused tasks. Such a syllabus introduces a focus on form into a meaning-centred curriculum; that is, the syllabus consists of "tasks" as defined above but also allows also for the systematic treatment of linguistic form (Willis, 1996, p. 66).

Nunan (1989) provides some useful advice on sequencing and integrating tasks. He suggests that it is important to "look at the integration of communicative tasks with other tasks and exercise types which are designed to help students develop the enabling skills they will need to communicate successfully, or which are designed to develop such skills as learning-how-to learn" (p.118). In this way, teachers are able to exercise their professional judgment to choose appropriate teaching approach for their context in which students can obtain optimal learning of knowledge as well as skills.

One way to sequence tasks using a psycholinguistic processing approach (Nunan, 1989) in which tasks are sequenced according to the cognitive and performance demands exerted upon students as demonstrated in three levels – processing in the form of comprehension tasks, productive in the form of controlled production activities and interactive in the form of authentic communications.

Another way of sequencing task emphasizes task continuity within a unit of work. According to Nunan (1989), task continuity "refers to the chaining of activities together to form a sequence, in which the successful completion of prior activities is a prerequisite for succeeding ones" (p. 119). In fact, a textbook *The Challenge* is used to demonstrate how text continuity is dealt with; and the flexibility that teachers should enact in designing a task-based course. The textbook includes "modules" that are then divided into "chains" and there are various steps in each chain and two tasks at the end of the chain.

These chains in the module are related to the theme but they are not interdependent. The omission of one chain does not affect the quality of the learning. In fact, teachers and students can decide which chain they want to undertake depending on student ability and progress. The four macro-skills are included in each chain and students are required to listen, write, analyze, make notes, interview and report or discuss in pair or group.

Students must complete each step in the chain, as the preceding step is necessary for the succeeding step as it provides necessary information related to the task. The approach used in *The Challenge* is flexible as it allows teachers and learners to choose the direction for learning. The needs and language proficiency of learners can be catered for if textbooks can provide such flexible approach to material design.

The aim of sequencing task is to make sure that it is at the appropriate level of demand for students. The danger of inappropriately sequenced tasks is that it can lead to unfavourable learning outcomes. According to Mok (2001), difficult tasks lead to the reliance on lexicalized interaction which would result in "fossilization and may produce only routine solutions to communication problems" (p. 23). Easy tasks hinder interlanguage development as no further consolidation has gained in the learning process. Skehan (1996a) proposes using language factors and cognitive factors to sequence tasks. These factors are described as follows:

Language factors

- syntactic complexity and range
- lexical complexity and range

Cognitive factors

- familiarity of material in the task
- nature of material: abstract vs. concrete
- reasoning operations required
- degree of structuring contained (p. 24)

Richards and Rogers (2001) points out that sequencing of tasks according to task complexity plays an important role besides selecting tasks. However, it is undeniable that "task difficulty is itself a concept that is not easy to determine" (p. 232). Richards and Roger (2001) cite Honeyfield's (1993) criteria for deciding task complexity: Procedures, input text, output, amount and type of help given, role or teachers and learners, time allowed, motivation, confidence, learning styles (Richards & Rogers, 2001).

5. Task Complexity

Task complexity plays an integral role in selection and sequencing of tasks. Task complexity in task design is based on the following criteria (Ellis, 2003):

1. Factors relating to input include:

(i) Input medium – whether the information is presented in written or pictorial form, whether learners can decode it in their own time or in the lesson, or whether it is culturally familiar or unfamiliar. It is believed that pictorial input is easier than writing and then oral, also familiar information is easier than unfamiliar information.

(ii) Code complexity – it relates to the lexical and syntactical complexity of the input. Texts with high-frequency vocabulary and a low level of subordination are easier to understand than texts with low-frequency vocabulary and complex sentence structure. Research indicates that elaborate input (input that includes paraphrases and glosses) is more comprehensible than simplified input.

(iii) Cognitive complexity – it concerns the "cognitive demands of processing the content" of the input information, whether the information type is static, dynamic or abstract. It was found that tasks with abstract ideas are more challenging than tasks with names of objects and actions (Prabhu, 1987). Another factor is the amount of information – including the elements or relationships involved. The degree of structure is also an element that

affects cognitive complexity. Tasks with identifiable time sequence and clear structure are easier to comprehend.

(iv) Context dependency – whether contextual support like visual information is included. Context-free input is more complicated for learners. It was found that "texts supported by photographs, drawings, tables and graphs are easier to understand" (Nunan, 1989, p. 69).

(v) Familiarity of information – it relates to "the relationship between the thematic content of the task and the individual learner's world knowledge" (Nunan, 1989, p.70). Learners may feel stressful when they are asked to communicate in an unfamiliar topic.

2. Factors relating to task conditions:

(vi) Conditions influencing the negotiation of meaning – the chance and time for negotiation of meaning can affect the task complexity. A one-way task does not have as many chances for negotiation of meaning rather than two-way tasks.

(vii) Task demands – whether the task involves a single or a dual demand, for example, to mark the route on the map imposes a single demand and to mark the route and describe it imposes a dual demand.

(viii) Discourse mode – a monologue promotes fluency and a dialogue can enhance accuracy and complexity.

3. Factor relating to the process of performing a task:

(ix) Reasoning needed – information-gap tasks are the easiest, reasoning-gap intermediate and opinion-gap tasks the most difficult. The number of steps involved can also affect the complexity in the process of performing a task.

4. Factors relating to task outcomes:

(x) Medium of the outcome – pictorial and written products are easier than oral ones. For beginner learners who have not yet learned to speak or write in the language, it may be appropriate to use simple comprehension tasks.

(xi) The scope of the outcome – tasks with closed outcomes are easier than those with open outcomes.

(xii) The discourse domain of the outcome – the level of complexity is ranked from easy to difficult: lists/ description – narration/ classification – instruction/

arguments. The degree of complexity is related to the level of detail in the product. The complexity of instruction depends on the number and content of the specific directives.

(xiii) Complexity of the outcome – straightforward outcomes with a simple decision is easier than those with multi-faceted judgments. The greater the precision of the outcome, the more complex the task is as it requires greater lexical and syntactical accuracy (Ellis, 2003, p. 73).

In considering task complexity, it is appropriate to look at individual learner differences which in turn impact on task difficulty. According to Ellis, task difficulty can be adjusted by certain methodological procedures which "increase or ease the processing burden placed on the learner" (Ellis, 2003, p. 67). Teachers are responsible for imposing these procedures, for example, use of pre-task activities such as pre-teaching of vocabulary useful for the tasks or provision of planning time.

6. Task Cycle

Task designers have to ensure that a particular group of learners are given appropriately sequenced tasks with the right level of difficulty for learners" competence. Skehan (1996b) points out that the teachers need to be decisive of their choices in the different stages of task implementation. He has devised a comprehensive table to demonstrate the different stages of a task cycle.

Table 1: Stages in task implementation (Skehan, 1996b, p.24)

	Purpose of phase	*Examples*
Pre-task	Cognitive: ease subsequent processing load	*foregrounding, e.g. introduction to topic of task* *observing* *doing similar tasks* *planning*
	Linguistic: Introduce new forms into attention	*explicit teaching implicit teaching* *consciousness-raising*
During task	Manipulate pressure: influence processing balance	*speed, deadlines* *stakes* *number of participants*

	Calibrate: influence processing balance	*provide visual support introduce surprise elements*
Post-task	Retrospect: remind learners of importance of form	*public performance analyse* *consciousness-raise*

It is clear that there are stages in the task implementation: the pre-task, during task and post-task. Each stage has its specific purposes to achieve. It is crucial that teachers realize these purposes in helping them facilitate students' learning.

According to Nunan (2001), language teaching pedagogy in the different stages needs to take into account three components:

(1) Language data: samples of spoken and written language. With exposure to a language, learning of its form, function and use is more likely to happen. Both authentic and non-authentic materials are useful for learners.

(2) Information: refers to "experiential information about the target culture and the linguistic information about the language systems" (p. 2). This information of the grammatical principles and rules can be presented inductively or deductively.

(3) Opportunities for practice: extensive practice is essential for language learning.

Nunan (2001) distinguishes practice into tasks, exercises and activities. "A task is a communicative act" which has no focus on form and no linguistic outcome. An exercise has a focus on form and a linguistic outcome. An activity also has a focus on form and a communicative outcome (p. 3). As mentioned earlier, tasks are then further classified into real-world tasks and pedagogical tasks. Pedagogical tasks are carried out in the classroom to "activate acquisition processes" (p. 5). Once the pedagogical tasks are specified, it is necessary for the syllabus designer to identify the knowledge and skills that learners need to have as to carry out the tasks in the lessons (p. 5). Therefore, teachers need to be properly informed and trained in the methodologies in order to achieve more effective implementation.

7. Role of Teacher and Learner

The role of teacher and the role of learner are interactive and inseparable. Regarding the role of teachers, Murphy (2003) points out that the main role of teacher in TBET is a facilitator of learning: "teachers should always facilitate learning which involves balancing the amount of exposure and use of language, and ensuring they are both of suitable quality" (p. 57). It also highlights the learner-centeredness of TBET that suggests teachers to pay attention to learners' needs, to motivate them and help them build up self-confidence, positive learning attitudes and strategies. The process of learning is seen as important as the outcome. In addition, teachers should value the significance of cooperative and collaborative learning. The overall learning environment should be supportive for students to improve their language proficiency.

Willis (1996) states that the role of the teacher "is to select topics and tasks that will motivate learners, engage their attention, present a suitable degree of intellectual and linguistic challenge and promote their language development as efficiently as possible" (p. 23).

"One can generalize here and say that the teacher, in a task-based approach, needs to command a significantly wider range of skills than in more structural approaches. These include:

- an ability to select and sequence tasks for supplementary activities
- the competence to organize, appropriately, pre- and post-task activities
- a willingness to adapt task difficulty during the actual task phase
- a sensitivity to individual differences and the capacity to adapt tasks to take account of differences in learner orientation." (Skehan, 1996b, p. 30)

Therefore, teachers should aim to develop the skills suggested by Skehan (1996b) in order to improve their teaching effectiveness.

Teachers are confronted with immense challenge in catering for individual variation in TBET because they need to maintain a balance between providing appropriate instructions to individual learners and designing tasks for learners in general. In implementing tasks, it is important to create conditions for a focus on form while the actual learning of the specific structure may not be effective due to the individual developmental sequence of the learners. Nevertheless, a focus on form helps learners notice

the structure and may eventually lead to acquisition. Teachers, as syllabus and task designers as well as instructors, must take into account learner needs and then derive appropriate types of instruction.

Swan (1985) also thinks that "theoretical confusion can lead to practical inefficiency, and this can do a lot of harm, with time and effort being wasted on unprofitable activities while important priorities are ignored" (p. 9).

TBET requires different and distinctive roles of learners, teachers and learning processes. Willis (1996) points out that exposure, use and motivation are essential conditions for language learning and task-based approach can engage learners in real interaction and fulfill the above conditions. Mok (2001) illustrates explicitly the change in the role of learner. He believes that learners should be involved in evaluating their learning. The learning goals and/or objectives should be made explicit to them so that they can be responsible for checking, monitoring and finally evaluating their own learning...the teacher is in a position of offering preparation and different support to the learners, beside being an organizer of activities and a resource person.

Murphy (2003) attempted to establish the importance that learners actually interact with the tasks in the classroom besides focusing on accuracy, fluency and complexity (p. 352). He cited Skehan (1998) and suggested that "teachers are primarily concerned with pragmatic issues, such as how learners can be encouraged to engage with tasks more effectively, and how tasks can be linked to form a coherent scheme of work" (p. 353). Indeed, Murphy pointed out that learner participation could influence task performance ultimately.

> Learning outcomes are a product of three main factors; the contribution of the individual learner, the task, and the situation in which the task is carried out. This means any pre-designed task will be changed by the way the learner interacts with it (Murphy, 2003, p. 353).

Murphy proposed that it is essential for the teachers to make clear the pedagogical objectives of the task to the learners, as they need to realize their learning purposes to achieve the pre-designated learning outcome. In order to cater for individual differences, a task should allow flexible procedural routes to the same learning goal, "Tasks should therefore involve learners ;in reflecting on the way in which they carried them out, as well as on the

language they used, thereby helping them to develop autonomy" (p. 354) – (critical evaluation by students themselves). The evaluation by students is useful for implementing future task-based courses and that teachers should also be course designers. In this way, they can fully understand the whole process involved in a teaching and learning cycle.

The idea of learning to learn is realized and the language competence and skills of learners will allow them to achieve accuracy, complexity and fluency in English and to meet the multidimensional demands of the 21st century. Such a change subsequently imposes a challenge on teachers and requires them to think and act differently in the classroom. The role of learners in TBET has also become more multi-faceted than in traditional approaches.

The role of learners and teachers are also described – the learners as group participants, monitors, risk-takers and innovators and the teachers as selectors and sequencers of tasks, preparing learners for tasks and consciousness-raising. Teachers need to introduce the topic, clarify task instructions, lexis and phrases to help task completion or even provide a demonstration of the procedures. It was argued that teachers need to focus on form before asking learners to participate in a task. Therefore, teachers can employ "a variety of form-focusing techniques, including attention-focusing pre-task activities, text exploration, guided exposure to parallel tasks and use of highlighted material" (Richards & Roger, 2001, p. 236).

8. Conclusion

Task-based English Teaching (TBET) is a new teaching method. "Task" is a special term in language teaching and is different from language exercise. It has its specific features, forms and teaching steps. There are various tasks in language teaching and learning, but the focus of every task is on solving a communicative problem which has some connection with the real world, learners" lives and learning experience that motivates their interests and participation.

Some of the concerns of teachers and educators related to the importance of Task-Based English Teaching and Learning were discussed in this paper, as well as how they have adapted new ideas to suit their situation. By way of conclusion, it may be considered that this study can be viewed from a more global and theoretical perspective, as an example of what is called the "Post method condition" (Kumaravadivelu, 1994) in language pedagogy. There

is now widespread acceptance that no single method or set of procedures will fit all teachers and learners in all contexts. Teachers can draw on the ideas and experience of others but cannot simply adopt them as a ready-made recipe; they need to develop a pedagogy based on Task-Based principles suited to their own specific context.

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Title

Mediated Learning Experience: Teacher vs. Peer Scaffolding Modes in L2 Writing Classes

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Biodata

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Abstract

The notion of scaffolding is increasingly applied in EFL or ESL writing classes yet, we need to know more about the strategies involved when teacher or peer mediators help student writers revise their compositions. This paper which is part of a larger-scale study was mainly designed to (a) identify the scaffolding behaviors applied by the teacher and peers in helping students to reach higher levels of independency in a writing course; (b) compare the scaffolding behaviors applied by teacher and peer mediators. The study was conducted to two writing classes of engineering students as part of their General English course. The students in the first class were received teacher scaffolding, while the students of the second class were asked to form pairs at random so the more experienced student worked with the student in need of help in each pair. In order to identify the teacher and peers' scaffolding behavior, the transcribed episodes of the interactions between them was codified based on Lidz's MLE (Mediated Learning Experience) rating scale which underwent some modifications and additions to match the existing data. Generally, the results of the study showed that the teacher used more scaffolding behaviors and strategies, thus creating more learning

environment for student writers. However, the difference between the behaviors as used by the teacher or peers was not that significant. Moreover, it was found that most of the offered scaffolding behaviors by the teacher and peers were *elaborated* scaffolding behaviors.

Keywords: Sociocultural theory, Scaffolding, Teacher mediator, Peer mediator, Writing.

1. Introduction

1.1. Sociocultural theory, Zone of Proximal Development, and Scaffolding

The famous Sociocultural Theory (SCT) which is grounded on the work of Lev Vygotsky (1978) is a theory of the development of higher functions which establishes strong connections between culture, language, and cognition. According to this theory, higher forms of human thinking and particularly learning are mediated. That is, the mind should be socioculturally mediated so as to operate at higher forms of thinking, such as problem solving. Vygotskian approaches to L2 are increasingly gaining momentum in the field of L2 learning (Aljaafreh and Lantolf, 1994; Donato, 1994; Guerrero and Villamil, 1994; Lantolf, 2000; Lantolf and Thorne, 2006) and some educators highlight the uniqueness of sociocultural theory in contrast to the predominant conceptualizations of L2 learning, because those approaches do not address directly the interactive, reciprocal, and dynamic features of language teaching and learning in and out of the classroom (Wu 1998 cited in Yu, 2003). Walqui (2006) summarizes the main tenets of SCT as: (a) Learning precedes development; (b) Language is the main vehicle of thought; (c) Mediation is central to learning; (d) Social interaction is the basis of learning and development. Learning is a process of apprenticeship and interaction in which skills and knowledge are transformed from the social into the cognitive plane; (e) The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is the primary activity space in which learning occurs (p.160).

A review of SCT research on L2 issues demonstrates that most studies include ZPD, scaffolding, and assisted performance. The ZPD is the most well-known and greatest construct in SCT. The ZPD is the distance between the actual developmental 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).

There are a number of ways in which teachers can assist students in developing subject matter knowledge from the interactive, sociocultural perspective. The one which is particularly constant with SCT is scaffolding that was developed by Wood et al (1976). Scaffolding is closely related to the ZPD in the sense that it is within the ZPD that scaffolding can occur. Wretsch (1979a cited in Lantolf and Thorne, 2006) describe scaffolding as a dialogically produced inter-psychological process through which learners internalize knowledge they co-construct with more capable peers. To put simply, scaffolding is a mechanism in which "a knowledgable participant creates, by means of speech, supportive conditions in which the novice can participate and extend current skill and knowledge to higher levels of competence" (Donato 1994, p. 40). To be successful, however, expert and novice should attain 'intersubjectivity'. This notion which is central to scaffolding asserts that to be successful, expert and novice should reach at a shared understanding of the goal of the activity.

Pressly (2002b) provided a rich description of scaffolding as:

> The scaffolding of building under construction provides support when the new building cannot stand on its own. As the new structure is completed and becomes freestanding, the scaffolding is removed. So it is with scaffolded adult-child academic interactions the adult carefully monitors when enough instructional input has been provided to permit the child to make progress toward an academic goal, and thus the adult provides support only when the child needs it (p. 97).

The above quote suggests that scaffolding works best when it is offered timely and to an appropriate degree. So, the more proficient becomes the learner, the less scaffolding is needed. And, successful scaffolding depends on skillful managing of the interaction by the expert based on the needs of the learner.

Scaffolding assistance involves a variety of functions. According to Wood et al. (1976) scaffolding has the functions of: Recruiting interest in the task, Simplifying the task, Maintaining pursuit of the goal, Marking critical features and discrepancies between what has produced, and the ideal solution, Controlling frustration during problem solving, Demonstrating an idealized version of the act to be performed. Moreover, Meyer (1993 cited in Kong, 2002) synthesized six distinguishing features of scaffolding instruction including: (a) teacher support that helps students relate the new information to their prior knowledge; (b) transfer of responsibility from

the teacher to the students; (c) dialogue which breaks from the traditional classroom discourse to more student initiated talk; (d) non-evaluative collaboration that focuses on the child's potential for new learning rather than evaluating the child's current competencies; (e) appropriateness of the instructional level defined as what a child can do with assistance within his/her ZPD; (f) Co-participation that creates opportunities for students to participate actively and cooperate in directing instruction. Mantero (2002) has also examined pedagogical implications of ascribing to sociocultural theory within foreign language classrooms and emphasizes that because of various constraints; instructors should use dialogue as verbal scaffolds into discourse. These analogies embody important features of scaffolding which aim at enabling a novice to solve a problem or to carry out a task or in general to reach higher levels of achievement.

This theory particularly emphasizes the process approach to writing since it operates on the assumption that human cognitive development is highly dependent upon the social context within which it takes place. And, interaction has widely been acknowledged as an essential component in process approach. So interaction predominates and investigating students' written product tells very little about how writers generate ideas, record and revise them. This view which involves students working together and interacting with one another has captured the attention of many second language writing researchers (Guerrero and Villamil, 1994; Mendonça and Johnson, 1994; Nelson and Murphy, 1993; Villamil and De Guerrero, 1996; Zhu, 2001).

Because the mediators' behaviors and responses provide critical information to students about their writing performance, paying attention to the nature of the responses and behaviors they offer is of high importance. Also, the role of dialogic view to language has increasingly become prominent specifically oral scaffolding, since it constitutes a highly individualized, negotiated means of delivering oral feedback to L2 students writing (Weissberg, 2006).

1.2. Teachers' scaffolding behaviors

Originally, Vygotsky's formulation of the ZPD was concerned with interaction between 'expert' and 'novice' (Clark and Graves, 2004; Cotteral and Cohen, 2003; Gillies and Boyle, 2005). It is believed that it is the interaction of teachers and students that have the potential to influence understanding and learning. Given the recognition of the influence of scaffolding on students' progress, this phenomenon is increasingly applied in L2 classes and many studies are conducted

to identify scaffolding behaviors which help students to reach higher levels of proficiency in different language skills.

One of the early efforts in order to apply the notion of scaffolding was the one carried out by Lidz (1991) who developed a Mediated Learning Experience (MLE) Rating Scale to assess the degree to which MLE characterizes the interactions of any experts with novices. For her, scaffolding "describes the mediator's adjusting the complexity and maturity of the teaching interaction to facilitate the child's mastery of the task; providing support when necessary; and providing encouragement and prompts to the child to move ahead when ready" (p. 80). According to Lidz, MLE scale is significant since unlike most of the existing scales of adult-child interaction 1) it can be used with mothers and teachers and has the potential for use with a broader age span 2) the MLE Rating Scale is a summary of the multitude of factors occurring within teaching and parenting relationships that may influence the child's cognitive development 3) MLE Rating Scale is sensitive to all needs of joint theory, assessment, intervention, and research 4) the MLE Rating Scale is intended to emphasize the qualitative nature of the mediator-child interaction, to be usable by practitioners in the field, to be easily taught and learned, and to yield meaningful information derived from brief observations. This scale and some other scaffolding behaviors mentioned in the literature as well as those observed in the study are used as codification system of the data in this study.

Warwick and Maloch (2003) investigated issues related to teacher scaffolding of pupils learning across two disciplines- literacy and science. The teacher used variety of strategies such as, asking questions, using names, to invite participation, asking follow-up questions which continue or expand a line of thought, and include reasoning in responses as well as writing frames "that allowed each group to operate for some of the time *as if* independent from the *expert*". Gillies and Boyle (2005) who examined the types of verbal interaction teachers engage in to challenge children's thinking and problem-solving during cooperative learning outlined six categories of teacher behavior: *control* (instructing, lecturing), *questions* (questions designed to elicit an expected response), *disciplines* (reprimands directed at the students), *mediates* (i.e. prompts, scaffolds, paraphrases, uses open questions in a tentative manner), *encourages* (praises students for their efforts with their work), and *maintenance* (helps students during learning, facilitates group learning).

Recently, the notion of scaffolding is particularly applied in writing classes by teachers. For example, Cotteral and Cohen (2003) examined how a group of English learners were guided by means of teacher scaffolding through the process of producing their first academic essays. The following features of scaffolding in the writing program supported the gradual acquisition of writing competence by the learner: 1) Topics linked to concurrent study themes, 2) Predetermined essay structure 3) Assistance locating appropriate texts and data 4) Staging of instruction 5) Modeling of composition process 6) Focus on language 7) Feedback from peers and tutors. (Also see, Felton and Herko, 2004; Wray, 2000)

1.3. Peers' scaffolding behaviors

While the first studies on scaffolding was mainly concerned with interaction between expert and novice e.g., teacher and students, current sociocultural theorists have extended the concept of scaffolding to include other forms of collaborative activity, including pair work among peers, specifically Donato (1994) who explored the notion of 'mutual scaffolding' among L2 learners. Donato attempted to explain that peers can scaffold one another in much the same way experts scaffold novices. Some researchers provided evidence that pairing children has led to development.

SCT supports the use of peer scaffolding particularly in writing classes since it views development as a result of social interaction in which an individual learns to extend his competence through the guidance of a more experienced individual. Because of the popularity of peer revision in L2 writing classes a good deal of empirical studies are implemented to examine different aspects of L2 peer revision (Conner and Asenavage, 1994; Mendonça and Johnson, 1994; Nelson and Murphy, 1993; Stanley, 1992; Villamil and Guerrero, 1996, 1998). Tudge's (1999) study was one of the early ones that examined peer interaction from a Vygotskian perspective, concerning with both the outcomes and processes of collaboration. His study provided some support for the Vygotskian position, in that less competent children could indeed benefit from working with a more competent peer and that arriving at shared meaning or intersubjective understanding in the course of discussion was a highly effective means of bringing about changes in thinking.

Mendonça and Johnson (1994) studied the oral feedback that the students in pairs gave on each other's papers. Their analysis revealed that five different types of negotiations occurred

during peer review: (1) questions (requests for explanation and comprehension checks), (2) explanations (unclear point, opinion or content), (3) restatements, (4) suggestions, and (5) grammar corrections. A study conducted by Villamil and De Guerrero (1996) among 54 Spanish-speaking ESL university students investigated the types of strategies students employed orally in order to facilitate the peer revision process. Findings revealed that peers made use of five different mediating strategies in order to cope with task demands. Of these mediating strategies, providing scaffolding was found to be a general strategy whose main function was for the members of the dyad to assist each other verbally in achieving task goals. The nature of this scaffolding was further analyzed into substrategies of which advising and responding to advice, eliciting and responding to elicitation, reacting and requesting clarification were the most salient.

A more related study to the present one was Guerrero and Villamil's (2000) study of peer collaboration in English as the SL writing classroom illustrated the use of several scaffolding behaviors, based on Lidz's scale, by the peer mediator. In general, the findings of the study revealed that the peer mediator's performance in this study displayed mainly: (a) *Intentionality*: willingness to influence his partner's action, to keep the interaction going, and to accomplish goals. (b) *Task regulation*: efforts at making the task manageable for both and inducing solutions to textual problems. (c) *Meaning*: promoting understanding by focusing on what was not clear or discrepant and eliciting clarification or correction. (d) *Contingent Responsivity*: ability to read his partner's cues especially affective and respond accordingly. The emergence of the writer's self-regulation and his growth as a more independent writer and reviser was also gradually witnessed. In effect, review of these studies suggests that certain peers' behaviors are more main and facilitative in providing support during peer revision process.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that researchers differ in their views concerning the value of the concept of scaffolding as a mechanism for students' learning. The researchers' views sometimes represent a continuum from concern that the metaphor is dangerously misleading to the view that the metaphor continues to be a useful guide. For example, as far as teacher scaffolding is concerned, the results of the study conducted by Bliss and Askew (2006) revealed that the teachers were unsuccessful as well as successful in scaffolding their students. Myhill and Warren (2005) who investigated the teacher's use of talk to scaffold pupils found that in addition to successful scaffolds, there were several critical moments where scaffolding was not that

successful among them were the critical moments which created confusion in learning because of the teacher's insecurity with her own subject knowledge.

Concerning peer scaffolding, Tudge's (1990) study revealed that peer interactions could deteriorate if a partner was less confident. Findings of Nelson and Murphy's (1992) study also showed that students do not necessarily use the peer comments. In peer response groups, when writers interacted with their peers in a cooperative manner, they were more likely to use the peer's suggestions in writing, but when they interacted in a defensive manner or did not interact at all, the writer was less likely to use the peers' comments. So, the effect of scaffolding is still controversial and requires more investigations.

2. Significance of the study

The concept of scaffolding is mostly examined in light of teacher or pee scaffolding. So, the difference between scaffolding strategies offered by teacher mediators and those offered by peer mediators has remained unexplored and the effectiveness of teacher or peer scaffolding is still open to questio. According to Villamil and Guerrero (1996) not only identifying the scaffolding behaviours and mechanisms that students employ while revising their compositions, but also quantitative investigation of the use and frequency of scaffolding strategies among the students needs further research. As such, the notion of scaffolding that is to some extend unknown to Iranian educators and a little attempt is made to apply this concept to the Iranian educational context, especially in writing classes, is examined. That is, this paper which is part of a larger scale study is mainly designed to explore if the type of scaffolding behaviors that the teacher mediator offers differ from those offered by peer mediators in a particular course. In order to fill this gap, unlike previous studies which investigated the influence of teacher or peer scaffolding individually, the present study explored both modes, i.e., teacher and peer scaffolding in a writing course due to the shift from emphasis on product to emphasis on process of writing, and recognizing the social nature of writing within SCT framework. To put simply, the study seeks answer to the following questions:

1- What kind of scaffolding behaviors do the teacher and peer mediators employ during revision?

2- Is there a difference between scaffolding behaviors used by the teacher and peer mediators?

3. Method

The study was conducted to two classes of students studying at the Department of Computer and Industrial Engineering of Mazandaran University of Science and Technology, Iran. The students were chosen based on availability and convenience sampling. The first class contained 15 students while the second class contained 10 students. They were at the second year of university. The students were required to take part in a compulsory writing class which complemented the General English course and was hold one session per week over a term. In both writing classes, the students were presented with two modes of writing – description and essay writing- for which they were required to prepare some compositions. For the purpose of the study, the students of both classes were assigned to teacher and peer scaffolding. To elaborate, the first class, containing 15 students, used teacher scaffolding. The students in this class were divided to some groups. They handed in their papers one week earlier, and the teacher determined which of groups' compositions should be revised. Then, she identified the trouble sources in which students needed scaffolded help and assisted them to get their writings revised.

On the other hand, the students of the second class were asked to form five pairs at random so that a more experienced student worked with the student in need of help. To determine who the more capable peer of each pair was, the students of this class were given a topic to write about. The writings were later scored by the teacher who determined which of the students in each pair has his/her composition revised. Consequently, the "writer" (the students whose written works needed more correction) and "reader" (the more knowledgeable student) of the pairs were selected, while they were not informed of the reader-writer roles. Then, the readers were trained on how to help the writers revise their compositions. After each revision session, the students were asked to work at home on a final draft of their composition and submit it a week later.

To analyze the data involving the verbal interaction obtained from all revision sessions in course of a term (twelve weeks), the verbal scaffolding between teacher-students and peers in the revision sessions were tape-recorded and transcribed. Note that some parts of the students' interaction were in Farsi. However, to facilitate understanding, an English version of the episodes was produced. The following notation system was used to transcribe the data:

Italics	Italics are employed to cite a letter, word, or a phrase as a linguistic example, including Farsi words
[brackets]	Bracket enclose actual Farsi words said by students
(parentheses)	Explanation by authors
…	Sequence of dots indicates a pause
Boldface	Words were said in English (text which is not in boldface was said in Farsi "Double
quotation"	Double quotation marks indicate participants are reading from the text
'Single quotation'	Single quotation marks are used either to avoid confusion in sentences containing grammatical expressions or for direct quote
{sic}	Sentences written by students containing errors

After that, the transcripts were segmented to episodes. That is, the units of discourse dealing with each trouble point (Guerrero and Villamil, 2000). Later, the episodes were codified based on Lidz's Rating Scale which is a very detailed scale containing 11 components. The scale, later, underwent some modifications and reinterpretations to match the existing data. However, some other important scaffolding behaviors observed in the teacher and peers' behaviors were also rated and added to the scale so it encompasses all types of scaffolding behaviors employed by the mediators (Appendix). The codification of the data was not an easy task since it became too difficult at times to differentiate between codes and a turn could contain a number of scaffolding behaviors. Take for example:

S(tudent): Now, what's this? What we wrote?
T(eacher): It's a premise. It's like the last writing, 'Saving money', one of the students had written, "Money is power, money talks". He had started talking about money in general. You can also start in this way; for example, tell a general thing about an employee.

As can be seen, the teacher's response in the above excerpt contains several scaffolding behaviors. First, *Intentionality* since the teacher is directly engaging the learner's attention to something he does not know about and make him involved by asking him to provide a general sentence about an employee. Second, *Contingent Responsivity*, for the teacher is responding to the learner's need and explains what he needs to know. In this case, the student wants to know what the function of the sentence they have just written in the composition is. Third, *Task Regulation*, because the teacher is stating a principle of solution, here, how to start writing by providing a general statement in the premise. Finally, *Transcendence*, because the teacher refers to a previous experience i.e., the last writing to remind him about writing a general sentence in the previous writing. Hence, in such cases an utterance is codified several times.

In addition, since Lidz's scale (1991) used in this study is a rating scale each component is ranked from 1 to 3 based on its degree of elaboration or explicitness which, at last, makes it easy to understand how explicit the employed scaffolding strategies are. To illustrate, consider the component of *Modeling* in the following excerpts:

T: **First, secondly and the other one is …..?**
S: **Thirdly**
T: **Yes, thirdly.**

Here, the teacher simply models a single word produced by the student i.e., "Yes, thirdly" without any further elaboration. So, rate 1 is given to this type of modeling. Now, take the second example:

S: **"firstly, for continuing education, is needed to know English for the reason that the most sources are English." {sic}**
T: **It is needed? Who is your listener?**
S: **We**
T: **We need to know English.**

Here, modeling is of rate 2 because the subject of the sentence is missing and after finding it through collaboration between the teacher and the student, the teacher models the whole corrected final product, "We need to know English."

T: **Well, what do we need after the brief overview of the graph?** (long pause) …. **Intr….?**
S: **Introduction.**
T: **Good. First of all, you have a brief overview of the object that is usually given to you. Then, you write a general statement as your introduction. Please tell me a general statement.**
S: **For introduction?**
T: **Yes.**
S: Ummm….
T: **Look, first of all you describe what it is about. The graph shows the number of visitors …. Then you summarize the whole graph in one sentence as your introduction. For example, "Generally, the number of visits to Pop Parade site is more than that of Music Choice."**

In this excerpt, the teacher models what is required for the learner to produce and models an appropriate language use needed for generating a general sentence for the introduction. This type of *Modeling* belongs to rate 3 and is mostly characterized as modeling the appropriate language use for specific academic functions such as describing, summarizing and exemplifying. In essence, though all the identified behaviors in the above excerpts are related to the category of

Modeling, they differ on the degree of explicitness depending on the nature of the task as well as needs of the learners.

In order to see whether the codification of the data by the researcher is reliable, ten percent of the data (25 pages) was coded by the researcher and another coder to account for both the intra and inter-coder reliability. The intra-coder reliability was 94.90, and the inter-coder reliability was 76.95. The inter-coder reliability was not as high as the intra-coder reliability given the complexity of the coding scheme and concepts. However, the disagreement was solved through discussion.

4. Findings and Discussion

Research Question 1

1- What kind of scaffolding behaviors do the teacher and peer mediators employ during revision?

The frequency and percentage of different scaffolding behaviors used by the teacher mediator is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Frequency and percentage of scaffolding behaviors applied by teacher mediator

1. Intentionality	750 (23%)	13. Optimistic alternative	91 (2.8%)
2. Meaning	53 (1.6%)	14. Instructing & giving minilesson	112 (3.4%)
3. Transcendence	57 (1.7%)	15. Modeling	156 (4.8%)
4. Joint regard	181 (5.6%)	16. Approval	196 (6%)
5. Sharing of experience	2 (0.1%)	17. Communicative ratchet	51 (1.6%)
6. Task regulation	263 (8.1%)	18. Source of error	12 (0.4%)
7. Praise and encouragement	187 (5.7%)	19. Creating interest in the task	5 (0.2%)
8. Challenge	76 (2.3%)	20. Assuring learner's perception	5 (0.2%)
9. Psychological differentiation	452 (13.9%)	21. Requesting clarification	44 (1.4%)
10. Contingent responsivity	209 (6.4%)	22. Correction	110 (3.4%)
11. Affective involvement	40 (1.2%)	23. Use of L1	32 (1%)
12. Identifying troublepoints	174 (5.4%)		
Macro 15 (0.5%)/Micro159 (4.9%)		**Total**	3,258

As can be seen, the teacher used 3,258 number of scaffolding behaviors. The three highest percentage of the mediating behaviors is associated with categories of *Intentionality* (23%), *Psychological Differentiation* (13.9%) and *Task Regulation* (8.1%) respectively. Other frequent behaviors are seen in categories of *Contingent Responsivity* (8.1%), *Approval* (6%), *Joint Regard* (5.6%), and *Identifying Troublepoints* (5.4%) respectively.

To illustrate, in the following episode we see the teacher's effort to scaffold one of the students:

S: **"Nowaday by improving the relation between countries and increasing journey to different parts of the world, it is needed to learn a unique language."** {sic}
T: **Do you see any mistake in this word?**
S: **Nowadays.**
T: **"to different part of the world"? Any mistake?**
S: **different parts of.**
T: **Yes, different parts of. Why?**
S: umm…
T: **Why should we put 'parts'?**
S: Because, it is ***different*** between some things.
T: **True. Journey?**
S: **Traveling. "it is needed to learn a unique language**." Umm … learn a unique language.
T: **Why did you omit 'it is'?**
S: Because you had underlined this sentence. It should be wrong. So, I changed it. (laughter)
T: **To whom does this sentence refer to?**
S: Generally?
T: **Who is your listener?**
S: **we.**
T: Yes**, … to different parts of the world, we need to learn a unique language, or understanding an international language is necessary.**
S: **Yes, it's better.**

In the above excerpt, several scaffolding mechanisms are employed by the teacher in helping the student revise her composition. The component of *Intentionality* (Lidz, 1991) is quite evident in the sense that the teacher consciously attempts to influence the students' action and engage his attention to a mistake by reading the incorrect part, "to different part of the world?" and also by asking questions such as "Any mistake?" to make him involved. Also, *Psychological Differentiation* (Lidz, 1991), which defined as keeping a distance between the teacher and students is mainly obtained by asserting sentences such as "Who is 'your' listener?" So, the teacher tried to maintain an objective stance in the interaction and make the student notice that it is his composition and let him function independently.

Approval is another most frequently observed scaffolding behavior seen in this excerpt too. For example, after the correct answer was provided by the student, the teacher approved it by telling "Yes" or "True". By approving the students' answers and suggestions, mediators create a feeling of successful mastery in the learners. Approving the students' answer leads us to one of

the main characteristics of scaffolding, i.e. intersubjectivity. The results of the study by Guerrero and Villamil (2000) also showed that peers who participated in a common task, had a shared understanding of the situation. As such, *Approval* reveals that mediators and students have reached intersubjectivity and both share similar understanding of the solution, meaning of special word, and so on. (Also see, Bliss and Askew, 2006)

Comments such as "Do you see any mistake in this word?" illustrates *Identifying the Troublepoints* (Guerrero and Villamil, 2000) which involves thinking rather than simply showing the mistake to the student. In this study, *Identifying the Troublepoints* comprised a high percentage. This component contains two subcategories of micro and macro troublepoints. Micro troublepoints characterizes reference to an error at sentence level while macro troublepoints characterizes reference to an error at supra-sentence level. *Identifying Troublepoints* is usually a frequently used component in any task since the mediators' main concern is to identify the areas of difficulty for which students need assistance.

Another important scaffolding behavior displayed by the teacher was *Modeling* (Wood et al., 1976). In the above excerpt, the teacher not only modeled the corrected form of the sentence but also modeled a new sentence that can be replaced by saying, "… to different parts of the world, we need to learn a unique language, or understanding an international language is necessary". *Modeling* is frequently applied in classes and a great number of researchers constantly consider it as one of the most important kinds of scaffolding. In his study Kong (2002) modeled various behaviors during different stages of the lesson. Walqui (2006) also classified it as one of the six main types of instructional scaffolding. He stated that:

> "students need to be given clear examples of what is requested of them for imitation. When introducing a new task or working format, it is indispensable that the teachers be able to see or hear what a developing product looks like … In addition to modeling task and activities, it is important to model appropriate language use for the performance of specific academic functions, such as describing, comparing, summarizing, evaluating, and so on" (pp. 170-171).

Communicative Ratchet which characterizes as assuring that students are well understood and they don't fall back is an important component seen by the teacher. When the teacher noticed an omission made to the writing, he asked: "Why did you omit 'it is'? And the student responded: "Because you had underlined this sentence. It should be wrong. So, I changed it (laughter)."

This example clearly shows the importance of this behavior. It is important for students to be aware of the changes they make and teachers concern about not allowing students to fall back. In another part, the teacher achieved this goal by asking. "Why should we put 'parts'?" after the student provided the correct answer and they explained the reason so the teacher became certain of his understanding and his ability to solve similar problems in the future independently.

The frequency and percentage of the scaffolding behaviors for peers is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Frequency and percentage of scaffolding behaviors applied by peer mediators

1. Intentionality	321(19.2%)	13. Optimistic alternative	36 (2.1%)
2. Meaning	18 (1.1%)	14. Instructing & giving minilesson	93 (5.6%)
3. Transcendence	20 (1.2%)	15. Modeling	99 (5.9%)
4. Joint regard	116 (6.9%)	16. Approval	71 (4.2%)
5. Sharing of experience	8 (0.5%)	17. Communicative ratchet	2 (0.1%)
6. Task regulation	73 (4.4%)	18. Source of error	8 (0.5%)
7. Praise and encouragement	44 (2.6%)	19. Creating interest in the task	1 (0.1%)
8. Challenge	1 (0.1%)	20. Assuring learner's perception	52 (3.1%)
9. Psychological differentiation	239 (14.3%)	21. Requesting clarification	42 (2.5%)
10. Contingent responsivity	130 (7.8%)	22. Correction	108 (6.4%)
11. Affective involvement	4 (0.2%)	23. Use of L1	44 (2.6%)
12. Identifying trouble points	145(8.6%)		
Macro 27 (1.6%)/Micro 118(7%)		**Total**	1,675

As can be seen, the highest percentage of the mediating behaviors belongs to the categories of *Intentionality* (19.2%), *Psychological Differentiation* (14.3%) and *Contingent Responsivity* (7.8%) respectively. Other frequently used scaffolding behaviors are seen in categories of *Identifying the Troublpoints* (8.6%), *Joint Regard* (6.9), *Correction* (6.4%), *Modeling* (5.9%) and *Instructing and Giving Minilessons* (5.6%) respectively. For illustration, take the following excerpt in which the peer mediator (reader) is trying to help his partner (writer) to revise her work.

W(riter): This part is finished. We gave example as well. What should we say next?
R(eader): Now, we must provide some other reasons on why we should save money. Only one reason is not enough.Give an example on the enjoyment of spending money. For instance, how should one spend his money? What things should we spend our money for?
W: I give an example now. **For example, I enjoy from** … is ***'from'*** correct to be put here? **Enjoy from going to trip**. It is not necessary. Is it?
R: No, it's not.
W: **And restaurant**. Let's add another thing. Is ***'happy places'*** good?
R: Uh hmm … **entertainment places, buying expensive clothes …**
W: This one was your own idea.
R: **Give money to children as gift.** Don't you have any idea about what to add?
W: I can just say 'you can make the best use of your money.'
R: What for example?

W: For example, the very same thing … enjoy, make the best use of it …
R: It is true if you have lots of money. (laughter) because if someone has a little money, he cannot make the best use of it.
W: Everything is bad at its extreme. For example, some people really forget the present, just think of the future. That is, they tolerate all difficulties in order to have a nice future. But, others who are more normal try harder to think about now. They think about the future as well, it does not mean they don't think about it at all, though, I think, they try more to be happy.
R: **They enjoy from their money, because spending it …**
W: For traveling …
R: **Traveling** …
W: **Go to trip, traveling, and** …
R: **Go to different restaurant.**
M: **Yes, restaurant,** for example to go out with friends all the time …
R: Buy best clothes and … for example …
W: Yes …, now, what should I write?
R: **They enjoy from …**
W: **Enjoying?**
R: **Yeah, they enjoy from going to travel, to trip** …
W: ***Trip*** is better. How is restaurant spelled?
R: r.e.s.t.u.r.a.n.t.
W: Does it have an '***e'***?
R: No, it doesn't.
W: Correct?
R: Yes.

In the above excerpt, the component of *Joint Regard* (Lidz, 1991) is applied by the reader which is characterized as "we-ness of the interaction". The reader tries to focus attention on the writer's text and see it through the writer's eyes. This behavior is clearly observed in sentences such as, "Now, *we* must provide other reasons …" Also, it was seen that the reader instructed the writer on how to support her ideas by providing examples which is considered as the component of *instructing and giving minilessons* (Guerrero and Villamil's, 2000). Employing this behavior demonstrates peer-mediators' role as instructors to teach the students particular points and lessons explicitly.

Another most frequently used components by the peer mediators as it is shown in the above excerpt was *Contingent Responsivity* (Lidz, 1991). The writer accepted the reader's role as the mediators since she asked him several questions, like "How is restaurant spelled?", "How should I write …?" and in turn, the mediator was highly responsive to the needs of the student in a timely and appropriate way. For example in response to writer's question "What should we say next?" the reader explains that "Now, we must provide some other reasons on why we should

save money. Only one reason is not enough. Give an example on the enjoyment of spending money…"

In addition to the scaffolding behaviors observed in both classes, 65 instances of false interventions were identified in the peer-mediated class. They are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Frequency of unsuccessful scaffolds in the peer-mediated class

False correction	30	False task regulation	10	False use of L1	2
Uncertain correction	10	Uncertain task regulation	1	Making Correct Things Incorrect	12

According to the above table, the highest number of unsuccessful scaffolded is related to false correction where the mediators corrected the students' errors wrongly. It was also interesting that 12 instances of Making Something Correct Incorrect were also observed on the part of the peer mediators. To clarify, note the following excerpt containing unsuccessful scaffolding:

R: **"- The graph shows the percentage of boys and girls achieving the highest grades …"** {sic} **highest grades?**
W: … Gave highest grades …
R: No … hmm … no, no, the other ***graphs*** had not ***highest grades* …** It was the highest among all the scores … Actually, the grade they took in each subject. Some of them were high, but not all of them were ***highest grades* … "in their school-leaving exam for several subject."** {sic}
W: I copied this part from the book.
R: It was not ***highest***. Different lessons had different percentages … **"the percentage of boys and girls"** … uh hmm … **compare?**
W: Uh hmm …
R: The sentence is totally incorrect.
W: Then, correct it. I don't know how to correct it.
R: Uh hmm … **therefore**, hum … **comparison between boys and girls …** uh hmm … **the scores …** from … it's a comparison with … what, for several subjects … between years 1993-1994, then …

As can be seen, the reader is able to identify the troublepoint and he says, "This sentence is totally incorrect", but he is unable to correct it. The uncertainty about how to correct a troublepoint causes some troublepoints not to be dealt with or it finally results in false changes. Unsuccessful scaffolding mostly results from the mediator's lack of subject knowledge. Peers usually are partial holders of knowledge. They are able to help their students as much as their knowledge permits. Many researchers also differ in their views concerning the value of the metaphor of scaffolding as a mechanism for learner's learning. For example, Bliss and Askew's

(2006) study revealed that scaffolding is not always successful. Myhill and Warren (2005) also concluded that teacher's insecurity with her own subject knowledge creates confusion in learning. So, it is recognizable that scaffolding can be successful as well as unsuccessful. However in terms of this learning experience, unsuccessful scaffolds were associated with peer-mediators who were recognized as less knowledgeable mediators. It is important to keep in mind that students are still learning the language and sometimes it is difficult for them to interpret what they mean, transfer what they know, offer appropriate solutions and so forth. Therefore, "there is no guarantee that the meaning that is created when two peers interact will be at a higher level, even if one child is more competent than another and is providing information within the less competent peer's zone of proximal development" (Tudge, 1990, p. 19).

Research Question 2

2- Is there a difference between scaffolding behaviors used by the teacher and peers?

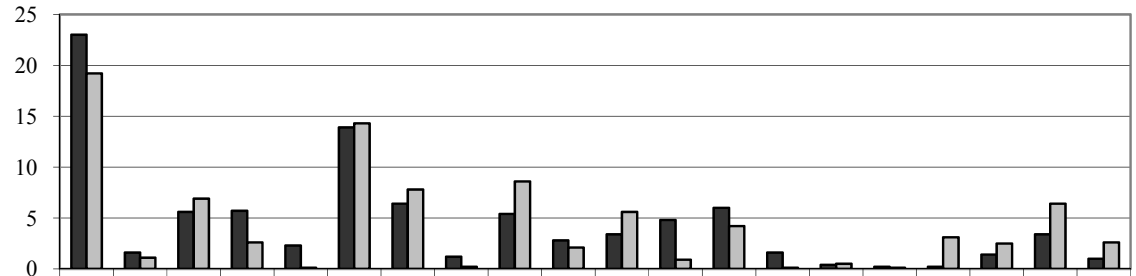
The result of comparison between the percentage of the scaffolding behaviors in both classes is shown in Figure 1.

As seen in Figure 1, the highest percentage of the mediating behaviors in both classes is associated with categories of *Intentionality* (T: 23% / P: 19.2%) and *Psychological Differentiation* (T: 13.9% / P: 14.3). This shows that the mediators in both classes obviously had taken responsibility of assisting the students in the task of revising their writings and were consciously attempting to influence the students' action, particularly through engaging their attention and involvement, and controlling and directing the students' behavior. *Psychological Differentiation* in both classes was mainly obtained by keeping a distance between the mediators and students in that the mediators tried to maintain an objective stance in the interaction.

However, the third frequent component in the teacher- and peer-mediated classes is related to the component of *Task Regulation* (8.1%) and *Identifying the Troublepoints* (8.6%), respectively. It illustrates that the teacher was mostly occupied with regulating and manipulating the troublepoints in order to find a solution for them. On the other hand, peers often engaged in finding the troublepoints and correct them or at least give a minilesson about it. So, they engaged in *Task Regulation* about as half as the teacher. That is why the component of *Correction* (6.4%)

was also frequent in the peer-mediated class. That is, rather than resorting to *Task Regulation* which has a longer-term effect, student mediators usually resort to *Correction*.

Figure 1: Percentage of the scaffolding behaviors applied by the teacher and peer mediators



	Int.	Mean.	JR	PE	CHL	PD	CR	AI	IT	OA	IGM	Mod	Ap.	CRA	SE	CIT	ALP	RC	Cor.	UL1
Teacher-%	23	1.6	5.6	5.7	2.3	13.9	6.4	1.2	5.4	2.8	3.4	4.8	6	1.6	0.4	0.2	0.2	1.4	3.4	1
Peer-%	19.2	1.1	6.9	2.6	0.1	14.3	7.8	0.2	8.6	2.1	5.6	0.9	4.2	0.1	0.5	0.1	3.1	2.5	6.4	2.6

Teacher-% Peer-%

The two following episodes illustrate how teacher or peer mediators may approach troublepoints of the same nature differently.

Episode 1:

S: I don't know. I don't have any idea about how to start it.

T: Look. For example say … you refer to the readers. Say, 'Do you know who a good employee is?"

S: D**o you know who is best working…**

T: **who is a good employee? Yes… Do you know who a good employee is? The answer is the thesis.**

S: It's the beginning?

T: Yes. It's a premise. It's like the last writing, saving money, one of the students had written: **"Money is power, money talks."** He had started talking about money in general. So you can start about something general in the premise before you narrow it down in the following parts. Now, tell a general thing about ***employee***. Ok?

S: Yes. **A good employee is someone who has a good understanding …**

T: **good understanding of his job.**

In the first episode the teacher identifies the troublepoint –there is no premise and thesis statement- and tries to regulate the task by offering the statement of solution by telling "you can start about something general in the premise before you narrow it down in the following parts." So the student learns how to do the task and finally tries to start the composition by telling a general sentence "A good employee is someone who has a good understanding…"

Episode 2:

W: **"On the fist day the number of visits to Pop Parade was high."**
R: What's this?
W: I'm describing the trends.
R: Where's your ***introduction***?
W: I don't know.
R: First write: **Generally the number of visits to Pop Parade is more.**

In the second episode the peer mediator is also able to identify the troublepoint –there is no premise and thesis statement. However, unlike the teacher, the peer mediator corrects it immediately by telling a general or thesis statement without making the writer involved.

The reason why peers had a tendency to correct the trouble points themselves rather than being engaged in the process of problem solving can also be viewed in light of the less frequent component of *Challenge* that was scarcely applied by the peers. *Challenge* was a particularly important component of the scale. In the teacher-mediated class, the students were helped to reach higher levels of functioning. But little effort was made on the part of the peer mediators to help the student to reach beyond their current level. In fact, students usually just think of the current situation to solve an immediate difficulty. This critical factor is usually ignored in case of peer mediators because they mostly look at the final product than the process of learning. They are not aware of the fact teacher is not just a conveyer of knowledge. Conversely, teachers are usually more aware of this fact that the task is the student's so they try to create a challenging situation, such as manipulating a task but not beyond the child's ZPD and make the student attempt to reach the outcomes and achieve competency.

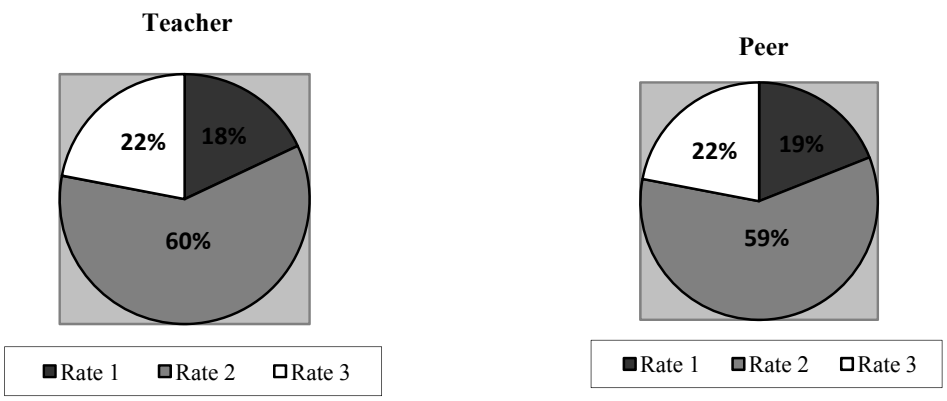
Contingent Responsivity was also frequently applied in both classes illustrating that the mediators in both classes were highly responsive to the needs of their students. The reason why *Contingent Responsivity* had a higher percentage in the peer mediated class (T: 6.4% / P: 7.8%) may be that since the teacher was the only mediator in his class, she could not be responsive to the needs of all the students of the class. On the contrary, in the peer-mediated class, the students were paired, one function as a mediator and the other one as his/her student. In such conditions, peer-mediators were more able to be responsive to the learners' different needs.

A Chi-Square test was also run to see if the difference in the use of scaffolding behaviors in the teacher and peer-mediated classes is significant. The result of chi-square was not really significant $p > .08$, that is, there was not a difference between the teacher and peers' use of the different components of the scale. That is, almost the same components of the MLE Scale were

as a means of mediation by the teacher and peer mediators. Though, the relationship between the mediator (teacher or peer) and the type of scaffolding behavior applied by them was not significant, some differences could be observed. To illustrate, *Assuring Learner's Perception* in the teacher-mediated class was used only few number of times because unlike peer-mediators the teacher was not uncertain about her offered principles so there was no need for her to resort to this kind of scaffolding behavior.

Finally, a comparison was made between the offered scaffolding behaviors by the teacher and peers in the MLE Rating Scale the result of which is presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Percentage of the scaffolding behaviors in each rate of the scale



The results revealed that the most frequently used behaviors in the teacher- and peer-mediated class is related to the second rate of the scale (60% and 59%) and rate 3 was a little more than rate 1.

Generally, the proportion of the second rate was really higher than the first and third rates in both classes, that is, mediators in both classes resorted to more elaborated mediations. The results are consistent with other studies in which it was concluded that elaborated and explicit feedback is more effective than implicit and less elaborated feedback (e.g. Mercer, 1996). Mediators express the issues they want students to consider in their discussions or compositions explicitly and guide them directly, students "have been found to be enthusiastic and effective at grasping knowledgeable ways of using language for sharing and constructing understandings" (Gillies and Boyle 2005, p. 256). Providing explicit feedback also depends on a main reason. As Pressly (2002b) put it, the adult's mediation will be less detailed if the child catches on quickly

and has less difficulty with the task. So, the faster the student grasp the point, the less elaborated feedback will be required.

5. Conclusion

The kind of writing class presented in this study was based on SCT, which highlights the importance of learner participation and collaboration among learners as well as between the teacher and whole class. This teaching style emphasizes the need to focus on the writing process and the procedures and strategies in the act of writing, rather than simply the finished product. When students are working through the process of co-constructing meaning and reach intersubjectivity they benefit the task cognitively. Actually by scaffolding the process of learning, students 'learn how to learn'. Also, Scaffolding is a highly flexible and adoptable model of instruction that supports students' learning and enables the mediators to instruct students with diverse needs.

In this study, the teacher and peers played a crucial role as mediator and displayed a remarkable variety of scaffolding behaviors, such as *Intentionality* (willingness to keep the interaction going), psychological differentiation (trying to keep a distance so the learner can function independently), *Task Regulation* (regulating the tasks by manipulating them), *Contingent Responsivity* (ability to read the learner's needs and respond in an appropriate timely manner), and *Modeling* (modeling solutions and appropriate language use). In general, the teacher applied more scaffolding behaviors than the peers, thus providing more learning environment for the student writers. However, note that they need varying degrees of scaffolding that enables them to gain increasing control over the writing ability.

Though the most frequent behaviors such as *Intentionality* and *Psychological Differentiation* were the same for both the teacher and peer mediators and the relationship was not significant, some differences were also observed. For example, the components of *Affective involvement*, *Communicative Ratchet*, and *Challenge* were hardly ever used by the peer mediators. On the other hand, they used more correction and L1 than the teacher. So, the results suggest that applying different scaffolding strategies may vary from one mediator to another, in this case from the teacher mediator to the peer mediators.

It is very important for the teachers not only rely on a few scaffolding behaviors such as questioning or *Task Regulation*. Teachers (and peers) should display several scaffolding

behaviors to avoid monotony and cause advancement through the task. The fact that the difference between the degree to which particular scaffolding behaviors is significant and some are clearly more frequent than the others suggest that the type of scaffolding behavior employed by the mediators may have to do with the task that students are to accomplish. To prove it though, more research needs to be carried out.

Given that frequent instances of unsuccessful scaffolds, the study to some extent questioned the capacity of peer-mediators in helping each other when working in pairs. Lack of subject knowledge and enough proficiency in L2 was considered as the main cause of this deficiency. It was interesting to find that not having enough proficiency in L2 not only causes peer mediators to offer incorrect or uncertain suggestions, but also to make the correct language form incorrect. Yet, some studies can be carried out to identify the reasons as well as sources and areas in which peers' assistance is not effective. In addition, more inquires are needed to fully account for the helpful scaffolding behaviors used by the teacher and peers particularly in writing classes.

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Title

To Translate Idioms: Posing Difficulties and Challenges for Translators

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"Translation is a customhouse through which passes, if the custom officials are not alert, more smuggled goods of foreign idioms than through another linguistic frontier.'' (Juli Casares, 1956)

Abstract

In all languages there are a great number of idioms - unique, language-fixed expressions whose meaning cannot be deducted from the individual words of the phrase. Idiomatic expressions are always language- and culture-specific. The fact that idioms are always language- and culture-specific material makes also the ***translation*** of idioms an important and interesting area of study. Since each language has its own ways of expressing certain things, an expression in one language may not exist in some other language, or the language may have a very different expression to convey the same meaning, or the corresponding expressions may not be found in another language. This language-fixity makes the translation of idioms sometimes rather tricky and problematic, it is important that this paper on idioms should show the translators how to deal with them in their translation.

Keyword; Translation, Idiom, Collocation.

1. Introduction

1.1.Definition

Linguists have demonstrated that knowing a language is more than just knowing the meaning of its morphemes, simple words, and compound words. In addition to these, they say, "… there are fixed phrases consisting of more than one word, with meaning that cannot be inferred by knowing the individual words. Such phrases are called IDIOMS.'' (*Fromkin,* 1983).

There is a general agreement among linguists as to what an idiom is even though they employ different terms to refer to it. Likewise, the definitions found in almost all sources dealing with idioms are more or less identical. Consider the following, for example, which is a relatively comprehensive definition:

A term used in grammar and lexicology to refer to a sequence of words which are semantically and often syntactically restricted, so that they function as a single unit.

From a semantic view point, the meaning of the individual words cannot be summed to produce the meaning of the 'idiomatic' expression as a whole.

From syntactical view point, the words often do not permit the usual visibility they display in other context. e.g. "it is raining cats and dogs'' does not permit it is raining a cat and a dog / dogs and cats, etc. (*Crystal*, 1980)

Following these and other similar definitions, the terms 'idiom' and 'idiomatic expression' are used interchangeably here to refer to such commonly used expressions as phrasal verbs, idioms, figurative expressions, metaphorical phrases, sayings and proverbs.

2. Idiom and different semantic characteristics of it

All languages have phrases or sentences that cannot be understood literally. Even if we know all the words in a phrase and understand all the grammar of the phrase completely, the meaning may still not be apparent. Many proverbs, informal phrases, and common sayings offer this kind of problem. A phrase or sentence of this kind is said to be idiomatic. They are groups of words which form part of normal speech in a particular language, used speakers from all walks of life. They are the pedigree of nations that is they are never out of season. It is important to realize that idioms are not only colloquial expressions, as many people

believe. They appear in very formal style and in slang, in poetry, in business, in the language of Shakespeare, and the Bible.

"Idioms are not a separate part of the language, which one can choose either to use or omit; they form an essential part of the vocabulary of English". Seidl and Mc Mordie (1988,p.11) According to Komissarov, (1985) ''Ideas expressed by idioms produce a strong impression on the reader … They appeal to his emotions, his aesthetic perception, his background.'' For him, an idiom's semantics are a complex entity having as many as five aspects, i.e., figurative meaning, literal meaning, emotive character, stylistic register, and national coloring.

A few examples will illustrate this:

(1) ***Figurative meaning***. e.g." To kick the bucket". (As to die, but it has offensive meaning based on the context.)

(2) ***Literal meaning*** .e.g. "To kick the bucket".

(3) ***Emotive characters;***

Positive meaning e.g. "To kill two birds with one stone."

Negative meaning. e.g. "To work one's ticket''.

Neutral meaning .e.g. "Rome was not build a day''.

Pragmatic meaning;

Giving advice .e.g. "You should mind your p's and q's.''

...

(4) ***Stylistic registers****;*

Very formal e.g. "To join the great majority.''

Informal or colloquial e.g. "To show ones true color.''

Slang e.g. "To be a pain in the neck.''

Slang, taboo e.g. "To cock something up.''

(5) ***National coloring*****;**

Geographical Names e.g. "To set the Thames on the fire.'' which states the English origin.

Proper Names e.g. "Achilles' heel.'' Which states the Greek origin

3. Types of idioms

It is important for the English to Russian translator to note that not all idioms are slangs, colloquialisms or metaphors, and the term "idiom" must not be confused with any of these. Idioms can occur at any language level from very formal downwards. The following examples help to illustrate this point:

A lot of idioms depend on ***collocation*** – ordinary words that are naturally placed together in normal usage. For instance, the English say "on foot", and never "upon foot" "with foot" or "at foot". It is easy to find the Russian equivalent "пешком", but not all collocations are non-idiomatic collocations. However, collocations are defined as fixed, non-idiomatic constructions, the meaning of which reflecting the meaning of their components. Collocations are, therefore, different from idioms whose meanings are not the combination of the meaning of the individual words in them. Consider, for example, the following sets of word associations in English and their Russian equivalents:

set A	***set B***
Sooner or later	*Рано или поздно*
Open secret	*Секрет полишинеля*
Blood transfusion	*Переливание крови*
With open arms	*С распрострёртыми обьятиями*
Open letter	*Открытое письмо*
White lie	*Ложь во спасение*

In these sets certain words are keeping company but, you will see that in set A the meaning of each item is combination of the meanings of its components. In set B, on the contrary, the meanings of the items cannot be determined by putting the meanings of their individual words together. The items in both sets are collocations whereas those in set B are "idiomatic collocations''. They play a significant role in translation, so much so that, some linguists e.g. (New Mark, 1988) have stated that translation in a sense is a continual struggle to find appropriate collocations. That is, English collocations have proved to be problematic for translators.

Phrasal Verbs

In theory, phrasal verbs are generally considered to be idiomatic combinations of a verb and an adverbial particle. The exact status of the latter is still being debated, scholars being

divided on whether it is an adverb, prepositional adverb, postpositional prefix, special part of speech, etc. However, here we are interested only in the features of adverbial particles.

In general, the main function of phrasal verbs is conceptual categorization of reality in the speaker's mind.They denote not only actions or states as “ordinary” verbs do, but also specify their spatial, temporal or other characteristics.This ability to describe actions or states more precisely, vividly and emotionally is determined by the adverbial components of phrasal verbs. By combining with these elements, verbs of broader meaning are subjected to a regular and systematic multiplication of their semantic functions.Verbs can often cause particular problems with regard to idioms-that is, English phrasal verbs can be highly idiomatic, their meanings being unpredictable from the sum of their constituents' meanings (e.g. *take in* (to deceive), *lay down* (to build), *let on* (to tell a secret). In such cases, where the context or professional experiences fail to reveal the sense of a phrasal verb, a good explanatory or bilingual dictionary can be of great help to the translator. All of these expressions demonstrate how the translation of idiomatic expression can often end in bland expressions in the target language if not undertaken by an expert.

No item of the language, let alone an idiom, has meaning in isolation. To clarify the intended meaning of the idiom, it must be put into context. This is called linguistic context and refers to other words used in the same sentence. Then there is the physical or extra linguistic context which has to do with the described situation. It is important to note that some idioms can change their meaning depending on context. So the usual translation from English into any target language might not be applicable. As an example, consider the idiom ‘‘at the top of the tree’’ and put it in this sentence; ‘‘John is at the top of the tree now’’. Is the reader sure what the sentence is saying about?

Is he in a dangerous position?

Is he hallucinating? Or he is hiding?

One just cannot say now, but put the idiom in a proper context, and the meaning becomes clear; “Ten years ago John jointed the company, and now he is the general manager! Yes, he is really at the top of the tree! ”.The idiom means “to be at the top of one’s profession or to be successful’’.

This goes to show that even if you succeed in locating a similar expression in the other language at first, it may be inappropriate given the context. This can be extremely frustrating for the translators.

4. To translate idioms –The actual meaning

In our world, which embraces more than 3000 languages, communication between different nations with different languages is feasible through translation, e.g. translation is absolutely essential. As Lörscher(1991) puts it, the ever – increasing exchange of information in areas such as economy, politics and science, makes communication between different languages and cultures absolutely vital. As the world is becoming more internationalized each day, also language skills are emphasized more than ever.

This phenomenon has resulted in the fact that the importance of translation has also grown greater than ever before. Translation enables communication across cultural and linguistic boundaries and reinforces intercultural understanding.

In defining translation, Nida (1975,p. 95) points out; Translation is ‘‘… reproducing in the receptor language(target language) the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style.’’ (Cited in Miremadi, 1993, p. 123). And all this depends on the work of the translators, whose job is to convey ideas and information from one language to another. So, the task of transmitting information across language barriers is both difficult and demanding, as the languages are living entities, which change on an almost daily basis. The translators have to avoid falling into a great many pitfalls, and a good translation requires more than the mastery of two or more languages. Quality work demands comprehensive and in – depth knowledge of a particular field. Idiomatic expressions are always language – and culture – specific. An expression in one language may not exist in some other language, or the language may have a very different expression to convey the same meaning. According to Pinnavaia (2002) They are the patrimony of a culture and tradition; they present centuries of life in a determined sociolinguistic context and geographical setting and are therefore the heart and soul of a linguistic community. It is precisely this culture-bound nature that makes them unmanageable for translators who do not belong to the same linguistic community and who

cannot instinctively –as native speakers do – recognize a clear semantic, pragmatic and syntactic pattern.

Idiomatic expressions, proverbs and metaphors are particularly hard to translate well. Where an English person *kills two birds with one stone*. a German will *kill two flies with one flap* **(Zwei Fliegen mit einer Klappe schlagen),** and a Russian *kill two rabbits(Убить двух зайцев).* When *it is raining cats and dogs* in England, in Germany *there are strings falling from sky* **(Es gießt wie aus Kannen)** and in Russia *it is raining from the bucket(*Дождь льёт **как из ведра).**

The most difficult things, however, are often the unspoken facts and illustrations that arise from the cultural background of the source language. But it is totally impossible to know all the English, German, Russian or any other language fairy tales, legends or customs. It is only natural that they may pose great difficulties and challenges for translators. And the question of idioms is certainly one of them. But they cannot be literally translated into other languages. Not a few writers likewise opposed literal, word-for-word translation of idioms. For example, the French scholar, Dolet (1509-1546), suggests that, in order to produce an adequate translation, a translator should "avoid the tendency to translate word for word", since word for word translation, as Dolet (1509-1546) explains, ''misinterprets the original content and spoils the beauty of its form'' (cited in Miremadi, 1993,p. 74).We know this to be true, or it is very seldom that an idiom in one language e.g. English, can be appropriately translated by an equivalent idiom into another language e.g. Russian, but the question however remains: "How should they be translated?"

An idiomatic translation is usually considered the best kind of translation as, if done properly, it comes across as the way a native speaker would talk or write. The translation difficulties arise in case;

When there happen to be no corresponding equivalent idiom in our target language.

When the existing ''ready- made'' equivalent cannot to be used as it is because , for example , the idiom in source language labeled informal in the past and now is considered to be taboo in style ,or its emotive character has changed.In English the expression ''kick the bucket'' (отбросить копыта) is slang and would be highly inappropriate in many contexts. In choosing an idiom it is necessary to make sure it is equivalent at every level.

5. Dealing with idioms in translation process

As said, due to the language-specific nature of idioms, their translation can be somewhat challenging at times. Idioms must be recognized, understood and analyzed before appropriate translation methods can be considered. One must, first of all, be able to spot idioms from a text – it is absolutely crucial that a translator recognizes an idiom when s/he sees one. The ability to identify idioms is of enormous importance, since their meaning should never be understood literally. As Ingo (1990, p. 247) puts it, the translator must first analyze what the writer has intended to say before s/he can even think of translating the expression. Larson (1984, p. 143) agrees, as he argues that the first crucial step in the translation of idioms is to be absolutely certain of the meaning of the source language idiom. Therefore the most important issue in translating idioms is the ability to distinguish the difference between the literal meaning and the real meaning of the expression (Ingo 1990, p. 248). This is why recognizing and being able to use idioms appropriately requires excellent command over the source language.

It is, thus, only after identifying the non-literal meaning of the idiom that a translator can even think of translating the expression into the target language. In addition to being able to recognize idioms in a source text, the translator must also be able to use idioms fluently and competently in the target language (Larson 1984, p. 116). Not only does a translator need to master the source language, but s/he must also be able to express him/herself in the target language fluently and smoothly. Larson (1984, p. 116) stresses the importance of the ability to use target language idioms naturally; because that ensures that the translator can produce smooth and lively target language text as well as preserve the stylistic features of the source text.

The final difficulty, then, is to find a TL expression with the same meaning. The problem lies in the fact that an idiomatic expression in one language rather often does not have an equivalent expression in another language. The translator has to think of an appropriate translation strategy for the phrase.

In general, translation theorists recognize three different translation strategies for idioms, so for the English to Russian translator there are three possible approaches to idioms:

Translate the idiom word- for- word into the target language. Literal translation is generally considered to be the least successful translation strategy. The same applies to idioms: Most scholars claim that a literal translation conveys "foreign" elements into the target language text, which are generally considered unacceptable (Larsen,1984,p.15).They do not generally recommend translating idioms literally, because a word-for-word translation of an idiom is said to "ruin the meaning and the beauty of the original expression" (Nida,1964,p.16) result in "nonsense" (Larson 1984,p. 116), and is therefore "rarely successful" (Ingo,1990,p. 246).Obviously this is not something a professional translator would do, as it usually becomes completely meaningless in the target language, though you might well find it in a machine translation. So the expression "Every dog has its day'' might become "У каждой собакой свой праздник бывает", which would make no sense to a Russian reader in the original context. (Будет и на нашей улице праздник).

Translating an idiom with a non – idiom, identify the meaning and use a Russian phrase that translates the meaning, but isn't an idiom. So "kick the bucket" would be translated as умирать, "to die". In most cases this is the most feasible solution, although it usually results in a less forceful and sometimes unfaithful translation.

Translating an idiom with an idiom, the most recommended translation strategy for idioms is translating them with a natural target language idiom which has the same meaning as the original source language idiom. For instance, "Sink or swim!" "потону или выплыву! or либо пан, либо пропал!"

According to Ingo (1990, p. 246) idioms should always be translated with a semantically and stylistically corresponding idiom in the target language. Bassnett McGuire (1980,p. 24) on the other hand, suggests that idioms should be translated on the basis of the function of the phrase: the source language idiom should be replaced by a target language idiom that has the same meaning and function in the TL culture as the SL idiom has in the SL culture. However this is sometimes possible to carry out this recommendation in practice, but not often. In the case of "Jack of all trade", it might be possible to use "мастер на все руки". However, it is also necessary to be aware of language level, cultural implications etc. In English the expression "Jack of all trade, master of none" as ''За все берётся и

ничего толком не умеет", often used in dialogue to shorten what is being said; e.g. in speech or conversation, we may hear the first part of this English proverb, ''Jack of all trade …''and the second part of it "master of none'' is omitted from the whole expression which makes the idiom sound offensive. So in English the expression ''jack of all trade" and would be highly inappropriate in many contexts. In choosing an idiom it is necessary to make sure it is equivalent at every level.

The benefits of the strategy of matching an idiom by an idiom are related to the stylistic balance between the source and target language texts. By translating source language idioms with corresponding target language idioms, the style and manner of expression of the source text can be conveyed also to the target language text. The translator should therefore make every effort to find a corresponding target language idiom for a source language idiom – if there is none available, the idiom should be translated with a "normal", non-idiomatic expression which conveys the same meaning.

6. Conclusion

"The essence of language is said to be communication, and idiomatic expression are among its instruments. The English language, we know, is rich in idiom so much so that it would be very difficult indeed to establish linguistic communication without using idioms, and the majority of speakers of either English or any language are often unaware of when they are using them. Even at the very early stages of learning English idioms prove indispensable. Imagine a situation where two persons are being introduced formally but the parties fall short of the conventional idiomatic greeting "How do you do?''. Tajali,(1997,19).Now that the objective of using a language in real situation is communication, the approach to its translation must also be communication-based.

There are a few parallel idioms in two languages, but not many, that is, it is very seldom that an idiom in one language, e.g. English, can be appropriately translated by an equivalent idiom in another language, e.g. Russian, so the majority have to be translated by phrase that simply coveys the meaning and image . However, it is very difficult for English to Russian translators to achieve a translation with the same level of idiom as the source language. This requires a lot of skills on the part of the English to any target language translator. The problem in the translation of idioms is not really their alleged untranslatability – rather, the

actual problem lies in the fact that their idiomatic quality cannot always be transmitted to the target language text. There is no doubt that an idiomatic translation if well done is the ideal type of translation it comes across as the way a native speaker would talk or write. So translators must be wary of the translating idioms into their own languages. Even if they locate an idiom they must be certain that it exactly fits the requisite context and generates the necessary connotations and associations. Often in the end, it may be best to avoid the idiom–better safe than sorry!

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Title

A Corpus-based Analysis of Authentic Audio-visual Materials and its Possible Application in L2 Teaching Activities

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Abstract

The use of authentic audio-visual materials (AAVM) has always been a controversial issue in L2 teaching activities. Much of the opposition aroused in this regard concerns the un-suitability of such materials in terms of language features prevalent in these materials such as speed of delivery, degree of orality, etc. Though there are many features listed in the literature, this paper tries to provide an exploratory investigation of the dominant linguistic and non-linguistic features mostly found in the audio-video input of such materials by means of a corpus development and analysis based on 100.000 running words for two major genres namely information (news bulletins and documentary films) and entertainment (movies and series). More than 15 different features which are considered in the extant literature on listening comprehension have been investigated in this paper.

The analysis of the results reveals that certain features are more dominant in a given genre requiring due attention to be paid to those features in case such materials are to be used as a teaching materials in L2 activities.
Keywords: Authentic audio-visual materials, Orality, Corpus linguistics, Type/ token Ratio.

1. Introduction

The new millennium can be regarded as the century of new developments in all spheres of life. The innovations and changes taking place in all aspects of human life can be seen everywhere, thus making the foreign language teaching as no exception in this regard. In our contemporary world, the national borders have shrunk and contacts with people living on other parts of the globe have become a reality, we live in an age when an event which has occurred in the remotest places of the world can be relayed to other sides of it in a blinking of an eye. Living in such a world brings to the mind prophecies concerning the realization of "global village".

The widespread availability of mass media materials such as movies, series, documentaries and news has imposed new requirements on the recent educational objectives. Language teaching business is now under heavy pressure by the L2 learners to incorporate such materials in language teaching activities, so that by the end of their language learning career, the L2 learners can enjoy authentic materials like native speakers. The reluctance of language teachers to use such materials mostly goes back to their lack of understanding about such materials.

The arguments over the use of authentic materials in the classroom for the L2 teaching purposes especially listening skill has been going on for at least two decades. Authentic audio-visual materials here refer to any material which according to Rings (1986) and Field (1998) is designed or recorded for native speakers and not for language learning purposes. Although many current scholars regard authenticity as highly desirable (Rings, 1986, Field 1998), some authors like Ur (1984) and Dunkel (1986) maintain that such materials are neither good nor appropriate for learners and their specific goals. While proponents provide a long list of advantages inherent in such materials such as being a good motivator, providing meaning, content, and guidance, and also bringing authenticity to the classroom, scholars such as Penfield (1987) hold that the blame should be put on the lack of an understanding of mass media; and they are of the opinion that

media has been overlooked because teachers do not enjoy sufficient knowledge of how to utilize such rich and complex learning materials to students' needs and language competencies.

On the other hand, the opponents hold that teachers should avoid the temptation to use such materials because of their availability. Some scholars such as Ur (1984) and Dunkel (1986) maintain that the use of "unedited, non-pedagogical materials in the classroom only creates problems, since the selection; obtaining or rating of such materials are often difficult for learners at lower proficiency levels".

While the controversy over the usability of authentic audio-material has turned into a divisive issue with its own staunch supporters and vocal opponents each group citing its own list of advantages or disadvantages for such materials a closer look at the extant literature reveals that authentic-audio materials has been a domain that few researchers have dared to set foot in. Most of the warning issued relates to a lack of scientific analysis which can partly be attributed to the extensiveness of the work required in this regard, an issue which has brought a barrage of criticism on the supporters of such materials. The bulk of criticisms directed at the supporters of such materials can all be placed in a "nutshell" of lack of understanding. All those blames and shortcoming cited above can be removed provided there is a thorough analysis of the language used in such materials along with their contributing factors (both linguistic and non-linguistic). This paper tries to provide such an investigation by preparing a sample corpora and then analyzing its linguistic and non-linguistic features in order to give a comprehensive sample of two major authentic audio-visual genres namely in the domain of information (news and documentaries) and entertainment (movies and series).

2. Studies on AAVMs

Out of the four language skills, listening is one of the channels in which we process language in real time, and it plays a pivotal role in our daily life. The role that listening skill plays in human life surpasses other skills in terms of frequency and function. Rivers (1981) holds that in reality, listening is used far more than any other single language skill in normal daily life. On average, we can expect to listen twice as much as we speak, four times more than we read, and five times more than we write.

Up to few decades ago, listening skill was regarded a forlorn hope in L2 teaching activities. This prevalent tendency led some scholars like Shohamy(1991) to call it a "neglected skill";

however, this skill nowadays enjoys a much better status in L2 activities. Benson &Hijett (1980) were among the first who called it an essential prerequisite for oral communication, while Scarcella and Oxford (1992) consider it as an influential factor affecting the development of reading and writings and others such as Dunkel (1991) are of the opinion that it has a significant role for the university students' success because it still acts as the main means of instruction in all education levels. Listening also plays an important role in language teaching business, because besides being the most frequently used language skill, it helps the learners to grasp the message of the spoken language in the classrooms.

One rich source of listening materials relates to the Authentic Audio-Visual Materials. As was mentioned above, the lack of a thorough understanding of this phenomenon has led to serious doubts concerning the usability of such materials in L2 classrooms. Despite the abundance of studies concerning the benefits of AAVM listed by scholars such as MacFadden, K., Barrett, K., and Horst, M. (2009) who regard such materials as a useful source of authentic language input in which the viewers are likely to acquire new linguistic features through accidental learning, most of the studies dealing with such materials (movies, TV talk shows, News and serials) have focused and placed the main burden on vocabulary knowledge.

Difficulties related to the nature of the general listening input materials for L2 learners have been widely investigated in the literature. Though not exclusively based on AAVM, concerning the type of factors inherent in input materials, researchers have identified a large number of factors affecting listening task difficulty. Webb and Rodgers (2009) and Webb (2010a, 2010b) can be regarded as the pioneers who have tried to investigate the language of AAVM but sad to say their studies have focused on just one of the numerous variables involved in listening comprehension difficulty task namely vocabulary coverage. In their study of 88 TV programs and also movies, they suggested that 98% coverage may be sufficient for comprehension and they hold that comprehension of TV programs may be easier than written text because of the presence of visual clues.

Listening comprehension is a complex process and it seems that various input variables such as connectedness of speech and social and regional variations in pronunciation, plus listeners' cognitive and metacognitive characteristics can affect it.

"Researchers have listed several variables including speech rate, length of passage, syntactic complexity, vocabulary, number of hearing, text type or "orality" degree, input source (live or

recoded), discourse structure, noise level, accent, register, propositional density, amount of redundancy, etc…as contributing factors to the listening task difficulty" (Brindley & Slatyer, 2002.P.7). However, none of the above scholars have focused exclusively on AAVM nor have dealt with all the above variables in one study. It seems that such variation may make understanding of the L2 speech particularly difficult if it diverges substantially from the norms students are familiar" (cited in Major, Fitzmaurice, Bunta, &Balasubramanian, 2005).

The main aim of the corpora collection and analysis was to identify and analyze the AAVM input variables listed in the literature; variables which though separately dealt with are assumed to affect listening comprehension. So we were interested to find the answers for the following two questions.

1. What are the prevalent variables (both linguistic and non-linguistic) found in AAVM?
2. What is the relative significance of each variable in AAVM input?

Answering the above two questions it was hoped would pave the way in having a better insight into such materials which could act as a road map for the selection, grading and teaching strategies by the teachers when they attempt to make use of such materials in the classroom.

3. Methodology and Analyses:

In order to get an understanding of the underlying features of AAVM mostly discussed in the literature, and based on the results of a pilot questionnaire on the most urgent needs and problems experienced by English language university majors, two major types of genres were identified, namely information and entertainment categories. Though AAVM fall into numerous categories and this distinction may be a little fuzzy, we did limit the research question into two main categories based on this rough dichotomy. The two genres selected were further divided into news and documentary (for information genre) and movies and serials (for entertainment genre). By information AAVM we meant those materials whose major function is to convey a sort of information to the audience while the second genre's main objective is assumed to be limited to the amusement of the audience. To collect the materials for the first genre, news bulletins of various 24 hours International News Channels such as CNN, BBC, France 24, Aljazeera English, Press TV, and Euronews were selected while the various documentary films in the domain of technology, science, biography, history, engineering, wildlife, politics, etc were included in the second category. For entertainment as its name implies we selected feature

movies and series. To select the materials for the first genre type i.e. during a whole year beginning from Sep. 2009 up to Sep. 2010 news bulletins from different TV channels were recorded and then 50 news footages were selected randomly for analysis. The news footages were either recorded live from TV or downloaded from the Internet. In addition to the news footages, fifty documentary films were randomly selected from a long list of such materials. The same procedure was followed for the feature movies and series. 100 films and series were randomly selected from among some 1000 films and serial episodes.

3.1. Procedure for the Preparation of AAVM Corpus:

Although corpus linguistics enjoys a history of several decades long, it has only been in the last few years that it has received any serious attention by applied linguists. For a quarter of a century, corpus evidence was ignored, spurned and talked out of relevance, until its importance became just too obvious for it to be kept out in the cold (Sinclair, 1996).

ESP teachers were among the first who appreciated the pedagogic potential of corpus work. Lexicographers were the second group of scholars who reaped the benefits of corpus linguistics in the compilation of dictionaries and arriving at the context-bound regularities. Nowadays a large number of dictionaries include descriptions of words and phrases that are based on corpus research. Other teaching materials such as grammars and textbooks are also benefitting more and more from the availability of evidence from a corpus-based research. Corpora can also be used as the basis for the description of phrases in language, which again is of great benefit to the learner. And finally, there is an increasing body of research that illustrates the discrepancies between the type of English we find in traditional teaching materials that are based on intuition, and the kind that we find in language corpora. Kennedy (1998) maintains that corpus based research not only has had an impact on the context of language pedagogy, but also it has the potential to have a direct effect on language teaching methodology. He is of the opinion that for over 3 decades, the analysis and description of corpora has helped to gather facts about lexis, grammar, and discourse which are indispensible for ELT activities.

3.2. Size and Types of Corpora

The second stage of the research concerned the preparation of a 100,000 words corpus from the above materials. By the advent of computers, corpora analysis has entered a new era. Although,

the earlier corpora were of small size, the modern corpora can range from one million word corpora such as the Brown Corpus, to the Bank of English TM Corpus, which up to the year 2005 hasexceeded 500 million words (Adolphs, 2006).

Corpora are of two main types those which are based on writing materials and those which are based on spoken data. Unlike certain types of texts, especially that are generated by using electronic media like e-mails and word-processed documents, which tend to be readily available, the second group are less frequent and may require a lengthy collection process and careful manual preparation. Examples of such texts include transcripts of spoken interactions or any documents that are unavailable in electronic format. Though the advances made in automatic voice recognition, and modern software programs have had a great influence on the development of corpus analysis, the issue of spoken materials still remains as one of the most defying issues in this regard and that is one of the main reasons why this aspect of corpus linguistics has not been approached by individual researchers. Because of such difficulties, spoken corpora have remained a time-consuming and expensive research to undertake.

Though O'Keefe A., McCarthy, M., & Carter, R (2007) warn that generalizations based on a corpus under 1 million words in size may not be reliable, due to the uniqueness of the research and difficulties associated with the task, we chose 100.000 as sufficient for our work. For each main genre, a representative sample of 50,000 words was targeted, which implies that each individual genre could have a 25.000 words sample. At first it was decided to place the selection on time segments from the randomly selected samples for each genre which meant that 5 minute section to be cut from each sample for analysis, but since this procedure proved inadequate because the number of verbal interactions or verbal exchanges varied greatly in the selected segments, consequently we decided to base the selection criterion on the utterance of a specific number of words so in order to have a representative number of all possible styles, a 500 words sample from each main genre was selected for further analysis, no matter how long the 500 word sample lasted. In other words, each randomly selected part (be it a news footage, a documentary or a feature film or serial episode) was played back several times and the spoken interactions / monologues were transcribed up to 500 words the beginning and the end of the film footage were marked and archived for further analysis. The operative procedure followed consisted of providing a wide transcription for all different genres. It needs to be noted that for news, most documentary films and some serials for which there was no transcription available, the

painstaking task of transcription was done by the researcher which proved a very difficult and excruciating process. Even for the films and movies which a transcription was available in the Internet, to make sure that nothing has been left, the same transcripts were double checked by watching the materials several times and not only erroneous parts were corrected but also extra unnecessary features identified, marked or deleted. In this way 200 segments consisting of 50 films, 50 series episodes, 50 news footages and 50 documentaries each with 500 words length were obtained (the default number for the selection of the footage was 500 words, though there can be some minor fluctuation due to the fact that we wanted to keep the last sentences complete) the final output was a corpus of 100,000 running words of the spoken materials of the above materials (each genre 25,000 words consisting of 50 different samples).

3.3. Analysis of the Corpus:

For the first time, an attempt was made to provide a complete analysis of the variables mostly identified separately in the extant literature. It needs to be noted that some of these features have been dealt with for the first time here as it was assumed they may act as a distractor or facilitator during the listening process. Therefore, the following stages were taken as described below.

The next stage of the research concerned the analysis of the transcribed corpora. The total number of pages thus obtained for linguistic analysis amounted to 100.000 running words collected in more than 600 pages in word format. The underlying assumption for the analysis of the spoken utterances rendered to written form was that for the majority of the cases they were the reproduction of written scripts, because in films, the actors repeat the memorized monologues or dialogues, news items are read by news announcers or the voiceover we here in documentary films is the reading of a passage already written by someone else and so there remain only few spontaneous unplanned speech which can be found mainly in live reports and interviews. Another assumption was that the linguistic and non-linguistic features present in the collected AAVM contribute to their difficulty level for L2 learners. The main aim was to identify and classify the variables to see whether they differed significantly from genre to genre and if positive to what extent and how prevalent a particular feature was in a given genre. The analysis consisted of two parts: the first part which can be referred to as linguistic analysis concerned with linguistic features while the second part related to the non-linguistic features prevalent in AAVM. In needs to be added here that in order to reduce the burden of the task and enable the

computer to do the counting process, after the preparation of the transcripts, each segments was minutely analyzed (both by carefully reading the transcribed texts and listening to the audio-video materials), by doing so the transcripts were purged of any non-spoken items while an attempt was made to keep it as faithful to the audio input as possible. At the same time, to facilitate the computation process, special codes designating the occurrence of a particular variable were assigned to each footage transcript. This procedure which in electronic text analysis is referred to as "mark-up" or "encoding" is undertaken in order to get a fast and reliable computation of a particular feature in a text.

The linguistic analysis of the AAVM focused on the following features including "type and token" for each individual 500-words sample along with the type and token ratio, (by type here we refer to the number of distinct words in a corpus, that is, the size of the vocabulary, and tokens refers to the total number of running words, 500 for each footage and 100,000 in all). Concerning the number of types listed for each particular variable, it needs to be noted that we did use an N-gram based system which treats cat and cats as two separate words. If we use such words as instances of a single abstract word, or lemma (lemma is a set of lexical forms having the same stem, the same major part-of-speech, and the same word-sense), then the number of types obtained for each genre will decrease. Since this counting process is quite formidable without modern software programs, a software program by the name "Word Extractor or WoEx" was developed and used for this purpose. By means of the said program, all the types in a particular genre were tallied alphabetically along with their frequency of occurrence.

Corpus research has highlighted the fact that a large proportion of language is phrasal in nature, that is, there is an observable tendency for particular items to co-occur in a non-random fashion. The attraction between two words is often referred as collocation. Since O'Keefe, et al (2007) corpus research had shown that spoken interaction is characterized by the frequent use of multi-word lexical units or idioms, and because the WoEx program could only recognize words separated by space, and since we did not wish to commit the pedagogical limitation of MacFadden et al (2009) research concerning the presence of idioms, all the idioms in each transcript were counted and then written as a single word unit to avoid its effect on the type/token figures.

The other factor investigated concerned the type/token ratio which is often calculated in order to gain some basic understanding of the lexical variation within the text and it is calculated by

dividing the number of tokens in a text by the number of types. It is useful when assessing the level of complexity of a particular text or text collection. As a general rule, the higher the type-token ratio, the less varied the text is. In this way, ratios for all 200 footages plus for each single genre were obtained.

The next variable looked for was the number of sentences or idea units expressed in these 500 words samples, plus the type of sentences (simple, complex, compound or complex compound) and the average words per sentence. In the Brown Corpus the mean number of words per sentence in the informative prose category is much greater than in imaginative prose (Kennedy, 1998, p. 157), therefore, we assumed that the different AAVM genres use different sentence structure a phenomenon which adds to the complexity of comprehension. So the types of sentences in term of syntactic structures present in the transcribed texts were minutely counted and the results were taken note of.

Another variable was the percentage of proper nouns in the corpus. This is a serious problem for many L2 learners because even dictionaries do not include many proper names. Liberman and Church (1992) report that 21% of the word tokens in their 33 million-word corpora "1988 AP Newswire Corpus" were names. Furthermore, they report that a list of obtained in 1987 from the Donnelly marketing organization contain 1.5 million names (covering 72 million households in the United States). The challenge concerning the presence of proper nouns in the case of AAVM and television has been delineated more closely in a recent study by Webb and Rodgers (2009), in their analysis of a corpus of both British and American movies totaling 268.384 running words, they were able to show that an L2 learner needs to know a minimum of 3000 word families plus many proper nouns and marginal words in order to understand TV (marginal words are items characteristic of spoken interaction such as um, and uh-huh). However, without the knowledge of proper nouns (many of which may be difficult for learners unfamiliar with North American Culture) and marginal words, they conclude that the learner would need to be able to understand at least 12,000 word families- a vocabulary size associated with very advanced learners (Nation, 2001). Thus proper names and their frequency of their occurrence were also taken note of, so the frequency of occurrence of proper nouns was counted, but in order to prevent their effect on type frequency, they were omitted and replaced with an especial code designating the proper nouns before running the type frequency computation.

Another issue which according to the literature greatly affects the listening comprehension / perception of the L2 learners concerns the presence of what is technically known as orality (or formality degree) in the speech output. By orality we refer to any deviation in the dictionary form of the word done in the actual pronunciation of the speakers which can include variations caused by phonological rules such as assimilation, reduction, deletion, insertion, fast speech delivery, connected speech, contraction, etcetera. We also included in this category all the representations of weak forms along with other speech variations as cases of orality in our sample databank. For example if the phrase "I am going" to was pronounced as "I gonna", or "she is" as "she's" all these cases were recorded as cases of orality and their frequency of occurrence in each sample was counted. However, before running the WoEx Program, and in order to avoid the effect of such representations of spoken language on type figures, the cases of orality were changed into normal English spelling e.g. "isn't" was spelled as "is not".

We also counted the number of sentences in each sample transcripts plus the number of simple or complex sentences. In order to make the task easier, the dichotomy adapted here was based on a distinction between simple or complex sentences, all compound and complex compound sentences were tallied under complex sentences.

Another variable related to the accent of the speakers which was accordingly divided into 5 major accents of Formal American, Formal British, Informal American, Informal British, Black English and Non-native accent. These classifications were based on pure linguistic judgment without any reference to the speakers' race or nationality or other physical characteristics. As all the spoken utterances had been transformed into transcripts, we also selected three samples from each genre and provided its reading difficulty estimate on the basis of Edward Fry's Readability Graph (cited in Farhady, H. Jafarpoor, A. and Birjandi, P. 1994. P.317).

By non-linguistic factors we targeted and took note of the following features: (1) speed of delivery: though findings clearly show that there is not an isomorphic relationship between speed of speech and comprehension (Flowerdew 1994), yet one consistent finding is that the best aid to comprehension is to use normal speaking speed with extra pauses inserted. The average speed of spoken English, including pauses, is in the neighborhood of 180 words per minute. Reading speed vary considerably, of course, but the average may be between 200 and 400 words per minute (Gibson & Levin, 1975. P 539), a little faster than speaking and listening. Therefore we took note of the time spent for the production of spoken transcripts. All the 200 segments were

examined in terms of time (in seconds) and necessary records were made. (2) The sex of the main speaking characters in each segment was another non-linguistics feature which we considered in our viewing. The main characters of movies and serials (about 432) and also news bulletins and documentaries (224) were taken note of and recorded. (3) Since we wanted to obtain the prevalent patterns in different genres concerning the main age groups of the speakers, it was categorized into 5 age groups namely kids, adolescents, youth, middle-aged and elderly and the main characters were accordingly labeled. (4) The presence or absence of extra background noise during the utterance of the sample transcripts was also taken note of and thus divided into four types namely studio setting (no extra noise, or very high quality voice input) speech with background noise, the presence of background music, and the last category which contained both music and background noise mixed with original voice, these different cases were ranked one (the easiest) to four (the most difficult) (5) unlike listening to radio, where obviously 100% of the information is carried to the listener by audio, in video programs there is a very important feature namely lip movements which may act as a facilitator in speech perception, therefore, to obtain this feature we took notice of the camera's shooting angle, we made use of the camera's angle to make necessary classifications i.e. extremely closed-up, closed-up, medium-closed up shots in which there was a possibility of seeing the characters' lip movement were categorized as lip present, while in those shots such as medium shot, long shot or extremely long/wide shots in which the viewer had to deal with an audio input were classified as lip movement absent; the third possibility concerned the hybrid case in which the camera moved as the speaker was uttering something. In other words if the camera did not stay on the speaking character to let him/her finish his/her utterance, the footage was categorized as mixed and was scored 3. So we had three levels here, lip reading present (case 1), lip reading absent (case 2), or a mixed condition (case 3). (6) The next feature was related to the fact whether the speech was rehearsed or read from scripts or was spontaneous. In this stage, all the spoken utterances were accordingly divided into planned speech or spontaneous speech. In summary the whole corpus was analyzed for the following variables:

Linguistic variables	
1	Type, token
2	Type , token ratio of each sample
3	Mean of type in each sample
4	Type token ratio of each genre
5	Number of total sentences in each sample
6	Number of sentences by syntactic type (simple, or compound, complex or compound complex) in each sample
7	Mean of words in a sentence
8	Number of idioms per sample
9	Number of proper names in each sample
10	Number of proper names in each genre
11	Number of orality cases in each sample
12	Number of orality cases in each genre
13	Accent of the main characters
14	Readability (reading difficulty scale)
Non-linguistic variables	
15	Sex of the speaker
16	Mean of sentences uttered in one minute
17	Mean of words uttered in one minute
18	Age range of the speakers
19	Noise level in each sample
20	Lip reading in each sample
21	Degree of preparedness in each sample

Table No. 1: Linguistic and Non-Linguistic Variables Investigated

4. Results and Discussion:

All the data were then fed into Word Extractor and the SPSS programs; and making use of relevant tests their prevalent features were obtained. To save space, the results of the statistical

analyses conducted for different variables are not included here. The following table presents the major data obtained for each single variable.

No.	Feature	Movies	Serials	News	Documentaries
1	Total words	25300	25288	25273	25043
2	Total type without proper names	3397	3422	3853	4566
3	Mean of type in each sample 500 words	241	244	247	250
4	Total number of proper names in each genre sample	769	826	1803	921
5	Total types used in each genre (without proper nouns)	5260		6729	
6	Type/token ratio for each genre	7.44	7.38	6.55	5.48
7	Mean time of each sample by seconds	336	343	197	324
8	Mean of words uttered in one minute	92	108	156	101
9	Total sentences	4253	3895	1319	1320
10	Readability	2		4	
11	Mean of sentences / sample	85	77	26	26
12	Mean of words / sentence	6.14	6.56	19.7	19.92
13	Mean of simple sentence /sample	69.2	61.5	9.6	9.3
14	Mean of complex sentences/sample	10.1	12.4	13.2	15.8
15	Mean of idioms /sample	7	12.3	19.9	12.5
16	Mean of proper names/sample	18.2	20.6	35.2	18.4
17	Mean of orality/sample	31.7	33.6	15.37	13.29

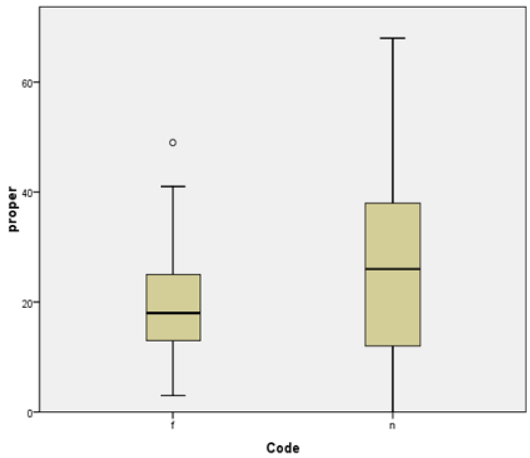
Table No.2: Results of the main variables investigated

A look at the above table reveals interesting points about the underlying linguistic features of the four mass media genres. As can be seen in table No. 2, the number of types for documentaries is much higher compared with the three other genres (3397 types for movies, 3422 types for series, 3853 types for news and 4566 types for documentary films). So it seems that the documentaries require a wider range of vocabulary coverage compared with the other three AAVM genres.

It needs to be noted that proper nouns have not been included in the type/token counts and one reason for obtaining a lower type rates for all four genres concerns this fact. So if the proper

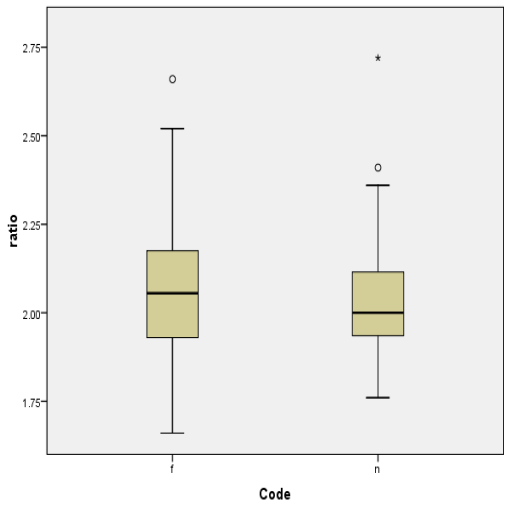
nouns had not been excluded from this process, for example the actual type rate for the news genre would get to (3853+1803=4656). The number of proper nouns in News bulletins exceeds the other three genres while documentaries rank second in this regard, and it is almost twice the size of other genres (1803 cases compared with 726 and 869 cases in movies and serials) and therefore it can be inferred that proper nouns are a significant component of news bulletins, an issue which needs to be taken care of in the teaching of such materials.

In the following section, the dominant variable in each genre is presented in boxplots. The boxplot (also known as a box or whisker plot) summarizes the following statistical measures: median, upper and lower quartiles and minimum and maximum data values.The following boxplot represents the proper nouns usage in films & serials and news and documentary genres respectively.



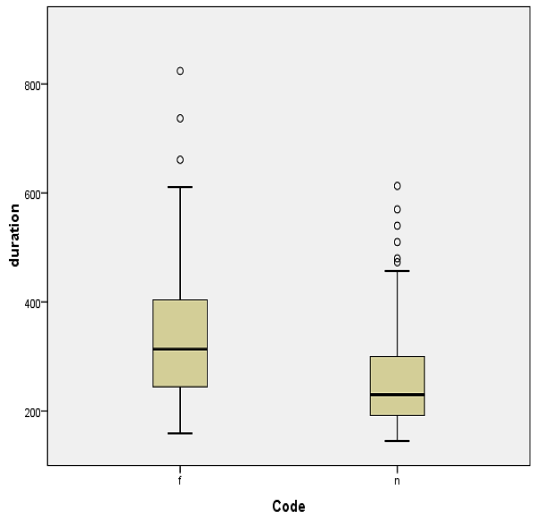
Boxplot No 1: Proper names in both genres (n: information, f: Entertainment)

Type / token ratio is much higher in movies and serials than the two genres of news and documentary films. Type / token ratio for films, serials, news and documentary has been 7.44, 7.38, 6.55and 5.48 respectively. The type token ratio for entertainment genre and information genre was 9.61 and 7.47 too. This difference in type / token average implies that the first genre i.e. films and serials are based on less varied texts whereas the latter are of more varied texts. The following boxplot presents this relationship.



Boxplot No. 2: Type token ratio in entertainment {f} and Information Genre {n}

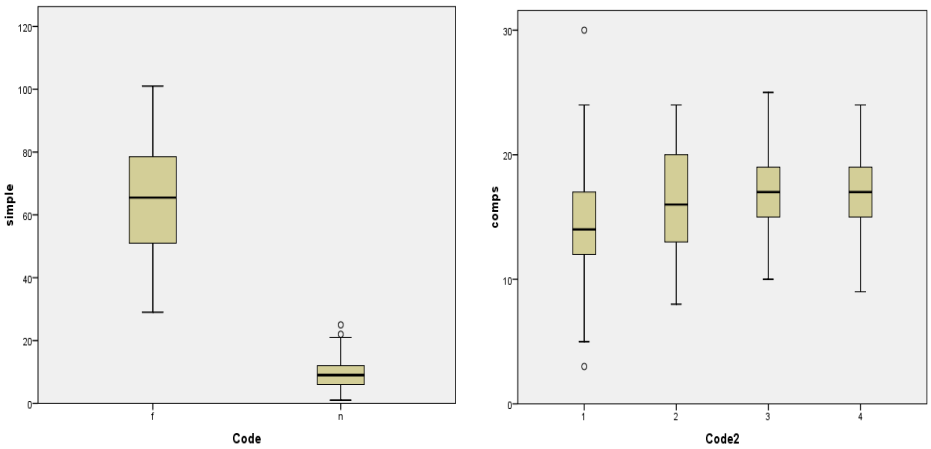
A look at the mean time spend for the production of 500 word samples reveals that news bulletins have the shortest time (197 seconds) while movies, serials and documentaries have had a much longer time for delivery. This is an important issue which means that the fastest speech can be found in news bulletins while other genres have a much slower delivery rate (it needs to be added that undue pauses have not been considered in the calculations). The following boxplot represents this point graphically.



Boxplot No. 3: Average delivery time for entertainment and information genres

Concerning the speed of delivery (mean of words uttered in one minute) it seems that news bulletins rank first (with the average of 156 words per minute) while the distribution of time for other genres is roughly the same, which means that apart from news bulletins, other three genres have similar delivery speed (row 10 of the table).

From the sentence structures' point of view, it seems that the total number of sentences used in each sample genre differs greatly from each other. There are more than 4253 and 3895 sentences in films and serials which makes the sentences consist mainly of simple structure having fewer number of words whereas the sentences used in news and documentaries are much fewer (1320 and 1319) and therefore much longer respectively. Both news and documentary genres do have a much higher percentage of complex structures and tend to use less simple constructions making them more like written texts, while movies and serials due to their dominant feature mainly consist of simple verbal interaction or idea units. This can be reinforced by the examination of reading difficulty index calculated for all four genres; the readability index obtained for the entertainment genre was 2 while the readability index for information genre had been 4 which is twice the size for the first genre. So it appears that in information genre, the use of complex, compound structures is more prevalent and it is a characteristic feature of their diction making it resemble to more advanced reading texts, a fact which is also reflected in the readability and type, token ratio. The following two boxplots represents the occurrence of simple and compound/complex sentences in four different genres.



Boxplot No. 4 & 5: Simple and complex sentences in both genres

Concerning the use of idioms; it seems that news bulletins utilize a large number of idioms and multi-word clusters compared with the other genres (mean of 19.9 idioms in each 500-word sample); while movies have the lowest number of idioms per sample (7 on average) making it stand in the fourth rank in this regard, while there is no difference in the average use of idioms in serials and documentaries (12.3 and 12.5 respectively). The following tables represent the mean of idioms used in each genre.

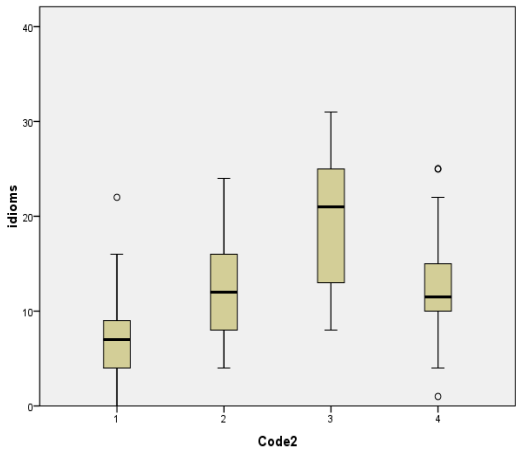
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
number of idioms in entertainment genre	100	0	24	9.66	5.164
Valid N (listwise)	100				

Table No 3: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
number of idioms in information genre	100	1	31	16.18	7.037
Valid N (listwise)	100				

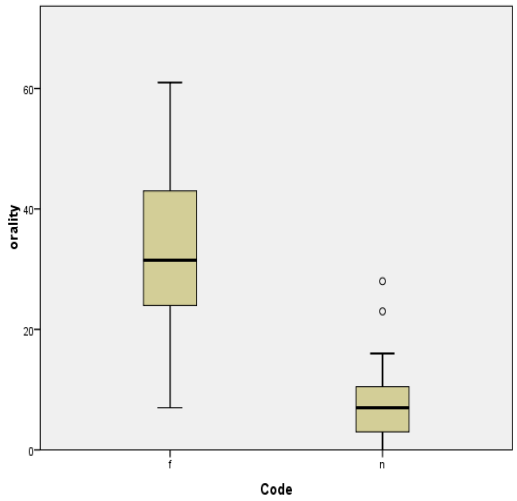
Table No. 4: Descriptive Statistics

The following boxplot presents the idioms usage in films, serials, news and documentary respectively.



Boxplot no. 6: idioms use in four different genres

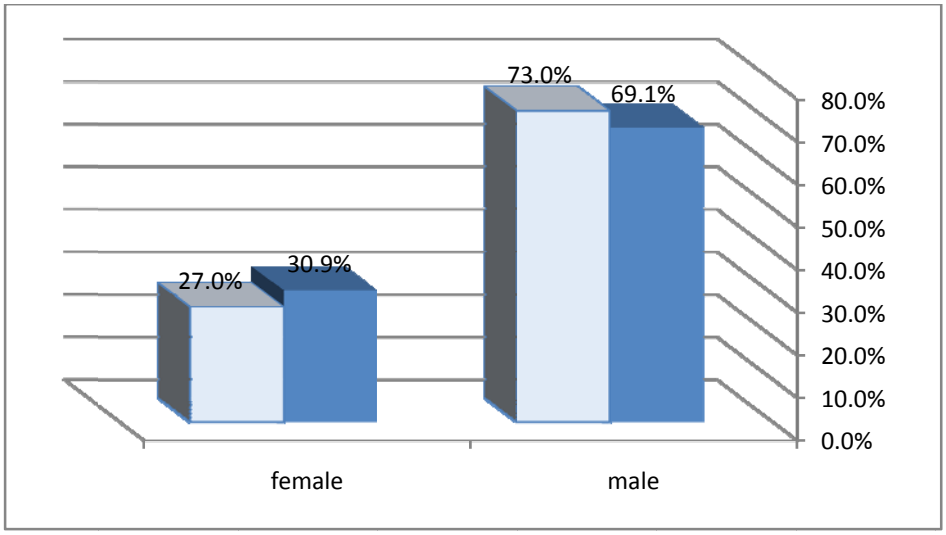
An important variable which is assumed to greatly affect the listening comprehension of L2 learners relates to the presence of orality in listening input. The analysis of the 100.000 running words for four different genres showed that movies and serials have a much higher mean of orality cases (31.7 and 33.6) compared with similar cases in news and documentaries (15.37and 13.29). The figures obtained for each genre is an indication that news and documentaries do have a much formal style while the language of movies and series tends to be less formal (having more orality cases). This issue along with the data obtained for sentence structure and reading difficulty index is an indication of the point that information genre enjoys many features which are mostly found in written texts while the features dominant in entertainment genre mainly belong to face-to-face interaction. These are issues which need to be considered in the selection and grading of such materials for their use in the classroom. The following boxplot represents the orality use for entertainment and information genres respectively.



Boxplot No. 7: Orality frequency in entertainment and information genres

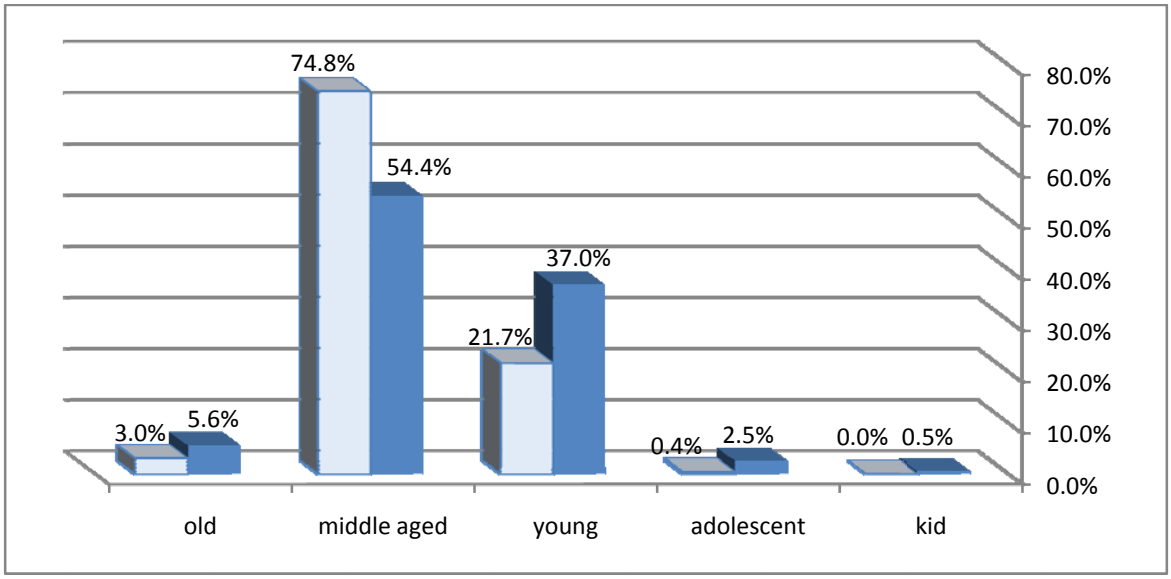
As was mentioned above, we also considered the non-linguistic features present in these genres. The following tables represent the data graphically.

Frequency Table



Graph No.1; Gender of the speakers(blue indicates entertainment genre and white information genre)

A look at the above graph (graph no. 1) reveals that the males have a greater role in both genres with about 70% while the females' role in input contribution in both genres is limited to 30%.



Graph No. 2: Age range of main speakers(blue indicates entertainment genre and white information genre)

Out of the five age ranges considered, in both genres the young and middle aged have the major contribution to the speech input while the share of other three age groups namely kids, adolescents and the elderly is very low.

Presence of noise or voice quality

The following tables and graphs represent the four different possible scenarios for voice quality in both genres.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	no noise clear voice	112	26.4	26.5	26.5
	natural environ background noise	193	45.5	45.7	72.3
	music	41	9.7	9.7	82.0
	Natural + music	76	17.9	18.0	100.0
	Total	422	99.5	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.5		
Total		424	100.0		

Table No.5: Voice quality for information samples

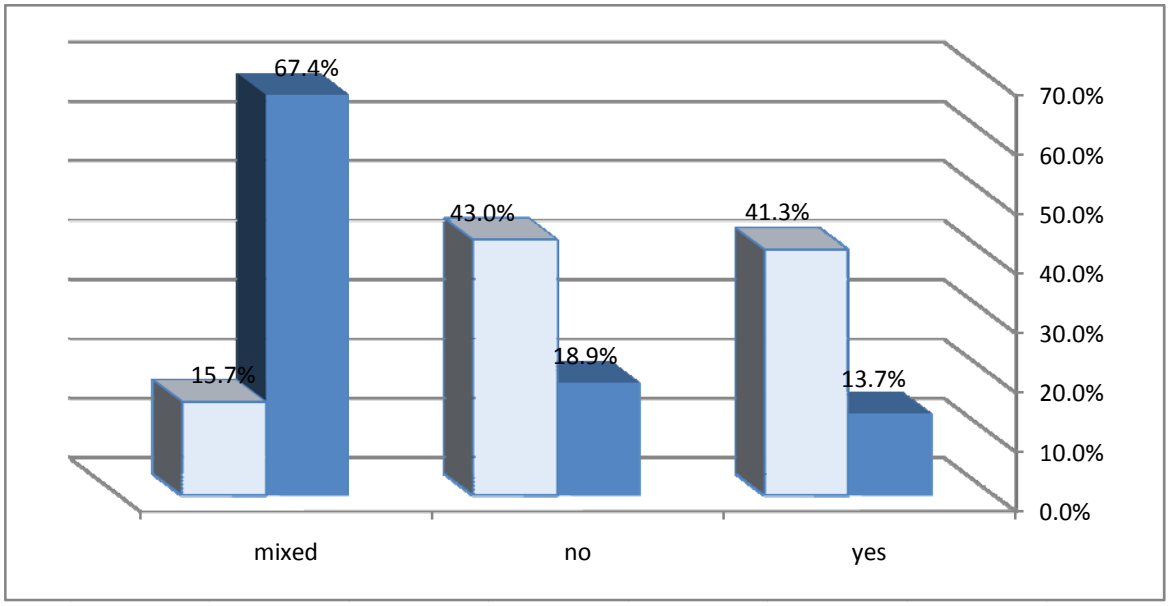
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	clear, no background noise	107	45.5	46.5	46.5
	voice plus background noise	64	27.2	27.8	74.3
	voice plus music	50	21.3	21.7	96.1
	music plus background noise	9	3.8	3.9	100.0
	Total	230	97.9	100.0	
Missing	System	5	2.1		
Total		235	100.0		

Table No. 6: Voice quality in films / serials

By comparing the data; (tables No.5 and 6) it becomes clear that information genre enjoys the highest percentage of best quality voice (45% compared with 26%) which can be attributed to the fact that most news and documentaries are recorded in studios thus producing a voice without external noises while the majority of cases in movies and serials are recorded in natural setting which makes the presence of external noises inevitable.

Code			Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Film	Valid	yes	56	13.7	13.7	13.7
		no	77	18.9	18.9	32.6
		mixed	275	67.4	67.4	100.0
		Total	408	100.0	100.0	
News	Valid	yes	95	41.3	41.3	41.3
		no	99	43.0	43.0	84.3
		mixed	36	15.7	15.7	100.0
		Total	230	100.0	100.0	

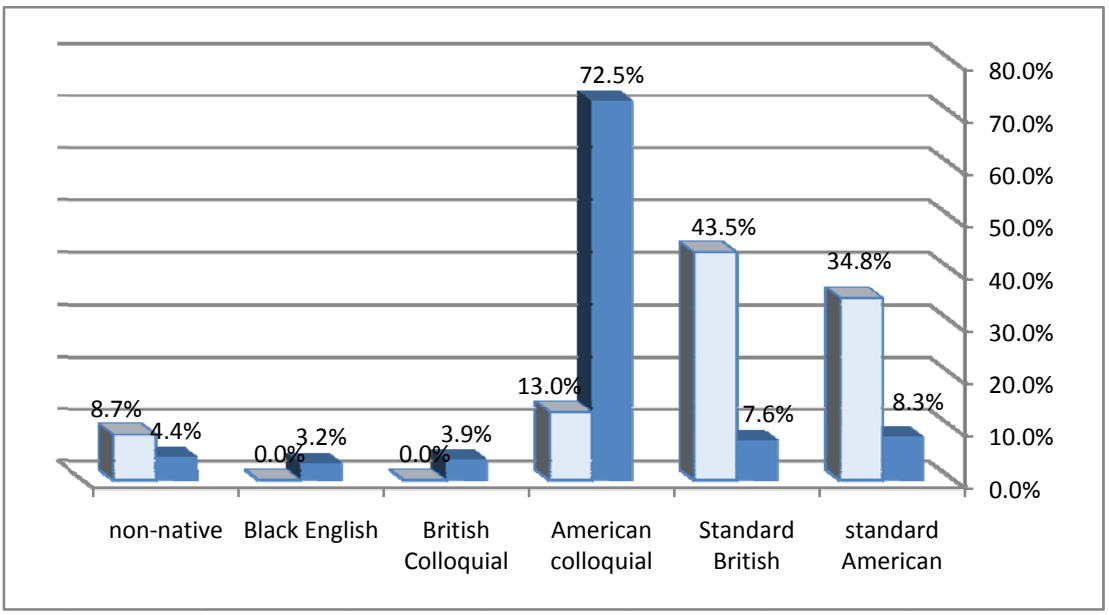
Table No. 7: lip reading possibility



Graph No. 3: lip visibility cases for the speakers (blue indicates entertainment genre and white information genre)

If we assume that visual clues including lip movement can act as a facilitator in listening comprehension, in seems that information genre does enjoy a higher percentage in this regard while entertainment genre does have a higher percentage of mixed cases an issue which can be

attributed to the nature of such materials in which the camera is constantly on move and does not stay fixed on a particular character for long.



Graph No. 4: Type of accents used by speakers in each genre (blue indicates entertainment genre and white information genre)

A look at the graph No 4 reveals that standard accents (both American and British) are mainly found in information genre which gives it a formal quality while colloquial accent, mainly American is seen in entertainment genre. The relatively considerable percentage of non-native accent found in information genre can be attributed to its worldwide coverage of such materials manifested in reports or interviews conducted with non-native speakers of English.

Concerning the question of whether the audio materials are based on spontaneous, unplanned production or are read or rehearsed from already written scripts, we only considered the information genres the results of which are presented in the table No. 8. The criterion adapted was based on the fact that in live reports and interviews this phenomenon is found and it is not applicable for entertainment genres where all the spoken audio material is based on the rehearsal of previously written scripts. Spontaneous and unplanned speech constitutes nearly half of the spoken materials in our sample data.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	planned script	126	53.6	54.8	54.8
	unplanned	104	44.3	45.2	100.0
	Total	230	97.9	100.0	
Missing	System	5	2.1		
Total		235	100.0		

Table No. 8: Type of script reading in news / documentaries

4. Conclusion:

Based on the above discussion, it seems that each genre does have unique features which need to be taken into account in case such materials are to be used in the classrooms. Concerning the information genre, the following points needs to be emphasized by teachers in their L2 activities:

1. News do have the highest use of proper nouns, therefore familiarity with proper nouns such as geographical names, the names of politicians, places, countries, different institutions, and organizations, etcetera can play an important role in the better comprehension of such materials. Concerning the documentaries which have the highest vocabulary requirement, an emphasis should be placed on academic vocabulary teaching.
2. Compared with other genres, news also do enjoy a high rate of idiom use, therefore special attention should be paid to the teaching of idioms in such materials.
3. Another important issue which needs to be considered in news concerns the relatively fast speech delivery which requires that teachers provide special listening strategies in this regard. Therefore, for better understanding of news bulletins especial attention should be placed on the strategies dealing with the delivery speed found in such materials.
4. News bulletins and documentary films do also have syntactically more complex structures which makes them suitable for advanced learners.
5. Regarding the voice quality and compared with other genres, in the majority of cases news have much better voice quality without any external background noises which can be considered an advantage for L2 learners.
6. Lip reading is also much more apparent in information genre (especially in news bulletins) which can help as a visual clue for L2 learners.
7. Another point which is of significance concerns the prevalence of standard dialect (both British and American) in information genre which once again can be regarded an

advantage for L2 learners who are not exposed to various regional and social dialects of English.

8. About 40% of the voice input cases in documentaries were of voiceover without any apparent speaker which makes it more like radio programs, however, the visual input differentiates it from audio only inputs.

The following points can be summarized for the entertainment genre:

1. Orality (less formality) is much prevalent in entertainment genre, a point of considerable significance for L2 learners who have been mainly exposed to teachers' speech and may find it quite difficult to comprehend such materials. It is advisable to provide sufficient training courses before embarking on the use of such materials. The training should focus on the phonological rules, connected speech, contraction, reduction, omission, and etcetera.
2. Since the voice quality in entertainment genre is mostly combined with other noises such as background noise, music, or both it is recommended to select materials which do fall in the first category i.e. clear voice without any additional noises.
3. It seems that the dominant accent used in entertainment genre is colloquial American, so a prerequisite for movies and serials is the familiarity with the spoken variety of American English, a point which is further reinforced by orality and sentence structures of this genre.
4. Concerning the speech delivery rate, movies and series have a much slower rate compared with news and documentaries. However, the entertainment genre contains features mostly found in face to face interactions such as overlapping, pauses, marginal words, and etcetera.
5. Concerning the incidental learning of vocabulary, it seems that series lend themselves much better to this phenomenon, because certain words tend to occur more frequently in a given genre such as drama, detective story etcetera. Therefore, series are recommended for self-study purposes since the likelihood of repetition in much higher in such materials.
6. Due to the prevalence of simple sentences and simple verbal interactions found mostly in entertainment genre, such materials are good for teaching conversations and listening comprehension courses at pre-intermediate and intermediate levels whereas information

genre especially documentaries should be reserved for much advanced proficiency levels due to both their higher structural complexity, formality, and higher vocabulary loads.

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Title

The Deconstructive Role of Environment in the Process of Fluidity of Mind

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Akram Mokhtari Esfidvajani got his B.A. and M.A. in English Literature from Islamic Azad university of Rasht and Islamic Azad University of Tabriz in 2001 and 2005 respectively. She has taught as a lecturer about five years at different universities of Iran: Islamic Azad University of Rasht, Islamic Azad University of Lahijan, Payame Noor, Jaber Ibn Al-Hayyan. Now, she is a Ph.D. student in English Literature at USM in Malaysia. Her research interests include post-colonial studies, post-structural studies, and feminist studies.

Abstract

Humanity is a wonderful, respectable, thought-provoking concept and proper to unfold. What it means to be human is in more need of understanding humanity, of knowing the effect of environment on that. All of us have a common experience that is: we are all human. Human as the core of the universe has special capabilities that cause to make a thorough change in any creature. However, sometimes some exceptions are found and sound like a shock for him such as environment that consciously or unconsciously permits it to possess his thoughts.The present study by using Deridda's deconstruction aims to indicate that human's humanity that has been considered as a superiority and known as the axis of creation and nature is a location for occurring vicissitudes. The most significant part of human that is under the umbrella of revolution and can sequentially create more alternations is thought or mind.This article, by expressing new dimensions of human and in succession humanity, is based on the underlying assumption that environment is a major point of deconstructing the

structure of human thoughts that penetrates in humanity and also examines that human thought is not fixed and stable, but it is fluid.
Key words: Humanity, Mind, Thought, Environment, Fluidity, Unstableness.

1. Introduction

Humanity seems to be a simple word which can readily be written and spoken by any individual like any other words. However, going to the depth of this word makes its complexity clear. Although there have been lots of books and articles about human and humanity, there are still lots of issues for discussion. The relation between human and environment is an undeniable phenomenon which is worth considering and clarifying its different aspects.

In definition of environment, it can be said that it is a condition for state of existing. It is a kind of atmosphere that affects human's ability and directs him toward how to live in the earth, in the world. Speaking and thinking about environment does not mean just weather or nature, but it refers to human nature and human mind. The environment human is living in is a set of external conditions that affects humankind's life, activity, and the method of thinking. Mankind has willy-nilly been influenced by his environment during his whole life under the pressure of social positions, social rules and the interaction with people of where he lives. Deconstruction as a good instrument which analyzes and interprets the activity of human mind in the prevailing environment breaks the limitation of arguments in this category.

2. Methodology

The representation of what is called fluidity of mind can be shown through Derrida's deconstruction which is used to dismantle the existing elements. The difference between what it is and what it has to be induced in the idea of instability of mind is under the effect of environment as one of the most important factors in making human characteristics that needs to be considered. Humanness is described by interaction between individuals and the world they live in and also, to some extent, by the interior process of self-creation through culture and environment. The other side of the argumentative aspect of this work is its self-reflective, theoretically self-conscious dimension, which is notably different in expression and intent. It alludes to the sheer difficulty of gaining access to the sources of self-recognition. This kind of thinking creates spaces willing to be guided by a true knowledge which psychologically

and socially needs a long process. Perhaps, it can be said that deconstructing of mind is the creator of spaces in human life in which important changes and responses to those changes occur. This article is done to explore and read the self as a dependent part in the current context of environment.

3. Manuscript

Certainly, anything in the world has special meaning. Anything can be effective and finds value in understanding the other thing. All these meanings are the meanings that have found meaning in the realm of human mind. It can be said that human mind is the center of generating meaning or without human mind there would never be any meaning. As we increase our ability to change our world and affect others we discover powers which are proceeding in affecting on us. The point is that the more one knows his surrounding the better he knows what he is. But the question is which factor causes people to change their ways of living and thoughts because of the milieu they are living in?

Therefore, to state the problem concisely, this article's aim is to investigate the fluidity of mind in relation to the environment to deal with its effects on human beings' life. The investigation will be conducted to consider the representation of individuals' thoughtvia Derrida's deconstruction to express the idea that people subjected to the atmosphere around themare characters with instable personalities and show how people reach knowledge through their interaction with the environment in their search for their true identity consciously or unconsciously.

Speaking about humankind's mind and thought is so much complicated as if one speaks about human's spirit or soul, something that cannot be touched, observed and experienced. However, as a human being all of us have experienced to be a human with peculiar personalities of any human. It cannot be possible to detect the exact thought of any thought, to discover what is behind any mind, but it is irrefutable that any mind has lots of thoughts to think or speak about them, to do them, or to imagine them, and it can occur in any moment. It is impossible to measure thoughts or what is in the mind because they are not measurable. But, there is the knowledge that there is something in the mind for discovering.

Thinking about thoughts is a permanent process during any individual life. Thoughts can be positive or negative, proper or improper, safe or dangerous, childish or mannish, whatever they

are, they involved mind in different times of day or night. If thinking categorizes into thinking about thoughts, actions and feelings, it will be understood how much human mind can be expanded. Although environment is one of the most significant factors alters human mind, but the element causes human mind remains unstable is something beyond environment. It is a quality inside human being, something that is familiar but unknown so I call it an unknown sense. It is a situation over everything else that can affect human mind, and makes it unstable and exposes it to proceeding changes.

This unknown sense originates from the depth of human nature's existence. Something that is obscure but there is. If we refer to the moments of loneliness when we are honestly just with ourselves we can feel it, a challenging sense inside human being. Its being can be felt but can never be accessed. It is something like any abstract concept such as any other abstract concepts. It is the same sense invites man to have different thoughts and opinions, changes thoughts and causes unstability in human being. It is the source of any vicissitude that mankind follows unconsciously without asking why. It is part of human and human is part of environment. Although this unknown sense belongs to human and environment, but it is something outside the limitation of it. The roots of everything can be found in the unknown sense because everything comes out from the mind while mind is a subordinate but the main branch of the unknown sense. Mind can be supposed as a land, an obscure, mysterious and extended land in every person's existence. This land can be broadened according to any individual personality. But what is important is that no one is aware of the contents of other person's land- mind. In fact, the owner of the mind him/ herself is unable to perceive what exactly has dominated in his/ her mind. On the one hand, nobody can hold any thought in the hand; on the other hand, human thought deserves to be recognized. What is important is that it should not be ignored that there is a coalition between man, mind and human behavior.

If we believe in spirit, it can be said that any individual has a soul that is detached from the physical body. Nobody has touched or seen this spiritual part of human being. Human mind can be compared with spirit in this situation. Mind is untouchable and access to it is not conceivable physically. On the other hand, man is particularly considered by his own thought. In fact, thought is the most prominent properties of human being. But what does happen to man when he thinks about something and makes a decision for that but after a while arranges some changes in it? Or how can it be considered when he is certain about some of his thoughts during a special time, but

in the other time, after a time interval he is neither definite about that nor tries to change his attitudes toward that.

Structuralists believe any literary text has a function and distinguishing between different kinds of texts refers to the way text functions as a whole. Moreover, they deliberate function has dominated on which orientation and also considers the interrelation between the elements refers to which structure. If we resemble human as a whole to a literary text and take a closer look at him, we can regard him as a structure with different elements such as thoughts and emotions as the most prominent. But which kind of coherent structure may change by passing time?

Now, if we take into account human according to Derrida's deconstruction and analyze and dismantle human thought as an objective meaning that is open to subjective ideas, there can be found contradictions and incompatibilities. Although any individual lives according to his special thinking style, his product of the mind can be affected by different elements such as environment, culture, and achieving higher knowledge. Due to this reason, vicissitudes are evident and comprehensible in human thoughts. Creating an idea like a literary theory in a particular era and then refusing and replacing it with a new idea in a different period shows that human being has not stable and fixed thought as a superior creature needs. It must be mentioned that these changes in the opinion cannot be an indicator of development, because no one can surely say which idea, supposition, or concept can be better or more complete than the prior or frontier. Any new opinion does not mean its perfection.

Therefore, this study tries to display that there is no regular and steady thought in human. Every thought is going to be annihilated and replaced by another thought. Any thought may be substituted by another one. Since there is a close relationship between thought and identity, any change in the mind, as the source of thought, generates changes in human identity. Since there is also adjacent connection between human and everything around him, one of the influential elements in making changes in human thought is the enclosed environment. With permeation of environment as an unseparated part of the location we are living, human structure smashes. The existent person is not the same person simultaneously when he is changing his thought due to any reason. Here is an example of what it will be called fluidity of mind in the following part. It has frequently happened for everybody to plunge in a profound thinking unconsciously, and it is like a jolt for him when he comes to know how time has involuntarily elapsed. Human, his thought, and subsequently his identity are exposed to alternations with whatever is outside his

mental and physical existence. Human is not firmly settled in the least. Human is a structure with no perfect meaning in itself. External environment deconstructs what has been known as the established structure of human. There cannot be personality or individual identity belongs to human. Human mind is dependent upon surroundings and anything reveals itself as his opinion is due to the world around him. According to Aristotle, human is an imitator and there is no creativity attributed to him. It can be expanded that the circumferential elements goes it under question if there would be any stabilized one. Actually, human thought is fluid. It flows and takes the shape of imposed objects on itself. There cannot be a distinguished meaning or definition for human being except in being an integral part of environment around him. So, human is fluid not physically but contemplatively.

4. Conclusion

Attaining a fixed thought far from uncertainties needs a long time and even though a long deliberating process. Reaching to a balanced and fixed thought necessitates recognizing our internal world and making it correspondent with the external world to be able to find our pure intention. Abolition of segregation of man with environment cannot be done not until making a balance between outside and the energy inside him, and the compatibility of body, spirit and mind, and in higher levels, human suitability culminates when man is united to the whole universe and the energy inside in.

In this way, the discordant between cosmos and our comprehension stands for human deficiency and imperfection. Human fluid mind is unable to supervise and restrain the world. Universe is more complicated than to be taken in hand easily. Ignorance is an unsegmented side of our knowledge. Finally, it is difficult to discern and monitor mind by itself, and it is more troublesome to convey the invisible world of one's mind to other one, the mind content that is obscure for its owner too. Human as a myth of the modern world lacks stability of mind. Although it cannot be denied that the only defense of human is mind itself. Outside factors are uncontrollable aspects of one's mind that interfere upon individual's mind and lead one's thought toward precariousness, unsteadiness, and fluidity.

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Title

The Impact of Professional Competence on Choosing and Using Textbooks at University level

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Abstract

While the quality of ESL textbooks has improved dramatically in recent years, the process of selecting an appropriate text seems to be still a challenge in Iran. Although many factors might be at work, the role of teachers' awareness and their professional competence behind their choices cannot be underestimated. Therefore, this study is an attempt to trace the role of EFL teachers' competence in selecting textbooks for the course "Reading 1" at university level, and find out the extent to which the students and teachers are satisfied with the selected books.

To this end, 11 teachers and 241 students served as the participants of this study. The data, collected via survey, observation and interview revealed that almost all teachers employed impressionistic method to choose their textbooks and made almost zero reference to their professional competence. Moreover, there was no congruence between the degree of students' and the teachers' satisfaction towards their *reading* books, an observation which calls for an immediate revision in the courses provided for teachers in their pre- service programs.

Keywords: Evaluation, Professional Competence, Reading Textbooks, Textbooks.

1. Introduction

A textbook can serve different purposes for teachers: as a core resource, as a source of supplementary material, as an inspiration for classroom activities, even as the curriculum itself. Thus, it is important to select a textbook which can do such jobs effectively because decisions related to textbook selection will not only affect teachers, but also the students, and the overall classroom dynamic. However, since no textbook is perfect, the task of choosing one has always been a daunting one. To worsen the matter, it is a task that not many teachers are given the opportunity to do either, as many language schools and institutes use a planned textbook that the teacher is required to teach. However, in some cases, opportunities do arise when teachers have to replace a book because the already used one has become outdated, a new class is created, or the teacher needs something as a supplementary.

Although many factors might be at work, the role of teachers' awareness and their professional competence behind their choices cannot be underestimated. Thus, in this study, the researchers try to scrutinize this process and explore the procedures and criteria used by university level teachers to select their textbooks (here, a textbook for "Reading1" for the students majoring in "English Language"). Furthermore, the research intends to examine the consequence of this choice for both the teachers and students and find out whether or not they are satisfied with the selected books.

2. Review of Literature

Observations of many EFL classrooms and programs verify that all the essential constituents of the curricula are to a considerable extent either directly or indirectly overshadowed by the textbooks and instructional materials that are often used by language instructors. Riazi (2003) maintains "Textbooks play a very crucial role in the realm of language teaching and learning and are considered to be the second important factor in the second/foreign language classroom compared to the teacher" (p.52).

Yet, despite the opportunities given to university level teachers to select their textbooks, serious problems still exist in the selection process currently adopted by most Iranian academics. McGrath (2001) explains why the selection of a textbook is an important decision, and gives some examples of what could go wrong if an unsuitable textbook is chosen. To prevent the consequences, he introduces three basic methods for evaluating textbooks and suggests one which can cover up the shortcomings of the others. The three commonly used methods are:

(a)- The *"Impressionistic"* method

It involves analyzing a textbook on the basis of a general impression gained by reading the blurb and the contents page and the skimming to get a sense of organization, topics, layout and visuals. Cunningsworth (1995) confirms that this method is appropriate, particularly, "when doing a preliminary sift through a lot of courses before making a short list for more detailed analysis, and looking at new material that may be considered for adoption at a later date" (p.1).

(b)- The *"checklist"* method

This method is also inadequate if it is used solely, however it has some advantages. It is systematic in the way that the criteria on the list are checked off in a certain order. It is also very easy to compare different materials and it is not very time-consuming compared to other methods.

(c)- The *"in-depth"* method

This method suggests a careful examination of the representative features such as the design of one particular unit or exercise, or the treatment of particular language elements. An obvious disadvantage of this method is that the selected section might not be representative of the book as a whole.

As all the three methods above have had their own pros and cons, McGrath recommends an *"integrated"* approach which must be modified for each individual case of material selection.

That is, the outcome of the integrated approach should be determined by the criteria which are not the same in every situation. One way to make it easier is to make a distinction between general criteria (features that are necessary in any kind of teaching material) and specific criteria (features that are related to the particular context) (McGrath, 2001, pp.25-31).

There are a number of learner and teacher factors which should be consulted before making any decisions; such as age, proficiency level, experience, information about the institution and the specific program for which the material is intended. The fact that the evaluation is affected by the evaluator's values is a problem that McGrath (2001) points out in his book. He suggests that in order to lessen this problem, evaluators should have a critical view of the criteria that are put together by other people, and they should also have knowledge of their own values. He advocates group evaluation since the material is inspected from a variety of perspectives, and the important decision of selecting a textbook will be a shared responsibility (pp.48-52). McGrath emphasizes that it is important for teacher trainees to acquire the skill to evaluate textbooks during their teacher education. He points out that "trainees need to develop the capacity to evaluate existing materials in relation to the teaching-learning context and their teaching purposes. By gaining the capacity to evaluate textbooks less time will have to be spent on adaptation and supplementation of the textbook" (p.4).

Similarly, Skierso (1991 cited in Celce-Murcia, 1991, p. 432) claims that even though teachers are never completely satisfied with a textbook, most of them still use one in their teaching, and since textbooks are never perfect, teachers need to be able to evaluate the textbook on an everyday basis in order for it to suit his or her students. In much the same way, Skierso lists a number of factors that need to be established before the evaluation process can start. Information is needed on the students, the teacher, the institution and so on (ibid pp.432-434).

Furthermore, Harmer (1998, p.118) suggests a principled approach for selecting textbooks. A principled approach involves a number of different aspects and considerations and is best approached in four stages: Analysis, Piloting, Consultation, and Gathering Opinions.

This brief review indicates that different authors and researchers have been trying hard to present various textbook evaluation schemes or models, each with their own advantages and disadvantages.

One of the most recent models which were proposed by Riazi (2003) suggests four main stages in the evaluation and selection of textbooks and other materials for specific situations and contexts. These four stages include:

1. *Survey* (of the teaching/learning situation in which the materials are to be used. Issues related to the learners, teachers, institution, goals and objectives, and so on will be taken into account.)
2. *Analysis* (a detailed analysis of the materials. It is more or less neutral and provides the evaluator(s) with the information on categories of different elements presented in the materials.)
3. *Evaluation* (a professional interpretation of the information obtained in the analysis stage. The evaluator(s) may use their experience and expertise and give weights or provide value judgments to the obtained information.)
4. *Selection* (using the weights identified in the evaluation stage and the requirements of the particular learning/teaching situation in which the material is going to be used and selecting the textbook that fits.)

Unfortunately; however, in spite of the universal attempt to systematize the process of selecting and evaluating textbooks for long, this does not seem to have been the common case among the Iranian teachers even when they are given the chance to choose their own textbooks from among the numerous sources available in the market.

3. Purpose

Having been stimulated by such observation, the researchers attempted to take the issue under further investigation and examine what actually goes on when Iranian University teachers are to choose a textbook. More specifically, the study was after finding answers to the following research questions:

1. What guides teachers' decisions for choosing the right textbook(s) for the course "Reading Comprehension1" at university level?
2. What professional awareness do teachers possess about the process of selecting and using textbooks?
3. How do teachers evaluate and rate their selected textbooks?

4. How do students evaluate and rate their teachers' selected textbooks?
5. Is there any congruence between the attitude of the students and teachers towards the selected books?

4. Method

This section provides a detailed account of the Participants, Instrumentation, Data Collection Procedure, and Data Analysis of this study.

4.1. Participants

Eleven teachers and 241 students comprised the participants of this study. The teacher population included 6 females and 5 males with the age range of 29 to 56. These teachers who were randomly selected from different Iranian universities (both Private and State universities) represented various parts of the country (for example, Guilan University from north, Bo-Ali University from west, Allame University from the capital city- Tehran, Shiraz University from south, Isfahan University from centre, Larestan Azad University from south, Tehran Markaz Azad University from the capital city- Tehran, Ferdowsi University from east, Shiraz Azad University from south) . Four teachers were TEFL graduates, three had a degree in English literature, three majored in linguistics, and the last held a degree in English translation. All teachers were either M.A or PhD holders with the teaching experiences of 6 to 27 years.

The student population of this study consisted of two hundred and forty one 18 to 25 year old English major freshmen studying at different Iranian universities.

4.2. Instrumentations

A triangulation of data collection techniques: interviews, class observations and questionnaires were used for this study. The detailed description of each appears below.

a. Interviews

Eight (8) questions adopted from Ur (1996) were used in interviews as the main questions on textbook selection. The questions addressed issues of *background*, *criteria of choosing a textbook*, *information on current textbook* (merits and demerits of the book), *procedure of using the textbook*, *objectives of course, characteristics of the students* and *competence of the teachers in selecting the textbook* (see appendix 1). The interviewees were first asked to describe their

teaching background and name their selected textbook(s). Under the category *criteria* the researchers wanted them to describe the procedure used to select a new textbook and the criteria applied in the process. In the next category they were asked to state the names of the textbook(s) they were currently using along with their strong and weak points. Under '*procedure*' the teachers were to describe how they used the textbook in their classes. Then to check for the teachers' professional awareness of the 'Reading1' course's instructional objectives, the researchers wanted them to state their beliefs on what the course intended to achieve. They were also asked to describe the role they assigned to the characteristics of the students before choosing the textbook. In the last category they were asked to assess their earlier academic experiences for their usefulness for the task they were facing in their current career—that is, judging and choosing a textbook which can most successfully help the learners meet the instructional objectives.

b. Class observation

In order to validate and support the data collected from teachers and students, the researchers observed the same classes (11 classes) from the selected universities. To this end, they used a modified version of the Ur's (1996) checklist (pp. 219), which consisted of nine items each with 3 choices (see appendix 2). These items were as follows:

1. The class seemed to be learning the material well,
2. The learners were engaging with the foreign language throughout,
3. The learners were attentive most of the time,
4. The learners enjoyed the lesson, were motivated,
5. The learners were active all the time,
6. The lesson went according to plan,
7. The language was used communicatively throughout,
8. The activities encouraged communicative and meaningful practice,
9. The activities incorporated pair and group work.

The choices were based on a three point scale: 1. Non-applicable, 2. Applicable, 3. Strongly applicable. During the class observations, the researchers attempted to focus on students' involvement with the selected textbook and see whether students were motivated by or interested in the book.

c. Questionnaires

At the end of the term, two sets of textbook evaluation questionnaires were administered to the teachers and students to get their feedbacks towards the selected textbooks. The questionnaires used in this study were developed from Litz (2000).The questionnaires were divided into several categories, each of which explored a certain aspect of the textbook. The categories in the questionnaires were: *layout, usefulness, interest, learning, difficulty, timing and activities of the book(s)*. The choices in the questionnaires were ordered from *strongly disagree to strongly agree*. The questionnaires were used in the form of checklist so that they could be completed quickly (see appendix 3). In addition, space was provided for comments and teachers and students were encouraged to give suggestions regarding the textbook(s).

The student questionnaire was administered at the end of the semester. 241 English major students studying at the selected universities filled out and returned the questionnaires. The questionnaire consisted of 13 items. It was tried not to provide a very detailed and long questionnaire, because our experience has shown that this kind of questionnaire can be boring and disappointing and in most of the cases students are not willing either to complete or fill it carefully.

First, one of the researchers introduced the questionnaire to the students in Persian, because it was thought that some students might not understand the items and categories of the questionnaire. Having caught the interest of the students, the researcher attempted to give the very gist of the study, its aims, and its implications (the objectives of the study were explained to them in advance). They could ask any questions about the content of the questionnaire in case they had come across any vague points. In all cases the researcher was present at the time of data collection to answer and clarify anything the participants found difficult to understand.

The teacher questionnaire was administered at the end of the semester too. Eleven English teachers teaching "Reading 1" course at different universities in Iran were asked to fill out this questionnaire. The objectives of the study were explained to the teachers in advance and they were asked to do their best and be as unbiased as possible towards their picked textbooks. They were free to ask whatever questions about the content of the questionnaire in case they had encountered any vague points therein. In all cases, one of the researchers was present at the time of data collection to answer and clarify anything the participants found difficult to understand.

5. Results and Discussion

Based on the five research questions stated earlier, the results are discussed for each in turn.

Regarding the first question of the study, the teachers were asked in the interview how they had selected their textbook(s) for different courses, especially *Reading* courses, and what criteria they had considered when selecting the book. McGrath's (2001) evaluation procedures were used to codify teachers' responses. Table 1 presents the results.

Table 1

Percentage of different methods used by teachers to select textbooks

Categories	Percent
1. Impressionistic method	45.45
2. Relying on their experiences	9.09
3. Consulting with their colleagues	9.09
4. Number 1 & 2 (both)	18.18
5. Number 1 & 3 (both)	18.18

As table 1 illustrates, most of the teachers used the impressionistic method of choosing the textbook as introduced by McGrath (2001, p.25). In this method, the informants browse through and read some of the texts in the textbook. They investigate the types of texts, the structure, the layout, glossary lists and language skills. By categorizing the data, it can, more specifically, be seen that the teachers selecting their textbooks mostly relied on one or two of these three factors:

1. Consulting with their colleagues
2. Relying on their experiences
3. Analyzing the textbook on the basis of a general impression (impressionistic evaluation).

Concerning the second question of the study, the researchers asked the interviewees about their familiarity with the criteria and process of choosing textbook due to their earlier studies and through any other courses. They were to state what they knew in this regard and how they had gained the knowledge. The intention was to find out whether they had enough professional awareness about the process of selecting and evaluating a textbook. The results appear in Table 2.

Table 2

Degree of familiarity with the criteria and process of choosing textbook

Number of teachers	Not Enough	Sufficient	Very much
11	90%	10%	0

According to table 2, 90 percent of teachers confessed that they did not have sufficient familiarity with the criteria and of course they did not know much about different methods of choosing and evaluating textbooks either. They believed that the number of courses related to this topic during their academic studies were not enough and it would have been better if they had had further courses related to syllabus design and materials preparation. The matter was worse when they were assigned to teach the course 'Reading 1', despite the fact that it had little affinity with their field of study as described in the participants section.

For the third question, the results showed that all the teachers had a positive attitude towards their textbook(s). They were satisfied with the selected and used textbook(s) and were willing to use them the following terms and years regardless of their shortcomings. Although different teachers used different textbooks for 'Reading1' course, all gave positive responses to the question of whether they were satisfied with their selected textbooks or not. In other words, they all claimed that their textbooks in general had more positive points than negative ones and had the potential to be used in different classes and situations.

To seek the answer to the fourth question of the research, the researchers observed *eleven 'Reading 1'* classes to see whether the textbook(s) were interesting and engaging and whether the students were interested in them or not. The focus was mainly on student interaction and motivation. During the class observations, the researchers used a checklist (Penny Ur's checklist 1996 p.219), which consisted of 9 items which had to be completed based on a three point scale. Table 3 summarizes the results for each criterion separately.

Table 3

Percentage of the criteria observed

Criteria	Non Applicable	Applicable	Strongly Applicable
1. The class seemed to be learning the material well	60.0	40.0	0
2. The learners were engaging with the foreign language throughout	30.0	70.0	0
3. The learners were attentive most of the time	60.0	40.0	0
4. The learners enjoyed the lesson, were motivated	60.0	40.0	0
5. The learners were active most of the time	70.0	30.0	0
6. The lesson went according to plan	30.0	70.0	0
7. The language was used communicatively	50.0	50.0	0
8. The activities encouraged sufficient communicative and meaningful practice	80.0	20.0	0
9. The activities incorporated pair and group work	80.0	20.0	0

Based on the results for the first item (table 3), in most of the classes (60 %), the class seemed not to be learning the material well and the quality of learning the material was not satisfactory.

Concerning the second item, it was seen that in most of the classes (70%) the English language was spoken and used. Both teachers and students were trying to use the second language as a means of conveying their messages.

In case of the third item, in most of the classes (60%), learners were not attentive, because as the researchers were told in the informal talks with the students, they were not interested in the textbooks. They were complaining that the classes were boring.

With regard to item 4 too, most of the learners were not motivated in the classes and the classes were unable to catch their interest.

As with the fifth item, the table shows most of the learners in classes (70%) were not active during the class time. The researchers found that the routine like procedures of the

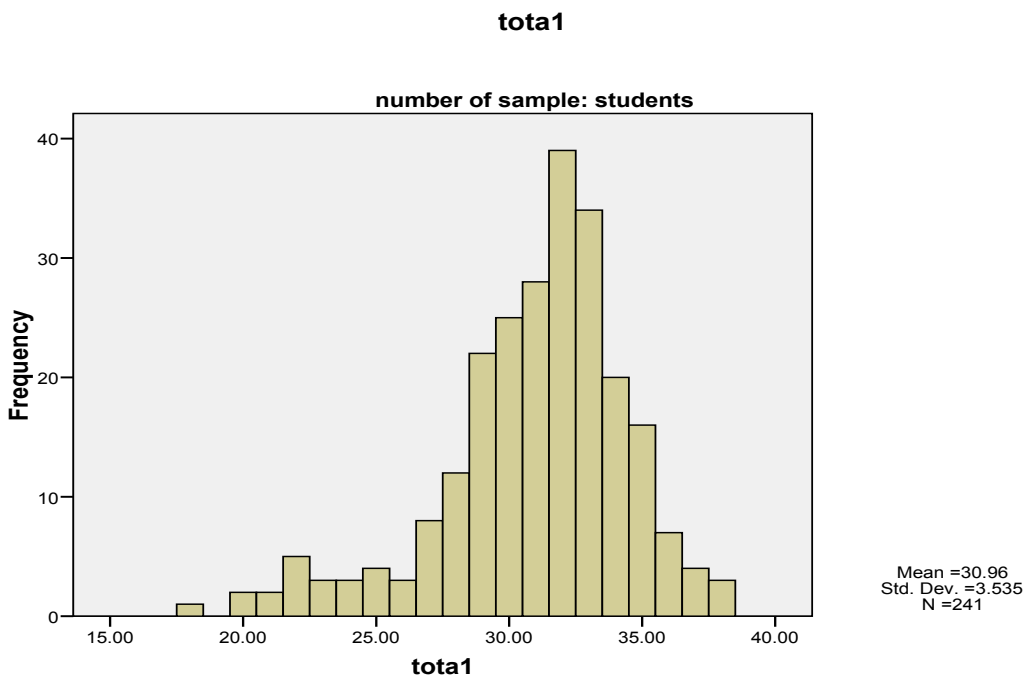
classroom activities were the root cause of this problem.

For the sixth item, the research indicates that in most of the classes teachers were prepared to teach the book and they knew what to do with that. However, the observation also indicated that almost all teachers were too bound to the textbooks that they were not willing to use any other materials which could lead to more active and interesting atmosphere.

Concerning the seventh criterion, it was found that almost in half of the classes both teachers and learners were trying to use the language communicatively and naturally. Yet, even in these classes the number of students who were using the language communicatively was not satisfactory.

Finally, as the table shows the last two items of the checklist did not have acceptable results either. The researchers observed that the activities in most of the classes did not incorporate pair and especially group work and they could not encourage sufficient communicative and meaningful practice.

Next, the student questionnaire was administered to get students' feedback regarding the used textbook(s). The items used in students' questionnaire were similar to those used in the teachers'. Of course it should be mentioned that since the number of questions used in students' questionnaire was 13, the maximum score which could be obtained by each student was 65.



The diagram above shows that most of the scores --60%-- given to the textbooks by the students fall between 31 (the mean) and 35 and 34% of the scores fall below the mean. It can be inferred that most of the students had a negative attitude towards their textbook(s) and they were not satisfied with the selected and used textbook(s).

Regarding the last question of the research, two sets of textbook evaluation questionnaires were given to the teachers and students to get their feedbacks towards the used and selected textbooks. Both the students and the teacher's evaluation survey questionnaires contained questions that pertained to *the layout, interest, learning, timing, usefulness, and difficulty level of the textbooks*. Teachers' questionnaire consisted of 8 main categories including 23 items and students' questionnaire consisted of 6 main categories including 13 items and the responses could be varied from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree for both questionnaires. To have a more practical comparison of the results, the researchers tried to concentrate on only those 13 items in the teachers' questionnaire which were alike those in the students'. So the results of this part are based on the analysis of the 13 shared items in the teachers and students' questionnaires. Both of the questionnaires were trying to assess a similar point (the attitude of teachers and students towards the books selected to be used in classes). It should be mentioned that although some questions in teachers' questionnaire had different wordings, they measured the same things as did the students' questionnaire.

To obtain the answer to the questions, the frequency of all responses to the questions (common and similar questions) by both teachers and students were calculated one by one. Then since the requirements for using t- test were not met , "Man-Whitney Test" was used instead for each question to see whether there was any statistically significant difference between the attitude of the teachers and students towards the item (question) or not. This was done for all of the questions as a whole too, to see whether the difference between the attitude of the teachers and students towards the whole textbooks was significant or not. The results appear in table 4 below:

Table 4
Frequency analysis of responses obtained by students and teachers (items1-13)

Item	Participants	S D	D	Un	A	S A	Man-Whitney U	Z	Sig	S/NS
1	Students	34	101	67	34	5	458	-3.8	.000	S
	Teachers	0	1	2	7	1				
2	Students	49	110	57	22	3	1133	-.86	.38	NS
	Teachers	0	7	3	1	0				
3	Students	41	72	92	35	1	503	-3.6	.000	S
	Teachers	0	1	3	5	2				
4	Students	39	82	95	25	0	614	-3.1	.002	S
	Teachers	0	2	3	6	0				
5	Students	45	104	73	19	0	540	-3.5	.000	S
	Teachers	1	1	2	7	0				
6	Students	38	113	65	25	0	439	-3.9	.000	S
	Teachers	0	1	4	5	1				
7	Students	67	96	61	16	1	1038	-1.2	.200	NS
	Teachers	1	6	1	3	0				
8	Students	67	106	58	10	0	302	-4.5	.000	S
	Teachers	0	1	4	5	1				
9	Students	41	111	76	12	1	246	-4.8	.000	S
	Teachers	0	0	4	6	1				
10	Students	22	41	40	130	8	1036	-1.2	.200	NS
	Teachers	0	3	1	6	1				
11	Students	40	79	107	14	1	516	-3.6	.000	S
	Teachers	0	2	2	7	0				
12	Students	44	101	86	10	0	98	-5.5	.000	S
	Teachers	0	0	1	9	1				
13	Students	36	98	80	26	1	578	-3.3	.001	S
	Teachers	1	1	1	8	0				

The first category of the questionnaires was about *timing* and consisted of *two questions*, assessing the sufficiency of time. As table 4 shows, there is a significant difference between the attitude of the teachers and the students towards the first item. It seems that the majority of the students (over 70%) did not agree on the sufficiency of time, but from the teachers' point of view, over 73% of them believed that there was enough time to complete the work. As for the second item of the first category which asked students and teachers whether they had time to complete the work or not, it can be understood that 65% of both teachers and students agreed that

there was not much time to complete the work. So there is not a significant difference between their attitudes towards the second question.

The second category of the questionnaires considered the *usefulness* of the Reading book(s) taught in different universities. The category consisted of two questions. As we can see table 4, the difference between the attitude of teachers and students towards the usefulness of the books was significant. It seemed that on the one hand, the majority of the students (80%) either disagreed or were undecided about the usefulness of the used book(s). On the other, most of the teachers (60%) voted for the usefulness of the used and selected textbooks.

Attractiveness (interest) of the used book(s) and their activities was the third category of the questionnaires. It consisted of two questions. Table 4 reveals that there is a significant difference between the attitude of the students and the teachers towards the third category. Like the previous category, over 60% of the students thought that the books and their activities were not interesting. Over 63% of the teachers, on the other hand, believed that the books and their activities were interesting and motivating.

Difficulty of the book(s) and their activities was the fourth major category of the questionnaires which consisted of two questions. The table shows that the attitude of the teachers and the students regarding the difficulty level of the books is the same and there is not a significant difference between their attitudes towards the used textbooks. It seems that both the teachers and students believed that the textbooks being used were not difficult to understand. Regarding the second question of the fourth category, as the above table indicates, the difference between the attitude of the students and teachers is significant. On the one hand, the students did not agree that the activities of the books were difficult to do, on the other; the teachers believed that the activities were difficult enough to challenge the students.

The fifth category of the questionnaires which consisted of two questions considered the *layout* and *type-size* of the books. Table 4 shows that there is a significant difference between the attitude of the students and teachers towards the layout of the books. It seems that 63% of the students had a negative attitude towards the layout of the used books and believed that the books were not well designed. The teachers, on the other hand, were satisfied with the layout of the used books. However, with regard to the second question of the fifth category-*type size of the book*- it seems that most of the students and the teachers (60%) had a positive attitude towards

the used books. So as the table shows, the difference between the attitude of the students and the teachers is not significant.

Learning was the last category of the questionnaires which consisted of 3 questions. Regarding the first question, about 49% of the students disagreed that they improved their English as a result of using the book(s) and 44% were not sure about their improvement in English as a result of using the book. But with regard to the teachers' responses, the majority of them (63%) believed that their students improved their English by using the prescribed books. By looking at the table, it can be understood that there is a significant difference between the attitude of the teachers and the students towards the first question of the "Learning" category.

Considering the second question, the table indicates that the difference between the attitude of the students and the teachers is significant. From the students' side, 60% of them disagreed that they have learned a lot from using the books and 35% were undecided. But 81% of the teachers, from the other side, believed that the students have learned a lot from the used books.

Considering the last question of the "Learning" category, 60% of the students disagreed that the book made them do new things. With regard to the teachers' attitude towards the last question, it was found that over 72% of them agreed that the books made students do new things and as the table shows the difference between the attitude of the students and teachers is significant.

Wrapping up the above information, it can be understood that in all items, except three (2, 7 & 10), there were significant differences between the attitudes of the students and the teachers.

Next, we checked the statistical significance of the attitude of the teachers and students towards the whole textbooks by using "Man-Whitney Test" for the total items.

Table 5

Man-Whitney Test Total

	Total
Mann-Whitney	23.500
Z	-5.5
Asymp. Sig	**.000**

As table 5 indicates, there is a significant difference between the attitude of the teachers and the students towards the used and selected textbooks (the whole books) and the null-hypothesis thus was rejected at the .05 level of significance.

6. Conclusions

This study has tried to investigate some problematic issues in textbook evaluation and selection for Iranian EFL teachers. The results indicated that almost all teachers of 'Reading1' courses used impressionistic method to choose their desired textbooks.

It was also found that the teachers were not sufficiently familiar with different methods of choosing and evaluating textbooks. This is ironical to see because teachers who rely most heavily on textbooks are the ones least qualified to interpret its intentions or evaluate its content and method.

Moreover, it seemed that the lack of experience with the related courses, classes and lessons in their degree program syllabuses was the major root of this difficulty. All teachers in the interviews believed that relevant courses offered during their teacher education programs were not enough and it would have been more helpful if they had had further courses related to syllabus design and materials preparation in their degree programs.

Furthermore, there was not any congruence between the attitude of the students and teachers towards the used books. While, the teachers were satisfied with the used textbooks, most of the students were not so, because the textbooks were unable to appropriately meet their needs. During the class observation, it was found that in most of the classes, students were not active most of the time and the classes were boring.

The findings of the study suggest that given the pressures of work and time, limitations of resources and facilities, and lack of expert knowledge, teachers had to select published materials which for the purpose of appealing to a large market, did not consider the appropriateness for classroom use in a local learning situation, and consequently failed to provide the rationale underlying the approach to language learning. In other words, they lacked cultural and social appropriacy. In conclusion, although the decisions of materials selection may lie in the hands of EFL teachers, the other contributing factors, such as the particular teaching-learning situation, the learners, the specific learning purpose, and the learning process, play determining roles in the success or failure of the materials.

Hence, this study underscores the importance of the addition of special courses to teacher education which can equip teachers with the required competence for undertaking such a demanding task. Furthermore, it also suggests that the material, particularly, when it is supposed to be used as a textbook, must be reviewed by a number of colleagues so that they can comment on the work to prevent any possible flaws.

Finally, the writers of the paper believe that the evaluation of the EFL materials currently taught at university level requires a deeper and more exhaustive analysis and scrutiny by a group of experienced teachers and that the viewpoints and the ideas proposed by a single research might not be adequately reliable because however hard one tries, it is almost impossible to be unbiased and impartial in ones judgments.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Interview Questions

1. What book(s) do you use for **"*Reading 1*"**?
2. How did you choose it (them)? (Your criteria)
3. Is the book appropriate for students? (The strong and weak points of the book)
4. How do you use it (them)?
5. What are the objectives of "*Reading 1*" at university?
6. Did you know anything about the characteristics of the students (their proficiency level, their age, etc) before choosing the text?
7. Do you know anything about the characteristics of a good textbook?
8. How much did you become familiar with the criteria of choosing appropriate textbook at university? Through which course(s)?

APPENDIX B

Class Observation Checklist

****PLEASE NOTE: 1-Non-Applicable 2-Applicable 3-Strongly Applicable**

Criteria for evaluating lesson effectiveness	NA(1)	A(2)	SA(3)
1. The class seemed to be learning the material well.			

2. The learners were engaging with the foreign language throughout.			
3. The learners were attentive most of the time.			
4. The learners enjoyed the lesson, were motivated.			
5. The learners were active most of the time.			
6. The lesson went according to plan.			
7. The language was used communicatively throughout.			
8. The activities encouraged sufficient communicative and meaningful practice.			
9. The activities incorporated pair and group work.			

APPENDIX C

Teachers and Students' Questionnaires

(A) Student Textbook Evaluation Questionnaire

Dear Students,

The English course you are taking is quite essential in your further studies and so we are keen to hear what you think of the course and the book.

We thank you for the time and effort that you give us to complete this questionnaire. Your responses will help the students that follow this course in the future.

****

****PLEASE NOTE: 1-Strongly disagree 2-disagree 3-Undecided 4-agree 5-Strongly agree**

Please circle your responses.

A) Timing

1. I had enough time to complete the work.

1 2 3 4 5
2. I was given too much time to complete the work.
1 2 3 4 5
Comments (if any):

B) Usefulness

3. The materials in the book will be useful for my studies.
1 2 3 4 5
4. The material will be useful for my life.
1 2 3 4 5
Comments (if any):

C) Interest

5. The book was interesting.
1 2 3 4 5
6. The book had a variety of tasks and activities.
1 2 3 4 5
Comments (if any):

D) Difficulty

7. I found the language of the book difficult to understand.
1 2 3 4 5
8. I found the tasks and activities difficult to do.
1 2 3 4 5
Comments (if any):

E) Textbook Layout

9. The book was well laid out.
1 2 3 4 5
10. The type size of the book made it easy to read.
1 2 3 4 5
Comments (if any):

F) Learning

11. I improved my English as a result of using this book.
1 2 3 4 5
12. I learned a lot from using this book.
1 2 3 4 5
13. The book made me do new things.
1 2 3 4 5
Comments (if any):

(B) Textbook' Evaluation Feedback Form (For Teachers)

Experience: Degree:

Name of the book(s)……

Could you please answer the questions by circling the appropriate responses? Would you please kindly add comments where necessary giving further details. Thank you for your time and co-operation in completing this feedback form.

* If there is not enough room for your comments please continue over the page. ****PLEASE NOTE: 1-Strongly disagree 2-disagree 3-Undecided 4-agree 5-Strongly agree**

A) Timing

1. There was enough time to complete the work.

1 2 3 4 5

2. There was too much time to complete the work.

1 2 3 4 5

Comments (if any):

B) Usefulness

3. The material will be useful for my students' studies.

1 2 3 4 5

4. The material will be useful for my students' life.

1 2 3 4 5

5. The materials in the book will be useful for my teaching.

1 2 3 4 5

6. I would choose to teach this textbook again.

1 2 3 4 5

Comments (if any):

C) Interest

7. The book was interesting.

1 2 3 4 5

8. The book had a variety of tasks and activities.

1 2 3 4 5

Comments (if any):

D) Difficulty

9. The language of the book was difficult for my students.

1 2 3 4 5

10. The tasks and activities of the book were difficult for my students.

1 2 3 4 5

Comments (if any):

E) Textbook Layout

11. The book was well laid out.

1 2 3 4 5

12. The type size of the book made it easy to read.

1 2 3 4 5

Comments (if any):

F) Learning and Content efficiency (passages, exercise & instructions)

13. Students improved their English as a result of using this book.

1 2 3 4 5

14. Students learned a lot from using this book.

1 2 3 4 5

15. The book made students do new things.

1 2 3 4 5

16. They are clear and of the students' interest.

1 2 3 4 5

Comments (if any):

G) Student motivation

17. The students were motivated by the book.

1 2 3 4 5

18. Students were motivated by the book as it will be useful for them.

1 2 3 4 5

19. Students were motivated by the book as it will be part of a test/assessment. .

1 2 3 4 5

Comments (if any):

***H)* Activities**

20. The activities encourage sufficient communicative and meaningful practice.

1 2 3 4 5

21. The activities incorporate individual, pair and group work.

1 2 3 4 5

22. The grammar points and vocabulary items are introduced in motivating and realistic contexts.

1 2 3 4 5

23. The textbook's activities can be modified or supplemented easily.

1 2 3 4 5

Comments (if any):

Title

Theme-Rheme Patterns in English and Persian Scientific Texts

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Biodata

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Abstract

The present study investigates the thematic organization across scientific genre in Persian and English. It also attempted to locate the relationship between theme position elements and topic related nodes in terms of their physical and semantic distance from the central topic as well as their grammatical properties (i.e., the degree of their markedness). The data for this study were supplied through different text types of scientific genre such as biology, geology, chemistry, physics and mathematics. 20 books were randomly selected, among many books in scientific texts in English and Persianlanguages. The selected books were originally written in English and Persian languages. In order to have ample instances of texts, 2 paragraphs of about 150 words were selected from each book By analyzing the collected data, it was found that there is a relation between English and Persian languages in using topic-related nodes in theme position. Both languages used high degree of topic-related nodes which contributed to their homogeneity and consequently led to the recognition of these texts as content or information oriented in which what is said is of high importance than how something is said. Also there was a high tendency in these texts in using unmarked themes than the marked ones in both languages. Results also suggest

that actual explanations on a scientific topic do in fact require lexically cohesive links to the statements to be explained and these links are semantically quite specific and essential for understanding explanations.

Key words: Marked theme, Rheme, Theme, Unmarked theme,English and Persian texts

1. Introduction

In any act of communication, organization is a major problem which must be solved if the communication is to be successful. One of the constraints on speakers/writers when producing their message is that they can produce only one word at a time. Therefore, they have to choose a beginning point for their utterance. The initial place has an enormous importance in the clause as well as in the discourse. Whatever is chosen to be the first place, will influence the hearer/reader's interpretation of everything that comes next in the discourse since it will constitute the initial textual context for everything that follows (Alonso, Belmonte & McCabe, 1998).

It is the initial position of the clause in SVO languages where formal categories such as theme, topic, grammatical subject and given information usually come together. To some extent, these terms are confusing and in order to shed light on these terms and clarify their notions their definitions will be provided in this section. Let us try then to clarify the notion of theme and provide some definitions of it from a functional perspective. First of all, topic is a non-structural discourse category which describes what the text is about (Brown & Yule, 1983; Van Oosten, 1986). Given information is the information that can be predicted or which belongs to that knowledge shared by both listener and speaker, whereas new information is that information which is contextually non-retrievable and says something about the given (Prince, 1981). According to Halliday (1994), the grammatical subject is the one that of which something is predicated. Also, Halliday (1994) distinguishes three different kinds of subject. Grammatical subject which is defined above, psychological subject which is the concern of the message and the logical subject which is the doer of an action. But Halliday (1994) used three equivalent terms for these expressions. He used theme for psychological subject, subject for grammatical subject and actor for logical subject.

Halliday (1994) provides different definitions for theme which will be listed as follows:

"1. The theme is what is being talked about, the point of departure for the clause as a message.

2. The English clause consists of a theme and a rheme. The theme of the clause is the element which, in English, is put in the first position.

3. The theme is the statement which serves as the point of departure of the message; it is that

which the clause is concerned.
4. Within that configuration, the theme is the starting point for the message; it is what the clause is going to be about" (Cited in Fries, 1995, p. 3).

Halliday believes that each clause conveys a message that has two parts, i.e., what comes first or the theme, and what comes last or the rheme. The theme usually constrains given information and the rheme, new information (1994).

By taking into account the above mentioned points about theme, the terms such as topic-related nodes, marked and unmarked theme can be clarified. They can be explained as follows:

1. Theme: it is the element which serves as the point of departure of the message (Halliday, 2004). In this study the theme, as defined by Halliday, is considered as the first element which is put in the initial position. For example:

Example 2.1.*The duke* has given my aunt that teapot.

The duke is the theme of this sentence.

2. Unmarked theme: when theme is conflated with the subject, it is called unmarked theme (Halliday, 2004). For example:

Example2.2. *I* like the Walrus best.

Since this sentence follows the normal patterning of English sentences it is called unmarked.

3. Marked theme: when a theme is something other than the subject, it can be referred as a marked theme (Halliday, 2004). For example: Example 2.3. *This responsibility* we accept wholly.

In this sentence the object 'this responsibility' has been raised to the beginning of sentence where a subject is usually expected to be.

4. Topic- related nodes: the theme in each sentence which is directly related to the central topic or the macro-theme of a text is called topic -related node (Lotfipour-Saedi and Rezai-Tajani, 1996). For example:

Example2.4. *The fair* was a rather squalid company of gypsies that traveled from town to town and once a year made a three day stay at Herbury (Central topic: Herbury fair).

5. Non-topical theme position: The elements which appear in the initial position of the sentence but are not topic-related concepts (Lotfipour-Saedi and Rezai-Tajani, 1996). For example:

Example2.5.*The tailor himself* she did not find until later (Central topic: Beatrix's sense of curiosity).

6. Physical distance: it refers to the physical distance of the node from the central topic of the text and can be calculated in terms of the elements fronted before the realization of the first topic-related node in each sentence in a text (Lotfipour-Saedi and Rezai-Tajani, 1996). For example:

Example2.6. One afternoon when some ladies came to tea she heard a curious story concerning a

small tailor in Gloucester (Central topic: Beatrix's sense of curiosity). In this sentence the topic-related node is *she* so two non-topic related nodes are fronted before the first topic-related node and consequently the topic-related node is in the third position.

7. Semantic distance: it can be discussed on the basis of the relationship between themes and the central topic, besides, the position of the nodes in a textual hierarchy. Also, the type of semantic relationship holding between the nodes and the central topic should be taken into account. In this study, the semantic distance is defined in terms of the number of missing links/inferences needed to be processed by the reader from a node to the central topic. The relationship between the node and the central topic can be a mere repetition of the central topic or they may hold a synonym, hyponym or antonym related to the central topic. The analysis of the semantic distance will be a subjective procedure in our data (See also Lotfipour-Saedi and Rezai-Tajani, 1996). For example:

Example2.7. *A suppressor mutation* is a mutation that counteracts the effects of the original mutation such that the double mutant individual containing both the original mutation and the suppressor mutation and the suppressor mutation has a phenotype similar to that of the wild type. *Suppressors* are isolated when a mutant strain is reverted to restore the wild type or wild – type – like phenotype. As *with the isolation of the original mutation*, one must devise a selection/ screen that allows the identification of revertants having the wild – type phenotype. *The suppressor mutation* alone will frequently have a mutant phenotype; but this phenotype could be novel or could similar to the phenotype or the original mutation (central topic: Suppressor mutation). As it is clear in the above text, a mere repetition of the central topic at the beginning of each sentence in this text leads to a suitable semantic distance between the text and the central topic.

2. Review of the Related Literature

In addition to Halliday's systemic functional approach to language, many attempts have been made to study the thematic elements (i.e., their lexico-semantic and grammatical properties) and their patterns of progression in a number of registers/genres.

Danes' study (1974) on patterns of topic development postulates three main types of thematic progression:

1. Simple linear progression: each rheme becomes the theme of the next utterance.
2. Constant progression, where the item in the theme of the first clause is also selected as the theme of the following clause.
3. Derived hyper-thematic progression, where the particular themes in subsequent clause are derived from a hyper-theme or from the same overriding theme.

According to Fries (1983) different discourse genres (i.e., narratives, descriptives, argumentatives, and so on) have different patterns of thematic progression. For example, an argumentative text can be characterized by high proportion of cross-reference from the rheme of one sentence to the theme of the text.

Lotfipour-Saedi and Rezai-Tajani (1996) study thematization strategies of scientific and literary English texts. Their findings suggest that the scientific texts contain more topic-related nodes in theme position and are more homogenous than literary texts in terms of their distribution of topic-related nodes. Also, the number of sentences containing no nodes in literary texts is much higher than in the scientific texts.

Yarmohammadi (1995) investigates theme-rheme organization, theme relationships, categories origins and dependency or sequencing bonds in five field of social science in English and Persian. The result of his analysis revealed:

1. The development of the English paragraphs by developing the themes other than the initial themes.
2. The stronger tendency of English paragraphs towards the sequencing relationships than the Persian ones.
3. A high tendency in using nominal themes than the adverbial ones in both languages.

This study investigates thematization strategy or theme/ rheme organization at the global level of some English and Persian scientific texts in order to show that the results of this study can be applied in teaching writing of English to the speakers of Persian and the translation of English to Persian and vice versa.

3. Method

Different text types of scientific genres such as biology, geology, chemistry, physics and mathematics comprise the data pool. 20 books are randomly selected, among many books in scientific texts in English and Persian. The selected books are originally written in Persian and English. In order to have ample instances of texts, 2 paragraphs of about 150 words is selected from each book.

The thematic analysis of the scientific genre in the present study is based on a system provided by Lotfipour-Saedi and Rezai-Tajani (1996). The scientific texts in both languages are broken into single sentences. Having changed each text into a single sentence, their themes, their relationship between nodes and central topic and the degree of markedness or unmarkedness will be calculated. Then, the percentages of the texts are calculated and can be listed as follows:

- The percentage of topic related nodes as well as percentage of non-topical theme position
- The percentage of sentences containing nodes as well as sentences containing no nodes

In all these parts, a comparison and contrast will be provided between two languages,

Persian and English, in addition to a comparison and contrast with the work of Lotfipour-Saedi and Rezai-Tajani's results. Also a table will be provided to compare the total percentage of the first topic related nodes in these two languages.

The statistics for the percentage can be obtained by calculating the total number of each specific part (total number of topic-related nodes, total number of non-topical theme position, and total number of sentences containing no nodes) divided by the total number of sentences in each genre. It should be taken into account, that in the present study the theme is calculated in terms of the elements which are put first in the initial position in each sentence.

4. Results and discussion

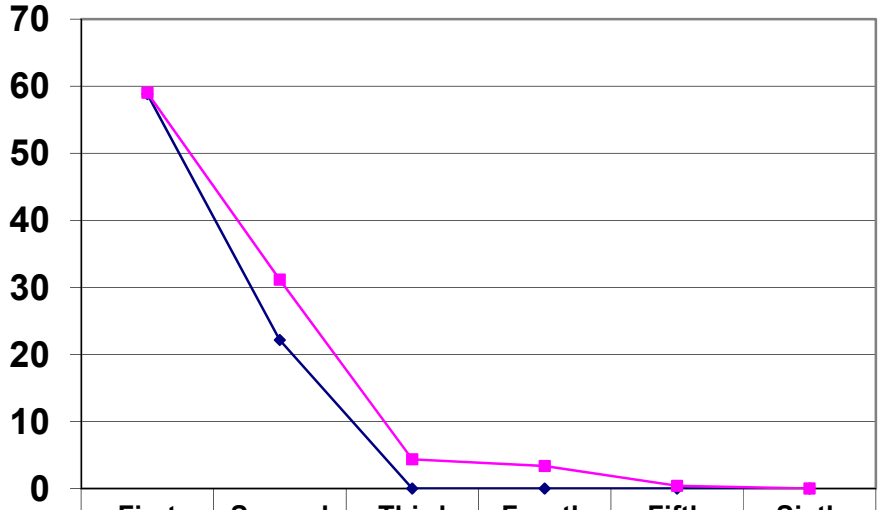
It was found that there is a relation between English and Persian in using topic-related nodes in theme position. Both languages used high degree of topic-related nodes which contributed to their homogeneity and consequently led to the recognition of these texts as content or information oriented in which what is said is of high importance than how something is said.

Also there is a high tendency in these texts in using unmarked themes than the marked ones in both languages. The use of unmarked theme, usually the mere repetition of the central topic, indicated that on the one hand, the syntactic slot is filled and, on the other, it gets prominence. Results also suggest that actual explanations on a scientific topic do in fact require lexically cohesive links to the statements to be explained and these links are semantically quite specific and essential for understanding explanations. It appears that writers use appropriate lexical cohesive devices such as mere repetition, antonyms, and synonyms in their texts to provide appropriate prior knowledge construction to make the text clearly understandable.

4.1 The distribution of topic-related nodes at different position

Comparison of the first topic-related nodes at different positions shows that there is a close relationship between English and Persian in terms of the first and second positions which are occupied by topic-related nodes. Because of the order of the sentences patterning in Persian, there are some sentences which occupy the third, fourth and fifth position and this causes problems with regard to Halliday's framework of theme as the initial element. Due to the position of the verb as the last element such a situation can exist when a Persian text is analyzed according to the framework of Halliday's theme/rheme. The above results can be illuminated more clearly in Table 1.

Table 1 *distribution of topic related nodes at different position*



	First Position	Second Position	Third Position	Fourth Position	Fifth Position	Sixth Position
English Texts	58.82	22.15	0	0	0	0
Persian Texts	59.04	31.15	4.37	3.36	0.41	0

4.2 Total percentage of the analyzed parts

Table 2 shows the total percentage of English and Persian scientific texts from thematic organization point of view. By referring to the table, it can be concluded that, generally, there is a close relationship between English and Persian in different aspects. Also, there are some differences between two languages that are taken into account in details by referring to several tables which are provided in this section.

Table 2

Total percentage of the parts which have been analyzed in this study

	English texts	Persian texts
Topic-related nodes	75.95	79.19
Non-topical theme position	24.04	20.78
Sentences containing no nodes	3.96	1.84
Sentences with unmarked theme	62.25	52.57
Sentences with marked theme	37.40	47.42
Nodes in first position	58.82	59.04
Nodes in second position	22.15	31.15
Nodes in third position	-	4.37
Nodes in fourth position	-	3.36
Nodes in fifth position	-	0.41

5. Conclusion

Indeed, one way of achieving cohesion in text is through thematic patterning, which involves the relationships between clauses based on the information contained in their themes and rhemes. Because the discourse comprehenders do not process all the information in text, they try to consider the key known information and base other information on them. So, it is the task of discourse producers to put the appropriate information in a relevant and most noticeable position to boost their reader's comprehension.

The findings of the present study are as follows:

In both languages:

1. The number of topic related nodes in theme position was much higher than non-topical related nodes (Table 4.2.).
2. The distribution of topic-related nodes is the same, i.e. all the nodes were distributed in either first or second position. Such a situation leads to homogeneity of the texts (Table 4.2.). It should be taken into account that a few number of the sentences in Persian texts occupy the third, fourth and rarely fifth position. This is due to the order of Persian language (S. V. O.) pattern in which the verb is the last element and consequently, is in contrast with the framework of Halliday's definition of theme as the initial position.
3. Most of the sentences contained nodes. There were few sentences that did not have any nodes (Table4.2.).
4. The number of unmarked topical and non-topical theme-position elements was higher than marked one (Table4.2.).

Also there are some little differences between English and Persian texts that can be listed as follows:

1. The number of unmarked and marked theme position in Persian was higher than English (Table 4.2.).
2. Sentences containing topic-related nodes in Persian are higher than English (Table4.2.).
3. The Persian texts consist of more topic-related nodes than English (Table 4.2.).
4. Nodes occupy the second position in Persian were higher than English (Table 4.2.).
5. Non-topical theme position in English was higher than Persian (Table 4.2.).
6. The number of sentences containing no nodes in English is higher than Persian. It is twice as much as the Persian ones (Table 4.2.).

Contrary to what was done by Saedi and Tajani, the number of unmarked theme was higher than marked ones in the present study (Table 4.2.).

The following are suggestions for further research:

1- This study was carried out on the scientific texts in English and Persian. Similar study can be done on the literary texts in both languages in order to know their similarities and

differences.

2- The same study can be carried out on the parallel texts, for example, a text in English and its translation in Persian.

3- The same study can be carried out in order to understand whether a text with topic–related nodes can affect comprehension or not.

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APPENDICES

Table1. Number and topics of the English texts which have been referred to in this study

Text	**Topic**	**Number of sentences**
1	Tectonic movements of the earth crust	10
2	Technogenic changes of external geosphere	8
3	Water	16
4	Geothermal environmental impact of energy development	5
5	Subatomic particles	15
6	Nuclear fusion	8
7	Amounts of reactants and products	11
8	Coal	7
9	Partial ordering relations and lattices	19
10	Basic terminology	18
11	Recursive definitions of sets	7
12	Hamiltonian paths and Hamiltonian cycles	14
13	Suppressor mutation	5
14	DNA micro array analysis	10
15	Mouse (Mus musculus)	9
16	Measuring animals, weighing animals	12
17	Transition probabilities and rules according to wave mechanics selection	9
18	Quantum numbers of the electrons in an atom	8
19	Newton's first law	11
20	The gravitational field	13

Table 2. Number and topics of the Persian texts which have been referred to in this study

Text	Topic	Number of sentences
1	بررسي حرارتي و زمين گرمايي	12
2	فضاي خالي در خاك	14
3	زهره يا ناهيد	14
4	مسير امواج زلزله	7
5	بلورها	10
6	خواص ابررساناها	8
7	پيوند شيميايي	10
8	رسانش الكتريكي	9
9	توزيع طبيعي	7
10	ضريب همبستگي	8
11	بردارها و فضاهاي برداري	8
12	ماتريس	10
13	غشاي سيتوپلاسمي	10
14	ميكروتوكسين ها	8
15	ليپتونما يا ليپتوتن	9
16	موتاسيون هاي برگشتي يا معكوس	7
17	اصل اول ترموديناميك	5
18	گرماي ويژه مايعات	5
19	هدايت الكتريكي در ماده و دسته بندي اجسام	15
20	محاسبه ميدان مغناطيسي به كمك پتانسيل اسكالر	9

BIOLOGY

A Suppressor Mutation

A suppressor mutation (Unmarked) is a mutation that counteracts the effects of the original mutation such that the double mutant individual containing both the original mutation and the suppressor mutation and the suppressor mutation has a phenotype similar to that of the wild type. **Suppressors** (Unmarked) are isolated when a mutant strain is reverted to restore the wild type or wild – type – like phenotype. **As with the isolation of the original mutation** (Marked), one must devise a selection/ screen that allows the identification of revertants having the wild – type phenotype. **One** (Unmarked) determines whether a revertant is a true revertant, that is restores the original gene sequence, or if it carries a suppressor mutation by crossing the revertant to a wild – type strain and seeing whether the original mutation from the suppressor mutation. **The suppressor** (Unmarked) mutation alone will frequently have a mutant phenotype; but this phenotype could be novel or could similar to the phenotype or the original mutation.

Table 3. Analysis of an English text in terms of degree of markedness.

Unmarked theme :	4 →	**Percentage :** 80
Marked theme:	1 →	**Percentage :** 20
Total number of sentences : 5		

BIOLOGY

A Suppressor Mutation

A suppressor mutation (Topic-related node) is a mutation that counteracts the effects of the original mutation such that the double mutant individual containing both the original mutation and the suppressor mutation and the suppressor mutation has a phenotype similar to that of the wild type. **Suppressors** (Topic-related node) are isolated when a mutant strain is reverted to restore the wild type or wild – type – like phenotype. As **with the isolation of the original mutation** (Topic-related node), one must devise a selection/ screen that allows the identification of revertants having the wild – type phenotype. **One** (Non-topic related node) determines whether a revertant is a true revertant, that is restores the original gene sequence, or if it carries a suppressor mutation by crossing the revertant to a wild – type strain and seeing whether the original mutation from the suppressor mutation. **The suppressor mutation** (Topic-related node) alone will frequently have a mutant phenotype; but this phenotype could be novel or could similar to the phenotype or the original mutation.

Table 4. Analysis of an English text in terms of topical and non-topical theme position.

Topic-relates node:	4 →	**Percentage :** 80
Non-topic relates node:	1 →	**Percentage :** 20
Total number of sentences : 5		

فيزيك

گرماي ويژه مايعات

تمام مطالبي را كه براي محاسبه **گرماي ويژه** گازها (Node)ذكر شد درباره مايعات نيز مي توان بكار برد ولي درباره مايعات نظر بوجود نيروهاي التصاق نمي توان قواعد كاملا كلي كه شامل تمام يا يک دسته از مايعات باشد بيان كرد بلكه بايد براي هر مايع بخصوص در صورت داشتن مقادير انرژي گرماي ويژه را همانطور كه براي گازها گفته شد حساب كرد شک نيست محاسبات مشكلتر و پيچيده تر است . معمولاً **گرماي ويژه مايعات** (Node) را به طريقه هاي گرما سنجي تعيين مي كنند و عموماً گرماي ويژه با فشار پايا را در فشار جوي تعيين كرده و با رابطه موجود ميان Cوc گرماي ويژه با گنج پايا را حساب مي كنند. **گرماي ويژه مايع** (Node) نيز مانند گاز با تغيير دما تغيير مي كند. **گرماي ويژه مايع هاي آلي** (Node) در حدود ۵/۰ (اتر ۴۸/۰ بنزين ۴۱/۰) گرماي ويژه جيوه مانند فلزات خيلي كم و در حدود ۳۳/۰ است. براي اطلاع بيشتر درباره **گرماي ويژه مايع** (Node) كافيست به جدولهاي مربوط در كتب اعداد فيزيكي مراجعه شود.

Table5. Analysis of a Persian text in terms of sentences containing no nodes.

number of sentences containing no nodes :	0 →	**Percentage :** 0
Total number of sentences : 5		

فيزيك

گرماي ويژه مايعات

تمام مطالبي را **كه براي محاسبه گرماي ويژه گازها** (Second position) ذكر شد درباره مايعات نيز مي توان بكار برد ولي درباره مايعات نظر بوجود نيروهاي التصاق نمي توان قواعد كاملا كلي كه شامل تمام يا يک دسته از مايعات باشد بيان كرد بلكه بايد براي هر مايع بخصوص در صورت داشتن مقادير انرژي گرماي ويژه را همانطور كه براي گازها گفته شد حساب كرد شک نيست محاسبات مشكلتر و پيچيده تر است . **معمولاً گرماي ويژه مايعات** (First position) را به طريقه هاي گرما سنجي تعيين مي كنند و عموماً گرماي ويژه با فشار پايا را در فشار جوي تعيين كرده و با رابطه موجود

ميان Cوc گرماي ويژه با گنج پايا را حساب مي كنند. **گرماي ويژه مايع** (First position) نيز مانند گاز با تغيير دما تغيير مي كند. **گرماي ويژه مايع هاي آلي** (First position) در حدود ۵/۰ (اتر ۴۸/۰ بنزين ۴۱/۰) گرماي ويژه جيوه مانند فلزات خيلي كم و در حدود ۳۳/۰ است. براي اطلاع بيشتر **درباره گرماي ويژه مايع** (Second position) كافيست به جدولهاي مربوط در كتب اعداد فيزيكي مراجعه شود.

Table 6. Analysis of a Persian text in terms of position of the nodes.

First position:	3 →	**Percentage :** 60
Second position:	2 →	**Percentage :** 40
Total number of sentences : 5		

More examples are provided here to show the third, Fourth and fifth position of the nodes in Persian texts:

Example1. Third Position:

مطالعات مارينر II نشان داده است كه **اين جو** فقط مقدار خيلي كمي بخار دارد (زهره يا ناهيد : Central topic).

Example2. Fourth Position:

براي مثال، ريشه گياهان، فعاليت جانداراني نظير كرم ها و حشرات، **در ايجادتخلخل** خاك اهميت دارند (فضاي خالي در خاك: Central topic).

Example3. Fifth Position:

مادامي كه مواد مذاب دروني به طرف سطح زمين حركت مي كنند انتظار مي رود كه **درجه حرارت دروني زمين وشيب گرمايي** افزايش يابد بررسي هاي حرارتي و زمين گرمايي: Central topic).

Table 7. Comparison of nodes/topical themes in theme and non-theme position in English and Persian

TEXT	English texts				Persian texts			
	Nodes in theme position		Nodes in non-theme position		Nodes in theme position		Nodes in non-theme position	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1	9	90	1	10	10	83.33	2	16.66
2	5	62.5	3	37.5	9	64.28	5	35.71
3	16	100	0	0	11	78.57	3	21.42
4	5	100	0	0	4	57.14	3	42.85
5	15	100	0	0	10	100	0	0
6	6	75	2	25	6	5	2	25
7	6	54.54	5	45.45	10	100	0	0
8	5	71.42	2	28.75	9	100	0	0
9	10	52.63	9	47.36	6	85.71	1	14.28
10	15	83.33	3	16.33	6	75	2	25
11	4	57.14	3	42.85	8	100	0	0
12	12	85.71	2	14.28	9	90	1	10
13	4	80	1	20	9	90	1	10
14	9	90	1	10	4	50	4	50
15	6	66.66	3	33.33	6	66.66	3	33.3
16	7	58.33	5	41.66	4	57.14	3	42.58
17	6	55.55	3	33.33	3	60	2	40
18	8	100	0	0	4	80	1	20
19	7	63.63	4	36.36	14	93.33	1	6.60
20	8	61.53	5	38.46	7	77.77	2	22.22
Total percentage	**75.95**		**24.04**		**79.19**		**20.78**	

Table 8. Degree of markedness/ unmarkedness in English and Persian

TEXT	English texts				Persian texts			
	Unmarked theme		Marked theme		Unmarked theme		Marked theme	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1	9	90	1	10	5	41.66	7	58.33
2	4	50	4	50	10	76.92	3	23.07
3	14	87.5	2	12.5	10	71.42	4	28.57
4	2	40	3	60	2	28.57	5	71.42
5	11	73.33	4	26.66	5	45.45	6	54.54
6	4	50	4	50	3	37.5	5	62.5
7	7	63.63	4	36.36	8	80	2	20
8	4	57.14	3	42.58	3	33.33	6	66.66
9	5	26.31	12	63.15	3	42.85	4	57.14
10	11	61.11	7	38.88	3	42.85	4	57.14
11	4	57.14	3	42.85	4	50	4	50
12	5	35.71	9	64.28	8	80	2	20
13	4	80	1	20	6	60	4	40
14	8	80	2	20	5	62.5	3	37.5
15	6	60	4	40	6	66.66	3	33.33
16	9	75	3	25	3	42.85	4	57.14
17	6	66.66	3	33.33	2	40	3	60
18	5	62.5	3	37.5	3	60	2	40
19	7	63.63	4	36.36	10	66.66	5	33.33
20	8	61.53	5	38.46	2	22.22	7	77.77
Total percentage	**62.5**		**37.40**		**52.57**		**47.42**	

Table 9. Comparison of sentences containing no nodes in English and Persian

TEXT	English texts		Persian texts	
	Sentences containing no nodes		Sentences containing no nodes	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1	0	0	1	8.33
2	0	12.5	0	0
3	0	0	0	0
4	0	0	1	14.28
5	1	0	0	0
6	0	12.5	0	0
7	0	0	0	0
8	0	0	0	0
9	0	0	0	0
10	0	0	0	0
11	0	0	0	0
12	0	0	0	0
13	0	0	0	0
14	0	0	0	0
15	1	11.11	0	0
16	2	16.66	1	14.28
17	1	11.11	0	0
18	0	0	0	0
19	0	0	0	0
20	2	15.38	0	0
Total percentage	**3.96**		**1.84**	

Table 10. The frequency of the nodes with regard to their relative position in English and Persian

TEXT	English texts							Persian texts					
	Position of the nodes							Position of the nodes					
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
1	8	1	-	-	-	-		4	5	-	1	1	-
2	5	2	-	-	-	-		9	2	2	-	-	-
3	15	1	-	-	-	-		11	1	2	-	-	-
4	2	3	-	-	-	-		3	4	-	-	-	-
5	11	4	-	-	-	-		5	4	1	-	-	-
6	4	2	-	-	-	-		3	3	-	2	-	-
7	4	2	-	-	-	-		10	-	-	-	-	-
8	6	1	-	-	-	-		6	3	-	-	-	-
9	5	7	-	-	-	-		6	3	-	-	-	-
10	9	3	-	-	-	-		3	4	1	-	-	-
11	4	1	-	-	-	-		4	4	-	-	-	-
12	7	5	-	-	-	-		8	2	-	-	-	-
13	3	1	-	-	-	-		9	1	-	-	-	-
14	6	3	-	-	-	-		4	3	-	1	-	-
15	6	2	-	-	-	-		6	1	2	-	-	-
16	4	3	-	-	-	-		4	-	1	1	-	-
17	5	1	-	-	-	-		4	1	-	-	-	-
18	7	1	-	-	-	-		3	2	-	-	-	-
19	6	1	-	-	-	-		10	5	-	-	-	-
20	7	1	-	-	-	-		5	4	-	-	-	-
Total percentage	**58.82**	**22.15**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**		**59.04**	**31.15**	**4.37**	**3.36**	**0.41**	**-**

Title

The Study of Principles and Techniques of Bimodality Theory from ELT Teachers' Perspective: The Case of Iranian Teachers

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Biodata

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Abstract

The present study is an attempt to investigate the applications of Danesi's (2003) bimodality theory from Iranian EFL teachers' perspective. The purpose of the research is first to determine the extent to which ELT teachers utilize the principles of bimodality theory in their teaching and second to determine the extent to which ELT teachers implement these principles correctly in terms of their respective modal stages. The study also aims at examining ELT teachers' views concerning the applications of Danesi's (2003) modal techniques suggested for designing the learning activities of ELT textbooks to see whether ELT teachers corroborate the applications of these techniques. To this end, the researcher developed a questionnaire with a five Likert-type scale to scrutinize the pedagogical application of bimodality theory from ELT teachers' perspective. To collect the required data, the designed questionnaire was distributed among 30 Iranian EFL teachers at a foreign language institute in Mashhad, Iran. After analyzing the data, the corollaries of the study indicated that the teachers seemed not to be aware of the pedagogical purposes of these principles because they significantly failed to implement these principles successfully in the classroom, especially the principles belonging to the R-Mode Stage. In terms of the

application of modal techniques, the majority of the teachers were found not to confirm the findings offered by Danesi (2003) to a statistically large extent. The results have some implications and suggestions for curriculum developers and ELT practitioners.

Keywords: Bimodality theory, Principles of bimodality theory, Modal techniques, ELT teachers

1. Introduction

To date, numerous theories and assumptions on Second Language Teaching (SLT) have generally contributed to the development of second language teaching and learning. And as a result, several fundamental methods (e.g. Grammar Translation Method, Direct Method, Audio-lingual Method, & Total Psychical Response) and approaches (e.g. Communicative Language Teaching, & Task-based Language Teaching) have been proposed to make substantial progress in the domain of second language teaching and learning. Yet, as such methods or approaches have intended to implement their theories and assumptions in the given teaching contexts; the vast majority of them have relatively failed to meet the needs and expectations of their target language learners.

The above methodological issue has raised the notion of *SLT Dilemma* proposed by Danesi (2003) which explains that despite considerable research on SLA and SLT, language learners rarely achieve high levels of proficiency irrespective of their language background or the employed methodology. In the emergence of SLT Dilemma, ecological and socio-cultural issues have played a pivotal role in the domain of second/foreign language teaching due to the large number of prevailing pedagogical challenges reported around the world (Mahmoodzadeh, in press). Until now, some noteworthy reactions, however, have been put forward for this dilemma, namely Kumaravadivelu's (1994) *post-method pedagogy*, Larsen-Freeman's (1999) *seven I's*, and Ellis's (2005) *principles of instructed language learning*, and Danesi's (2003) *bimodality theory* (see Mahmoodzadeh, 2011 for overview of the theoretical trends towards this dilemma).

However, the focus of the present study is on Danesi's (2003) reaction to SLT Dilemma. According to Danesi (2003), bimodality theory, one of the recent views on SLT which has ushered in a new era of research in second language learning and teaching, suggests that the reason that so many methods and approaches in SLT have relatively tended to fail lies in the fact

that all of them were in part unimodal, that is, focusing on only one of the two hemispheres of the brain. In effect, any instructional system that privileges only one of the two modes of brain is bound to fail sooner or later because such a system has been unimodally developed.

In addition, Danesi (2003) maintains that on the one hand, the methods such as Grammar Translation Method or Audio-lingual Method focused only on the left hemisphere (L-Mode) while, on the other hand, the Communicative, Humanistic, and Neurolinguistic methods and approaches overemphasized the right hemisphere (R-Mode) to the detriment of the L-Mode. Moreover, bimodality theory is a view of second language learning which claims that neuroscientific constructs could have pedagogical consequences, and that the functions associated with both hemispheres of the brain should be taken into account in SLT, that is, structuring classroom input, designing syllabuses, and doing all the things that are required for carrying out SLT in a classroom environment (Danesi, 2003).

However, to the author's knowledge, no pervious study has been carried out thus far investigating the pedagogical consequences of the neurolinguistic research-based findings developed by Danesi (2003). In this respect, bimodality theory can thus be considered as a deprived or neglected area in terms of the conducted scholarly research projects thus far. In fact, among the studies probing the applications of neurolinguisticlly-oriented theories, there seems to be a research gap for the investigation of this theory. In the light of such perceptible lacuna, apparently some studies need to be conducted either to justify the applicability of this theory or to contradict it. In an endeavor to address this issue, the present study focuses on the applications of bimodality theory from the ELT teacher's perspective which may consequently contribute to the body of the knowledge of second language pedagogy.

1.1. Research Questions

In an attempt to investigate Iranian EFL teachers' views on the pedagogical applications of bimodality theory, the present study intends to find the answers to the following questions:

1) To what extent do Iranian EFL teachers use Danesi's (2003) principles of bimodality theory in their classrooms?

2) To what extent do Iranian EFL teachers implement Danesi's (2003) principles of bimodality theory correctly in terms of their respective modal stages?

3) Do Iranian EFL teachers corroborate the applications of Danesi's (2003) modal techniques of bimodality theory for designing the learning activities of ELT textbooks?

2. Review of the Related Literature

2.1. Bimodality Theory

To begin with, it is important to note that in spite of growing interest in neuroscience, few researchers have approached language teaching from the perspective of neurolinguistics and have attempted to apply neurolinguistic discoveries to the development of concrete prepositions that could guide second language teachers during the last few decades (Kim-Rivera, 1998). Drawing upon the proposed neurolinguistically-oriented theories over the last decades, one of the fundamental studies is perhaps the work related to the educational construct called *bimodality theory*. This term was first proposed by Danesi (1986). According to Danesi (1986), bimodality theory is an attempt to provide neurolinguisic foundation for language instruction in the classroom. The underlying assumption is that there is a natural flow of information from the right to the left hemisphere of the brain during language learning. In this sense, Kim-Rivera (1998) likewise states, "language instruction should reflect this flow direction by providing concrete forms of instruction at early stages and more formal and abstract instruction at later stages" (p. 92).

It is worth mentioning that the principles and techniques of bimodality theory have been developed and modified during the last two decades. In essence, Danesi (2003) introduces the most recent pedagogical implications of bimodality theory through a set of pedagogical principles and techniques. These principles and techniques can assist language teachers to improve their teaching. With the aid of these informing principles and techniques, syllabus designers and material developers can likewise gain access to the recent neurolinguistic findings which may enable them to design more efficient ELT materials for EFL/ESL learners of different teaching contexts.

As was mentioned earlier, the concept of bimodality in second language acquisition advocates a solution to SLT Dilemma based on the contemporary findings of neurolinguistics. In this sense, Danesi (1987) notes that" the impact of neuroscience on language learning has established, as a fact, that language learning is a multi-dimensional process that requires an equally versatile and multi-faceted pedagogical response"(p. 379). In effect, in terms of the

nature of the cerebral learning system, that is, the two hemispheres of the brain being specialized according to function, the only viable teaching approach is one which caters in a complementary fashion to the student's global language processing (Cicogna & Nuessel, 1993). In fact, as Kim-Rivera (1998) mentions," the two hemispheres process language input as a unit and are thus complementary: the left hemisphere enables us to analyze individual concepts, while the right hemisphere allows us to synthesize information into discourse" (p. 97).

The research and advances of neurophysiology have habitually affected language pedagogy during the last two decades cultivating bimodality to a greater degree and exhibiting its most prosperous offerings. On the one hand, at the end of the 19th century, the designation of the left hemisphere as major or dominant and the right as weak or minor caused teaching methods to be unimodal, that is, to concentrate on the structural form of language (Danesi, 1988). Nevertheless, Danesi (2003) argues that while the techniques utilized in inductivist and deductivist methods focused on developing L-Mode control of second language, it should be noted that some of the techniques used in the inductivist method, for example, the use of the situational practice, the incorporation of visual stimuli, the contextualization of practice routines did have an R-Mode focus. It might thus explain why they have survived to this day as effective techniques on their own.

On the other hand, some flourishing Neurolinguistic methods and Communicative and Humanistic approaches emerged which were designed with an opposite unimodal bias. That is, they typically overemphasized and utilized R-Mode functions to the detriment L-Mode functions. This is why they always generated much interest at first, but seldom produced high level of proficiency at the end of a course of study. However, Danesi (2003) truly believes that:

> …no method or approach has ever been designed intentionally to be unimodal. It is more accurate to think of SLT practices generally as placeable on a continuum with two extreme L-Mode and R-Mode endpoints (i.e. Grammar Translation Method & Silent Way methods, respectively) at which bimodality theory suggests the mid-point of this continuum as the most appropriate for SLT practice (p. 49).

In terms of the studies conducting on the basis of bimodality theory, Danesi (2003) discusses that after the proposal of bimodality theory, a number of second language teachers and researchers,

especially in Italy and North America began assessing the implications of this theory critically (Curro, 1995; Lombardo, 1988; Nuessel & Cicogna, 1992; Pallotta, 1993).

By the same token, Talebinezhad and Mahmoodzadeh (2011) have recently conducted a study investigating the pedagogical applications of bimodality theory in a selection of both internationally-developed and locally-developed ELT textbooks used widely in Iran. In the end, the results of the study revealed that pedagogical techniques and principles of bimodality theory appear to be significantly more applied in the design of the internationally-developed ELT textbooks than the locally-developed ones. The study also suggested that perhaps one of the main reasons for the inefficiency of the locally-developed ELT textbooks used in Iran was the marginality of the pedagogical techniques and principles of bimodality theory in them and that the textbooks need to be modified in order to be more in line with the pedagogical objectives of bimodality theory.

However, since the arrival of the tenets of bimodality theory, some researchers have cast doubt on the pedagogical effectiveness of this theory. For example, Kim-Rivera (1998) argues that there are some issues concerning Danesi's bimodality theory. One of these issues is that few empirical studies have been carried out to support this theory (e.g. Danesi, 1988; Danesi & Mollica, 1988) and only when a consistent pattern of significant results is available can bimodality be considered worthy as a theoretical basis for instructional practice. According to Kim-Rivera (1998), another issue is that Danesi's bimodality theory has been the only concrete proposal for second language teaching from the perspective of neuroscience.

As a result, it can be implied that there have been few arguments for or against this theory from SLA researchers. Thus, the validity of this theory requires additional research and the support of future neurolinguistic findings. In fact, as Mahmoodzadeh (2011) contends, if such a scholarly phenomenon occurs, then this theory might have the potential status of a new paradigm and might cause a paradigm shift in the current theoretical trends towards the issue of SLT Dilemma.

2.2. The Modal Principles of Bimodality Theory

The core premise and tenets of bimodality theory incorporates four pedagogical principles which have been derived from the recent relevant brain research corresponding directly to the application of bimodality theory in SLT. Danesi (2003) introduced these principles in the

following: "(1) *the modal flow principle*; (2) the *modal focusing principle*; (3) *the contextualization*; (4) *the conceptualization principle*" (p. 49). According to Danesi, (2003), the consolidation of these principles would effectively enhance the learning of the language, as they integrate both structure and communication and thus educate both hemispheres at the same time.

2.2.1. The Modal Flow Principle

By definition, the modal flow principle (also known as *modal directionality principle*) indicates that "at first the experiential plane is activated (i.e. the *R-Mode*), then new input flows to the analytical (i.e. the *L-Mode*), as was generally the case with the inductive principle"(Young & Danesi, 2001, p. 84). This pedagogical principle was first derived from the typical observation of language teachers and students in the classrooms. As the findings of this observation were mapped against the relevant neurolinguistic work on the hemisphericity, interestingly a perfect mach resulted (Danesi, 2003).

However, the principle of modal directionality should be utilized only with new input so that foreign language learners may experience a new structure or concept before shifting to the formal explanation (Antenos-Conforti, 2001).Young and Danesi (2001) discuss that during the initial learning stages, students need to assimilate new input through observation, induction, role-playing, simulation, oral tasks, and various kinds of interactive activities. But formal explanations, drills, and other L-Mode procedures must also follow these stages, since the control of learning structures will not emerge spontaneously.

Hence, the teacher needs to allow for the student's improvisation during the early learning stages. Instructional techniques which focus on explanations will be of little value, since the students generally have no preexisting L-Mode schemata for accommodating the new input directly. In order to make the new material accessible to the L-Mode; therefore, the early stages should involve both the teacher and learner in activities enlisting exploration, imagination, spontaneity, and induction. Once the initial learning stages have been completed, the teacher can shift modes and begins to focus more on formal, rule-based instruction (Young & Danesi, 2001). In comparing this principle with the inductive principle, Danesi (2003) argues that:

> …the modal directionality can be seen to be a different version of the oldest principle in teaching - the inductive principle. But unlike its use in strictly inductivist methods, it does not require the deployment of induction for all learning tasks, only those that

involve new input. Thus, if a learning task contains knowledge or input that the learner can already accommodate cognitively, directionality can be effectively avoided (p. 52).

Danesi (2003) also maintains to identify the general procedures being utilized in any given teaching context based on the modal flow principle as follows:

During R-Mode Stage:

*Classroom activities should be student-centered and involve students and teachers in a complementary fashion.

*Novel input should be structured in ways that activate sensory, experiential, inductive forms of learning (dialogues, questioning strategies, simulations, etc.)

*The students' inductive and exploratory tendencies should be encouraged to operate freely when introducing new information.

During L-Mode Stage:

*The focus now shifts to the teacher. The teacher should explain the structural and conceptual features of the new materials clearly using deductive and inductive techniques as warranted by the situation.

*Explanations, drills, etc. should follow the experiential learning phases.

*Focusing on some problematic aspects of the subject being taught is to be encouraged if a student appears to have difficulty grasping it or using it with appropriate comparison to his/her L1 language with suitable exercise materials.

During Intermodal Stage:

*The learner should be allowed to employ the new materials to carry out real-life verbal tasks, but only after he/she shows the ability or willingness to do so.

*Teaching new things or discussing matters of form and structure during this stage should be avoided.

*Students should be allowed to find solutions to the problems of communication on their own.

*Role-playing and working in pairs or groups is advisable for most students, although some may not wish to participate. These reluctant students can be assigned other kinds of creative tasks instead (e.g. writing).

2.2.2. The Modal Focusing Principle

Modal focusing principle is required at points in the learning process when, for instance, a learner appears to need help in overcoming some error patterns which have become an obstacle to learning. L-Mode focusing allows the learners an opportunity to focus on formal matters for accuracy and control while R-mode focusing allows the learners to engage in matters of understanding and conceptualization (Danesi, 2003).

Further, the modal focusing principle in no way implies that mechanical practice be conducted in an uncontextualized way. On the contrary, meaningful contexts should always be provided not only for new input, but also for focusing purposes. "This allows the R-Mode to complement and strengthen the intake operations of the L-Mode, especially during more mechanically- oriented focusing tasks" (Young & Danesi, 2001, p. 89). As Mollica and Danesi (l998) note, "the modal focusing stresses the fact that, at some time during the learning process, students may need to concentrate on one mode or the other to digest the new data, reinforce acquired structures or vocabulary, or simply think of what to say" (p. 210).

2.2.3. The Contextualization Principle

With regard to this principle, Danesi (2003) discusses that memorizing or pronouncing words in isolation, rehearsing speech formulas, or even practicing grammar without reference to some situations which typically entail them rarely leads to the facilitation of learning. The reason for this pedagogical failure is that language derives its meaning (usage) primarily from the context in which it is involved (i.e. its use). So, without sufficient context, it is unlikely that the brain can assimilate new input in any mnemonically functional way.

Likewise, Danesi (2003) believes that that during an R-Mode Stage, the new material must contain references to cultural concepts in order for the brain to detect the appropriate meaning potential of the new structures whereas, during an L-Mode Stage, the practice and rehearsal of the new structures is greatly enhanced if practical or conceptual information is given. Given the merits associated with the techniques of this principle, Danesi (2003) also maintains that:

> …there are two types of cultural techniques: (1) Cultural contextualization techniques, which are designed to provide culturally appropriate information that allows students to relate the novel linguistic input to cultural concepts, symbolism, rituals during an R-Mode Stage. (2) Practical contextualization

> techniques, which refer to the use of meaningful information or reference to realistic situations in the design of exercises and activities used during an L-Mode Stage (p. 58).

It should be noted that among contextualization techniques are "the use of open dialogues, authentic texts, and realia" (Kim-Rivera, 1998, p. 97). In short, contextualization means the creation of an environment in which an activity may be situated. This means the avoidance of structure-based pattern drills that focus on linguistic forms rather than the context in which conversation takes place (Cicogna & Nuessel, 1993).

2.2.4. The Conceptualization Principle

Given the fact the conceptual errors are abundant in learner discourse (Danesi, 2000), Danesi (2003) concludes after a common observation of teachers that students often produce L2 messages which are semantically anomalous when they attempt to speak or write spontaneously without some form of guidance. Following this assumption, Danesi (2003, p. 61) relates "the source of such anomaly to the unconscious tendency of learners to put together L2 messages on the basis of L1 concepts". Thus, he believes that language teachers must ensure that the two systems- the linguistic and the conceptual- are interrelated during all aspects and stages of instruction and practice. In addition, given the incoming L2 conceptual structures, the conceptualization principle can manifest itself in one of these three ways: (1) isomorphic (2) overlapping (3) differentiated.

In the light of different forms of conceptualization, Colella (1999) discusses that we cannot approach language teaching or even communication as a mathematical equation where 1 + 1 =2. Each word in the target language is represented by a sound: each sound is linked to a meaning and image/concept which may or may not coincide with the learner's L1.

In addition, Danesi (1993) argues that grammatical and lexical categories are also correlated to concept categories and experience. The student learning a L2 must learn about the life of the language through his/her understanding of concept boundaries, metaphorical usage, proverbs, and conceptual domains. Included in this domain of language are also al1 the nonverbal language of a target culture such as gestures, tone, social interactions and register.

Moreover, it should be noted that these principles are not self-contained and sometimes require overlapping each other in a complementary pattern regarding their underlying

assumptions. For instance, a teaching practice or learning activity aimed at activating the R-Mode Stage by providing the context for the new incoming language input can also allow learners to experience and explore it; therefore, such a teaching practice or learning activity belongs to two complementary principles (namely the modal flow principle and the contextualization principle respectively) not one single principle.

2.3. The Modal Techniques

By definition, a technique is "any procedure that helps accomplish certain objectives in class. It can be an explanation of grammar, a type of activity, or a test that has an identifiable R-Mode, or L-Mode, or Intermodal focus in its design"(Danesi, 2003, p. 104). Danesi (2003) categorizes these techniques generally as *Structural Techniques*, *Visual Techniques*, *Ludric Techniques*, *Humor Techniques*, and *Role-Playing Techniques*. With respect to the significance of these techniques, it is worth mentioning that overlooking the effects of modal status of the learning activities can lead to the serious impediment of learning the new language materials in language learners (Danesi, 2003).

As discussed by Danesi (2003), the aim of structural techniques is development of some aspect of linguistic, communicative, or conceptual competence. These techniques include teacher explanation of grammar and vocabulary, classroom exercises and activities. Most of these techniques have either an R-Mode or an L-Mode focus while some are also intermodal, such as translation exercises or cloze test techniques. Visual techniques provide either: (1) visual contexts to accompany the verbal input, or else (2) provide illustrative support for some explanation, exercise, activity, etc. Thus, they can provide crucial R-Mode contextualization for learning. In addition, in terms of conceptualization principle, they can also foster the development of the conceptual competence in learners if the provided visual imagery is illustrative of the conceptual domain being learned.

Ludric techniques refer to any game- playing or problem-solving techniques including crosswords, word searches, scrambled words, interactive games, board games, etc. These techniques fall into two main categories: Language Teaching Games (LTGs) which are useful during intermodal stages; and Language Teaching Puzzles (LTPs). The LTP techniques are also of two types: form-based LTPs which promote L-Mode form-based language learning; and concept-based LTPs which promote both R-Mode communication-based learning and conceptual

fluency. Riddles, logical deductions, simple mathematical puzzles fall into this category as well (Danesi, 2003).

Humor techniques are designed to evoke humor with a crucial R-Mode focus and are useful to develop conceptual fluency in learners. These techniques are also in line with the conceptualization and contextualization principles. And finally, role-playing techniques including pair work or group work tasks are designed to engage learners in communicating together in a creative fashion during Intermodal Stage (Danesi, 2003).

However, due to the possible controversies regarding techniques that may be questionably bimodal, Danesi (1991) examines the issues of how psychologically meaningful it is to label technique X as right-hemispheric and Y as left-hemispheric. The method used was Lateral Eye Movement (LEM), which is based on the assumption that in most (right-handed) people the activation of left-hemispheric functions causes the eyes to shift their glance to the right. This quick assessment of the bimodal classifications of techniques resulted in the LEM findings which did not contradict the techniques used in Danesi and Mollica (1988) study.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The participants involved in this study comprised 30 Iranian EFL teachers (13 male & 17 female) teaching English at a foreign language institute in Mashhad at the time of the study. The teachers ranged in age from 22 to 35 (M= 25), and their teaching experience varied, ranging from 3 to 9 years (M= 4.5).The subjects were selected through a convenience sampling.

3.2 Instrument

In the light of the goal of the study, a survey design was used to direct the study. To meet the aims of the study, a survey instrument, a three-page questionnaire (see Appendix A), was developed on the basis of the research questions to investigate Iranian EFL teachers' views on the pedagogical applications of bimodality theory in the classroom. More particularly, the designed questionnaire consisting of 52 Likert-type and closed-choice items was divided into three sections. The first section contains demographic questions in order to gain information about the teachers' gender, age, and teaching experience. The second section (items 1-31) intends to seek the teachers' views on the applications of the principles of bimodality theory in

EFL classrooms. And finally, the third section (items 32-52) aims at exploring the teachers' views on the utilization of the learning tasks and activities with reference to design of the ELT materials based on the modal techniques of bimodality theory.

However, it should be noted that the questionnaire items were all derived from the principles of bimodality theory which attempt to represent the pedagogical applications of this theory more practically. In this way, the participants were perhaps more likely to answer the questionnaire items more accurately. After considering the content of questionnaire items, the following labels were assigned to each item:

A) *Items representing Danesi's (2003) principles of bimodality theory:*

- Modal flow principle items: 1,2,3,6,7,8,10,11,12,13,14,15,17,21,22,24, 25,26,27,29,30
- Modal focusing principle items: 4,5,9,16,18,19,20,23,31
- Contextualization principle items: 2,10,11,15,21,24,25
- Conceptualization principle items: 4,19,21,22,23,31

** Modal stage of the items representing Danesi's (2003) principles of bimodality theory:*

- IS (i.e. R-Mode): items: 2,3,5,10,11,15,16,21,24,25
- SS (i.e. L-Mode): items: 1,4,8,9,12,14,18,19,20,23,26,31
- FS (i.e. Intermodal): items: 6,7,13,17,22,27,28,29,30

B) *Modal status of the learning activities based on Danesi's (2003) bimodality theory:*

- IS (i.e. R-Mode): items: 41,43,49
- SS (i.e. L-Mode): items: 32,37,38,40,45,46,47,51
- FS (i.e. Intermodal): items: 33,34,35,36,39,42,44,48,50,52

The questionnaire items deal with teaching of new language forms including grammatical structures, vocabulary items, concepts, and language functions. These types of language forms were selected because it was felt that they could be considered as a relatively appropriate representation of all new language input for language learners. As was mentioned earlier, the principles of bimodality theory occasionally require overlapping each other in a complementary fashion regarding their underlying assumptions (Danesi, 2003). In view of such issue, some

questionnaire items (items 2, 4,10,11,15, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 31) thus represent the pedagogical applications of more than one principle. That is to say, some items belong to two complementary principles instead of one single principle.

3.3 Procedure

To begin with, to assess the reliability of the designed questionnaire, the internal consistency reliability of the items included in the questionnaire was estimated. In doing so, a pilot test was administered among 15 participants randomly selected from a larger population, but with the same characteristics. After the pilot test, slight changes were made in the introductory instruction, ambiguities and misunderstanding of the items were identified, and also some of the items bearing extreme scores were revised to assure a higher reliability.

In addition, to decrease the possibility of any misunderstanding with respect to the questionnaire instruction, the researcher explained to the participants how to complete the questionnaire. After analyzing the participants' responses, it was found that the questionnaire items (1-31) had achieved an alpha coefficient of .83 in the pilot run. And, since George and Mallery (2003) maintain that items can be claimed to have a high degree of reliability if they achieve a score of .80 or higher in the reliability statistics (analysis), the items in the designed questionnaire indicated a relatively high degree of internal consistency as the alpha value was greater than .80.

Furthermore, to evaluate the validity of the designed questionnaire, it was given to four experienced applied linguists and TEFL professors to judge its validity. However, some items were deleted and others were modified according to the jurors' suggestions until the researcher came up with a satisfactory final draft of 52 items.

To collect the necessary data, the designed questionnaire was distributed among 43 EFL teachers while enough time was given to them to complete it. However, among the 43 EFL teachers, 30 EFL teachers agreed to participate and complete the questionnaire items. After collecting the data, they were quantitatively analyzed. To calculate the frequencies of participants' responses, frequency counts and percentage indexes were reported for them. And to compute the means of responses, the rating took the form of Likert Scales. Rating scales were numerically coded as 1) Never, 2) Rarely, 3) Sometimes, 4) Usually, 5) Always. This greatly facilitated the statistical analysis.

4. Results and Discussion

To answer the research questions, the data were collected and analyzed quantitatively. Firstly, to estimate the extent Iranian EFL teachers use Danesi's (2003) principles of bimodality theory in their classrooms, the means of the participants' responses were assessed. The results are illustrated in the following:

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for the questionnaire items tabulated based on the type of their principles

Type of principles	*Questionnaire items*	*Mean*	*Std. Deviation*
Modal Flow	1,2,3,6,7,8,10,11,12,13,14,15,17,21,22,24, 25,26,27,29,30	3.9	.43
Modal Focusing	4,5,9,16,18,19,20,23,31	3.3	.62
Contextualization	2,10,11,15,21,24,25	4.2	.50
Conceptualization	4,19,21,22,23,31	2.6	.56

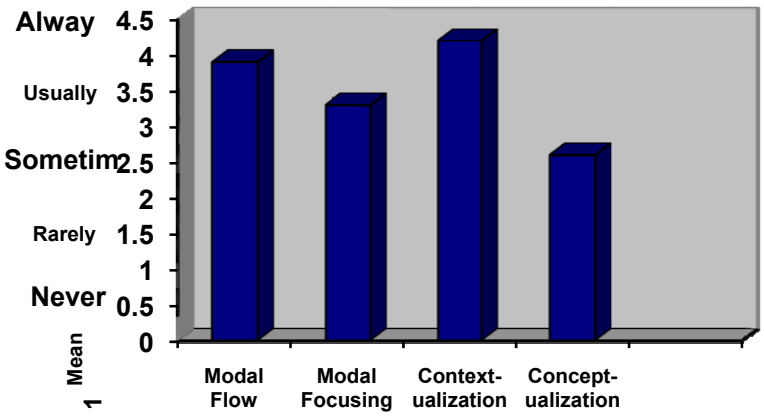

Figure 1: The frequency of teachers' use of principles of bimodality theory in the classroom

As shown in Figure 1, seemingly the Iranian EFL teachers tend to consider and utilize the modal principles in their teaching but the extent they use these principles in their classrooms varies. More specifically, the results likewise revealed that Iranian EFL teachers are more likely to use and focus on the application of the contextualization principle in an attempt to utilize it in their classrooms (M= 4.2) as compared with other modal principles, whereas they tend to overlook the conceptualization principle and use it in their classrooms to a lesser extent (M=2.6). The results

also showed that the teachers employ the two principles of modal flow and modal focusing in their teaching with the means of 3.9 and 3.3 respectively.

Secondly, to estimate the extent Iranian EFL teachers implement Danesi's (2003) principles of bimodality theory correctly in terms of the modal stages, the frequencies of the participants' responses were calculated. The obtained results are presented in the following figure:

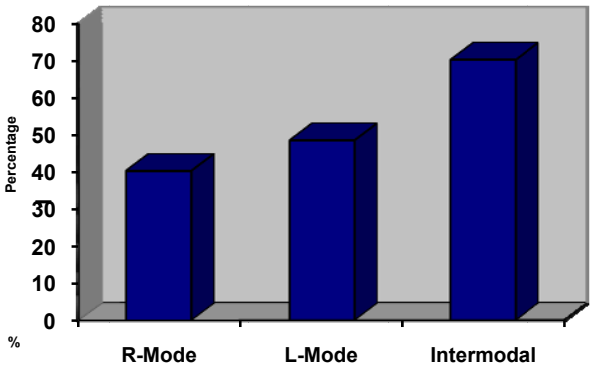

Figure 2: The frequency of teachers' correct responses in terms of implementation of principles of bimodality theory in their classroom

As can be seen from the frequencies of modal stages in Figure 2, the results indicated that the Iranian EFL teachers apply the bimodality principles in their classrooms with varying degrees. But in terms of successful implementation, they seem not to follow the principles in question to a great extent. To put it in another way, the teachers under investigation use these principles in the classrooms but they seem not to able to implement them in their respective modal stages very successfully.

To put in a nutshell, based on the reported results of the questionnaire shown above, it can be inferred that the Intermodal Stage can be perhaps the most productive and optimal modal stage in terms of successful implementation, since the respondents identified correctly 70.2 % of the principles belonging to this modal stage. On the other hand, R-Mode Stage is probably the most deprived modal stage regarding the successful implementation, since the respondents identified only 40.3% of the principles belonging to this modal stage. Finally, to see whether or not Iranian EFL teachers confirm the applications of Danesi's (2003) modal techniques of bimodality theory for designing the learning activities of ELT textbooks, the frequencies of the participants' responses were calculated and then compared with as displayed in the following:

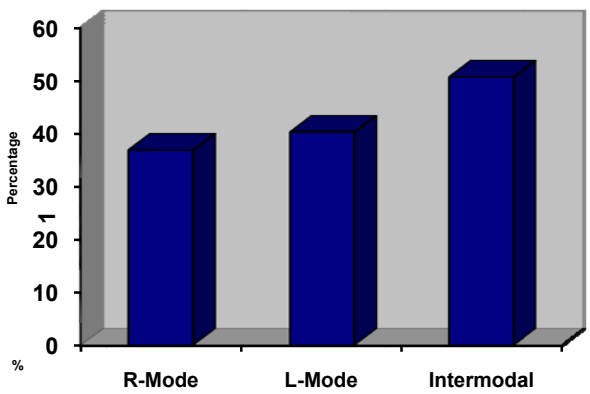

Figure 3: The frequency of teachers' correct responses in terms of modal status of the learning activities

Based on the above results, it is implied that Iranian EFL teachers generally do not endorse statistically the application of modal techniques to a large extent. Furthermore, as shown in Figure 3, it is once again the Intermodal Stage which appears to be the most productive stage for modal techniques, since the respondents identified the modal status of the learning activities belonging to this stage more correctly than other modal stages (50.6%). In addition, concerning the modal status of different learning activities under scrutiny, close test, conversation-making and picture-description activities were more identified correctly than other activities, whereas translation and repetition exercises were the least identified ones (see Appendix B).

5. Conclusion

To sum up, the overall findings of the study showed that the Iranian EFL teachers apply the principles of bimodality theory with varying degrees in their classrooms. But what is worthwhile to point out is that they are perhaps not aware of the pedagogical purposes of these principles, since they significantly fail to implement the principles at the appropriate time, especially for the principles belonging to the R-Mode Stage. In view of such pedagogical failure, several important factors are suggested to be accounted for. These factors include the EFL teachers, the ELT materials, the EFL learners, and also the educational curriculums. Each of these factors can play a key role and may contribute to the emergence of pedagogical failures such as this. Thus, the reasons for this perceptible failure can not be only attributed to the ELT teachers' inability or lack of their understanding since several other factors are also involved in the process of language teaching.

Thus, it is perhaps safe to conclude that in order to implement the principles of bimodality theory successfully, Iranian EFL teachers' perception and awareness of these principles need to be raised, the ELT textbooks need to be modified in line with the principles of bimodality theory, and finally there should be an alignment between the curriculums and the applications of bimodality theory. Furthermore, it can be concluded based on the findings of this study that the majority of the Iranian EFL teachers under study do not endorse statistically the application of modal techniques to a large extent.

One the whole, the results of the study, nonetheless, are context-bound not universal and entail some similar supporting findings to gain more scholarly values. However, the present study can be considered as a preliminary step towards shedding light on the pedagogical applicability of the theory of bimodality. In another vein, the author likewise suggests that although seemingly Danesi's (2003) bimodality theory is a controversial issue and thus may not be considered as a totally tenable and justifiable theory, it might be so perhaps only due to the salient lack of its related studies in the literature of language pedagogy. And in this way, perhaps no one can judge the applications and applicability of theories such as this, without having access to sufficiently relevant background studies.

With respect to the possible implications of the study, the study may offer syllabus designers and material developers some insights to be considered in design of ELT materials. In terms of teacher development, the author likewise suggests that an awareness and understanding of the scientific research informed principles and techniques which incorporate some pedagogical values, such as those proposed by Danesi (2003), may virtually help ELT practitioners first to engage in self-reflection and improve their teaching performance accordingly and second to put forward some crucial findings for other language teachers and researchers involved in the circle of second/foreign language teaching. In fact, it is assumed that an understanding of the research-based pedagogical principles and techniques such as these, can serve language teachers as a helpful guideline to re-evaluate their own teaching performance and consequently benefit from more effective classroom practices.

Therefore, it is suggested that syllabus designers and curriculum developers pay sufficient attention to the knowledge and awareness of their target ELT teachers about the applications of bimodality theory when they attempt to design and develop syllabuses and textbooks because the

lack of teachers' awareness leads to the incorrect implementation of the modal principles and techniques embedded in the designed syllabuses and textbooks.

5.2. Suggestions for Further Research

One of the evident shortcomings of the study is related to the small number of involved participants. This small sample size restricts the generalization of findings. Thus, first there is an urgent need for future research to cross-validate the findings from this study to some various and larger samples across the different teaching contexts around the world. Second, it is suggested that some studies, both experimental and survey be planned to investigate the applicability of this theory in various EFL/ESL classrooms from other perspectives, in particular, from the EFL/ESL learner's voice and from the materials or curriculum developer's voice.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire

Dear participants:

The following questionnaire is part of a research project which has been designed to investigate the practical teaching of English to the EFL learners in Iran. Please read the following instructions carefully and fill in the questionnaire with your best responses.

Personal information:

Gender: ***Male*** ***Female***

Age: ……..

Years of experience: ……..

We have divided practical teaching of the new learning materials to EFL/ESL learners into three stages following as: ***initial stage*** (introducing the new learning materials), ***secondary stage*** (facilitating learning of the new materials), and ***final stage*** (bringing teaching of the new learning materials to an end).

A) Please read each of the following teaching procedures carefully. First decide in which *stage* you employ them in your teaching by writing one of the following options: ***IS (Initial Stage), SS (Secondary Stage), FS (Final Stage), or NC (Not Certain)*** in the provided space. And then, circle the appropriate number to indicate how frequently you employ them in your teaching in the classroom: *(1) Never, (2) Rarely, (3) Sometimes, (4) Usually, or (5) Always***.**

New Grammatical Structures

1) I provide a brief explanation for them and then ask learners to identify them in the reading or conversation sections. ……..
1 2 3 4 5

2) I allow learners to explore and notice them through a dialogue or a conversation…….
1 2 3 4 5

3) I write down some examples for them on the board and then allow learners to infer the grammatical rules on their own. ……..
1 2 3 4 5

4) I provide some corrective feedback for some weak learners with appropriate conceptual comparison to their native language system…….
1 2 3 4 5

5) I allow some learners having difficulty dealing with the new structures to listen to the conversation once more…….
1 2 3 4 5

6) I assign learners to write a letter or an-email about a subject using the new structures or patterns……
1 2 3 4 5

7) I ask learners to work in pairs taking turns asking and answering some personal questions……
1 2 3 4 5

New Vocabulary Items

8) I ask learners to repeat them several times after me in order to learn how to pronounce them correctly……
1 2 3 4 5

9) I ask volunteers to explain the meanings of the new words to the learners having difficulty understanding them…….
1 2 3 4 5

10) I try to use the realia (actual objects, flash cards, photographs, posters, visual dictionaries, etc.) to teach them…….
1 2 3 4 5

11) I ask learners to listen to the new words carefully for several times while looking at their given pictures……..
1 2 3 4 5

12) I ask learners to check their dictionaries for the meanings and pronunciations of the new words…….
1 2 3 4 5

13) I use some board games to help learners learn the correct spellings of the new words…….

1 2 3 4 5

14) I explain the meanings of new words by providing some examples, synonyms, or antonyms for them. …….

1 2 3 4 5

15) I ask learners to listen or read the reading passage and try to guess the meanings of the new words. ……..

1 2 3 4 5

16) I allow the learners having difficulty understanding the meanings of the new words to listen to the conversation once more…….

1 2 3 4 5

17) I ask learners to work in pairs to talk about some special matters and share their opinions using the new words……

1 2 3 4 5

18) I identify the learners having difficulty pronouncing the new words correctly and then I ask them to repeat the new words several times after me……

1 2 3 4 5

19) If I notice some learners' errors are due to the absent of some concepts across the two languages, I try to explain the conceptual differences of the words across the two languages…….

1 2 3 4 5

20) I assign weak learners some drills to practice writing the new words and learn their correct spellings……..

1 2 3 4 5

New Concepts

21) I allow learners to culturally experience and notice them through a short video or a conversation……

1 2 3 4 5

22) I ask learners to work in groups to discuss the cultural concepts while taking some notes about the opinions of their group members…….

1 2 3 4 5

23) I provide some conceptual information about them and also try to compare these new concepts with those of their own culture…….

1 2 3 4 5

New Language Functions

24) I allow learners to observe them through a dialogue or a conversation…….

1 2 3 4 5

25) I try to create a situation in which I can use the new functions to allow learners to discover the meanings and uses of the new language functions on their own…….

1 2 3 4 5

26) I explain the different ways of expressing the new language functions to learners and then ask learners to identify them in the conversation……..

1 2 3 4 5

27) I ask learners to work in pairs and take turns role-playing the situations presented in the conversation sections……

1 2 3 4 5

28) I allow learners to get involved in some interactive games to practice the new language functions…….

1 2 3 4 5

29) I ask learners to alter or expand the conversation using their own ideas……...

1 2 3 4 5

30) I assign learners to work in pairs or groups to create their own conversations using the new language functions……..

1 2 3 4 5

31) If I notice that learners tend to use the new language functions based on their L1 (Persian) conceptual system, I try to explain the conceptual differences across the two languages……..

1 2 3 4 5

B) Please read each of the following classroom learning activities. First decide to which *stage* each of them belongs by choosing one of the following options: ***IS (Initial Stage), SS (Secondary Stage), FS (Final Stage), or NC (Not Certain).***

32) Repetition exercises

IS SS FS NC

33) Letter-writing activities

IS SS FS NC

34) Problem-solving discussions

IS SS FS NC

35) Structural fill-ins

IS SS FS NC

36) Group work Jig-saw activities (information-gap activities)

IS SS FS NC

37) Transformation exercises

IS SS FS NC

38) Structural completions

IS SS FS NC

39) Role-plays

IS SS FS NC

40) Substitution exercises

IS SS FS NC

41) Riddles

IS SS FS NC

42) Translation exercises

IS SS FS NC

43) Songs and chants

IS SS FS NC

44) Opinion-sharing activities

IS SS FS NC

45) Sentence-formation activities (Scrambled words)

IS SS FS NC

46) Comprehension exercises (open-ended/multiple-choice questions or True/False statements)

IS SS FS NC

47) Error-identification activities

IS SS FS NC

48) Cloze tests

IS SS FS NC

49) Picture-description activities

IS SS FS NC

50) Interactive games

IS SS FS NC

51) Cross word puzzles

IS SS FS NC
52) Conversation-making activities
IS SS FS NC

Thank you very much for taking time to fill in this questionnaire.

Appendix B

The frequency distribution of teachers' responses in terms of the modal status of the learning activities

No. of items	***Types of learning activities***	***R-Mode***	***L-Mode***	***Intermodal***	***NG(Not Certain)***
32	*Repetition exercises*	20	**6**	2	2
33	*Letter-writing activities*	6	6	**16**	2
34	*Problem-solving discussions*	4	6	**18**	2
35	*Structural fill-ins*	0	16	**9**	5
36	*Group work Jig-saw activities (information-gap activities)*	0	8	**15**	7
37	*Transformation exercises*	0	**16**	11	3
38	*Structural completions*	0	**13**	9	8
39	*Role-plays*	4	9	**14**	3
40	*Substitution exercises*	3	**15**	8	4
41	*Riddles*	**4**	4	13	9
42	*Translation exercises*	2	4	**6**	18
43	*Songs and chants*	**12**	3	9	6
44	*Opinion-sharing activities*	8	2	**18**	2
45	*Sentence-formation activities (Scrambled words)*	0	**17**	7	6
46	*Comprehension exercises (open-ended/multiple-choice questions or True/False statements)*	0	**6**	20	4
47	*Error-identification activities*	0	**17**	10	3
48	*Cloze tests*	0	4	**24**	2
49	*Picture-description activities*	**19**	8	0	3
50	*Interactive games*	2	8	**12**	8
51	*Cross word puzzles*	6	**7**	9	8
52	*Conversation-making activities*	0	8	**20**	2

****Note: Boldface indicates the correct modal status of the learning activities based on Danesi's (2003) modal techniques.***

Title

Teacher vs. Student-centered Classroom Interaction at Isfahan University

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Biodata

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Abstract

The present study was carried on to investigate the degree of teacher vs. student-entered classroom interaction in ELT classes of the English Department of Isfahan University to see if the degree of teacher vs. student-centered classroom interaction is affected by different levels of education; B.A., M.A., Ph.D. The hypotheses to be tested were: 1) teachers show more initiating behavior than students during ELT class activities as one moves down from one level of education to another, 2) Students show more responding behavior than the teacher during ELT class activities as one moves up from the B.A. level, through the M.A. level, to the Ph.D. level, 3) there are periods of silence or non-talk during class activities, 4) ELT classroom interaction varies at different levels of education; in other words, as one moves up from one level of education to another , classroom interaction becomes less teacher-centered and students have a bigger share in classroom discourse. The participants of the present study were teachers and students of 9 EFL classes in the Department of English of Isfahan University: three classes were selected at the B.A. level, three classes at the M.A. level, and three classes at the Ph.D. level. The courses under study were testing, methodology, and linguistics. In each of the classes under study a total of sixty minutes of classroom interaction was tape-recorded, thirty minutes of which was

randomly chosen for the sake of the present study. The tape-recorded data were later analyzed based on Brown's Interaction Analysis System (BIAS). A Univariate Analysis of Variance and t-tests were run to see if the differences were meaningful. A post hoc Sheffe test was conducted to shed light on those differences. It was revealed that B.A. level classes were more teacher-centered than M.A. level classes, and M.A. level classes in their own turn were more teacher-centered than Ph.D. level ones confirming all but not the second hypothesis.

Key Words: Student-centered, Teacher-centered, Classroom interaction, Level of education.

1. Introduction

Interpersonal interaction is thought of as a fundamental requirement of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Many researchers have stated that language instruction requires the development of interactional competence and interaction is a fundamental element of language teaching for communication (Kramsch, 1986; Rivers, 1987; Ellis, 1988). The interactionist perspectives in SLA have considerably emphasized on the role of interaction in general, and meaning negotiation in particular, with respect to the conditions which are theoretically important for SLA. Pica (1994) states that meaning negotiation, as a way of modifying interaction, enhances SLA by helping learners make input comprehensible and modify their own output, and by providing opportunities for them in order to access second language (L2) form and meaning. In accordance with the interactionist perspective, the conditions for SLA are substantially enhanced by helping L2 learners negotiate meaning with either native speakers (NS) or non-native speakers (NNS) (Long & Robinson, 1998). It is very important that L2 teachers construct an interactive learning environment in which learners can communicate with each other in the target language and negotiate meaning by means of interaction; the more learners participate orally and the more they engage in the negotiation of meaning, the better they will acquire the language. Research shows that this kind of learning may result in (a) higher student's achievements and greater productivity, (b) more caring, supportive and committed relationship among students, and (c) greater psychological health, social competence and self-esteem.

Observations of many different classes both in content area subjects and in language instruction consistently, show that teachers typically do between one half and three quarters of the talking done in the classroom. Several research reports indicate that the teacher dominates the classroom discourse. Allwright (1980), using audio taped data from two parallel UCLA low-level ESL classes, concluded that the teacher has a vastly disproportionate number of turns compared with other participants and that most of them have the function of "discourse maintenance", that is, taking an unsolicited turn, when a turn is available. He adds that the teacher also does almost all the interrupting, and is even among those guilty of turn stealing. Coulthard (1985) studied classroom interaction structure; he found that teachers dominate the classroom discourse and students share a little portion of it. Shehadeh (1999) investigated the role of NNS-NNS interaction and the role of self-initiation in providing opportunities for the production of comprehensible output. He investigated the ability of NNSs to modify their output toward comprehensibility in the context of NS-NNS and NNS-NNS interactions and the degree to which such modified comprehensible output was other or self initiated. The results showed that most repairs were self initiated and that NNS-NNS interactions produced more other initiations and other initiated modified comprehensible outputs. He claims that the frequencies of these modified comprehensible outputs support the importance of modification toward Gass & Varounis (1994) examined NS-NS, NS-NNS, and NNS-NNS conversations. They observed that negotiation of meaning is most prevalent among NNS-NNS pairs. Similarly, Shehadeh's study (1999) shows that a greater amount of extended negotiation work took place in NNS-NNS interactions than in NS-NNS interactions for the modified comprehensible outputs produced.

Taken all of the preceding discussion into account, the importance of classroom interaction in promoting students' second language acquisition seems to be crucial. It helps learners in general, and second language learners in particular, in the process of negotiation of meaning, exposing themselves to further input, and in using the language communicatively both with each other and with the teacher. However, research has shown that teachers monopolize the classroom discourse, and pupils as a one-headed participant contribute little to classroom interaction. In spite of the fact that many researchers have addressed the issue of classroom interaction, none have investigated second language classroom interaction across different levels of education, that is, B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. As such, the present study aims at investigating second language classroom interaction regarding teacher vs. student-centeredness at different

educational levels, that is, B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. to see if the degree of teacher vs. student-centered interaction varies from one educational level to another.

2. Methodology

This study sought answers to the following questions:1) Do teachers show more initiating behavior than students during ELT class activities at different levels of education, that is, B.A., M.A., and Ph.D.? 2) Do students show more responding behavior than teachers during ELT class activities at different levels of education, that is, B.A., M.A., and Ph.D.? 3) Is there any period of silence or non-talk during ELT class time at different levels of education, that is, B.A., M.A., and Ph.D.? 4) Do the different levels of education, that is, B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. affect the degree of teacher vs. student- centered interaction in ELT classes? With regard to the research questions, the following four hypotheses were set forth: 1)Teachers show more initiating behavior than students during ELT class activities as one moves down from one level of education to another. 2) Students show more responding behavior than teachers during ELT class activities as one moves up from B.A. level, through M.A. level, to the Ph.D. level. 3) There are periods of silence or non-talk during class activities.4) The ELT classroom interaction varies at different levels of education. In order to find answers to the above-mentioned questions the following methodology was used.

2.1 Participants

The participants of the present study were teachers and students in 9 EFL classes in the Department of English of Isfahan University: three classes were selected at the B.A. level, three classes at the M.A. level, and three classes at the Ph.D. level. In order for the findings to be reliable, the classes under the study came from three specific courses. These were testing, methodology, and linguistics. Three classes were observed and tape-recorded in testing courses, three classes were observed and tape-recorded in methodology courses, and three classes were observed and tape-recorded in linguistics courses. The same number of classes in each of the three educational levels; B.A., M.A., and Ph.D.; was chosen so that the collected data and the findings of the study render reliable results.

2.2 Materials

Information obtained through tape-recorded data from classes under study constituted the materials for the present study. In each of the classes under study a total of sixty minutes of classroom interaction was tape-recorded; thirty minutes of which was randomly chosen for the sake of the present study. The tape-recorded data were later analyzed based on Brown's Interaction Analysis System (BIAS) (Brown, 1975) (see appendix 1).

2.3. Instrumentation

Brown's Interaction Analysis System (BIAS) (Brown, 1975) was used as the instrument of the present study. Unlike other systems (FOCUS, for example) which are unreasonably elaborate for practical purposes and in which the researcher is called upon to identify, judge, and record various events simultaneously, this system is fairly simple and can be usefully applied to analyzing verbal interaction in second language classes. In order to implement the BIAS system, a tally sheet (see appendix 2) is used and marked every three seconds for the duration of the observation. Once the whole lesson has been coded in this way, percentages can be calculated for each of the categories noted.

In order to determine the inter-rater reliability in the identification of different categories, a second rater tallied 10% of the data (totaling 54 minutes) which was chosen randomly. This was done because it was not possible for a second rater to tally all of the recorded data. Based on Spearman's formula for calculating correlation, a resulting agreement rate of 83% was reached.

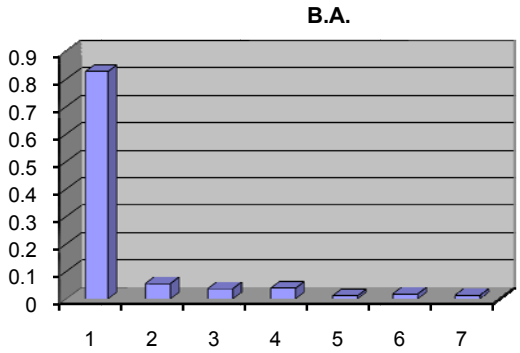
3. Data Analysis

The percentage of time being spent in each category of BIAS was calculated. Percentages of teacher talk (categories 1-3), student talk (categories 3 & 5), and silence (category 6) as well as unclassifiable (category 7) were calculated. The frequency, the proportion, and the mean score of teacher talk vs. student talk were calculated and compared to see if there was a difference in the degree of teacher vs. student-centered ELT classes at different levels of education, that is, BA, MA, and PhD. A Univariate Analysis of Variance was run to see whether these differences were meaningful or not. A post hoc Sheffe test was further run in order to spot the differences, and to provide the researcher with more detailed information about those differences. In order to compare the mean of teachers vs. students talk, their initiating and responding behaviors in each of the three educational levels separate t-test were conducted.

4. Results and Discussions

The investigation of the first research question revealed that at all of the three educational levels teachers showed more initiating behavior than the students. Teachers showed the most initiating behavior at the B.A. level classes, they showed less initiating behavior at the M.A. level classes. At the Ph.D. level classes teachers had the least initiating behavior. In other words, as one moves up from one level of education to another, from the B.A. level, through the M.A. level to the Ph.D. level, teachers' initiating behavior decreases (Figure 1). The differences were significant at 5% level of significance. Quite the reverse was true of students' initiating behavior. They showed the most initiating behavior at the Ph.D. level classes, less initiating behavior at the M.A. level classes, and still the least at the B.A. level classes(Figure 1). Again the difference was significant at %5 level of significance. That students' initiating behavior increased from the B.A. level, through the M.A. level, to the Ph.D. level, is in line with Seliger's 1983 study in which he showed that there seemed to be a relationship between learners' participation patterns and their progress in mastering English, the higher students' command of English, the more initiating behavior they show in language classes. Students at the Ph.D. classes are more skillful than those at the M.A. level, and students at the M.A.level in their own turns are more skillful than those at B.A. level. Therefore, the initiating behavior follows this pattern.

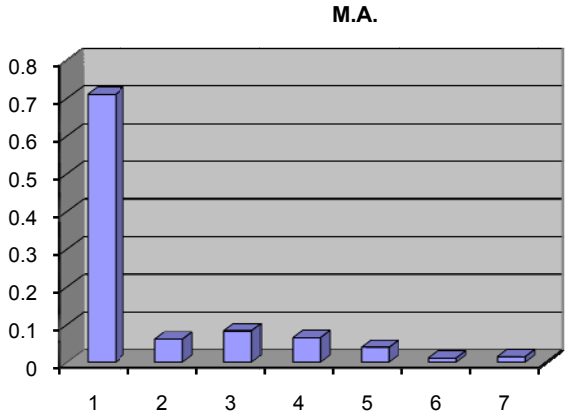
Figure 1: *Bar Graph for BIAS Categories at B.A.*



The results obtained from the investigation of the second research question, addressed in this study, also revealed that students showed the most responding behavior at the Ph.D. level classes. At the M.A.level classes, students showed less responding behavior, and at the B.A. level classes, they showed still less responding behavior (Figure 2). However, since the means were close to each other, the difference was not significant at 5% level of significance. The

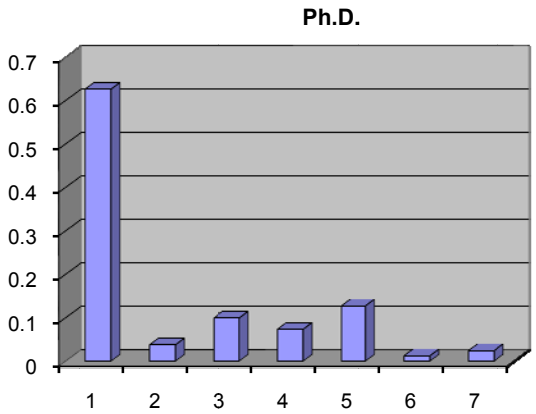
differences in mean of responding behavior, tends to support Seliger (1983) who claimed that the more proficient learners have a bigger share of classroom discourse than less proficient ones. In all of the three levels teachers showed more responding behavior than the students; this is in opposition with Bellack et al. (1996), and Dunkin and Biddles (1974) study in which the students uttered the most of the responding moves.

Figure 2: *Bar Graph for BIAS Categories at M.A.*



The answer to the third question indicated that the B.A. level classes had got the most frequency of silence. The M.A. level classes had got the least period of silence and the Ph.D. level classes were in between (Figure 3). However, the difference was not significant at 5% level of significance. Possibly , one justification for the high frequency of silence at the B.A. level classes is that when teachers stop talking, students do not take the turn due to their low proficiency in the language.

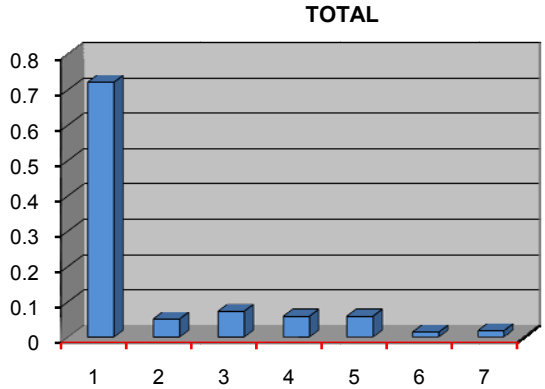
Figure 3: *Bar Graph for BIAS Categories at Ph.D.*



Finally, the investigation of the last research question in the study revealed that teachers had the most of the talking at the B.A. level classes. At the Ph.D. level classes they had the least frequency of talking. Teacher talk at the M.A. classes was somehow in between. Quite the reverse was true of the students' talk. They talked most at the Ph.D. level classes, less at the M.A. level classes and still the least at the BA-level classes (Figure 4). Any way, in all of the three levels teacher talk was much more than the student talk. The differences were significant at 5% level of significance. This provides support for a number of studies such as Musemeci's (1996), Flanders' (1985), Coulthard's (1985), Tsui's 1995, Bellack et al.'s (1996), and Dunkin as well as Biddle's (1974), and Legarreta's (1997) study in which teachers dominated the classroom discourse and students had a little portion of it.

The results obtained from the four research questions addressed in this study all point out to the fact that though interaction has long been recognized as a fundamental element in learners' language development, today's classrooms in Iran have remained teacher-centered.

Figure 4: *Bar Graph for the Total of BIAS Categories*



5. Limitations of the study

The present study suffered from a number of limitations, which will pose inevitable restrictions upon the generalization of its results. They are as follows:

1) The random selection of the subjects for the sake of the present study was not possible
2) It was not possible for the researcher to control the influence of particular teachers on classroom interaction.
3) The time of observation was not the same for all of the classes. Some classes were observed in the morning and some other in the afternoon.
4) Non-verbal interaction was not taken account of.

5) Only certain courses (Testing, Methodology, and Linguistics) were used in the present study.
6) Only ELT classes at the English Department of Isfahan University were chosen for the sake of the present study.

6. Conclusion

The results obtained from the four research questions addressed in this study all point out to the fact that though interaction has long been recognized as a fundamental element in learners' language development, today's classrooms in Iran, particularly those in universities, have remained teacher-centered. As a concluding note, it can be stated that although it was revealed that ELT classes at BA level were more teacher centered than MA classes and MA classes in their own turn were more teacher centered than PhD classes, any generalization based on the results of the present study should be made cautiously.

6.1 Pedagogical Implications

The results of this study may be of benefit to EFL teachers, teacher trainers, and syllabus designers, as well as to the students. The findings may encourage teachers who still believe in teacher-centeredness in language to change their viewpoints in favor of more learner-centered approaches. The results are especially of value to teachers in Iran in that they become aware of what actually goes on in the classrooms, so that they may decrease their talking time and encourage pupils participation in classroom interaction through making use of activities which call for students' participation.

The findings of this study are also useful for teacher trainers to introduce courses in which classroom interaction, its role in language learning, and different patterns of classroom interaction as well as ways to improve it, are explained. These way teachers become familiar with various instruments to judge their own way of teaching so that they can see their strong and weak points. In doing so, they can improve their own teaching and can incorporate different techniques for improving classroom interaction into their conventional teaching programs.

Syllabus designers and textbook writers will also benefit from the results of this study to incorporate in their EFL/ESL materials activities which involve the negotiation and interpretation of meaning so that students could have more chances of using the language both

with each other and with the teacher. They ought to provide learners with situation in which language learning can take place naturally, through classroom interaction and negotiation of meaning.

Another advantage to the present study is that it encourages students to take part in classroom interaction if they are going to learn effectively; the more learners participate orally, and the more they engage in classroom discourse, the better they will acquire the language.

6.2 Suggestions for Further Research

The present study showed that classrooms in Ph.D. level were more student-centered than those in M.A. level, and classrooms in M.A. level in their own turns were more student-centered than those in B.A. level. However, as it is true for every research, it cannot be claimed that findings of this research are generalizable to similar cases. As Seller and Chummy (1989) believe, " the nature of research is such that the more answers are obtained, the more questions arise. Curiosity in second language acquisition, as in other disciplines, leads researchers to more problems, more questions, and more areas of research". The present study is no exception.

With regard to the present study, the following areas may be worthy of further investigation:

1) The present study dealt with EFL classes; other classes such as ESL and ESP can be examined using the same procedures.
2) This study can be replicated by a large number of classes at different universities, so that the result of the study will be generalizable to a larger population.
3) Investigating the nature of classroom interaction itself in the three levels of education can be subject to further research.
4) This study dealt with teacher vs. student-centered classroom interaction in university classes, a comparison between classroom interaction in high school classes with those of institutes is highly recommended.
5) A comparison between the nature of interaction in content classes; which are taught in English, with that of language classes can be another topic for further research.
6) In this study only two thirty-minute sessions were tap-recorded for each course, an extended investigation of classroom interaction over a semester or a year could be a good subject for further research.

7) A longitudinal study of the development students who have taken part in a teacher-centered classroom with those who have participated in a student-centered classroom is subject to further research.
8) The nature of teacher's questions, display vs. referential, and their influence on students' production can be another topic for further study.
9) Replicating the present study with another instrument for analyzing classroom interaction and comparing the results with those of the present study calls for further study.
10) A comparison of teachers' and students' social interactions outside the classroom with theirs inside the classroom seems to be another topic for interested researchers.

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Appendix 1:

Brown's Interaction Analysis System (BIAS)

Teacher Talk	**Initiation**	**TL**	Teacher lectures, describes, explains, narrates, directs e.g., this is Brown's procedure for coding classroom interaction.
		TQ	Teacher questions, about content or procedure, which pupils are intended to answer.
	Response	**TA**	Teacher responds, accepts feelings of the class; describes past and future feelings in a non-threatening way; praises, encourages, jokes with pupils; accepts or uses pupils' ideas; builds upon pupils' responses; uses mild criticism such as 'no, not quite'.
Student Talk	**Response**	**PA**	Pupils respond directly and predictably to teacher questions and directions.
	Initiation	**PV**	Pupils volunteer information, comments, or questions
		S	*Silence ,Pauses , short periods of silence*
		X	Unclassifiable. Confusion in which communications cannot be understood; unusual activities such as reprimanding or criticizing pupils; demonstrating without accompanying teacher or pupil talk; short spates of blackboard work without accompanying teacher or pupil talk.

Appendix 2: A Tally Sheet

Category	Tally Marks	No. of Tallies	% of Tallies
TL			
TQ			
TA			
PA			
PV			
S			
X			

Title

The Effect of Etymological Elaboration on Iranian EFL Learners' Comprehension and Retention of Idioms

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Abstract

In recent years, idioms have received considerable amount of attention in EFL contexts. Linguists have sought ways to promote learning and teaching methods of these prefabricated language chunks. It is now believed that the meaning of all idioms is not arbitrary but somehow 'motivated' by their literal, original usage. This technique, namely, referring to the etymology of idioms in order to understand their idiomatic meaning is called 'etymological elaboration'. The present study is an attempt to show the effect of such technique on the learners' comprehension and retention of idioms. The subjects of this study were 50 Iranian advanced students studying English at Bahar Language Institute, Shiraz. They were divided into two homogenous groups of experimental and control. The experimental group was provided with the origins of 15 idioms and then the subjects were asked to identify their meanings. The control group was also demanded to identify the meaning of those idioms but without being informed about their origins. To check the subjects' retention of the idioms, they were asked to complete a task of providing the missing part of the same idioms. This task was applied one week after the first task. The results of the independent samples t-test

($p<0.05$) showed that providing learners with the original usage of idioms can effectively enhance their comprehension and retention.

Keywords: Etymological Elaboration, Idiom, Comprehension, Retention

1. Introduction

1.1 What is an idiom?

The word "idiom" comes from the Greek "idios", meaning: "one's own, peculiar, strange". Idioms are not well-defined maybe because teachers and learners are faced with a hotchpotch of items which cannot be treated uniformly as part of the learning /teaching task. In order to define idioms, we have to first define the 'multiword units' (MWU) since idioms are a subtype of these units along with the prefabricated chunks such as, fillers (*sort of, excuse me*), near-compounds (*cover-up, weather forecast*), prepositional expressions and phrasal verbs (*under the influence, cheer up*, *figure out*), collocations (*tell a story, wreak havoc, big business*), proverbs (*let's make hay while the sun shines*) and other lengthy standardized phrases (*it couldn't be further from the truth*) (Boers, Eyckmans and Stengers, 2006). Multiword units are defined as "a fixed and recurrent pattern of lexical material sanctioned by usage" (Grant and Bauer, 2004, 38).

There are certain recurrent themes in all definitions of idioms based on which the idioms can be defined. They can be classified under the headings of 'compositionality', 'institutionalization' and 'degree of frozenness / fixedness' (Grant and Bauer, 2004).

Compositionality: compositionality deals with meaning. If the meaning of a construction can be derived transparently from the meanings of its elements it is said to be compositional. Idioms, however, are believed to be non-compositional (Nunberg, Sag and Wasow, 1994).

Institutionalization: refers to the degree of recognition a particular phrase meets in a speech community. Idioms are widely recognized (Fernando and Flavell, 1981).

Frozenness: frozenness/fixedness means that the idioms' elements cannot be deleted and nothing can be added to them.

1.2 Etymological elaboration

The aim of this study is to explore the probable effect of associating the meaning of idioms with their original, literal usage on comprehension and retention of learners. This technique is called

"Etymological Elaboration" or EE (Boers et al.2004). EE is a type of semantic elaboration (i.e. the learners active and rich processing of an item with regard to its meaning) (Cohen et al.1986).

How the Etymological Elaboration helps the learners comprehend and retain idioms is not clear yet. As Boers (2004) states: "We cannot be sure about what exactly might be going on in the learners' brain for etymological elaboration to have this attested mnemonic effect" (Boers, F., Demecheleer, M. & Eyckmans, J. 2004a, 55). One plausible explanation lies in Dual Coding Theory (Clark and Paivio, 1991), "as the etymological information is likely to call up a mental image of a concrete scene which then can be stored in memory alongside the verbal form, and which can subsequently provide an extra pathway for recall"(Boers et al. 2007, 43). So, we can say that the beneficial effect of EE on retention is explained in Dual Coding Theory, and also we can say that the effect of this technique on comprehension lies in Cognitive Semantic Theory (Boers et al. 2004).

1.3 Research questions and hypotheses

In this study, two questions were answered. One of these questions lies in the field of idiom comprehension and the other one concerns idiom retention.

- Does "Etymological Elaboration" as a learning strategy, contribute to the EFL learners' comprehension of idioms?
- Can the learners remember idioms for a long time if they are informed about their origins?

The two questions can be formulated in the form of the following null hypotheses.

- The strategy of raising learners' awareness of the etymology of idioms does not help them figure out their meanings.
- The Etymological Elaboration does not contribute to learners' retention of idioms.

2. Literature review

Although much of the research on idioms was done during 1990s, the first hypotheses about the behavior of idioms were proposed during 1970s. Before this time, the study of idioms was neglected for three main reasons (Boers, Demecheleer and Eyckmans, 2004):

1. The linguists thought of language as a dichotomy, that is, grammar rules and individual words. However, idiom was not included in this division;

2. The idiomatic expressions were considered unimportant and their use was restricted to rhetoric and poetry;
3. It was assumed that the meaning of idioms could not be predictable.

The above reasons led linguists to believe that idioms could not be taught colorfully. The only option that the students could choose was 'rote learning'. As a consequence, the idiomatic expressions received little interest in educational linguistics.

In the last twenty years, a new approach to idioms was proposed by the proponents of cognitive semantics (e.g. Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Johnson 1987 and Langacker, 1987, 1991). One thing that is new in cognitive semantics about the idioms is that this approach links metaphors to the idioms. In other words, cognitive semantics takes into consideration such issues as the systematic nature of idioms, the conceptual mappings that account for much of the meaning of idioms, the motivated nature of idioms and other cognitive mechanisms (like metaphor, metonymy and conventional knowledge) on which idioms are based (Kovecses and Szabo, 1996).

In cognitive semantics it is believed that when something (for example MWUs) is neither arbitrary nor completely predictable it is somehow motivated (By motivation we mean what Lakoff (1987, 448) defines as: "the relationship between A and B is motivated just in case there is an independently existing link, L, such that A-L-B 'fit together'. L makes sense of the relationship between A and B". In other words, although idiomatic meaning is not fully predictable on the basis of a literal meaning, the derivation from the literal sense can nonetheless be explained. Another thing which must be made clear about this motivation is that since the motivation does not have a true predicative status, it is said to be a retrospective explanation (Boers, Eyckmans and Stengers, 2006).

There are various ways by which the idiomatic idioms can be motivated. One of them is motivating the multiword expressions by referring to their underlying conceptual metaphors or metonymies. The other line for motivating idiomatic expressions is called "Etymological Elaboration". This approach motivates the idioms by tracing them back to their historical, cultural or etymological origins and was first proposed by Boers (2001). Etymological elaboration as a subtype of semantic elaboration is believed to foster learning. This may be explained by resorting to two complementary theories of learning and memory, namely, "dual coding theory" (e.g. Paivio, 1986) and "levels of processing theory" (Cermak and Craik, 1979).

The quintessential assumption of "levels of processing theory" is that retention of an item is dependent on the depth or level of processing carried out on the material to be remembered. Superficial processing leads only to shallow, short-term retention. However, deep processing leads to efficient, durable retention. The contribution of this theory to the beneficial effect of etymological elaboration is that as the learners carry out the task of identifying the source domains behind idiomatic idioms they are involved in a certain degree of cognitive effort. This "identify-the-source" operation is said to occur at a 'deeper' level of processing than 'shallow' rote learning and according to the assumptions of levels of processing theory deep –level processing may enhance memory storage (Boers et.al. 2004).

The "dual coding theory" states that by associating idioms with their source domains, learners are likely to encode the items in their memory in a dual fashion, both as a verbal form and as a mental image of a concrete scene. This enhances retention as it creates a dual pathway for recall.

To verify their hypothesis of the effective role of Etymological Elaboration Boers and his colleagues carried out some experiments that are outlined briefly here.

Boers (2001) looked specifically at the effect of the "identify-the-source" task on learners' retention of idiomatic idioms. The subjects of the study were two parallel groups of Dutch-speaking college students (N = 54) who were asked to consult a dictionary in order to explain the meaning of ten idiomatic idioms. The control group was then given the task to provide contexts in which each of the idioms could be used, while the experimental group was given the task to hypothesise about the origins of each of the idioms. Both tasks required cognitive effort and deep processing, but the "identify-the-source" task aimed at calling up a mental image and thus at encouraging dual coding. In subsequent tests measuring participants' recall in a gap-fill exercise (after 1 week) and their retention of the meaning of the idioms (after 5 weeks), the experimental group scored significantly better than the control group. Therefore, it could be said that the experimental group had clearly benefited from the identify-the-source task.

The encouraging results of this paper-and-pencil experiment encouraged the authors to apply the strategy of etymological elaboration on a larger scale using a computer-aided program called "Idiomteacher". The results of this study also showed that etymological elaboration could help learners in comprehension and retention of idioms. Boers et. al. (2004) and Boers et. al. (2007) also indicated the beneficial effect of providing learners with the origins of idioms.

3. Methodology

3.1 Subjects

The participants who took part in this experiment were 50 EFL students (30 males and 20 females) studying English at Bahar Language Institute and their age ranged from 18 to 22. Students were native speakers of Persian.

The subjects of this study were somehow homogeneous in terms of their proficiency in that they had all passed an international IELTS mock exam gaining the pass score of 5 out of 9 and their scores obtained through the placement test ranged from 5 to 6 out of nine. According to the rubrics and guidelines of the test, the students in this range of ability were categorized as upper intermediate to advanced level of proficiency.

3.2 Instrument

A pen and paper test including 15 idioms was used in order to assess the effectiveness of the proposed strategy. This test was first used in an on-line format by Boers and et al. (2007). It consists of three parts:

- A matching exercise (including 15 idioms) in which the idioms and their origins will be matched;
- A multiple-choice exercise (including the same 15 idioms as in the matching exercise) regarding the definition of the idioms;
- A gap-fill exercise consisting of some meaningful sentences which should be filled in by the appropriate idioms. The 15 idioms used in this exercise are the same idioms used in the above exercises.

3.3 Procedures

Because the test was not previously tested or validated it was necessary to show that it was a valid and reliable test. In order to check the validity the researcher consulted some experts (Mr. Tajalli and Dr. Bagheri) to analyze it for validity. After assuring its validity, the test was administered once and the data were put into SPSS. Cronbach's alpha was used to check the reliability. The result showed that the test was reliable (r = 0.88). After checking the validity and reliability of the test, the test was administered to check for the effectiveness of the proposed strategy. It is noteworthy that the content of the tests assigned to two groups was a bit different in that the experimental group's test included a matching exercise about the origins of idioms while that of the control group lacked this kind of exercise. This was because the researcher

wanted to know if presenting the experimental subjects with some etymological explanations would make any differences between their comprehension and retention scores and those of the control group.

3.3.1 The test for experimental group

The task for this group contained an exercise on the origin of the idioms.

- **Matching exercise-idioms and their origins**

In this task, the participants were asked to match the idioms to their origins. The 15 idioms were presented on the left and their origins were presented on the right. The origins were not in the correct order, so the students had to match them to the appropriate idioms. In order to avoid pure guesswork, some explanations contained several hints. After the subjects had finished the task, they were given the answer key to check their answers. However, they were not allowed to change what they had already written.

- **Multiple-choice task-idioms and their definitions**

In this exercise, the participants were asked to choose the correct definition for each of the 15 idioms from the four choices offered. As in the case of the matching task, they were provided with the answer key.

- **Gap-fill task--idioms in context**

In the last exercise which was held one week after the exercises mentioned above, the students were given fifteen meaningful sentences containing fifteen idioms and were requested to complete the idioms using suitable keywords. This task was designed in order to assess the subjects' retention of idioms in the long run.

Sentences were supposed to be clear enough but they were not the definitions of the idioms.

3.3.2 The test for control group

- **Multiple-choice exercise**

First, the subjects were given the multiple-choice task. They were asked to choose the correct definition for each idiom.

- **The gap-fill task**

After one week the subjects were given the gap-fill task which was the same as the gap-fill test in the experimental group.

3.4 Statistical procedures

After collecting the data (i.e. the points which the participants in both groups had obtained through the exercises), an independent samples t-test was conducted in order to indicate whether the etymological elaboration had an effect on learners' comprehension of idioms. Likewise, another independent samples t-test was used to show the effect of the proposed strategy on learners' retention of idioms. The mean and the standard deviation of each group for both variables-comprehension and retention- were also calculated.

4. Results and discussion

4.1 Mean scores

The mean scores and the standard deviations for each group (experimental group and control group) are presented in the following tables. The first table represents the scores on the comprehension task and the second one indicates the mean scores on the retention exercise.

Table 4.1 the mean and standard deviation for comprehension task

Group	Mean score	Standard deviation
Experimental	9.8400	2.70308
Control	6.9600	2.18861
Total	8.4000	2.83563

Table 4.2 the mean and standard deviation for retention task

Group	Mean score	Standard deviation
Experimental	10.7200	3.00721
Control	6.4800	3.99082
Total	8.6000	4.10077

4.2 The t-test

In order to analyze data obtained from the comprehension and retention tests, the SPSS package was used. Because the study contained one independent variable (i.e. etymological elaboration) and two dependent variables (i.e. comprehension and retention) and for each dependent variable there was a distinct test and since two groups of control and experimental were used (the

experimental group received the treatment but the control one didn't) it was assumed that an independent-samples t-test would be appropriate to show the effect of etymological elaboration on learner's comprehension and retention of idioms. Therefore, the independent-samples t-test was run two times (once for comprehension test and the other time for retention test).The results of these two t-tests have been shown in figures 4.1 to 4.4.

Figure 4.1 group statistics for comprehension task

	code	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
score	experimental	25	9.8400	2.70308	.54062
	control	25	6.9600	2.18861	.43772

Figure 4.2 Independent samples t-test for comprehension task

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	1.027	.316	4.140	48	.000	2.88000	.69561	1.48139	4.27861
Equal variances not assumed			4.140	46.009	.000	2.88000	.69561	1.47983	4.28017

Figure 4.3 group statistics for retention task

	code	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
score	experimental	25	10.7200	3.00721	.60144
	control	25	6.4800	3.99082	.79816

Figure 4.4 Independent samples t-test for retention task

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	2.014	.162	4.243	48	.000	4.24000	.99940	2.23057	6.24943
Equal variances not assumed			4.243	44.610	.000	4.24000	.99940	2.22662	6.25338

The effect of etymological elaboration on the learner's comprehension and retention of idioms can be shown by resorting to both mean scores of the experimental group and the control group. The first hypothesis of the study is that providing the learners with the original, literal usage of the idioms may help them understand their idiomatic meaning better. To see whether this hypothesis is retained or rejected we must look at the mean scores obtained from the comprehension task (or identify the meaning task). We see that the participants' mean score in the experimental group is 9.84 (SD = 2.7) while the mean score of control group is 6.96 (SD = 2.1). This shows that those participants who were provided with the etymological explanation of the idioms were more successful in the comprehension of idioms than those who didn't receive the etymological explanations. So, it can be concluded that the etymological elaboration can help learners to figure out the figurative meaning of idioms. By resorting to the results of the independent samples t-test we can see that our conclusion is retained and the beneficial effect of etymological elaboration is again confirmed ($p = 0.00 < 0.05$).

The second hypothesis is whether providing the learners with some etymological explanations can help them remember the idioms for a long time. To retain or reject this hypothesis we have to resort to the mean scores obtained from the retention task (or the gap-filling task). The mean score of the experimental group is 10.72 (SD = 3.00) while the control group's mean score is 6.48 (SD = 3.99). As in the case of comprehension task, we see that the mean score of the

participants provided with the etymological explanation is higher than that of the participants only provided with the context which reveals the positive effect of the etymological elaboration on retention of idioms. The results of the independent samples t-test again prove that EE has had an effect on retention ($p = 0.00 < 0.05$).

5. Conclusion

The data of the study are encouraging regarding the effect of etymological explanation on the comprehension of idioms. Therefore, we can conclude that providing the learners with the origins of idioms can effectively help them understand their idiomatic meaning in an interesting and insightful way. Based on this conclusion, we suggest teachers of English use this technique in the classroom context and encourage students to use the etymological explanation plus the context to better understand the idioms' idiomatic meanings (especially those idioms whose etymology is transparent).

The second conclusion that can be drawn from the results of this study is that the learners of English can enhance their retention of idioms if they are informed about the literal usage and the etymology of them. This suggests that in classroom contexts, English teachers can provide their students with the etymology of idioms before asking them to memorize these idiomatic expressions in a rote-learning fashion.

5.1 Pedagogical Implications

This study gains the significance of providing teachers of English language as well as those interested in learning idiomatic expressions with a new and interesting way of studying idioms. So, the teachers who like to teach idioms as a part of their lesson plan can enhance their students' understanding by asking them to think about the idioms' origins before trying to understand their meaning. Also, the etymological elaboration can facilitate the recall of idioms in the long run as it calls up a mental image of a concrete scene which can be stored alongside the verbal form of the idiom in memory.

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Appendix: The idioms used in the exercises and their origins

A rule of thumb	Based on the use of one's thumb as a rough measurement tool
Under the gun	This phrase refers to laboring under the threat of a gun, either you finish or you get shot
To roll with the punches	The phrase is a tactic in boxing where the objective is to avoid receiving a direct hit
To tie the knot	Some marriage ceremonies tie together the wrists of the bride and the groom
In the pink	In fox hunting, hunters wore red jackets called pink that were a symbol of being ready for hunting
A dicey situation	The phrase refers to the risk and uncertainty of betting games played by dice
To blow smoke	Magicians often use smoke in their performance to obscure your your view and conceal a bit of trickery
A sitting duck	A bird on the ground is far easier to shoot than a flying bird
Lock, stock and barrel	This phrase refers to three primary components of a firearm
A red-letter day	Calendars typically have holidays marked in red
No holds barred	A phrase used in wrestling where there are no restrictions on holds
Dressed to the nines	In old times a tailor used nine yards of fabrics to make high quality suits
To be wet behind the ears	The phrase refers to a time shortly after birth before being completely dry
Take the bull by the horns	Refers to the danger and difficulty of taking a bull's horns
The lord willing and the creek doesn't rise	This appears to be a simple prayer for heavenly support and a lack of floods

Title

Language Attitudes of Iranian Junior High School Students towards the English Language and Its Use in Iranian Context

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Abstract

In the 20th and 21st centuries English has become an indispensable part of educational curriculum in Iranian schools. Despite all the efforts and investments devoted to cultivate and popularize English among Iranian language learners, the resultant outcome could not live up to the authorities' expectations. A great body of research has proved that learners' attitude towards foreign language learning and success in learning a foreign language are highly related. This study is to investigate Iranian junior high school students' overall attitude towards learning English as a foreign language. As well as, the possible difference that exists between boys' and girls' attitude towards learning English as a foreign language. The findings indicate that Iranian junior high school students generally have a positive view of using and learning English. It was also observed that there is no significant difference between female and male learners' attitudes, although that

of the girls was slightly more positive.

Keywords: Language attitude, Gender, Iranian EFL learners.

1. Introduction

Currently English has dominated the context of foreign language learning and teaching in Iran. Teaching English starts at the age of 11, first grade in junior high schools and it continues up to university levels. In spite of studying English for a long period of time in schools (almost 7 years), the outcome is not satisfactory and students are not able to communicate in English in the real context. As a result, the authorities and researchers have tried to investigate the reasons why, despite all the money, time, and efforts spent, Iranian students are not as successful in learning English as they are expected. There is a general consensus that there are a number of interrelated factors playing important roles in students' success in learning English, namely: text-books, teachers, learning environment, and learners. Learners' attitude towards English as a foreign language is among the factors which contribute to their success.

1.1. Language Attitude

Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics (Richards et al., 2010) defines language attitude as:

> "the attitudes which speakers of different languages or language varieties have towards each other's languages or to their own language. Expressions of positive or negative feelings towards a language may reflect impressions of linguistic difficulty or simplicity, ease or difficulty of learning, degree of importance, elegance, social status, etc. Attitudes towards a language may also show what people feel about the speakers of that language. Language attitudes may have an effect on second language or foreign language learning. The measurement of language attitudes provides information which is useful in language teaching, and language planning." (p. 314)

According to Gardner (1985) attitudes are components of motivation in language learning. He believes that, "motivation ... refers to the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favorable attitudes toward learning the language" (p.10). Furthermore, he holds that the motivation to learn a foreign language is determined by

basic predispositions and personality characteristics such as the learner's attitudes towards foreign people in general, and the target group and language in particular, motives for learning, and generalized attitudes.

Buschenhofen (1998) in his study assessed the attitudes towards English language existing among year 12 and final-year university students in Papua New Guinea. The results of the study indicated: (1) a generally positive attitude by both groups towards English and (2) some significant attitudinal differences in relation to specific English language contexts.

Yang et al. (2003) in their study discussed the attitudes students in Hong Kong hold towards English before and after their tertiary studies. The findings suggested that students were generally comfortable with the language environments and courses offered in secondary and tertiary settings; they agreed that learning English is important in the post-1997 era.

Ngidi (2007) in her study examined the attitudes of learners, educators, and parents on the use of English as a language of learning and teaching and an additional language in selected schools to the north of Kwazulu Natal (Mthunzini Circuit) in South Africa. The findings revealed that learners have a positive attitude towards the use of English as a language of learning and teaching and an additional language in schools. The findings also indicated that educators have a negative attitude towards English as a language of learning and teaching and as an additional language in schools. The findings further showed that parents had a positive attitude towards the use of English as a language of learning and teaching and an additional language in schools.

Al-Tamimi et al. (2009) conducted research on Petroleum Engineering students' motivation and attitudes towards learning the English language regarding 1) the use of English in the Yemeni social context, 2) the use of English in the Yemeni educational context, 3) the English language and 4) the culture of the English speaking world.

Their findings showed the students' positive orientation toward the English language. The results indicated that a high number of the students showed their interest in the culture of the English speaking world as represented by English-language films.

Chalak et al. (2010) in their study investigated the various socio-psychological orientations of Iranian undergraduates towards learning English. It focused on the motivation orientations of the students and their attitudes towards the target language and its community.

The results revealed that these Iranian Nonnative speakers of English learn the language for both 'instrumental' and 'integrative' reasons and their attitudes towards the target language community

and its members were generally found to be highly positive.

As it surveyed above, most of the works done on this area has tapped the effect of attitude on university students. In addition to that, little research has been conducted on the attitude of Iranian school students.

This study intends to investigate:

1. Do Iranian junior high school students have a positive overall attitude towards learning English as a foreign language?
2. Does any difference exist between boys' and girls' attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language in Iranian junior high schools?

2. Method

2.1. Participants

The sample includes 116 third grade junior high school students of two Iranian public schools in Tehran. 60 of them are female students and 56 of them are male students. In order to make the subjects comparable, it was tried to select both schools from among middle-class districts of the city.

2.2. Instrumentation

An attitude questionnaire of twenty items adapted from Pennington and Yue (1994), who had obtained theirs from Pierson et al. (1980), was administered. It attempted to measure the students' ethnolinguistic attitudes by asking them to rate twenty statements about language and ethnicity on a Likert scale of three alternatives (1 = agree, 2 = uncertain, 3 = disagree). The questionnaire was modified from the original, firstly to correspond to the Iranian context and, secondly, to correspond either to junior high school education setting.

To ensure the reliability and validity of the questionnaire a pilot study was run among ten selected students. After answering the questionnaire, the students were interviewed and asked about their ideas regarding the questionnaire items. Based on the interview the items were classified into six separate categories. These categories are included in table 1 regarding the following points:

Table 1 *Categories of classified questionnaire items*

Educational and social status of English	It is a good thing to have English as the frequently used foreign language in Iran (1). My social science and mathematics textbooks should be written in Iranian (2). English should be a medium of instruction in the schools in Iran (3).
Social and Instrumental value of English	English is the mark of an educated person (4) If I use English, I will be praised and approved of by my family, relatives and friends (5). If I use English, my status is raised (6). The spread of the use of English is one of the most crucial factors in Iran's development today (7).
The use of English with detract from cultural identity	When using English, I do not feel that I am Iranian any more (8). At times I fear that by using English I will become like a foreigner (9). If I use English, it means that I am not patriotic (10).
Orientation toward English	I am forced to learn English by the people around me (11). I like reading English magazines, books, etc (12). I love talking with foreigners in English (14). I wish that I could speak fluent and accurate English (15). I feel uneasy and lack confidence when speaking English (16). I would take English even if it were not a compulsory subject at school (17).
The intrinsic value of the English language and English based culture	I like to see English speaking films (18). The command of English is very helpful in understanding foreigners and their cultures (19).
Discomfort about Iranian people speaking English	I feel uncomfortable when hearing one Iranian speaking to another in English (20). I feel uneasy when hearing an Iranian speaking English (13).

The questionnaire was presented to students in Persian since the language of presentation may affect the students' responses. In this case, the effect would probably be to elicit slightly less favorable attitudes to English because the possibility of misunderstanding the questionnaire in English is thought to be reduced by allowing students to answer the questionnaire in their mother tongue.

3. Results and Discussion

After collecting the distributed questionnaires, the data were tabulated and illustrated in the following tables. Table 2 contains the frequencies, percentages, and means of Male students' responses to the items of the questionnaire.

Table 2 *Male students' attitudes towards the use of English in Iran*

Questions	F Agree	P Agree	F Uncertain	P Uncertain	F Disagree	P Disagree	Mean
1	42	75.00	10	17.86	4	7.14	2.68
2	4	7.14	14	25.00	38	67.86	1.39
3	10	17.86	12	21.43	34	60.71	1.57
4	38	67.86	10	17.86	8	14.29	2.54
5	40	71.43	14	25.00	2	3.57	2.68
6	34	60.71	14	25.00	8	14.29	2.46
7	40	71.43	12	21.43	4	7.14	1.36
8	0	0.00	12	21.43	44	78.57	1.21
9	14	25.00	20	35.71	22	39.29	1.86
10	10	17.86	20	17.86	36	64.29	1.36
11	20	35.71	4	7.14	32	57.14	1.79
12	42	75.00	4	7.14	10	17.86	1.36
13	18	32.14	2	3.57	36	64.29	1.68
14	44	78.57	6	10.71	6	10.71	2.68
15	42	75.00	8	14.29	6	10.71	1.36
16	18	32.14	20	35.71	18	32.14	2.00
17	34	60.71	12	21.43	10	17.86	2.43
18	34	60.71	12	21.43	10	17.86	2.43
19	36	64.29	18	32.14	2	3.57	2.61
20	10	17.86	16	28.57	30	53.57	1.36

Table 3 contains the frequencies, percentages, and means of Female students' responses to the items of the questionnaire.

Table 3 *Female students' attitudes towards the use of English in Iran*

Questions	F Agree	P Agree	F Uncertain	P Uncertain	F Disagree	P disagree	Mean
1	54	90.00	4	6.67	2	3.33	2.87
2	12	20.00	18	30.00	30	50.00	1.70
3	10	16.67	22	36.67	28	46.67	1.70
4	54	90.00	6	10.00	0	0.00	2.90
5	58	96.67	2	3.33	0	0.00	2.97
6	50	83.33	10	16.67	0	0.00	2.83
7	50	83.33	6	10.00	4	6.67	1.23
8	16	26.67	16	26.67	28	46.67	1.80
9	26	43.33	18	30.00	16	26.67	1.23
10	4	6.67	10	16.67	46	76.67	1.30
11	20	33.33	10	16.67	30	50.00	1.83
12	44	73.33	10	16.67	6	10.00	1.23
13	6	10.00	6	10.00	48	80.00	1.30
14	58	96.67	2	3.33	0	0.00	2.97
15	60	100.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	1.23
16	6	10.00	12	20.00	42	70.00	1.40
17	56	93.33	4	6.67	0	0.00	2.93
18	54	90.00	0	0.00	6	10.00	2.80
19	50	83.33	10	16.67	0	0.00	2.83
20	8	13.33	12	20.00	40	66.67	1.23

For the ease of interpretation, the 20 items were categorized into 6 separate categories: Educational and social status of English, Social and Instrumental value of English, The use of English with detract from cultural identity, Orientation toward English, The intrinsic value of the

English language and English based culture, and Discomfort about Iranian people speaking English.

Table 4 *Attitudes towards the use of English in Iran and distribution of rates according to gender*

Attitude toward the use of English			**Gender**	
		Mean	**F**	**M**
Educational and social status of English	It is a good thing to have English as the frequently used foreign language in Iran (1).	2.78	2.87	2.68
	My social science and mathematics textbooks should be written in Iranian (2).	1.55	1.70	1.39
	English should be a medium of instruction in the schools in Iran (3).	1.64	1.70	1.57
Social and Instrumental value of English	English is the mark of an educated person (4)	2.72	2.90	2.54
	If I use English, I will be praised and approved of by my family, relatives and friends (5).	2.83	2.97	2.68
	If I use English, my status is raised (6).	2.65	2.83	2.46
	The spread of the use of English is one of the most crucial factors in Iran's development today (7).	1.30	1.23	1.36
The use of English with detract from cultural identity	When using English, I do not feel that I am Iranian any more (8).	1.51	1.80	1.21
	At times I fear that by using English I will become like a foreigner (9).	1.55	1.23	1.86
	If I use English, it means that I am not patriotic (10).	1.33	1.30	1.36
Orientation toward English	I am forced to learn English by the people around me (11).	1.81	1.83	1.79
	I like reading English magazines, books, etc (12).	1.30	1.23	1.36
	I love talking with foreigners in English (14).	2.83	2.97	2.68
	I wish that I could speak fluent and accurate English	1.30	1.23	1.36
		1.70	1.40	2.00

	(15). I feel uneasy and lack confidence when speaking English (16). I would take English even if it were not a compulsory subject at school (17).	2.68	2.93	2.43
The intrinsic value of the English language and English based culture	I like to see English speaking films (18). The command of English is very helpful in understanding foreigners and their cultures (19).	2.62 2.72	2.80 2.83	2.43 2.61
Discomfort about Iranian people speaking English	I feel uncomfortable when hearing one Iranian speaking to another in English (20). I feel uneasy when hearing an Iranian speaking English (13).	1.30 1.49	1.23 1.30	1.36 1.68

As the table indicates, in the case of Educational and social status of English, almost two third of the participants showed a positive attitude. It was also observed that female students have a higher positive attitude than their male counterparts.

Regarding the social and instrumental value of English, most of the students considered using English as a highly prestigious and valuable asset. It can be induced that girls have a better attitude towards this aspect of using English.

In the next item, the use of English and detraction from cultural identity, nearly half of the students think that speaking in English goes against their national and cultural identity. Female students harbored a less positive attitude and thought that it can be anti-patriotic to speak in English.

Nearly two third of the students stated that they have started learning English of their own volition and have an intrinsic motivation towards it. The results show that there is no significant difference between females' and males' rates.

A high percentage of the students recognized knowing English as a valuable tool to

understand English based culture. In this category, females demonstrated a slightly more positive attitude.

And finally, it can be understood from the above table that around one third of the students felt uncomfortable hearing Iranians speaking English. In this item girls showed less negative attitude towards hearing Iranians speaking English than boys.

The results show that the students have mildly positive attitudes. According to the findings, junior high school students' overall attitude towards the English language and the use of English in Iran is positive. They also welcome English as the frequently used foreign language in Iran, appreciate the social and instrumental value of English, and tend to take English even if it were not compulsory at school. Surprisingly, a high percentage of Iranian students start learning English of their own will and have intrinsic motivation for learning English.

The overall rates of male and female students are not significantly different. However, female participants demonstrated a slightly more positive attitude towards using and learning English. According to the results, Male students are more self-confident while speaking in English in public, but females feel more uncomfortable and self-conscious when they speak English. Moreover, generally speaking, female students believe that using and learning English raises their social status and they consider English as a prestigious language, whereas the male students have this belief to a lower account. Another difference that exists between males' and females' attitudes is that female students, while speaking English, feel that they are not Iranian anymore or they feel that they are in an English speaking country. On the other hand, male students did not have such extreme attitude towards speaking English.

4. Conclusion

The present study indicates that the positive language attitudes let learners have positive orientation towards learning English.

Another important result of this study is that although the students have positive attitudes towards the English language, they do not have positive attitudes towards an Iranian speaking English to another Iranian. Here the role of the teacher can be said to be an important factor to establish the cool environment to encourage students to practice speaking English with other Iranian students.

As observed and mentioned throughout the research, Iranian junior high school students

have relatively highly positive attitudes towards learning and using English. It can be construed that mere positive attitudes towards a language will not definitely guarantee one's success in learning a language. Therefore, some other factors such as teacher, learning environment, and textbooks should be taken into account to enhance students' learning.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire of attitude towards the English language and its use:

	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree
1. It is a good thing to have English as the frequently used foreign language in Iran.			
2. My social science and mathematics textbooks should be written in Iran.			
3. English should be a medium of instruction in the schools in Iran.			
4. English is the mark of an educated person.			
5. If I use English, I will be praised and approved of by my family, relatives and friends.			
6. If I use English, my status is raised.			
7. The spread of the use of English is one of the most crucial factors in Iran's development today.			
8. When using English, I do not feel that I am Iranian any more.			
9. When I use English, I feel as if I were in a foreign country.			
10. If I use English, it means that I am not patriotic.			
11. I am forced to learn English by the people around me.			
12. I like reading English magazines, books, etc.			
13. I feel uneasy when hearing an Iranian speaking English.			
14. I love talking with foreigners in English.			
15. I wish that I could speak fluent and accurate English.			
16. I feel uneasy and lack confidence when speaking English.			
17. I would take English even if it were not a compulsory subject at school.			
18. I like to see English speaking films.			
19. The command of English is very helpful in understanding foreigners and their cultures.			
20. I feel uncomfortable when hearing one Iranian speaking to another in English.			

Title

Interactional Metadiscourse in English and Persian Research Articles; A Contrastive Rhetoric Study

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Abstract

Metadiscourse refers to those linguistic devices which not only organize a text but also signal the writer's attitude towards the text and readers. In this study, English and Persian Linguistic and Sociological research articles (RAs) were compared for the use of interactional metadiscourse using Hyland's (2004) model of metadiscourse. The corpus included 40 research articles, 20 in Persian and 20 in English. The frequency of the interactional resources in the introduction and discussion sections of RAs was obtained. The Chi Square test of significance showed that RAs were not different in the use of engagement markers but English RAs contained significantly more hedges, boosters, attitude markers and self mentions. It is concluded that interactional resources play an important part in research article writing and their use is related to the writing cultures and norms. The difference in the use of interactional metadiscourseshows the differences of writing culture of Persian and English writers.

Keywords: Metadiscourse, Interactional Resources, Hedges, Boosters, Engagement Markers, Attitude Markers, Self Mentions.

1. Introduction

Academic writing is a major concern of most recent researchers and this study deals with one of the major subcategories of academic writing, i.e., research article (RA) which is a powerful genre representing "the key product of knowledge manufacturing industry" (Swales 1990:125). RAs provide a suitable area for the study and analysis of academic texts. It is indispensable for an RA writer to be familiar with the basic writing rules of scientific texts and consistently follow them. In their academic writing, writers refer to others, organize their texts, use the visual elements like diagrams, figures and tables, show their own attitudes towards the issue being discussed, state commitment or non-commitment towards propositional contents of the text, establish stance towards their propositions and finally, establish a kind of dialogue with readers. To do so, the writer employs a number of rhetoric devices called metadiscourse.

According to Hyland (2004)

> "Metadiscourse is self-reflective linguistic expressions referring to the evolving text, to the writer and to the imagined readers of that text. It is based on a view of writing as a social engagement and, in academic contexts, reveals the ways writers project themselves into their discourse to signal their attitudes and commitments"(P. 138).

In this study, metadiscourseis defined and studied with an interactive perspective of the term because RA is seen as a social phenomenon by which readers and writers as community members try to interact and communicate meaning.

Hyland (2005: 3) believes that 'metadiscourse embodies the idea that communication is more than just the exchange of information, goods or services, but also involves the personalities, attitudes and assumptions of those who are communicating', and hence 'the writer is not simply presenting information about the suggested route, by just listing changes of direction, but taking the trouble to see the walk from the reader's perspective.' Metadiscourse is considered as 'the cover term for the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assisting the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community' (ibid: 46).

Hyland (2004) and Hyland and Tse (2004) consider metadiscourse as an interpersonal means in the hands of writers to express their propositions in a coherent and convincing manner and to establish interaction with their readers. They believe that writers try to anticipate and respond to the readers' potential negation by the aid of, borrowing Thompson's (2001) terms*, interactive* and *interactional* resources.

The model illustrated in table 1. is composed of two categories of metadicursive elements: interactional and interactive resources. Some examples are also provided.

The present paper deals with interactional resources. Interactional resources put readers in the dialogue by showing the author's perspective towards both propositional information and readers themselves. Through these linguistic devices the author bridges his relationships with the reader "to direct readers in how to take the author – that is, how to understand the author´s perspective or stance toward the content or structure of the primary discourse and the readers" (Crismore, A. & Farnsworth, R., 1990: 121). Metadiscourse here is basically evaluative and engaging, influencing the degree of certainty, the expression of attitudes, judgment and commitment on the part of the writer and the degree of reader involvement. These resources relate to the tenor of discourse, which controls the level of personality in a text. These resources are as follows:

Hedges show the writer's reluctance to full commitment to propositional content. These devices determine the writer's doubt about propositions in the text and soften the author's statements or limit his/her personal commitment towards the conveyed content. According to Lackoff(1972), they are "devices whose jobs are to make things fuzzier or less fuzzy." According to Prince, Frader and Bosk (1982), these devices show that "the writer is less than fully committed, or committed in some marked way" (P. 85).

Table 1

Hyland's classification of metadiscourse (extracted from Hyland (2004))

Category	Function	Examples
Interactive resources	Help to guide reader through the text	
Transitions	Express semantic relation between main clauses	In addition/but/thus/and
Endophoric markers	Refer to discourse acts, sequences and text stages	Finally/to conclude/my purpose is to
Frame markers	Refer to information in other parts of the text	Noted above/see fig./in section 2
Evidentials	Refer to source of information from other texts	According to X/Y,1990/Z states that
Code glosses	Help reader grasp the meaning of ideational material	Namely/ e.g./such as/ in other words
Interactional resources	Involve the audience in the Argument	
Hedges	Withhold writer's full commitment to proposition	Might/perhaps/possible/about
Boosters	Emphasize force or writer's certainty in proposition	In fact/ definitely/ It is clear that
Attitude markers	Express writer's attitude toward proposition	Unfortunately/ to agree/surprisingly
Engagement markers	Explicitly refer to or build relationship with reader	Consider/note that/you can see that
Self-mentions	Explicit it reference to author(s)	I /we/my/our

Some examples of hedges found in the corpus in English research articles (ERAs) are: *assume, at least, attribute to, may, particularly, and relatively*; and in Persian research articles (PRAs) are:

فرض کردن	نسبتا	تقریبا	امکان پذیر	احتمالا
[færzkærdæn]	[nesbætæn]	[tæghriban]	[emkanpæzir]	[ehtemalæn]
Suppose	rather	almost	possible	probably

Boosters, opposed to hedges, reveal the writer's certainty or full commitment to propositions. By means of these devices, writers emphasize the force of the propositions.

Some examples of boosters found in the corpus in ERAs are:*apparent, essential, exactly, in fact, obvious, of course, and reveal*; and in PRAs are:

عقیده دارد	دقیقا	شاهد (محکم)	بی تردید	اطمینان
[æghidedaræd]	[dæghighæn]	[shahedemohkæm]	[bitærdid]	[etminan]
believe	exactly	convincing evidence	doubtless	certainty

Attitude markers express the writer's evaluation of prepositional information, conveying surprise, agreement, obligation, and so on. Some examples of attitude markers found in the corpus in ERAs are:*notably, heavily, important, overwhelming, and remarkably*; and in PRAs are:

فاجعه آمیز	چشمگیر	بارز	ارزنده	سودمند
[fajeeamiz]	[cheshmgir]	[barez]	[ærzænde]	[soodmænd]
catastrophic	salient	manifest	worthwhile	useful

Engagement markers address readers straightforwardly, either by focusing their attention or by including them in the text with grammatical devices like second person pronouns, imperatives and question forms. Some examples of engagement markers found in the corpus in ERAsare:Consider, Note that, See, ...?, us, and we (inclusive); and in PRAs are:

در نظر بگیر(یم)	ما	مشاهده کنید	توجه کنید
[dærnæzærbegirim]	[ma]	[moshahedekonid]	[tævæjjohkonid]
Let's suppose	We (inclusive)	Look at	Pay attention

Self-mentions show the degree of writer presence in terms of first person pronouns and possessives. Some examples of self-mentions we found in the corpus in ERAs are: I, my, ourselves, to my knowledge, we (researchers); and in PRAs are:

پژوهشگر	ما	نگارنده	(فعل)+ یم
[pæjooheshgær]	[ma]	[negaræende]	[fel + im]
The researcher	We (researchers)	The writer	Verb + connected first person pluralpronoun

2. Review of the Related Literature

Metadiscoursehas been studied from different standpoints and perspectives. Studies have suggested the importance of metadiscourse for establishing positive politeness and address friendly attitude in school texts (Crismore, 1984). It has been shown to be a useful means of greater guidance and orientation for the reader in science popularizations (Crismore and Farnsworth, 1990), postgraduate theses (Swales, 1990), International Quality Control Documents (Warren, 2001) and company annual reports (Hyland, 1998 a). In academic writing, metadiscourse has been seen as an important pragmatic resource for influencing readers' responses to claims in RAs (Cheng and Steffensen, 1996; Hyland, 1998b; Intraprawat and Steffensen, 1995; Mauranen, 1993; Moreno, 1997) and in Darwin's origin of Species (Crismore and Farnsworth, 1989). Contrastive analyses of various languages/cultures have divulged a number of important differences in writing.

Contrastive rhetoric analyses comparing English language writing conventions with those of other languages e.g. German (Clyne, 1991), Finish (Mauranen, 1993), Czech (Cmerjkova and Dones, 1997), Swedish and German (Baclund, 1998), Bulgarian (Vassileva, 2001) have indicated that cultural communities differ considerably in the use of various metadiscursivedevices. According to Peterlin (2005) although the essential characteristics of academic genres and research articles are universal, cross cultural studies like those mentioned above have shown various differences in rhetorical strategies among national cultures. The results of the above mentioned studies show that metadiscourseis often used more frequently and more systematically in English language texts written by native speakers of English than in texts in other languages.

Peterlin (2005) found that Slovene academic writing used a restricted amount of metadiscourse than English academic writing. According to Mauranen (1993a), Finnish and Anglo-American practices show different views of politeness and of readers' expectations.

The use of metadiscourse in English and Arabic linguistics research articles was studied by Abbas (2011) which showed that researchers using two languages in the study behaved significantly differently in the use of interactional metadiscourse. Arab researchers used significantly more interactional resources in their texts. In his corpus, hedges were the most frequent interactional metadiscourse. His interpretation was that in linguistics as a soft discipline the mitigated view points and the established facts are combined to attain maximum effect.

Boosters were the second most frequent metadiscourse markers in Arabic. In his corpus, hedges, boosters, attitude markers and engagement markers were more frequent in Arabic. Self mentions were more frequent in ERAs.

Marandi (2003) compared the introduction and discussion sections of 30 master's theses written by British and EFL graduates in English, Iranian Persian native speakers in Persian. She found that the use of hedges was significantly more in theses written by native speakers of English. Regarding the use of emphatics they showed no significant difference and attributers were used significantly more by Persian theses written by Persian native speakers. The difference of the use of persona markers in her corpus was significant, too.

Abdollahzadeh (2003) studied the use of hedges, boosters and attitude markers in the introduction section of Iranian ELT scholars and Anglo-American academic writers. He found that Anglo- American writers used significantly more boosters and attitude markers than non-native writers. The difference in the use of hedges was not significant but Iranian academics used more hedges.

Abdi (2009) showed that English and Persian RA writing norms of Persian language in the use of metadiscursive devices were different from English norms. He found that Persian and English writers' use of interactional metadiscourse was 'strikingly' different. In his study, English writers used interactional metadiscourse two times more than Iranian Persian writers. He felt that this is due to the limited readership of the research articles including the professional disciplinary community of Persian speakers in which the writers make no attempt to fine tune the rhetorical structure of their texts.

In Abdi's (2009) only the use of engagement markers was not significant but the use of hedges, boosters, attitude markers and self mentions were significantly different. Citing from Hyland (2002), he thought that Persian writers followed the positivists' advice to keep their prose impersonal.

This study is to reveal how Iranian PRA writers exploit interactional metadiscourse in comparison with English native speakers' ERA writers and to show how frequent these resources are in PRAs.

3. Method

In this study, the frequency of interactional resources was investigated using Hyland's (2004) classification in RAs written by Iranian writers in Persian and English writers in English published in academic journals.

The frequency of occurrence of interactive resources was investigated in 40 RAs, 20 in Persian and 20 in English, written by native speakers of the two languages, selected from two disciplines of Sociology and Linguistics, 20 in Linguistics and 20 in Sociology, to determine whether the differences in the use of these devices were significant or not. The articles were selected from two soft disciplines which are close to each other regarding their rhetorical conventions. The RAs were selected from Iranian and internationalEnglish journals. (See Appendix A.)The period of publication of RAs ranged from 2000 to 2004. The RA writers of both languages are all academics. They were native speakers of English and Persian.

The number of words was counted in these 40 RAs using Microsoft Word 2003. The number of words of each group of the articles was the same; every group of 10 articles has 43700 words. This was done to analyze the frequency of the interactional resources in a fair way. The most important part of the data gathering began by the identification of interactional resources used in the texts being studied. To do this, all the RAs were read carefully, then according to Hyland's (2004) definition and classification of metadiscursive devices, the articles were searched for interactional devices, the words which had those devices were marked and put in their proper categoriesregarding their meaning, function and context which embedded them. For a list of English and Persian interactional resources see Appendix B. The frequencies of these devices were counted in all of the RAs manually for two times with a two week interval to obtain the reliability of the analysis. The results were correlated with one another. The resulting correlation ($r = 0.80$) was an estimate of an intra-rater reliability of the judgments being made by the researchers. Finally, the data were analyzed statistically by means of Minitab Software to test the hypotheses.

Table 2

The Frequency of Interactional Resources in PRAs and ERAs

Interactional resources	Persian		English	
	Total No.	%	Total No.	%
Hedges	590	33.33	1673	36.48
Boosters	565	31.92	1480	32.27
Attitude Markers	436	24.63	710	15.48
Engagement Markers	128	7.24	289	6.3
Self-mentions	51	2.88	434	9.47
Total	1770	100	4586	100

Table 2 shows the frequency of the interactional resources in two RA groups. As you see, hedges were the most frequent interactional resource in both ERA and PRAs and boosters and attitude markers were respectively the second and third most frequent interactional resources in both PRAs and ERAs.

After hedges, boosters and attitude markers, in ERAs self mentions were more frequent than engagement markers but in PRAs, in contrast, engagement markers were more frequent than self mentions.

4. Results

Chi Square tests were run to test the significance of the differences between the frequency of Persian and English interactional resources. The levels of significance are 0.001 and 0.005.

Table 3 Results of Chi-square Test of Iranian and English Writer's Use of Hedges

$X^2_{Observed}$=24.70>$X^2_{Critical}$=3.84	DF=1	P-Value= 0.00	(P-value=0.00<0.01)

Table 3 shows that English writers employed hedges significantly much greater than Iranian writers of RAs.

Table 4 *Results of Chi-square Test of Iranian and English Writer's Use of Boosters*

$X^2_{Observed}$ = 19.03 >$X^2_{Critical}$=3.84	DF=1	P-Value= 0.00	(P-value=0.00<0.01)

Table 4 shows that the difference in the use of boosters in PRAs and ERAs was very significant.

Table 5 *Results of Chi-square Test of Iranian and English Writer's Use of Attitude Markers*

$X^2_{Observed}$=43.69>$X^2_{Critical}$=3.84	DF=1	P-Value= 0.00	(P-value=0.00<0.01)

As you see table 5 shows that the difference in the employment of attitude markers in the RAs written by native Persian writers and native English writers were statistically very significant.

Table 6 *Results of Chi-square Test of Iranian and English Writer's Use of Engagement Markers*

$X^2_{Observed}$=0.00<$X^2_{Critical}$=3.84	F=1	P-Value= 0.97	(P-value=0.097>0.05)

Table 6 shows that the difference in the use of evidential in PRAs and ERAs was not statistically significant.

Table 7*Results of Chi-square Test of Iranian and English Writer's Use of Self Mentions*

$X^2_{Observed}$ = 9.25 >$X^2_{Critical}$=3.84	DF=1	P-Value= 0.00	(P-value=0.000<0.01)

Table 7 shows that the difference between PRAs and ERAs in the use of self mentions was very significant.

5. Discussion

Research writing from a social interactionistview of writing moves beyond the topic, content, audience, genre to the broader sociocultural milieu, including the communities in which RA writers are embedded (Bizzell, 1982; Bruffee, 1984).This social view emphasizes the role of socio-cultural contexts in assigning meanings and values to linguistic expressions. It suggests that writers must acquire a sense of what a given discourse community considers as prominent issues, relevant arguments, and appropriate linguistic choices.

Interactional metadiscursive resources play an important part to satisfy the above-mentioned needs of the RA writers to become qualified members of their disciplinary communities considering their texts and their audience awareness .

The importance of the interactional device can be shown by the occurrence of one interactional metadiscourse in every 27.50 words of the corpus. In the present study, the use of interactional

metadiscourse in ERAs was significantly more than PRAs except for engagement markers which were more in ERAs but not significantly more then PRAs. This can be ascribed to some factors like Iranian RA writers' tendency towards positivist epistemological view of science. They try to communicate just the facts of their research endeavors and to be impersonal regarding the commitment towards their propositions. The frequency of the use of hedges and boosters in PRAs can show this point. When it comes to the addition of the feelings, attitudes and personal presence of the RA writers, Iranian writers try to be seen less, their voice was hidden behind their propositions and they tried not to have their own say as much as ERA writers did.

Another reason seems to be about the mentality PRA writers have about the readers of their RAs. As pointed by (Abdi, 2009), their audience is composed of a limited number of disciplinary community members who expect the RA writers to have mostly scientific knowledge presentation in their RAs.

Now we analyze all the interactional metadiscourse one by one in the corpus.

5.1. Hedges

With the help of hedges, English writers were more successful in showing uncertainty about their propositions, saying that their information is as an opinion rather than a fact and conveying deference, modesty or respect. By mitigating their claims writers protect themselves from potentially critical responses from readers. This result was in agreement with the findings of Marandi (2003) and Abdi (2009).

Look at the following sentences in PRAs which used hedges to mitigate propositions (Note that, at the end of each example, PS refers to Persian sociology RAs and PL refers to Persian linguistic RAs.The numbers are given according to Appendix B):

در تحقیق نحوی این فرا یند اشتقاقی , حر کت برون سا ختی پر سشوار ه ممکن است ا جباری (زبان انگلیسی) , اختیاری

(ز بان فا رسی) , و غیر مجاز (زبان ژا پنی) باشد.

[dærtæhghighenæhvi in færayændeeshteghaghi, hærkæte boron sakhtieporseshvaremomkenæstejbari(Englisi), ekhtiari (zæbanefarsi) vægheiremojaz (zæbanejhaponi) bashæd.

(From a syntactic point of view, this derivational process may be obligatory (in English) and optional (in Persian) and ungrammatical (in Japanese)).(PL.9)

به نظر این دو نو یسنده , تغییرات عظیم دو ران بلو غ بسیار تنش زاست و ممکن است بسیاری از اختلالات روانی – اجتماعی را سبب شود .

[be næzære in do nevisændehtæghirateæzimedoranebolooghbesyartæneshzastvæmomkenæstbesyariæzekhtelal alterævani-ejtemairasæbæbshævæd.]

(According to these two writers, the great changes happening in puberty are largely problematic and may cause many of the psychic-social disorders). (PS.4)

Some examples of the use of hedges in ERAs(Note that, at the end of each example, ES and EL refer to English sociology RAs and English linguistics RAs respectively The numbers are given according to Appendix B.) :

This pattern might suggest that IM, although related too ELL, lies on a continuum separate from ELL, a possibility that warrants more research. (EL 3)

However we doubt it is the dominant process in most workplaces. (ES.9)

5.2. Boosters

ERA writers employed more boosters than PRA writers to ensure that readers were left in no doubt of the writer's estimation of the full significance of the research, to promote novelty and value of the research, to emphasize that their study addressed an important problem in a helpful way, to report substantial new findings, to accentuate the reliability of their work, and to convince the readers through the logical force of the argument. The finding of the study is in line with Abdi (2009) and Abdollahzade (2003).

The following are some examples of the use of hedges in PRAs:

وا قعیت این است که مسایل اجتماعی به کندی شکل می گیر ند.

[vagheiyat in æstkemæsaeleejtemai be kondisheklmigiræn d.]

(The reality is that social issues are formed slowly). (PS. 6)

تلفیق این گو نه معانی در این متن ,دقیقا با هدف و نیت تبلیغ کننده مطا بقت و همسویی دارد.

[tælfighe in gone mæanidær in mætn, dæghighænbaneyyætevæhædæfetæblighkonændemotabeghætvæhæmsooidaræd.]

(Putting together these meanings in this text is exactly in line with the intention and goal of the writer). (PL.5)

Some examples of the use of hedges in ERAs:

Thus for monolinguals, the choice between ser and ester should indicate a subtle semantic difference. (EL. 9)

Only a few of the statutes are like these just cited referring to: seared “matters in the strict senses”. (ES.7)

5.3. Attitude markers

The results of the study showed that PRA writers employed far less attitude markers in their RAs probably because they thought that a scientific piece of writing should not include words expressing personal feelings and attitudes. Contrary to PRA writers, ERA writers used these resources effectively to have a reader friendly text, to make their texts work as speech, and to evaluate the reader's response to guide them. The same results were obtained by Abdi (2009), Marandi (2003).

These are the examples of attitude markers in PRAs:

با تو جه به این شرا یط بررسی معیار های همسر گزینی در بین آنها و عوامل مو ثر بر این معیارها قابل تو جه است .

[batævæjjoh be in shærayet, bærræsiye meyarhaye hæmsærgozini dær beyne anha væ ævamele moæsserbær in meyarha ghabele tævæjjoh æst.](Considering these conditions, a study of the criteria for choosing the partner and the factors affecting these criteria are of great importance.)(PS.9)

علم زبان شناسی و بخصوص آرا و افکار فردینان دو سوسو ر د رابتدای قرن بیستم تا ثیر بسزایی بر نظریه ادبی در این قرن داشته است .

[elme zæbanshenasi væbekhosoos ara væ æfkare Ferdinand de Saussure dær ebtedaye ghærne bistom tæsire besæzai bar næzæriyeye ædæbiye in ghærn dashte æst.]

(Linguistics and particularly thoughts and opinions of Ferdinand de Saussure have had an influential effect on literary theory at the beginning of twentieth century.) (PL.7)

These are the examples of attitude markers in ERAs:

Fortunately for the language learner, a lot of figurative language can be "motivated". (EL. 4)

Hopefully, the example developed here will help to convince some readers that the question should be taken seriously. (EL. 9)

5.4. Engagement markers

These devices helped writers to negotiate an asymmetrical relationship of competence, allow them to intervene in the discourse to address readers directly and draw readers into a dialogue.

Both PRA and ERA writers employed these devices which indicated that they tried by means of inclusive and second person pronouns to provide a significant means to negotiate role relationship. They used inclusive "we" to invite readers into the discussion by drawing on the shared general knowledge or the previous discourse to lead the reader through an argument. They used questions to directly engage the readers with the topic, text and the dialogue with the themselves.(See the following sentences.) Theresult was in line with Abdi's (2009) findings regarding the frequency of the use of engagement markers.These are the examples of attitude markers in PRAs:

...ولی وقتی می گو ییم .

[vælivæghtimigooim.]

(But when we say…. (Inclusive) (PL.1)

معنا و مو لفه های شهر وندی چیست ؟ حدود و مرزهای این مفهوم تا کجاست؟

[mænavæmoællefehayeshæhrvændichist? Hodoodvæmærzhaye in mæfhoom ta kojast?]

(what is the definition and factors of citizenship? Where is the domain of meaning?)(Question)(PS.5)

These are some examples from ERAs:

This left us with a text of 801 categorization judgments. (Me and you (readers)) (EL. 5)

Let us touch on at least some of the objections to conceptual jurisprudence. (ES. 7)

Does this matter if disbursements corrupt? (EL 6)(Question)

5.5.Self mentions

In the present study, ERA writers used more self-mention devices than PRA writers. They employed these devices to show authority by speaking as an insider, using the codes and the identity of a community member and relating to their convictions, engagement with the readers, and personal presentation of 'self'.

The linguistic choices writers made not only affect the conceptual or ideational meaning that they convey, but also influence the impression they make on readers.

What follows are some examples of self-mention in our corpus:

برای رد یا اثبات فر ضیه را بطه عامل جنس را با معیار های زیبایی چهره در جد ول زیر مو رد بررسی قرار می دهیم .

[
bærayerædyaesbatefærziyerabeteyeamelejensrabameyarhayezibaiyechehredærjædvælezirmorede Bærresighærarmidæhim.]
(To accept or reject the hypothesis, we study the relationship between sex and beauty in the following table). (PS. 9)

دو سوال کلی برای ما مطرح بود .

[do soalekollibærayemamætræhbood.]
(Two general questions were important for us). (PS.4)

These are some examples of self-mentions in ERAs:

In our view, both suggestions are inaccurate and deleterious to the field (EL .5)
Nevertheless, I note that, on the minimalist understanding of grammar, the issue of reaxiomatizations is ruled out. (EL.8)

6. Conclusion

Interactional devices play an important part in research writing because there is an interactional metadiscourse in every 27.50 words. This shows that RA writers should pay more attention to the use of these powerful rhetoric elements in order to show their attitude not only towards the texts but also to the readers.

While writing, RA writers should conform to the disciplinary conventions of their fields of studies, have solidarity with the readers by the application of interactional metadiscourse, and a balanced commitment towards the propositions by the use of hedges and boosters. Sometimes they need to mitigate their claims to open other interpretation to the minds of the readers and to show respect towards the audience, other times they need to have a performance of an insider who has reliable and convincing knowledge and to show the shared understandings of their disciplinary propositions.

Writing conventions and norms are different in different cultures but when it comes to English as a lingua franca language, the internationally accepted norms should be applied in RA genre. Persian RA writers while writing in English should consider the interactional weight of

their writing performance more seriously in order to have an accepted voice in an international environment.

Iranian academics' writing conventions and reading expectation should move away from positivist impersonalized text performance towards more socialist presentation of knowledge claims and writers' stance and voice.

The results can be applied in English language teaching classes, especially in writing courses for Persian speaking students and students of English as a foreign language, and for those who want to publish an article in an English journal.

Students of English should be familiar with these resources and their use in spoken and written language. A writing course should highlight this issue to familiarize the students with the application of these resources. This will help the students move from the mechanics of writing to the highest level of language i.e. discourse and its process.

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Appendixes

Appendix A *The studied research articles*

Linguistics and Applied Linguistics research articles (EL)

1. Gorden, M. (2001).A Typology of Contour Tone Restriction, *Studies in Language 25*, 423-462.

2. Schmitt, N. & Zimmerman, C. B. (2003). Derivative Word Forms: What Do Learners Know? *TESOL Quarterly*, 36,146-171.

3. Noels,K.A., Pelletier , L. , Clement R. &Vallerand R. J.C (2003).Why Are Language Learning a second Language ? Motivational Orientations and Self Determination Theory. *Language Learning*, *53*, 33-63.

4. Boers., P. (2000). Metaphor Awareness and Vocabulary Retention,*Applied Linguistics* , *21*, 553-572.

5. Campbell, L. S., Harris , A. C. (2002). Syntactic Reconstruction and demythologizing, myths and the prehistory of grammars , *Journal of Linguistics*, *38*, 599-618.

6. Brauthiaux, P. (2002). Hold Your Courses: Language, Education, Language Choice, and Economic Development .*TESOL Quarterly, 36*, 275-296.

7. Flowerdew, L. (2004). An Integration of Corpus- Based and Genre-based approaches to Text Analysis in EAP/ESP: countering criticisms against corpus –based methodologies. *English for specific Purposes*, *24*,321 332.

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6.Costa, R. L. &Mozejko, D. T. (2000) Constructing/Becoming History, *Current Sociology*,*48*, 27-49.

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Linguistics and Applied Linguistics research articles in Persian (PL)

1.احمدی گیوی, حسن (1382), بن مضارع اشتقاقی, مجله دانشکده ادبیات و علو م انسانی مشهد شماره , تابستان 1382 ص145-153

2.اسمعیلی طاهری, احسان (1382) نکاتی درباره ی مقوله ی زمان فعل در عربی و فارسی مجله ی دانشکده ی علوم انسانی سمنان شماره ی چهار ص46-33

3.اقا گل زاده, فردوس و افخمی, علی (1383) زبانشناسی متن و رو یکر دهای ان, مجله ی زبانشناسی سال نو ز دهم, شمار ه ی او ل, بهار و تابستان 1383

4.اهنگر, عباسعلی (1382) تحلیلی صو رتگرا از حر کت پرسشواره در زبا ن فا رسی,مجله دانشکده ی اد بیات و علوم انسانی دانشگاه مشهد(علمی -پزوهشی) شماره ی,141 تابستان 82 ص 155-177

5.جان نژاد, محسن (1379) محدودیت های نحوی, مجله دانشکده ی اد بیات و علوم انسانی دانشگاه شهید چمران اهواز, سال اول, شماره اول, ص 63-75

6.علوی, سید محمد (1383) نقش دانش گرامر و وازگان در تست خواندن و درک مطلب, پژوهش های زبان خا رجی, شماره ی 17, تابستان 1383, ص 114-93

7.علی زاده, علی(1382) توازی یا تکرار پنهان و نقش ان در خلق اثار ادبی ;یک تحلیل نحوی – کلامی, مجله ی دانشکدهی ادبیات و علوم انسانی مشهد (علمی - پزو هشی) شمار ه ی 142 پاییز 1382 ص 209- 193

8.کرد زعفرانلو کامبوزیا, عا لیه (1381) دوره ی جدید, شماره ی 12(9)9فرایند های واجی مشترک در گو یشهای استان کرمان -نشریه ی دانشکده ادبیات و علوم انسانی – دانشگاه شهید با هنر کر مان ص 130-111

9.کساییان,زهرا (1383) تر جمه و اصطلا حات : بر رسی تر جمه ی دانشجو یان قبل و بعد از دروس تر جمه, نشریه ی دانشکده ی ادبیات و علو م انسانی دانشگاه تبریز, سال 47, بهار 1383, شماره ی مسلسل 190 ص 41-23

10.لسانی, حسین (1383)مقایسه ی صفت در زبان ها ی رو سی و فا رسی پزو هش ز بان های خار جی شما ره ی ,17 تا بستان 1383 صص 126-115

Sociology research articles in Persian(PS)

1.آزاد برمکی, تقی, چاوشیان ,حسن(1381)بدن به مثابه ر سانه ی هو یت, مجله جامعه شناسی ایران, دوره ی چهارم, شماره ی چهار,,1381, ص 75-57

2.زارع شاه آبادی, اکبر, زارع شاه آبادی, علیر ضا (1381) بر رسی عوا مل مو ثر بر معیا ر های همسر گزینی در بین دانشجو یان یزد, فصلنامه جمعیت شماره ی 40و39 74,- 56

3.زنجانی, حبیب الله (1380), تحول جمعیتی و پیا مد ها ی مسئله آفرینی آن نامه ی انجمن جامعه شناسی ایران شماره5 سال 1380

4.سخاوت, جعفر (1382) برر سی عوا مل مو ثر بر نا هنجا ری ها ی دا نش آمو زا ن استا ن لر ستا ن, مجله جا معه شنا سی ایران ,شما ره ی 3, 1381, ص 76-55
5. شیا نی, ملیحه (1381) تحلیلی جا معه شنا ختی از وضعیت شهر وندی در استا ن لر ستا ن , مجله جا معه شنا سی ایران ,شما ره 3 ,1381 ص 80-60
6.طا لبان, محمد رضا (1382) افول دیندا ری و معنو یت در ایران : تو هم یا وا قعیت (تا ملی در یا فته ها ی پژو هشی), حو زه و دا نشگاه, سال نهم, شما ره 35, تا بستان 1382, ص 51-15
7.غفوری, محمود, مقصودی, سوده (1381) مقا یسه ی نقش ها و پایگا ههای ا جتما عی زن و مر د در کتا بهای دا ستا نی کو د کان در سال های 78-69
8. فرو تن ,یعقوب (1380) بر رسی جامعه شناختی تحو لات سالخو ر دگی جمعیت ایران ,مجله ی علو م انسا نی دا نشگاه سیستان و بلو چستان, ویز ه نامه ی تا ریخ و علو م اجتما عی, شهریور ماه 80, ص252-239
9.فیو ضات, ابراهیم (1381) نگرش جوا نان به حر فه و صنعت, مجله جامعه شناسی ایران , دوره ی چها رم, شمار ه ی 1, ص 77-65
10.لهسائی زاده ,عبد العلی (1380)عوا مل مو ثر بر نگر ش مر دان نسبت به زنان در جامعه :مطالعه مو ردی شهر شیراز, مجله ی جا معه شناسی دا نشگاه شیراز ,دو ره ی شا نز دهم ,شماره ی دوم, بهار (1380) پیا پي 32, ص 129-99

Appendix B

Index of Interactive Resources found in ERAs

Hedges	***Boosters***	Only	Noticeable
		Precisely	Overwhelming
Almost	Actually	Quite	Precisely
Appear	Affirmed	Realized	Prefer
Assume	Always	Really as a result	Prevalent
At least	Any	Relatively	Promising/ly
Attribute to	Apparent	Result	Proper
Can	Apparently	Reveal	Properly
Could	At all	Show	Prophetically
Essentially	Believe	Solely. reveal	Readily
Feasible	Best of	Substantively	Readily
Generally	Certain	Surprising	easily
If	Claim	To the	Reasonable
largely	Claims	To the extent that	Remarkably
Implicational	Clear	Unclear	Safely
In particular	Clear	Undoubtedly	Serious
In practice	Completely		Severely
Interpretation	Conceivable	***Attitude Markers***	Significance
Likely	Conclude		Significant
Little	Conclusive	Accusatively	Significantly
Mainly	Confirms	Actual	Sticking
May, might	Document(v)	As is well-known	Straightforward
Merely	Entirely	Considerably	Strictly
on the absence of	Essential	Convincingly	Striking
Particularly	in essence	Crucial	Striving
Plausible	Every	Crucially	Strongly
Possible	Evidence	Directly	Subtitle
Possibly	Exactly	Disappointing	Successful
Rarely	Exactly	Essentially	Sufficiently
Rarity	Explicit	Even	Suggestive
Reasonably	Find/finding	Excellent	Surprising
Relatively	Fully/determine	Extremely	Ultimately
Relatively	Heavily	Fortunately	Unfairly
Roughly	In deed	Fruitful	Unhelpfully
Seem	In fact	Fundamental	Usually
Should	In fact	Greatly	
Some	Indeed	Heavily	
Subsequently	Insufficient	Ideally	***Engagement Markers***
Substantially	Just	Ill-suited	
Suggest	Must	Imply	Consider
Superficially	Must	Important	Imperatives
Theoretically	My knowledge	Important/	Note that
Typically	Necessarily	importance	Ours
Uncertainty	No evidence	Intensely	Questions
Unlikely	No/plain	Interesting	Real
Usually	Obvious	It is hoped that	See
Would	Of course	It is worth	Us
Particularly	Often	Limited	We
perhaps		Misleadingly	
Possibility		Mistakenly	
Suggest		Necessary	***Self Mention***
		Nice	
		notably	I
			My
			ourselves
			To my knowledge
			We

Index of Interactive Resources found in PRAs

قانع کننده ***Boosters*** ***Hedges***

احتمال
احتمالا
اساسا
امکان
امکان پذیر
انتظار می رود
بتدریج
بطور ضمنی
بطور کلی کلی ترین
بعضا
به تد ریج
به طور بالقوه
به طور نسبی نسبتا
به علاوه
به ندرت
به نظر رسیدن
به ویژه
پیش بینی کر دن
تدریجا
تقریبا
تیره نا روشن
چه بسا
حداقل حداقلی
حدودا
خواه نا خواه
خواه+ شناسه+
در کل
در نظر گرفتن
شاید
صرفا
ضمنی
ظاهرا
ظاهرا علی الظاهر
عملا
غالبا غالب
فرض کردن
گاه
گاهی
لزوما
مختصر
مخصوصا
معمولا
ممکن است
منطقا
مورد شک و تردید
می توان
نا کامی
ناچیز
نسبت دادن

(می توان) اد عا کرد
اساسا
اشکار بوضوح شفاف کاملا
به کلی
اطمینان
اعتقاد
با اطمینان
باور
باور اصلی
باید
بایستی
بایستی
البته
بدیهی است
بطور کامل
بطور مشخص
به راستی
به طور جامع
به طور قطع
به فراوانی
به هیچ وجه هیچگا(هیچ)
بی تردید
پر واضح است
تایید
تنها
جامع تر
حتی
حتی
حقیقتا
دایما
در حقیقت
در نتیجه
در واقع
در واقع
درست
دقیق تر
دقیقا
شاهد (محکم)
صریحا به طور صریح
طبعا طبیعی
غقیده دارد
غیر ممکن
فقط
قابل اعتنا
قطعی
کافی
کاملا
متقاعد کننده
محو ری
مشخص (شدن)
مطمینا
معتقد است
ممکن است
منحصر بفرد
منحصرا
موید
نتیجه نتایج
نشان دهنده
نشان می دهد

همه تمام
همواره
همیشه
واقعا
واقعیت

Attitude Markers

قابل) مورد توجه
اتفاقا
ارزنده
ان شاء الله
بارز
بحث بر انگیز
بحرانی
بد نیست
بر جسته
به راحتی
به روشنی روشنتر
بهتر
بهتر
بی اهمیت تر
پذیر
پیچیده دشوار
مورد تاکید
تعیین کننده
توجیه پذیر
جالب
جذابیت عام
چشمگیر
خوب تر
در حقیقت
در حقیقت
الزاما
ساده(ترین)
سهم بسزا
سودمند
شایان توجه
شایان ذکر است
باستثنای
مناسب
صریح
ضرورت
ضروری
واقع بینانه تر
ضعیف
عمدتا عمده ترین عمده
غیر ضابطه مند
قابل اجتناب
قابل اعتنا
قابل توجه ذکر اهمیت
قابل فهم
قابل ملاحظه(تامل)
(قابل) مورد تو

قوی
کم رنگ تر
لازم الرعایه شرط لازم
لازمه مستلزم
متاسفا نه
مطرح(مهم)
معنی دار
ممتاز
مناسب
مهم(مهمی)
مهمترین
مهمترین
نادر
نادر استثنای
بی اهمیت تر
جدی
تعجب بر انگیز
فاجعه آمیز
بی اهمیت تر
جدی
تعجب بر انگیز
فاجعه امیز

Engagement Markers

جملات امری
توجه کنید دقت کنید مشاهده کنید
(جمله سوالی؟)
در نظر بگیر(یم)
ما (حضور مخاطب در بیان مفهوم)

Self-mention

(فعل)+ یم
نگارنده
ما
پزوهشگر (محقق)

Title

Audiovisual Mass Media News and Language Learning In EFL Context

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Abstract

Today, technology has dominated the world by extensive improvements in audiovisual mass media such as TV and radio. Accordingly, TV is not just an entertainment tool anymore. It can be used as pedagogically valuable source of authentic language input for language learning. In the same line, the present study aims at investigating the effect of exposure to audiovisual mass media news on improving EFL learners' speaking proficiency. To achieve this purpose, a

speaking proficiency test was administered to two hundred language learners and ultimately sixty intermediate language learners were selected and randomly divided into group one and group two. During the experiment, group one participants had exposure to TV and radio news to work on in-and out-side the classroom. On the contrary, the participants in group two had only exposure to a sample selected utterances extracted from different kinds of TV and radio programs rather than news. At the end of the experiment, both groups took another sample speaking proficiency test to find out whether any significant improvement was achieved regarding their speaking proficiency. Accordingly, the results obtained from the post-test indicated that both groups performed differently on the post-test which was indicative of the fact that exposure to TV and radio news compared to non-news programs promotes EFL learners' speaking proficiency more.

Key words: Exposure, Mass media, Audiovisual programs, Speaking proficiency

1. Introduction

In the last two decades, different technologies such as computer, mobile tools, and audiovisual mass media have dominated the world by sharing and showing a variety of programs to both instruct and entertain various audiences. The impressive developments in audiovisual and computer-mediated communications programs offer many possibilities for teachers to construct activities for language learning (Chinnery, 2005; Jingi & Ying, 1999; Parker, 2000; Salaberry, 2001; Bell, 2003; Ishihara & Chi, 2004; Bedjou, 2006; Mcconatha, Praul & Lynch, 2008). In this regard, TV and radio as two old technologies which allow everyone to have easy access to authentic language input via different programs such as news, films, songs, and documentaries have been the focus of many studies (Brinton & Gaskill, 1978; Poon, 1992; Baker, 1996; Berber, 1997; Bell, 2003; among others). However, among the different TV and radio programs, news has received greater attention among the researchers.

Linguistically speaking, there are a number of particular characteristics observed in developing any news from TV and radio as a dominant audiovisual mass media which make it

different from other genres. In this regard, one of the characteristics of TV news which make it pedagogically valuable to be utilized in English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL) classrooms is vocabulary recycling (Blatchford, 1973; Brinton & Gaskill, 1978). The recycling feature of vocabulary in TV and radio news genre is also considered as redundancy of input which is generally understood to facilitate second language comprehension (Chaudron, 1983; Chiang & Dunkel, 1992). In the same line of argumentation, news writers and very experienced news reporters or newscasters are aware of the role of the news genre in the public attitude. As a result, they make their attempts to present the news stories, discussions, and commentaries as precisely and directly as possible to draw individuals' attention. To reach the goal, news agendas also use specific vocabulary items and structure in order to make the news more understandable with a large group of the public. In other words, ambiguous structures which may hinder comprehension are almost avoided in developing and presenting news items. The lexico-syntactic feature of this genre is what makes TV and radio news a valuable source of vocabulary input for EFL/ESL learners. As the news consistently includes the same words and utterances, a good pedagogical benefit implicitly exists in TV and radio news programs (Blatchford, 1973).

Another essential characteristic of TV and radio news genre is the fluency of speech which is the use of appropriate pausing, rhythm, intonation, stress, rate of speaking, and the use of interjections and interruptions (Bell, 2003). Consequently, fluency of speech is a dominant linguistic feature which can be observed in utterances designed and developed to be read by newscasters. One more important feature of TV and radio news is the special discourse which is used throughout the issue. In this relation, essential factors such as the nature of the news, the cognitive, affective and social status of both the news items and the audience, the structure of the news, etc. should be of focus.

In view of the above, one of the most essential ways of improving EFL learners' speaking proficiency may be through having greater amount of exposure to fluent native speakers or even fluent nonnative ones. In the same line, from among all the TV and radio programs, the TV and radio news has shown to be very effective in teaching different aspects of language. However, TV news may have a different look for at least two reasons: first, many language learners seem to be interested in different news types depending on their personal dependency and/or

affiliation; second, due to the various discoursal functions of the TV news, the listener may or may not have to focus on either form or the content.

2. Review of the Related Literature

Exposure to mass media news, for example, TV and radio news, the pedagogical value of such materials, and the possibility of using TV and radio news at all levels of EFL/ESL settings in order to enhance different language skills have been the focus of a pool of studies.

In a research conducted by Brinton and Gaskill (1978), the effect of listening to TV and radio news on improving EFL students' listening comprehension was studied. Brinton and Gaskill (1978) argued that using TV and radio news utterances as teaching material has proved effective on improving listening comprehension of EFL learners having difficulty in dealing with comprehending news utterances. A similar study which focused on using TV news to improve listening proficiency was also conducted by Poon (1992). In addition to the above mentioned studies, Baker (1996) also focused on the pedagogical value of TV news in EFL classes and listening comprehension. According to Baker (1996), TV and radio news can help EFL students improve their listening comprehension.

The use of fast speech such as those of TV and radio news in EFL/ESL classrooms has also been studied by some other scholars. In this regard, Cauldwell (1996) conducted a study aiming at discovering the relationship between direct encounters with fast speech such as TV and radio news and teaching listening to EFL students. Accordingly, students may have some problems coping with fast speech at first. However, EFL students can diminish these problems and improve their listening through great amount of exposure to fast speech. Another anecdotal study conducted by Mackenzie (1997) also highlighted the possibility of using TV and radio news reports at all levels of EFL learning. The study rejected the assumption that because the reporters speak too fast, the content is too complex, and the vocabulary is too difficult, TV and radio news cannot be used at lowest levels of EFL situations.

Regarding proficiency and comprehension of television and radio news in a foreign language, a research by Berber (1997) highlighted the point that through enough exposure to these materials, students can easily cope with the comprehension of such materials. Cabaj and Nicolic (2000) also noted that a great amount of exposure to TV and radio news could help

students to cope with TV and radio news broadcasts easier. Moreover, through exposure to TV news and radio programs students acquire the knowledge, structures, strategies, and vocabularies they can use in everyday situations.

In the same line, a study was conducted by Bell (2003) focusing on the pedagogical value and informative aspects of TV and radio news broadcasts in EFL settings. He considered background knowledge or content schemata, formal schemata, and linguistic difficulty as three broad categories for selecting any kinds of TV and radio news stories for the EFL classrooms. However, Wetzel et al. (1994), in their study, found that TV news is not always helpful in comprehension.

In short, the majority of the aforementioned descriptive and experimental works have focused on the pedagogical value and the effect of exposure to TV and radio news genre on promoting different language skills especially listening comprehension but none of them has specifically focused on the relationship between exposure to mass media news genre and EFL learners' speaking proficiency. This was one of the initial reasons to carry out the present study.

3. Developing Speaking Proficiency in EFL Context

Developing language proficiency in general and speaking proficiency in particular has always been the main concern of language learners in EFL context because of the lack of social interaction in English which is generally understood to lead to the improvement of speaking proficiency (Pica, 1994). However, teachers may help language learners to acquire a satisfying speaking proficiency by exposing them to authentic communicative input or data such as audiovisual mass media programs.

In view of that, the present research was set on the assumption that language learners have difficulty developing a satisfying speaking proficiency in EFL countries mostly because of their few amount of exposure to utterances filled with fluently produced discourses such as those found in audiovisual mass media programs such as TV and radio news. English language learners mostly watch different kinds of movies for their intensive and extensive listening practice. However, since fluency of speech is a key feature of the utterances produced in different TV and radio news, the author of the present paper believes that high amount of

exposure to news from TV and radio may prove effective in promoting EFL learners' speaking proficiency. More particularly, this study is set out to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent does greater exposure to TV and radio news genre improve EFL learners' speaking proficiency?
2. To what extent does greater exposure to TV and radio non-news programs improve EFL learners' speaking proficiency?

4. Methodology

4.1. Participants

The initial participants of this study were two hundred 3rd year EFL learners including both males and females from Islamic Azad University, Abadan Branch, Iran. Out of the initial population, 60 participants were selected. It should be mentioned that the 3rd year EFL learners were selected because all the 3rd year EFL learners in Iran pass all conversation, reading, and grammar courses at the first 2 years. Then, they deal with courses such as oral reproduction of stories, idioms and expressions, and translation of TV and radio materials. Consequently, it was supposed that they could deal with audiovisual news media and non-news media materials easier.

4.2. Instruments and Materials

The first instrument was a set of parallel speaking proficiency tests form IELTS which were used as pre-post tests. The speaking proficiency tests were parallel to increase the internal validity of the findings. Moreover, the reliabilities of both tests were verified prior to the study.

The second instrument was a checklist to score the speaking proficiency tests. In order to score the interviews, a checklist developed by Askari (2006) was used. The validity of the checklist had been also verified by Askari through a pilot study. Regarding the checklist it should be mentioned that it scores each interview (speaking test) out of 30. Moreover, it included six scales including fluency, comprehension, communication, vocabulary, structure, and accent. Each scale incorporates five levels (5 points). It should also be mentioned that, to develop the speaking proficiency assessment checklist based on which the interviews were scored, various sample checklists were reviewed and closely evaluated by Askari (2006).

Regarding the materials that were used, it should be mentioned that 2 kinds of different materials from TV and radio were prepared and used. The first one was a collection of 150 hours

authentic news programs including both video and audio extracted and prepared from various channels such as Press TV which was given to group one to work on in-and out-side the classroom. The second material was a collection of 150 hours authentic programs rather than news prepared from TV and radio for group to work on in-and out-side the classroom.

4.3. Procedure

This research was conducted based on pre-test and post-test design. The first step to take, before the participants were selected, was to verify the reliabilities of the IELTS speaking proficiency pre-tests. To do so, the tests were given to a trial group of 3rd year students including both males and females. Then, the reliabilities of both tests were calculated separately by means of KR-21 formula. Once the reliabilities of the above-mentioned tests were verified, one test was given to two hundred 3rd year EFL students including both males and females. When the scores of the test were obtained, 60 participants who scored one standard deviation above and below the mean were selected as homogeneous language learners. Then, the 60 homogeneous participants were divided into two groups as group one (n=30) and group two (n=30) based on random judgment sampling.

Regarding the speaking test, it should be mentioned again that the scoring was carried out using the speaking proficiency scale developed by Askari (2006). To do so, each interview was scored out of 30 according to the speaking proficiency scale which includes six scales of fluency, comprehension, communication, vocabulary, structure, and accent and each scale incorporated five levels (5 points). More importantly, in order to increase the reliability of the speaking scores, rating activities were carried out first by the researcher himself and then by an inter-rater and later the mean score of speaking pre-post tests for every participant was calculated.

Throughout the experiment which lasted for one year (2 academic semesters and 3 hours a week), the researcher provided group one participants with the news media exposure (from the above-mentioned 150 hour collection) as one kind of genre specific language listening material to work on in-and-outside the classroom with researcher monitoring. In contrast, group two was provided with exposure to non-news programs (from the above-mentioned 150 hour collection) as one kind of general language listening material to work on in-and-outside the classroom with researcher monitoring.

During the experiment and for each interval between every two sessions, the participants in group one were asked to watch and listen to at least 4 hours of the already selected news from the collection from mass media outside the classroom and write down the summary of whatever was heard which will be viewed and discussed later inside the classroom. Moreover, group two participants were also asked to do the same with non-news media programs outside the classroom. In other words, they were also asked to watch and listen to at least 4 hours of the already selected non-news media programs from the collection outside the classroom and write down the summary of whatever was heard which will be viewed and discussed later inside the classroom. As the matter of fact, this was only done to make sure that group one participants had at least the same minimum amount of exposure to news from the mass media and group two participants had at least the same minimum amount of exposure to non-news programs from the mass media outside the classroom.

After one year of exposure of group one to news from mass media and group two to non-news programs from mass media, all the participants took the same sample speaking proficiency test from IELTS as a post-test to find out if there was any improvement in their speaking proficiency. After the participants were interviewed (speaking post-test), the scores of both groups gained from pre-test and post-test were compared by means of t-test analysis to see whether or not any changes happened regarding their speaking proficiency.

5. Results and Discussion

The results of the present study are in line with the studies conducted by Brinton and Gaskill (1978), Cauldwell (1996), and Mackenzie (1997) regarding the effect of exposure to mass media on improving different language skills. Accordingly, the present study proved that greater exposure to audiovisual mass media news can improve the speaking proficiency of EFL learners to a significant extent. The reason behind this might be that the recycling feature of vocabulary used in TV news and the lack of inappropriate pausing, which is fluency of speech, could help the participants in group one to improve their speaking proficiency to a significant extent.

Following is the statistical analysis of group one and group two participants' pre-post tests scores.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics related to group one pretest and posttest results

Groups	*N*	*MEAN*	*SD*	*t-test*
Group one pretest	***30***	***19***	***.50***	***_3.023***
Group one posttest	***30***	***24***	***.46***	

T-observed =-3.023 T-critical=1.671 T-observed bigger than t-critical

Table 2. Descriptive statistics related to group two pretest and posttest results

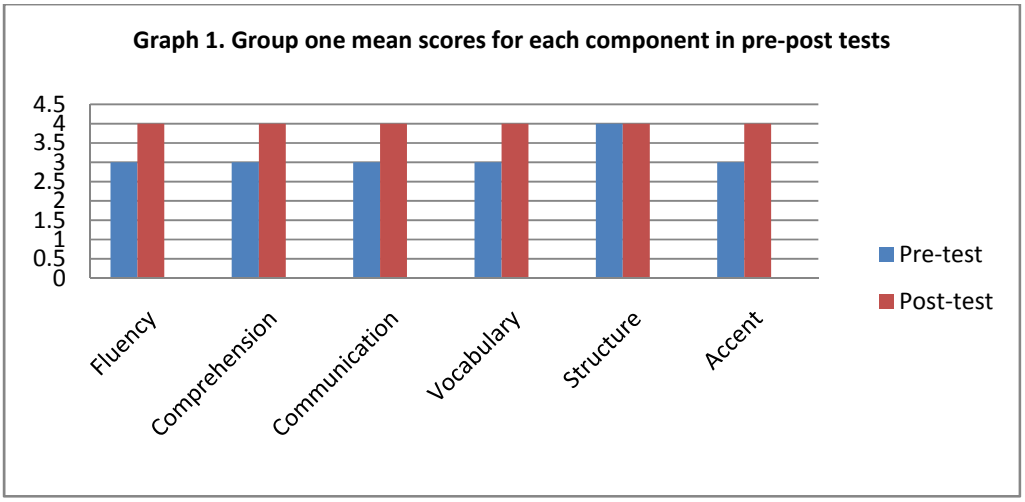
Groups	*N*	*MEAN*	*SD*	*t-test*
Group two pretest	***30***	***18***	***.58***	***_0.202***
Group two posttest	***30***	***20***	***.41***	

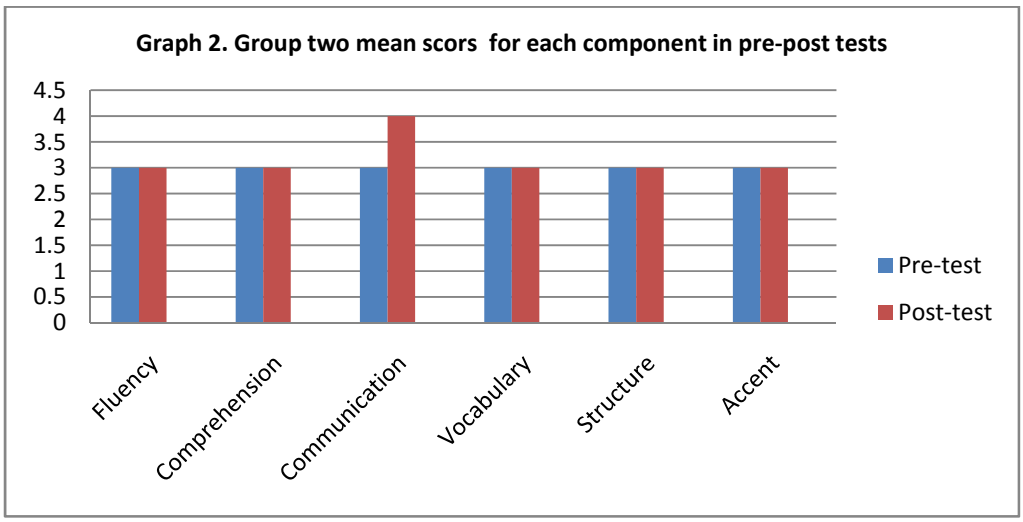
T-observed =-0.202 T-critical=1.671 T-observed smaller than t-critical

According to the data obtained from group one and group two pre-post tests results, the following analysis can be made. Regarding group one performance in the pre-post tests, it should be mentioned that the mean score of the participants in group one in the pre-test was 19 out of 30. This mean score rises to 24 in the post-test which is indicative of the fact that a significant progress was made in their performance. Using the statistical analysis of t-test for group one, it was observed that the t-critical is lower than the observed. This means that the improvement was significant.

In relation to the data obtained from the pre-post tests for group two, the mean score in the pre-test was 18 and in the post-test was 20. This minor progress can be interpreted as improvement. However, in order to see if this positive change in the mean score can be interpreted as a significant improvement or not, a statistical analysis of t-test should be conducted for the scores of group two. Accordingly, the t-test indicated that the t-critical was higher than the t-observed which was indicative of the fact that the change in the mean score was not high significant to lead to a significant improvement.

The data obtained by each group in the pre-post tests regarding each component of speaking proficiency is also presented in the following graphs.





The first graph shows the statistical analysis of the mean scores obtained for each component of speaking proficiency by the participants in group one in the pre-post tests. Accordingly, all the components except structure, which remains steady, make improvement in the post-test. This may be due to the fluency of speech and vocabulary recycling feature of news which lead to improvements in different components of speaking proficiency. On the contrary, in the second graph which shows the statistical analysis of the mean scores obtained for each component of speaking proficiency by the participants in group two, all the components remain steady except communication which makes improvement in the post-test.

6. Conclusion

In the last few years different technological developments in audiovisual mass media has dominated the world by providing a variety of authentic programs to be utilized not only for entertainment but also instruction. In the same line, the developments in audio, video, and computer-mediated communications programs offer many possibilities for teachers to construct activities around watching and listening to audiovisual news programs, watching related videos, and holding conversations in real-time. Accordingly, the aim of this study was to provide empirical evidence of the effect of exposure to various audiovisual news programs on speaking proficiency.

The results of the study were indicated that greater exposure to audiovisual mass media news programs compared to non-news programs has a significant effect on enhancing EFL learners' speaking proficiency. In a nutshell, this study is an important reminder to language researchers and practitioners about the importance of exposing learners to authentic communication input or data such as audiovisual news programs particularly in EFL contexts which lack the social interaction as a source of authentic language input. The study verified previous research about the impact of media exposure by participatory immersion in authentic input in EFL contexts. The research result may inspire teachers to use audiovisual news programs in their conversational classes to teach speaking proficiency. The result of the study also encourages the language learners who intend to improve their speaking proficiency to have greater exposure to TV and radio news.

At the end, it should be mentioned that the present research could be expanded if it had been conducted with other language learners with differentiated proficiency levels. In other words, further studies can be conducted to investigate which language proficiency learners benefit more from exposure to various audiovisual mass media programs.

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Title

The Effect of Explicit Teacher-directed Noticing on Learning Verb + Noun Collocations

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Abstract

The present study investigates the effect of explicit teacher-directed noticing on learning verb+ noun collocations by thirty college students, selected from among sixty five majors in TEFL in Payam Center, Shahrekord, Iran. At the time of the study, they were taking Basic Reading Comprehension Course as a required first-year course. In order to select a homogeneous group sample, a language test was given to all the students. 44 of the students were rated at the intermediate level of proficiency from whom 30 were randomly selected. After the administration of the pretest containing 20 items on Verb+ Noun collocations a pamphlet containing some Verb + Noun collocations was provided by the researcher. Each collocation was given along with one authentic example in context. At the end of each unit, the students were provided with different noticing exercises such as fill in the blanks, matching, cross out the irrelevant word/s, etc. At the end of the course, a parallel test to the pretest was given to the students as the post-test. The subjects' task was to fill in the missing collocations. Factors affecting the results of the test reliability and validity were minimized as far as possible.

The researcher measured the effectiveness with which the completion test was performed in the number of correct responses to the 20 questions in the pre-test and the post-test. In order to accept or reject the first null hypothesis, test scores were analyzed statistically. To verify the hypothesis, the matched t-test was used.

The results of the t-test showed that teacher-directed noticing has a significant role in learning collocations
Keywords: Collocations, Explicit noticing, Teacher-directed noticing

1. Introduction

Vocabulary plays a significant role in learning a second or foreign language and also in attaining communicative skills. Lexical competence is at the heart of communicative competence, the ability to communicate successfully and appropriately. (Coady & Huckin, 1997, cited in Deccarico, 2001).It is accepted that choosing our words carefully in certain situations is more important than choosing grammatical structures (Harmer, 1991).Among many techniques and approaches that emphasized vocabulary teaching, Michael Lewis's Lexical Approach interested language teachers more than any other approaches. It is based on the idea that language consists of meaningful chunks that, when combined, produce continuous coherent text, and only a minority of spoken sentences are entirely novel creations (Lewis, 1998).

In his approach, Lewis focuses heavily on collocations. Collocation is "the readily observable phenomenon whereby certain words co-occur in natural text with greater than random frequency." (Lewis, 1997a).Examples range from two-word combinations such as *fast food* to extended combinations such as *He's recovering from a major operation.*

Learning collocations, however, is not so easy for the learners. The essentially simple idea is that word choice is seriously limited by what comes before and after "is perhaps the single most elusive aspect of the lexical system and the hardest, therefore, for learners to acquire"(Thornbury,2002).Considering the difficulty of learning collocation , it is the teachers' responsibility to pave the way for the students. The most useful role of the teacher, perhaps, is in consciousness- raising in encouraging noticing on the part of the learners. Thornbury (1997) asserts that when there is no noticing, there will be no acquisition. Sometimes the noticing is guided by the teacher i.e. the teacher directs the students' attention to lexical features thought to be useful; sometimes the noticing is 'self-directed', i.e. the students themselves select features they think will be useful for them. Sometimes the noticing is explicit, e.g. when items in a text are highlighted; sometimes it is implicit e.g. when the teacher reformulates a student's text.

2. Review of the Related Literature

In his Lexical Approach, Michael Lewis (1993) challenged the standard view of dividing language teaching into grammar and vocabulary by arguing that language consists of lexical items. He treats them as belonging to five major categories. A relatively small group of lexical items is the words and polywords. They have usually been considered as essential vocabulary for learners to memorize. The other categories include institutionalized utterances and sentence frames and heads. The fifth category is collocations. Collocation is understood as the way in which words typically occur with each other, i.e. combinations of words in natural speech with a certain frequency. Native speakers intuitively 'know' which words frequently combine and which do not. To a native speaker, they just do not sound right. Knowing frequent collocations is essential for accurate, natural English.

Schmitt (2000) makes a significant contribution to a learning theory for the Lexical Approach by adding that 'the mind stores and processes these [lexical] chunks as individual wholes.' The mind is able to store large amounts of information in long term memory but its short term capacity is much more limited, when producing language in speech for example, so it is much more efficient for the brain to recall a chunk of language as if it were one piece of information. 'Figment of his imagination' is, therefore, recalled as one piece of information rather than four separate words.

Nattinger (1980) suggests that teaching should be based on the idea that language production is the piecing together of ready-made units appropriate for a particular situation. Comprehension of such units is dependent on knowing the patterns to predict in different situations. Instruction, therefore, should center on these patterns and the ways they can be pieced together, along with the ways they vary and the situations in which they occur.

Learners need to be aware of the fact that words, in Thornbury's phrase, "hunt in packs." (Thornbury, 1998). That is to say, all words have their own, unique collocational fields. Collocations can be defined in numerous ways (Moon, 1997), but for pedagogical purposes it is more practical to restrict the term to the following: two or three word clusters which occur with a more than chance regularity throughout spoken and written English. Below are the most easily distinguishable types:

Verb + noun	*throw a party / accept responsibility*
Adjective + noun	*square meal / grim determination*

Verb + adjective + noun	*take vigorous exercise / make steady progress*
Adverb + verb	*strongly suggest / barely see*
Adverb + adjective	*utterly amazed / completely useless*
Adverb + adjective + noun	*totally unacceptable behavior*
Adjective + preposition	*guilty of / blamed for / happy about*
Noun + noun	*pay packet / window frame*

Obviously, it is not possible or even desirable, to attempt to 'teach' an unlimited number of lexical chunks. But, it is beneficial for language learners to gain exposure to lexical chunks and to gain experience in analyzing those chunks in order to begin the process of internalization. We believe, like Lewis(1993), that encouraging learners to notice language, specifically lexical chunks and collocations, is central to any methodology connected to a lexical view of language.

Batstone (1996) describes noticing as 'a complex process: it involves the intake both of meaning and form, and it takes time for learners to progress from initial recognition to the point where they can internalize the underlying rule'. At the same time, Lewis (2000) argues that noticing chunks and collocations is a necessary but not sufficient condition for input to become intake. If learners are not directed to notice language in a text there is a danger that they will 'see through the text' and therefore fail to achieve intake.

Ellis (1997) claims acquisition can be hastened as a result of explicit instruction or consciousness-raising." The most useful role of the teacher, therefore, is in consciousness-raising, in encouraging noticing on the part of the learners. In other words, the teacher becomes more of a learning manager, giving students strategies to use outside the classroom while at the same time providing exposure to as much appropriate, quality language as possible.

Hill (2000) asserts that when teaching collocation, teachers need to pay close attention to pronunciation, intonation, stress, and grammar. He lists topics to consider when teaching collocations:

1. Make students aware of collocations. Students need to know that learning collocations is crucial for learning English, and noticing collocations is an important stage in learning.

2. Teaching individual collocations. We should present collocations as we would present individual words. At higher levels, when students learn less common vocabulary items, they need to be made aware that some words are used in a very restricted number of collocations. Students also need to know how to use new vocabulary items, which makes it necessary to know about their collocational field and contexts in which they are used.
3. Storing collocations. Students need to have an organized vocabulary journal to record collocations. They can organize their journals in different ways: grammatically, by common key word, by topic, etc. They can also make use of tables or spider-grams, which work well with visual learners. For example, students can record certain collocations under headings such as *have/take/do* or *make*.

When teaching collocations, we cannot ignore reading and listening skills, which help learners notice collocations. Writing and speaking skills, on the other hand, give them the opportunity to practice collocations.

One can easily resort to teaching collocations in isolation as well. However, this kind of teaching is no better than teaching single words in isolation. Unless students are taught in context-based classes, collocations will not make sense to learners, and meaningful learning will probably not take place.

Deveci (2004) suggests the following activities to raise students' awareness of collocations:

1. Ask learners to underline chunks they can find in a text. It is helpful to give them different kinds of chunks to look for. For lower levels, it is better to restrict students to noun + noun, adjective + noun, or verb + noun collocations because more complex chunks would confuse them.
2. Small extracts from the concordances published by COBUILD can be used to explore the possible environments of a word. However, ready-made concordances would be more suitable for higher levels because they do not include enough contexts for lower level learners to understand the meaning without help. Ready-made concordances may also include too many unknown words for lower-level students. Teachers who want to use concordances with lower levels should write their own, bearing in mind their students' level of grammar and lexis.
3. After they have read a text, learners can be given a set of incomplete phrases taken from the text and asked to complete them by scanning the text again. This can be done at any level. Imagine that your intermediate students have read a text on time management. Some possible incomplete

phrases from the text could be: *[on] time*; *[in] time*; *[on] the dot*; *[at] times*; *[from] time [to] time*. These phrases focus on a preposition + noun collocation.

4. After they have seen certain collocations in a text, learners can be asked to find pairs of collocations arranged randomly. If the students have read a text on traffic, a possible matching activity could be:

1. traffic	a. traffic
2. heavy	b. warden
3. rush	c. trafficking
4. drug	d. jam
5. traffic	e. hour

5. To encourage student autonomy, have students do dictionary work to find certain collocations. Dictionaries of collocations on the market such as the LTP Dictionary of Selected Collocations and The BBI Dictionary of English Word Combinations can be of great help in drawing students' attention to collocations.
6. Give students phrases in their native language and equivalent phrases in English, and ask students to match the phrases. This activity will help students see that collocational ideas are not always formed in the same way in English. More idiomatic collocations could be used with higher-level learners.

3.Methodology

3.1.Participants

Thirty college students, selected from among 65 took part in this study. All of them were native speakers of Persian and were majoring in TEFL in Payam Center, Shahrekord, Iran. At the time of the study, they were taking Basic Reading Comprehension Course as a required first-year course.

In order to select a homogeneous group sample, a language test was given to all the students. 44 of the students were rated at the intermediate level of proficiency from which 30 were randomly selected.

3.2. Teaching Materials

The purpose of the present study was to test the effect of explicit teacher-directed noticing on the learning of Verb + Noun collocations. In order to do so, after the administration of the pretest containing 20 items on Verb+ Noun collocations a pamphlet containing some Verb + Noun

collocations was provided by the researcher. As to the frequency of the collocations, the researcher tried to choose the most frequent collocations using the COBUILD Bank of English Corpus. The researcher also made an attempt to include those collocations presented in their book. For example, the first unit of the pamphlet included common collocations with HAVE such as have a bath, have a haircut, have sympathy, etc. Each collocation was given along with one authentic example in context. At the end of each unit, the students were provided with different noticing exercises such as fill in the blanks, matching, cross out the irrelevant word/s, etc.

3.3.Procedure

The first phase of the study was selecting the subjects. In order to select a homogeneous group sample, a language test was given to 65 students who were native speakers of Persian and were majoring in TEFL in Payam Center, Shahrekord, Iran. At the time of the study, they were taking Basic Reading Comprehension Course as a required first-year course.

44 of the students were rated at the intermediate level of proficiency from whom 30 were randomly selected.

After the administration of the pretest containing 20 items on Verb+ Noun collocations a pamphlet containing some Verb + Noun collocations was provided by the researcher. The pamphlet included 12 units each containing a set of collocations with particular verbs such as HAVE, MAKE, DO, TAKE, SAVE, etc in context of sentences. In order to raise the students' awareness of collocations, for every unit the researcher designed additional exercises such as fill in the blanks, matching, cross out the irrelevant word/s, etc. Then in order to focus more on the collocations, the students were asked to underline the collocations in their books.

At the end of the course, a parallel test to the pretest was given to the students as the post-test. The subjects' task was to fill in the missing collocations. Factors affecting the results of the test reliability and validity were minimizes as far as possible.

The researcher measured the effectiveness with which the completion test was performed in the number of correct responses to the 20 questions in the pre-test and the post-test. In order to accept or reject the first null hypothesis, test scores were analyzed statistically.

4. Results and Discussion

After the procedure described above, the results of the pre- and post-test were tabulated to evaluate the null hypothesis. Since the scores were based on an interval scale and the every subject's score was independent fro other scores, the t-test was used to compare the means of the pre-test and the post-test. It was maintained using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS).

The results of the pre-test and the post-test for 30 subjects are shown in Tables 1 & 2 .

Table 1
The results of the pre-test for 30 subjects

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4.00	1	3.3	3.3	3.3
	7.00	1	3.3	3.3	6.7
	8.00	1	3.3	3.3	10.0
	10.00	1	3.3	3.3	13.3
	11.00	8	26.7	26.7	40.0
	13.00	4	13.3	13.3	53.3
	15.00	2	6.7	6.7	60.0
	16.00	7	23.3	23.3	83.3
	18.00	4	13.3	13.3	96.7
	20.00	1	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Table 2
The results of the posttest for 30 subjects

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	10.00	1	3.3	3.3	3.3
	11.00	2	6.7	6.7	10.0
	12.00	1	3.3	3.3	13.3
	13.00	1	3.3	3.3	16.7
	14.00	2	6.7	6.7	23.3
	15.00	4	13.3	13.3	36.7
	16.00	4	13.3	13.3	50.0
	17.00	4	13.3	13.3	63.3
	18.00	7	23.3	23.3	86.7
	19.00	2	6.7	6.7	93.3
	20.00	2	6.7	6.7	100.0
	Total	30	100.0	100.0	

Regarding the research question, the null hypothesis was formulated: H1.Teacher-directed noticing has no significant effect on learning collocations.

To verify the hypothesis, the matched t-test was used. The results of the t-test showed that teacher-directed noticing has a significant role in learning collocations. Table 3 displays the results of the t-test for the first research hypothesis.

Table 3

The results of the t-test for the research hypothesis

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	pretest	13.4333	30	3.70166	.67583
	posttest	16.0333	30	2.65854	.48538

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 pretest - posttest	-2.60000	2.62087	.47850	-3.57865	-1.62135	-5.434	29	.000

As it is clear from the t-test, we can easily reject the null hypothesis and claim that Teacher-directed noticing has a significant effect on learning collocations. Language teaching, therefore, should focus on collocations, and the way they come together. It also should raise the student's awareness in order to increase the rate of learning collocations by the students.

Over the last few years, vocabulary teaching has been considered to play a significant role in language learning and improving the learners' communication skills. Collocations, as one the most essential areas in language learning have gained more interest from language teachers and learners. Although it is certainly impossible to 'teach' an unlimited number of lexical chunks, it is beneficial for language learners to have exposure to collocations and to develop some effective strategies to internalize the most frequently used ones. As Lewis (1993)maintains, encouraging learners to notice language, especially collocations, is central to any methodology connected to a lexical view of language. One way to help students notice these lexical chunks is Teacher-directed noticing. The results of the present study are in line with what Lewis and other vocabulary specialists mentioned assert. It is implied that language activities related to learning

collocations must be directed toward raising learners' awareness of the lexical nature of language.

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Title

The Effect of using computer-assisted language learning (CALL) on the Reading Comprehension of Narrative Texts for the Iranian University Male Freshmen

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Abstract

This study aimed to explore the effect of computer-assisted Language Learning (CALL) on the reading comprehension of narrative texts of Iranian male freshmen. The study was designed as a true-experimental research-Randomized Control Experimental Group, Pre-test-Post-test Design. The subjects in this study were 60 male freshmen from Islamic Azad University of Khodabandeh who are studying English as their major course. They were freshmen who had been

selected out of many other EFL students through the Standardized Nelson Test. These subjects were divided into two groups, control group and experimental group (each group subsumed 30 male subjects). The leven'stest indicated that the subjects were convincingly homogeneous. The experimental group was taught using computer-assisted instructions in a language laboratory, while subjects in the control group were taught using a traditional method of instructions in traditional classroom setting. The training took 12 sessions and the same instructor taught the groups three hours each session. During the first week, a pre-test was given to both groups. Then, a post-test was given at the end of the instructions. An independent sample t-test appeared to be an appropriate tool for data analysis in this study since there were two groups who were evaluated twice through pre and posttest. The results showed that there were statistically significant differences between two groups that can be attributed to the effect of CALL on the reading comprehension of narrative texts.

Keywords: Computer-assisted Language Learning**,** Narrative Text**,** Traditional Method.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Significant use of CALL began in the 1960s. Since then, the development of CALL software has followed the changes in teaching methodologies (Han, 1996). As teaching method changed to audio- lingual and communicative approaches, CALL software included simulations and more interactive programs. Research has shown that learning strategies employed in CALL can affect the quality of learning the language. However, it still lacks methods and a clear theoretical foundation (Christopher, 1995).

They are so widespread that one feels outdating if not using them. The influence of these over powerful technological tools has pervaded all aspects of the educational, business, and economic sectors of our world (Singhal, 2004). There is no doubt that just as the computer has established itself firmly in the world of business and communication technology, it has also succeeded in acquiring a fundamental role in the educational process. This role is becoming more powerful as computers become cheaper, smaller in size, more adaptable and easier to handle. Computer are

becoming more appealing to teachers because of their huge capabilities and extensive effectiveness (Dhaife, 2004)

Few teachers nowadays, at least in the Western world, rely solely on chalk and blackboard. Over the years, more and more technical inventions have taken their place among the educational aids with which teachers surround themselves, to make their teaching more effective. What distinguishes the computers from other pieces of equipment, such as tape recorders and film projectors, and what forms in fact the basis of its being an educational aid is its interactive capability (Nelson Ward andKaplow, 1976).

The idea of using computers for teaching purposes in subjects like modern languages arouses mixed feeling and meets with a variety of reactions (Kenning & Kenning 1983). The fact that computers are used in the teaching of other subjects and are put to a great many applications in society makes one suspect that no field lays completely outside their scope and that they might indeed be of some use (Davies and Higgins, 1980). To many, the prospect of using computers is not without appeal; it is the kind of challenge which one feels drawn to respond to. At the same time, the technology frightens us; we are afraid that it may come to dominate us and we may be even being afraid of losing our jobs.

The computer gives individual attention to the learner at the console and replies to him. Traditionally, it acts as a tutor assessing the learner's reply, recording it, pointing out mistakes and giving explanations. It guides the learner towards the correct answer, and generally adapts the material to his or her performance (Demaiziere, 1982). The computer thus promotes the acquisition of knowledge, develops the learner's critical faculties, demands active participation and encourages vigilance (hah, 1996). Gonglewiski (2007) maintained that computer mediated instruction can provide a very valuable language learning experience.

There are two questions that this research is going to answer:

- Is there a statistically significant difference concerning the gain scores on the reading comprehension of narrative texts between the learners instructed by the CALL and the learners instructed by the traditional approach?
- What do the language learners in the experimental group think about the CALL as to learn?

2. Methodology

2.1. Subjects

The students in this study were sixty Iranian university male freshmen in Khodabandeh Islamic Azad university (educational year 2011) studying English as a foreign Language, with ages between 20 to 25.They consented to participate in this study and were motivated by being informed in advance that they would receive extra credit for their participation.

2.2. Instrument

To investigate the hypotheses, several instruments were utilized. They were validated through a pilot study before being employed in the project. The instruments applied were:

First, the Standardized Nelson English Language Test including 64 multiple-choice items (version 250B, 1976) along with an answer sheet was used to homogenize the subjects. In other words, the subjects were exposed to the Standardized Nelson English Language Test and those students who acquired more than seventy percent of the scores were selected for the main purpose of the study. The selected subjects were divided into two groups, control group and experimental group. Each group consisted of 30 male subjects.

A structured interview guide (based on a journal for teachers of English by Campion on the Internet) was used to collect data to answers the second research question. The subjects in the experimental group were interviewed one by one regarding their opinions about the CALL. The interview took place in the Islamic Azad University of Khodabandeh without a time limit, but took approximately 7-10 minutes for each subject. The interviews with the learners were tape-recorded and the researcher took notes. The subjects were interviewed in English.

Computer-assisted language learning, as defined for this study, was provided in a language laboratory where learners worked alone on a computer using the provided programs and learnt at their own pace. The instructor did not participate in the learning process, but he made sure that learners were working alone on their computers. On the other hand, traditional instruction was given in the lecture format as information going from the instructor to the learners. Subjects had to follow the instructor's schedule and they could not learn at their own pace. All the materials used in the groups were identical. For classroom practice, *TOEFL* (2002) reading comprehension intermediate levels were used. The learners instructed by CALL used the CD versions of these materials.

2.2. Design

Since real random selection of the subjects was possible, the study followed the True-Experimental Design with the help of pre-test, post-test pattern. The diagram of such a design is as follows (Ary 1996). (See Table 1)

Table 1- Randomized control experimental group, pretest-posttest design

Group	Pre-test	Independent variable	Post-test
A	T1	X	T2
B	T1	-	T2

In this design T1 (A) and T1 (B) are the tests before applying the treatment, and T2 (A) , T2 (B) are the tests after treatment, respectively, where X is the treatment. Based on the design the difference between the mean of the pretest and posttest of the first group scores and the difference between the mean of the pretest and posttest for the next group scores are tested for the statistical significance. At the outset of the study two groups were given a pre-test described in the instrument sections; the test involved 50 items about reading comprehension. To ensure the tests were delivered in an identical fashion, the researcher administered the test for each group, giving the same instruction in each case. The researcher administered the pretest to both groups in the same class and recorded the scores, then both groups received instruction through different media for twelve weeks and three hours each week by the same instructor. During the twelve weeks, for classroom practice, TOEFL (2002) were used. The learners instructed by the CALL also used the CD versions of these materials.

2.3. Procedure

The subjects in the experimental group (30 male subjects) worked alone on a computer and learned at their will (all the subjects in the experimental group knew how to use computer). They studied any section as much as they liked.

The researcher did not participate in the teaching/learning process, but the researcher monitored the class just to make sure that subjects were working with the computer and to help if anything went wrong with the computers.

The subjects in the control group (30 male subjects) met me three hours each session during twelve weeks. The same materials (printed and paper version of the practice tests) were used

according to the schedule set by the researcher. Subjects studied reading comprehension during three hours. On the last day of classes, the researcher administered the post-test. The scores obtained by the pre-test and post-test were statistically analysed.

Moreover, after two days following the post test the subjects in the experimental group were interviewed one by one for their opinion about the CALL. The interview took place in Khodabandeh Islamic Azad University without a time limit, but took approximately 7-10 minutes for each subject. The interviews with the subjects were tape-recorded and the researcher took note.th subjects were interviewed in English.

2.4. Pilot Study

The subjects in this study were 60 male freshmen at B.A level majoring in the language-teaching course in the Department of the Foreign Language Education in Khodabandeh Islamic Azad University in the winter 2010. They were freshmen who had been selected out of many other EFL freshmen through the Standardized Nelson English Language test (version 250, 1976). These subjects were divided into two groups, control group and experimental group (each group subsumed 30 male subjects).

The test questions, which were taken from the book, TOEFL (2002) reading comprehension intermediate level, were piloted before they were given to the subjects in the study. This piloted test was given to college male freshmen who attended KhodabandehPayyam Noor University English Language Centre (ELC). Before giving this piloted test, the researcher went to that University and with the acceptance of the university, the researcher asked 100 male freshmen to participate in the study. To homogenize these students, the Standardized Nelson English Language Test (version 250, 1976) along with an answer sheet was administered to them. The reliability of Nelson Test was 0.92. Then, the researcher corrected the papers and 60 students were selected through simple random sampling method. In other words, those students who acquired more than seventy per cents of the scores were selected and this piloted test was given to them

2.5. Data Analysis

An independent samples t-test appeared to be an appropriate tool for data analysis in this study since there were two groups who were evaluated through pre and post-tests. The interview data were also utilized to shed light on the content analysis.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Results

Research Question 1

The main purposeof the present study was to examine the effect of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) on the reading comprehension of narrative texts for the Iranian university male freshmen. A glance at the reading comprehension mean scores probably showed that the experimental group who were benefited from computer performed better, **t-observed = 7.65, t-critical = 2.00** so **t-observed > t-critical**. The results of the t-test analysis, which mentioned indicate that the researcher has to reject null hypothesis. The experimental group surpassed the control group. This means that the subjects in the experimental group benefited significantly from the instruction in teaching reading with computer and hence this mode of training was significantly more beneficial than the traditional way of teaching reading (Table 2).

Table 2 – Independent samples t-test analysis of gain score difference in the reading narrative texts

	Group	Number of subjects	Mean	Standard Deviation	Variance	t-observed	t-critical	Degree of freedom
Reading difference	Control	30	31.43	9.05	82.01	7.65	2.00	58
	Experimental	30	39.16	6.89	47.54			

P-value≤0.05

Research Question 2

After two days following the post-test the subjects in the experimental group-including 30 male subjects-were interviewed one by one so that they could put forward their opinions about the CALL. The interview took place in the Islamic University of Khodabandeh without a time limit. The subjects were interviewed in English. They were asked, "**Did you feel comfortable**

working with the CALL? Why? / Why not?"on the whole, the subjects (n = 15) said that theydid not feel comfortable working with computers. They claimed that they were not used to having computers as an instructional tool in the learning and teaching process. In addition, they added that although their high school had computers in the laboratory, the administration just covered it to protect it from dust and being broken. They just started to use computers while taking the IT course. On the contrary, the other subjects (n = 15) said that they felt comfortable while working with computer. In addition, two of the subjects mentioned that they were used to having computers in their home or high school. In response to the question, "**Was CALL motivating to you? Why?/Why not?**" 90% of the subjects (n = 27) claimed that they found the CALL motivating. The subjects provided several reasons:

- Studying anything as much as they could.
- Spending more time on the sections they are having difficulty in getting immediate feed back
- Reviewing the material they are studying as much as they liked.

However, three of the subjects (10%) mentioned the necessity of having a teacher in the classroom. They believed that the interaction that the computer provided was artificial and they were sometimes bored with the same feedback style (like "this is wrong, please try again," etc.).

Table 3 – Finding obtained through the interviews with the participants (Experimental group = 30 male subjects)

Questions	frequency		percent	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
1- Feeling comfortable with CALL	15	15	50 %	50%
2- CALL offers more motivation than traditional class	27	3	90 %	10%

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Title

An Investigation into the Emotional Intelligence and the Degree of Success in Foreign Language Achievement in Iranian EFL Context

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Abstract

This study was an investigation to find out the relationship between emotional intelligence and the degree of success in foreign language achievement in Iranian EFL context. To do this, the Emotional Intelligence Inventory (EQ-i) was administered to 453 fourth-grade pupils from secondary senior high school in Babol, northern part of Iran. Data gathered from EQ questionnaire's scores and grade point average (GPA) in English language course from the record of registrars were analyzed. Statistical results illustrated that EQ and GPA were significantly correlated. It also displayed that there existed more strong correlation for some subscales such as self-actualization, self-regard, optimism, happiness, and stress-management. T-test analysis confirmed that participants having higher EQ abilities achieved higher degree of success in English course. With reference to the findings, the results were discussed in integrating emotional intelligence, and its subscales in school curriculum to raise the level of students' success in academic achievement, particularly language learning.

Keyword: Emotional Intelligence, Intelligence, Success in foreign language achievement,

1. Introduction

Looking at the history of learning, especially language learning, everyone acknowledges that learners are different in second language learning. To account for this difference many philosophers were traditionally replete with the idea that since individuals are different in their cognitive ability they vary in how successful they are in learning. In other words, they assumed that those who are high at linguistic and logical-mathematical abilities can reliably better go through the process of learning. The Stoics of Ancient Greece believed that logic was superior to feelings because people could agree as to rational arguments but often disagreed as to feelings (John D. Mayer, Richard D. Roberts & Sigal G. Barsade, 2008). Intelligence was defined and measured in terms of linguistic and logical- mathematical abilities. Aristotle argued that intellect was reliable while emotion was too undependable to be of much use of rational thought (Bar-on/Parker, 2000). The same controversy raised in the area of early psychology. Intelligence – conceptualized as abstract thinking – was considered as a notion devoid of emotion having the ability to predict life and academic success. However this story did not last prominently for a long time, in a rather different approach, Gardner (1983) proposed a controversial theory of Multiple Intelligence, which questioned the horizontal approach to intelligence and blew apart the traditional thoughts about monolithic general intelligence. In his MI theory, he initially described seven *intelligences* including intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences which, in part, paved the way for uncovering other intelligences such as *emotional intelligence,* which is interchangeably known as *EI* or *EQ* (Rouhani, 2008).

Considering above, it should be suggested that IQ was no more the only key to open the doors of success in life; EQ or EI can also be given a role to act in varieties of areas in which life prosperity could be achieved. The role of emotional intelligence has been studied and seemed to be significant in many fields including academic and work performance (Carmli, 2003; Rohana, Kumarauzaman and Zanariah, 2009), education (Fernandez-Berrocal, 2008), management studies (Sajitha, Balasubramanian and Ghatal, 2008), language (David A. Havas, Arthur M.Glenberg and Mike Rick, 2007) and foreign language anxiety (Rouhani, 2008) .

With regard to the emotional intelligence and second language learning, some investigations inspired from Crashion's claim in the monitor model, especially in the part from affective filter, have tried to find out the contribution of EQ to second/foreign language learning (Fahim & Pishghadam, 2007). Pishghadam (2009) also in quantitive analysis demonstrated that there is

small but significant correlation between emotional intelligence and second language success. However some variables such as age, sex and ethnicity were not controlled in his investigation. The goal of this study is to examine the effect of EQ on foreign language achievement in school learning environment from secondary senior high school in Iran (Babol).

2. Backgrounds

2.1 Emotional intelligence

2.1.1 History and Theory of Emotional Intelligence

In ancient Greek, The Stoic philosophy was influential in giving superiority to the logical thought, syllogisms, arguments and inquiry, but this rational- dominated idea was not accepted by all. For example, the movement of sentimentalisms in Europe in18th century claimed that truth might be a property of one's feelings and intuition, and such feelings were truer than reason(Reddy, 2001).On the emergence of Emotional Intelligence (EI), the roots can be traced to Robert Thorndike who wrote about Social intelligence, "the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls – to act wisely in human relations" (Thorndike, R.L, 1920, p: 228) And David Wechsler who stated that non-cognitive aspects of intelligence were important for adaptation. However their claims were not considered seriously until years later when Howard Gardner's multiple intelligence approach in 1983 blew apart the traditional thoughts about monolithic general intelligence. In his MI theory, he initially described seven intelligences including intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences which paved the way for other intelligences such as emotional intelligences.

In 1988, Bar On first coined the term emotional quotient (EQ) as a counterpart to IQ, that is, to cognitive ability. Bar On thought of EQ as representing a set of social and emotional abilities that help individuals cope with the demands of daily life (cited in Pishghadam, 2009).But in a rather different and more restricted in mind, Peter Salovey and John Meyer created term "emotional intelligence" in 1990. In an initial theoretical approach, they introduced emotional intelligence as a group of related mental abilities. They defined EI as "the ability to monitor one's own and other's feeling and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" that involves the ability to perceive, use, understand, and manage emotions" (Salovey& Mayer, 1990, p.189). This approach lasted by the time when journalistic rendering and Daniel Golman's (1995) best-selling book " Emotional

Intelligence" popularized the notion of emotional intelligence. Golman (1995) stated that EQ can be defined and categorized in five domains: (A) knowing one's emotion, (b) managing emotions, (c) motivating oneself, (d) recognizing emotions in others, and (e) handling relationships. He noted that a person with higher emotional intelligence should become happier, more optimistic, motivated and outgoing.

By 1997 and 1999, Mayer and Salovey, together with Caruso, tried to revise and expand their first ability model while keeping its two- part approach form into account. The revised ability model was based on the capacity to reason in four areas or branches: (a) perceive emotions in oneself and others accurately, (b) use emotions to facilitate thinking, (c) understand emotions, emotional language and signals conveyed by emotions, and (d) mange emotions so as to attain specific goals(Mayer and Salovey, 1997).

Theoretically speaking, approaches to emotional intelligence, in terms of their focus on specific skill or general integration of abilities can be divided into three models; The Specific–Ability approaches, Integrative Model Approaches and Mixed-Model Approaches (Mayer, Robert, and Barsade, 2008).The specific–ability approaches concern individual mental capacities important to EI. They assume these individual abilities join intelligence and emotion to enhance thought. The procedures begin with perception of emotion, continue with the use of emotional information in thinking and reasoning about emotion and end with emotion management.

Having considered above mentioned abilities, the integrative-model approaches try to introduce an overall sense of EI by joining them together. For example, Izard's Emotional Knowledge Approach and Mayer & Salovey Four Branch Model of Emotional Intelligence are considered to be in this domain.

The third approaches to EI, mixed-model approaches, target to assess one ability of EI, e.g. emotion perception, and to mix it in other scales of non- EI qualities, e.g. happiness, stress tolerance and self regard (Bar-on 1997). In line with this notion, according to Bar-On EI is an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures (Bar On, 1997, P.14).

Taken altogether, there exist some dissimilarities between mixed and ability approaches. Mayer (2001) believes that mixed model claims a stronger predictive power for success (cited in Rouhani, 2008).He also argues that since mixed model adds so many independent personality

traits into EI, it is disappointing from a theoretical and construct validity standpoint (Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso, 2008).To them, ability model can best measure EI.

However they also believe existing alternative scales still have rooms for substantial improvement and in spite of their differences, both ability and mixed approaches of EQ share a similar intention: to understand how an individual perceives and regulate his or her emotion (Rouhani, 2008).

2.1.2 Significance of EI in ESL/EFL

Concerning the significance of the role of emotional domain in second/ foreign language learning, a number of methodologies (e.g. suggestopedia and community language learning) have attempted to take affective factors such as self esteem, fear, anxiety and some other personality traits into account. For example, Carl Roger's humanistic psychology, in the CLL method, has more of an affective focus than cognitive. He studied the "whole person" as physical and cognitive, but primarily emotional being. In his view, inherent in principles of behavior is the ability of human being to adapt and grow in the direction that enhances their existence (Brown, 2007).

In line with the role of emotional factors in language learning, methodologies were also influenced by Stephen Krashen's Affective filter in which he claimed the best acquisition will occur in environment where anxiety is low and defensiveness absent. Brown (2007) argued that understanding how human beings *feel* and respond and believe and value is an exceedingly important aspect of a theory of second language acquisition (Brown, 2007).

In communicative language classroom, where pair and group work are considered vital, affective and emotional education (perceiving, assessing and managing of behavior) is notably significant. Negative emotions such as anxiety, fear, shyness, nervousness, anger, frustration, doubt, aversion and so on, all of them affect the normal expression. If the learners are affected by the negative emotions too much, even the best teachers, teaching materials, teaching methods are useless. In contrast, positive emotions such as self-esteem, confidence, empathy, motivation, happiness and curiosity etc. help to create conditions which are conducive to the psychological state. Therefore, it is important to give additional consideration to emotional literacy – the ability to express emotion- and to emphasize on creating a conductive environment in which students' EQ could be raised.

On the role of emotional intelligence in second language learning, few studies have been investigated. The studies known, up to now, to the researcher is the work of Fahim and Pishghadam (2007) in which they stated that there was a relationship between EQ/ IQ and verbal intelligences which in turn could account for academic achievement. Rouhani (2008) in a study of the relationships between emotional intelligence and foreign language anxiety revealed that the cognitive – affective reading- based course significantly improved the participants' emotional intelligence scores and also notably decreased their foreign language anxiety. Moafian and Ghanizadeh (2009) in a study of the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers and their self-efficacy have explored that there was a correlation between EQ and self-efficacy of the subjects. In a quantitive analysis, Pishghadam (2009) argued that there is small but significant correlation between emotional intelligence and GPA scores of university students who were in their second year of learning English as their foreign language. As he claimed, the variables of age, gender and ethnicity were not controlled in his study. To take the homogeneity of aforementioned variables into account and to better understand the contribution of EQ to second language learning in high school, this investigation is going to examine the role of emotional intelligence in second language learning of fourth- grade students from secondary senior high school in EFL Iranian Context (Babol).To do so, This present empirical research is looking for to find the answer of the following questions:

1. Is there any relationship between foreign language achievement of pupils and their EQ?
2. Does gender have any effects on emotional intelligence?
3. Do successful EFL pupils benefit from higher level of emotional intelligence?

   To this end, following null hypothesis were addressed.

   H1: It is assumed that there is no relationship between emotional intelligence and foreign language achievement.

   H2: Gender difference is not considered to be significant to account for high or low emotional intelligence.

   H3: High score achieving in EFL is not influenced by emotional intelligence.

3. Method

3.1 Participants and Settings

A community sample of 453 fourth- grade pupils from secondary senior high school in Iran (Babol) participated in this study. All subjects, aged 18, were selected by random cluster sampling method comprising 228females and 225 males.

3.2 Materials and Procedures

The participant form different parts of the city were asked – if they would volunteer-to take part in a study on "An Investigation into the Emotional Intelligence and the Degree of Success in Foreign Language Achievement in Iranian EFL Context."In September (2010), participants completed the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ- I; Bar-On, 1996), which was originally designed in 1980 by Bar-On. It is a self-judgment scale with 133 items which measures five broad areas of skills or competencies and 15 subscales; self-awareness (8 items), assertiveness (7 items), self-regard (9 item), self-actualization (9 items), and independence (7 items), empathy (8 items), interpersonal relationship (11 items), and social responsibility (10 items), problem solving (8 items), reality testing (10 items), and flexibility (8 items) stress management EQ (18 items), which is divided into stress tolerance (9 items) and impulse control (9 items), Happiness (9 items) and optimism (8 items) (Bar-On, 1997, pp. 43–45). To help the participants better understand and to avoid any misconception of content of the questionnaire for lower-level pupils, the participants were provided with Persian version, which was administered in Iran. Dehsiri (2003) stated that this test and its components have reliability and validity in Iranian culture. Dehshiri analyzed the test onto 250 university students in Tehran. He stated that the questionnaire has good internal consistency, test retest reliability, and construct validity. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was found to be 0.76 and the results of the factor analysis provided some support for the inventory hypothesized structure (Dehshiri, 2003).

Participants answer on a 5-point Likert type scale continuum from "Very seldom or Not true of me" to "Very often or True of me."The average time to complete the test is 20–50 minutes. The total reliability of the questionnaire was measured via alpha Cronbach in this study which in turn showed an estimation of 0.80.

The research investigation was administered in both boys and girls schools from different parts of the city (Babol) in August 2010. Since the researcher, as an English teacher in educational department, has been teaching in many schools for 19 years, he has received warm and beneficial cooperation from the staffs of the schools. Therefore there was a possibility for the researcher to attend all classrooms and to give directions whenever it was necessary. Also to

motivate the pupils to answer the questions attentively and carefully, they were promised to be informed of their level of emotional intelligence, if they would like.

3.3 Data Analysis

According to the instructions of EQ questionnaires, the answer sheets were scored, and then the total EQ scores were computed. To further explore the role of the components of EQ in foreign language learning, the correlations of subscales and GPA were analyzed as well. As far as concerned for GPA score, the pupils' scores in English course were obtained from registrar of schools. Since there was no need to transform the raw scores into standard ones, the raw scores were used in this study. Data adopted from administrations was analyzed through inferential and descriptive statistics via Spss software.

To determine the normal distribution of the data, descriptive statistics of EQ and its subscales and GPA of the participants were analyzed (See table 1).

To study the role of EQ in foreign language achievement and to find its relationships with GPA, person product- moment correlation was conducted to data (See table2).

A descriptive gender analysis was employed to show the number, mean standard deviation and standard error of mean for both male and female participants (See table3).

In order to explore the effect of gender on competency of emotionality, an independent sample t-test was conducted on EQ variable in different groups; male and female (See table4).

To investigate whether those who are successful in foreign language learning have a higher level of emotional intelligence, the pupils from both genders were divided into two successful and unsuccessful groups. This classification has pedagogical conception at schools. Academically, successful pupils are defined as those with a grade-point-average for the academic year of above 50%. And on the other hand those who achieve below 50% of grade-point-average are considered to be unsuccessful. Needless to say for the present study these values are obviously significant. Pupils in successful group are allowed to continue the study while the unsuccessful ones have to repeat the course if their GPA remains less than 50%. A descriptive statistics of successful and unsuccessful groups were displayed for all participants. (See Table 5)

To maintain the effect of EQ on high level of GPA in foreign language learning an independent sample t-test was carried out (See table 6).

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of EQ, its subscales and GPA

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Grate Point Average	453	4.00	20.00	13.8643	4.13513
Total Emotional Quotient	453	229	594	410.97	40.465

Table 2: the correlation between of EQ, its subscales and GPA

	Grade Point Average
Total Emotional Intelligence	.332(**)
Problem solving	.308(**)
Happiness	.606(**)
Independence	.544(**)
Stress management	.591(**)
Self actualization	.754(**)
Emotional self-awareness	.533(**)
Reality testing	.572(**)
Interpersonal	.160(**)
Optimism	.609(**)
Self regard	.635(**)
Impulse control	.277(**)
Flexibility	.483(**)
Social responsibility	.306(**)
Empathy	.318(**)
Assertiveness	.428(**)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 3: Descriptive statistics of gender analysis

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Total Emotional Intelligence	Female	228	310.03	31.395	2.079
	Male	225	311.92	29.532	1.969

Table 4: The results of t-test on EQ variable in different groups (male and female)

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Total Emotional Intelligence	Equal variances assumed	.149	.699	-.661	451	.509
	Equal variances not assumed			-.661	449.970	.509

Table 5: Descriptive analysis of successful and unsuccessful groups in GPA

	Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Total Emotional Intelligence	Successful	320	315.22	29.321	1.637
	unsuccessful	131	300.80	30.862	2.696

Table 6: The result of t-test on EQ variable in different groups (successful and unsuccessful)

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Total Emotional Intelligence	Equal variances assumed	.171	.679	4.672	450	.000
	Equal variances not assumed			4.573	230.702	.000

4. Results

As indicated in data analysis section descriptive and inferential statistics of data were displayed in terms of research questions. Table 2 illustrates that EQ and its subsets correlate with GPA scores. It was found that there is a significant correlation between EQ and GPA, (r = 0/332, P< 0/01). The table further showed that some EQ components such as self actualization (r = .754, p< 0/01), self regard(r = .635, p< 0/01), optimism (r = .609, p< 0/01), happiness (r = .606, p< 0/01), stress management (r = .591, p< 0/01) were strongly correlated with GPA scores while reality

testing (r = .572, p< 0/01), independence (r = .544, p< 0/01), and emotional self-awareness(r = .533, p< 0/01) found to be moderately correlated with GPA. The subscales of flexibility(r = .483, p< 0/01), assertiveness(r = .428, p< 0/01), empathy (r = .318, p< 0/01), problem solving (r =.308, p< 0/01), and social responsibility (r = .306, p< 0/01), displayed to have found slightly lower correlation with GPA score. The table also indicates that impulse control (r = .277, p< 0/01), and interpersonal(r = .160, p< 0/01) have the lowest correlation with GPA.

In terms of the second research questions, table 4 investigates significance of gender difference and its effect on the degree of emotional intelligence, Comparing the t score of the table (*t*= -.661) at the level of (p<0.5), with critical values of student's distribution (*t*) (Best and Kahn, 2006, p: 480), since a *t* value of -.661is smaller than t critical(2.576), therefore the second hypothesis which states that gender difference is not considered to be significant to account for high or low emotional intelligence, is supported.

Tables 5 and 6 address the third research question by which the descriptive statistics of successful and unsuccessful group - mean, standard deviation and standard error of mean - in GPA for both groups were illustrated. With regard to the effect of EQ on high score achieving, table 6 demonstrates the result of t-tests in which the *t* score is 4.672.Cosmparing with critical values of student's distribution (*t*) at the level (p<0.5), the result revealed that a *t* value of (4.672) is exceeding t critical (2.576), therefore the hypothesis claiming that high score achieving in EFL is not influenced by emotional intelligence is not found to be supported.

To further investigate and to explore the degree of predictive power of EQ in predicting foreign language achievement, regression analysis was employed to data. The results illustrated that participants' EQ score was positively predicting success in foreign language learning. (See table 7)

Table7: Regression analysis of EQ and GRP score

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-.141	1.884		-.075	.940
Total Emotional Intelligence	.045	.006	.332	7.470	.000

a Dependent Variable: Grade Point Average

As indicated in table 8, the model summery statistics revealed that R value is 0.332 which shows the multiple correlation coefficients between pupils' EFL achievements and their emotional intelligence. The table also indicated R squared value is 0.110. This means that 11 percent of dependent variable, i.e., pupils' foreign language achievement at school can be explained by their emotional intelligence.

Table 8: R squared table for EQ as the predictor of foreign language achievement

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.332(a)	.110	.108	3.90518

a Predictors: (Constant), Total Emotional Intelligence

5. Discussion and conclusion

Regarding the role of emotional intelligence in foreign language achievement, this investigation has a number of important findings. First it confirmed that emotional intelligence was positively, though moderately, correlated with GPA score. This is, in fact, empirically in accordance with the aforementioned findings; the work of Pishghadam (2009), in which he found that emotional intelligence was correlated with success in second language learning and also it is in line with finding of Fahim and Pishghadam (2007) that discovered correlation between general mood and GPA. However it is far easy to overestimate the role of EQ in predicting language learning. As stated in regression analysis, only 11 percent of success can be justified by emotional intelligence. This study further suggested that the components of emotional intelligence had divergent correlation with GPA scores. Certain subfactors such as self-regard, self-actualization, happiness and stress-managment were shown to have strong correlation with GPA. In other words, pupils possessing a higher degree of self-regard, self-actualization, happiness and stress-managment could obtain the higher GPA scores which in turn determined the better foreign language achievement.

Another finding refers to the effect of gender on emotional intelligence which was shown in table (4). To provide the different groups of gender with needed opportunities of treatment, the result of t-tests indicated that the role of gender difference in emotional intelligence and second language learning was strongly dissociated.

Dissociation of gender and EQ variable implies that if it is to administer EQ- related curriculum program for school or an institute, the overall program can be implemented for both genders equally, i.e. if it is to provide the pupils with the EQ training programs and to increase their emotionality along with cognitive skill development, each group of male and female can be given the same treatment based on their needs and personal derive. However this hypothesis must be proposed with careful and moderate attention, because there might be some degree of correlation between some components and gender variable which in turn necessitates curriculum designers and language teachers to consider personality variation for both group.

To justify the significance of self, happiness and stress-management traits in language learning, the possible explanation could be pertained to the role of affective i.e. personality factors, along with cognitive and socio-cultural, domain in second language learning. In addition to management of classroom activities and attending to students' cognitive needs, affective needs are also critically the matter of importance. According to Chastain (1988, P. 167) positive affective support for learning serves to increase achievement. And needless to say that self-esteem, among the personality traits, is the dominant one. According to Brown (2007) language is inextricably interwoven into the fabric of virtually every aspect of human behavior. He further continues that self-esteem is probably the most pervasive aspect of any human behavior. It could easily be claimed that no successful cognitive or affective activity can be carried out without some degree of self-esteem, self-confidence, knowledge of yourself, and self efficacy. Adelaide Heyde (1979) found positive correlation between self-esteem and foreign language learning in which she discovered the highest correlation between task self-esteem and performance on oral production measures. Watkings, Biggs, and Regmi (199), Brodkey and Shore (1976), and Gardner and Lambert (1972) all included measures of self esteem- in their studies of success in language learning (Brown 2007, p. 155).

On the role of the happiness and stress-management factors in EFL/ ESL context, it should be mentioned that they are in fact related to feeling of satisfaction and feeling security in classroom especially in interview program.

The first one signifies individuals' happiness and positive views of life and their feeling of self- satisfaction in learning procedure in rapport and fun atmosphere i.e. those who have the ability to feel satisfied with life and to have fun can better achieve second language success.

The high degree of correlation between stress-management and foreign language achievement emphasizes the role of anxiety in L2 learning. As Elis (1994) states, there are many other variables that will influence language development, particularly second language learning. These include affective factors such as anxiety. Horwitz et al. (1986) suggest foreign language anxiety, which is a phenomenon associated with L2 formal context in learning language skills. They describe it as a "distinct complex phenomenon of self perception, belief, feeling and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of language learning process" (Horwitz et al. 1986, p. 128).Pupils having high capability of stress management are expected to feel relaxed and self satisfied when communicating through L2 stressful context and consequently obtain higher level of language proficiency. Therefore if the language teachers are concerned with helping pupils develop their L2 abilities, they might want not only to improve their emotional intelligence skills but also reduce foreign language anxiety, if possible (Rouhani 2008).

However this study has demonstrated that the relation between emotional intelligence and second language learning is not that significant; this very low level of correlation is not liable to be ignored. In fact learning a second language seems to be difficult, demanding, and full of stress and pressure for learners (Krashen, 1981), especially for adults, because learners have to speak in another language which is not their mother tongue, make lots of mistakes and may face setbacks. Therefore Teachers are expected to establish an atmosphere of friendship, stress-free situations, and low-level anxiety to help students improve emotional intelligence by which they can cope with proclaimed problems. Empowerment and Focusing on affective factors can make pupils able to utilize four areas of emotional intelligence abilities; perceiving emotions, using emotions to facilitate thinking, understanding emotions and emotional language, managing emotions to attain goals, to know their preferences, weakness and strength and establish the needed strategy to make use of those abilities to compensate for their linguistic weaknesses regardless of their natural preferences.

Based on this and other research findings and a current tendency to regard school as organic whole, it can be affirmed that emotional intelligence can be applied in foreign language teaching/learning methodology, especially in construction view and also as a dynamic living whole, school events are filled with tremendous interrelated factors in which pupils and their

cooperative interaction are key important ones to negotiate and to establish communications that they can learn something of their future social behavior.

With regard to the role emotional learning in a school environment, this study urges that it is time to grasp the new vision of education that says educating heart is as important as educating the mind. This stresses that the underlying lessons of the educational paradigm and school curriculum program must closely reinforce emotional empowerment. Since children spend much less time with family members and also their family member are decreasing (one or two parents and one or two children) to its strict minimum, it puts more responsibility on school administrators, specifically teachers to educate and train pupils emotionally, that is, besides concentrating on cognitive skill (reading, writing, and mathematics) they should provide pupils with social emotional program in which it is possible to educate those who are low in emotional competencies to improve their abilities to better recognize their feeling, express them, and regulate them.

As it is claimed that emotional intelligence can be increased, trained and schooled (Elias et al., 1997) and high trait EI is conductive to improved academic and scholastic performance at schools (K.V. Petrides, Norah Frederickson, Adrian Furhum, 2002), it obviously necessitates for second language teacher to contemplate raising emotional intelligence and its components specifically self-regard, self-actualization, happiness, interpersonal and stress management by using strategy in which they can put more emphasis on affective domain. This can be fulfilled by group work, listening to light music, watching emotional clips, self disclosures, designing questionnaires, reading literature and psychological text, and self discovery techniques(Pishghadam, 2009).

For example the use of literature in language teaching can give many contributions to increase students' emotional achievement such as creative thinking, motivation, enjoyment, self discovery while the learners try to read and analyze poems and literary texts**.** Moreover a small group discussion will enhance good social interaction and positive criticism from peers in the classroom and lowers pupils' stress and anxiety dramatically. It gives them a sense of security in which they can express their feeling easily and less inhibition in foreign language environment.

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Title

Personal Observation of Three ESP Classes

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Biodata

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Abstract

ESP came to existence after the Second World War when a great and inevitable need was felt by everyone to have access to an internationally accepted language to satisfy his/her everyday needs. "ESP was not a monolithic universal phenomenon; it has developed in different countries at different speeds" (Hutchinson and Waters, 1993). In Iran, ESP courses with the aim of satisfying the needs of learners are taught at universities for years. But what is noticeable is the inadequate criticism or evaluation of such courses or classes by experts. This paper consists of different parts starting from a brief general report of what was observed in three different ESP classes (from among many ESP classes) held at Sheikhbahaiee University to posing some practical suggestions for solving or at least reducing the existing problems and enhancing the effectiveness of such classes with t he aim of helping both teachers and learners in the process of learning and teaching.

Keywords: Learning a language, English for specific purposes.

1. Introduction

Dudley-Evans in one of her speech in 1997 clearly defines ESP as having the following characteristics:

Absolute Characteristics

1. ESP is defined to meet specific needs of the learners

2. ESP makes use of underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves

3. ESP is centered on the language appropriate to these activities in terms of grammar, lexis, register, study skills, discourse and genre.

Variable Characteristics

1. ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines
2. ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of General English
3. ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, however, be for learners at secondary school level
4. ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students.
5. Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language systems

Strevens (1988) influenced the above definition. It is seen that although he has improved it substantially by removing the absolute characteristic that ESP is "in contrast with 'General English'" (Johns et al., 1991: 298), and has included more variable characteristics. The division of ESP into absolute and variable characteristics, in particular, is very helpful in resolving arguments about what is and is not ESP. From the definition, we can see that ESP can but is not necessarily concerned with a specific discipline, nor does it have to be aimed at a certain age group or ability range. ESP should be seen simple as an 'approach' to teaching, or what Dudley-Evans describes as an 'attitude of mind'. This is a similar conclusion to that made by Hutchinson et al. (1987:19) who state, "ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning".

In Iran, students who are majoring in one of the different fields such as *tourism, computer engineering, computer science, industrial & commercial management, applied math, and IT* usually pass a two-credit basic English (on the basis of their performance in university entrance exam) followed by an obligatory three-credit General English and then a three-credit or more ESP courses. Since the focus of this paper is on the way ESP classes are held in the above-mentioned university, the next part of this paper begins with a general report of what was actually observed.

2. General report

It does not seem necessary here to report in details what was observed in the three ESP classes as far as teacher's roles and characteristics are concerned since detailed information is appended to this paper.

The three observed classes were *ESP for commercial & industrial management, ESP for computer science and ESP for tourism.* Since no particular and worth-mentioning shortcoming was seen in the ESP class held for tourism and almost most aims, if not all, were satisfactorily achieved, the remaining part of this paper will elaborate on the events happening in the other two ESP classes in which some problems were observed.

Although developments in educational psychology have focused on the role that learners themselves can play in the learning process, the observed classes were totally *teacher-centered* and the learner's roles were limited to reading just some few lines or writing the translation of the English texts provided by the teacher down resulting in a very monotonous atmosphere in the class. In fact, *reading and translation* formed two major activities and concerns of the teachers in the classes leaving no room for learners to negotiate meaning.

No one can deny the role of native language (Persian) in such classes for the better comprehension of difficult concepts but not to the extent that the role of English is marginalized or totally ignored. As the name ESP suggests it is *English (not Persian)* that should be the first channel of communication in such classes.

Considering the books, they were really useful and in line with the needs of the learners. In one class besides the book a handout was also suggested in which students were interested. In fact, the suggested books or handouts were not only relevant to their needs but also interesting for them (this part (selection of materials) was in line with the suggestion of educational psychologists who believed in the development of ESP courses in which relevance to the learners' needs and interests was paramount).

As mentioned earlier, these classes were teacher-centered and reading and translation formed two major activities. Unfortunately, when the English texts (either in books or handouts) were read by the teacher, the mere focus was on explaining the topic in Persian leaving no room at all for explaining the language. In fact, there was a kind of deviation from the text. This deviation was overtly observed in the two classes as far as pronunciations and structures were concerned. In terms of vocabulary, it was ignored in one class (ESP for commercial & industrial management) whereas in the other one (ESP for computer science) acceptable attention was paid to it.

3. Observed problems of both teachers and learners

What is going to be considered here as learners' or teachers' problems is on the basis of what was observed in the two above-mentioned ESP classes and any generalization in this regard may be out of place!

3.1. Teachers' problems

Since most of the worth-mentioning issues related to the teachers are appended to this paper in the form of a checklist (see appendices), a few major ones are presented in this section.

As mentioned by different ESP experts, an ESP practitioner is not just a teacher but a collaborator, researcher, material designer and evaluator as well. Maybe one reason for this goes back to the deniable role that ESP practitioners can play in facilitating and paving the ground for learning to take place. In fact, ESP practitioners are given this freedom and chance to help their students satisfy their needs by analyzing the given class profile. The existence of different class profiles and consequently different needs, expectations and reasons for learning has put greater responsibility on the shoulder of ESP practitioners and logically demands more vigilance.

In terms of language abilities, the teachers were not really well-trained. In almost all aspects of four skills this inability was overt. This may be because of their not being language teachers. In fact, it was observed that these content teachers had the minimum amounts of problems as far as the content and specialized vocabulary of the subject was concerned but when it came to the knowledge of language (e.g., morphological features and non-specialized vocabulary) including the art of teaching, the problems and their inabilities surfaced.

The lack of providing a suitable situation for learners to be involved in the learning process was another serious problem. The classes were totally teacher-centered and the students were passive listeners fining no opportunity to ask their questions or be active participants. In fact, it was the teacher who was responsible for this shortcoming because not only elicitation but also encouragement was absent in such classes.

As mentioned in the introductory part, there was a kind of deviation from the text. In fact, the teacher kept talking (in Persian) about the topic for minutes while ignoring the text and its linguistic properties all together. In my opinion, two reasons for this shortcoming can be mentioned at first glance:

1. Their inability to maneuver on the linguistic properties of the texts due to insufficient knowledge of English.
2. Their having taken it for granted that learners already are familiar with these properties. (On the basis of observation, this reason is not acceptable since while reading, the learners had problems in some aspects specially structures and these were all observed by the teachers themselves).

These were the most noticeable problems as far as teachers' roles are concerned. For a detailed report of the three teachers' manner of holding the classes refer to the appendices.

3.2. Learners' problems

ESP in any of its developmental stage (syllabus & methodology development, course design, and evaluation procedure) involves a kind of preoccupation with learners' needs. In all these stages, learners are at the heart of attention. ESP is all about learners' needs, expectations and reasons for learning. *Anything* that can help them satisfy their needs should be used and economy should be taken into account. By anything it is meant that need satisfaction devices do not know any limits and economy refers to satisfying learners' needs in the minimum amount of time, with the minimum amount of energy and money.

What is going to appear in this part relates to learners' problems while reading the texts. In fact, the only time that learners were involved actively in the class was when they were reading. Therefore, most problems mentioning here relate to the observed difficulties they experienced while reading.

1. *Sentence structures:* learners really had problems in understanding the structure of sentences. They did not know the role that each word played in the sentences and had difficulty in understanding the tenses especially when sentences were long and a little complicated. These problems led to a wrong translation.

2. *Ing-ending words*: these were another source of learners' difficulties. The time when ing was a tense marker, it was well understood but was a source of difficulty when appearing at the beginning of the sentence playing a role different from what usually was expected by learners.

3. *Multi-meaning words:* similar words in different languages in different contexts carry different meanings. Most learners usually attribute a very limited range of meanings to words and when they face these multi-meaning words with a different meaning they become confused.

4.*Passive voice*: anther frequently observed source of difficulty in reading comprehension was passive sentences. Students usually expected subjects to appear first and objects next. Such sentences in which the order is reversed formed another source of difficulty.

Besides all the above-mentioned problems, the other ones include their *lack of motivation*, *their different level of proficiency* and *amount of familiarity with the content.*

4. Suggestions

Having reviewed some of the basic and noticeable problems of learners and teachers in the three above-mentioned observed ESP classes, some practical suggestions for eliminating or at least reducing the mentioned problems with the aim of helping both teachers and learners in the process of learning and teaching are introduced.

1.in the introductory part, it was made clear that in Iran student take ESP courses after having passed a two-credit basic English followed by a three-credit general English. On the basis of observation, it was found that a large bulk of the learner's problems was due to their poor knowledge of general English. So it seems necessary for learners to first reach an acceptable level of general English knowledge (familiarity with basic structures, vocabulary and pronunciations) and then attend ESP classes in which any explanation of linguistic properties are absent.

2. The major activities in the classes were *reading and translation.* In my opinion, as far as translation is concerned, it should be to a large extent excluded but reading is a need on the condition that a different attitude toward this skill be held by teachers. In the observed ESP classes, reading was one step before translation .In fact, reading was the means and translation was the end. Reading as a skill is useful in such classes when there is not a kind of deviation from the text by the teacher while explaining the content. Linguistic properties of the texts are as important as the content of the field.

3- Learners' inability to understand long sentences was another problem. This problem can be solved to some extent by dividing long sentences into shorter ones.

4-The other learners' problems were their inability in making meaning out of multi-meaning words. By nature, the content of ESP courses abounds in such words. Therefore, teachers can prepare a list of these words in advance to prevent any confusion on the side of learners.

5-The lack of syllabus and lesson plan was another problem. Students did not have a general view of what was going to be covered in each session and what was supposed to be achieved at the end of the term. This problem can be resolved to a high extent by giving students a syllabus in the first session of any educational semester.

6-Another mentioned problem was the overuse of the native language in such classes. No one can deny the role that native languages such as Persian in the Iranian context can play in better understanding of difficult concepts in such classes but not to the extent that the role of English as the first medium of instruction be marginalized or ignored. Unfortunately, in the three-observed classes, except the one held for tourism, the role of English was totally ignored. English was used just for reading texts. In my

opinion, ESP teachers are responsible for this problem because as mentioned earlier, learners attend ESP classes after having passed Basic English and general English courses in which English is the primary medium of instruction. In fact, the teachers of Basic English and general English courses prepare learners for further instruction that happens in ESP classes. But unfortunately this overuse of native language in ESP classes which was highly marginalized in basic and general English courses violates what learners' already have got used to. The reason may go back to fact that the teachers of Basic and general English courses are language teachers but ESP teachers are content teachers.

5. Discussion

This paper began with a personal report of what was observed in three ESP classes held at Sheikhbahaee University in Isfahan, followed by a part dealing with both teachers' and learners' problems and ended with some suggestions for the sake of helping both teachers and learners to overcome their problems.

A teacher (whether language teacher or content teacher) who undertakes an ESP class should know that he has been given the necessary freedom and chance to optimize teaching and facilitate leaning. Many ESP experts believe that an ESP practitioner is not just a teacher but a collaborator, researcher, material designer and evaluator as well. In fact, ESP practitioners are given this freedom and chance to help their students satisfy their needs by analyzing the given class profile. The existence of different class profiles and consequently different needs, expectations and reasons for learning has put greater responsibility on the shoulder of ESP teachers and logically demands more vigilance.

The personal observation revealed that ESP teachers who were all content teachers could not satisfy learner's needs satisfactorily. The main noticeable problems were related to their *unacceptable knowledge of language* and lack *of familiarity with the art of teaching*. The first mentioned problem led to a kind of deviation from the text ignoring all of its linguistic properties (structures, vocabulary, morphological features, etc) and the second problem led to a kind of monotonous and boring class. Considering all the above-mentioned problems, it seems vital to put the responsibility of undertaking an ESP class on the shoulder of language teachers whose knowledge of language and art of teaching enable them to satisfy learners' needs and expectations. Some may question the subject matter knowledge of language teachers. This can not pose any problem because holding a positive attitude toward the content and having familiarity with the basic principles of the subject will suffice. In fact, "the ESP teacher should not become a teacher of the subject matter, but rather an interested student of the subject matter" (Hutchinson and Waters, 1993). In short, language teachers undertaking an ESP class should be

interested in the subject like learners of the field with this difference that they are more linguistically proficient and more powerful in using and manipulating their art of teaching.

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Appendices

Appendix A

ESP Class: **Mr. A**
Faculty Observed: **Faculty of Management**
Rank: **Sophomore**
Course: **ESP for Tourism**
Rating scale (l = very poor, 2 = weak, 3 = average, 4 = good, 5 = excellent, NA = not applicable)

CONTENT						
Main ideas are clear and specific	1	2	3	**4**	5 (Excellent)	
Sufficient variety in supporting information	1	2	3	4	**5**	
Relevancy of main ideas was clear	1	2	3	4	**5**	
Higher order thinking was required	1	2	3	**4**	5	
Instructor related ideas to prior knowledge	1	2	3	4	**5**	
Definitions were given for vocabulary	1	2	3	4	**5**	
ORGANIZATION						
Introduction captured attention	1	2	3	4	**5** (Excellent)	
Introduction stated organization of lecture	1	2	3	4	**5**	
Effective transitions (clear w/summaries)	1	2	3	**4**	5	
Clear organizational plan	1	2	3	**4**	5	
Concluded by summarizing main ideas	1	2	3	4	**5**	
Reviewed by connecting to previous classes	1	2	3	4	**5**	
Previewed by connecting to future classes	1	2	3	4	**5**	
INTERACTION						
Instructor questions at different levels	1	2	3	**4**	5	NA

Sufficient wait time	1	2	3	**4**	5	NA
Students asked questions	1	2	3	4	**5**	NA
Instructor feedback was informative	1	2	3	**4**	5	NA
Instructor incorporated student responses	1	2	3	**4**	5	NA
Good rapport with students	1	2	3	4	**5**	NA
VERBAL/NON- VERBAL						
Language was understandable	1	2	3	4	**5** (Excellent)	
Articulation and pronunciation clear	1	2	3	4	**5**	
Absence of verbalized pauses (er, ah, etc.)	1	2	3	4	**5**	
Instructor spoke extemporaneously	1	2	3	4	**5**	
Accent was not distracting	1	2	3	4	**5**	NA
Effective voice quality	1	2	3	4	**5**	
Volume sufficient to be heard	1	2	3	4	**5**	
Rate of delivery was appropriate	1	2	**3**	4	5	
Effective body movement and gestures	1	2	3	4	**5**	
Eye contact with students	1	2	3	4	**5**	
Confident & enthusiastic	1	2	**3**	4	**5**	
USE OF MEDIA						
Overheads/chalkboard content clear & well organized	1	2	3	4	**5**	NA
Visual aids can be easily read	1	2	3	4	**5**	NA
Instructor provided an outline/handouts	1	2	3	4	5	**NA**
Computerized instruction effective	1	2	3	4	5	**NA**

SPECIAL CLASSIFICATION NOTES:

STRENGTHS: (e.g. metacurriculum, use of comparisons & contrasts, positive feedback, opportunity provided for student questions)
Teacher had almost a full command over English oral and written abilities. He gave enough synonyms, antonyms, word family and examples. He also gave positive feedback and asked students for feedback. Teacher gave enough opportunity to students to ask their questions and share their knowledge and experiences. He could also successfully motivate students. Sometimes he expressed some relevant idiomatic expressions and metaphor to expand students' general knowledge.

WEAKNESSES: (e.g. unable to answer student questions, overall topic knowledge, relevance of examples, etc.)
No significant problem was observed.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS RATING: 1 2 3 4 **5**
Date of Conference: 2010 Observer Signature: Reza Dehghan

REPORT: First teacher wrote the title on the board and read a sentence from the passage. Then he wrote new words on the blackboard and asked learners to guess their meaning then he wrote their Persian meaning and some word family. He continued reading the rest of the passage sentence by sentence. At the end of each paragraph he asked students whether they understood or not. Though he explained everything in English, English was the dominant language in the class. He sometimes exemplified some points for a better understanding. He paid enough attention to both accuracy and fluency. Two lectures were given by two students in English .Teacher usually asked students some question for elicitation. The class had a friendly environment and enough variation. Students also participated in activities voluntarily.

General Observation of All Features of Lesson

	Areas		Comments
1.	Preparation	Clearness of aims	Ok
		Lesson plan	Very good
		Materials/aids	Very good
		Classroom layout	Normal
2.	Suitability of materials		Very good
3.	Use of aids		Blackboard, textbook and real situation
4.	Accuracy of teacher's language		Very good
5.	Instructions/classroom management		Excellent
6.	Presentation of new language		Very good
7.	Elicitation		Very well
8.	Checking understanding		Excellent
9.	Correction		Indirectly through asking question
10.	Monitoring		Very good
11.	Exploitation of materials		Good
12.	Staging		Ok
13.	Variety		Ok
14.	Pace		Normal
15.	Balance accuracy/fluency activities		Excellent
16.	Students' motivation/participation		Very good
17.	Range of leaching techniques		Very good
18.	Mobility		Excellent
19.	Voice	Loudness	Not loud enough
		Speed	Ok
		Pronunciation	Very good
20.	Balance of attention		Good
21.	Body language/eye contact		Excellent
22.	Manner/rapport		Very good
23.	Encouragement		Good
24.	Group dynamics		Ok
25.	Understanding of learning process		Very good
26.	Achievement of aims		Very good

Appendix B

ESP Class: **Mr. B**
Faculty Observed: **Faculty of Engineering**
Rank: **Senior**

Course: **ESP for Computer Engineering**
Rating scale (l = very poor, 2 = weak, 3 = average, 4 = good, 5 = excellent, NA = not applicable)

CONTENT						
Main ideas are clear and specific	1	2	**3**	4	5 (Excellent)	
Sufficient variety in supporting information	1	2	3	**4**	5	
Relevancy of main ideas was clear	1	2	3	**4**	5	
Higher order thinking was required	1	**2**	3	4	5	
Instructor related ideas to prior knowledge	1	2	**3**	4	5	
Definitions were given for vocabulary	1	2	3	**4**	5	
ORGANIZATION						
Introduction captured attention	1	**2**	3	4	5 (Excellent)	
Introduction stated organization of lecture	**1**	2	3	4	5	
Effective transitions (clear w/summaries)	1	**2**	3	4	5	
Clear organizational plan	1	2	**3**	4	5	
Concluded by summarizing main ideas	1	2	3	**4**	5	
Reviewed by connecting to previous classes	1	2	**3**	4	5	
Previewed by connecting to future classes	1	**2**	3	4	5	
INTERACTION						
Instructor questions at different levels	1	**2**	3	4	5	NA
Sufficient wait time	1	2	3	**4**	5	NA
Students asked questions	1	2	**3**	4	5	NA
Instructor feedback was informative	1	2	**3**	4	5	NA
Instructor incorporated student responses	1	2	3	**4**	5	NA
Good rapport with students	1	2	**3**	4	5	NA
VERBAL/NON- VERBAL						
Language was understandable	1	2	3	**4**	5 (Excellent)	
Articulation and pronunciation clear	1	2	3	**4**	5	
Absence of verbalized pauses (er, ah, etc.)	1	2	**3**	4	5	
Instructor spoke extemporaneously	1	2	**3**	4	5	
Accent was not distracting	1	2	3	**4**	5	NA
Effective voice quality	1	2	**3**	4	5	
Volume sufficient to be heard	1	2	**3**	4	5	
Rate of delivery was appropriate	1	2	**3**	4	5	
Effective body movement and gestures	1	**2**	3	4	5	
Eye contact with students	1	**2**	3	4	5	
Confident & enthusiastic	1	**2**	3	4	5	
USE OF MEDIA						
Overheads/chalkboard content clear & well organized	1	2	3	**4**	5	NA
Visual aids can be easily read	1	2	3	**4**	5	NA
Instructor provided an outline/handouts	1	2	3	4	5	**NA**
Computerized instruction effective	1	2	3	4	5	**NA**

SPECIAL CLASSIFICATION NOTES:

STRENGTHS: (e.g. metacurriculum, use of comparisons & contrasts, positive feedback, opportunity provided for student questions)

Teacher gave some synonyms and antonyms for new vocabularies. Sometimes he made use of example to help better understanding

WEAKNESSES: (e.g. unable to answer student questions, overall topic knowledge, relevance of examples, etc.)

He was unable to answer questions concerning language learning because he was a content teacher not a language teacher. Sometimes he gave wrong direction to students. The class was teacher-centered, in other words he was the only speaker, actually translator in the class. It was a very monotonous class.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS RATING: 1 2 **3** 4 5
Date of Conference: 2010 Observer Signature: Reza Dehghan

REPORT: At the beginning of class teacher started reading a passage from textbook_and translating it word by word. He continued reading and consequently translating to the end of class. During his reading, he asked students some questions regarding meaning of words to check their understanding and to make sure they are learning. If they could not answer the question he defined those words. There was almost no group work and students very rarely participated in class activity. The dominant language was Persian and English was used just once for reading the passage by the teacher himself. He also explained the new words and expression in Persian without any English version. As a whole there was very little variation and the class was monotonous. At the end he assigned some homework to students that they should read the text and summarize it in their own words

General Observation of All Features of Lesson

	Areas		Comments
1.	Preparation	Clearness of aims	Not that much clear
		Lesson plan	Not bad
		Materials/aids	Good
		Classroom layout	Normal
2.	Suitability of materials		Ok
3.	Use of aids		Blackboard and textbook
4.	Accuracy of teacher's language		Good
5.	Instructions/classroom management		Good
6.	Presentation of new language		Not bad
7.	Elicitation		Weak
8.	Checking understanding		Very good
9.	Correction		Directly and immediately
10.	Monitoring		Ok
11.	Exploitation of materials		Not too bad
12.	Staging		Ok
13.	Variety		Very little variety
14.	Pace		Very slow
15.	Balance accuracy/fluency activities		Very little
16.	Students' motivation/participation		Less than needed
17.	Range of leaching techniques		Not too bad
18.	Mobility		Not bad
19.	Voice	Loudness	Could be better
		Speed	Less than normal
		Pronunciation	Very good
20.	Balance of attention		Not bad
21.	Body language/eye contact		Not good enough

22.	Manner/rapport	Not suitable
23.	Encouragement	Weak
24.	Group dynamics	Very little
25.	Understanding of learning process	Very good
26.	Achievement of aims	Not too bad

Appendix C

ESP Class: **Mr. C**
Faculty Observed: **Faculty of Management**
Rank: **Junior**
Course: **English for the students of management**
Rating scale (l = very poor, 2 = weak, 3 = average, 4 = good, 5 = excellent, NA = not applicable)

CONTENT							
Main ideas are clear and specific	1	2	**3**	4	5 (Excellent)		
Sufficient variety in supporting information	1	2	**3**	4	5		
Relevancy of main ideas was clear	1	2	3	4	**5**		
Higher order thinking was required	1	2	3	**4**	5		
Instructor related ideas to prior knowledge	1	2	**3**	4	5		
Definitions were given for vocabulary	1	**2**	3	4	5		
ORGANIZATION							
Introduction captured attention	1	2	**3**	4	5 (Excellent)		
Introduction stated organization of lecture	1	**2**	3	4	5		
Effective transitions (clear w/summaries)	1	2	**3**	4	5		
Clear organizational plan	1	2	**3**	4	5		
Concluded by summarizing main ideas	1	2	3	**4**	5		
Reviewed by connecting to previous classes	1	2	**3**	4	5		
Previewed by connecting to future classes	1	2	**3**	4	5		
INTERACTION							
Instructor questions at different levels	1	**2**	3	4	5	NA	
Sufficient wait time	1	2	**3**	4	5	NA	
Students asked questions	1	2	**3**	4	5	NA	
Instructor feedback was informative		1	2	**3**	4	5	NA
Instructor incorporated student responses	1	2	3	**4**	5	NA	
Good rapport with students	1	2	3	**4**	5	NA	
VERBAL/NON- VERBAL							
Language was understandable	1	2	3	4	**5** (Excellent)		
Articulation and pronunciation clear	1	2	**3**	4	5		
Absence of verbalized pauses (er, ah, etc.)	1	2	**3**	4	5		
Instructor spoke extemporaneously	1	**2**	3	4	5		
Accent was not distracting	1	2	3	**4**	5	NA	
Effective voice quality	1	2	3	4	**5**		
Volume sufficient to be heard	1	2	3	4	**5**		
Rate of delivery was appropriate	1	2	3	**4**	5		
Effective body movement and gestures	1	2	3	**4**	5		
Eye contact with students	1	2	3	**4**	5		
Confident & enthusiastic	1	2	**3**	4	5		
USE OF MEDIA							
Overheads/chalkboard content clear & well organized	1	2	**3**	4	5	NA	
Visual aids can be easily read	1	2	3	4	**5**	NA	

Instructor provided an outline/handouts	1	2	3	4	5	**NA**
Computerized instruction effective	1	2	3	4	5	**NA**

SPECIAL CLASSIFICATION NOTES:
STRENGTHS: (e.g. metacurriculum, use of comparisons & contrasts, positive feedback, opportunity provided for student questions)

No significant strength was seen just to mention his knowledge of content for which he had no problem.
WEAKNESSES: (e.g. unable to answer student questions, overall topic knowledge, relevance of examples, etc.)

Teacher was unable to make all students participate in class activities. He had a very limited teaching technique that couldn't meet all the requirements of the class. He didn't provide students with enough chance to share their knowledge

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS RATING: 1 2 **3** 4 5

Date of Conference: 2010 Observer Signature: Reza Dehghan

REPORT: Teacher asked students to read the passage and translate it into Persian_consequently. Then teacher himself gave his translation which was treated as the best response. The whole class was ***translation-centered*** and teacher read aloud his translations for students to write down like a dictation class. Both teacher and students communicate in their first language and use of English was very limited. Majority of students could not find any opportunity to present their translations of the text

General Observation of All Features of Lesson

	Areas		Comments
1.	Preparation	Clearness of aims	Not very clear
		Lesson plan	Ok
		Materials/aids	Very good
		Classroom layout	Normal
2.	Suitability of materials		Ok
3.	Use of aids		Blackboard, textbook and handout
4.	Accuracy of teacher's language		Not bad
5.	Instructions/classroom management		Good
6.	Presentation of new language		Ok
7.	Elicitation		Good
8.	Checking understanding		Not too bad
9.	Correction		First peer-correction then by teacher
10.	Monitoring		Ok
11.	Exploitation of materials		Good
12.	Staging		Ok
13.	Variety		Very monotonous
14.	Pace		Ok
15.	Balance accuracy/fluency activities		Very little

16.	Students' motivation/participation		Very little
17.	Range of leaching techniques		Less than expectations
18.	Mobility		Very good
19.	Voice	Loudness	Very good
		Speed	Normal speed
		Pronunciation	Not bad
20.	Balance of attention		Good
21.	Body language/eye contact		Very good
22.	Manner/rapport		Not bad
23.	Encouragement		Not too bad
24.	Group dynamics		Good
25.	Understanding of learning process		Ok
26.	Achievement of aims		unclear

Title

Aspects of Word Knowledge: Receptive Versus Productive Performances

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Abstract

The present study aimed at evaluating mastery over various aspects of depth of vocabulary knowledge as defined by Nation (2001) in both receptive and productive modes by TEFL graduate students as well as TEFL graduate teachers. The purpose was to show which aspect in which mode was more difficult to master even in advanced levels and even when teaching experience is involved. The study also examined two tests designed to measure depth of vocabulary knowledge. To construct the tests, Nation's table of word knowledge was used. This table divides depth of vocabulary knowledge into three main aspects of form, meaning, and use in both receptive and productive modes, 18 items in total. 41 TEFL graduate students and teachers received the word-knowledge tests. Results show significant low performance on use part in both modes for both groups

while higher nonsignificant performance on form over meaning is also observed. Surprisingly four years of teaching did not have any effect on the results. Furthermore, both groups performed better receptively than productively. One reasonable pedagogical implication is to give more importance to aspects that are more difficult to learn, especially aspects that are related to the use of language which are highly related to syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationship between words.

Key words: depth of vocabulary knowledge, performance on word knowledge, receptive versus productive modes

1. Introduction

Depth of vocabulary knowledge is differentiated from breadth of vocabulary knowledge, as it refers to the quality of knowing words i.e., the quality of lexical knowledge (Meara, 1996; Read, 1993, 2000), or more specifically, how well a word is known rather than the number or the quantity of the words a language learner knows in a special level of his proficiency (Read 2000). Miller (1999) indicates that the question of what it means to know a word has fascinated many psychologists, for knowing a word is usually believed to be equal to know its meaning, and meaning is believed to be one of the most important concepts of understanding the nature and limits of psychology.

Word knowledge has shown to have various dimensions; nevertheless, learners seem to have one common conception of it. They think they know a word as soon as they learn what the word sounds like, what the word looks like and what its meaning is (Nation, 2001). This is one of the most important misunderstandings which most language learners and some language teachers share. In fact, the aspects of word knowledge are varied and vast.

Bogaards (2000, as cited in Mukarto, 2005b) mentions form, meaning, morphology, syntax, collocates, and discourse as the aspects of vocabulary knowledge. Carroll (2008) divides word knowledge into phonological, syntactic, morphological, and semantic features. Last but not least, Richards (1976, as cited in Mukarto, 2005b) considers the following seven items as assumptions of vocabulary knowledge:

(1) knowing its relative frequency and its collocation, (2) knowing the limitation imposed on its use, (3) knowing its syntactic behavior, (4) knowing its basic forms and derivations, (5) knowing its association with other words, (6) knowing its semantic value, and (7) knowing many of the different meanings associated with the word. (p.8)

Miller (1999, as cited in Carroll, 2008), in answering the question 'what is involved in knowing a word?' offers two interpretations: one is performative, that is, "what tasks does knowing a word enable a person to perform?" (p.2). He answers that the tasks would be those which prove that a person really knows a word. The second is substantive, that is, "what does a person who knows a word know?" (p.3). He answers that "meaning" is what a person who knows a word must know.

Beck and Mckeown (1991, as cited in Yopp & Yopp, 2007) declares that knowing a word is not an all-or-nothing proposition; they believe in different gradations of word knowledge that range from no knowledge to "rich decontextualized knowledge of a word, including its relationship to other words and its extension to metaphorical uses" (p.792).

Nation (1998) insists on the awareness of the different aspects of word knowledge. He also believes that this awareness should be based on some regular systems so that learners can easily recognize what to look for and can easily observe gaps in their knowledge. One of his suggested systems is to use the items of the table of what is involved in knowing a word (2001, p. 27, Appendix A) which divides each item into receptive and productive knowledge. Basically, he believes that while receptive vocabulary use is the comprehension of the form of a word as one is listening or reading and retrieving its meaning, productive vocabulary use is expressing a meaning as one is speaking or writing and retrieving and making the suitable spoken or written word form. He also adds that these two terms apply to a variety of kinds of language knowledge and use. However, when they are applied to vocabulary, these two terms cover all of the 18 items mentioned in the aforementioned table. Nation (2001) also indicates that at the most general level, knowing a word involves its form, meaning and use.

Few studies, if any, focus on depth of vocabulary knowledge and its component parts, especially on investigating which aspects are more challenging for the learners and which aspects take more time to master when the following aspects are taken into account: (a) the role of teaching experience, as it might affect the quality of word knowledge, (b) the two modes of

word knowledge, which are receptive and productive, and (c) the test which should be used to assess this knowledge.

Teaching gives teachers experience of being involved in the learning process. This involvement results in paying deep attention to what and how to learn in order to teach. Therefore, experience resulted from teaching situations might make a difference in learning the dimensions of vocabulary knowledge as defined by scholars.

Concerning receptive and productive aspects of word knowledge, Nation (2001) mentions that receptive learning and use seems easier than productive learning and use. In this regard, Nation also continues that:

> While it is possible to make noticeable changes in vocabulary knowledge, it is not easy to move this knowledge into productive use. Laufer suggests that one cause of this may be a lack of encouragement and suitable activities to push receptive and productive knowledge into active use. (p.182)

In two studies (Laufer, 1998; Laufer & Paribakht, 1998, as cited in Nation, 2001) on vocabulary size, the learners' performance on the receptive test was better than the productive test. The experiments show that it is not easy to move receptive vocabulary into productive use, especially for low frequency words.

Stoddard (1929, as cited in Nation, 2001) compared receptive with productive vocabulary learning through equivalent test formats. Half of Stoddard's 328 school-age participants learned 50 French-English word pairs receptively, and the other half learned the same items productively. Both groups took the same recall test with half of the items tested receptively (write the English translation of the French word) and half of the items tested productively (write the French translation of the English word). The results revealed that, first, receptive tests were easier than productive tests - total receptive mean scores of both groups were twice as high as productive ones. Second, there was a correlation between the type of test and the type of learning - those who learned receptively performed better on the receptive test while those who learned productively performed better on the productive test. Third, the effect of the type of test was greater than the effect of the type of learning - although learners of both kinds of learning got similar scores, the receptive learners' scores on the receptive test were much higher than the productive learners' scores on the productive test.

Waring's similar study (1997a, as cited in Nation, 2001) came up with the same results even in a delayed vocabulary retention test. Waring also found that many learners were not equally skillful at both receptive and productive learning. Taking the previous studies into consideration, one may wonder if the advantage of receptive over productive mode remains when different aspects of word knowledge are focused on and when high frequency words are tested.

Four tests are used to measure depth of vocabulary knowledge, which are reviewed and commented by Mukarto (2005a). First, the Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS), which was developed by Paribakht and Wesche (1993, 1996). The different levels of lexical knowledge of specific target words that learners were learning in a comprehension-based ESL program were supposed to be measured by the aforementioned test. The test has a 5-scale self-report format. Each word is presented individually and learners are asked to indicate their degree of knowledge, ranging from no familiarity with the target word to the ability to use it accurately in a sentence. The VKS format is as follows:

Headword

I. I don't remember having seen this word before.

II. I have seen this word before, but I don't know what it means.

III. I have seen this word before, and I *think* it means …….(synonym or translation)

IV. I *know* this word. It means……. . (synonym or translation)

V. I can use this word in a sentence:…….. . (If you do this section, please also do Section IV.)

Howerver, as Mukarto (2005a) believes, the test can neither be used to measure very small increase in word knowledge, nor can it be used to tap "sophisticated knowledge of given words and to tap the knowledge of various associative meanings" (p. 154).

The second example in this regard is Word Associate Test (WAT) developed by Read, which was a reaction against the VKS. According to Nassaji (2004) the WAT measures different semantic and collocational relationships that a word has with other words in the language. In fact, it measures the learner's depth of vocabulary knowledge through word associations. Mukarto (2005a) clarifies the test in the following way:

> The test has 50 items to measure learners' ability to identify whether or not there is any syntagmatic (collocational), paradigmatic (synonymous), and analytic (part-whole or whole-part) relationship between a stimulus word and each of the eight other words

presented as choices. Out of these alternatives, four are distractors. The eight associates and distractors are divided into two groups. Consider the table below:

sudden

beautiful quick surprising thirsty	change doctor noise school

The words in the left box are adjectives. The relationship between the associates (*quick* and *surprising*) and the target word is either paradigmatic (synonymous) or analytic. The words in the right box are all nouns, and the relationship between the target word *sudden* and its associates (*change* and *noise*) is syntagmatic. (pp.154 &155)

As Mukarto (2005a) says this test measures the knowledge of low frequency words and, as a result, it is not appropriate to test the knowledge of high frequency words English learners know. The two other tests mentioned by Mukarto are the Euralex French Tests and interviews, none of which seem to be appropriate for assessing depth of vocabulary knowledge, as the former tests French high frequency words and the latter is time consuming and not practical with more than a handful examinees while not covering all aspects of depth of vocabulary knowledge.

None of the mentioned tests were appropriate for the purpose of the current study; as a result, the researchers decided to design two tests to measure the quality of word knowledge based on Nation's table of word knowledge (2001). This table was shown as a valid criterion for identifying aspects of word knowledge in both L1 and L2 (Barouni, 2010). The design and development of the tests are explained in the materials section.

The evaluation of depth of vocabulary knowledge and the claim about the effect of teaching experience on the development of different aspects and the effect of mode of vocabulary knowledge remain little more than conjecture if they are not tested in a range of contexts. In light of the paucity of reliable evidence, the following study was designed to help meet this need.

The following questions will be answered in this study:

1. Which aspect(s) of high-frequency-word knowledge (if any) is (are) more difficult to master in advanced levels and even in the light of gaining teaching experience?
2. Is performance on the reception mode better than the production mode in advanced levels and in view of teaching experience?

2. Methodology

2.1 Participants

Twenty one TEFL graduate students (TEFLGS hereafter) and twenty TEFL graduate teachers, who were among TEFL graduate students with at least four years of teaching experience (TEFLGT hereafter) from Islamic Azad University of Najafabad (IAU hereafter), Iran, were the participants of this study. The participants were chosen regardless of their gender, age or any other special criteria.

2.2 Instruments

The main instruments used in this research study were (a) the reception and production vocabulary proficiency tests (RPT & PPT hereafter) originally designed and developed by Nation et al (2001, pp. 416-425) and simplified by the researchers, (b) Nation's table of word knowledge (2001, p. 27), and (c) the reception and production tests (RT & PT hereafter) made by the researchers. The following explanations clarify how these materials were prepared.

2.3 Reception and production proficiency tests

RPT and PPT which originally belong to Nation et al. were adapted by the researchers to show whether the participants surely had a knowledge of 3300 absolutely essential words, which equals the frequency bands of 5, 4 and 3 of Collins Cobuild dictionary (2001). This number of words equals the 4000 word level in "BNC-20 VocabProfile" (VP hereafter) adapted by Tom Cobb (2003) for the Web, which is based on Laufer and Nation's Lexical Frequency Profiler (1995). The Lexical Frequency Profile measures the amount of vocabulary from different frequency levels used in learners' composition writings.

For this purpose, the reduced form of the Vocabulary Levels Test (VLT hereafter), Test B and Productive Levels Test (PLT hereafter), Version C, presented in Nation (2001, pp. 416 & 425) were chosen. The original VLT made by Nation is described in Nation (1983 & 1990). Test B is a major improvement of the original test, which was designed and made reliable and valid by Schmitt, Schmitt and, Clapham (2001). PLT is based on VLT, but it tests vocabulary productively rather than receptively. The description of making and validation of this test is presented in Laufer and Nation (1999). Each test consists of 2000, 3000, 5000, academic and 10000 word levels in an increasing order of difficulty.

Since for this research study the participants' performance on at most the 4000 word level of the VP was supposed to be evaluated, the "academic word list" and the "10000 word level" parts of these two tests were omitted. The tests were piloted with a different sample from the TEFL graduate population in IAU, became reliable by Cronbach's alpha (r = .87), and were validated by three English professors to be given to graduate students in the same university.

There were some reasons behind choosing these two tests. First, this research aimed to choose those who had the knowledge of the VP 4000 word level (equals 3300 word level of Cobuild dictionary), and these two tests were appropriate to measure this precisely. Second, these two tests were equivalent forms, which became reliable and valid by their own designers. Last but not least, they were approved of being appropriate for Iranian English language students by three Iranian professors.

Since these two tests were diagnostic tests to diagnose where learners need help, Nation (communicated, consulted and informed via e-mail) preferred his own Vocabulary Size Test for this purpose. Nonetheless, the VST did not seem appropriate for the participants, especially its third 1000-word level seemed difficult for them. Moreover, the VST did not have an equivalent productive form.

2.4 Nation's table of word knowledge (Appendix A)

This research is based on Nation's table (2001, p. 27) of what involves in knowing a word. Three main factors are considered as important in knowing the word: form, meaning and use. Furthermore, each of these main factors has their own sub-factors. The sub-factors are further divided into receptive and productive categories as well. Totally, 18 items are considered as important in knowing a word.

2.5 Reception and production tests (Appendix B)

In these two tests, all the target words chosen for the tests, the answers, and even the distractors were selected from high frequency words. The reason was that these tests were supposed to measure the different aspects of the participants' word knowledge of the target words as presented by Nation both receptively and productively. Otherwise, the lack of success on the part of participants might have resulted from their unfamiliarity with the target words or their breadth of vocabulary knowledge (vocabulary size), which was not the focus. The target words

were chosen from different sources like *Vocabulary in Use* (1999 & 1997), *Study Skills* (1998), *504 Absolutely Essential Words* (2001).

The frequency of the words is based on the frequency bands of Collins Cobuild dictionary (2001). The considered word frequency for these tests is 3 or more among the 5 frequency bands equal to the 4000 word level of the VP.

Based on the dictionary explanation, the words in bands 5 and 4 (approximately 680 and 1040 words respectively) account for about 75% of all English usage, and it was the reason for choosing these two bands for this research. Band 3 includes approximately 1580 words. Knowing the words in this band extends the range of topics which one can talk about, and it was the reason behind choosing this band for this research as well. Considering the mentioned number of words in these three frequency bands (680+1040+1580), it should be noticed that the participants had to be at least at the level of 3300 words based on the frequency bands of this dictionary. Moreover, all the target words, their answers and distractors of these two tests, after being controlled by Cobuild's frequency bands to be among bands 5, 4 and 3, were rechecked by the VP. Almost all were among the first, second, third, and fourth 1000-word level (totally 4000 word level).

Moreover, Nation's instruction in the section entitled "How can depth of knowledge about a word be tested?" in his book *Learning Vocabulary in Another Language* (2001, p.354) was the basis of designing these two tests; however, there were a few changes due to the designers' opinion and his negotiation with Nation through some e-mail communication. The one to one item validly of test items with the questionnaires was confirmed by Nation and three English professors.

Finally in this regard, the following issues were considered as important in test design.

a. All items in RT were multiple-choice questions, and in PT, the participants were required to produce words or explanations. Item discrimination and item facility were run and necessary replacements were done.
b. Regarding item numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4, the target words with different syllables were selected. Furthermore, in RT (item 1), the words selected as distractors were harmonious.
c. Regarding item numbers 5 and 6 in both RT and PT, words with different affixes were selected. However, since words with affixes have low frequency, only adverbs with high frequency stems (3 or more frequency bands) were chosen. In PT (item number 6), the

meaning or synonym of each target word which was supposed to be produced was written in parentheses. However, their Persian equivalences were added when the definitions did not seem understandable.

d. Regarding item numbers 7 and 8 in both RT and PT, target words with different parts of speech were selected. In PT, any probable correct translation was accepted. Only adverbs with high frequency stems were selected. Moreover, when meaning was the focus, almost always the first meaning of the words was considered.

e. Regarding item numbers 9 and 10, what was tested was what a word included. In other words, the features of a concept were considered as the answers rather than the synonyms. In these parts, the participants had to decide whether or not the written features existed in the concept. For example, *button* and *flash* exist in *camera*, and *excitement* as well as *being alive* exist in *music*. Therefore, the participants were expected to select such features and not to provide synonyms for the words *camera* and *music*. Moreover, while in RT the best possible and most appropriate group of answers was considered to be chosen, in PT, any possible answer was accepted.

f. Regarding item numbers 11 and 12, what was tested was word association, i.e. the words which come to our mind because of a special word. For example, the associations of the word *camera* could be *party, celebration* and *scenery*. However, based on what Nation believes (communicated via e-mail), synonyms can also be considered as associations of the words. As a result, synonyms mentioned in PT were also accepted. In RT, the participants had to choose the most appropriate group of words.

g. Regarding item numbers 13 and 14, grammatical patterns (parts of speech) of the words were tested. The participants needed grammatical knowledge to find the correct answer. Therefore, the frequency of the words making up the sentences was not controlled, although simple sentences were chosen. The correct answers were selected from among four important parts of speech (adjectives, verbs, nouns and adverbs).

h. Regarding item numbers 17 and 18, the equivalence of the target words was added beside them, and the participants were asked to compare each pair and choose (receptively) or write (productively) where, when and how often they encounter the target words, which were bold and italicized.

2.6 Procedures

Fifty six graduate students received RPT and RT in one session and PPT and PT two weeks later in another session. Based on the Guide to Levels Test by Nation, only those who were able to score 27 or more out of 30 words in RPT, and 16 or more out of 18 words in PPT were supposed to be chosen for the RT and PT. However, the problem encountered was that the productive performance of students was lower than expected. As a result, for RPT, 27 or more out of 30 scores in parts 1 and 2, and 14 or more in part 3 were selected as the basic requirement of being in the data. These numbers in PPT were 14 or more out of 18 (3/4 of each section) in sections 1 and 2, and almost around 8 or more in section 3. The performance of 42 out of 56 participants, almost half of them were TEFLGS and the other half were TEFLGT, was in this range and probable to be considered as the research data. Therefore, their RT and PT were scored.

2.7 Data analysis

The following analyses were applied to the data respectively:

a) The participants' performance on the three main parts of RT and PT (form, meaning, use)
b) The participants' performance on all the individual items of RT and PT (A to I)
c) Total performance on nine items of RT and PT and the comparison of performance on RT and PT

The means and standard deviations for each part of the test are indicated in Table 1 for all participants and in Table 2 for each group separately.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for both groups on the different parts of the tests

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
reception test form	41	27.1951	2.52210
reception test meaning	41	25.8293	2.07247
reception test use	41	21.8049	2.87419
production test form	41	24.9024	2.25616
production test meaning	41	22.5122	2.68442
production test use	41	21.8049	2.87419

As this table shows, performance on form, meaning and use changes in decreasing values of mean scores (from the range of 0 to 30) in both modes. The table shows the best performance

of participants on form and the worst on use irrespective of test mode. However the difference between form and use (mean difference 1.856) and meaning and use (mean difference 1.351) in the reception mode, F (3.366) = 10025.394 , p = .000; and between form and use (mean difference 2.315), and meaning and use (mean difference 1.532) in the production mode, F (3.366) = 4205.714, p =.000 are found significant.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for each group on different parts of the tests

group		reception test form	reception test meaning	reception test use	production test form	production test meaning	production test use
TEFL graduate students	Mean	27.4286	25.8571	21.9048	25.0952	22.4286	21.9048
	N	21	21	21	21	21	21
	Std. Deviation	1.69031	1.65184	3.11295	1.51343	3.20268	3.11295
TEFL graduate teachers	Mean	26.9500	25.8000	21.7000	24.7000	22.6000	21.7000
	N	20	20	20	20	20	20
	Std. Deviation	3.20321	2.48363	2.67739	2.86724	2.08756	2.67739
Total	Mean	27.1951	25.8293	21.8049	24.9024	22.5122	21.8049
	N	41	41	41	41	41	41
	Std. Deviation	2.52210	2.07247	2.87419	2.25616	2.68442	2.87419

This table shows the same trend of achievement for both groups on the three different parts of the tests i.e., the highest means belong to form and the lowest to use in both modes. However, no significant difference between the groups in different parts of the test is found. Therefore in the other phases of analysis no distinction is made between the groups, and the data will be analyzed for all participants as a whole.

Next, the means and SDs for all items of the tests are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for all items of the tests

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
reception test 1	41	8.7317	.92262
reception test 2	41	9.7073	.71568
reception test 3	41	8.7561	2.40604
reception test 4	41	9.5122	.81000
reception test 5	41	8.8537	.88207
reception test 6	41	7.4634	1.14231
reception test 7	41	9.1707	.80319
reception test 8	41	7.6829	1.58807
reception test 9	41	4.9512	1.64243
production test 1	41	8.2439	.83007
production test 2	41	8.9268	1.19143
production test 3	41	7.7317	1.24548
production test 4	41	8.8049	1.12293
production test 5	41	5.7561	1.78578
production test 6	41	7.9512	1.74573
production test 7	41	7.3171	1.66492
production test 8	41	6.4390	1.97546
production test 9	41	4.4878	2.65633

Table 3 shows the best performance of participants on item 2 of RT (the correct spelling of each word - Form, Written, Reception) and the worst on item 9 (where, when and how often we encounter the word - Use, Constraints on use, Reception). In addition, the highest standard deviation belongs to item 3 of RT (word parts - Form, Word parts, Reception), while the lowest belongs to item 2 of RT (the correct spelling of each word - Form, Written, Reception). Regarding the production mode, the best performance of the participants is on item 2 of PT (the way the word is written and spelled - Form, Written, Production) and the worst on item 9 (where, when and how often we encounter the word - Use, Constraints on use, Production). In addition, the highest standard deviation belongs to item 9 of PT, while the lowest belongs to item 1 (the way the word is pronounced - Form, Spoken, Production).

Analysis of variance shows significant effect of test items, F (8, 324) = 48.59, p = .000 in the reception mode, and Scheffe test shows that (a) performance on items 1, 3, 5 is better than performance on items 6, and 9; (b) performance on items 2, 4, 7 is better than performance on items 6, 8, and 9; and (d) performance on item 9 is the worst. Regarding production, the same effect of test items has been found, F (8, 324) = 30.54, p = .00, and Scheffe test shows that (a)

performance on items 1, 2, 4, and 6 was better than performance on items 5, 8, and 9; (b) performance on item 3 is better than performance on items 5, and 9; and (c) performance on item 9 is the worst.

Total performance in each mode was also measured and shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics for the receptive/productive modes

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	total reception	74.8293	41	4.83685	.75539
	total production	69.2195	41	5.87159	.91699

Table 5 shows a higher total mean score for RT than PT. The difference is found significant, t (40) = 7.84, p =.000. The following figure illustrates the mean scores of nine items of RT and PT.

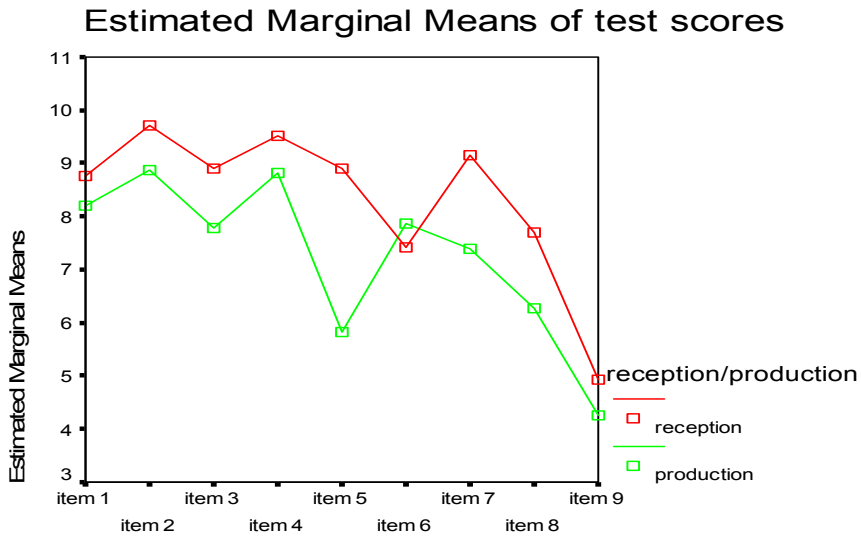

Figure 1. Results of RT and PT nine items mean scores

Figure 1 shows the performance on RT is generally more successful than PT.

The results of this study could be summarized as follows. Regarding the three parts of the tests (form, meaning, and use), performance on the use part of both tests was significantly worse than form and meaning parts. However, although the mean scores for the form part were higher than the meaning parts in both tests, the difference did not reach significance.

Concerning the performance of each group on the three parts of form, meaning, and use, no significant difference was found. In other words, both graduate students and graduate teachers

performed the same on the three parts of the tests, meaning that for both groups performance on use was significantly the worst and performance on form was insignificantly better than performance on meaning.

Regarding individual items of RT, performance was better on auditory word recognition, word parts recognition, and conceptual features recognition than relationship of the word with other words, and contextual use of the word. Also, the way the word looks like, meaning, and grammatical features of the word were performed better than word association, collocations, and contextual features of the word. Furthermore, the performance was the worst on contextual use of a word.

With relation to productive mode, word pronunciation, meaning and word relationship to other words were performed better than conceptual features of words, word collocation, and contextual features of word use. Still selecting appropriate affixes was easier than deciding on conceptual features of the words and contextual features of word use.

Finally, general performance in the receptive mode was found significantly better than performance in the productive mode.

3. Discussion

Looking at Nation's table of word knowledge, one might consider the use part (grammatical functions, collocations, and constraints on use) as the most practical part of word knowledge. However, the findings of the present study clearly show that performance on the use part, both receptively and productively, was significantly the worst. Even performance on the productive use part was the lowest of all, as is shown in Figure 1. One may conclude that either the participants did not know the importance of aspects that are related to the use of word knowledge or they did not have necessary knowledge in this respect. However, findings of the study done on both graduate students' and graduate teachers' beliefs about aspects of word knowledge show that both groups knew the importance of this component of word knowledge, as they gave the same importance to this part as they did to form and meaning parts of Nation's table of word knowledge (2001) in both L1 and L2 (Barouni, 2010). Therefore, it seems more reasonable to accept the latter conclusion and conclude that the participants lacked necessary knowledge of this aspect. An interesting point is that teaching experience could not be helpful as well. In other words, it could not change the results in favor of graduate teachers. Consequently, measures

should be taken to highlight the importance of knowing the appropriate usage of words and how to improve use of word knowledge not only for English learners but also for English teachers.

Regarding the second research question, the findings of the study strongly show that the participants in both groups performed better on RT than PT. This finding was very much likely and expected since the researchers encountered this matter when the proficiency tests were run and the reception and production tests were piloted in IAU. In both cases, the participants performed better on reception than production test, although the tests were very much parallel and at the same level of difficulty. This finding is fully in congruence with what Nation (2001), Laufer (1998), Laufer and Pribakht (1998), Stoddard (1929, as cited in Nation, 2001), Waring (1997, as cited in Nation, 2001), Ellis and Beaton (1993), and Henrikson (1995) have found and indicated in their studies. Their findings show that receptive learning and use of words is easier than productive learning and use, active vocabulary development is slower and less predictable than passive one, receptive tests are easier than productive tests, and receptive vocabulary develops faster than productive vocabulary.

There are some reasons mentioned by Nation (2001) for this matter such as the amount of knowledge explanation (productive learning requires extra learning of new spoken or written output patterns; therefore, it is more difficult than receptive learning), the practice explanation (receptive use is more practiced by learners than productive use), the access explanation (a word in L2 has a simple link to L1 translation, but the L1 word has many associations among which the productive recall is much more difficult), and finally the motivation explanation (learners are not motivated enough to use certain kinds of knowledge productively because of different reasons, e.g. socio-cultural background).

Highly related to this finding is Anderson's (1990) distinction between declarative and procedural knowledge. It seems well that the knowledge of language that learners have stored in the form of declarative or knowledge of "what" should be in some way transferred to another form, which is procedural or knowledge of "how", to be used in production. It takes time for learners to do that and this knowledge comes usually after the first type of knowledge.

The same support is given by Henriksen (1996), who looks more closely at the issue by defining vocabulary learning as movement along three continua: the partial-practice continuum, the receptive-productive continuum, and the depth-of-knowledge continuum. The first is a knowledge continuum that refers to levels of word knowledge operationalized at different levels

of understanding or comprehension. The second is a control continuum that describes the different levels of access or use ability operationalized through different kinds of receptive and productive tasks. The third refers to both the word's referential meaning and its paradigmatic and syntagmatic relationships with other words. Word meaning starts with its recognition along the partial-precise continuum and moves forward to the mastery of finer shades of meaning. This entails that learners learn a word better when they also learn the knowledge between lexical items. Therefore, development along the third level improves partial to precise meaning. The nature of these two types of knowledge is declarative as defined by Anderson (1990). However, the nature of the receptive-productive continuum seems to be procedural, as it controls accessibility aspect of lexical competence, or whether the learner is able to use a lexical item receptively or productively. The point that both types of knowledge moves along a continuum explains why levels of word knowledge related to form develop sooner than levels of word knowledge related to use, as the latter necessities establishing both paradigmatic and syntagmatic relationship between a word and other words in one's repertoire. The receptive productive continuum as well starts with receptive and moves towards productive. Logically receptive knowledge seems to be easier and less demanding to master earlier.

Detailed findings of the study are in line with Henriksen's idea (1996) that some aspects of word knowledge are more related to words by themselves, while others are more related to different types of relationship a word has with other words in the lexicon. Better performance on word recognition, word parts recognition, and conceptual features recognition than performance on relationship of the word with other words, and contextual use of the word as well as better performance on the way the word looks like, meaning, and grammatical features of the word than word association, collocations, and contextual features of the word in the productive mode gives credit to the same issue.

Finally, it should be mentioned that the most important role of any language is communication, which is to a great extent in the realm of language production and it depends on noticing and mastering both syntagmatic and paradigmatic relationship of words with each other. As a result, it seems that researchers, scholars, teachers and learners should focus on these aspects more seriously than before. In other words, more studies, theories, practices and stronger beliefs in this regard are really needed to be carried, developed, followed and held.

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Apendix A
Nation's table of word knowledge

Form	**Spoken**	**R**	**1. What does the word sound like?**
		P	**2. How is the word pronounced?**
	Written	**R**	**3. What does the word look like?**
		P	**4. How is the word written and spelled?**
	Word parts	**R**	**5. What parts are recognizable in this word?**
		P	**6. What word parts are needed to express the meaning?**
Meaning	**Form and Meaning**	**R**	**7. What meaning does this word form signal?**
		P	**8. What form can be used to express this meaning?**
	Concepts and referents	**R**	**9. What is included in the concept?**
		P	**10. What items can the concept refer to?**
	Associations	**R**	**11. What other words does this make us think of?**
		P	**12. What other words could be used instead of this one?**
Use	**Grammatical functions**	**R**	**13. In what patterns does the word occur?**
		P	**14. In what patterns must we use this word?**
	collocations	**R**	**15. What words or type of words occur with this one?**
		P	**16. What words or types of words must we use with this one?**
	Constraints on use (Register, frequency..)	**R**	**17. Where, when and how often would we expect to meet this word?**
		P	**18. Where, when, and how often can we use this word?**

Source: ***learning vocabulary in another language*** **by Nation (2001), page 27.**

Sample Reception Test (Appendix B)

Name : **Professor:** **Term:** **Course:**

A. Listen and underline the word you hear. Estimated time : 1 min.

Example: a. acquire b. require c. replier d. retire

1. a. price b. prize c. pride d. prime
2. a. seat b. set c. seed d. sit
3. a. unable b. enable c. liable d. disable

B. Underline the correct spelling of each word. Estimated time: 2.5 min

Example: Analasis analysis analisis analyses

1. celebrate calebrate celebrait celebrat
2. approach aproch aproach approache
3. necesary nasessary necessary neseccary

C. The following words are broken into their component parts. Underline the correct item. Estimated time : 2.5 min

Example: variation

a. vari + ation b. varia + tion

c. va + ria + tion d. vary + ation

1. irresponsible

a. irres + pons + able b. ir + response + able

c. ir + responsible d. irresponse + able

2. disagreement

a. dis + agree + ment b. disagree + ment

c. dis + agreement d. disag + reement

3. redefine

a. rede + fine b. re + define

c. re + de + fine d. redef + ine

D. Choose the appropriate Persian translation for the following words. Estimated time : 2.5 min

Example: Numerous

a. بسیار b. مهم c. قطعی d. مشخص

1. Abuse

a. سوء استفاده کردن b. متهم کردن c. ارتعاش داشتن d. تبخیرشدن

2. Nightmare

a. غم b. رویا c. کابوس d. تاریکی

3. Deliberately

a. بطور همیشگی b."عمدا" c. در یک زمان d. نا اگاهانه

E. Which of the following items do the words include? Choose the most appropriate group. Estimated time: 5 min

Example:"camera"

a. lens, flash, button b. bag, fabric, plastic

c. pipe, plastic, electricity d. button, picture, money

1. "race"

a. winner, prize, compete b. happiness, game, environment

c. hope, future, cure d. horse, attempt, doubt

2. "commerce"

a. book, relationship, far b. sell, business, fabric

c. buy, iron, business d. buy, sell, business

3. "college"

a. university, desk, entertainment b. course, board, professor

c. desk, board, traffic d. book, course, government

F. Choose the most appropriate group of words which you can think of in response to each word. Estimated time: 5 min

Example:"sympathy"

a. interest, friend, money b. kindness, mother, love

c. whiteness, silence, pain d. understanding, enemy, heal

1. "cancer"

a. cough, pill, treatment b. life, cure, upset

c. hope, future, cure d. death, pain, hospital

2. "storm"

a. movement, pleasure, coldness b. anger, shout, revolution

c. shake, atmosphere, flood d. fear, shout, flight

3. "battle"

a. escape, joy, run b. fight, violence, agreement

c. gun, hate, soldier d. hate, anger, understanding

G. Select the correct answer. Estimated time : 5 min

Example: I have very fond …….of my time in Spain.

a. memorize b. memorial c. memorizing d .memories (noun)

1. My company has ……. a new approach to staff meetings.

a. adopting b. adopted c .adoption d. adoptive

2. Unfortunately, scientists have been unable to find a……. for this complaint.

a . curable b. cures c. cured d. cure

3. Eating fatty foods can damage your…….. .

a. healthy b. health c. healthful d. unhealthy

H. Choose the correct collocation for the underlined words. Estimated time : 5 min

Example: Life in the past was much simpler as many people work to **……** their basic **needs**.

a. have **b. meet** c. make d. earn

1. Today, for many of us, our job is not just a way of …….. a living.

   a. having b. doing c. meeting d. making

2. For many of us, work …… an important role in our everyday life and gives us strong sense of personal fulfillment.

   a. does b. plays c. makes d. earns

3. Even in our leisure time we have to …… so many choices about what to do or watch.

   a. make b. take c. get d. set

I. There are 10 pairs of words in the following section. They have the same meaning but they are used in different contexts and situations (for example, different level of formality, different English speaking countries, different places, etc). Compare them and choose where, when and how often we encounter the first one which is bold. In other words, choose the appropriate and probable place, time and frequency of use of the first words. Estimated time: 5 min.

Example: "***truck;*** lorry"

a. in America, when two drivers are talking together, sometimes met

b. in America, when a taxi driver is transferring a passenger, usually met

c. in England, when two drivers are talking together, often met

d. in England, when a taxi driver is transferring a passenger, usually met

1."***hell*** ;damn"

a. in an interview, when the interviewer is asking some questions, usually met

b. at a conference, when the members are lecturing, sometimes met

c. at a university, when the professors are teaching, often met

d. on the phone, when two friends are talking angrily, sometimes met

2. "***poll***; voting"

a. in the offices, everyday, always met

b. in daily conversations, when the society is experiencing an economic crisis, usually met

c. in newspapers, during an election time, rarely met

d. in newspapers, during an election time, usually met

3. "***blast***; explosion"

a. in a fire station, when the fire fighters learn how to fight the fire , always met

b. in a fire station, when the fire fighters learn how to fight the fire , usually met

c. in newspapers, when a huge explosion is reported, always met

d. in newspapers, when a huge explosion is reported, rarely met

Sample Production Test (Appendix B, Cont.)

Name : **Professor:** **Term:** **Course:**

A. Read the following words.

1. considerable
2. accommodation
3. succeed

B. Listen to the following words and write them down. Estimated time : 1 min

1.
2.
3.

C. Add an appropriate affix (prefix, suffix) to each of the following words to express the meaning mentioned in parentheses. Estimated time : 5 min

Example: Associate (organization) : associate + ion = association = organization

1. Legal (against the law) :
2. Child (stage of being a child):
3. Suit (appropriate) :

D. Translate the following words into English. Estimated time : 2.5

Example: نوجوان = teenager

1. بی خا نمان
2. بدهکاربودن
3. رفتار

E. What items can the following words as concepts refer to ? In other words, which concepts the following words include? Mention three items for each. Be aware that synonyms <u>are not</u> acceptable. Estimated time : 10 min

Examples: "Music" : exciting, classical, live

"library" : book, desk, study

1. career
2. collapse
3. citizen

F. Write three appropriate associations or synonyms for each word. Estimated time : 10 min

Example: abroad foreign country, travel, plane ticket
Or
Outside, overseas, foreign country

1. authority
2. purchase
3. charity

G. Decide on the appropriate form of the word and write it in the spaces provided. Time: 7.5 min

Example: Children will always …**compete**…for their parents' attention**. (compete) verb**

1. Even a small …… ..can leave a piece of memory in the brain. **(suggest)**

2. The rocket took off into the air and the crowd ..... …..in a wild manner. **(scream)**

3. Why don't you drop off my mother first and then come back and ..... ….us up. **(pick)**

H. Fill in the blanks with the appropriate word (collocation). Estimated time : 7.5 min

Example: John made a mistake, and he should …**accept**… its **consequences**.

1. Women …… far less crime than men.
2. She tried to …… attention to what he was saying.
3. These chemicals have been found to ……..serious environmental damage.

I. There are 10 pairs of words in the following section. They have the same meaning but they are used in different contexts and situations (for example, different level of formality, different English speaking countries, different places, etc). Compare them and write where, when and how often we encounter the first one which is bold. In other words, write the appropriate and probable place, time and frequency of use of the first words. Estimated time: 10 min.

Example: "***bike***; bicycle": in an informal conversation, when two friends are talking about their bicycles, sometimes met

1. "***thus***; so"

2. "***etc***; blah blah"

3. "***cool !***; great !"