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Foreword

First of all we wish you a very happy 2013 and welcome to volume nine and the first edition of the year 2013. In this edition, we have included thirty six articles from EFL/ESL, Literature and Translation studies. The bi-monthly Iranian EFL Journal has attracted many readers not only from the Middle East but also from different parts of the world and in this way; the number of our reviewers has also increased. We have increased the number of our reviewers and now, more than ninety reviewers are cooperating with the journal and evaluate the 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 topics of EFL/ESL, Literature and Translation studies, the growth and readership has been pleasing. Statistically, readers are coming from almost 80 countries. In this issue we present thirty six articles for your reading. In the first article, [Reza Pishghadam](#), [Azar Hosseini Fatemi](#) and [Shoorangiz Ghaviandam](#) present designing and validating a scale on English Language Teacher Perfectionism (SELTP). In the second article of the issue, the acquisition of relative clause in Persian speaking children is done by [Seyede Zahra Hashemi](#). In the third article of the issue, [Najmeh Nasri](#), [Azizollah Dabbaghi](#) and [Zohreh Kassaeian](#) have studied the effect of task type on learning English collocations. In the next article, Grammar and its Appropriate Placement in EFL Compositions is studied by [Taleb Yari](#) and [Seyed Mahdi Araghi](#). In the fifth article of the issue, [Hedye Rahmatian](#), [Mahboube Akbarzadeh](#) and [Nahid Heidari](#) present the relationship among multidimensional perfectionism, foreign language classroom anxiety, and motivation among Iranian EFL university students. The next article which is about the effect of strategy based instruction on EFL learners' writing ability is done by [Fatemeh Mahdavi](#). In the seventh article of the issue [Reza Dehghan Harati](#) has studied familiarity with basic issues in ESP. In the eighth article of the issue the effect of using self-correction of mistakes in online text-based conversation on EFL learners' oral proficiency is done by [Forouzan Dehbashi Sharif](#) and [Bahareh Jalayeri](#). In the next article, the effect of conscious attention to form on achieving syntactic proficiency among Iranian intermediate EFL learners is studied by [Sara Jafari](#). In the tenth article of the issue, [Ali A. Eftekhary](#) and [Mahshid Mirzaaghaee](#) have studied on the effect of using



metacognitive strategies on listening comprehension of Iranian EFL learners. In the eleventh article of the issue CMC and distance learning: a case of vocabulary learning is studied by [Elahe Moladoust](#). In the twelfth article of the issue, sources of situational interest in reading comprehension and gender differences of Iranian EFL learners is presented by [Masoud Khalili Sabet](#), [Amir Mahdavi](#) and [Nasra Roozbeh Rad](#). In the next article, [Minoo Alemi](#) and [Zahra Mesbah](#) have presented textbook evaluation based on the ACTFL standards: the case of *Top Notch* series. In the fourteenth article of the issue, teacher educators and school teachers' perceptions of professional needs in the Foreign Language Classroom is studied by [Ayooob Damavand](#), [Azizollah Viyani](#) and [Seyyed Hossein Kashef](#). In the fifteenth article of the issue, [Maryam Mohammadi](#), [Afsar Rouhi](#) and [Mehran Davaribina](#) present the role of learning strategies on the students' academic achievement. In the next article, A Qualitative Study on the Impact of Students' Self-Efficacy on Their Ability to Achieve Speaking Skills is studied by [Nima Shakouri Masouleh](#). In the seventeenth article of the issue, [Ahmad Mohseni](#) and [Adnan Satariyan](#) have presented vocabulary focused language learning on IELTS writing skill development: a case study. The next article which is about Iranian EFL students' writing performance based on types of topic progression technique is presented by [Sahar Zahed Alavi](#) and [Ali Beihaghi](#). In the next article of the issue [Fathollah Ghaderinezhad](#) has studied investigating the EFL learners' perceptions of the role of prior knowledge in Reading Comprehension. In the twentieth article of the issue, a sociopragmatic study of speech act of suggestion in Persian EFL Learners is presented by [Vahid Mahmoudi Gahrouei](#). In the next article, a general approach to focus on form instruction is done by [Farahman Farrokhi](#) and [Fattaneh Abbasi](#). In the next article of the issue [Maryam Bahardoust](#) has studied grammatical collocation in writing production of EFL learners: a study of L2 Collocation Learning. In the twenty third article of the issue, comparing TEFL and English translation learners' beliefs about language learning in the Iranian context is presented by [Kamran Janfeshan](#), [Maryam Islampanah](#) and [Servah Nikenaam](#). In the next article, [Jahanbakhsh Langroudi](#) and [Mina Pirouznejad](#) have presented the relationship of burnout, engagement, and employment with academic achievement of Iranian EFL university students. In the next article of the issue,



Lexical Exposure and Meaning Awareness in Iranian EFL Learners' Semantic Restructuring is presented by [Abbas Bagherian](#). In the next article, analyzing discourse differences of Iranian male and female's syntactic structures in text messaging via cell phones is presented by [Seyyed Reza Seyyedi Noghabi](#). In the next article of the issue, [Esmail Faghieh and Behnam Behfrouz](#) have studied the effect of teaching English discursal cohesive markers through simple prose on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' writing. In the twenty eighth article of the issue, [Nassim Golaghaei and Firooz Sadighi](#) present form-focused instruction and understanding bilingual mental lexicon: a case of the hegemony of semantic Transfer. The next article which has the title of, on the effect of background knowledge and IQ on reading comprehension and recall process of a group of Iranian intermediate students is presented by [Mahboobeh Khosrojerdi](#). In the next article of the issue A Contrastive Rhetorical Analysis of Persian and English Narrative Genre in Short Stories is studied by [Nasser Rashidi and Afsaneh Baharloo](#). In the thirty first article of the issue, the role of emotions in reading literary texts: fact or fiction? is presented by [Katayoon Afzali](#). In the next article, Crosbian Nihilistic reading of Sadegh Hedayat's *Three Drops of Blood* and Franz Kafka's *The Trial* is presented by [Hassan Shahabi and Fatehem Mojdegani](#). In the next article of the issue [Aida Ferdowsifard](#) has studied optional structural shifts in translation; a critical discourse analysis approach. In the next article of the issue, the relationship between grammatical proficiency and translating competence in Persian-English translation in EFL students is studied by [Nasrin Miryan and Leila Iravani](#). In the next article of the issue, expertise and explicitation in translation studies: is there any relationship? is presented by [Reza Yalsharzeh and Sepideh Ahmad Khanbeigi](#). In the last article of the issue, a study of African American vernacular dialect translation into Persian in *The adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is presented by [Masoud Sharififar and Seyed Amin Enjavi Nejad](#).

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



Title

Designing and Validating a Scale on English Language Teacher Perfectionism (SELTP)

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Abstract

The major aim of this study was to design and validate a Scale on English Language Teacher Perfectionism (SELTP). To this end, the scale was constructed by picking up the most common aspects of English language teachers' perfectionistic orientations. Afterwards, the scale was administered to 407 EFL learners in private language institutes in Mashhad, Iran. Rasch measurement was utilized to substantiate the construct validity of the scale. The results of the Rasch analysis exhibited that all of the

items met the criteria for fit to the Rasch model and therefore the whole scale can be considered as unidimensional. Finally, statistical results were discussed, and implications were provided in the context of English language teaching.

Keywords: teacher perfectionism, English language, construct validity, Rasch measurement

1. Introduction

In recent years, perfectionism, as a psychological construct, has attracted considerable worldwide attention. Perfectionism is one of man's personal characteristics, which has been proven to cause many psychological problems such as anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and other personality disorders (Chang et al., 2007; Flett, Hewitt, & Dyck, 1989; Onwuegbuzie & Daley, 1999). As offered by Ram (2005), perfectionists are concerned with striving for high and unrealistic goals, pay too much attention to their failures, ignore their successes, and have fear of making mistakes. Perfectionists' fear of failure and not being perfect may cause procrastination, making them avoid performing less than perfect performance (Frost, Marten, Lahart, & Rosenblate, 1990).

Apart from these psychological problems, perfectionism has a great influence on learners' academic performance (Bieling, Israeli, Smith, & Antony, 2003; Flett, Blankstein, & Hewitt, 2009; Ram, 2005). In addition, perfectionism can have a significant role in language learning, which may be highly detrimental (Akhoondpoor, 2008). In language learning, perfectionist learners, who set unrealistic goals, and never take risks to express themselves or do not like to be wrong in their grammar and pronunciation, may fail to be successful.

Learners try to be perfect as their teachers focus on correctness and avoiding mistakes. They never like to make mistakes and avoid expressing themselves when they are not sure what is right or wrong. Learners are not taught to take risks and make mistakes to improve their learning. But in fact, they are always under the pressure of being correct and not making mistakes. Learners gradually become perfectionists; they endeavor to speak without any pronunciation or grammatical errors. Pishghadam and Akhoondpoor (2011) indicated that perfectionistic teachers make students afraid of making mistakes and taking risks. This will make the learners remain silent and wait for the proper chance; otherwise they do not try to express themselves when they are not sure about the correctness of what they want to say.

This striving for perfection would cause many serious problems in learners' performance. In such situations, learners have high levels of fear and anxiety in English classes, Teachers set high standards and overemphasize on correctness and this results in error phobia and learners may have an

unpleasant experience in language classes (Akhoondpoor, 2008). As Pishghadam and Mirzaee (2008) suggested, language classes have become “sites of fear and anxiety”. In this situation, learners prefer to avoid performance as they have fear of being criticized by the teacher so they refrain from involving themselves in the class, and this will reduce risk-taking in them.

As already mentioned, it seems that the major cause of learner perfectionism can be teacher perfectionism. To the knowledge of the researchers, no research has been found to examine the construct of perfectionism among English language teachers. It seems that the reason for lack of research in this area is that there has not been an appropriate instrument to carry out studies on this subject. Different scales of perfectionism which are available are all in the field of psychology, which cannot be employed in the field of language teaching and learning. Therefore, since it was felt that in the field of language teaching there is a gap of research in this area, the researchers decided to construct and validate a Scale on English Language Teacher Perfectionism (SELTP) to detect and remedy this deficiency.

2. Theoretical Background

Historically, perfectionism as one of the instrumental personality factors has been an increasing interest to many researchers, and more recently, a large and growing body of research has investigated this construct from a psychological point of view. A wealth of research (Blankstein, Flett, Hewitt, & Eng, 1993; Chang et al., 2007; Flett, Hewitt, & Dyck, 1989; Onwuegbuzie & Daley, 1999; Stoeber & Joorman, 2001) has been carried out to analyze the association between perfectionism and different psychological traits and mental states. *In particular*, numerous studies have attempted to explain the determinants of perfectionism (Sorotzkin, 1998), whereas several other studies (Jiao, Onwuegbuzie, 1998; Mor, Day, Flett, & Hewitt, 1995; Onwuegbuzie & Daley, 1999; Trexler & Karst, 1973) have addressed the crucial role of perfectionism in a host of other factors.

According to a definition provided by Frost et al. (1990), perfectionism is “the setting of excessively high standards for performance accompanied by overly critical self-evaluations” (p.119). In a similar vein, Hewitt and Flett (1991) argued that perfectionists strive for unattainable goals as well as high standards in whatever they do irrespective of the situations and consequences. In the same vein, Hollender (1965) held the view that perfectionists believe “mistakes must never be made, and see mistakes as evidence of unworthiness; they are preoccupied with fear of failure and disapproval, and if they experience failure and disappointment, become dysfunctionally depressed” (Pishghadam & Akhoondpoor, 2011, p.432).

The overlooked association between perfectionism and language learning formed the central focus of a study by Gregersen and Horwitz (2002) in which, they attempted to draw associations between foreign language learning anxiety and perfectionism. As Gregersen and Horwitz (2002) put it, in language learning setting, perfectionist language learners strive for speaking with no mistakes, either grammatical or pronunciation, to put it differently, they wish to speak just like a native speaker; with this in mind, they never like to be evaluated negatively by others and accordingly, they will withdraw from voicing their opinions and this hope for the ideal situation results in the rise of language anxiety.

Thereafter, in a recent study, Pishghadam and Akhoondpoor (2011) investigated the role of perfectionism in foreign language learners' success and anxiety; they presented an association between language learners' perfectionistic orientations and low academic achievement as well as poor performance in language skills. Consistent with the findings of Gregersen and Horwitz (2002), they asserted that learner perfectionism and learner anxiety were positively related, demonstrating that the more perfectionist the learners are, the more anxiety they will experience. Furthermore, their findings revealed that perfectionism was negatively associated with skills of reading, speaking, and listening as well as GPA. Pishghadam and Akhoondpoor (2011) maintained that perfectionism is deleterious for language learners, making them under-achievers in language learning as it makes them avoid taking risks and being wrong. Akhoondpoor (2008) also suggested that the perfectionist learners always maintain to accomplish "perfect performance" and never be satisfied with their performance and this makes them go through more anxiety.

From the time perfectionism was seriously dealt with, different scales for measuring perfectionism have been developed. In their seminal work, Hewitt et al. (1991) constructed a measure of perfectionism called "Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale" (MPS). This Multidimensional scale has been developed to evaluate three dimensions of perfectionism: self-oriented perfectionism, other-oriented perfectionism, and socially prescribed perfectionism. Self-oriented perfectionism is referred to "unrealistic standards and perfectionistic motivation for the self"; and by other-oriented perfectionism it means "unrealistic standards and perfectionistic motivation for others" and socially prescribed perfectionism is "the belief that significant others expect oneself to be perfect" (Hewitt et al., 1991, p.464). As suggested by Samar and Shirazizade (2011) among the all scales made on perfectionism this multidimensional model of Hewitt and Flett is the most compatible with educational aspects.

Subsequently, Frost et al. (1990) constructed the next multidimensional measure of perfectionism, "Frost Multidimensional perfectionism Scale" (FMPS). In this measure, Frost et al. (1990) provided six dimensions for perfectionism: Concern over Mistakes, Personal Standards,

Parental Expectations, Parental Criticism, Doubts about actions, and Organization (see Frost, Heimberg, Holt, Mattia & Neubauer, 1993).

Further, another scale of perfectionism was designed by Hill, Huelsman, Furr, Kibler, Vicente, and Kennedy (2004). This 8-scale measure of perfectionism called the “Perfectionism Inventory” (PI) took the important constructs provided by 2 existing Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (Frost et al., 1990; Hewitt & Flett, 1991) measures. The sub-constructs of this scale include: Concern over Mistakes, High Standards for Others, Need for Approval, Organization, Parental Pressure, Planfulness, Rumination, and Striving for Excellence.

Learners’ perfectionism in language learning can be in part due to their teachers’ perfectionistic orientations, but as previously stated, in spite of its instrumental role, language teachers’ perfectionism has received scant attention. Therefore, in order to analyze learners’ perfectionism, it is of great importance to learn more about language teachers’ perfectionism. As already mentioned, there are several existing scales that are commonly used to measure perfectionism, but they are all designed in the field of psychology. Hence, the evidence suggests that a scale is required to be employed in the field of language learning.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

participants cooperated towards the completion of this study were 407 learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in private language institutes which consisted of 201 males and 206 females, ranging from 15 to 51 years old with a mean age of 22. The participants were advanced (No=211) and upper-intermediate (No= 196) EFL learners. The participants were asked to respond to a scale of teacher perfectionism with 30 items.

3.2. Instrumentation

SELTP was first constructed and then validated to be used as an instrument for conducting further research in the field of foreign language learning. The questionnaire consists of 30 items. The items are scored according to the Likert- type scale of four points ranging from (1) “always” to (4) “never”. Some of the items had to be reverse-scored so that higher scores show higher levels of perfectionism.

3.3 Procedure

The procedures followed in this study comprised designing the test, doing a pilot study, and administering the test and finally validating the questionnaire by utilizing the Rasch model. In the first place, the researchers provided a list by taking the most common factors which may lead to English teachers’ perfectionistic tendencies on into considerations. It was assumed that these perfectionistic

orientations could include factors such as: insisting on perfect grammar and pronunciation, emphasizing on native like accent, having negative reaction toward learners' mistakes, and forbidding L1 in the classroom. In order to ascertain the plausibility of the specified factors, the researchers consulted with 2 expert teachers. Afterward, some items were developed for each factor as a 4-point Likert-type scale. Then, a pilot study was carried out at two stages. To determine the content validity of the scale and eliminate the ambiguities of the items, 5 experienced teachers were asked to evaluate every single item of the scale while thinking aloud. Considering the provided comments, the items were modified or omitted until eventually 30 items were attained. Subsequently, the scale was submitted to 15 EFL learners, to respond to the questionnaire while expressing their opinions about individual items and the whole scale. Ultimately, by making up the deficits of the questionnaire, it was administered to 407 EFL learners in different institutes in Mashhad, Iran.

In order to substantiate the construct validity of the SELTP, Rasch measurement was employed. Rasch analysis was conducted using Winsteps version 3.74. The entire dataset with 30 items and 407 persons was subjected to Rasch analysis to evaluate the fit of data to the model and assess the unidimensionality of the instrument. If these tests are satisfied and the assumptions hold, the scale is a unidimensional Rasch scale and persons and items can be located on an interval scale.

4.Results

As demonstrated in the item statistics in Table 1, all items fit the Rasch model since according to the criteria put by Bond and Fox (2007), all items having outfit and infit mean square (MNSQ) indices inside the acceptable range of 0.70-1.30 fit the Rasch model. Misfitting items are signs of multidimensionality and model deviance.

Table 1: *Item statistics and fit statistics*

Item	Estimate	Error	Infit MNSQ
1	1.98	.09	.87
2	-1.17	.07	.80
3	.47	.07	.74
4	.91	.07	.89
5	.22	.07	1.17
6	-.39	.07	.92
7	-.61	.07	1.30
8	-.98	.07	1.02
9	-.28	.07	1.17
10	1.20	.07	1.17
11	.18	.07	.92
12	-.67	.07	.99
13	-.17	.07	1.13
14	-.24	.07	1.08
15	.27	.07	1.30
16	.47	.07	.77

17	-.02	.07	.86
18	.43	.07	1.08
19	.38	.07	1.12
20	-.15	.07	1.00
21	-.93	.07	1.03
22	-.94	.07	.84
23	.54	.07	.84
24	-.76	.07	.98
25	.04	.07	.95
26	.45	.07	.87
27	.82	.07	1.25
28	.45	.07	.90
29	-.16	.07	.86
30	-1.38	.07	1.03

As indicated in Table 2, the Cronbach's alpha reliability of the test is 0.76; the raw score standard deviation of the sample is only 8.4 out of 30.

Table 2. Summary of 407 measured persons

	Total score	count	Measure	Model Error	infit		Outfit	
					MNSQ	ZSTD	MNSQ	ZSTD
MEAN	69.0	29.7	-.34	.25	1.00	-.2	1.00	-.2
S.D.	8.4	.6	.51	.01	.49	2.0	.48	1.9
MAX.	94.0	30.0	1.17	.33	3.49	6.5	3.67	6.8
MIN.	42.0	27.0	-2.36	.24	.22	-5.0	.23	-4.9
REAL RMSE	.27	TRUE SD	.43	SEPARATION	1.58	PERSON RELIABILITY	.71	
MODEL RMSE	.25	TRUE SD	.44	SEPARATION	1.78	PERSON RELIABILITY	.76	
S.E. OF PERSON MEAN	= .03							

The analysis yielded a person separation of 1.58 and an item separation of 10.43. Item measures ranged from -1.38 (item 30) to 1.98 logits (item 1). The *root mean square error* (RMSE) for items was 0.07 and for persons is 0.27 which indicate quite precise measurement.

Table 3. Summary of 30 measured items

	Total score	count	Measure	Model Error	infit		Outfit	
					MNSQ	ZSTD	MNSQ	ZSTD
MEAN	936.0	403.1	.00	.07	1.00	-.1	1.00	-.1
S.D.	158.4	2.6	.74	.00	.16	2.4	.16	2.5
MAX.	1252.0	407.0	1.98	.09	1.36	5.2	1.36	5.2
MIN.	566.0	395.0	-1.38	.07	.74	-4.4	.75	-4.3
REAL RMSE	.07	TRUE SD	.73	SEPARATION	10.43	PERSON RELIABILITY	.99	
MODEL RMSE	.07	TRUE SD	.73	SEPARATION	10.75	PERSON RELIABILITY	.99	
S.E. OF PERSON MEAN	= .14							

The item-person map (Figure 1) can serve to provide evidence for the representativeness of the test items. The map indicates that the size of items on the right correspond to the size of persons on the left, demonstrating that the test fits perfectly with the subjects. As one can see, all individuals are clustered towards the centre of the scale and the items are spread all over the scale. Therefore, the person abilities are estimated quite precisely as is evident from the low root mean square standard error of the persons which is 0.27.

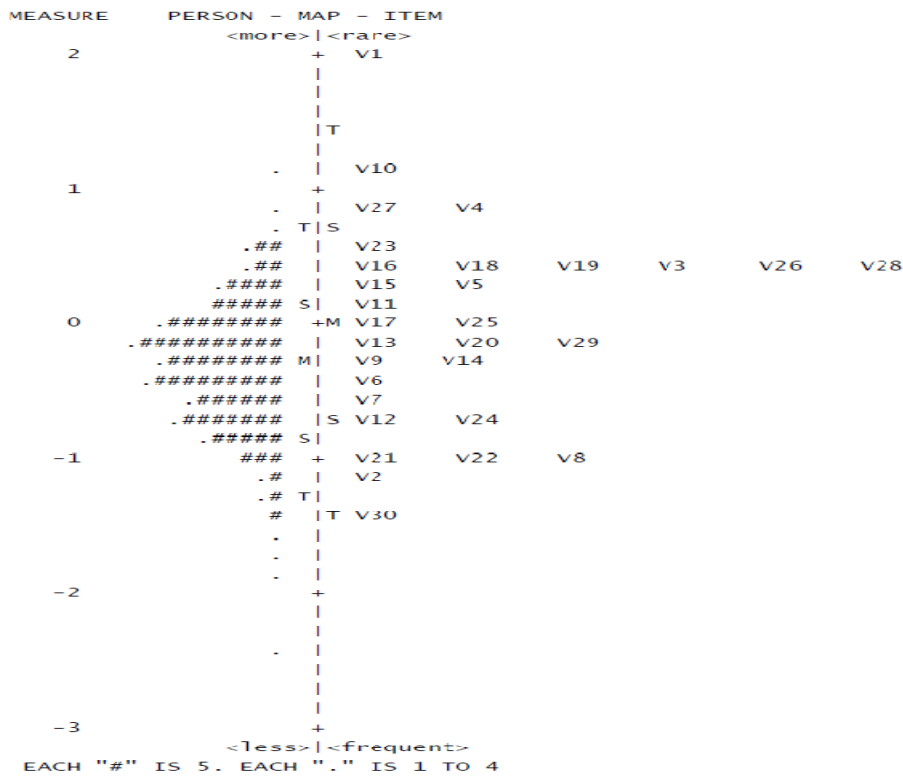


Figure 1. Items-persons map

Table 4 exhibits that the thresholds for all the 4 categories are ordered. Thresholds are estimated difficulties of observing one response category over the category below; they show how difficult it is to observe each category. They are the points on the rating scale where the probability of being observed in a category and the category below is equal. The first category has no lower category so there is no measure for that. Threshold estimates are expected to increase with category values (Baghaei, 2010).

Table 4. Summary of category structure

Category	Count	Average Measure	Infit Mean square	Threshold
1	2266	-1.12	1.00	None
2	4769	-.52	.91	-1.54
3	3951	.11	.90	-.04
4	1106	.41	1.14	1.57

4. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to construct and substantiate the validity of SELTP. To this end, a questionnaire with 30 items was constructed by choosing the most effective factors of perfectionism in English language teachers. Afterward, in order to analyze the scale, Rasch model was applied. Rasch model analyses indicated that all the 30 items fitted and also it was demonstrated that the whole scale was unidimensional and valid in order to measure English language teacher perfectionism.

SELTP was designed to measure English language teachers' perfectionistic tendencies towards several factors including, perfectionism against learners' mistakes in grammar and pronunciation, learners' accent, their use of L1, etc. These perfectionistic tendencies may be detrimental to learning process. For instance, English language teachers' emphasis is mostly on perfect accent, pronunciation, and grammar. As offered by Pishghadam and Navari (2009), it is prestigious to learn and know how to speak English and to have a perfect native-like accent. Pishghadam and Saboori (2011) also suggested that being a proficient language learner is rated as how much a person can gain a native-like accent. Although it is the heyday of world Englishes and the idea of "the death of native speaker" (Widdowson, 2003), there is no trace of it and the idea of being perfect and the best is still appreciated by many teachers and learners (Pishghadam & Mirzaee, 2008). Teachers insist on perfect pronunciation and grammar and native-like accent and do not tolerate learners' mistakes, while all these issues are rejected in post-modern era (Pishghadam & Kamyabi, 2009). Apart from influencing language learners' perfectionism, teachers by insisting on perfect accent provide learners with a tendency to achieve a native-like accent which as confirmed by Pishghadam and kamyabi (2009), might lead to learners' deculturation. For instance, items 8 and 10 check English teachers' inclination towards perfect accent, and item 4 is an example of English teachers' insisting on perfect pronunciation.

As mentioned above, another aspect of teacher perfectionism could be teachers' reaction towards learners' mistakes. Akhoondpoor (2008) argued that teachers' inappropriate feedback to learners' mistakes might have a destructive effect on learners. Learners need to take risks and make mistakes and try being wrong in order to learn the language successfully; but these perfectionistic tendencies may prevent them from taking risks and avoid making mistakes. In this regard, they will remain silent and participate less in class discussions, and as a result their speaking will be debilitated and evaluated negatively by teachers. As an example, items 2 and 7 deal with English teachers' reactions toward learners' mistakes.

Although there are several existing scales that are commonly used to measure perfectionism, SELTP is specifically designed in the domain of language teaching and learning; thus, we believe that the construction of SELTP represents a significant advance in perfectionism research in the field of language learning and can be employed as a tool for pedagogical purposes.

Further, this scale can bring about awareness for language teachers. It is hoped that, by realizing the ramifications of their perfectionistic tendencies on learning process, which may be detrimental, language teachers try to get rid of them and attempt to create a satisfying environment for learners. Language teachers should be conscious about their beliefs and attitudes toward language learning which have an influential role in shaping the learners' beliefs about successful language

learning. Language teachers are expected to appreciate the post-modern notions like world Englishes and attempt to make learners aware of the fact that there is no best thing, encouraging them to abandon their insistence on native-like accent and being perfect. Moreover, Language teachers are recommended to encourage learners to take risks and never be afraid of faulty performance or being wrong in class. In addition, they are supposed to be careful about their reactions against learners' mistakes and the way they give feedback, since their negative reactions might lead to learners' anxiety and fear of taking risks.

Overall, further research is recommended in order to more substantiate the validity of the scale. This study was conducted by utilizing Rasch measurement; it is recommended to carry out another analysis with factor analysis in order to determine the number of sub-constructs of the scale. Moreover, studies can be conducted to investigate the objective relationship between SELTP and other related variables such as teacher belief, teacher efficacy, teacher success, and teacher burnout. After all, it is our hope that that SELTP represents a fruitful contribution to the study of perfectionism in English language teaching settings to make teachers conscious of their perfectionistic tendencies, trying to remove them. In sum, SELTP seems to be a practical and relatively efficient measure of English language teachers' perfectionism.

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Appendix

A Scale on English Language Teacher Perfectionism (SELTP)

هرگز	به ندرت	اغلب	همیشه	
4	3	2	1	1 معلم زبان من اصرار دارد که در کلاس فقط انگلیسی صحبت کنیم.
4	3	2	1	2 اشتباهاتی که از روی بی دقتی شاگردان است او را ناراحت می کند.
4	3	2	1	3 در بحث های کلاسی اصرار دارد وقتی صحبت می کنیم توجه کامل به گرامر داشته باشیم.
4	3	2	1	4 اگر کلمات را کمی اشتباه تلفظ کنیم سریع آن را تصحیح می کند.
4	3	2	1	5 کسی حق ندارد معنی کلمات را به فارسی بگوید.
4	3	2	1	6 وقتی شاگردان کارها را آنطور که او انتظار دارد انجام نمی دهند ناراحت می شود.
4	3	2	1	7 اصرار دارد که حتما با لهجه انگلیسی یا آمریکایی صحبت کنیم.
1	2	3	4	8 اگر مفهوم چیزی را که (در listening) می شنویم فهمیده باشیم برایش کافی است.
1	2	3	4	9 هیچ تاکیدی بر روی لهجه شاگردان ندارد و فقط بر روی مفهوم آنچه می گویند تمرکز می کند.
1	2	3	4	10 وقتی گرامر را تدریس می کند بعضی نکات را به فارسی توضیح می دهد.
4	3	2	1	11 کم کاری و درس نخواندن شاگردان او را ناراحت می کند.
4	3	2	1	12 انتظار دارد در بخش listening تمام کلمات را دقیق تکرار کنیم.
1	2	3	4	13 اگر قابل فهم صحبت کنیم تاکیدی بر روی دقیق بودن تلفظ کلمات ندارد.
1	2	3	4	14 در حال صحبت اگر بتوانیم منظور را برسانیم اشتباهات گرامری را نادیده می گیرد.
1	2	3	4	15 اگر شاگردان از او درخواست کنند بخشهای دشوار را به فارسی توضیح می دهد.
4	3	2	1	16 اصرار دارد که شاگردان در تمام مطالبی که او تدریس کرده عملکرد خوبی داشته باشند.
4	3	2	1	17 برایش مهم است که روان و بدون مکث صحبت کنیم.
1	2	3	4	18 اگر شاگردان تکالیف را انجام ندهند واکنشی نشان نمی دهد.
4	3	2	1	19 اگر در کلاس فارسی صحبت کنیم واکنش منفی نشان می دهد.
4	3	2	1	20 انتظار دارد تا تمام کلمات را با تکیه (stress) درست تلفظ کنیم.
4	3	2	1	21 وقتی نگارش (writing) را تصحیح می کند بیشتر روی نقطه گذاری تاکید دارد.
4	3	2	1	22 اگر از درسی که جلسه پیش تدریس کرده کسی اشتباه کند واکنش منفی نشان می دهد.
4	3	2	1	23 وقتی گرامر را تدریس می کند انتظار دارد که آن را به طور کامل فهمیده باشیم.
4	3	2	1	24 تحمل عملکرد ضعیف و عذر و بهانه ی شاگردان را ندارد.
4	3	2	1	25 انتظار دارد که تمام شاگردان در امتحان نمره ی خوب و عالی داشته باشند.
4	3	2	1	26 از شاگردان انتظار دارد که همیشه کلمات را دقیق و درست تلفظ کنند.
1	2	3	4	27 وقتی در کلاس متنی را می خوانیم به اشتباهات تلفظی واکنشی نشان نمی دهد.
4	3	2	1	28 اگر در حال صحبت اشتباه گرامری داشته باشیم سریع تصحیح می کند.
4	3	2	1	29 اگر عملکرد شاگردان با استانداردهای او هماهنگ نباشد آن را گوشزد می کند.
4	3	2	1	30 از اشتباه شاگردان خیلی ناراحت می شود.

Title

The Acquisition of Relative Clause in Persian Speaking Children

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Biodata

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Abstract

The current study investigated the acquisition of relative clauses (RCs) in Persian-speaking children. Children (N=60) aged 4-6 years completed a picture selection task that tested their comprehension of subject-, object-, and genitive- RCs. The results indicated that a) the children aged 4-5 experienced greater difficulty processing subject and object RCs when compared to 5-6 year olds, b) the 4-5 age group comprehended the three RC types equally, and c) the 5-6 year olds experienced greater difficulty processing GRCs compared to the ORCs and SRCs, and their comprehension of ORCs proved to be better than SRCs.

Key words: Subject relative clause; Object relative clause; Genitive relative clause

1. Introduction

Relative clauses differ in interesting ways in different languages. As a result, they are one of the structures that have been intensively studied across languages. In English, object relatives (where the modified head noun plays the object role in the relative clause) are more difficult to understand than subject relatives.

One source of difficulty in language comprehension is structural ambiguity, which is quite prevalent in language. The most famous example is a sentence constructed by Bever (1970,316), "The horse raced past the barn fell", which has attracted the attention of psychologists and linguists. Most English speakers, on first encounter, tend to interpret "The horse raced past the barn" as a simple SVO structure and then realize that their initial analysis was incorrect. In this example, temporary ambiguity arises because English allows the dropping of the words "that was", which would have made it clear that the sentence begins with a relative clause and thus prevented the incorrect simple SVO

interpretation. A central question in the field of language comprehension concerns how people are able to understand language so effortlessly most of the time, in spite of these and other kinds of ambiguity.

It is also possible to use less extreme examples to investigate language comprehension, and relative clauses of all varieties have proven to be particularly useful structures even when no optional words are omitted, because there are systematic differences in how easy they are to understand.

Two kinds of relative clause constructions in English can be illustrated by the examples in (1.a) and (1.b) below. These two types of relative clauses contain exactly the same words but different orders.

1.a. Subject Relative Clause

The boy [who t attacked Mary] was my classmate.

1.b. Object Relative Clause

The boy [who Mary attacked t] was my classmate.

Brackets surround the relative clauses, which modify the main clause subject in the examples above. It is also possible for the relatives to modify a main clause object, as in the examples in (2.a) and (2.b) below.

2.a. Subject Relative Clause

The girl did not like the boy who t introduced the boss.

2.b. Object Relative Clause

The girl did not like the boy who the boss introduced t.

These two types of relative clauses are distinguished by the role that the head noun ("the boy) plays in the relative clauses. In (1.a) the boy serves as the doer of the action "introduced" in the relative clause, while in (1.b) the boy is instead the object of the action "introduced". The noun modified by the relative clause is called the "head" noun, and based on its function within the relative clause, (1. a) and (2.a) are called "subject relative clauses" while (1.b) and (2.b) are called "object relative clauses".

Traditionally, relativizers like "who" have been called "fillers" since they can be mapped to fill gaps that are posited in the canonical position for noun phrases with their function. The relationship between filler and gap can be characterized either in terms of Linear Distance or Structural Distance. The linear distance of a filler-gap dependency is the number of words between the filler and the gap, as illustrated below in (3.a) and (3.b).

3.a. Subject Relative Clause

the writer who t attacked the people

Filler Gap

3.b. Object Relative Clause

the writer who the people attacked t

Filler

Gap

Example (3) shows that the distance between filler and gap is shorter in subject relative clauses (3.a) than in object relative clauses (3.b) in English. The shorter linear distance between filler and gap in subject relative clauses has been cited as one of the reasons why subject relative clauses are easier to process in English, which has been shown in many previous studies (e.g., Just & Carpenter, 1992). Another way to characterize distance between filler and gap is in terms of hierarchical structures (O'Grady, 1997). The more nodes there are between filler and gap (i.e., the deeper the embedding), the longer the structural distance and possibly the more difficult the construction. Fewer nodes intervene between filler and gap in a subject relative than in an object relative, which may also contribute to the comparative ease English speakers have with subject relatives.

Other factors have also been proposed to account for processing asymmetry in English relative clauses. Another account attributes the processing asymmetry to the relative frequency of different word orders (Bever, 1970; MacDonald & Christiansen, 2002). According to this hypothesis, the word order that is most common in a language will be the easiest for people to process. Consider the English relative clauses below:

4.a. Subject Relative Clause

the writer who t attacked the people
 S V O

4.b. Object Relative Clause

the writer who the people attacked t
 o s v

Subject relative clauses have SVO word order, which is canonical in English, while object relative clauses have the less frequent OSV word order. Thus, subject relatives should be easier for English speakers to understand.

Note that all of the factors described so far are a consequence of word order, since that is what determines Linear and Structural Distance. Since canonical word order varies across languages, these kinds of accounts would make different predictions for different languages. In contrast, there are other accounts whose predictions do not differ across languages. One is the noun phrase Accessibility Hierarchy proposed by Keenan and Comrie (1977). It aims to provide a single generalization across human languages. The accessibility to relative clause formation of certain noun phrases is given as follows:

Subject > Direct Object > Indirect Object > Oblique Object > Genitive > Object of Comparison (where ">" means more accessible than)

The central idea is that if a language permits relativization on a constituent that is lower on the hierarchy, it will naturally permit relativization on all constituents that are higher on it.

Thus, grammatical functions that are higher on the hierarchy can be relativized in more languages. All languages can relativize Subjects but fewer languages can relativize both Subjects and Direct objects, and fewer still can relativize Subjects, Direct Objects, and Indirect Objects, and so on. While English allows relativization of all grammatical functions (Fox, 1987), many other languages such as Mandarin and Basque can relativize only some of them. Thus, subject relatives are the most frequent types of relative clauses across languages. Since the Accessibility Hierarchy puts Subject highest in the hierarchy for all languages, this account predicts that subject relative clauses should be universally easier than object relative clauses, regardless of other properties shown in different languages.

Another explanation (MacWhinney & Pleh, 1988) hypothesizes that people are oriented to the subject of a clause by default because the subject is what the clause is about and shifting perspective to another functional role in the sentence will be harder than maintaining the subject's perspective. Subject relative clauses modifying the main clause subject will be easiest since they require no shifting of perspective. In object relative clauses, however, people have to shift their perspective between the subject of the main clause and the subject of the relative clause and then back to the main clause subject. In contrast, for relative clauses modifying main clause objects, both subject and object relatives require a single shift. For object relatives modifying main clause objects, there must be a single shift from the object of the main clause to the subject of relative clause. For subject relatives modifying main clause objects, a single shift is also required to shift from object of the main clause to subject of the relative clause. To summarize, this account predicts that subject relatives modifying main clause subjects should be easiest, subject and object relatives modifying main clause objects should both be about the same amount harder and object relatives modifying main clause subjects should be hardest. Since those theories were originally based on English, they all explain why subject relatives are easier in English, but it turns out that some of them make different predictions for other languages.

2. Background

Brandt et al. (2009) and Kidd et al. (2007) have shown that the subject–object asymmetry disappears when children are tested on object RCs that conform to the discourse conditions that generally lead to object RC use: when they contain (i) an inanimate head noun, and (ii) a pronominal RC subject, as in *This is the pen that I used yesterday* (cf. *This is the boy the girl chased yesterday*).

Object relatives (ORs) cause heavier processing loads than subject relatives (SRs) in both pre- and post-nominal position (pre-nominal relatives: Miyamoto & Nakamura 2003,; post-nominal relatives: King & Kutas 1995, Traxler et al. 2002). Researchers such as Keenan and Comrie (1977) have argued that object relative clauses are universally more difficult than subject relative clauses, for reasons outlined earlier.

A consistent finding in acquisition and adult sentence processing is that subject RCs such as (3.a) are easier to process than object RCs, as in (3.b), e.g., Arnon (2005); Aydin (2007); Correa (1995); Diessel and Tomasello (2005); Gibson (2000); O'zcan (1997); O'zcelik (2006). In (3.a) and (3.b) the underscore gap marks the grammatical role occupied by the head noun in the RC. In the case of (3.a), the head noun (the writer) occupies the subject role, and in the case of (3.b), it occupies the object role. As stated before a number of proposals have been put forward to explain why (3.a) is generally easier to process than (3.b). The structural distance hypothesis is the first (SDH; O'Grady, Lee, & Choo, 2003), which claims that the structural distance between the head noun and the position it occupies in the RC determines sentence difficulty. The same prediction is made by accounts that attribute the difficulty to the linear distance between the head and its position in the RC; that is, the number of intervening words between the head noun and the gap (e.g., Gibson, 1998, 2000; Hawkins, 1989). We call this the linear distance hypothesis (LDH).

The difference in complexity has also been attributed to the fact that object RCs have non-canonical word order within the RC (in English, Object–Verb–Subject; e.g., Bever, 1970; Christiansen & MacDonald, 2009; MacDonald & Christiansen, 2002). The suggestion being that, since canonical word order is more frequently encountered, it is easier to parse than non-canonical word order, which is comparatively infrequent and therefore marked. This is called the word order difference hypothesis (WDH).

The relevant evidence in the adult processing literature that explicitly decide between these approaches comes from languages that, unlike most Indo-European languages, are head-final and have pronominal RCs. In these languages, the SDH predicts that subject RCs should be easier to process than object RCs, yet the LDH predicts the opposite. In line with the LDH, Hsiao and Gibson (2003) showed that object RCs were easier to process than subject RCs in speakers of Chinese, and Ishizuka, Nakatani, and Gibson (2006) reported a similar result in Japanese. These results are not without controversy, however, since Chien-Jar and Bever (2006) have argued that there is in fact a subject RC preference in Chinese. Finally, Carreiras, Dunabeitia, Vergara, de la Cruz Pavi'a, and Laka (2010) reported an object RC preference for Basque.

In acquisition, our understanding of this issue has been hampered by methodological difficulties. For instance, Hakuta (1982) and Clancy, Lee, and Zoh (1986) reported studies of RC acquisition of Japanese and Korean children, respectively; yet their studies were limited by the fact that they presented their test sentences without a context in which to process the RCs as a noun modifier. However, studies of children's spontaneous speech (Japanese; Ozeki & Shirai, 2010) and their elicited production (Quechua; Courtney, 2006) have shown that, for the relevant typological contrast, object RCs are not always more difficult for children. Kidd, Brandt, Lieven, and Tomasello (2007) and Brandt et al. (2009) have also shown that English- and German speaking children do not find object RCs more difficult when they are tested on test sentences that conform to the discourse conditions that lead to object RC formation. Arnon (2010) has reported similar results for Hebrew. These results from the adult-processing and child language-acquisition literatures suggest that the SDH hypothesis has trouble explaining the range of crosslinguistic results, which can in turn be accommodated by the LDH (with some qualification, see Warren & Gibson, 2002). However, the LDH hypothesis does not account for the fact that children are not skilled at processing genitive RCs (e.g., the woman whose cat licked the bowl; Diessel & Tomasello, 2005), suggesting that difficulty is not totally captured by simple distance metrics. The WDH can also account for the range of results, although in languages with free word order it is difficult to predict the role of canonicity in the absence of reliable estimates of word order use.

Diessel and Tomasello (2005) showed that English- and German-speaking children performed very badly on genitive RCs in an elicited imitation task, and attributed the difficulty to both syntactic and semantic properties of the genitive.

2.1. Persian relative clauses

Relative clauses in Persian use the word "ke", which functions as a relativizer, or relative clause marker, but also has several other functions. In relative clauses, "ke" functions like the relative pronoun in English and it is used with both animate and inanimate head nouns. English has SVO while Persian has SOV default basic word order. Both in English and Persian the head occurs at the beginning of the relative clause; they are both head first.

The following examples illustrate the construction of Persian relative clauses:

5.a. Persian Subject Relative Clause

mardi [ke Ali azaš enteqad kard]
 man that Ali from him criticize PAST 3SG
 "the man [who Ali criticized]"

5.b. Persian object Relative Clause

mardi [ke az Ali entiqad kard]

man that from Ali criticize PAST 3SG

“the man [who criticized Ali]”

“Ke” serves as the relative marker in the relative clause. In Persian it is subject relative clauses that have SVO word order, which is the canonical word order in Persian. Object relative clauses, on the other hand, have SOV word order, which is non-canonical and thus less frequent. In *Persian* RCs modify the head; they follow the NP they modify. All *Persian* RCs are typically introduced by the invariant complementizer *ke*.

Like the East-Asian languages Japanese, Korean, and Chinese, Persian is a null-subject head-final language with Subject–Object–Verb (SOV) word order (Karimi, 2005). Persian RCs are post-nominal while East-Asian languages are not. Therefore Persian is an interesting language in which to study the acquisition of RCs, because typologically it falls in between the European and East-Asian languages that have been at the centre of debate about RC acquisition and processing.

So a feature of Persian is that there is no relative pronoun in Persian RCs: the RC is always introduced by the complementizer *ke*. Thus the complementizer is invariant; it does not agree with the function of the noun phrase it follows and takes the same form regardless of the animacy, gender, function, or number of the noun phrase it follows. Persian allows pronominal copies to occur in gap sites in some RCs; that is, a personal pronoun is used where a gap might be expected. For instance, the following example (a) represents a Persian RC in which the pronoun ‘u’, ‘she’, is used resumptively, and example (b) shows a clitic pronoun, as ‘her’, used resumptively.

6.a. zan- I [ke u ra davat kardid] Woman RM
[that her OM invite- PAST-2SG]

“The woman whom you invited”

6.b. Zan- I [ke davatas~ kardid]
Woman RM [that invite her PAST-2SG]

“The woman whom you invited”

Two more relevant points to note about the Persian language are that (i) verbs are inflected for number and person, and (ii) specific objects are marked by “ra^”, “ro” or “o” (OM, object marker, henceforth). In Persian RCs resumptive pronouns is important. According to Taghvaipour (2004) a subject RC requires a gap, an object RC optionally permits a gap (thus allowing a resumptive pronoun in place of a gap), and a genitive RC never permits a gap (i.e., it always requires a resumptive pronoun). Table 1 shows the pattern of distribution of gaps and resumptive pronouns in RCs. If the relativized element is subject, a resumptive pronoun cannot appear. This is illustrated in (7).

7. mard- I ke ___ pirahan o puš id
Man RM that ___ shirt OM wore 3sg

“The man who wore a shirt”

*mard- I ke u pirahan o puš id
Man RM that h shirt OM wore 3sg

“*The man who he wore a shirt”

Example (8) shows alternative expressions of a Persian object RC representing the woman that the man is looking at. They illustrate how Persian allows gaps and resumptive pronouns alternatively if the relativized element is the object.

8. zan- i [ke [mard Negah __ mikone]]
woman RM [that [man look at __ do.PRES 3SG]]

“the woman that the man is looking at”

zan- I [ke [mard nega(ha) s̃ mikone]]
woman RM [that [man look at him do.PRES 3SG]]

“*the woman that the man is looking at him”

If the element which is relativized is the possessor NP, a resumptive pronoun must be present. This is contrasted in (9):

9. mard- i ke pirahan- as̃ zard ast
man RM that shirt his yellow is

“the man whose shirt is yellow”

*mard- I ke pirahan __ zard ast
man RM that shirt __ yellow is

“the man whose shirt is yellow”

In genitive RC as in (10), there is no gap but a resumptive pronoun –as̃, which shows the original location of the head noun in the RC.

10. zan- i [ke [gorbe- as̃ [fekr mikone]]]
woman RM that cat her thinks

“the woman whose cat thinks”

The present study intended to explore the difficulty Persian-speaking children experience in the acquisition of three Persian RC types (subject, object, and genitive). The predictions of each complexity metric outlined above: SDH, LDH, and the WDH were tested.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

Sixty monolingual Persian-speaking children, between 48 and 72 months of age, were recruited for the present study from Tebyan pre-elementary school and Ayandegan nursery school in Shiraz. All of them were normally developing children with no language impairments, hearing deficits, neurological difficulties, and social, emotional, or behavioural problems.

3.2. Instruments

The participants performed a picture selection task that consisted of 15 items: 5 subject-, 5 object- and 5 genitive-RCs. There were three pictures, presented vertically on each page of the test booklet from which the participants had to choose the picture that matched the sentence read to them by the experimenter. All the verbs used in the RCs were in the present tense in order to control for possible animacy effects, which has been shown to affect children’s comprehension (e.g., Brandt et al., 2009; Correa, 1995; Goodluck & Tavakolian, 1982). All the noun phrases were animate, therefore; testing children only on animate NPs to test the differing predictions of the structural processing theories outlined above. Verbs in Persian agree in person and number with the subject in each clause, so the NPs had the same person and number to factor out possible cues from verb agreement.

3.3. Procedure

The children were tested individually. At the beginning of the session, the children were shown the test booklet. They were told that they would hear the experimenter read out a sentence that matched only one of the pictures, and that their task was to choose the picture that the experimenter had described. The children were then given three practice items to ensure that they understood the procedure. On these trials the children were provided with feedback if they gave incorrect answers; the experimenter showed them the correct picture and how that picture differed from the others. No feedback was provided during the remainder of the testing session. A test sentence was repeated only if the child requested this specifically, and was only repeated once. All children were tested in a single testing session. The entire session lasted approximately 10 minutes for each child.

4. Results and Discussion

Items were initially scored as either correct, if they pointed to the correct picture, or incorrect. An error analysis was also conducted based on the incorrect decisions the children made. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to find out whether there existed any differences between these two age groups in the comprehension of RC types and to see which type they comprehend better. The results are summarized in the Tables.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics for Performance of Different Age Groups on SRCs

	age group	N	Sum of Ranks	Mean Rank
score	4-5	30	788.00	26.27
	5-6	30	1042.00	34.73
	Total	60		

Table2 Mann-Whitney Test for Performance of Different Age Groups on SRCs

	score
Mann-Whitney U	323.000
Wilcoxon W	788.000
Z	-2.021
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.043

Tables 1 and 2 show that the children's performance improved with age across Subject RCs (sig=0.043<0.05) and that the 5-6 age group's mean on SRCs was significantly higher than the 4-5 age group's (sig1-tailed=0.02<0.05).

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics for Performance of Different Age Groups on ORCs

	age group	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
score	4-5	30	22.13	664.00
	5-6	30	38.87	1166.00
	Total	60		

Table4 Mann-Whitney Test for Performance of Different Age Groups on ORCs

	score
Mann-Whitney U	199.000
Wilcoxon W	664.000
Z	-3.983
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

Tables 3 and 4 indicate that the 2 groups' performance on object RCs differed significantly (sig=0 <0.05) and that the 5-6 age group's mean on ORCs was higher than the 4-5 age group's (sig(1-tailed)=0.0<0.05).

Table 5 Descriptive Statistics for Performance of Different Age Groups on GRCs

	age group	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
score	4-5	30	30.83	925.00
	5-6	30	30.17	905.00
	Total	60		

Table6 Mann-Whitney Test for Performance of Different Age Groups on GRCs

	score
Mann-Whitney U	440.000
Wilcoxon W	905.000
Z	-.157
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.876

As tables 5 and 6 indicate the two groups' performance on GRCs wasn't significantly different (sig=0.876 >0.05), and the two groups' comprehension of this RC type was almost the same; it didn't improve with age.

The Independent Samples t-test was used to compare the overall performance of the groups on the RC types under investigation. The results are shown in the following tables.

Table 7 Mean and SD of the Overall Performance of the Two Groups on the RC Types

	ageGr	N	Mean	max	Std. Deviation
	4-5	30	11.0000	15	1.83829
	5-6	30	12.3333	15	1.84453

Table 8 The Independent Samples T Test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Equal variances assumed	0.32	0.57	-2.80	58.00	0.01
Equal variances not assumed			-2.80	58.00	0.01

As tables 7 and 8 clarifies the two age groups' overall performance was proved to be significantly different (sig=0.01 <0.05); the 5-6 year olds' mean was higher than the 4-5 ones (sig(1-tailed)=0.0<0.05).

Tests were conducted to compare each group's performance on each RC type. The following tables show how the 4-5 year olds performed on different RC types under investigation.

Table 9 The 4-5 Year Olds' Performance on Different RC Types

age group		kind	N	Mean Rank
4-5	score	SRC	30	50.20
		ORC	30	44.77
		GRC	30	41.53
		Total	90	

Table 10 4-5 Group's Chi-Square

age group		score
4-5	Chi-Square	1.924
	df	2
	Asymp. Sig.	.382

Tables 9 and 10 indicate that this group performed equally well on the various RC types and that there was no significant difference among their grades in the three RC groups (sig=0.382 >0.05).

The same statistics were used to investigate how the 5-6 year olds performed on different RC types under investigation.

Table 11 The 5-6 Year Olds' Performance on Different RC Types

age group		kind	N	Mean Rank
5-6	score	SRC	30	47.37
		ORC	30	58.65
		GRC	30	30.48
		Total	90	

Table 12 5-6 Group's Chi-Square

age group		score
5-6	Chi-Square	20.219
	df	2
	Asymp. Sig.	.000

Tables 11 and 12 show that the members of this group performed differently on various RC types and this difference was significant. ($\text{sig}=0.00 < 0.05$). The difference among the three RC types can be investigated through the following tables.

Table 13 Subject RC Vs. Object RC

	kind	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
score	SRC	30	26.60	798.00
	ORC	30	34.40	1032.00
	Total	60		

Table 14 Mann-Whitney Test on Subject RC Vs. Object RC

	score
Mann-Whitney U	333.000
Wilcoxon W	798.000
Z	-1.972
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.049

As tables 13 and 14 show the 5-6 year old group's performance on SRCs and ORCs was significantly different ($\text{sig}=0.049 < 0.05$). Since $\text{sig}(1\text{-tailed})=0.02 < 0.0$, it was concluded that they comprehended ORCs better than SRCs.

Table 15 Subject RCVs. Genitive RC

	kind	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
score	SRC	30	36.27	1088.00
	GRC	30	24.73	742.00
	Total	60		

Table 16 Mann-Whitney Test on Subject RC Vs. Genitive RC

	score
Mann-Whitney U	277.000
Wilcoxon W	742.000
Z	-2.673
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.008

According to tables 15 and 16 the 5-6 year old group's performance on SRCs and GRCs was significantly different ($\text{sig}=0.008 < 0.05$); they comprehended SRCs better than GRCs ($\text{sig}(1\text{-tailed})=0.004 < 0.05$).

Table 17 Object RC Vs. Genitive RC

	kind	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
score	ORC	30	39.75	1192.50
	GRC	30	21.25	637.50
	Total	60		

Table 18 Mann-Whitney Test on Object RC Vs. Genitive RC

	score
Mann-Whitney U	172.500
Wilcoxon W	637.500
Z	-4.374
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

Tables 17 and 18 indicate that the 5-6 year old group's performance on ORCs and GRCs was significantly different ($\text{sig}=0.000<0.05$). It can also be seen that they comprehended ORCs better than GRCs ($\text{sig}(1 \text{ tailed})=0.004<0.05$).

Overall it can be concluded that the 5-6 year olds performed best on object RCs, followed by subject RCs, followed finally by genitive RCs ($\text{ORC}>\text{SRC}>\text{GRC}$).

4. Conclusion

One of the controversial issues in current psycholinguistic research is whether object relative clauses are universally more difficult than subject relative clauses. So far, most research in other languages has found object relative clauses to be harder than subject relative clauses, just as in English (Dutch: Mak, Vonk, & Schriefers, 2002, German: Schriefers, Friederici, & Kuhn, 1995). However, there are some conflicting results. Recent findings in English and German have shown that object RCs are not always more difficult than subject RCs (Brandt et al., 2009, and Kidd et al., 2007). Since most theories on sentence complexity are originally based on English, they all explain why subject relatives are easier in English, but it turns out that some of them make different predictions for other languages.

The current study investigated the acquisition of relative clauses in Persian speaking children aged 4-5 and 5-6 years. Like European languages, for instance English and German, Persian has post nominal RCs. We specifically tested the predictions of three theoretical approaches to sentence complexity; word order difference hypothesis (WDH), the structural distance hypothesis (SDH), and the linear distance hypothesis (LDH).

The first major finding was that in the 5-6 year old children object RCs were the easiest to interpret. This finding is inconsistent with all of the theoretical approaches to structural complexity. While numerous studies of language acquisition have shown that children experience difficulty with non-canonical structures (e.g., Bates & Mac-Whinney, 1982, 1989; Bever, 1970; Slobin & Bever, 1982), this study reveals that non-canonical word order does not cause difficulty for the Persian speaking children.

The results from the present study suggest that the 5-6 year old children analyze the RCs based on the presupposition that the doer of the action in SCRs and OCRs is the one who is the closest to the verb stated; the one who has the least linear distance to the verb, *provided that it's a noun not a*

pronoun. As an instance the sentence : ‘Pesari ke Mina ra mizanad’ (The boy who hits Mina) is comprehended as: ‘Mina mizanad’ (Mina hits), since ‘Mina’ is the closest to the verb, and in: ‘Pesari ke Mina u ra mizanad’ (The boy who Mina hits), ‘Mina’ is again assumed to be the doer of the action for the same reason. The children allocated no roles to the pronouns such as u (him) in this example!

The 5-6 year old children in general performed well on ORCs , and when they couldn’t not interpret them correctly they chose pictures at random. In some occasions, the children interpreted an object RC as a subject RC, imposing Persian canonical word order onto the RC in the test sentence.

The second finding was that the 5-6 year old children faced the most difficulty dealing with GRCs. The complexity of genitive RCs may first and foremost be due to non-canonical word order. Second, they are likely to be low in frequency, suggesting that children have very little experience processing them. Upon hearing the first part of the sentence, that is, the head noun plus the complementizer, the children were likely to assume that this was either a subject or an object RC. This expectation is likely to make genitive RCs difficult, since the children have to reanalyze these sentences if they are to correctly process them. In the genitive RCs the children sometimes ignored the subject of the matrix clause, i.e., the possessor, interpreting ‘the girl whose rabbit is eating ice cream’ as ‘the rabbit is eating ice cream’ or ignored the second noun phrase in the sentence, the possessum, interpreting ‘the girl whose rabbit is eating ice cream’ as ‘the girl is eating ice cream’.

The third major finding was that the 4-5 year old children did not vary in their performance on subject, object, and genitive RCs; they saw no difference among them and dealt with them all the same way.

The results also indicated that the children aged 4-5 experienced greater difficulty processing subject, and object RCs when compared to 5-6 year olds. This seemed to be due to the fact that they were not competent enough to comprehend different RC types well; the children’s performance on these RC types was proved to improve with age.

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Title

The Effect of Task type on Learning English Collocations

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Abstract

The present study aims to investigate the effects of two types of tasks; namely, receptive and productive, on learning English collocations. For this purpose, sixty advanced EFL students were divided into two groups. One of the groups received a receptive task while in the second group productive tasks were implemented. Immediate and delayed receptive and productive tests were given. The results revealed that although both tasks led to significant gains in the receptive tests, the productive task group significantly outperformed on the productive tests. The findings are pedagogically helpful for EFL teachers, as they suggest the use of productive tasks for teaching collocations.

Keywords: Collocation, Receptive task, Productive task, Advanced EFL learners

1. Introduction

The literature on collocation reveals a consensus among researchers and language pedagogists as to the importance of collocation for foreign or second language learning. It has

been proposed that an increment of the students' knowledge of collocation will prompt an improvement of their oral skills, listening comprehension and reading speed. There has been augmented interest in the role of collocations in the classroom and demands for a more explicit and notable place to be given to their teaching within academic curriculums (Hill, 2000; Kennedy, 2003; Lewis, 2000). Notwithstanding the problems learners have in producing collocations and their pivotal role in fluency development, the number of empirical studies which have addressed the effective teaching of collocations is relatively small. The present study investigates teaching of collocations through two task types, namely receptive and productive, and measures their influence on the receptive and productive acquisition of English collocations in the immediate and delayed posttests. By addressing these areas, this study aims to provide empirical support for the more effective means of teaching collocation in the language classroom.

2. Background

The bulk of literature on collocations has focused on collocational behavior and their implementation by learners in the second language (L2) classroom. Corpus linguists have investigated different types of collocation, and several studies have been conducted to find out their relationship with other multiword lexical units (Moon, 1997, 1998). Kennedy (2003) as well as Xiao and McEney (2006) conducted an investigation into the grammatical and semantic constraints on co-occurrence of words. Research found that collocation is a highly problematic area for L2 learners and that collocational errors constitute a high proportion of learner errors in L2 writing (Bahns & Eldaw, 1993; Hussein, 1990). Analysis of learners' essays and reports revealed that collocation, particularly the verb-noun form, was the cause of a notable number of learner errors (Nesslhauf, 2003).

Although as researchers such as Mackin (1978) emphasized, collocation may be learned incidentally along with the meaning of single-word items, studies on EFL vocabulary learning evidence that incidentally acquiring meaning for even relatively salient single-word items is a relatively slow process with learning dependant on the amount of input (Warning & Takaki, 2003; Webb, 2007a).

Most of the studies that address the issue of collocation are concerned with the use of computer –aided language learning (CALL) facilities. Sun and Wang (2003) investigated the effectiveness of inductive and deductive approaches to learning grammatical collocations at two levels of difficulty in the classroom. The researchers asked two groups of senior high

school students to complete an hour-long deductive or inductive teaching approach. The deductive group received rule explanations with example sentences and the inductive group had to induce the patterns using a concordancer. The results of the posttest were in favor of the inductive group as the learners in this group improved slightly more than those in the deductive group in learning collocation. The level of difficulty was also found to play a role in the learning outcome since easy collocations proved to be more suitable for an inductive approach. The design of the study, however, underwent some criticisms, including the small sample size of collocations and the arbitrary nature with which the collocations were divided into levels of difficulty (Chan and Liou, 2005).

Being a relatively new method, task-based language teaching does not have a literature as rich as that of other methods and approaches. However, a good number of studies have been carried out with a specific focus on the use of tasks in teaching a foreign language. Tasks hold a central place in current SLA research and also in language pedagogy. This is evident in the large number of recent publications relating to task-based learning and teaching. Many researchers have attempted to brief language teachers how tasks can facilitate L2 learning (for example, Crookes and Gass 1993; Foster and Skehan 1996). Researchers have investigated the effect of task-based instruction on different aspects of L2 learning. A great body of research enlightened language teachers about the fruitfulness of implementing tasks into grammar instruction (For example, Fotos and Ellis 1991; Mohammadi 2007; Ahmadian 2009).

Few studies, however, have compared the effects of utilizing different task types on the learners' vocabulary gains. To take an example, Joe (1994) conducted a study in order to see into the effect of generative tasks on incidental vocabulary knowledge. To determine his participant's level of vocabulary knowledge before the experiment, Joe made an interview with him. A second vocabulary knowledge interview was run after the experiment and two multiple-choice tests were given. The research findings revealed that generative tasks are advantageous for the acquisition of unknown words. The effects of the "read and retell" task on incidental vocabulary learning was examined in another study by Joe (1998). The process of reading and retelling a text, as the study concluded, engages learners in generative processing of information and subsequent promotion of incidental vocabulary learning. Moreover, de la Fuente (2002), Ellis and He (1999), Ellis et al., (1994) and Loschky (1994) researched L2 vocabulary acquisition through tasks while production of specific L2 target words was built into the tasks. The findings of these studies reveal that tasks that stimulate negotiation of specific L2 lexical forms may be beneficial for productive acquisition

“provided that the students have the opportunity to use the items they have begun to acquire and to receive feedback from other speakers” Ellis et al. 1994: 483.

De la Fuente (2006) investigated the effects of three vocabulary lessons, one of which was based on the traditional method, Presentation, Practice, and Production (PPP) and the other two were based on task-based instruction. The results uncovered the effectiveness of task-based lessons as compared to the old PPP lesson. Warning (1997, b) concluded that receptive tasks provoke better results in receptive vocabulary knowledge while productive tasks tend to improve productive gains. Since productive tasks are likely to take more time than the receptive ones, their subsequent effect on the vocabulary gains may be partly due to the longer duration of these tasks. In a more recent study, Webb and Kagimoto (2009) compared the effects of receptive and productive tasks on the learning of collocation. They measured the receptive and productive knowledge of the instructed collocations through four tests. The first test measured the productive knowledge of collocations while the second one measured the receptive knowledge. In the third and fourth tests the learners were required to write the translation of the collocations in L2 and L1 respectively. The results showed that both tasks were effective. When the researchers divided the participants into higher and lower level, they came to the understanding that the productive tasks were more beneficial for the higher level learners while the receptive tasks were more fruitful for the lower levels. Although webb and kagimoto (2009) included the productive knowledge of collocations in their study, they neglected the oral production of the target collocations as well as their long term retention. This is what this study purports to investigate. Considering the gap in literature with respect to investigations on the oral production of English collocations, the present study aims to investigate the effect of two types of tasks, namely the receptive and productive on the collocation learning of advanced EFL students in Iranian context.

The current study seeks to address the following research questions:

1. Is there any significant difference between the performance of participants in the receptive task group and of those in the productive task group as to the receptive acquisition of English collocation in the immediate post-test?
2. Is there any significant difference between the performance of participants in the receptive task group and of those in the productive task group as to the productive acquisition of English collocation in the immediate post-test?
3. Is there any significant difference between the performance of participants in the receptive task group and of those in the productive task group as to the receptive acquisition of English collocation in the delayed post-test?

4. Is there any significant difference between the performance of participants in the receptive task group and of those in the productive task group as to the productive acquisition of English collocation in the delayed post-test?

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The sample participants who were willing to take part in this study were all female advanced students of English as a Foreign language in a language institute. The participants' age ranged between sixteen to thirty (i.e. mainly adults). After determining their age and sex, eighty students were initially chosen to participate in the study. In order to ensure the homogeneity of the students in terms of their vocabulary knowledge, a modified version of Nation's (1990) Levels Test was administered. Considering the Levels Test results, sixty students were chosen as the participants of the study. The students were all equally distributed into two classes so that each class was composed of thirty female homogeneous adult participants at advanced level. This way the researchers were confident that any factor related to the number of participants, their age and sex, that might have confounded the results of the experiment, have been eliminated.

The two groups of the participants were subsequently arranged, according to the purpose of the study, in the following way:

1. The receptive task group, which was presumed to be instructed by receptive tasks.
2. The productive task group, which was supposed to receive instruction through productive tasks.

3.2. Materials

In the study, a number of instruments were implemented that will be described below.

3.2.1. Proficiency Level Test (PLT)

A modified version of Nation's (1990) Proficiency Level Test was used before the commencement of the treatment in order to make sure about the homogeneity of the participants in terms of their word knowledge.

3.2.2. Test of target words unfamiliarity

Before the commencement of the experiment a test was administered to make sure that the students were all unfamiliar with the to-be-learned collocations. In a multiple-choice format the test included items in which the node word for each collocation was given and the

students were required to choose the correct collocate from four choices or select a fifth choice, *I don't know*, if they did not know the answer.

Example

Lose a) touch b) teach c) trouble d) travel e) I don't know

The test included fifty items; each item questioned the meaning of one of the target collocations. The students were also asked to tick the word if they knew the collocation before but they could not remember it now. After analyzing the results, twenty collocations with which none of the participants were familiar were selected as the target collocations of the study.

3.2.3. Recognition post-test

After the experiment, a twenty-item multiple choice recognition test was administered to test the participants' short-term memory regarding the instructed collocation. The test was identical to the pretest discussed above except that the number of target collocations had been reduced to the 20 which were learned in the experiment. One week after the treatment, the same testing procedure was gone through to test the retention of the learnt collocations in long-term memory. In order to eliminate test familiarity, the order of the items and distracters were changed for the delayed post-test.

3.2.4. Tests of vocabulary production

At the end of the instruction session a production test was run in a language laboratory. Students were given the node words from the target collocations and were asked to say the collocates, which they had learned in the treatment and their voices were recorded. In the example below, the learners were required to say the target collocate *demand* before the node word *meet* with which it had appeared in the treatment.

Example

Meet

3.3. Procedures

To accomplish the purpose of the study, the following procedures were carried out:

After administering the Proficiency Level Test and the test of vocabulary unfamiliarity, there remained sixty participants and twenty collocations with which none of the students were familiar. The participants encountered each collocation along with its first language (L1) meaning followed by two example sentences. Later, in the receptive group, the students were given a receptive task in which each of the target collocations was presented in three new sentences and the students were asked to read the sentences silently.

In the productive treatment, the participants encountered the collocations in the same sentences as the receptive task. However, the node word was provided alone and the students were required to find the appropriate collocate from the list of words provided and read the collocations aloud as they fill in the blanks. The participants were monitored to ensure that they pronounced the collocations in each sentence. The answer key was later provided for the students to check their answers. After the treatment the students were given a production test and a recognition test. In order to test the participants' long-term as well as short-term memory regarding the instructed items, similar testing procedures were gone through one week after the instruction.

3.3.1. Scoring and coding procedures

As it was mentioned earlier, after the treatment sessions a productive test and a recognition test was given. The recognition test consisted of twenty multiple-choice items. For the purpose of scoring this test each correct response was given one point and a zero point was given to the items with no answer or a wrong answer. As for the productive test, each correct response was given two points. If a response was mispronounced and it resembled the target collocate, was singular when it should have been plural, plural when it should have been singular, or the wrong part of speech, it was marked as partial knowledge and was awarded one score. As an illustration, for the target collocation *lose touch*, responses such as *touches*, and *touching* were scored one. In order to ensure the reliability of the test of oral production, two raters scored each individual and the reliability between the two raters was 0.9.

4. Results

In order to determine which group obtained the better results, the scores of two groups on the four tests were compared. The descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, and number of participants) of the scores for the immediate test measuring receptive knowledge of collocation are reported in table 1. The results show that both groups demonstrated large gains in knowledge with very little difference between the scores for both groups.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for the immediate receptive test

	Method	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
receptive test1	receptive task	16.2667	1.50707	30
	productive task	16.7667	1.52414	30
	Total	16.5167	1.52373	60

Table 2 presents the results of the immediate productive test. Looking at the table, one can observe that the two groups obtained similar results.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for the immediate productive test

Method		Mean	Std. Deviation	N
productive test1	receptive task	16.0667	1.41259	30
	productive task	16.3333	1.97105	30
	Total	16.2000	1.70543	60

The descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, and number of participants) of the scores for the delayed test measuring receptive knowledge of collocation are reported in table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for the delayed receptive test

Method		Mean	Std. Deviation	N
receptive test2	receptive task	13.0667	1.74066	30
	productive task	13.8667	1.65536	30
	Total	13.4667	1.73172	60

Figures of table 3 reveal that the two groups of the study had a similar performance on the delayed test of receptive knowledge. The last two series of scores are related to the students' scores on the delayed test of productive knowledge the results of which appear in table 4.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics for the delayed productive test

Method		Mean	Std. Deviation	N
productive test2	receptive task	9.8333	1.76329	30
	productive task	12.1667	1.28877	30
	Total	11.0000	1.93101	60

Here, it can be observed that the group of students who received productive task outperformed the receptive task group. In order to make the obtained descriptive statistics more meaningful, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed the results of which appear in tables 5 and 6. The independent variable was the type of learning task and the four tests, as described in table 6, were considered as the dependant variables.

Table 5. Multivariate Tests (c)

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.997	5425.384	4.000	55.000	.000	.997
	Wilks' Lambda	.003	5425.384	4.000	55.000	.000	.997
	Hotelling's Trace	394.573	5425.384	4.000	55.000	.000	.997
	Roy's Largest Root	394.573	5425.384	4.000	55.000	.000	.997
method	Pillai's Trace	.428	10.293	4.000	55.000	.000	.428
	Wilks' Lambda	.572	10.293	4.000	55.000	.000	.428
	Hotelling's Trace	.749	10.293	4.000	55.000	.000	.428
	Roy's Largest Root	.749	10.293	4.000	55.000	.000	.428

The multivariate test, as presented in table 5, revealed an overall significant difference between the two tasks (sig: .000, $p < 0.05$). In order to locate the difference, tests of between-subjects effect was conducted.

Table 6. Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Method	receptive test1	3.750	1	3.750	1.632	.206	.027
	productive test1	1.067	1	1.067	.363	.549	.006
	receptive test2	9.600	1	9.600	3.327	.073	.054
	productive test2	81.667	1	81.667	34.241	.000	.371

The results showed that the difference lies in the delayed productive test (sig:0.000). As it was revealed in table 4, the productive task group outperformed the receptive task (mean: 12.1667), therefore, we can conclude that there was a significant difference between the performance of the two groups of study in the delayed productive test in favor of the productive task group.

4.1 Student perspective

At the end of the experiment, an interview was carried out in order to ask the students to express their opinions about the lesson. In the receptive group, many students stated that the tasks were good and useful and they learned something new. The general impression from the productive group was also positive as most of the students considered the tasks fruitful. One of the students in the productive group mentioned that “ since during the lesson we had some tasks which asked us to pronounce the words I think I performed well on the tests.” Another felt that although the tasks were worthwhile they needed more practice: “In the immediate tests I could answer most of the questions but in the delayed one I forgot many words, I think it would be better if we had more practice.”

5. Discussions and conclusion

Based on the results obtained from statistical analyses, it was revealed that both tasks were effective methods of teaching collocation as much as the receptive knowledge is concerned. In other words, despite the qualitative differences in terms of the type of instruction, the receptive and productive tasks both seemed to be effective in promoting the immediate retrieval of target collocations. It is possible that the amount of processing that took place during both tasks was enough for the learners to achieve good results on the immediate posttests, both recognition and production tests. These findings are consistent with Webb & Kagimoto (2009) which compared the effects of receptive and productive tasks on the

collocation learning of higher level and lower level students and concluded that both task types are effective in receptive and productive learning. However, considering the productive knowledge of the collocations, although the two groups gained almost similar results in the immediate posttest, the mean score for the receptive task and the productive task being 16.06 and 16.33 respectively, there was found a significant difference between the performance of two groups in the delayed production test. It is possible that the productive task allow for deeper processing of the collocations by helping the learners to establish more productive meaning-form connections. Based on some studies (e.g. Schmidt, 1990), it can be claimed that the way learners process information influences learning. According to Laufer and Hulstijn (2001), retention and learning of unfamiliar words depends upon the degree of involvement which is operationalized by the three factors of need, search and evaluation. In processing the words and when involvement is higher, better retention will happen. In this study, while learners in the receptive group had to read the new collocations in the three sentences provided for each target collocation, the students in the productive group, as discussed in the procedure section, had to choose the appropriate collocate to fill in the blanks and finally check their answers. Therefore, it is fair to say that the three factors of need, search and evaluation were stronger in the productive tasks leading to more involvement of the learners and consequently more learning.

It is worth mentioning that a comparison of the participants' scores on the receptive and productive tasks revealed that the scores on the productive tests were lower than those on the receptive tests. These findings are consistent with the previous studies stating that recognition tests lead to better performance than recall test, e.g. Postman, Jenkins, & Postman (1984), and Jourabchi (1994). As Ellis (1995), Glover (1989), and McDaniel & Mason (1985) found before, selecting the correct response is much easier than producing a response from memory. In sum, even though the inherent qualities of the two task types, namely the receptive task and productive task, may not, as shown by immediate tests, have a different impact on the collocation learning of students in the short term retention, they seem to have different effects in the long term retention.

5.1. Pedagogical implications

Putting the findings of research into practice is one of the important challenges. It is up to the researchers, textbook writers, and in service programs for teachers to inform foreign language teachers of the recent findings of the researchers in the field. Otherwise, the findings of research are of little value. This research project can have some pedagogical implications for teachers. In ESL context, it is necessary to make learners aware of the importance of learning

collocation, and to teach them to notice words that regularly appear together in context. The current study showed that commonly used tasks for teaching individual words can be easily altered to effectively teach collocation. The findings of this study have some implications for researchers as well. Those who conduct research in the area of language teaching may be inspired to compare the effects of different task types on learning collocation.

Any study has its limitations and shortcomings and this research study is not an exception. Some of the restrictions imposed upon this research study are as follows:

1. Due to the restrictions of the institute, and to have homogeneous students in terms of gender, we were obliged to select participants only among the female students.
2. The participants of the present study were all advanced students. This puts another restriction on the results of the study to be generalizable.
5. We were obliged to include participants from a single language background, i.e. Persian. This can be counted as another limitation of this study.
6. In the present study, no more than two task types, namely the receptive and productive tasks, were compared.

The current study examined the effects of receptive and productive tasks on learning collocation. Participants in the receptive group encountered target collocations in three glossed sentences, and participants in the productive group completed a cloze task in which they had to fill in the target collocations in blanks using the same sentences read by the receptive group. The results showed that there was no significant difference between the two tasks on the immediate tests of receptive and productive knowledge. However, analyses of the participants' scores on the delayed test of production indicated that participants in the productive task group significantly outperformed those in the receptive group. Considering the scarce of research on learning collocation, and having in mind the variety of tasks applicable in teaching collocation, further research investigating the effects of other vocabulary learning tasks would be a useful follow up to this study.

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Title

Grammar and its Appropriate Placement in EFL Compositions

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Abstract

This article looks at the controversial position of grammar in writing methodology, and attempts to lay out a number of guidelines for the inclusion of grammar in composition classes specifically intended for EFL, rather than ESL contexts. Today's principal current methodologies, the process approach and the genre approach, which were developed primarily for ESL situations, are examined for their suitability in EFL contexts. Some of the other issues surrounding a focus on form are also considered. Our conclusion is that there are grounds for including a limited grammar component in composition courses, and that such a grammar needs to be of a general rather than a genre-specific nature. A number of guidelines are suggested for including grammar, along with a brief example of how they might be applied.

Keywords: Grammar, Appropriate Placement, EFL Compositions

1. Introduction

The position of grammar in ELT has shifted dramatically in the last years in EFL teaching curriculum. This is true for all parts of ELT, but it is perhaps particularly the case in the teaching of writing, which itself has experienced various changes over recent years.

Modern writing methodologies now consist of two main branches, the process approach and the genre approach, both of which are very different from the old writing-to-learn method, which focused almost entirely on sentence-level grammatical form. Process approaches focus on the writer, the creativity and individualism of writing, and the process of writing as a whole, starting from the generation of ideas through to the editing of work, as well as following studies of how successful writers write. Genre approaches, on the other hand, focus more on the reader, and on the conventions a piece of writing needs to follow in order to be successfully accepted by its readership. Like most, if not all, innovations in ELT, both of these approaches were developed in English-speaking ESL (Holliday 1994) countries, and cater largely for the needs of learners in those contexts, from college students to business students learning ESP. However, these approaches were not developed specifically for the rest of the ELT world, where the teaching of composition often has very different goals. Much teaching of writing in these contexts still concentrates heavily on traditional methods, one reason being that teachers find themselves searching unsuccessfully for an up-to-date methodology which was designed with their teaching situation in mind. In particular, the place which grammar should occupy in composition classes is a confused issue, as EFL teachers on the one hand recognize that the stress in the methodology which reaches them is very much against grammar in favor of meaning and communication, while on the other hand students and curricula continue to place grammatical concerns at the forefront of their needs. This paper is an attempt to provide some guidance to teachers in EFL contexts as to the position which grammar should take in composition classes.

2. Process approach

The process approach is perhaps the most influential theory of writing approaches instruction at the present time. Here especially, higher-level concerns have often pushed a focus on form completely out of the scene. There are many writing text and methodology books which ‘contain no grammar reference or instructional component’ at all (Raimes 1991:410). When grammar is mentioned, it is placed firmly in the background, and very often left until last, as part of a post-writing editing process. Hedge (1988: 23), for example, while acknowledging the importance of grammar in producing written work, comments that ‘good writers tend to concentrate on getting the content right at first and leave details like correcting spelling, punctuation and grammar until later’. White and Arndt (1991: 133) acknowledge that at the editing stage ‘grammatical accuracy and correctness of form are

now important', but they suggest that language problems are best dealt with through teacher feedback on student-nominated topics—and they hope that these would 'move from surface features of the text to realizing that there are more fundamental aspects of organization and meaning which need improving". White and Arndt are not alone in making teacher feedback a principal area for grammatical input. Ferris is also an advocate for grammar correction at the feedback stage, believing that in the lack of firm evidence that it is not effective, teachers should 'keep their own experiences and intuitions in mind' (Ferris 1999: 10) as to whether and how they should provide grammatical corrections—experiences and intuitions which she clearly believes will for the main part be in favor of providing feedback on grammar. Recently, however, there has been some criticism of grammar correction by teachers. Truscott (1996: 355), in a powerful review article suggests not only that there is no evidence supporting the use of grammar correction, but also that grammar correction might even be harmful for learners, as it reduces motivation and encourages students to avoid correction by sticking to simple constructions. Truscott's arguments, although not uncontroversial (see Ferris 1999), certainly have some appeal to teachers, as most of us can sympathize with the view that spending hours correcting grammar, only to have students pay scant attention to our corrections, and then make the same mistakes time and time again, is actually un-, or even counter-productive.

3. The genre approach

The genre approach to writing grew out of discourse analysis, and is especially strong in the field of ESP. This approach analyses the particular conventions, grammatical as well as organizational, of specific types of texts which students need to be able to produce. This methodology has had particular success in revealing the generic structure of academic writing, and legal, medical, and business texts. The philosophy is that all texts conform to certain conventions, and that if a student is to be successful in joining a particular English-language discourse community, he or she will need to be able to produce texts which fulfill the expectations of its readers as regards grammar, organization, and content. Although the genre approach places grammar much more centrally than the process approach does, the focus is not on general grammar, but instead on the grammatical peculiarities of the particular type of text being looked at. For example, complex nominal phrases are particularly prevalent in advertising, academic discourse, and legislative texts, but they have different realizations, and perform different functions in each (Bhatia 1993: 148). Genre

analysis looks at the specific effect of particular structures as they apply to particular types of text.

4. The view points for teachers

Methodology offers teachers these two main approaches to teaching teachers writing, and it is from these that teachers need to be able to find appropriate techniques to match their goals. Four teachers in were asked about the reasons for teaching writing. Those who taught school students gave reasons such as it ‘gives opportunities for language practice (review grammar and vocabulary) because students have to write in EFL examinations to give opportunities for creative/imaginative language use’. Teachers in many Asian countries might well add that it is a rare opportunity in an otherwise grammar-translation curriculum to actually produce language. Although ‘it will be of future professional benefit’ was also in the European teachers’ list in Tribble, the vast majority of students in state EFL are not seeking to enter an English-language discourse community, and will probably never need to produce a written English text for anyone but their teacher. Tribble recommends a combination of process and genre approaches to teaching writing, and stresses that ‘knowledge of the language system’ is essential in producing a successful piece of writing. This remedies the lack of language system input in the process approach, but it can be argued that in EFL contexts, where exposure to English can often be counted in single figure hours per week, there is a pressing need for composition courses to contribute to more general language improvement rather than to take a genre-specific approach to grammar.

5. Issues surrounding grammar instruction

In ELT in general, there is much lively debate about whether grammar instruction is a useful means for improving language ability. Krashen is of course a leading exponent of the idea that grammar instruction is not an important part of language acquisition, which is developed instead through massive comprehensible input of the target language. Krashen (1999: 245) has written a number of articles arguing that the effect of grammar instruction is ‘peripheral and fragile’.

5.1 Krashen’s monitor

Even Krashen’s theory admits a small place for consciously-learnt grammar, which can be utilized when the monitor operates to regulate and control language output. For Krashen, monitor use is of minimal importance in general language acquisition because of the

conditions which are necessary for it to operate, namely sufficient time, a focus on form, and knowledge of the rule. In normal conversation, these conditions, particularly the time factor, do not exist. This does suggest, however, that if it is geared towards situations where the Monitor is used, where close attention to surface form is both necessary and possible in terms of time (the perfect example being the production, and particularly the editing, of a piece of written work), grammar instruction can indeed be of use. Furthermore, the point made by Krashen—that the effect of such instruction has a tendency to fade over time—can lead to the conclusion that it should become an integral part of the teaching programme, to ensure that sufficient recycling takes place to prevent fading. It should be stressed here that editing a piece of written work is not something which can be left until the writing is over. Many textbooks assume a rather linear process of writing, where drafting neatly follows generating ideas, and editing comes at the end. Instead, editing should be seen as an on-going task, combined with the generation of ideas, drafting, and revising. Grammar is just as important an instrument of communication as content, and a text cannot be written cohesively without attention being paid to how meaning is being expressed through the grammar.

5.2. Support for grammar instruction

It is possible to find greater support for the use of grammar instruction from those who are in some measure opposed to Krashen's theories. Ellis in particular notes a number of studies which demonstrate how formal instruction can have a positive effect on learners' ability, and concludes that the answer to whether formal instruction works is a tentative 'yes' (Ellis 1990). One reason why it can work, he argues, is that explicit instruction is necessary for learners to be able to notice features in the input which they receive, which can then become part of their acquired knowledge. In an experimental study, Fotos (1993) found that grammar instruction was beneficial in helping students to notice specific features of texts. These authors were concerned with language improvement in general, but if formal instruction also enables students to notice specific features in texts, presumably this ability will also be of help when it comes to the process of editing work (although Fotos' article did not specifically examine whether students could notice incorrect features, or whether they could notice features occurring in their own texts).

5.2.1 Form and forms

Other writers have looked at the issue of grammar instruction by distinguishing between a focus on forms and a focus on form. A focus on forms represents the approach taken by the more traditional grammar, based syllabus, with all the inherent problems of an

'accumulation of entities' view of second language acquisition. A focus on forms, on the other hand, keeps the communication of meaning as the central concern, and tackles grammar as and when it is necessary to aid that communication. Advocates of a focus on form range from those who believe that such a focus should only ever be implicit, to those who regard some explicitness and momentary isolation from context, along with the use of meta linguistic terms, to be more useful (see Doughty and Williams 1998). Common to all, however, is the belief that the motivation to focus on form comes from an analysis of learners' communicative needs, rather than from an externally-imposed linguistic syllabus. Belief in the benefits of a grammar component is all very well, but instruction has been a recent study which, on the surface at least, suggests that grammar instruction does not actually aid accuracy or editing. Polio, Fleck, and Leder (1998) found that a group which received extra grammar training and corrective feedback did not outperform a control group in the linguistic accuracy of their compositions, and that improvement in accuracy after editing likewise did not increase. However, the authors did admit to several limitations in their study, including the possibilities that the type or timing of the grammar instruction given was unsuitable and that the general increase in accuracy over the semester for all groups meant that editing would become more difficult. In addition, the measure used in the study counted accuracy as a whole, including inappropriate use of lexical items, rather than accuracy in particular categories. It could well have been that students did improve their editing and accuracy in some of the categories in which they received instruction, but that this was not enough to significantly affect their overall score.

5.2.2 Other factors

One other important issue is that of the definition of 'grammar'. Much of what people regard as 'grammar' can be addressed relatively easily by learnable rules, which themselves are suitable matter for explicit instruction. But there are many other aspects which are much more difficult to address in this way, for example, 'problems with sentence structure, including missing words, unnecessary words, and word order problems' (Ferris 1999: 6). The boundary between grammar and lexis is also becoming increasingly blurred, and problems towards the lexis side are unlikely to be resolved by the application of simple rules. Studies which have examined student beliefs and expectations have consistently found students to have much more favorable attitudes towards grammar instruction than teachers and methodologists. Schultz, for example, found that overall, students have a 'strong conviction that grammar is useful in foreign language learning' (1996: 345), and that, in her particular case, 26% wanted even more grammar study than they were receiving. Manly and

Calk (1997) also found that in their research, most students perceived grammar study as useful in writing better compositions. Of course, as Truscott has pointed out (1996: 359), teachers should provide students with what helps them to learn, rather than with what students think helps them to learn. However, this angle ignores the effect of student motivation on learning, and the very real possibility that not taking learner beliefs about the importance of grammar instruction into account could affect students' trust in the teacher and the institution, and consequently lower motivation (Schultz 1996). All other things being equal, if students believe that the type of education they are receiving has positive effects on their learning, it stands to reason (and to Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis) that this is preferable to the reverse case. It is possible, of course, that students only have positive attitudes to grammar because they do not know any other way of teaching or learning. Students in EFL countries taking composition courses are likely to be especially used to grammar instruction, and expect and appreciate it in class even more than other types of students. This is not just due to their personal experiences of language learning, and beliefs based on these (which might be open to change), but also because of strong cultural perceptions of the nature of education as a whole. These cultural perceptions would be especially difficult to alter, and the whole notion of attempting to alter them raises many ethical concerns (see Holliday 1994). So while it may be feasible to change (if one wanted to) students' perceptions about the value of grammar, assuming that there is a coherent methodology available which supports this, it remains perhaps a wiser course to adapt to them and work with them.

5.3 Guidelines for inclusion of grammar in composition classes

While the above discussion might suggest that there is a need to include a grammar component perhaps this should be in a composition class be performed in line with the following suggested Guidelines.

- a) Grammar should not detract the meaning –oriented nature of composition teaching, and should always be related to its function in the discourse. restricted to the type of grammar which suits the application of rules.
- b) Grammar correction should be avoided in teacher feedback
- c) A grammar should be directly linked to the editing process.
- d) It should satisfy students' perceived needs.
- e) It should involve substantial recycling of material.

5.3.1 Applying the guidelines

In applying these, it would probably make sense to focus the guidelines editing on two or three grammatical points at a time. These might be points which have been looked at previously in other parts of the English curriculum, or which have been selected individually by the students themselves (perhaps after completing a diagnostic test) if they find them problematic. Again, it should be stressed to students that while editing is a separate process from generating ideas and drafting (which, as far as possible, should be carried out free from grammatical worries), it often happens in much the same time frame, i.e. while the composition is being written, rather than tacked on to the end.

6. Discussions and conclusion

Teachers who work in EFL contexts where they teach students for only a few hours per week for general purposes, have been rather overlooked when it comes to modern methodologies in composition writing. The two principal paths taken by modern writing methodology, process and genre—need to be carefully adapted if they are to be suitable for this huge sector of the ELT world. The place which grammar should occupy on composition courses has been a particular source of confusion. In this paper I have tried to establish some basic guidelines about how grammar can be included in composition classes, which match the principles of modern methodology with the particular goals of the EFL, rather than the ESL, community. It is hoped that by following the conditions set out above, composition courses will not only afford students the chance to develop as independent writers, and enjoy the creativity of writing, but also help to consolidate the basic grammatical knowledge they are building up through other parts of the curriculum, and at the same time emphasizing the discourse value of the structures they are using.

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Title

The Relationship among Multidimensional Perfectionism, Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety, and Motivation among Iranian EFL University Students

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Abstract

The associations between multidimensional perfectionism and psychological factors of motivation and foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA) among university students have seldom been made the focus of empirical research. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the relationships among Frost multidimensional perfectionism, FLCA, and motivation. A community sample of 80 Iranian EFL students (23 males, 57 females), studying English at Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman completed questionnaires including the Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS), Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), and Academic Motivation Scale (AMS). Results obtained through using Pearson Product Moment Correlation supported a significant correlation between multidimensional perfectionism and motivation, a significant relationship between

multidimensional perfectionism and FLCA. The study also found a significant correlation between, motivation and FLCA. Implications for target country universities in the provision of support are discussed.

Keywords: Multidimensional perfectionism, Foreign language classroom anxiety, Motivation

1. Introduction

Second language researchers have long been aware that second language learning is often associated with affective factors, among which the constructs of perfectionism, motivation, and FLCA have been recognized as important predictors of second language learning.

Perfectionism is characterized by striving for flawlessness and setting of excessively high standards for performance accompanied by tendencies for overly critical evaluations of one's behavior (Flett & Hewitt, 2002; Frost, Marten, Lahart, & Rosenblate, 1990). The Multidimensional Perfectionism (Frost, et al., 1990) includes the following dimensions: 1. Concern over Mistakes (reacting negatively to mistakes) 2. Doubts about Actions (doubting the quality of one's performance) 3. Personal Standards (setting of very high standards for self-evaluation) 4. Parental Expectations (Perceiving that one's parents have high expectations) 5. Parental Criticism (perceiving one's parents as being excessively critical) and 6. Organization (overemphasizing the importance of order and organization).

Dörnyei (2005, p. 9) regarded motivation as a function of a person's thought and defined it as "the dynamically changing cumulative aroused in a person that initiates, directs, coordinates, amplifies, terminates and evaluates the cognitive and the motor processes whereby initial wishes and desires are selected, prioritized, operationalized and acted out". Motivation can also be divided into extrinsic and intrinsic ones (Arnold, 2000). Extrinsic motivation comes from the learner's desire to get external reward or the cognition of the peers and parents, or the avoidance of punishment. While intrinsic motivation comes from the learner's internal factors because the learner regards L2 learning as a means to acquire knowledge and satisfy his curiosity and interest (Arnold, 2000).

Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) viewed foreign language anxiety as "the apprehension experienced when a situation requires the use of a foreign language with which the individual is not fully proficient" (p.5). When it comes to the anxiety of using a foreign language in classrooms, Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) further explained foreign language anxiety is

“a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” (p.128).

Since no previous study has been conducted, investigating the relationship among perfectionism, motivation, and FLCA among Iranian university learners of English as a foreign language, this research can be quite significant and useful in the area of foreign language education. Therefore, the present study aims at investigating the relationship of the psychological characteristics of perfectionism, motivation, and FLCA among foreign language university learners.

2. Literature review

2.1. The relationship between Perfectionism and Motivation

Although a great deal of research examining the association between multidimensional perfectionism and students' psychological adjustment has taken place (e.g., Chang & Rand, 2000; Chang & Sanna, 2001; Dunkley, Blankstein, Halsall, Williams, & Winkworth, 2000; Dunkley, Zuroff, & Blankstein, 2003; O'Connor & O'Connor, 2003), several important questions remain to be addressed. One important focus for subsequent research is an examination of the specific factors that contribute to the respective impact of the dimensions of perfectionism on students' psychological adjustment.

Perfectionism is often considered to be a symptom of maladjustment. Pacht (1984) stated that perfectionism was not only undesirable but also debilitating and unhealthy. Regarding the Frost and colleague's perspective, concern over mistakes is the dimension most closely related to symptoms of maladjustment (Flett & Hewitt, 2002; Frost et al. 1990; Saboonchi & Lundh, 2002). To a lesser extent, the doubts about actions dimension has also been related to maladjustment (Soenens, Vansteenkiste, Luyten, Duriez, & Goossens, 2005), as well as the parental expectations and the parental criticisms dimensions (Stober, 1998).

More recently, perfectionism is also considered to have positive aspects. According to Maslow, striving for perfection through self-actualisation is really an “indication of the absence of neurosis” (as cited in Peters, 2005, p. 3), while Silverman (as cited in Peters, 2005) believed the root of excellence is perfectionism and that this is what urges the individual toward achieving higher goals. Regarding the Frost and colleague's perspective, the high personal standards and the organisation subscales are typically associated with healthy experiences (Frost, Lahart & Rosenblate, 1991; Frost et al. 1990).

Neumeister (2004) has suggested that the motives in perfectionists determine whether the perfectionist tendencies are maladaptive or adaptive. It is suggested that performance

goals based on the desire to outperform others may have a detrimental outcome on motivation, and may lead to maladaptive behaviours (Dai, Moon, & Feldhusen, 1998 as cited in Neumeister, 2004), while perfectionist behaviours rooted in intrinsic motives and mastery goals for learning the material are adaptive. Positive aspects of perfectionism have been associated with intrinsic motivation.

Stoeber, Feast, and Hayward (2009) examined how self-oriented and socially prescribed perfectionism are related to intrinsic extrinsic motivation. Regarding motivation, self-oriented perfectionism showed positive correlations with intrinsic reasons for studying, and socially prescribed perfectionism positive correlations with extrinsic reasons. The findings confirm that socially prescribed perfectionism is a maladaptive form of perfectionism associated with extrinsic motivation for studying. Self-oriented perfectionism, however, is an ambivalent form associated with intrinsic motivation for studying.

Yachu Kuo (2011) investigated the relationship between intrinsic extrinsic motivation and perfectionism of EFL college freshman students in Taiwan. The statistical analyses of the questionnaires indicated that most EFL college freshman students in Taiwan were intrinsic-motivation types and self-oriented perfectionists. Also found was a positive relationship between motivation and perfectionism toward EFL learning. Self-oriented perfectionism was found to be positively related to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and other-oriented perfectionism was associated with extrinsic motivation. It was also found that there is no significant difference between motivation type and the respondents' background characteristics in terms of gender, age, and college major. However, the results did indicate that perfectionism differed significantly among the respondents in terms of age and college majors.

2.2. The relationship between Perfectionism and FLCA

The psychological construct of language anxiety is a complex matter within the context of foreign language teaching (Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, Christine, & Daley, 1999). Communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety (Horwitz, et al., 1986) evoke an image of a language learner who is overly concerned with the appearance of his or her communication attempts. Like anxious foreign language learners, perfectionists set excessively high standards for performance accompanied by overly critical self evaluation (Frost et al., 1990).

With respect to language learning, perfectionist students would not be satisfied with merely communicating in their target language. They would want to speak flawlessly, with

no grammatical and pronunciation errors, and as easily as native speaker (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002). Rather than demonstrating less than perfect language skills and exposing themselves to the possible negative reactions of others, perfectionists Language learners would likely prefer to remain silent, waiting until they were certain of how to express their thoughts. According to Gregersen and Horwitz (2002), such impossibly high standards create the ideal condition for the development of foreign anxiety.

Based on Pacht's (1984) conceptualization, Brophy (1999) catalogued a number of symptoms of perfectionism in students that seem to be counterproductive to learning of any kind and especially so for language learning.

- Performance standards that are impossibly high and unnecessarily rigid.
- Motivation more from fear of failure than from pursuit of success.
- Measurement of one's own worth entirely in terms of productivity and accomplishment.
- All or nothing evaluations that label anything other than perfection as failure.
- Difficulty in taking credit or pleasure, even when success is achieved, because such achievement is merely what is expected.
- Procrastination in getting started on work that will be judged.
- Long delays in completing assignments, because the work must be perfect from the beginning and continue to be perfect as one goes along.

Brophy's description of perfectionists evoked several items in foreign language classroom anxiety scale (FLCAS, Horwitz et al., 1986), an instrument used to identify language anxious students. Furthermore, Brophy's suggestion that perfectionist students set overly high performance standards that are accompanied by a fear of failure is reflected in MacIntyre and Gardener's anxiety model (1991). Although the preceding analogy between foreign language- anxious and perfectionist students is appealing, little research has examined the connection between these two traits.

Price (1991) interviewed highly-anxious students to gain insight into the subjective experience of language anxiety. Price (1991) concluded from his case studies that the difficulty level of foreign language classes, personal perception of language aptitude, certain personality variables (e.g., perfectionism and fear of public speaking), and stressful classroom experiences are all possible causes of anxiety. According to him, anxious learners often engage in self-comparison with classmates and peers – a practice which can lead to anxiety.

Gregersen and Horwitz (2002) found that some students' language anxiety may stem from their perfectionist tendencies. By examining the reactions of the language learners to their actual oral performance and analyzing the audiotapes for instances of perfectionism,

evidence was gathered suggesting that anxious and non-anxious learners differ in their personal performance standards, procrastination, fear of evaluation, and concern over errors. They concluded that anxious students share many similar manifestations with perfectionists and these similarities have the potential for making language learning unpleasant. Evidences of this conclusion include the fact that anxious learners were not easily satisfied with their accomplishments and had a higher level of concern over the errors they made than non-anxious learners who tended to celebrate small victories accomplished.

2.3. The relationship between motivation and FLCA

Although no previous study has specifically inquired into the relationship between motivation and FLCA, the two affective individual difference variables are presumed to be related to one another. In Gardner and associates' research in the framework of the socio-educational model of second language learning (Gardner, 1985; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993; Gardner, Tremblay, & Masgoret, 1997), anxiety measures have formed part of the Attitudes/Motivation Test Battery, which is indicative of a strong hypothesized link between the two learner characteristics. In his social-context model, Clément (1980, 1986) also conceptualizes anxiety as a construct closely related to motivation. However, as the focus in models of L2 learning has been on the effect of several variables on language learning outcomes, the functional relationship between language anxiety and motivation has never been fully clarified (Dornyei, 2005; Gardner, Day, & MacIntyre, 1992; MacIntyre, 2002).

Generally, anxiety measures have been found to correlate negatively with various indices of motivation, which suggests that anxious language learners also tend to be less motivated compared to their non-anxious counterparts (Clément, Dornyei, & Noels, 1994; Gardner et al., 1992; Gardner, Lalonde, & Pierson, 1983; Sison, 1991, as cited in Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993). Besides, anxiety measures in factor analytic studies often loaded negatively on motivation factors, again suggesting that highly motivated learners do not tend to experience anxiety in the classroom and other L2 situations (Gliksman, 198, as cited in Gardner et al., 1992; Gardner et al., 1997). In view of such results, Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) suggest a reciprocal relationship between the two affective variables. Intuitively it seems logical that high levels of FLA can reduce learners' motivation to learn a L2, since anxious learners tend to find this experience frustrating and painful.

It is also reasonable to suppose that high levels of motivation are likely to abate learners' anxiety, as motivated learners tend to be successful and perceive language learning as a positive experience, which is bound to decrease anxiety. Nevertheless, logical though this

reasoning may be, anecdotal and empirical evidence suggests that the relationship between anxiety and motivation is not as Predictors of foreign-language anxiety straightforward. There appear to be far too many language learners who would not fit into the *anxious* - un/demotivated vs. confident - motivated categories. Often it is strongly motivated learners who are reported to experience high levels of language anxiety (Horwitz, 1996; Jackson, 2002; Kitano, 2001).

Horwitz (1996) may be right in pointing out that motivation and ego-investment are to be considered among factors influencing language anxiety. Her reasoning, “there must be a desire to communicate well in order to worry about how your communicative efforts are perceived” (1996, p. 367) sounds more than logical. It raises the possibility that highly motivated learners with a strong desire to learn a foreign language, who invest a great deal of time, effort and emotional energy into mastering it to a high standard, may also be prone to experiencing anxiety, paradoxically, even more so than learners with less personal involvement. Therefore, it is obvious that further research is required to investigate the relationship between learners’ motivational characteristics and FLA. So this study aims at answering these research questions:

1. Is there any relationship between multidimensional perfectionism and FLCA among EFL university students?
2. Is there any relationship between multidimensional perfectionism and motivation among EFL university students?
3. Is there any relationship between FLCA and motivation among EFL university students?

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The participants of this study were 80 junior students (23 males, 57 females) studying English at Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman. The age range of participants was 20-23 and students were selected randomly.

3.2. Instruments

The following instruments were used in the study:

1. Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS, Frost et al., 1990)
2. Academic Motivation Scale (AMS, Vallerand et al., 1992)
3. Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS, Horwitz et al., 1986)

1. The MPS is a 35-item questionnaire that designed to measure perfectionism across six dimensions. Items were scored on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. Higher scores indicated higher levels of perfectionism.
2. AMS is a 24-item questionnaire that measured an individual’s internal versus external motivation. Items were scored on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from “Does not correspond at all” to “Correspond exactly.”
3. In the FLCAS, there are 33 items and a 5-point scale ranging from "strongly agree" (5 points) to "strongly disagree" (1 point). Each anxiety score was gained by summing the ratings of the thirty-three items. The theoretical range of this scale was from 33 to 165. The higher the total points were, the more anxious the student was.

4. Data collection

The present study was carried out during the class time in the first semester of the academic year (2012). To conduct this study, MPS, AMS, and FLCAS were distributed among the participants simultaneously, and they were given the necessary instructions as how to answer each questionnaire. It is worth noting that the participants were not asked to write their names on either of the questionnaires in order for them to be relaxed and sincere. With regard to the three questionnaires, the subjects were assured that the results of the study would be used only for investigation purposes, and that there would be no right or wrong answers to any of the items of the questionnaires, so they just had to choose the one choice that best described them.

5. Results

In order to determine the descriptive statistics of the variables (perfectionism, motivation, and FLCA) the descriptive analysis was carried out. These results are presented in table 1.

Table 1 *Descriptive Statistics*

	N	Minimum	maximum	Mean	Std.Deviarion	Variance
Perfectionism						
• Personal standards	80	6	34	18.00	10.66	113.82
• Concern over mistakes	80	9	45	22.33	14.54	211.69
• Parental expectations	80	5	27	12.78	7.58	57.56
• Parental criticism	80	4	20	10.41	5.78	33.46
• Doubting of actions	80	4	20	10.71	5.85	34.25
• Organization	80	6	30	15.78	9.38	88.14
Intrinsic motivation	80	5	60	33.05	17.52	307.23
Extrinsic motivation	80	5	60	33.00	18.56	344.68
FLCA	80	35	163	95.92	57.97	3360.83
Valid N(listwise)						

The analysis of the collected data shows that Pearson correlation coefficients between personal standards and intrinsic motivation is 0.71 with the P-values of 0.00 which is less than the significant level of $\alpha = 0.05$. Moreover, Pearson correlation coefficients between organization and intrinsic motivation is 0.67 with the P-values of 0.00 which is less than the significant level of $\alpha = 0.05$. Finally, Pearson correlation coefficients between concern over mistakes, parental expectations, parental criticism, doubting of actions and extrinsic motivation are 0.67, 0.70, 0.70, and, 0.73 respectively with the P-values of 0.00 which is less than the significant level of $\alpha = 0.05$. Therefore, it can be concluded that first, there is a significant relationship between personal standards and intrinsic motivation (Table 2); second, there is a significant positive relationship between organization and intrinsic motivation (Table 2), and third, there is a significant positive relationships between between concern over mistakes, parental expectations, parental criticism, doubting of actions and extrinsic motivation (Table 2).

Table 2 *The correlation between motivation and dimensions of perfectionism*

personal standards Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	Personal standards 1 .000 80	Intrinsic motivation .715 .000 80	Extrinsic motivation -.612 .000 80
Concern over mistakes Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	Concerns over mistakes 1 .000 80	Intrinsic motivation -.606 .000 80	Extrinsic motivation .674 .000 80
Parental expectation Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	Parental expectation 1 .000 80	Intrinsic motivation -.610 .000 80	Extrinsic motivation .706 .000 80
Parental criticism Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	Parental criticism 1 .000 80	Intrinsic motivation -.615 .000 80	Extrinsic motivation .706 .000 80
Doubting of actions Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	Doubting of actions 1 .000 80	Intrinsic motivation -.638 .000 80	Extrinsic motivation .738 .000 80
Organization Pearson correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	Organization 1 .000 80	Intrinsic motivation .678 .000 80	Extrinsic motivation -.570 .000 80

To answer the third research question (Is there any relationship between dimensions of perfectionism and FLCA?), Pearson Correlation was conducted. The analysis of the collected data shows a significant and negative correlation between personal standards and FLCA ($r = -0.73$), a significant and negative one between organization and FLCA ($r = -0.69$), and finally significant and positive relationships between FLCA and concern over mistakes ($r = 0.66$),

parental expectations ($r = 0.69$), parental criticism ($r = 0.72$), and doubting of actions ($r = 0.73$) (Table 3).

Table 3 *The correlation between FLCA and dimensions of perfectionism*

	FLCA	Personal standards	Concern over mistakes	Parental expectations	Parental criticism	Doubting of actions	Organization
FLCA							
Pearson Correlation	1	-.731	.666	.692	.720	.737	-.698
Sig.(2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
N	80	80	80	80	80	80	80

According to table 4, there is a significant and negative correlation between FLCA and intrinsic motivation ($r = -0.88$). Moreover, there is a significant and positive relationship between FLCA and extrinsic motivation ($r = 0.88$).

Table 4 *The correlation between FLCA and motivation*

	FLCA	Intrinsic motivation	Extrinsic motivation
FLCA			
Pearson Correlation	1	-.888	.887
Sig.(2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
N	80	80	80

6. Discussion and conclusion

In this section, the research questions are dealt with one by one. Each question will be answered based on the findings of the study. The first research question asked whether there are any relationships between multidimensional perfectionism and motivation. There were statistically positive relationships between two dimensions of multidimensional perfectionism (personal standard and organization) and intrinsic motivation. On the other hand, there were statistically positive relationships between other four aspects of perfectionism (concern over mistakes, parental expectation, parental criticism, doubting of actions) and extrinsic motivation. Participants with personal standards and organization aspect of perfectionism had intrinsic motivation. As investigated by Neumeister (2004), perfectionist behaviours rooted in intrinsic motives and mastery goals for learning the material are adaptive. Positive aspects of perfectionism have been associated with intrinsic motivation. According to Frost et al., (1990), personal standards and organization are more related to intrinsic motivation and concern over mistakes, parental expectation, parental criticism, doubting of actions are more related to extrinsic motivation.

The second research question asked whether there are any relationships between Frost multidimensional perfectionism and FLCA. There was statistically negative relationship between two dimensions of multidimensional perfectionism (personal standards and

organization) and FLCA. There was statistically positive relationship between the other four dimensions of multidimensional perfectionism (concern over mistakes, parental expectations, parental criticism and doubting of actions) and FLCA. This finding is consistent with the results reported by Price (1991) and Gregersen and Horwitz (2002) who found that some students' language anxiety may stem from their perfectionist tendencies.

The third research question asked whether there are any relationships between motivation and FLCA. There were statistically negative relationships between intrinsic motivation and FLCA. There were statistically positive relationships between extrinsic motivation and FLCA. Those students, who had FLCA, were extrinsically motivated. The results of this study is in line with Horwitz, (1996), Jackson (2002), and Kitano (2001) who reported that motivated learners experience high levels of language anxiety.

This study led to several conclusions concerning the (1) relationships between Frost multidimensional perfectionism and motivation, (2) relationships between Frost multidimensional perfectionism and FLCA, and (3) relationships between motivation and FLCA. First, with regards to the concept of multidimensional perfectionism, it was concluded that personal standards and organization were positively related to intrinsic motivation and concern over mistakes, doubts about actions, parental expectations, and parental criticism were positively related to extrinsic motivation. Based on the findings of this exploratory study, personal standards and organization were negatively related to FLCA on one hand and on the other hand concern over mistakes, doubts about actions, parental expectations and parental criticism were positively related to FLCA. Finally the results of this study showed that FLCA was positively related to extrinsic motivation and negatively related to intrinsic motivation.

These findings have some implications. Firstly, English language teachers need to become more aware of different affective factors such as perfectionism, motivation, and FLCA. Teachers can help their students by creating a stress free learning environment in the classroom for students. It is important to have a relax atmosphere so that students would feel more motivated and less anxious in their learning. Moreover, due to different degrees of students, perfectionism, teachers should make use of a wide variety of instrumental tasks in the class in order to meet the needs of the learners with varying degrees perfectionism. Teachers can also teach their students to increase their motivation level by “developing a set of self-motivating strategies” (Williams & Burden, 1997, pp. 141-2). They can involve learners in making decisions related to learning the language (Williams & Burden, 1997); give students more time to think, opportunities to rehearse or receive feedback; and create a

pleasant, relaxed atmosphere in the classroom (Dornyei & Csizer, 1998, as cited in Yan, 2009). These approaches have been found to be related to increased participation and confidence (Crandall, 1999), which in turn can facilitate foreign language learning and reduce foreign language classroom anxiety. Finally, curriculum developers and material designers should provide curriculums and materials that best suit different learners of different degrees of perfectionism, motivation, and FLCA.

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Title

The Effect of Strategy Based Instruction on EFL Learners' Writing Ability

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Abstract

The present study investigates the effect of strategy based instruction of writing on developing learners' writing abilities in English as a foreign language. The participants of the study were thirty Iranian Ph.D. students doing an English writing course. A longitudinal study was conducted in which a Strategy Based Instruction (SBI) Program was employed to compare the participants' score before and after SBI training. Five procedures, namely, strategy preparation, strategy awareness-raising, strategy instruction, strategy practice, and personalization of strategies were followed to familiarize the participants with different categories of language learning strategies including memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, and social. The results of the statistical analysis show that the application of SBI program has a positive effect in improving Ph.D. students' writing abilities. The frequency of strategy use was also investigated using the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). The pedagogical implication of the study is that if the instructors systematically introduce and reinforce strategies that can help learners to develop writing skills, the learners may well improve the performance on writing tasks. The study also suggests the notion of integrating strategy training into writing instructional plan and embedding strategies into writing tasks.

Keywords: Language learning strategies (LLSs), Strategy based instruction (SBI), Strategy learning, Strategy use, Writing skills

1. Introduction

Language learning strategies (LLSs) are one of the most important individual difference factors in language acquisition (Skehan, 1989). As Ehrman and Oxford (1990) put it, compared to less proficient learners, more proficient learners are more likely to use a wider range of language learning strategies. Language learning strategies can be utilized to promote greater learner autonomy because as Dickinson (1987) argues, the use of appropriate strategies allows learners to take more responsibility for their own learning. This is, in turn, a big challenge for Iranian non-English-major Ph.D. students who are no longer in a formal classroom setting of EFL. While many studies have focused on the use of language learning strategies for improving speaking, reading, and listening skills (Cohen, 2000; O'Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Russo, and Küppler, 1985, Weiyang, 2000; Li and Liu, 2008, to name a few), very few have investigated the role of SBI in improving writing skills (eg. McMullen, 2009). It implies that more attention should be paid to finding whether learners can use learning strategies for improving their writing ability which is a unique challenge when they want to write and publish academic articles in English. The present study is an attempt to concentrate on the effect of strategy based instruction of writing in developing Iranian non-English-major Ph.D. students' writing abilities in English as a foreign language.

2. Literature Review: Strategy Based Instruction

According to Cohen (2003), language learners are being encouraged to learn and use a broad range of language learning strategies that can be tapped throughout the learning process, because it is believed that learning will be facilitated by making learners aware of the range of strategies from which they can select during language learning and use. The most efficient way to heighten learner's awareness is to provide strategy training.

To have a successful and helpful learning strategy instruction some requirements must be met by the teachers. These are summarized by Oxford (1994) into the following principles that she left subject to further investigation:

- 1) L2 strategy training should be based clearly on students' attitudes, beliefs, and stated needs,
- 2) strategies should be chosen so that they mesh with and support each other and so that they fit the requirements of the language task, the learners' goals, and the learners' style of learning,

- 3) training should, if possible, be integrated into regular L2 activities over a long period of time rather than taught as a separate, short intervention,
- 4) students should have plenty of opportunities for strategy training during language classes,
- 5) strategy training should include explanations, handouts, activities, brainstorming, and materials for reference and home study,
- 6) affective issues such as anxiety, motivation, beliefs, and interests—all of which influence strategy choice—should be directly addressed by L2 strategy training,
- 7) strategy training should be explicit, overt, and relevant and should provide plenty of practice with varied L2 tasks involving authentic materials,
- 8) strategy training should not be solely tied to the class at hand; it should provide strategies that are transferable to future language tasks beyond a given class,
- 9) strategy training should be somewhat individualized, as different students prefer or need certain strategies for particular tasks, and
- 10) strategy training should provide students with a mechanism to evaluate their own progress and to evaluate the success of the training and the value of the strategies in multiple tasks.

A variety of instructional models for strategy training have already been developed and implemented in a variety of learning contexts (Pearson and Dole, 1987; Oxford, 1990; Chamot and O'Malley, 1994; Nyikos, 1991; Grenfell and Harris, 1999; Cohen and Weaver, 2006). The focus of the present study is on a model called Strategy Based Instruction (SBI) which refers to a learner-centered approach to teaching that focuses on 'explicit and implicit inclusion of language learning and language use strategies' in language teaching materials (Cohen and Weaver, 1998:1). As Griffiths (2003) and Cohen (1998) state, SBI enables learners to find which strategies work best for them and how to use them in a variety of language learning use situations.

According to Cohen (2003:1), regardless of the differences among these frameworks, all strategy based instructions try to provide the learners with the tools to

- self-diagnose their strengths and weaknesses in language learning,
- become aware of what helps them to learn in the most efficient way,
- develop a broad range of problem-solving skills,
- practice learning strategies,
- make decisions about how to approach a language task,
- monitor and self-assess their performance, and
- transfer successful strategies to new learning context.

Cohen (2003:2) believes that in a typical SBI classroom, teachers do the following:

- describe, model, and give examples of potentially useful strategies
- elicit additional examples from students, based on learners' own learning experiences
- lead small-group and whole-class discussions about strategies
- encourage learners to experiment with a broad range of strategies, and
- integrate strategies into everyday class materials, explicitly and implicitly embedding them into the language tasks to provide for contextualized strategy practice.

3. Method

The present study undertakes to examine if Strategy Based Instruction (SBI) can help Iranian non-English major Ph.D. students develop their English writing skills:

Research Question 1: Can Strategy Based Instruction help Iranian Ph.D. students improve their writing skills?

It also determines learners' preferences of language learning strategies:

Research Question 2: What are the LLSs that are most frequently used by Iranian Ph.D. students?

3.1. Participants

The participants in the study were 20 male and 10 female Ph.D. students of three different state universities doing an English writing course at a private-control language institute in Tabriz, Iran. The participants were studying chemistry, biology, physics, histology, and nutrition. The purpose of the course was developing writing skills for academic articles. They participated in the study as part of the course assessment in their respective course. The researcher was the teacher of that course. The participants' ages ranged between 24 and 38, and the average age equaled 28. The native language of the learners was Azerbaijani Turkish (70%), Kurdish (10%), and Persian (20%). The native speakers of Azerbaijani and Kurdish used Persian as their second language and English was the foreign language of language of all participants.

3.2. Procedure

3.2.1. Procedure for Phase I

In order to find an answer to the first research question, a longitudinal study was conducted in which a Strategy Based Instruction (SBI) Program was employed. The aim was to compare the final scores of the participants before SBI training and the final scores of the same

participants after SBI training. The framework developed by Cohen and Weaver (2006: 4-5) was adopted in which six categories of strategies were included:

- memory (eg. I use flashcards to remember new English words);
- cognitive (eg. I make summaries of information that I hear or read in English);
- compensation (eg. If I cannot think of an English word, I use a word or phrase of a word that means the same thing);
- metacognitive (eg. I plan my schedule);
- affective (eg. I encourage myself); and
- social. (eg. I practice English with other learners)

Five procedures were followed:

1. *Strategy Preparation*: A brief explanation of each strategy was provided. Also, the participants were encouraged to express their own experiences of that strategy.
2. *Strategy Awareness-Raising*: Different kinds of strategies and their potential benefits were explained. The explanation was accompanied by PowerPoint presentation.
3. *Strategy Instruction*: In addition, a handout including a list of examples of strategies was given to the participants. Also each strategy was modeled by the teacher to clarify strategy use.
4. *Strategy Practice*: The participants were provided with an opportunity to experience language learning strategy use. The course material included many examples of strategy use which were practiced throughout the term.
5. *Personalization of Strategies*: This step involved asking the learners to fill out a short questionnaire to specify their favorite language learning/use strategies and their attitudes towards their effectiveness.

3.2.2. Procedure for Phase II

In order to measure strategy use, Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) was used in the second phase of the study. The SILL was devised by Oxford (1990) as an instrument for assessing the frequency of use of language learning strategies by learners. There are two versions: one for native speakers of English (80 items) and another for learners of English as a second or foreign language (50 items). The SILL is one of the most useful manuals of learner strategy assessment tool currently available. The SILL appears to be the only language learning strategy instrument that has been checked for reliability and validated in multiple ways (Oxford and Burry-Stock, 1995). Many previous measures were not adopted for many studies because they lacked reliability and validity data.

The SILL uses a 5 Likert-scale for which the learners are asked to indicate their response to a strategy description:

1. Never or almost never true of me
2. Usually not true of me
3. Somewhat true of me
4. Usually true of me
5. Always or almost always true of me (Oxford, 1990: 293)

The version of the SILL used in this study is a 50 item instrument that is grouped into two main groups, direct strategies and indirect strategies, which are further subdivided into 6 groups. Oxford's (1990) taxonomy of language strategies is shown in the following:

Direct strategies are classified into:

- *Memory strategies* (9 items) are used for entering new information into memory storage and for retrieving it when need for communication. (e.g., grouping, representing sounds in memory, structured reviewing, using physical response).
- *Cognitive strategies* (14 items) are used for linking new information with existing schemata and for analyzing and classifying it. Cognitive strategies are responsible for deep processing, forming and revising internal mental models and receiving and producing messages in the target language (e.g., repeating, getting the idea quickly, analyzing and taking notes).
- *Compensation strategies* (6 items) include such strategies as guessing and using gestures. Such strategies are needed to fill any gaps in the knowledge of the language. (e.g., switching to the mother tongue, using other clues, getting help and using a synonym).

On the other hand, *indirect strategies* are divided into Metacognitive, Affective and Social:

- *Metacognitive strategies* (9 items) are techniques used for organizing, planning, focusing and evaluating one's own learning. (e.g., linking new information with already known one, seeking practice opportunities, and self-monitoring).
- *Affective strategies* (6 items) are used for handling feelings, attitudes and motivations. (e.g., lowering anxiety by use of music, encouraging oneself and discussing feelings with others).
- *Social strategies* (6 items) are used for facilitating interaction by asking questions, and cooperating with others in the learning process, (eg. Asking for classification, cooperating with others and developing cultural understanding).

The questionnaire was translated into Persian by the researcher herself and checked by two translation instructor taking into consideration that the items retained their essential meaning and that the translation was easily understood. Oxford and Burry-Stock (1995:6) report ‘very acceptable reliabilities’ for the English version of the inventory. Its Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficients which are a measure of internal consistency, range from 0.89 to 0.98 (Oxford and Burry-Stock (1995:4). According to Oxford and Burry-Stock (1995:10), validity evidence, the degree to which an instrument measures what it claims to measure, has also been examined via a wide assortments of studies. The participants were asked to self-report the frequency of their strategy use for the fifty items of the inventory.

4. Results

4.1. Results of Phase I

The grading system which assigned identical rating scale was employed by the researcher for assessment in all cases, awarding scores for content, coherence, and mechanics, thus ensuring intra-rater consistency and reliability. Content was evaluated on organization, thesis statement, topic sentences, and conclusion. Coherence was assessed on the clarity and understandability of the writing. Any irrelevant sentences which did not support the topic sentence were marked accordingly. For scoring mechanics punctuation, spelling, and grammar were taken into account. At the end of the term, Pre-SBI scores were compared to Post-SBI scores. As Table 1 shows, it was revealed that the Post-SBI scores of the participants were higher than their Pre-SBI scores.

Table 1. Results of Data Analysis for the Writing Scores in Pre-SBI Vs. Post-SBI Tests

Test	Mean	Standard Deviation
Pre-SBI	77.1595	3.5817
Post-SBI	86.7586	4.1572

As Table 1 shows, the means difference is 9.5991, which is an encouraging number. The means difference is clearly illustrated in Figure 1 which displays the means for the writing scores of the participant in Pre-SBI vs. Post-SBI tests.

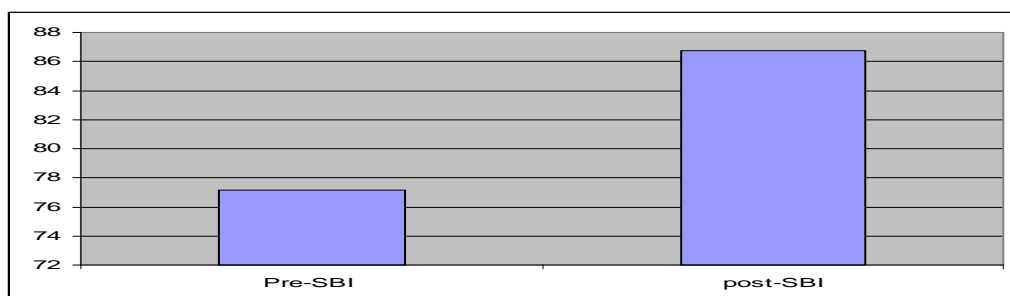


Figure 1. A Comparison of the Means of Writing Scores in Pre-SBI Vs. Post-SBI Tests

In order to make the above conclusions more justifiable, the results were compared using a Matched t-Test.

Table 2. Matched t-Test Results for the Participants' Scores in Pre-SBI Vs. Post-SBI Tests

Mean (Pre-SBI)	SD (Pre-SBI)	Mean (Post-SBI)	SD (Post-SBI)	t-Value Critical	Degree of Freedom	Two-Tailed Probability	t-Value Observed
77.1595	3.5817	86.7586	4.1572	2.093	29	.05	2.404

It can be observed from Table 2 that the observed t-value is greater than the critical t-value for the participants' performance in Pre-SBI vs. Post-SBI tests ($t_{\text{observed}} > t_{\text{critical}}$, at .05 level of significance). Therefore, according to the results of inferential statistics, SBI training had a positive effect in promoting the participants' writing ability.

4.2. Results of Phase II

Table 3 presents rank ordering of the strategies according to their frequency of usage. The means and percentages in Table 3 show that Metacognitive strategies have the highest mean (3.98) which indicates a high use of Metacognitive strategies followed by Affective, Social, Cognitive and Memory, while Compensation strategies ranked the lowest mean (3.15). It was also found that one of the six strategies groups (Metacognitive) falls in the high range, while the other 5 strategy groups fall in the medium range.

Table 3. Percentage of Strategy Use

Strategies	%	Degree	Rank
Metacognitive	81.4	High	1
Affective	61.8	Medium	6
Social	65	Medium	4
Cognitive	68	Medium	2
Memory	65.7	Medium	3
Compensation	62.2	Medium	5
Total score	67.35	Medium	

5. Discussion, Conclusion and Implications

The results of the study show that if the learners are aware of the array of strategies they can use, they can learn to select the appropriate strategies that can help them in writing. The use of strategies practiced repeatedly throughout the term could be observed in Post-SBI test. For

example, after SBI training, the participants began to use notes to organize before they write. This would help them to avoid irrelevant sentences in their writings. This would, in turn, lead to a more coherent writing. An investigation of the Post-SBI writings shows that the participants utilized the strategies practiced in SBI program to improve their writings in terms of organization, coherence, and mechanics. The greatest improvement was in the area of mechanics. Compensation strategies were employed frequently. Thus, the learners' improvement in writing at the end of the term can be attributed to the SBI program. In other words, the empirical evidence in this longitudinal study reveals that regarding the research question put forward, SBI can help learners improve their writing abilities in an EFL context.

Language courses designed for postgraduate students can seek to provide strategy training in writing. This can be carried out as English writing course syllabus for Ph.D. students or as a component of the English courses syllabuses which are currently practiced. In either cases, LLSs can be systematically integrated with the writing materials. As Cohen (2003) puts it out, at the first stage, learners' needs for improving a particular skill and also the resources available for teaching that skill should be identified. After deciding what strategies need to be taught, developed, and enhanced, materials, course materials should be prepared in such a way that they include exercises on LLSs. Ample opportunities need to be provided and a conducive environment should be created for the learners to practice using the strategies taught. This practice should be followed by constant evaluation and revision of the course materials. According to Carrell (1989: 129), effective teaching must include not only training and practice in the use of 'task-specific strategies, instruction, overseeing, and monitoring these skills (ie, self-regulation training)', but more importantly, 'information about the significance and outcome of these skills and the range of their utility (ie, awareness-raising)'.

A close examination of the results of this study reveals that the participants' learning strategy use as measured by the SILL ranges from high (81.4) to medium (61.8), with Metacognitive strategies used more frequently. Metacognitive strategies involve exercising "executive control" over one's language learning through planning, monitoring, and evaluating. They are techniques that are used for organizing, planning, focusing and evaluating one's learning. In general, these strategies help learners to gain control over their emotions and motivations related to language learning through self-monitoring. The high use of Metacognitive strategies among Iranian EFL learners is similar to that observed among students from Asian countries like Japan, China, Korea and Taiwan as reported in some of the studies on Asian students (e.g., Sheorey, 1998; Oxford et al., 1990).

Compensation strategies, which ranked the lowest (3.15), are strategies that enable students to make up for missing knowledge in the process of comprehending or producing the target language. However, the students were reluctant to use Compensation strategies, e.g. they did not use gestures when they had difficulty producing the language, and they didn't make up new words when they did not know the right ones.

The most important implication of this study is the need to provide students with further opportunities to use LLSs more frequently since the overall strategy use by the subjects under study falls in the medium range. The less frequent strategies in this study (Cognitive, Memory and Compensation) can form the core of a program of classroom strategy instruction. O'Malley and Chamot introduce the following steps to strategy instruction:

. . . the teacher first identifies or shows students for their current language strategies, explains the rationale and application for using additional learning strategies, provides opportunities and materials for practice, and evaluate or assist students to evaluate their degree of success with new learning strategies.(1990, pp. 157-59)

The teacher's role in strategy training is an important one. The teacher should learn about the students, their interest, motivations, and learning styles. The teacher can learn what language learning strategies his/her students appear to be using by observing their behavior in class: Do they cooperate with their peers or seem to have much contact outside of class with proficient foreign language users? Do they ask for clarification, verification or correction? Besides observing their behavior in class, the teacher can have adequate knowledge about the students, their goals, motivations, language learning strategies, and their understanding of the course to be taught. It is a fact that each learner within the same classroom may have different learning styles and varied awareness of the use of strategies. The language teacher should provide a wide range of learning strategies in order to fulfill different learning styles that meet the needs and expectations of his students who possessing different learning styles, motivations, strategy preferences, etc.

As in all classroom studies, the researcher was confronted with the inevitable limitation related to the sample size as the sample size for this study was not large, and thus, as always, further research is needed to make stronger generalizations. In order to enable better accumulation of knowledge in this research domain, sufficient numbers of studies in which variable like participant factors are taken into account, are needed. Moreover, the study can be conducted in settings different from that of this study. Hopefully, the issues raised and discussed in this work have offered insights for improved research practices. Replication

studies are obviously advisable in order to permit greater confidence in the results. Replication of the study across different proficiency levels and investigating the contribution of individual differences to the way SBI training influences different language skills are suggested. Also, more action research is required to provide more empirical data suggesting how teaching LLSs can contribute to the development of language skills other than writing. Longitudinal studies can be conducted to investigate the impact of factors such as motivation, proficiency level, gender, learning style, and learning context (ESL vs. EFL) in learning, selection, and use of LLSs in developing writing skills in Iranian EFL context.

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Title

Familiarity with Basic Issues in ESP

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to familiarize the readers with some key and basic issues in ESP in a coherent and tangible manner. In this paper, through using relevant literature, issues such as the reasons for the emergence of ESP, definitions, its distinguishing characteristics and differences with EGP and teachers' roles are discussed.

Keywords: ESP, EGP, methodology

1. Introduction

Its emergence after the Second World War popped up so many challenging issues. From the very first beginning different definitions have been stated to highlight the specific features that this newly developed trend entails. So much was written about its difference with its sister EGP and consequently the need to have teachers different from EGP teachers. Various roles were identified for an ESP practitioner like managing so many variables such as analyzing the learners' particular needs, expectations, and motivations as well as preparing appropriate teaching materials in line with their perceived needs.

In this paper, all the above mentioned issues are investigated to help both learners and teachers acquire a clearer image of what ESP is all about in general.

2. The Advent of ESP

In this part" three major and common reasons that led to the emergence of all ESP are mentioned" (Hutchinson and Waters 1987, p.6).

2.1. The demands of a Brave New World

This factor is clearly related to two historical events:

2.1.1. The end of the Second World War with which an age of expansion in scientific, technical and economic activity on an international scale took place and for various reasons and most notably the economic power of the United States at that time this role fell to English(p.6).

2.1.2. Oil crisis of the early 1970s also led to the flowing of both money and knowledge into the oil-rich countries. The language of this knowledge came to be English.

2.2. A revolution in linguistics

The second reason relates to the changes in the world of linguistics. In fact, there was a shift from usage to use and from the focus on language forms to functions and the way language is used in real communication. The idea was " If language varies from one situation of use to another; it should be possible to determine the features of specific situations and then make these features the basic of the learners' course" (Hutchinson and Waters 1987, p.7). This idea is exactly in line with what Hutchinson and Waters introduce as the guiding principle of ESP. Their principle is "*tell me what you need English for and I will tell you the English you need*" (Hutchinson and Waters 1987, p.8).

2.3. Focus on the learner

The last but not the least reason was the developments in educational psychology and consequently the focus on learners themselves as human beings and the idea that important roles are played by them in the teaching-learning process. They became the center of attention and these new changes led to considering their needs, expectations and reasons for learning.

3. Definitions

It is revealed through reviewing related literature that English for specific purposes has been defined differently. Four major definitions in the existing literature are mentioned here.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987)

ESP is an approach rather than a product focusing on learners' needs and the purpose behind it. It is their needs that justify the reason for their learning English and affects the decisions made on content and method. They believe the major concern is: *Why does this learner need to learn a foreign language?*

Stevens (1988)

ESP is defined through making a distinction between what is known as four *absolute* and two *variable* characteristics.

The four absolute characteristics are:

- designed to meet specific needs of the learner,
- related to content to particular disciplines, occupations and activities,
- centered on language appropriate to those activities in syntax lexis, discourse, semantics and analysis of the discourse,
- in contrast with general English.

The two variable characteristics are that ESP:

- May be restricted as to the learning skills to be learned,
- May not be thought according to any preordained methodology.

Robinson (1991)

ESP definition is based on two criteria:

- ESP is normally goal-directed,
- ESP courses develop from a needs analysis which aims to specify what exactly it is that students have to do through the medium of English.

ESP definition is also based on some characteristics:

- Limited time period in which objectives should be achieved,
- Adults in homogeneous classes in terms of the work or specialist studies that the students are involved in.

Dudley-Evans and St John (1998)

In their definition, they also made use of Stevens' (1988) absolute and variable characteristics but with a kind of modification:

Absolute characteristics

- ESP is designed to meet specific needs of the learner;
- ESP makes use of the underlying methodology and activities of the disciplines it serves;
- ESP is centered on the language (grammar, lexis, register), skills, discourse and genres appropriate to these activities.

Variable characteristics

- ESP may be related or designed for specific disciplines;

- ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of general English;
- ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation; it could be used for learners at secondary school level;
- ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced learners;
- Most ESP courses assume basic knowledge of the language system, but it can be used with beginners.

4. Difference between EGP and ESP

Hutchinson et al. (1987, p. 53) believe the difference lies in practice and not in theory. The major difference between EGP and ESP learners relates to the purpose behind which learning takes place. ESP students are usually adults who have already acquired the basic and general knowledge of English language for the purpose of communicating a set of professional skills and performing particular job-related functions. Having familiarity with general knowledge of English paves the way for them to go into the depth of the relevant context with which they can fulfill their needs.

In EGP, the focus is on teaching general vocabulary and language structures and the teacher is usually the sole source of knowledge that bombards the learners with structures with which they have no or few familiarity. In fact, most issues are relatively new to them.

In ESP the focus is on learners' needs, expectations and why they need to learn this language. Here, the language in context becomes important. Rationally, as the purpose of the learner changes, the contexts also vary to be in accordance with their needs. Unlike EGP learners, ESP learners' knowledge of the context makes it easier not only for them to participate actively in the learning process but also their teachers to guarantee their effective teaching.

5. Distinguishing characteristics of all ESP courses

Through comparison, so many differences can be observed between EGP and ESP. But in this part, the aim is to see what distinguishing characteristics all ESP courses have in common that make them unique.

Three common features have been stated by Carver (1983):

5.1. Authentic material

Considering the fact that ESP learners have already acquired some basic and general knowledge of English structures and are usually at intermediate or advanced levels, they are more exposed to other sources such as internet and magazines in which authentic materials abound.

5.2. Purpose-related orientation

This refers to creating a situation similar to the professional setting where the learners will use the language. In fact, the learners move from theory to practice and go beyond the limited classroom environment and practice effectively what they have actually learned.

5.3. Self-direction

"ESP is concerned with turning learners into users" (Carver, 1983, p. 134). As mentioned in part 3, In EEP classes, the teacher is not the sole source of knowledge but " an interested student of the subject matter" (Hutchinson and Waters 1987, p.163). Teachers should give certain degree of freedom to the learners to decide when, what and how they will study.

6. The role of an ESP practitioner

By using the term ESP practitioner instead of ESP teacher, Dudley Evans and St. John (1998) intend to emphasis what ESP actually involves is more than just teaching. They identify five vital roles:

6.1. ESP practitioner as *teacher*

Consequently when the nature of learners, needs and expectations vary, the methodology should also change. As the name ESP itself suggests, the teaching becomes more specific and to the point. As mentioned in the previous part, the teacher is no longer the sole source of knowledge. Learners having mastery over the content helps the teachers to create an environment in which real and authentic communication in the classroom are welcomed. The opportunities given to ESP learners to maneuver on their knowledge elicits a need for teachers to be patient and flexible.

6.2. ESP practitioner as *course designer and materials provider*

While all EGP learners' needs are similar and can be satisfied similarly through using so many existing materials, the needs of ESP learners vary and the existing materials may not suffice. Here, it is the teacher's role to assess the effectiveness of the existing material. There are occasions when there is no useful teaching material for a particular need and the responsibility is put in the shoulder of ESP teacher to write his/her own materials.

6.3. ESP practitioner as collaborator

This role suggests a need for teachers to cooperate actively and effectively with subject specialists. This cooperation can be for gaining information about the subject syllabus and tasks that ESP learners are supposed to carry out in their professional environment as well as specific collaboration when there is an integration between specialist studies or activities and the language.

6.4. ESP practitioner as researcher

Considering the nature and special characteristics of ESP classes, the need for teachers to go through a systematic investigation for a better fulfillment of learners' specific needs surfaces. Without conducting a research, the teacher may not be able to accurately analyze the needs, design a course and write teaching materials if necessary.

6.5. ESP practitioner as evaluator

Evaluation is not a new and specific term used just in ESP classes. EGP teachers also make use of evaluation to direct their teaching towards the goal. The difference lies in the higher degree of importance in ESP classes.

In all steps of teaching when an ESP teacher takes the role of an evaluator, s/he undergoes different types of evaluation such as testing of students, evaluation of courses and teaching materials. Testing students which is very common is to assess the learners' progress as well as the effectiveness of teaching.

Unlike EGP courses and teaching materials which are improved by methodology specialists, the teaching materials used in ESP classes are usually written by teachers. Therefore, it is a must to evaluate them from the beginning up to the end of the teaching to see whether the aims looked for by that particular group of learners have been achieved or not.

7. Conclusion

With the advent of ESP after the Second World War, a new dimension of teaching and learning based on learners' particular needs came to existence. That was learners' fields and needs that determined how and what materials to teach. From the very beginning challenging issues popped up. Differences between the nature of EGP and ESP were accentuated, various types of ESP were stated and the topic of ESP teachers came to be a new issue. The roles identified made ESP teachers different from EGP teachers. Great emphasis was put on identification of learners' needs. Having analyzed the needs, the teachers could come up with

designing an appropriate course for learners which could guarantee their successful communication in their target setting.

From all these do's and don'ts, this can be concluded that regardless of the needs, the teachers should go through all the steps and have thorough information about the roles they should play to satisfy the perceived needs.

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Title

The Effect of Using Self-correction of Mistakes in Online Text-based Conversation on EFL Learners' Oral Proficiency

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Abstract

In this study, considering the role of self-correction, the researcher investigated about the effect of two different trends in teaching conversation, namely online text-based and face-to-face conversation, on the improvement of the oral proficiency of EFL learners. To fulfill the purpose of this study, 64 students of Kavosh Language School in Mashhad were selected from among a total number of 92 based on their performance on the Preliminary English Test (PET) and randomly put into two experimental and control groups. Using communicative language teaching method, the teacher/researcher throughout 24 sessions taught the same content to both groups. The difference was that the experimental group benefited online interaction in a text-based format at home about 15-20 minutes. The rate of students' self-correction in each group were recorded and codified in four fields of grammar, spelling/pronunciation, semantics and mental processing. The results adopted from applying the chi-square analysis and Cramer's V formula, showed that the relationship between the frequencies, mean and the level

of degree of self-correlation of the experimental group was significantly higher than the control group so an achievement posttest, TSE (Test of spoken English) was given to the students in both groups at the end of the treatment and the mean scores of both groups on the test were compared through an independent samples t-test. The result showed that online text-based conversation had significant effect on EFL learners' oral proficiency and also the subjects in the experimental group used more self-corrections in grammar, semantics, pronunciation/spelling and mental processing respectively.

Keywords: Self-correction, Online text-based conversation, Oral proficiency

1. Introduction

The quest for finding means and tools to enhance the learning of both the individual and the community is perhaps as old as the first endeavors at learning and teaching themselves and it is necessary for students to make active use of technology to improve his language performance (Aqel, 2006).

The fact that computer-mediated communication (CMC) has the capacity to contribute to the second language learning process is gaining widening acceptance. In fact, benefits of both synchronous (e.g., chat) and asynchronous (e.g., email) forms of CMC have started to appear more regularly in the literature in recent years. Recent research on technology and language teaching has addressed the positive effects of online chatting, a form of CMC, on second language acquisition. Although much attention has been paid to effects of CMC on the development of grammar, vocabulary, and other language areas, little has been done linking it to speaking/oral proficiency.

Electronic wide-area networks, spread across the World Wide Web, connect speakers from a wide range of backgrounds and enable expanded opportunities for social interaction and language learning (Bonk & Kim, 1998). Indeed, the online language learning environment has greatly impacted the cognitive and social aspects of language learning. Interaction patterns sway and are swayed by the unique social activity of the electronic context. These messages have evolved as a new hybrid of spoken, written, and electronic chat discourse, (Blake, 2000; Muniandy, 2002; Warschauer, 1996).

Online text-based conversation has been argued to be a good venue for exploring self-correction, since it seems to provide an increase in processing time and opportunity for learners to focus on form (Pellettieri, 1999; Shehadeh, 2001; Smith, 2004), which may lead to a heightened potential for noticing one's own errors. Indeed, the nature of Synchronous

Computer-Mediated Communication (SCMC) requires learners to attend to both linguistic forms as well as the meaning of their communication.

Learner self-repair or self-correction has been explored in a variety of educational contexts from various theoretical perspectives and with a focus on both native speakers and second/foreign language learner. Self-corrections are seen as important from an SLA perspective because they provide insights into a learner's interlanguage (IL) development. Indeed, it is viewed by many as evidence of noticing an observable behavior from which we can infer that a learner has engaged in some monitoring strategy or has noticed a production error (Kormos, 1999).

In the view of the importance of effects of using self-correction of mistakes in online text-based conversation on Iranian intermediate EFL learners, this study intended to answer the two following questions:

1. Is there any significant difference between the rate of self-correction of mistakes among the Iranian intermediate students who use online text-based conversation and those who just use face-to-face conversation?
2. Does using self-correction of mistakes in online text-based conversation have any significant effect on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' oral proficiency?

In addressing the research question, the researcher stated the following null hypothesis:

H₀₁: There is no difference between the rate of self-correction of mistakes among the Iranian intermediate students who use online text-based conversation and those who just use face-to-face conversation.

H₀₂: Using self-correction of mistakes in online text-based conversation has no significant effect on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' oral proficiency.

2. Review of the Related Literature

Language acquisition does not happen unless the learner is relaxed and keen on learning. Fear of making mistakes prevents learners from being receptive and responsive. One aspect of overcoming fear of mistakes is the way mistakes can be remedied. Majority of EFL teachers assume an active role in error rectification, while learners prefer being passive and rely on teachers to point out their mistakes. In the long run, this approach is neither efficient nor efficacious, particularly in treating the so-called 'fossilized' errors (Harmer, 2001). The contemporary emphasis on learner-centeredness and autonomy suggests that in some settings

learner's self-correction of errors might be more beneficial for language learning than teacher's correction.

An updated theory on errors, corrective feedback and classroom practice in spoken language is described by Ancker (2000) who claims that 'error correction remains one of the most contentious and misunderstood issues in the second and foreign language teaching profession'. Learner self-correction has been explored in a variety of educational contexts from various theoretical perspectives and with a focus on both native speakers and second/foreign language learners. Self-corrections are seen as important from an SLA perspective because they provide insights into a learner's interlanguage development. Indeed, self-correction is viewed by many as evidence of noticing an observable behavior from which can be inferred that a learner has engaged in some monitoring strategy or has noticed a production error (Kormos, 1999).

Self-correction, or speech repair, is a major source of the disfluencies that speech dialog systems have to resolve. Since Hindle (1983), there have been many proposals as to how speech dialog systems can deal with self-correction (Bear, Downing, and Shriberg, 1992). It has been accepted by many as evidence of noticing (Lai & Zhao, 2006), which has been argued to be fundamental to the SLA process (Schmidt, 1993). Text-based chat has been argued to be a good venue for exploring self-repair, since it seems to provide an increase in processing time and opportunity for learners to focus on form (Pellettieri, 1999; Shehadeh, 2001; Smith, 2004), which may lead to a heightened potential for noticing one's own errors. Indeed, Yuan (2003) suggests that the nature of synchronous computer-mediated communication (SCMC) requires learners to attend to both linguistic forms as well as the meaning of their communication.

Kitade (2000) suggests that internet chat provides opportunities for learners to self correct both grammatical and pragmatic errors in their own linguistic output for essentially two reasons: first, there is no turn-taking competition and, second, there is more time for things like self-monitoring. Also, there are few paralinguistic cues available in text-based chat, which might reduce the sense of urgency to respond, and this, in turn, might facilitate learners' ability to monitor their language output more closely. SCMC texts are not ephemeral like oral/aural input and learners can scroll up/down to access an earlier message quite easily. Whether they in fact do this is an empirical question. Taken together, these features may positively influence a learner's ability to notice and subsequently correct non-target like language (Lai & Zhao, 2006; Smith & Gorsuch, 2004).

2.1. Van Hest's components of self-correction structure

Van Hest (1996) discusses self-correction structure in terms of three components:

- 1) A reparandum, which is either an error or an inappropriate expression;
- 2) An editing phase, which occurs immediately following the interruption of the flow of speech; and
- 3) A reparatum, which is the actual correction or change of the problematic item. Much of this work is based on research from L1 psycholinguistics and Levelt's (1983) repair classification system (Kormos, 2000; van Hest, 1996). This work makes a distinction between overt and covert repair. From this perspective, covert repairs (those made before articulation) proceed the same way as overt repairs. One must infer covert repair through indirect evidence such as word or phrase repetitions, syllabic repetition, silent pauses, etc. (Postma & Kolk, 1992). Van Hest proposes the model below for classifying the self-repair.

2.1.1. Overt Self-Repairs

- Error repair (E-repair): Those repairs made because the speaker has made an error.
- Appropriateness repair (A-repair): Those repairs made because the speaker thinks the original message is inappropriate in some way. For example, a message may be perceived as not having been specific enough.
- Different repair (D-repair): Those repairs in which the speaker interrupts his current message to introduce a new, totally different topic.
- Rest repair (R-repair): All other types of overt self-repair.
- Those cases whereby the speaker discovers imminent trouble in his/her message and "interrupts" him/herself before the troublesome item is uttered.

2.1.2. Covert Self-Repairs

In his work van Hest (1996) found that appropriateness repairs accounted for 39.7% of self-repairs, with error repairs making up 22.4%, different repairs 10.1%, with 12.3% of self-repairs remaining unclassified. Covert repairs made up 15.5% of all L2 self-corrections. Interestingly, Levelt's model does not explain where errors of morphology should go, though some researchers have collapsed syntactic and morphological errors together in a broader category of "grammatical" errors (Lai & Zhao, 2006).

Online conversation is a new phenomenon, having first come into existence toward the end of the 20th century. It is growing at one of the fastest rates of any new form of communication in human history, and its long-term impact is expected to be substantial. Online conversation represents the most important development in human communication and cognition since the development of the printing press (Harnad, 1991). According to

Streeck (1983), there are three basic mechanisms of conversation organization, implemented also in textual conversations, which are turn-taking, repair, and sequencing.

Conversation analysis is concerned with talk-in-interaction (Schegloff, 1987) and over the years several analyses have been conducted in which oral immediate conversation has been the subject of study. Condon & Cech (1996) claim that synchronous computer-mediated interaction also displays features such as turn taking and repair, which are both crucial in conversation analysis. They suggest that the same discourse processes are used in both CMC and F2F interaction and compare the structure of decision-making interactions by dividing utterances into functional categories.

Research has shown that humans often interact with computers as they do with other people, according to social rules and stereotypes, even when the interface is not a virtual human (Nass, 1992). Computer agents that use social dialogue, such as humor and small talk, to affect social relationships are really effective in performing tasks, and are viewed as likable, competent, and cooperative as F2F ones (Bickmore and Cassell, 2000). These conversational elements may help to increase engagement and task performance by improving credibility and positive affect with users.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The subjects who participated in this study were 64 Iranian adult male and female EFL learners at the intermediate level of English proficiency studying at Kavosh Language Institute in Mashhad. The sample was selected randomly based on the scores they obtained on a Preliminary English Test (PET) administered to them before conducting the study and was piloted in advanced with 18 other students with almost the same characteristics. Following the administration of the above test, a group of 92 students were selected randomly and 64 of those who obtained a score falling one standard deviation above and below the mean of the sample were chosen as the participants of this study.

3.2. Instrumentation

The instruments used in this study included: the assessment materials, the course book, the software, communicative tasks and activities utilized for each group. The assessment materials used were a test of general English proficiency (PET) and an oral proficiency test (TSE). Interactive tasks in this study for the both groups included: picture description, movie description, spot-the-differences, think-pair-share (Layman, 1981), paired annotations

(Kagan, 1992), and some other jigsaw tasks. The software CDs and devices used in the instrumentation of this study were Yahoo! Messenger and Camtasia CD which is dynamic screen video capture software which was employed in the experimental group to record exactly what appeared on each participant's computer screen in real time. For the control group the most important piece of equipment was a voice recorder in order to transcribe, code and analyze the instances of self-correction in participants' face-to-face conversations through interactive tasks. In order to facilitate the researcher's job in transcribing the student's recordings, Express Scribe Transcription Playback, digital transcription audio player software, was used.

3.4. Procedure

As the first, the PET was administered to 92 students and each participant was rendered a score based on his or her performance on the test. Out of the 92 students, those whose scores were between one standard deviation above and below the mean (N=64) were selected and were randomly divided into two groups: experimental and control. Normality of the distribution of scores and homogeneity of these groups were checked and a t-test was conducted to make sure there was no significant difference between the two groups' performance on their language proficiency at the onset of the study. The whole research project took place in 24 sessions and the students were taught Interchange Third Edition Student's book 2 by Jack C. Richards according to CLT approach with many interactive tasks.

In the control group, students almost in the form of pairs were asked to participate in the interactive tasks suggested by the teacher, almost pertinent to that session's subject of the lesson, as usual mode it is, face-to-face mode of conversation. In this group, all of the discussions, interactions, and communications produced by the participants were recorded from the first beginning moment of the class without letting them know, for later processes as transcription for coding the instances of self-corrections.

The participants in the experimental group also was divided into pairs from the very beginning to have a complete face-to-face conversation tasks in the classroom and out of it as the online textual conversations. In this group, everything in the class went as the same as the control group ones. The difference laid in the minutes through the online text-based conversation at home; the participants chatted (about 15-20 minutes) the interactive tasks at home in an online textual form together with the preplanned interlocutor. Every night three or four dyads got online to have the conversation in its text-based mode in the Yahoo! Messenger. After communicating about their interactive task, they saved the whole

conversation and brought to the teacher. The researcher analyzed the students' job and coded the instances of self-corrections which were the episodes that participants immediately corrected their own grammar, semantics, pronunciation (in the case of F2F communication only) or spelling (in the form of written communication) and mental processing.

After the treatment, the numbers of self-corrections in every group were coded according to the MICASE Transcription and Mark. The four areas of self-correction done by the students, based on the data driven from recorded conversations in both face-to-face and online text-based chats, a Chi-square and a Cramer's V analysis was performed to examine the relationship between the frequencies, mean and the rate of self-correlation in the two groups and at the end, the main TSE was administered to all the subjects of the main groups of experimental as well as the control group, as the main achievement posttest in order to determine whether there was any significant effect on their oral proficiency or not.

3.5. Design

Based on the nature and the purpose of the research, the design was quasi-experimental with posttest only design as participants were randomly selected and divided into two groups. The major variables which the researchers manipulated in this study (independent variables) included using online text-based conversation. Oral proficiency was the dependent variable. All of the participants in this study were in the same level of intermediate as they were homogenized with respect to their proficiency level by means of the PET, so the only control variable of the study was the language proficiency.

4. Results and Discussion

The results of the pilot study of PET revealed that the tests had a reliability of .77 as measured by Cronbach Alpha. The researchers administered the piloted PET among 92 intermediate students. The reliability of the test came out to be .93. The inter-rater consistency between the two raters came out to be .85 for the speaking sections. The mean of the scores for 92 students came out to be 67.6 and the standard deviation 7.46. Therefore, 64 students whose scores fell between 20.21 and 65.13 were selected as the participants of the study. In order to find out whether there was any significant difference among the performances of the two groups at the onset of the study, a t-test was run on the test scores. The assumptions for running a t-test were checked. Skewness ratio for the experimental group fell between the ranges of ± 1.96 but that of the control group was beyond it, thus the

distributions of the scores of the two groups were not normal as shown in Table 1 and running a t-test was not legitimized.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of the Two Groups Prior to the Treatment

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	Skewness		Skewness Ratio
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	
Experimental	32	55.0938	5.45574	29.765	.586	.414	1.41 - 3.62
Control	32	57.9375	4.66239	21.738	-1.504	.414	
Valid N (listwise)	32						

Hence the researcher had to resort to employing the Mann-Whitney test, as a non-parametric equivalent of *t*-test for this procedure. Tables 2 and 3 show the results for this statistical procedure.

Table 2. Mann-Whitney Test: Ranks

Participants		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
PET score	Xprim	32	30.72	983.00
	Cntrl	32	34.28	1097.00
	Total	64		

Table 3. Mann-Whitney Test: Test Statistics

	PETscore
Mann-Whitney U	455.000
Wilcoxon W	983.000
Z	-.769
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.442

According to Table 3, the results of the Mann-Whitney U test indicated that at the .05 level of significance, there was no significant difference between the mean rank of the control group (30.72) and that of the experimental group (34.28) on the proficiency test ($U = 455$, $N_1 = 32$, $N_2 = 32$, $p = .442 < .05$).

After counting the rate of instances of self-correction in each group from the first session of treatment to the last one, the researcher, based on the data driven from recorded conversations in both face-to-face and online text-based conversation, examined the relationship between the frequencies, mean and the level of degree of self-correlation in the two groups once the treatment was completed. To verify the first hypothesis in considering the first question "Is there any significant difference between the rate of self-correction of mistakes among the Iranian intermediate EFL students who use online text-based conversation and those who just use face-to-face conversation?", the four language areas self-corrected by the students, based on the data driven from recorded conversations in both face-to-face and online text-based chats within 24 sessions data went through the SPSS and a chi-

square analysis was performed to examine the relationship between the frequencies, mean and the level of degree of self-correlation in the two groups. Table 4 shows the descriptive statistics for the self-correction of the two groups on the four language areas.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics for the Self-correction of the Groups on the Considered Fields

			Group		Total
			Online	face to face	
Field	Grammar	Count	108	87	195
		Expected Count	105.7	89.3	195.0
		% of Total	31.3%	25.2%	56.5%
	Spelling	Count	32	9	41
		Expected Count	22.2	18.8	41.0
		% of Total	9.3%	2.6%	11.9%
	Semantic	Count	44	53	97
		Expected Count	52.6	44.4	97.0
		% of Total	12.8%	15.4%	28.1%
	Mental	Count	3	9	12
		Expected Count	6.5	5.5	12.0
		% of Total	.9%	2.6%	3.5%
Total	Count	187	158	345	
	Expected Count	187.0	158.0	345.0	
	% of Total	54.2%	45.8%	100.0%	

Table 5. Chi-square Statistics for the Self-correction of the Two Groups Pearson Chi-Square

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	16.679 ^a	3	.001
Likelihood Ratio	17.483	3	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.966	1	.046
N of Valid Cases	345		

After the Chi-square which has determined significance, a Cramer's V was used to determine the strength of association or dependency between the two variables. Table 6 shows the correlation between the two variables via Cramer's V in order to give the additional information.

Table 6. Correlation between the Two Variables via Cramer's V

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.220	.001
	Cramer's V	.220	.001
N of Valid Cases		345	

As a posttest, a TSE (Test of Spoken English), following its piloting among 27 students with almost the same characteristics, was administered at the end of the treatment to both the control and experimental groups. Table 7 below displays the descriptive statistics for this administration in both groups with the means being 42.96 and 36.4 for the experimental and control groups, respectively.

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics of the Posttest Scores of Control and Experimental Groups

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
Experimental	32	25.00	55.00	42.9688	1.24716	7.05501	-.902	.414
Control	32	20.00	50.00	36.4063	1.45902	8.25348	-.023	.414
Valid N (listwise)	32							

Considering the second question "Does using self-correction of mistakes in online text-based conversation have any significant effect on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' oral proficiency?" and to verify the null hypothesis of the study, the researcher conducted an independent samples *t*-test. Since the distribution of the scores obtained by the experimental group was not normal ($-2.17 > -1.96$), running a *t*-test was not legitimized. For this purpose *Mann-Whitney U* Test, as a non-parametric equivalent of *t*-test, was run. Table 8 below displays the results of the Mann-Whitney U Test.

Table 8. Posttest Inferential Statistics

Part	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
TSE Chat	32	39.67	1269.50
f2f	32	25.33	810.50
Total	64		

Test Statistics

	TSE
Mann-Whitney U	282.500
Wilcoxon W	810.500
Z	-3.143
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.002

The above table shows a significant difference between the means of the two groups ($U=282.5$, $P=.002<.05$). The difference in the means obtained by the two groups as reported in the Ranks table above indicates the superiority of the group had online text-based conversation (experimental group) on their oral proficiency posttest performance. ($U = 282.5$,

$N_1 = 32, N_2 = 32, p = .002 < .05$); By virtue of the significant difference between the means of the two groups, and the .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis considering self-correction of mistakes in online text-based conversation has no significant effect on Iranian intermediate EFL learners' oral proficiency, was rejected.

The result of the study, though limited in scope, suggests that practicing conversation in online text-based form of it had a significant effect on EFL learners' oral proficiency. That is to say that the use of online activities during instruction significantly increased learners' achievement. As online text-based conversation consists of 'written speech', the form which was the most emphasis on, target language forms are visually immediate and teachers or peers can highlight or otherwise call attention to those forms. Learners have the opportunity not only to see the language being used to communicate, but to look at it as many times and for as long as they wish without disruption of the online conversation.

5. Conclusion

The outcome of the posttest analysis clarified that online text-based conversation had a significant effect on EFL learners' oral proficiency. That is to say that the use of online activities during instruction significantly increased learners' achievement. Although this study was limited in duration and scope, the results clearly support earlier research on CMC and CALL which found that it accelerates achievement in oral proficiency as well as having positive effects on certain important factors such as motivation, and enjoying the class and working with others in other learners. CMC affords both instructors and students, both the time and opportunity they may lack in the live classroom to work through the negotiation of meaning with a focus on form. This does not mean that CMC serve as a replacement for live instruction; on the contrary, as a complement to live instruction, instructor-orchestrated CMC may enhance F2F learning by providing an additional venue to practice and reinforce f2f instruction as it is also supported by a multiplicity of theories from a variety of academic disciplines – including psychological theories of motivation, social cohesion, individual and cognitive development as well as socio-cultural theory, cognitive apprenticeship, situated cognition, and communities of practice.

Computer mediated communication approaches with its virtual classes can take advantage of heterogeneous classes by encouraging students to interact with one another and learn from peers. The bonds developed in this process can lead to increased understanding and acceptance of all members of a group, a benefit of CMC which extends well beyond the

walls of the class itself. Designed and implemented by teachers, online conversations can create supportive environments that will enable students to succeed in their course, enhance their oral communicative competence, boost their motivation toward learning English as a foreign language, and improve their interpersonal relationships.

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Title

The Effect of Conscious Attention to Form on Achieving Syntactic Proficiency among Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners

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Abstract

This empirical study of the effects of conscious attention to grammar instruction was conducted at a private institution on 110 participants at intermediate level. Specifically, the study addresses: a) Does conscious attention to the forms (explicit directed instructional approach) affect the recognition achievement of syntactic proficiency among the Iranian intermediate EFL learners? b) Does conscious attention to the forms (explicit directed instructional approach) affect the production achievement of syntactic proficiency among the Iranian intermediate EFL learners? Results of the study show that a) students who received explicit instruction is significantly better than those who received implicit instruction. b) A higher level of awareness and consciousness correlates positively with language development.

Keywords: Conscious language learning, Explicit learning and instruction, Implicit learning and instruction, Focus on form

1. Introduction

"There are many theories on how a second and foreign language is learned, how to implement various approaches in the classroom, and how to measure learning" (Andrews, 2007). Recently, Language learning research has witnessed superiority of studies that examine language learning under cognitive and information processing frameworks (see Doughty and Williams, 1998a; Robinson, 2003; Schmidt, 1990; White, 1998, to name just a few). A major

focus of this research has been exploring the role of awareness and attention in language learning. The concern in the role of cognitive mechanism is initiated by the need to find an influential explanation of how learners deal with and regulate a seemingly overwhelming influx of input which they encounter during the language learning process.

The influence of pedagogy on language learners has a variety of theories backed by research with differing findings (N. Ellis, 1994; R. Ellis, 1987; Krashen, 1981,1982; Schwartz, 1993). This study examined some of those theories in actual language classrooms. Its findings are closely attuned to the much-debated grammar instruction category often called form-focused instruction (FFI) with its divided to implicit instruction and explicit instruction (Ellis, 2001; Long, 1988, 1991).

A range of studies (e.g. Gass 1982; Pienemann 1985; Alanen 1995; Robinson 2003; Harley 1998) have concluded that these learners whose attention had been drawn to the formal properties of the TL exceed in performance than those exposed to implicit learning conditions.

The purpose of this study was to provide empirical data on the effect of conscious attention (explicit instruction) on grammatical structures and syntactic proficiency development. For a complete understanding of the theoretical framework and underlying terminology used for the treatments (explicit and implicit instruction) used in this study, a thorough review of Ellis' (2001) two types of FFI as discussed in Andrews(2007) is necessary. Briefly described, for explicit instruction, learning the form is the primary focus of all the tasks. In explicit instruction, a proactively selected form is intensely taught either by the presentation of the rules and then the giving of examples (deductive reasoning). For the implicit instructional treatment used in this study, the primary focus of the task is on understanding the meaning of the text (not on rule or structure formation). In implicit instruction, many sentence-examples (from authentic text) containing the structure are presented as input tasks. The input is done not so much by the teacher but by the task. The meaning of the text or task is primary over the grammatical form. The learners may infer "rules" from the examples with or without awareness that they are doing so. The examples and activities, hopefully, cause the LL to process form while interacting with the input.

The activities are designed so that the LL must employ the form to accomplish the tasks in the output. Even though students often need metalinguistic explanations as feedback to confirm their hypotheses when they question if their answers are correct, a difference in the implicit treatment used in this study from Ellis' model is that for the grammar "discovery" part of the lesson, no rule formation discussion or activity was overtly encouraged or done. It

was hoped that the input task alone would 'push' the LLs to notice the forms. With these two instructional approaches in mind, this study tested by classroom research theory that certain structures are learned better by explicit instruction.

To achieve the purpose of the study, the following research questions are proposed:

1. Does conscious attention to the forms affect the recognition achievement of syntactic proficiency among the Iranian intermediate EFL learners?
2. Does conscious attention to the forms affect the production achievement of syntactic proficiency among the Iranian intermediate EFL learners?

And accordingly the following null hypotheses are formulated:

1. There is no significant difference between Conscious attention (explicit) and subconscious attention (implicit) to the forms on recognition achievement of syntactic proficiency among the Iranian intermediate EFL learners?
2. There is no significant difference between Conscious attention (explicit) and subconscious attention (implicit) to the forms on production achievement of syntactic proficiency among the Iranian intermediate EFL learners?

2. Review of Literature

In this section, a number of studies regarding primary attention to explicit/implicit focus on form are presented. As for studies regarding the dichotomy of implicit and explicit focus on form, this question may come to mind, which is better and produces more beneficial effects. Two studies in this regard (Dekeyser, 1995; Robinson, 1995a, 1996b, cited in Long & Robinson, 1998) demonstrate that explicit focus on form instruction leads to significantly more gains than does implicit learning.

2.1. Focus on Form Background

What role focus on form instruction should play during a language teaching is a major issue in language learning. Andringa, 2005, claims focus on form instruction refers to attention to the formal aspects of language (grammar, spelling, intonation, etc.). Paying attention to linguistic form for many years was a controversy issue for language learning researches. Some argued that language learning is a fairly automatic process that occurs instinctively if instruction provides numerous opportunities to deal with the target language. Others have claimed that effective language instruction involves explicitly teaching the rules of the target language.

As historical overview provision of focus on form, Long and Robinson (1998) state that previously, analyzing the target language to form a pedagogical grammar which is termed by Long & Robinson's synthetic approach, is the first task in syllabus design.

In general as discussed before, there are two sets of strategies to focus on form. Explicit, or direct, strategies involve explicitly drawing the attention of the learner to the linguistic issue and implicit or indirect strategies which is not directly expressed.

Doughty and Williams (1998) also introduce these two dichotomies by first pointing to a common definition of explicit and implicit as follows: Implicit a. Implied or understood though not directly expressed. b. Contained in the nature of something though not readily apparent. Explicit a. fully and clearly expressed, defined or formulated. b. Readily observable. (p. 230)

2.2. Explicit Language Teaching

Related to the debate about the role of awareness in language learning is the issue of the degree of explicitness necessary to draw learner's attention to the targeted linguistic elements. Recently, many of the studies conducted under the attentional framework have been carried out within what is known as focus-on-form instruction.

As Ellis, 2001, claims focus on form instruction refers to a type of instruction that attempts to draw learner's attention to the formal features of the target language. According to Long and Robinson (1998), focus on form instruction emphasizes how learner's attentional resources are allocated at any given moment and involves occasional shifts of these resources to the linguistic code whenever a problem with comprehension and production arises. Focus on Form is motivated by research findings in both experimental (Doughty, 1991) and immersion settings (Swain 1998). The findings of this research suggest that meaning focused instruction alone may not be sufficient for learners to acquire the linguistic elements of the target language, and it suggests a positive relationship between drawing learner's attention to the formal properties of the target language and language development.

Similar to the concepts of awareness and attention, the term focus-on-form draws a considerable degree of debate among language learning researchers over its interpretation. Doughty and Williams (1998b) point out that focus-on-form interpretations range from a very narrow and implicit view adopted by Long (1991) to a broader, liberal, and more explicit view as presented in the work of Dekeyser (1998); Harley (1998); and Swain (1998). This divide is reflected in a growing number of experimental studies that have examined both ends of the continuum. Investigating the effects of visual input enhancement (e.g., bolding, capitalizing, or underlining) on language learning, White (1998) and Jourdenais (1998) and

Izumi (2002) demonstrate that this form of implicit instruction may not be sufficient to induce changes in learner's performance. On the other hand, studies conducted under explicit instructional conditions have generally demonstrated positive effects on learner's L2 development. In this regard, exploring the effects of instructional Radwan, 2005, condition on learner's language progress, Alanen (1995), Harley (1998), Robinson (2003) have concluded that learners exposed to explicit learning conditions outperformed those exposed to implicit learning conditions.

This conclusion and the favorable attitude to explicit focus on form, demonstrated by both foreign language instructors and students, emphasize that grammar learning should be an indispensable component of the language learning experience.

2.3. Role of Attention and Noticing in LL

Underlying the mainstream of current LL research is the Ansatz that some level of attention to the formal aspects of language is necessary for acquisition to take place (Radwan 2005, p.70). It is self-evident and commonsensical that focusing on specific linguistic aspects helps the learner to acquire and internalize them. Numerous recent studies investigated the complex relationships between the role of cognitive processes (consciousness, attention, awareness, detection...) and the process of language learning, and there is nearly global consensus among researchers that some degree of attention to problematic (fragile, crucial/non-salient) aspects of the input seems to be essential for understanding and learning to occur (Schmidt 1990, 1993a; Robinson 2003; Dekeyser 2001; Ellis 2001), although this consensus still conceals the fact that the exact role of awareness in the process of LL has generally been debatable, speculative, and at times contentious (Radwan 2005, p.70).

2.4. Conscious Attention to Language Forms

Due to William, 2004, the importance of conscious attention to form or noticing in language learning there are two opposing perspectives in terms of the role of consciousness. One advocates its necessity, the other subsidiary. As previously said for instance, Krashen (1982, 1985) claimed that a foreign language is acquired by a subconscious process and he distinguished language 'acquisition,' such as implicit knowledge of the language, and language 'learning,' such as explicit knowledge about the language. According to Krashen, "language acquisition is developed subconsciously through comprehending input while language learning is developed consciously through deliberate study of the L2." Prabhu (1987) also emphasized that language acquisition takes place not through attention to form but through the exposure to the adequate input.

On the contrary, Researchers such as Swain (1985) claim that merely exposure to language input is not sufficient for language learning. Swain studied the students in an English-French immersion program in Canada. Those students were sufficiently exposed to French language as a second language input for a long time and their French proficiency of reading, writing, listening and speaking was close to that of native speakers. It turned out, however, that their productivity of French language was not accurate although their fluency was acknowledged. Those students were less proficient in the grammatical domain. This suggests that something more than comprehensive input is effective for language learning, therefore, it will be significant to examine the theory which explains the relation between input and learners' mental powers-consciousness. So it is important to discuss what role learners' consciousness plays for acquisition by focusing on some researchers' works.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

To accomplish the objectives of this study, 110 female intermediate learners between 21-26 years old from Kish Language Institute was given a TOEFL test as a homogeneity test. Ninety learners whom met the necessary condition out of 110 were chosen to enter the second phase. The resultant sample comprised three classes in the institute with the equal population of 30.

The classes/groups were randomly nominated for one of the following condition,

1. (TEG) stands for textual enhancement condition group.
2. (ROG) stands for rule-oriented condition group.
3. (CG) stands for control group.

3.2. Instrumentations

In order to carry out this study, first, a TOEFL test as a homogeneity test consists of 90 questions were used. This test included two skills of structure and reading. The test was piloted with 30 similar learners to determine item characteristics, i.e., item facility, item discrimination, and choice distribution. The reliability of the test was calculated through KR-21 method which turned out to be 0.89. The test involved of 40 structure items and 50 reading items as question. A time allocation of 45 minutes was also estimated for the final version of the homogeneity test.

Second, a pretest consists of 80 questions, 40 items specified for recognition skill and 40 items for production skill was conducted. The assessment tasks in this study according to classification of Radwan, 2005 are as follows,

1. Grammaticality judgment and Preference tests task consist of 40 sentences.
2. Controlled writing task consists of 40 items within a set of contexts.

The first item which consists of 40 questions is specified for recognition skill and the last item which consists of 40 questions is specified for production skill. The test was piloted with 30 similar learners to determine item characteristics, i.e., item facility, item discrimination, and choice distribution. The reliability of the test was calculated through KR-21 method which turned out to be 0.85. A time allocation of 75 minutes was also estimated for the final version of the pretest.

Third, for treatment six short stories based on the aimed structure of this study was selected to proceed the study in the shape of three teaching packages which prepared for the three above mentioned groups, correspondence the received treatment for each group.

Fourth, the grammar teaching package was designed according to the book Longman English Grammar practice for intermediate students (L.G. Alexander). The two grammarian items which were selected for teaching in this study are conditional sentences and passive clauses that both of them are correspondence to the participants' English level.

Fifth, the last instrument of this study which was presented through treatment is a Post test consists of 80 questions, 40 items specified for recognition skill and 40 items for production skill was conducted. The assessment tasks in this study according to classification of Radwan, 2005 are as follows,

1. Grammaticality judgment and Preference tests task consist of 40 sentences.
2. Controlled writing task consists of 40 items within a set of contexts.

The first item which consists of 40 questions is specified for recognition skill and the last item which consists of 40 questions is specified for production skill. The selected items of the Post test agreed to the selected items of the pretest. The test was piloted with 30 similar learners to determine item characteristics, i.e., item facility, item discrimination, and choice distribution. The reliability of the test was calculated through KR-21 method which turned out to be 0.81. A time allocation of 75 minutes was also estimated for the final version of the post test.

3.3. Procedure

This study required 90 homogeneous learners who also had almost same familiarity with grammatical structures of two forms of conditional sentences, and passive clauses.

A TOEFL test as a homogeneity test consists of 90 questions was used which, some items for conditional sentences, and some items for passive clauses were added to it. The test involved of 40 structure items and 50 reading items as question. Then, 110 learners took the test, out of whom 90 learners met the necessary condition (i.e., scores below 10 were lack of ability of general English) to enter the second phase. A time allocation of 45 minutes was also estimated for the final version of the homogeneity test.

The selected participants which were matched on the basis of their first pretest scores, were put into three similar groups; two groups as the experimental groups, and one other as the control group. The resultant sample comprised three classes in the institute with the equal population of 30.

The classes/groups were randomly nominated for one of the following condition,

1. (TEG) stands for textual enhancement condition group.
2. (ROG) stands for rule-oriented condition group.
3. (CG) stands for control group.

In the second phase, 90 learners out of 110 which their scores were upper than 10 and due to Morgan table were chosen for the final phase of the study.

These 90 learners were pretested by means of a pretest consists of 80 questions, 40 items specified for recognition skill and 40 items for production skill was conducted. The assessment tasks in this study according to classification of Radwan, 2005 are as follows,

1. Grammaticality judgment and Preference tests task consist of 40 sentences.
2. Controlled writing task consists of 40 items within a set of contexts.

The first item which consists of 40 questions is specified for recognition skill and the last item which consists of 40 questions is specified for production skill. A time allocation of 75 minutes was also estimated for the final version of the pretest.

This test as pretest was conducted to make sure that in the beginning of the treatment, the participants had the same familiarity with the aimed structures in the study.

The next day following the pretest, the treatment would be followed within six sessions each forty-five minutes.

Regarding the treatment, this study required the teachers to provide the learners with a kind of task that pushed the learners to use the aimed structures in a way that the accomplishment of the task was not possible without using them.

In the first meetings, the short stories which contained a high rate of the mentioned grammar items were handed out to the participants. Six passages in the shape of short stories were developed for each structure to be presented to participants.

The mentioned short stories were divided to three different packages. The textual enhancement group (TEG) received the first package with bolded and underlined the study aimed grammatical items. These textual enhancement techniques purported to present the target feature implicitly through increasing its visual salience.

On the other hand, rule-oriented condition group (ROG) received the second package without any bolded and underlined, they received it with pages explanation of the rules of the study aimed grammatical items. These rule-oriented techniques purported to present the target feature explicitly through direct explanation and consciousness raising.

Finally, control group (CG) received the third package without any modification (bolded and underlined) or explanation.

To make up for the time which ROG spent on reading the rules, participants in the other groups were given a reading text, giving them information about the author of the short stories. For making sure that comprehension or its lack did not intervene in the student's performance the short stories was followed by a comprehension question for testing the learners' comprehension of the story within using the grammarian items which the participants work on them after reading each story in each session. This goal is applying to assess the learners' ability to notice the grammarian items.

The treatments would be received by all the participants in groups due to their basis classification textually enhanced in the case of TEG and with explanation in the case of ROG and without any modification and explanation for control group.

The last phase is Post test administration for finding whether the participants paid any attention to any grammatical features according to the presented treatment. The Post test consists of 80 questions, 40 items specified for recognition skill and 40 items for production skill was conducted. The assessment tasks in this study according to classification of Radwan, 2005 are as follows,

1. Grammaticality judgment and Preference tests task consist of 40 sentences.
2. Controlled writing task consists of 40 items within a set of contexts.

The first item which consists of 40 questions is specified for recognition skill and the last item which consists of 40 questions is specified for production skill. The selected items of the Post test agreed to the selected items of the pretest. A time allocation of 75 minutes was also estimated for the final version of the post test.

According to Radwan, 2005, which was designed the shape of the pretest and the Post test methods, the first task consisted of 40 sentences created in a very systematic manner, representing the various possibilities and constraints on mentioned grammarian items,

including grammatical and ungrammatical ones. The participants should judge and recognize the grammatical correctness of the sentences. The next task consist of 20 items tested the participants' preference for the blank fulfillment in which mentioned grammarians items could occur and selected one correct and suitable answer by the participants.

As with the previous measure, this task consisted of 20 sentences, and the participants had to circle their preference on the basis of correct and most suitable answer for blank fulfillment. While the first and second tasks measured the participants' recognition of the target feature, the third task measured the participants' ability to produce in writing the target feature in a controlled context which intended to maximize the production of the relevant target feature. The task comprised a set of contexts with 40 blanks and verbs in brackets before them which were represented a single action. The students were asked to write the correct form of the verbs in brackets in the blanks.

4. Data Collection and Discussion

At the beginning of the study all groups were given a TOEFL Test to see if they had almost same familiarity with grammatical structures of two forms of conditional sentences, and passive clauses. Table 1 shows the descriptive data of the homogeneity test.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Homogeneity Test.

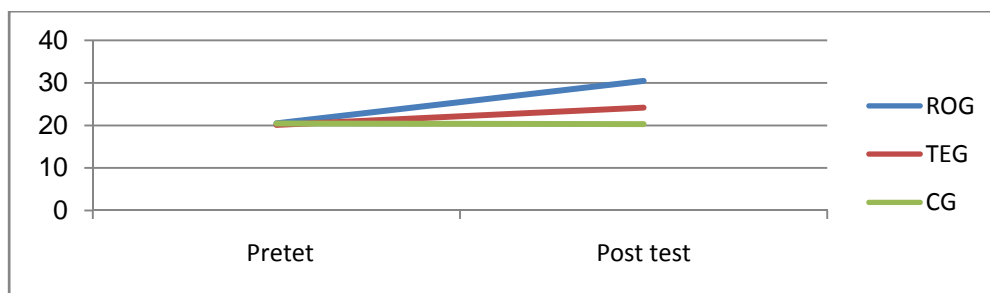
	N	Mean	Std. Error of Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation	Variance	Range
Homogeneity Test	110	49.2455	2.71379	52.0000	80.00	28.46249	810.11351	89.00

As can be seen in the table, the number of the participants at the first pretest is 110 which after homogeneity they decrease to 90 for following up the rest of the study.

4.1. Explicitness and Recognition

The first research question deals with Does conscious attention to the forms affect the recognition achievement of syntactic proficiency among the Iranian intermediate EFL learners? As mentioned all 110 of the intermediate level participants have given a homogeneity test which 90 learners was selected and entered to the second phase. The second test was pretest which was conducted to make sure that in the beginning of the treatment, the participants had the same familiarity with the aimed structures in the study and its results in Fig. 1 shows the mean scores for recognition skills of all the groups at Pretest and Post test.

Fig. 1. Mean scores for Recognition tasks pretest and Post test.



The ANOVA results for the first skill did not show any significant differences among the three groups prior to the treatment, ROG Mean=20.50, TEG Mean = 20.13, CG Mean = 20.46, (Table 2). Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Recognition tasks of the Pretest.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
ROG	30	20.5000	6.68890	1.22122	18.0023	22.9977
TEG	30	20.1333	6.76060	1.23431	17.6089	22.6578
CG	30	20.4667	6.80635	1.24266	17.9251	23.0082
Total	90	20.3667	6.67790	.70391	18.9680	21.7653

The ANOVA results showed the Fobserved value for the effect of the pretest is 0.027, degrees of freedom 2 and level of significance=0.05 (Table 3), that there is any significant differences between three groups at the pretest level, so any improvement they had demonstrated would be attributable to the instruction which they received during the experiment . Table 3. ANOVA for Recognition tasks of the Pretest

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between groups	2.467	2	1.233	.027	.973
Within groups	3966.433	87	45.591		
Total	3968.900	89			

The ANOVA results for the first skill at Post test show a significant difference among the three groups after treatments. It showed that as the ROG Mean=30.46 is more than the TEG Mean =24.20 and CG Mean = 20.30 (Table 4).

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics for Recognition tasks of the Post test.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
ROG	30	30.4667	7.90344	1.44296	27.5155	33.4179
TEG	30	24.2000	6.17782	1.12791	21.8932	26.5068
CG	30	20.3000	6.79325	1.24027	17.7634	22.8366
Total	90	24.9889	8.09702	.85350	23.2930	26.6848

The Fob served value for the effect of the treatment at post test is 16.131, degrees of freedom 2 and level of significance=0.01 (Table 5)it can be concluded that there is a significant main effect for recognition test between three groups after receiving treatments.

Table 5. ANOVA for Recognition tasks of the Post test.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between groups	1578.422	2	789.211	16.131	.000
Within groups	4256.567	87	48.926		
Total	5834.989	89			

Post-hoc analysis on condition showed that there is a significant main effect at 0.01 between ROG mean=30.46 and TEG mean= 24.20 so ROG performed significantly better than TEG and there is a significant main effect at 0.01 between ROG mean=30.46 and CG mean= 20.30 so ROG performed significantly better than CG and with level of significance0.05 between TEG mean= 24.20 and CG mean= 20.30 so TEG performed significantly better than CG (Table 6).

Table 6. Post-Hoc Recognition Pretest.

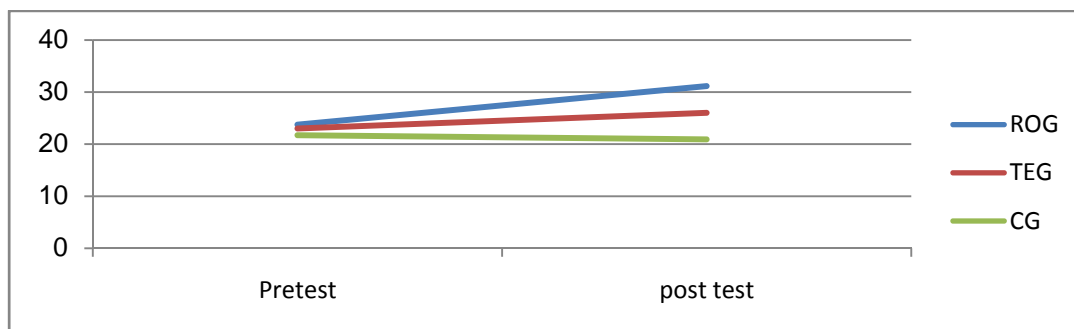
(I)Code	(J)Code	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
ROG	TEG	6.2667	1.80603	.001	2.6770	9.8563
	CG	10.1667	1.80603	.000	6.5770	13.7563
TEG	ROG	-6.2667	1.80603	.001	-9.8563	-2.6770
	CG	3.9000	1.80603	.034	.3103	7.4897
CG	ROG	-10.1667	1.80603	.000	-13.7563	-6.5770
	TEG	-3.9000	1.80603	.034	-7.4897	-.3103

It can be claimed that there is not any significant difference between the recognition mean scores as the first skill of the experimental and control groups in the pretest after homogeneity but, after receiving the treatments within six sessions the mean scores at post test have been changed and emerge a significant different between the recognition mean scores as the first skill of the experimental and control groups in which the ROG had a better performance than TEG as the other experimental group.

4.2. Explicitness and Production

The second research question deals with, does conscious attention to the forms affect the production achievement of syntactic proficiency among the Iranian intermediate EFL learners? As mentioned all 110 of the intermediate level participants have given a homogeneity test which 90 learners was selected and entered to the second phase. The second test was pretest which was conducted to make sure that in the beginning of the treatment, the participants had the same familiarity with the aimed structures in the study and its results in Fig. 2 shows the mean scores for production skills of all the groups at Pretest and Post test.

Fig. 2. Mean scores for production skills pretest and Post test.



The ANOVA results for the second skill did not show any significant differences among the three groups prior to the treatment, ROG Mean=23.76, TEG Mean = 23.00, CG Mean = 21.73, (Table 7).

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics for Production tasks of the Pretest.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
ROG	30	23.7667	7.30934	1.33450	21.0373	26.4960
TEG	30	23.0000	6.36802	1.16264	20.6221	25.3779
CG	30	21.7333	6.62770	1.21005	19.2585	24.2082
Total	90	22.8333	6.75619	.71216	21.4183	24.2484

The Fob served value for the effect of the pretest is 0.688, degrees of freedom 2 and level of significance 0.05 (Table 8), that there is any significant differences between three groups at the pretest level, so any improvement they had demonstrated would be attributable to the instruction which they received during the experiment.

Table 8. ANOVA for Production tasks of the Pretest.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between groups	63.267	2	31.633	.688	.505
Within groups	3999.233	87	45.968		
Total	4062.500	89			

The ANOVA results for the second skill at Post test show a significant difference among the three groups after treatments. It showed that as the ROG Mean =31.16 is more than the TEG Mean =26.03 and CG Mean = 20.93 (Table 9).

Table 9. Descriptive Statistics for Production tasks of the Post test.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
ROG	30	31.1667	7.21150	1.31663	28.4738	33.8595
TEG	30	26.0333	9.37893	1.71235	22.5312	29.5355
CG	30	20.9333	6.28591	1.14764	18.5861	23.2805
Total	90	26.0444	8.72541	.91974	24.2169	27.8719

The Fob served value for the effect of the treatment at Post test is 13.128, degrees of freedom 2 and level of significance 0.01 (Table 10) it can be concluded that there is a significant main effect for production test between three groups after receiving treatments.

Table 10. ANOVA for Production tasks of the Post test.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between groups	1570.822	2	785.411	13.128	.000
Within groups	5205.000	87	59.828		
Total	6775.822	89			

Post-hoc analysis on condition showed that there is a significant main effect at 0.05 between ROG mean=31.16 and TEG mean= 26.03 so ROG performed significantly better than TEG and there is a significant main effect at 0.01 between ROG mean=31.16 and CG mean= 20.93 so ROG performed significantly better than CG and with level of significance 0.05 between TEG mean= 26.03 and CG mean= 20.93 so TEG performed significantly better than CG (Table 11).

Table 11. Post-Hoc Production Post test

(I)Code	(J)Code	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
ROG	TEG	5.1333	1.99712	.012	1.1638	9.1028
	CG	10.2333	1.99712	.000	6.2638	14.2028
TEG	ROG	-5.1333	1.99712	.012	-9.1028	-1.1638
	CG	5.1000	1.99712	.012	1.1305	9.0695
CG	ROG	-10.2333	1.99712	.000	-14.2028	-6.2638
	TEG	-5.1000	1.99712	.012	-9.0695	-1.1305

It can be claimed that there is not any significant difference between the production mean scores as the second skill of the experimental and control groups in the pretest after homogeneity but, after receiving the treatments within six sessions the mean scores at post test have been changed and emerge a significant different between the production mean scores as the second skill of the experimental and control groups in which the ROG had a better performance than TEG, the other experimental group.

5. Conclusion

With regard to the effects of condition of learning, while ROG made significant gains between tests, TEG, which was expected to pattern with ROG, failed to make any significant progress. More importantly, learners in ROG were able to maintain their progress over a period of about one month following the treatment, and also were able to generalize their acquired knowledge to new cases. This result, while showing that less explicit forms of input enhancement such as textual manipulation are insufficient to induce changes in the learners' L2 ability, gives support to proponents of providing explicit instruction in the target linguistic form as the most effective means of drawing learners' attention to the rules regulating a complex linguistic structure such as conditional and passive clauses.

Direct consciousness at the level of understanding correlated positively with progress in performance on all test tasks. These results corroborate findings by Alanen (1995) and Robinson (2003). Similarly, Leow (1997a) showed that direct consciousness raising contributed to learners' intake and asserted that learners exhibiting higher levels of consciousness performed significantly better than learners with lower levels of consciousness.

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Title

On the Effect of Using Metacognitive Strategies on Listening Comprehension of Iranian EFL Learners

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Abstract

Listening skill in the procedure of second or foreign language learning has not carried the same attention as the other skills. Nevertheless, it's been apparently elucidated that as a receptive skill, listening plays a major role in enabling the language learners to acquire linguistic information. Relevant to this fact, the present study aimed at suggesting a way to facilitate the process of comprehending foreign/second language listening tasks; though so general, listening comprehension tasks in a foreign language class are perceived by the researcher so crucial and require special consideration and attention. Accordingly, conscious application of metacognitive strategies while doing the listening tasks is the major concern of this study, and is intended to be investigated in order to answer the question: "Do Metacognitive Strategies have any impact on the Listening Comprehension of Iranian Guidance school EFL learners?". In this regard, two groups of first graders of guidance school were chosen as the control and experimental group. The experimental group went under two months treatment of discussing about and applying the introduced metacognitive strategies while doing English listening tasks whereas the control group did the same listening tasks without receiving any identical treatment. During the treatment phase, the participants got familiar with a

number of listening metacognitive strategies and were asked to apply them in listening comprehension tasks while focusing on their difficulties. Meanwhile, they jotted down diaries regarding their perception towards using such strategies. The t-test obtained out of the listening comprehension pre-tests and post-tests revealed considerable improvement in the experimental group listening comprehension performance. The findings of this study could have implications for foreign/second language learners and teachers as well as the designers of a foreign/second language course books.

Keywords: Learning Strategies; Metacognitive Strategies; Listening Comprehension

1. Introduction

Listening skill, despite its significant role in the process of foreign language learning, has not been often considered seriously in language teaching and learning. To this fact, it has been called “Cinderella skill” by Nunan (1997): Listening is the Cinderella skill in second language learning. All too often, it has been overlooked by its elder sister: speaking. For most people, being able to claim knowledge of a second language means being able to speak and write in that language (Para#1).

However, second/foreign language learners usually find listening comprehension task such a tough activity, and difficult to manage. Ur (1984) maintains that a large number of foreign language listeners feel anxious while involving in a listening comprehension task because of their false expectation that they have to understand every word they hear and puts the responsibility of alleviating this worry on the shoulders of the teachers.

In respect to language learning in general and listening skill in particular and the difficulties occur to the listeners, the concepts of cognition and metacognition in learning comes into one’s mind.

Based on Miller’s (1983) point of view, cognitive process orientation lead learners toward intellectual autonomy and its curriculum “aims to develop skills so that the individual can examine problems, consider alternative solutions, evaluate those alternatives, choose an alternative, then implement and evaluate the solution” (p.121).

Metacognition, on the other hand, implies the knowledge of this cognitive process that particularly used in the realm of learning, based on which learners are consciously got involved in the process of learning, to the purpose of being aware of their problematic areas and finding out appropriate ways to overcome such difficulties. (Richards & Schmidt 1985)

To this purpose, learners employ some specific strategies required for a particular situation to help them progress, known as “learning strategies”. Among the three types of learning strategies, metacognitive strategies are at the centre of emphasis in this study. Metacognitive strategies play a direct role on self-directed learning and learner’s autonomy (Danuwong 2006; Shannon 2008).

As the final point, a model of metacognitive strategy training developed by Vandergrift et al. (2006) is worth describing here, since it’s the primary instrument used in the present study as a means of familiarizing the participants with such strategies. *Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire (MALQ)* consists of 21 items questionnaire which is related to five metacognitive factors: problem-solving, planning and evaluation, mental translation, personal knowledge, and directed attention. This questionnaire helps learners raise their awareness of the process of listening comprehension as well as the strategies they intentionally benefit from to enhance comprehension. It can also be used for self-assessment purposes by the students or diagnostic purposes by the teacher.

This study has been run to the aim of boosting foreign language learners’ awareness towards their foreign language listening skill, and suggesting a way that could probably help them to tackle with listening comprehension tasks. The researcher states her null hypothesis as, “There is no significant difference between the listening comprehension of Iranian EFL learners who use Metacognitive strategies for listening comprehension and that of those who do not.”

2. Method

2.1. Research Design

This study was conducted based on the quasi-experimental design in which two groups are involved, the experimental group and the control group. The independent variable refers to the application of a number of metacognitive strategies, and the dependant variable is the listening comprehension skill.

2.2 Participants

The intended participants of the study were 60 female students of an educational complex who were going to start their guidance school as first graders. They were generally about 11 or 12 years old.

2.3 Materials

A complete sample of KET was administered to determine the participants' English proficiency level and to make sure that they were homogeneous in this regard. The listening sections of two different samples of KET were employed as the pre-test and post-test with a time interval. A questionnaire including 21 items of metacognitive strategies called MALQ developed by Vandergrift et al. (2006) was applied as a written source of such strategies to be used by the participants. Besides, as a peripheral purpose, this questionnaire was used to demonstrate the frequency of the strategy used by the participants of the experimental group. A supplementary listening book, "Tactics of listening" in its basic level appropriate to their level, was also applied during the practice phase.

2.4 Procedure

First a standard proficiency test (KET) was administered to assure the homogeneity of the participants, as a result of which, they were divided into two groups.

Then, the two groups were taken a listening comprehension test (one of the samples of KET) as a pre-test. Besides, in order to raise their listening skill awareness, the experimental group participants were asked to jot down self reports regarding their listening comprehension skill and their probable weaknesses. At this step, the students attempted to reflect on their proficiency in this skill, and many of whom came into several problematic areas while getting involved in a foreign language listening task. These reports collected by the researcher, were just considered as a warm up step without any statistics computed on them. (Although, the reports were so much in detail and could have been analyzed and ideally applied as the descriptive data, the researcher just aimed at raising their sensitivity towards listening tasks through these reports.)

As the first step of the treatment, which was considered as the introduction phase, a number of metacognitive strategies driven from Vandergrift et al's (2006) "Metacognitive Strategy Awareness Listening Questionnaire" was introduced to the participants of the experimental group, and for half of a session, each item was explained, translated and supported by appropriate examples by the researcher; meanwhile the participants got involved and commented on each one.

Following this very first session, the practice phase started. During this step which lasted for about two months, four sessions a week, the strategies were regularly discussed and practiced during the tasks of listening comprehension. Following each sessions of metacognitive reflection and application while doing the listening tasks, the participants were asked to write a diary and include their perceptions towards the use and effect of the

strategies. Simultaneously, the control group received the same listening tasks but in a traditional way of listening activities which includes listening to the recorded instruction and doing each section as they are required.

After this period of two months metacognitive strategy instruction and practice during the listening activities, the final phase began with reaching a reasonable conclusion driven from a listening comprehension test as a posttest.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Pre-test, Listening Comprehension Test

The test given as a pre-test, listening section driven from a typical sample of KET led to the data shown in the following two tables:

Table 1: results of the paired sample statistics in the pre-test

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 E1	15.3333	30	3.63255	.66321
C1	15.7000	30	4.06965	.74301

Note. E1 stands for Experimental group and C1 for the control group before the treatment

Table 2: Results of the T-test before the treatment

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 E1 - C1	-.36667	5.77440	1.05426	-2.52286	1.78953	-.348	29	.731

As it is shown, the mean difference of the two groups in pre-test, with 95% confidence of interval, fell between the lower limit of -2.522 and the upper limit of 1.789, indicating that the obtained results were meaningful. There must be noted that despite of the fact that the mean difference indicated a correlation between the groups, the obtained significance exceeded 0.05, a raised issue that will be discussed later.

3.2. Post-test, Listening Comprehension Test

Having passed the period of treatment, the experimental group as well as the control group took a post-test which was a listening section of another sample of KET. Tables 3 and 4 demonstrate the obtained results:

Table 3: Results of Paired sample statistics in the post-test

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	E2	20.9333	30	2.67728	.48880
	C2	18.8667	30	3.29821	.60217

Table 4: Results of the T-test after the treatment

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 E2 - C2	2.06667	4.57077	.83450	.35991	3.77342	2.477	29	.019

Accordingly, it can be inferred that with the significance of $0.01 < 0.05$, the mean difference of the experimental and control group fell in the range of lower limit and upper limit of 95% confidence of interval: $0.3599 < m < 3.7734$. Thus, it can be safely claimed that the observed mean difference was meaningful and significant.

It must be notified that as it was promised before, the computed significance in the pre-test which exceeded 0.05 must be justified here. Based on the obtained mean difference in the pre-test and post-test, it could be concluded, as a by product, that lacking the knowledge of metacognitive strategies while performing listening comprehension tasks, could have a negative effect on decision making about their homogeneity in this skill. Actually, even a standard test seems to be incapable in reaching a logical conclusion about the homogeneity of the students.

4. Conclusion

Consequently, the findings computed from the post-test revealed a meaningful difference between the listening comprehension of the two groups with the significance of 0.01,

comparing to the pre-test, the null hypothesis of the study which maintained that “There is no significant difference between the listening comprehension of Iranian Guidance school EFL learners who use Metacognitive strategies for listening comprehension and that of those who do not”, could be rejected. This conclusion supports the previous related studies regarding the application of metacognitive strategies in facilitating and promoting listening comprehension of EFL learners.

4. 1. The study’s implications and recommendations

The findings of the present study could lead to a variety of implications in different fields:

- It suggests *syllabus designers* to include different types of learning strategies particularly metacognitive strategies along with each skill exercises, to explicitly familiarize language learners with their required strategies and schedule several exercises to create opportunities to apply them.
- It recommends *language teachers* to regularly remind learners to take benefit from metacognitive strategies and encourage them to become autonomous learners, who are aware of their learning processes, as well as their strengths and weaknesses.
- Finally *language learners* are suggested to reflect on metacognitive strategies and their use while engaging in different language tasks, and seek for occasions to apply them.

Furthermore, the researcher states some recommendations for other related studies. Firstly, it would be more satisfying to run the same study within larger group of participants, so that generalization would be safely implemented. Secondly, the number and variety of the taught and practiced metacognitive strategies can be extended to the whole 21 items stated in the “Metacognitive Awareness Listening Questionnaire”, obviously within more allocated time. Thirdly, this research will achieve its most reasonable and informative results if it could be done in both quantitative and qualitative ways of gathering data, since the learners’ individual perceptions and experiences while getting familiar with metacognitive strategies gained via self-reports or diaries would be as much valuable as their scores in the tests or the questionnaire, and both of which could lead to the more comprehensive conclusion.

Finally, the researcher suggests the test makers running a research to find out more about the idea that metacognitive strategy knowledge and use could influence a sensible result of learners’ homogeneity through standard tests.

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Title

CMC and distance learning: A case of vocabulary learning

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Abstract

The present study endeavoured to investigate whether story-sequencing task, a form of CMC, might help distance learning of vocabulary by Iranian EFL learners. 40 upper-intermediate EFL learners were divided into control and experimental groups. Both control and experimental groups worked on their L2 through CMC. The results taken from the posttest revealed that CMC was effective for distance learning of vocabulary. The participants were interviewed to explore their attitudes toward CMC. Based on the findings of this study, it is highly recommended that EFL teachers include this kind of task in their teaching.

Keywords: Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), distance learning, feedback, and story sequencing task

1. Introduction

Warschauer (1997) proposed the use of CMC as a powerful way to connect and facilitate interactive contexts for EFL learners to acquire, learn about, and learn through language. CMC engages learners in communicative exchanges using the computer. It increases ample opportunities for students to pay attention to linguistic forms and also provides a less stressful environment for second language practice and production. Mackey and Gass (2005) assert that CMC offers abundant data for L2 learners than do face-to-face oral exchanges. They suggest that CMC may help distant learning.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC)

Warschauer (1996) expounds that CMC has existed since the 1960s and is most likely the single computer application to date with the greatest impact on language teaching. CMC allows users to share both short and long messages. Schmidt (2007) notes that efforts have been made to design prescriptive methods for integrating interaction into the curriculum to make classrooms more effective. However, he holds that more interaction takes place in EFL classrooms with the use of CMC. Schmidt (2007, p. 2) highlights “CMC can be used to foster the same types of interaction that are evident in face-to-face settings”. He suggests that further research in this respect is needed.

2.2 Story-Sequencing Tasks

The task in which different individuals are given parts of a story (written or pictorial) with instructions to make a complete story is called a story-sequencing task. It involves plenty of information exchange, and therefore it requires the participants to interact while completing the task (Mackey & Gass, 2005).

2.3 Conventional Vocabulary Learning

In this study, a combination of explicit, implicit, and self-study strategy vocabulary learning are called conventional vocabulary learning. A combination of implicit, explicit, and self-study strategy vocabulary learning is practiced in almost all EFL institutes in Iran. For the control group conventional vocabulary learning was chosen. Implicit vocabulary learning happens when learners are exposed to the target words through a text, explicit vocabulary learning equals learning words through word lists, and self-study strategy means learning the target words by any method the participants favored.

2.4 Distance Learning and Virtual Learning

Distance learning refers to a method of study that involves working at home and sending your work to your teacher. In distance learning, learners do not take part in a formal classroom to work on their L2. Distance learning enables L2 learners to learn at any time and any place, with the supervision/ support of a tutor.

In this study, the participants send their L2 activities/tasks to their teacher by email; hence, it could be called virtual learning. Virtual learning is a type of learning that is done on the Internet or on a computer.

2.5 The Present Study

CMC can help distance learning (Mackey & Gass, 2005). Schmidt (2007) states more research is needed concerning how CMC helps L2 learning. Strambi and Bouvet (2003) state that further research is needed to assess the impact of distance EFL learning on learning outcomes. The current study purported to investigate the effect of story sequencing task

through CMC for participants who practiced their L2 through the internet, i.e. distance learning. The present study addressed the following research question: Is there a statistically significant difference between the effect of conventional vocabulary learning and story sequencing task, using CMC, on vocabulary acquisition of Iranian upper-intermediate EFL learners?

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

The participants of this study were 40 Iranian upper intermediate EFL learners (17 males and 23 females). Their age ranged from 14 to 35. They did not attend any formal classrooms. They worked on their L2 at home at a time convenient to them through the Internet. The participants had learned English in different EFL institutes. They all took a TOEFL test and their scores were between 495 and 517. They were divided into two groups of control and experimental groups; each group consisted of 20 participants.

3.2 Instrumentation

Mobile phones were used to record voices, and computers and emails were utilised to send and receive the recorded voices. A TOEFL test was administered to check the two groups' homogeneity in terms of general English proficiency. Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (Paribakht & Wesche, 1996) was used as a pretest to specify the unknown words by the participants. The same VKS was administered to the posttest in order to explore the effectiveness of the treatment. A sample of the VKS is demonstrated in appendix A and the target words are presented in appendix B. In the story-sequencing task, adopted from the book "Test your listening" (2002), there were some pictures representing a story. The pictures were not in a correct order; the participants looked at the pictures and tried to order the pictures to make a story.

3.3 Procedure

First, the TOEFL test was administered. Then, the VKS (appendix A) was given. Next, the participants were divided into two groups of control and experimental. After one week, the treatment words (appendix B) with their parts of speech, pronunciation, meaning and definition, and example sentences were emailed to both groups.

The experimental group had the story-sequencing task. The task consisted of 2 phases. Each participant did each phase of the task individually at home at a time convenient to him/her.

In phase 1, each participant ordered the pictures while recording his/her voice and told the logic of his/her ordering. While speaking and recording his/her voice, each participant was required to try to use the words s/he had just learned (i.e. target words). The outcome of this phase was the participant's recorded voice of the story. Then, he/she sent this recorded voice to the teacher. The teacher sent this recorded voice to another participant with the first participant's permission.

In phase 2, each participant looked at the pictures while he/she was listening to his/her partner's story. He/she had to decide in what ways his/her story was similar to and different from his/her partner's story. He/she could take notes, and then recorded his/her voice when telling the similarities and differences. Then, he/she sent the track of his/her voices to the teacher. The teacher listened and provided feedback on both form and content for both of the phases. She sent the feedback to the participants via email.

For the control group, who were also working on their L2 through the Internet, conventional vocabulary learning was chosen, as a placebo for the treatment.

After the treatment, the VKS was administered to both groups to investigate the effectiveness of the treatment. The same test, i.e. VKS, was used in both pretest and posttest.

To score the participants' posttest the following criteria were considered:

- a) When the participants chose option 1 or 2, their score for that item was 0. That is, they either had not seen the word or had seen the word but did not remember what it meant.
- b) When they chose option 3 and could give a correct reply, their score was 1 for that item. They could state a definition, a synonym, or a translation for the word. However, when their reply was partially correct, they got 0.5 for that item. For instance, when they did not observe the part of speech in their translation, synonym or definition, they got half of the score.
- c) When they chose option 4 and wrote a correct sentence they got 1. When they had minor grammatical mistakes they did not lose any score. But, when they showed some knowledge about the word they got half of the score.

As a result, in each item the scores could be 0, 0.5, 1, 1.5, or 2.

4. Data Analysis

The scores from the Vocabulary Knowledge Scale posttest were analysed utilising an independent samples t-test in SPSS 18 software.

5. Results

The present study endeavoured to investigate the effectiveness of story-sequencing task through CMC for distance learning of vocabulary. After the treatment was done, the two groups' scores were analysed using an independent samples t-test. As it is illustrated in Table 1, the mean scores for the experimental and control groups on the posttest were 23.45 and 14.23, respectively.

Table 1 *Descriptive Statistics for VKS Posttest by Two Groups*

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Experimental	20	23.45	2.10
Control	20	14.23	4.45

As Tables 1 and 2 illustrate, there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the control group and experimental group in the posttest ($p < .05$ at $d_f = 38$). Thus, there is a statistically significant difference between the effect of conventional vocabulary learning and story-sequencing task using CMC on vocabulary acquisition of Iranian upper-intermediate EFL learners.

Table 2 *Independent Samples T-test Results for VKS Posttest*

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			
	F	Sig.	T	d_f	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Equal variances assumed	4.04	.04	3.69	38	.001	9.87
Equal variances not assumed			3.63	34.5	.001	9.87

6. Discussion

The results revealed statistically significant improvement in vocabulary knowledge for the group who prepared story-sequencing task through CMC. Story sequencing tasks utilising CMC might probably prove effective for distance learning of vocabulary for various reasons which are in line with Pushed Output Hypothesis (Swain, 1995), Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1996), Involvement Load Hypothesis (Hulstijn & Laufer, 2001), Mackey and Gass' (2005) and Strambi and Bouvet's (2003) ideas.

6.1 Pushing Output

In preparing the story-sequencing tasks, the participants produced output. Based on Pushed Output Hypothesis, Swain (1995) declares that this act of pushing leads learners to make

more effort and to extend their interlanguage resources, which forces them to process language more deeply. This in turn aids them to move beyond their current level of interlanguage. Output is not only an observable result of the process of L2 learning, but it is also a crucial contributor to linguistic development in at least two ways, expounds Chapelle (1998). Firstly, producing linguistic output pushes learners to make use of their syntactic system, and consequently to develop this aspect of their ability. Secondly, it elicits subsequent input from interlocutors, some of which may hold indications of problems with the learner's output. This will cause the learner's noticing aspects of the linguistic form, making new hypotheses, and producing additional output. This process is called negotiation of meaning and it facilitates L2 development (Long, 1996). In fact, as Swain (2005) puts it, the three functions of output are performed by the participants, while they are doing the task. The three functions, she mentioned, were *the noticing/ triggering function*, *the hypothesis testing function* and *the metalinguistic (reflective) function*. The noticing function is when EFL learners are producing something either vocally or silently; they notice what they do not know. As a result, they seek opportunities to learn those materials. The hypothesis testing function holds that as participants produce material either through writing or speaking, they test their hunches about the way they can write or say something. Then through the feedback they receive, they can check whether they were correct or not. The metalinguistic function puts that using language to reflect on language produced by oneself or by others helps the process of SLA. In the current study, all the three functions had been done. The first was done when the participants produced the story-sequencing task and they understood whether they could use the learned materials in their speaking. This was the time that some of the participants emailed the teacher and stated: Actually I have some sort of problem with this. I learned the words carefully. Then I made pictures in order but while I was doing this, I didn't find any related between words which I learned and pictures, to talk about. Please tell me my mistake. Thank you.

The teacher helped them with replying: When you are ordering and speaking, for instance, you say "there was a *vacant* seat next to a girl, so the *bachelor* sat there" or "the man was *dismayed* and did not know what to do" or "the *conductor* was very serious" and you use the words in speaking and ordering the pictures, record your voice and send it to me.

The second function, i.e. the hypothesis testing function, was performed when the participants produced their materials and waited for the feedback in order to check their hunches about the ways they used the newly-learned words. And finally, the third function, metalinguistic function, was the second phase of the task in which the participants listened to

a partner and evaluated their partner's story versus theirs. The third function is in accordance with Long's (1996) assertion: the teacher provided the participants with negative evidence in her feedback. Negative evidence is "direct or indirect information about what is ungrammatical" (Long, 1996, p. 413) in the interlanguage produced by learners.

6.2 Involving Interaction and Negotiation

There were plenty of interaction and negotiation of meaning between the interlocutors when preparing the second phase of the story-sequencing task even though they were distant from each other while producing the task. In fact, the participants had to listen carefully to what their partner had recorded and evaluate the logic of her story sequencing, and afterwards they compared their own story with that of their partner and recorded their voices. They had to attend to the meaning. Long's (1996) Interaction Hypothesis holds that meaningful interaction in the second language is a necessary (though not sufficient) condition for learners to acquire L2 competence. Long's (1983) Interaction Hypothesis, in its early form, states that acquisition is facilitated when learners negotiate meaning. They gain comprehensible input in this way. Long's (1996) later form of Interaction Hypothesis takes feedback, learners' gain on their productions, into consideration too. Long (1996) asserts that through the modified output learners are pushed to reformulate their productions to make them comprehensible (Ellis, 2000). Long (1985) notes learners and their interlocutors negotiate the meaning of messages by modifying and restructuring their interaction to reach mutual perception. Long emphasizes that interactional modification is the main mechanism that causes comprehension, and consequently acquisition. Long's contention is that conversational interaction facilitates language acquisition. Obviously, in distance learning, too, the tasks should involve exchange of ideas and negotiation of meaning. In the present study, the experimental group outperformed the control group since the group's amount of interaction and negotiation of meaning was more than those of the other group. "In addition to providing linguistic input and feedback, learners' interaction with their instructors and other learners represents a fundamental factor from an affective point of view" (Strambi & Bouvet, 2003, p. 83).

6.3 EFL Learner's Involvement

Moreover, the task was effective since the participants were highly involved in preparing it. This is in accordance with Hulstijn and Laufer's (2001) Involvement Load Hypothesis: retention of unfamiliar words depends on the degree of involvement in processing the target words. The greater the involvement load, the better the retention is. Tasks in distance learning environments may be specially designed so that they can offer even more opportunities for

interlanguage development than tasks in spontaneous face-to-face conversation courses, in that they force learners to deal with difficulties in comprehension and production in order to achieve their communicative goals (Long, 1996).

6.4 Help with Distance Learning

As Mackey and Gass (2005) put it, CMC may offer abundant data for L2 learners than can face-to-face oral exchanges. Obviously, a task in which EFL learners are required to negotiate meaning, i.e. produce materials, listen and comment about each other's ideas, can engage them in more of the oral exchanges than a task in which there is much less exchange of information. As Mackey and Gass (2005) observed, CMC can help distant learning.

6.5 Feedback, Support, and Convenience

It is bound that distance learners will develop negative perceptions of their learning environment and experience a decline of motivation, unless a great deal of support and guidance is provided (Strambi & Bouvet, 2003). In the present study, the teacher's feedback was another influential issue to be considered in the success of the task. Furthermore, as in all distance EFL learning environments in the present study the experimental group had the opportunity to do the task at any time convenient to them. As Strambi and Bouvet (2003) insist, it is urgent that distance courses provide flexibility to cater to different skill levels, learning styles, and interests, as well as to allow students to integrate their study commitments into their busy lives as smoothly as possible. In the current study, factors such as the participants' having ample time to do the task at any time convenient to them were taken care of. Also, plenty of attention was paid to participants' creativity in producing the material. The participants' imagination was a great contributor to doing the task at hand. Strambi and Bouvet (2003, p. 83) also put that: It is essential, therefore, that learners come to perceive the learning environment as a place where assistance can be obtained whenever needed, and where everyone's opinions are respected and valued as contributions to the group's culture. This is especially true of distance learning environments, where face-to-face contact is limited or non-existent.

6.6 Participants' Outlooks

After the study, the participants' attitudes were sought. They believed being able to do the task at any time convenient to them was the most outstanding advantage of this kind of learning. The second most prominent merit of the task was that feedback provided on form; i.e. negative evidence. Other pros mentioned were as follows respectively: feedback to content, learning vocabulary through a new medium, and learning how to use technology for EFL learning.

7. Conclusion

CMC helped vocabulary learning because the amount of interaction in producing the task was high. Meaningful negotiation between the participants greatly contributed to L2 learning; it was an opportunity for producing pushed output, and the participants were highly involved in preparing the task. Rahimi and Sahragard (2008, p. 5) declare, “if learners do not use new words in speaking or writing, lack of production may result in forgetting. Learners should seek opportunities to use words, which have already been learned inside or outside of the classroom”.

Concerning the obsession of the youth with the use of mobile phones, computers, laptops, etc., distance learning through CMC in which negotiation of meaning and interaction are high could assist EFL learners both to learn and to enjoy their learning simultaneously. Put concisely, the findings culminate to the conclusion that story-sequencing tasks, as a form of CMC, could be recommended to be included in EFL contexts where L2 learners cannot attend a formal classroom.

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Appendices

Appendix A: A Sample of the VKS

Look at the list of words and choose the appropriate number for each word:

1. I don't remember having seen this word before.
2. I have seen this word before, but I don't know what it means.
3. I know this word. It means. (Give the meaning in definition or synonym.)
4. I can use this word in a sentence. (Write a sentence.) (If you do this section, please also complete 3.)

vacant 1. ----- 2. ----- 3. -----

4. -----

bachelor 1.----- 2. ----- 3. -----

4. -----

Appendix B: The Treatment Words

vacant, bachelor, well-off, affluent, dismayed, inquisitive, conductor, mortified, top-notch, hilarious, deprived, deliberately, sloppy, vivid

Title

Sources of Situational Interest in Reading Comprehension and Gender Differences of Iranian EFL Learners

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Abstract

With 27 male and 43 female Iranian EFL intermediate level students, the present study attempted to investigate the relationship between four sources of situational interest in reading comprehension texts and gender differences. Situational interest is commonly defined as an interest aroused by particular text factors and their associations with aspects of the readers' preferences or values. The participants were given 4 reading comprehension passages; each consisted of 5 True/False and 10 multiple choice questions as well as a written recall task. They also filled a Situational Interest questionnaire about each particular passage. Chi-square analysis and t – test formula were applied to test the null hypotheses of lack of any systematic relationship or difference between sources of situational interest and gender at $\alpha \leq .05$. The results showed that the correlation coefficient obtained is not significant; also, there is no significant difference among participants according

to their gender and sources of situational interest. The findings of the study can be more useful for practical purposes of language teaching where syllabus designers and teachers should use more distinct techniques in teaching reading skills to engage different sexes in the learning process rather than exposing them to different reading texts.

Keywords: Situational interest, sources of situational interest, reading comprehension, gender differences, Iranian EFL learners

1. Introduction

As it has been claimed and proved by many researchers in the field of educational and cognitive psychology, interest, as an energizer and modifier of behavior, plays a crucial motivational role in language learning. Individuals interested in a domain, activity, topic or thing (henceforth ‘object’) are more persistent, engaged and attentive when interacting with the object of interest (Ainley, Hidi, & Berndorff, 2002; Hidi, 1990 – 2000; Renninger, 2000). From a historical perspective, for many years scholars attempted to present a comprehensive definition and/or theory about the notion of interest which captures its basic essence the best; John Dewey (1913), Kintsch (1980), and Schank (1979) were among prominent figures that made important contributions toward a theory of interest. Although interest is generally described as an interactive relation between the individual and certain aspects of one’s environments (Krapp, 1999), researchers have conceptualized it in various ways. Many researchers have distinguished individual or personal interest (PI) from situational interest (SI) (Ainley, 2006; Hidi, 2000; Schraw & Lehman, 2001). Individual interest is characterized by an intrinsic desire to understand a particular topic that persists over time, whereas situational interest is assumed to be transitory, environmentally activated, and context-specific. Situational interest is changeable and can be partially controlled by teachers through tasks design and teaching strategies, and can often precede and promote the development of individual interest. Therefore, situational interest has been considered to possess a stronger potential in enhancing learning than individual interest (Bergin, 1999; Hidi & Anderson, 1992; Schraw, Flowerday, & Lehman, 2001). Previous studies (Ainley, 2006; Hidi, 2001; Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000; Schraw & Lehman, 2001) have reported that higher situational interest was related to enhance learning.

Decades of research have also presented us with lots of similar findings with respect to interest and reading comprehension as it has been stated that both reader- and text-based interests have been found to positively and consistently influence comprehension and

learning in a wide range of conditions and reading proficiency levels (Hidi, 2000). Moreover, personal and situational interests have been emphasized by Alexander & Jetton (1996) as the two major dimensions which are involved in reading processes.

2. Review of the Related Literature

2.1 Sources of Situational Interest and L1 Reading

Recently, empirical research has attempted to focus more on either situational interest or on various aspects of the text or the task environment that affects it. As an independent construct, situational interest and its effects on learning have been studied under competing theoretical frameworks. These frameworks differ in the number of components involved in defining situational interest and its sources. For example, Schraw, Bruning, and Svoboda (1995) described situational interest as pertaining to reading tasks in college students, using a six dimensional construct that included text cohesion, ease of comprehension, prior knowledge, ease of recollection, engagement, and emotiveness. Hidi and Anderson (1992) adopted a personal- and situational-interest dichotomy that was specified in learning expository writing. They assumed that situational interest involved two components: novelty and positive feelings generated by novel tasks or information. Yet others studied situational interest effects on learning using a single component structure of ‘interestingness’ (Frick, 1992; Hidi & Baird, 1986) or a polarized construct of ‘holding’ and ‘catching’ interest in science and mathematics (Mitchell, 1993).

The focus of the present study is merely on one of the three general aspects of situational interest research which has been termed text – based situational interest. Accordingly, most research on the effects of situational factors on student interest focused on text – based interest, with an examination of how specific features of text predicted students’ interest and engagement while reading (Schraw & Lehman, 2001). Text-based factors refer to properties of to-be-learned information, typically a text, that affect interest. Different properties (i.e., sources) of a text have been introduced by various scholars to have an effect in raising situational interest. For example, in an study with college undergraduates, Shraw, et al. (1995) offered six sources of situational interest including ‘Ease of comprehension’, ‘Cohesion’, ‘Vividness’, ‘Engagement’, ‘Emotiveness’, and ‘Prior knowledge’. College students read an expository text about the Persian Gulf War and then, by using a questionnaire created by the researchers, they rated it for these six sources to find out if these sources affect personal interest and text recall. Only ease of comprehension was related to

text recall once the effect of personal interest was controlled statistically. Schraw (1997) replicated these findings using a narrative literary text.

Despite all the works done in the fields of cognitive psychology and second language learning regarding the effects of situational interest on reading comprehension, unfortunately, it seems that little research exists on the particular role of situational interest on L2 reading. The most significant and exclusive study in this respect is the one carried out by Brantmeier (2006) in which, with advanced L2 learners, she attempted to build a multicomponent model of interest and L2 reading. She, basically, made use of the 5 sources of SI, originated from the work of Schraw, et al. (1995), with a slight change in the name of 'Ease of comprehension' factor to call it 'Ease of recollection' as well as excluding the factor of 'Vividness' from her work. In accordance with L1 research, she found out that 'Ease of recollection' is the only source significantly related to the three reading comprehension tasks she had used in the study.

2.2 Interest and Gender Differences

Similar to the limited number of research carried out in L2 contexts on the effect of situational interest on L2 reading, there is limited evidence of studies, conducted in L2 contexts, regarding the relationship between SI and gender differences. Even the general topic of interest has been rarely studied from the gender viewpoint. However, the issue of topic interest and its relationship to gender differences has been addressed in L1 situation by some scholars. Unfortunately, most of the works done in this regard deal with literary texts. For example, Asher & Markell (1974) investigated the effect of interest on text recall, text difficulty, and story length. The children participated in their study were asked to rate some pictures based on their level of interest and express how much they are eager to read more about the topics represented by the pictures. They found out that boys had better reading comprehension and recall of information about topics they were interested in. Likewise, Anderson, et al., (1987) reported that in recalling sentences rated as interesting by both girls and boys, boys had better performance than girls. Daly, et al. (1998) reported that gender plays an important role in the recall of story content. Their study demonstrated that boys outperformed the girls on recall tests when the protagonist is a male character. This study contradicts the findings of Oakhill & Petrides (2007) who found that when the content of a text is more about masculine themes, boys performs significantly better on test while girls' performance is not significantly affected by the content of a text.

With a different perspective, Kolić-Vehovec & Rončević (2008) examined gender differences in personal and situational interest for two types of texts (i.e., expository and

narrative) rather than topic interest. They reported that girls' both personal and situational interests are higher than boys in reading narrative texts while boys have higher situational interest towards expository texts. Accordingly, Ainely, et al., (2002) reported the same results on the better performance of girls. In a study with 39 male and 47 female subjects, they presented the participants with four literary texts; two with male protagonist and two with female ones. Results showed that the girls performed better and with higher levels of interest than boys regardless of the topic or the protagonist gender. In general, the studies presented above confirm the finding concluded by Oakhill & Petrides (2007) that '*boys are often more susceptible to the level of interest of reading materials than are girls*' (p. 3).

Reading comprehension skill has long been considered as one of the most difficult aspects of EFL learning and teaching since most of the EFL learners consider second language learning as equal to speaking in L₂ (Farhady & Sajadi, 1999). On the other hand, in many EFL contexts, reading texts, selected for a particular group of students, are provided based on teachers' subject of interest or the goals predetermined by course designers and/or curriculum planners. Therefore the students may encounter a large number of texts to them they do not have any particular kind of interest. Moreover, despite its great importance in the field of English Language teaching as a foreign language, the concept of situational interest (SI) has not drawn any attention of Iranian ELT scholars yet; and, this happens where most of Iranian English learners' specific purpose of learning English, particularly in universities, is to read and to comprehend their specialized texts in English.

3. The Present Study

Although a rich and contentious literature has addressed the effect of interest on readers' comprehension processes, nearly all of these works have dealt with reading in one's native language. Thus, much remains to be determined to understand whether and how text interest would affect foreign and second language reading processes.

The present study attempted to investigate the relationship between sources of situational interest in reading texts, as they have been proposed originally by Schraw, et al. (1995) and modified by Brantmeier (2006), and gender differences of Iranian EFL learners at intermediate proficiency level. It is hoped that this study works as a prelude to a wide range of research to be carried out in EFL contexts.

The following research questions guided this study:

1. Is there any relationship between sources of situational interest in reading texts and gender of Iranian EFL learners at intermediate level?
2. Is there any gender difference among Iranian EFL learners at intermediate level with respect to sources of situational interest in reading texts?

The null hypotheses of no significant relationship and no systematic difference between these two variables were taken by the researcher.

4. Method

4.1 Participants

70 Intermediate level students of a private language institute participated in this study during 3 successive semesters, each of which took one and a half months. Since the setting of the study was not an official academic one, all the subjects were enrolled voluntarily. Of this number, 28 students participated in the pilot study and after the reliability of the measures were approved the rest of them were added to this group. In general, 27 of the participants were male and 43 were female subjects between 13 to 36 year old. In each semester, 3 intermediate classes were selected randomly from among all intermediate classes available to the students.

Because of the sex segregation policies of the institute, these classes were held in two different buildings. The constraints imposed by the institute resulted in this type of convenience sampling procedure. The participants' background knowledge of English ranged from 2 to 11 years. They have been studying English constantly and without any break in two years or they have been studying English for 10 years but with many breaks in between – and that is the reason why both groups could pass as an intermediate level students. All of the participants had passed Preliminary English Test (PET) successfully before they were enrolled in the institute at this level.

4.2 Material and Instruments

The materials used for this study included a 'sources of situational interest' questionnaire (SIQ) and four reading comprehension texts followed by 5 True/False and 10 multiple choice questions as well as a written recall task.

Reading Comprehension Passages – Each reading passage was carefully selected after looking at different text genres that are most appropriate to be used at this level of language instruction. Since the theoretical background of the concept of Situational Interest in reading practiced by Schraw, et al. (1995), is only based on literary texts, a short story was selected as

one type of reading passage. The second passage was in a narrative genre; a biography of an American writer. The third and fourth passages were also authentic as they were selected from authentic reading books too. Generally speaking, the four passages selected for this study were in two broad genres of narratives and expository texts.

True / False Questions – True/false questions present a statement, and prompt the student to choose whether the statement is true. In this study 5 T/F questions followed each reading passage.

Multiple – Choice Items – 10 multiple-choice questions for each reading passage were used for which there were four possible responses: one correct response and three distracters. The distracters in the multiple-choice questions were reasonable and none of the multiple-choice questions could be answered correctly without having read and understood relevant parts of the passages.

Written Recall Task – In this task, the participants were asked to write down in English or their native language (i.e., Farsi) as much as they could remember about the passage just read, without turning back to the passage. The language of the written task was unimportant to the purposes of this study because participants' writing skill was not under question.

Sources of Interest Questionnaire (SIQ) – It includes 13 items in which individuals indicate on a 4-point Likert scale the degree to which they agree or disagree with each statement about the text they had just read. In this study, the original questionnaire constructed by Schraw, et al. (1995) was modified to one with 13 items which was originally used by Brantmeier (2006). Each 3 items are related to a particular factor among the 4 sources of situational interest; that are distinguished by Brantmeier (2006) as ‘Prior knowledge’, ‘engagement’, ‘ease of recollection’, and ‘emotiveness’. The point to note is that since this questionnaire deals with personal opinions of participants and also because, by nature, interest is a psychological concept, it was translated to the participants’ mother tongue for better comprehension and it was answered in the participants’ native language; Farsi. Furthermore, since two different text genres were used in the study, the term ‘story’ was replaced by ‘text’ in the SIQ. Table 1 provides the questionnaire used in this study with items included in it:

Table 1. *Items included in the SIQ*

Prior Knowledge	The text covered a topic I have read about or heard about before.
	The text contained information I was familiar with.
	The text dealt with a topic I know a lot about.

Engagement	The text was thought provoking.
	The text dealt with highly relevant issues.
	The text included vivid and exciting details.
Ease of Recollection	The text was easy to remember.
	The text was easy to concentrate on.
	The text was easy to picture in my head.
	The text contained some unforgettable information.
Emotiveness	The text made me happy.
	The text made me upset.
	The text gave me no particular feeling.

4.3 Procedure

After piloting the study to be confident about the significant reliability of the materials used, in 4 successive sessions (each required for each reading comprehension text) the participants were asked to carefully read a text and then complete the following True/False, multiple choice questions in a time limit of 40 minutes. Next, the texts were collected and the subjects were asked to complete a written recall task (in 15 minutes) and a SIQ.

4.4 Data Analysis

The issue of scoring the data was not a problematic one since most of the data was collected by using objective, closed-response questions such as True/False or Multiple-choice which removed the issue of personal judgments or interferences of other control variables in scoring data. In order to score the written tasks of the subjects, a supervisor for the research found and marked 3 major climaxes of each text which shape its content. Written answers were scored according to those 3 marked points. For writing each climax, the participants got 1 point which made the whole task a 3-point one.

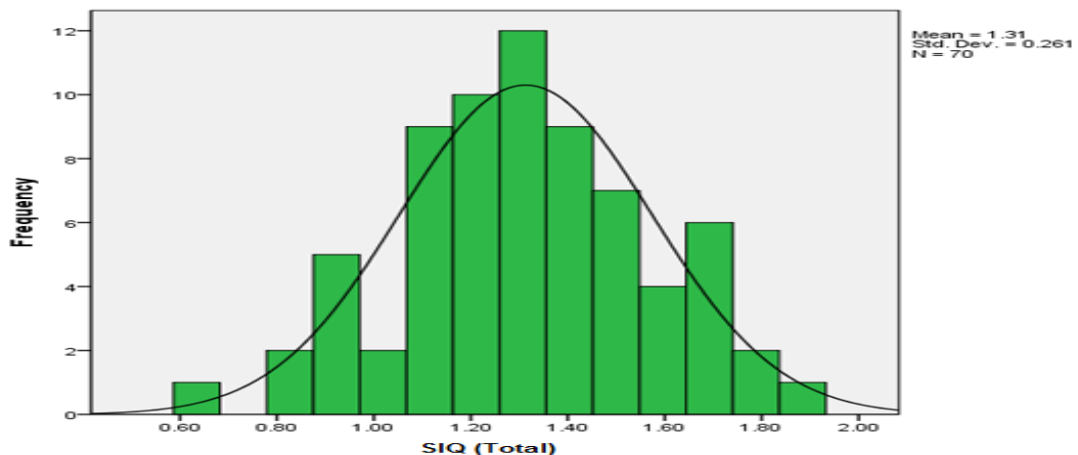
As mentioned before, SIQ was scored based on the degree to which the participants agreed or disagreed with the items in the questionnaire. This was done on a 4 – point Likert scale ranging from ‘*completely disagree*’ to ‘*completely agree*’.

5. Results

5.1 Descriptive statistics

In order to give a more comprehensive view of the participants of the study, descriptive statistics of the variable (age and SIQ) was analyzed. The analyses showed that 38.6 % of the participants were male while 61.4% were female. Moreover, the mean score for the overall SIQs was 1.312 with the standard deviation 0.260. Figure 1 shows the frequency of the overall SIQ among the subjects:

Figure 1. *Frequency of SIQ (Total)*



Before dealing with the main statistics of the study, it is worth to mention the reliability statistics of the instruments used. After implementing the pilot study, reliability coefficients of the questionnaire was calculated by Cronbach's Alpha Test. The findings revealed that the reliability of SIQ was acceptable ($\alpha_{SIQ1} = .77$, $\alpha_{SIQ2} = .83$, $\alpha_{SIQ3} = .87$, and $\alpha_{SIQ4} = .85$). However, since sources of situational questionnaire includes 4 different factors of 'prior knowledge', 'engagement', 'ease of recollection', and 'emotiveness', to them specific number of questions are assigned, the reliability of each of the four factors of each SIQ was also calculated separately. The four reading texts were also examined in order to find out whether they are reliable to be used for the actual participants of the main study. In short, all the reading comprehension passages were found to be reliable ($\alpha_{text1} = .80$, $\alpha_{text2} = .78$, $\alpha_{text3} = .79$, and $\alpha_{text4} = .84$).

5.2 Interpretive statistics

5.2.1 Chi – square Test of Gender & SIQ

This analysis was conducted to investigate the strength of the relationship between gender of the participants and the degree of general situational interest among them. To make sure if any of the separate SIQ has relationship with the gender of the participants, the test was

applied to each of them separately. Table 2 and Table 3 demonstrate the analyses in details respectively:

Crosstabulation				
Count				
		SIQ (Total)		Total
		Low	Moderate	
Gender	Male	2	25	27
	Female	6	37	43
Total		8	62	70

Table 2. Chi-square Test between Gender & SIQ (overall)

	Value	df	Asymp. P value (2-sided)	Exact P value (2-sided)	Exact P value (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.702 ^a	1	.402		
Continuity Correction ^b	.204	1	.651		
Likelihood Ratio	.741	1	.389		
Fisher's Exact Test				.472	.334
Linear-by-Linear Association	.692	1	.405		
N of Valid Cases	70				

As it is indicated in Table 2, it can be easily implied that there is no significant relationship between the two variables at $\alpha \leq .05$ since the level of significance is higher than this (P value = .40); therefore, there is no use in looking at the value column to find the strength of the relationship. The same thing happens in Table 3 which is a summary of all Chi-square tests carried out on all 4 SIQs:

Table 3. Chi-square Test between Gender & each SIQ separately

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square (1)	1.403 ^a	2	.496
Pearson Chi-Square (2)	.654 ^a	2	.721
Pearson Chi-Square (3)	.236 ^a	2	.889
Pearson Chi-Square (4)	.377 ^a	2	.828

It is observable that none of the SIQs has gained a significant level lower than alpha decision level at .05.

5.2.2 t – test of Gender & Reading comprehension tests; Gender & SIQ

To determine if there is any gender difference among participants with regard to the situational interest they have toward the four reading comprehension texts, t- test analysis was used. The test was used for two interrelated purposes of finding any:

- 1) gender differences with regard to reading comprehension performance
- 2) gender difference with regard to SIQ
- 3) gender difference with regard to the 4 sources of situational interest (i.e., prior knowledge, engagement, ease of recollection, and emotiveness)

First of all, reading comprehension of the participants was compared with respect to their sex. Table (4) shows how boys and girls performed on the four reading comprehension tests:

Table 4. *t – test analysis of reading comprehension tests and gender of the participants*

	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	t.	df.	Sig. (2-tailed)
Reading Test (1)	Male	13.22	3.17	1.69	68	0.095
	Female	11.97	2.87			
Reading Test (2)	Male	12.55	3.34	0.795	68	0.429
	Female	11.95	2.91			
Reading Test (3)	Male	13.29	3.13	0.189	68	0.850
	Female	13.26	2.69			
Reading Test (4)	Male	13.96	3.31	0.984	68	0.329
	Female	13.18	3.15			

As it is shown, none of the two sexes were significantly different with regards to their comprehension on reading tests. When the α level for the study was considered 0.05, the *P-value* of all the four tests are higher than 0.05.

To make sure about gender difference of the subjects with respect to the degree to which they were situationally interested in the texts, a *t* – test analysis was used to examine the mean differences of the two variables. Table 5 shows a summarized version of a *t*-test table in SPSS:

Table 5. *t*-test analysis of the variables used in the study

	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	t.	df.	Sig. (2-tailed)
SIQ (1)	Male	1.21	0.450	- 1.440	68	0.155
	Female	1.37	0.441			
SIQ (2)	Male	1.13	0.416	- 0.695	68	0.489
	Female	1.21	0.545			
SIQ (3)	Male	1.63	0.468	0.818	68	0.416
	Female	1.54	0.441			
SIQ (4)	Male	1.20	0.470	0.435	68	0.665
	Female	1.15	0.441			
SIQ (overall)	Male	1.29	0.281	- 0.402	68	0.689
	Female	1.32	0.249			

The *P*- values for equality of variances were greater than 0.05 for all sources of situational interest questionnaires used in the study, and this means that the equality of variances was not rejected. Therefore, the next step is considering the *P*-values related to the means (i.e., sig. (2-tailed)). As it is shown in Table 4 levels of significance for all SIQs are greater than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis of no significance gender difference is accepted.

To make sure of the results obtained, another *t* – test analysis was conducted to find out if the same results would be gained with respect to each of the four sources of situational interest. Table 6 shows the analysis in detail.

Table 6. *t* – test analysis of 4 sources of situational interest and gender of the participants

	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	t.	df.	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Male	0.956	0.513	0.334	68	0.740
	Female	0.920	0.392			

Prior Knowledge	Male	1.191	0.418	- 0.215	68	0.830
	Female	1.211	0.348			
Engagement	Male	1.770	0.359	- 0.206	68	0.836
	Female	1.793	0.494			
Ease of Recollection	Male	1.111	0.235	- 1.510	68	0.136
	Female	1.209	0.281			
Emotiveness						

Again, for none of the four sources, the *P-value* is greater than α level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). So, there is no gender difference among the participants regarding sources of situational interest in reading comprehension texts; so, the null hypothesis is again accepted.

An exception of this general finding occurred when examining the first sources of situational interest separately and in more details. Table 7 shows the *t* – test of SIQ for the first reading comprehension text:

Table 7. *t* – test analysis of SIQ for Text (1) and gender of the participants

	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	t.	df.	Sig. (2-tailed)
Prior Knowledge (Text 1)	Male	0.679	0.688	0.474	68	0.637
	Female	0.596	0.714			
Engagement (Text 1)	Male	1.296	0.639	- 0.95	68	0.346
	Female	1.434	0.561			
Ease of Recollection (Text 1)	Male	1.731	0.664	- 0.90	68	0.37
	Female	1.889	0.742			

Emotiveness (Text 1)	Male	0.987	0.595	- 2.679	68	0.009
	Female	1.403	0.652			

Here, the *P-values* for equality of variances were also greater than 0.05 for all the four sources. So, the assumption of equality of variance for t-test analysis was met. The distinctive feature of this analysis in comparison with those mentioned above is related to ‘Emotiveness’ source of situational interest. The level of significance for this factor greater than α level (Sig. (2-tailed) = *P-value* = 0.009 < 0.05). Therefore there is a significant difference between the two groups of male and female subjects in their emotional interest toward the text. The mean score of this variable is 1.403 among females which is greater than the mean score of male subjects (0.987). So, only for the first reading comprehension text, females were more emotionally interested than males.

6. Discussion

The findings of this study are in contrast with the results of previous research in the field (Ainely, et al., 2002; Anderson, et al., 1987; Asher & Markell, 1974; Daly, et al., 1998; Kolić-Vehovec & Rončević, 2008 and, Oakhill & Petrides, 2007) that gender difference has a role in the level of interest on reading comprehension. Boys and girls in this study showed no significantly different performance on the four reading comprehension tests administered. Correspondingly, the level of interest among boys and girls was not different for any of the reading comprehension texts. Again, of four sources of situational interest within a reading text, neither boys nor girls found one more interesting than the other three; of course there was an exception in the case of ‘Emotiveness’ source of situational interest in the first reading comprehension passage, which was higher among girls than boys. Moreover, the study showed no significant relationship between the genders of the participants and their level of situational interest towards the four reading comprehension texts.

One explanation for this discrepancy may lie in the first and foremost delimitation of the study; that is, the limited scope of this study. Because of lack of accessibility to human resources, only 70 intermediate-level EFL learners participated in this experiment. Undoubtedly, this problem indirectly relates to the potential problems of probability of the results. With small number of participants the possibility of Type II error of probability estimation increases ‘when a null hypothesis is accepted when it should not have been

accepted' (Mackey & Gass, 2005). In this experiment, too, the statistical Chi-square and t – test analyses showed no significant relationship / difference between the two involved variables of gender and sources of situational interest while it is possible for the results to show significant relationship/difference if the number of participants are larger.

It is also possible that the setting of the experiment made this inconsistency of results. While most of the research has been carried out in academic settings of schools or universities, this study was conducted in a private language institution where there is relatively low pressure on the students to learn English (regardless of extrinsic motivation, or sometimes pressure, developed by parents). It can be hypothesized that differential motivational factors are useful to explain why girls and boys performed the same in reading comprehension tests and none of them were affected by the interest level of the material. All of the participants of this study have motivational factors, extrinsic or intrinsic, to participate in the study; for them, the experiment was a useful evaluative tool to work on their reading comprehension skill. Most of them were interested in the activity itself. Supposedly, that is the reason why different text genres (i.e., expository or narrative) did not make any difference for them with respect to their level of interest.

The most possible reason for the obtained results can be the opposite case of what originally proposed by Asher & Markell (1974). They claimed that, based on related theories and data, children's sex-stereotyped views on reading are considered a feminine activity. (Kagan, 1964; Stein & Smithells, 1969). That is, if girls find reading a sex-appropriate activity, they perform it well regardless of whether they find the passage interesting or not. On the other hand, since reading is not considered a sex - appropriate activity for boys, they need an external interesting factor (i.e., situational interest sources) to comprehend texts well. Asher & Markell used this data to support their findings on better performance of boys in reading with the focus on their level of interest. Since the results of this study showed no gender difference in situational interest and no relationship between these two variables, the above-mentioned claim is rejected in this research. Seemingly, the male participants of this study did not consider reading as a feminine activity, and proved that no matter how much a text and its elements are interesting to them; they can perform the same as girls. The only case where girls were more interested in the given text was in the first reading comprehension passage which was a short story. The girls only were different in case of "Emotiveness" factor indicating that the short story, with a female protagonist dying at the end of the story, stimulated their emotions. However, the fact that the performance of all subjects on the test

showed no difference implies that boys, though not affectively interested in the text, could be at the same level of reading comprehension as girls.

7. Conclusion

The essence of second language reading requires it to be a multivariate process in which many factors, besides readers' language level, are involved. Previous studies done on L1 reading proved the significant effect of situational interest on reading process. The results of these studies showed that among many factors which can be regarded as sources of interest that situationally can encourage readers to continue reading, 'Ease of Recollection' and 'Engagement' are two factors which contribute the most. Some other researchers investigated the relationship between gender and situational interest, mostly in literary text. In most cases, the findings of these studies support better performance of boys over girls in terms of reading texts they showed significant level of interest towards. The results of this study could not support the above-mentioned findings since no relationship was found between four sources of situational interest (i.e., 'Prior Knowledge', 'Engagement', 'Ease of Recollection', and 'Emotiveness') in the two text genres (narrative and expository) and gender of the participants. Moreover, there were no gender differences among the participants on their performance on reading comprehension tests with regard to their level of situational interest towards those texts. Of course, only in the case of the short story with a female protagonist, the level of situational interest among girls was higher; however, this difference did not lead to their outperformance over boys. One explanation for this can be the limited scope of the study in terms of text genres, as only two genres were used. Moreover, as only Iranian EFL learners at intermediate level participated in the study, it may not be possible to generalize the results of this study to every proficiency level group and to every EFL learner.

As far as classroom teachers are concerned, it would not probably be easy for them to choose and implement different ranges of texts with coverage on various genres to allow boys and girls select the one they find more interesting and work on it to improve their reading comprehension skill. Nevertheless, material developers in EFL context can have a significant role in providing textbooks which direct students' to reading texts with situational sources which they find interesting. Of course, this requires a large-scale survey to collect boys and girls opinion and draw a general conclusion about their preferences. Though it might sound impossible, but still raising students' awareness of their own level and direction of interest can help them to improve in their reading skills as autonomous learners.

In order to be more practical, further research should examine the study in larger scale in an official academic setting, such as colleges and universities; that is because most of academic reading materials selected for these settings are specialized and also relatively long and boring for particular fields of study. Moreover, it is beneficial to investigate the relationship between gender and situational interest across other proficiency levels, mostly beginners. Since beginners' level of language proficiency is not very high, they are more subject to interesting elements which can trigger their better performance.

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Title

Textbook Evaluation based on the ACTFL Standards: The Case of *Top Notch* Series

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Abstract

The present study aimed to evaluate *Top Notch* series, which is widely used in EFL contexts. Fifty EFL teachers evaluated the series based on ACTFL standards by Cisar's(2000) checklist. The findings indicate that the series enjoy some benefits for language learners such as encouraging the students to communicate successfully by offering lots of opportunities for interaction, and demonstrating culture-based aspects through lively and authentic unbiased visual images. The series also let students connect their foreign language learning with other disciplines such as Medical Science, Art, Geography, etc. Moreover, the series offer vast opportunities for EFL learners to compare their own language with English as a foreign language. However, with regard to ACTFL standards, the series suffer from some shortcomings that require EFL teachers' consideration.

Keywords: Textbook/Course book evaluation, *Top Notch*, EFL context, ACTFL standard

1. Introduction

ELT materials (textbooks) have always played a very crucial role in the realm of language teaching and learning. Since textbook evaluation subsumes production, evaluation, and adaptation of materials, it is of paramount importance to conduct evaluation procedures that assure their pedagogical contribution to the learning and teaching process. In this sense, the use of textbook has prominence in ELT classroom (Hutchinson & Torres, 1994). It is also noteworthy that there is no single book that can satisfy all learners' needs (Lamb & Nunan, 1996). It is of utmost importance for teachers to choose an appropriate textbook that can best fit a particular EFL/ESL teaching and learning objectives and context. Teachers make necessary adjustments by adapting the materials before applying them in ELT classroom. Therefore, there is a necessity for assessing textbooks in different contexts to discover the benefits of one over the others, which in turn will lead to selection of an appropriate textbook. In an EFL context like Iran, EFL learners have rarely access to the native speakers, thus the teachers mediate between the learner and the text. Accordingly, a textbook plays a central role in this context and textbook evaluation is, therefore, a necessity. It seems that only few studies have dealt primarily with the evaluation of Top Notch series as one of the most widely used course books in Iranian institutes, in this context. This study investigates the strengths and weaknesses of this series.

2. Review of the Related Literature

In the literature on textbook evaluation, a large number of researchers have focused their attention on evaluating textbooks which have been used in an EFL context. Ranally (2002), for instance, evaluated New Headway which is used at the foreign language institutes in South Korea. Having analyzed the data, the researcher found that there is a good balance of work on both accuracy and fluency while the book suffers from some shortcomings particularly in the methodology. It was also revealed that there is not any consideration of speaking skills in the book. Hamiloğlu and Karlıova (2009) conducted a comparative study and evaluated five English course books from the view points of vocabulary selection and teaching techniques. The books were Countdown to First Certificate, Advanced Master Class, Grammar In Context 2, New Headway Advanced, and Top Notch 2. The results of evaluation indicated that all the selected course books integrated lexis into their syllabus, giving emphasis to vocabulary building. The results also showed that all the intended course books employed colorful layout to facilitate vocabulary acquisition and comprehension with the use

of illustrative/pictorial modes except for Grammar in context 2 which has pictures and drawing, though not colorful.

Elsewhere, Litz (2000) evaluated First Hand 2 which reflects multi- syllabi, and integrates four skills in a well organized design. He also elaborated on some of its weak points such as its repetitive activities and its failure to engage learners in meaningful use of language.

In a similar vein, Eslami, Esmaeli, Ghavamnia, and Rajabi (2010) set out to evaluate the four mostly instructed courses in Iran English language institutes. The books were Top Notch, Interchange, Headway, and On Your Mark. The researchers evaluated the course books under study in 2 stages based on Mcdounough and Shaw's (2003) division of course book evaluation into internal and external evaluation. After a thorough examination of introduction and table of contents, and in-depth examination of the cover page and introductory sections of the books, they concluded that Top Notch best meets Mcdounough and Shaw's (2003) evaluation criteria.

Sahrahgard, Rahimi, and Zaremoaeyeddi (2009) also *carried out an in-depth examination of the third edition of Interchange. They found that Interchange 3rd edition suffers from some weak points such as a lack of reference to teachers and learners. The next shortages were the overreliance on input enhancement techniques, ignoring the significant role of self-directed activities in task completion. However, there were also some positive sides in the series, including its great emphasis on pair work and meaningful interaction.*

Similarly, Riazi and Mosallanejad (2010) investigated the types of learning objectives in four textbooks taught in Iranian high schools. The findings of this study indicated that a sequential ordering was noticeable in terms of level of complexity and text length. In fact, it was found that the most prevalent learning objectives in the textbooks were lower order cognitive skills, i.e., knowledge, application, and comprehension.

In line with the abovementioned research, the present study endeavors to evaluate the intended course book using the questionnaire developed by Cisar (2000) based on ACTFL standards to shed more light upon the strengths and weaknesses of the series.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

The participants of the study were 50 Iranian EFL teachers who were asked to complete the checklist. The teachers had at least 5 years experience of teaching Top Notch series. Their age ranged from 25 to 30.

3.2 Instrument

The current study employed two kinds of instruments including Top Notch series and Cisar's (2000) checklist. A brief description of each is provided below.

3.2.1 Top Notch series

Top Notch (Saslow & Ascher, 2006) was selected to be evaluated in this study. Top Notch, a dynamic 6-level course for international communication, as the authors claim, aims to prepare students to understand spoken and written English and to express themselves appropriately. The series is based on new standards and uses the natural language that people really speak with a rock-solid learner-centered approach. Each Top Notch unit is made up of six two-page lessons. The sections include the introduction, controlled practice, controlled practice, free practice, free practice, and review.

Top Notch series provides learners with an opportunity to see their own progress at the end of every lesson. Each student's book consists of 10 units accompanied by the workbook, CD, teacher's manual and guide.

3.2.2 The Checklist

To conduct the evaluation, Cisar's (2000) checklist which is based on the American Council on Teaching of Foreign languages (ACTFL) standard was employed. A 4-point Likert scale ranging from Not at all to Completely was used to elicit the teachers' viewpoints regarding the content of the books. The standards provide an opportunity to monitor all the phases of instruction. Overall, the standards used in the checklist could be categorized into five main components. These categories are communication, culture, connection, comparison, and community. Communication refers to the ability to communicate in language with specific reference to the student's participation in communicative acts. Culture implies an understanding of other cultures in view of the commonly held practices and products. The third component is Connection which sheds light on the degree to which learners acquire information and accordingly expand their knowledge of other discipline via foreign language learning. The Comparison element determines the strength of the book in terms of making an association between linguistic and cultural aspects of the textbooks under the investigation. The last component is Community which focuses on learner's participation in multilingual communities at home and around the world. Furthermore, it suggests how much the textbook encourages using language beyond the classroom setting.

4. Results and Discussion

With specific reference to the research questions, the following analytical procedures were employed. The inter-rater reliability which was calculated via intraclass for the questionnaire was 0.8. To address the first research question, “How Top Notch series are in terms of ACTFL standards”, descriptive statistics including the mean and standard deviation for each subcomponent were calculated. The results are reported in Table 1.

As displayed in the table, regarding the component of communication, the total mean is 3.7 and the standard deviation is .53. This could in effect mean that the series is successful at preparing students to interact and communicate effectively. It convincingly encourages the learners to get involved in communicative acts. Employing an integrated multi-skills syllabus, the series provides the students with opportunities to relate topics, themes, communication functions and grammatical points. The activities are in real-world context and represent real-world tasks and thus allow students to take advantage of different strategies. Furthermore, the topics of discussion are all around concrete ideas. This part confirms the findings of Eslami et al.’s (2010) study which emphasized rich and authentic topics, subject and social content of Top Notch.

With regard to the cultural aspect, a total mean of 3.57 was obtained with the standard deviation being .59. It worth mentioning that the series is not restricted to a particular country or region, nor is it culturally biased or specific. It tries to cater for appropriate social environment in terms of topics and situation to develop cultural awareness. It also aims to demonstrate a balanced picture of different societies and nationalities without being culturally-bound. Thus, it is rich in terms of cultural content.

Given the third component of the checklist, i.e. that of connection, as the results demonstrate, the total mean obtained is 3.25 and the standard deviation is .80. Although the standard deviation shows a little inconsistency among raters, most of the teachers deemed it as a merit of the series to allow students to further their knowledge of other disciplines such as computer science, art, health, etc. Another point which is worth noticing is that the series enables the students to use previously learnt materials to do real life tasks. In fact, students are given opportunities to build on their prior personal experiences and existing background knowledge.

With respect to the comparison part, the mean score was 2.16 and the standard deviation was 1.73. The results also showed that the teachers participating in the study tended to rate the items of this part rather differently. The variation can be attributed to the fact that the series includes a few examples such as Ramadan and praying costume in Top Notch3 and sometimes no activities which represent Muslim culture. Some raters mentioned that, though

it represents few aspects of Iranian culture, it cannot be considered as a sign of inadequacy of the course book. Despite this fact, it is worth mentioning that the series is rich in terms of providing learners with a variety of situations to compare and contrast their own culture with foreign language culture.

As for the community part, the total mean score was 2.15 and a value of 1.58 was obtained for the standard deviation. The results also revealed that most of the teachers agreed that the series through different activities can somehow enable learners to participate in multilingual communities in their country and around the world. The researchers believe that the variation in the teachers' ratings is associated with Iranian EFL context rather than the book. Iranian EFL learners have rare opportunities to interact with native speakers. One of the unique features of the series is that it caters for students a lot of on-line activities and even songs with the lyrics to encourage them to communicate beyond the scope of classroom. The unit wrap-up which is presented in top notch activities motivates the learners to be more critical and creative to use pictures, instructed vocabularies and grammar to draw on their own story and to use language outside the classroom as well.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for ACTFL standards

Standards	Total Mean	Std. Deviation
Communication	3.7	.53
Culture	3.57	.59
Connection	3.25	.80
Comparison	2.16	1.7
Community	2.15	1.58

Top Notch series was evaluated based on ACTFL standards and then some general merits and demerits of the intended series for EFL context were determined.

As one of its merits, Top Notch series starts with a preview section which introduces the unit topic and objectives. It also has a well-organized presentation of the materials which allow students to preview the vocabulary, grammar and social language from the unit. This is in contrast with what Riasati and Zare's (2010) concluded about Interchange series. Their findings showed that the Interchange series did not include a detailed overview of the function, structure, vocabulary, any review section or any sort of evaluation quizzes at the end of each unit. While Interchange series suffers from a lack of supplementary teaching materials, Top Notch series compensates for these shortcomings by offering "teacher's resource disk" which consists of extensive learning activities. Moreover, Top Notch interaction and check point parts tend to provide the students with an appropriate model and then prompt them to produce their own piece of language.

EFL course books, especially those implemented in an EFL context, are definitely the primary source of learning how to pronounce or utter a word. As Hamiloğlu and Karlıova (2009) pointed out, Top Notch like headway offers lots of opportunities to improve pronunciation through a specific pronunciation section, where there is ample practice of rhythm, intonation, etc.

Unlike Sahragard et al.'s (2009) study which showed that Interchange series caters for more involvement of the learners in the classroom event, the observations made in the present study revealed that Top Notch series through different on-line activities and projects encourages learners to use language beyond the classroom as well.

As also confirmed by Eslami et al.'s (2010) study, it was observed that Top Notch series integrates lexis into its syllabus effectively and gives great emphasis to world knowledge in different parts of each lesson. The in-depth analysis of the series also sheds light on the fact that new words can be consolidated if they are being repeated in all language skills.

With regard to grammar and form of language, Top Notch series offers grammar booster for each grammatical point and employs both deductive and inductive approach toward teaching grammar.

As one of the demerits, the proportion of the tasks that involve students in pair work or group work is a little bit more than those task involving learners individually. Although, it would foster the opportunities for more interaction and communication, it can also reduce the autonomy of language learners because they can no more rely on themselves to follow the course book.

The results of the study also indicated that the series imposes the content; in fact, it gives little opportunities to either teachers or learners to determine the source of the input and the topic content.

In line with what Eslami et al. (2010) conclude about the series, the present study also provided evidence for the claim that Top Notch attempts to present all the four skills in an integrated way. However, there are some parts where one of the skills has been thoroughly discarded. Although the series includes both conversation models and conversation pair works in each lesson, the dialogues sometimes seem to be too short and artificial, lacking the features of natural speech as well.

Given the cultural aspects, it appears that there is sometimes no correspondence between Iranian cultures and western cultures; for example, Iranian learners may not know much about Mariachi band, harvest moon, thanksgiving, etc. In such cases, the burden is placed on

the shoulders of the language teachers to help learners get acquainted with such cultural issues through providing them with the necessary information and feedback.

Besides, taking the teacher's guide of the series into account, it was found that the time suggested to be allocated to some aspects of language such as listening, discussion, and interaction is not sufficient. As a matter of fact, it is believed that the students need more time to accomplish the activities and to consolidate them to their memories.

It is common that authors always make claims about their books. Top Notch authors are not an exception in this respect and they mention seven claims at the back of the book. What is of paramount importance, however, is the extent to which such claims are met in real classroom setting.

The first claim is that the series has employed “essential model conversations that make key social language unforgettable and easy to personalize”. As also indicated by Eslami et al. (2010), the researchers sometimes found the conversations artificial and distant from real life or everyday situations, because they tend to be so short and in some instances free from authentic interactional features such as pauses, repetition, etc.

With regard to the second claim implying that "Intensive vocabulary development with active recycling" has been utilized throughout the book, the researchers were unanimous that the series, in fact, did employ a rich syllabus in terms of vocabulary. The new vocabularies entered to the picture not only through vocabulary sub-headings but they were also reinforced by repetition in all four skills. The series also offers extensive opportunities for learners to utilize new vocabularies in Top Notch interaction part and unit Wrap up, where they are asked to tell the story.

Yet another claim made by the authors is that the book is equipped with a “Complete grammar support-extended by a bound in grammar booster”. The researchers believe the series substantiated the claim appropriately. Through the grammar booster, learners can benefit from more explanations, practices, and grasping additional grammar points both inductively and deductively.

Pertaining to the claim that there are "Top Notch interaction unique step-by- step discussion builders that guarantee success for all learners", the researchers believe that the discussion builders encourage learners to engage in free discussions and help them get nearer to the ultimate goal of communicating their thoughts effectively by drawing on the previously learnt materials. Although massive opportunities for recycling the language occur in this part, sometimes the topics seem to be boring and neither teachers nor learners have the option to choose between the topics.

The authors of the series also claim that thorough attention has been paid to pronunciation throughout the book. The analyses showed that ample support is provided in the series for this claim. Each unit includes specific pronunciation point and another benefit is that pronunciation activities in most of the units are based on the unit's content. After listening once, students can enjoy the opportunity to read the text to a partner with correct rhythm and intonation and receive feedback on their pronunciation.

The other claim posited by authors is that "a wide array of learning strategies and activities that promote critical thinking" has been focused on in the series. The researchers found that the types of activities are somehow in accordance with this statement. The first two lessons in each unit focus on controlled activities and the last two ones on free practice. Given the reading section, the learning strategies start with inference followed by other strategies, namely predicting, guessing, and critical thinking, while in the listening part, they move from auditory or sound discrimination, general idea, and inference to developing critical thinking.

Finally the authors claim that the series enjoys "authentic and refreshing content that connects students to the real world". Although sometimes the topics fall out learners' favor, overall the series through employing lots of authentic pictures and natural language not only shows cosmic underlying values but also connects students to the real world.

5. Conclusion

The findings of the present study can yield the general conclusion that the Top Notch series meets ACTFL standards in the most areas to a great extent and it is successful at immersing learners in an English speaking environment, and making the classroom itself a microcosm of English-speaking world. Furthermore, the series seems to be appealing to both teachers and students because of its physical characteristics including a colorful design and layout, well-organized and a high impact syllabus and the presentation of real-world and natural language in most parts. Although it should be admitted that this series has its own shortcomings as well.

The results of the present study can help enriching the literature on textbook evaluation in the EFL context. Besides, the findings can also be to the benefit of EFL teachers. The evaluation results can also be applicable in terms of enhancing the effective use of the series in that they may assist material developers to understand what areas of the series need further modifications. In the same vein, the recommendation is that teachers be encouraged to adapt their existing practices and bring the supplementary materials to the classroom to enhance

their quality of teaching, which could in turn result in better learning outcomes on the part of language learners.

There are a number of limitations which have to be considered by the future researchers. In fact, in order to yield more conclusive and comprehensive results, it is recommended to use a larger number of raters with more teaching experience in terms of Top Notch series. Moreover, with a larger sample size, the generalizability of the results would be more probable. Indeed a possible future research direction is to try to administer the checklist not only to a large number of teachers but also to a larger sample of learners who study the series to have their own perspectives regarding the pros and cons of the series.

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Title

Teacher Educators and School Teachers' Perceptions of Professional Needs in the Foreign Language Classroom

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Abstract

This study investigated teacher educators and school teachers' perceptions of English teachers' professional needs to find out the differences. A questionnaire which was designed based on interviews and literature delivered to both teachers and teacher educators. 257 teachers who were teaching at different institutes/schools in Shiraz and 127 teacher educators who were teaching in universities all over the country participated in the study. Based on the findings, the difference between teacher educators and school teachers is significant for Professional Development Program, Skill Need, Social and Cultural Knowledge, and Knowledge Need ($p < 0.05$), but the difference between two groups is not

significant for Quality Development Program and Expertise ($p > 0.05$). These differences refer to and alarm policy makers of ignored needs in the process of teacher education whether during pre-service or in-service programs. They also provide valuable insights for further needs analysis.

Keywords: school teachers, teacher education, professional needs

1. Introduction

Richards & Nunan (1990) point out “language teacher education has begun to recognize that teachers, apart from teaching method or instructional materials they may use are central to improving English language teaching”(as cited in Cheng, Ren & Wang, 2003, p.1). Fortunately, teachers have recently become the spotlight of many studies just because researchers have noticed the important role that teachers play in the education system, and how tremendously they could affect the future of the country in which they are teaching. In different studies some of teachers' educational and professional needs are implicitly mentioned including their need to develop reflective cultural, national, and global identifications (Banks, 2001), their need to understand many things about how people learn and how to teach effectively and their need to have extensive and intensely supervised clinical work in order to learn from expert practice (Darling-Hammond,2006), their need to have informing and supportive relationships with other teachers(Chubbuck, Clift, Allard & Quinlan, 2001). "Today's teacher candidates should all have the kinds of experiences that will allow them to identify the set of beliefs and assumptions they hold about teaching and learning and about the children with whom they will interact"(Commins & Miramontes,2006,P.241). Teachers need to know how to discover/uncover who learners are and what they bring to their instruction in order to plan well (Commins & Miramontes, 2006, p. 243).Teachers also need to understand "many things about how people learn and how to teach effectively, including aspects of pedagogical content knowledge that incorporate language, culture, and community contexts for learning"(Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 300). The issue of teachers' educational and practical needs has puzzled the researchers, and it seems that there is a contradiction between what teachers receive during education programs and what they really experience when they enter the profession.

2. Statement of the Problem

Elliot (1991) points out that "the only way out of the feeling of always falling short is to adapt to the common habit of teachers to consider the teacher education too theoretical and useless"(cited in Korthagen, et al. , 2006, p.1027). Thus, in teachers' point of view what they received during training course was of little avail when they enter the profession. Since many of teachers' educational and professional needs have not been met, they encounter many problems while teaching. It seems that teachers have no positive idea of teacher education programs and they think teacher educators live in an ivory tower and have no up-to-date idea of teachers' real needs. Northfield and Gunstone (1977) mention that "teacher educators should maintain close connections with schools and the teaching profession"(as cited in Korthagen et al., 2006, p. 1034). Thus through these close connections with schools, teacher educators could pave the way to meet teachers' educational and professional needs. As mentioned above, there is a gap between theory (what student-teachers receive) and practice (what they really encounter while teaching). But, the problem is that this gap is not closely analyzed and explored from school teachers and teacher educators' perspectives to find out the differences and contradictions. Thus the present study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- Is there any difference between teacher educators and practicing teachers' perceptions of English teachers' professional needs?

3. Literature Review

3.1 Teacher and Teacher education

"Many laypeople and a large share of policy makers hold the view that almost anyone can teach reasonably well—that entering teaching requires, at most, knowing something about a subject, and the rest of the fairly simple 'tricks of the trade' can be picked up on the job"(Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 301). That is one of the reasons that teachers have been deprived of many educational opportunities. But in fact, an effective teacher has special features which are not attained easily. Some of these features are mentioned indirectly in the following studies. Goodwin (2002) explains that teachers need to be able to differentiate instruction, develop knowledge of strategies and techniques for second-language development, and work closely with families and communities (as cited in Oliveira & Athanases, 2007, p. 203).

In everyone's school experience you could find teachers who have affected his/her track of life. Teachers are so powerful that they could influence the world to a great extent. "Although teachers cannot be assigned either all the credit or all the blame for student

achievement, they play a central role in students' education. This is particularly true for students who are especially vulnerable, such as English learners" (Gandara, Maxwell-jolly & Driscoll, 2005, p. 3). In fact, teachers need to have specific qualifications to be able to carry out the critical responsibility of teaching. Besides, appropriate personal qualities provide the ground for the development of good intercultural communicative competence and they are the key to overall success in the classroom .

Wechsler, et al. (2007) claim that good teaching is a combination of what the teacher brings into the classroom—that is, teacher characteristics, what teachers do while they are in the classroom—teaching practices, and what students take out of the classroom—student learning gains (p.4).

Heine and Emesiochl (2007) mention that the relationship between teacher quality and student achievement is highlighted and the attributes of highly qualified teachers is clarified by a brief review of recent research on teacher effectiveness and teacher preparation (p.3). Teacher quality can be analyzed from different aspects. From the knowledge point of view, teachers are required to have a good command of the content knowledge. "A teacher's knowledge of subject-area content is a consistently strong predictor of student performance, though the strength of the effect differs across studies" (Heine and Emesiochl, 2007, p.4). There is evidence that the more competent teachers feel, the more successfully they teach (Gandara, Maxwell-jolly & Driscoll, 2005, p.12).

Certainly, knowledge of new practices is essential for teachers to improve instruction for today's classrooms and prepare students for a productive role in the twenty-first century workforce. Yet more or better content knowledge by itself cannot necessarily accomplish much. For one, simply having more and better knowledge resources available does not mean that teachers will or can use them effectively in their classrooms. But equally as important, teachers require more than content knowledge to construct the sorts of educational environment reformers hope for and contemporary students need. Teachers need to know where to place instructional priority, how students are responding to their classroom choices, how to make adjustments when student achievement disappoints.

Teaching and learning activities need to be updated continuously since there come up many new situations and problems in everyday teaching that previous knowledge and information can not tackle them. As a result, the existence of some programs is essential to keep teachers aware of the recent findings and studies.

3.2 Professional Development Programs

Professional development programs are opportunities that teachers come together to share their experiences. Desimone, et al. (2006) mentions that "professional development is considered an essential mechanism for deepening teachers' content knowledge and developing their teaching practices. As a result, teacher professional development is a major focus of current educational reform initiatives" (p.181). But most of teachers consider these programs as formal programs which have nothing to offer in terms of knowledge and progress. Bull & Buechler (1996) mentions that "professional development, especially providing opportunities for educators to collaborate in schools, can foster improvement in educational outcomes" (as cited in John, et al. 2005, p.481). Teachers with no professional development are not as able as teachers with any professional development that focused on increasing skills for teaching EL students to teach these students across all categories of instruction (Gandara, et al. 2005, p.12).

During professional programs, people find a golden opportunity to share their experiences and find solutions for potential problems. The administrators of each district should organize professional development programs based on the teachers' needs of that specific district. The administrator is required to know everything about a comprehensive EFL program; otherwise it won't be a successful program and can not address teachers' real needs.

3.3 Needs

'Necessities' refers to the things that learners need to know in order to function effectively in the target situation and this type of need is determined by the demands of the target situation (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p. 55). Hichterich (1984) comments "a need does not exist independent of a person. It is people who build their images of their needs on the basis of data relating to themselves and their environment"(as cited in Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p. 56).

Coffey (1984) mentions that "needs analysis should be the starting point for devising syllabuses, courses, materials and the kind of teaching and learning that takes place. This has been recognized for some time" (cited in Jordan, 1997, p. 22). The perceptions of language needs of different parties have been investigated in different needs analysis studies and differing perceptions have been revealed. Ferris (1998) investigated the differing perceptions of students and faculty of students' academic aural/oral needs for university study in a number of colleges in the United States (as cited in Basturkmen, 2006, p. 18). In this study, the perceptions of English teachers' needs were investigated from teacher educators and school teachers' views.

4. Methodology

4.1 Qualitative phase

Ten people including five EFL teachers who had more than two years of experience and were teaching in public and private schools and five teacher educators who had the experience of teaching methodology participated in qualitative part. The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews to elicit the participants' ideas and attitudes on teachers' professional needs with school teachers and teacher educators separately. The interviews were pilot-tested beforehand to ensure the questions would elicit the data necessary for the study. After pilot interviews, the questions were revised. Then the main interviews were audio taped with the permission of the participants. Afterwards, the interviews were transcribed.

When all data were collected the researcher started content analysis. "Content analysis may be briefly defined as the systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics"(Neuendorf, 2002, p. 1). The obtained results of content analysis were used to construct the final items of the questionnaire that would be administered in the quantitative part of the study.

4.2 Quantitative phase

When the results of the content analysis were obtained, the researcher compared them with the literature and designed an item pool of 100 items. Then the items were categorized which reduced the number of the items to 31. In the item reduction, items which referred to the same subject or were not controversial, or were too general were omitted.

4.3 Pilot study

First, the questionnaire was reviewed by two of the university professors. They provided the researcher with constructive points on wording of the items, design and format of the questionnaire and then the questionnaire was administered to 30 participants who were teaching at different schools.

The results of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for evaluating reliability of the scales extracted from the factor analysis and the total questionnaire are presented in the following table:

The results of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient

Scale	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	Total
Cronbach's Alpha	.679	.723	.574	.729	.612	.590	.726

Although some of the factors extracted from the factor analysis, show moderate reliability (0.5 to 0.6) and some of them show good reliability (0.6 and higher), the reliability of the total questionnaire is confirmed at a good level.

4.4 Validating the questionnaire

127 teacher educators who were teaching in universities all over the country and 257 teachers who were teaching at different schools in Shiraz, Iran were participated in this study. 224 participants were female and 160 were male. They filled out the questionnaire. Items of the questionnaire were written in statement format. The questionnaire consists of 31 items in a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 representing strongly disagree to 5 representing strongly agree.

4.5 Factor Analysis

Factor analysis by Extraction Method of Principal Component Analysis and utilizing Varimax Rotation with Kaiser Normalization was used to extract the factor structure of the questionnaire.

The results of the model adequacy

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.683
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2019.324
	df	465
	P-value	.000

KMO shows a reasonable fit of the model, and the results of the Bartlett's test confirm this. The entire important factors produced by the analysis are placed in the most descending part of the plot. Based on this plot and other criteria, six factors emerged from the analysis procedure described above as 1. Professional Development Program, 2. Quality Development Program, 3. Skill Need, 4. Social and Cultural Knowledge, 5. Knowledge Need, and 6. Expertise.

5. Results

5.1 Descriptive Statistics

As the table demonstrates, 58.3% of the respondents are female and 41.7% of them are male. 66.9% of the participants are school teachers and 33.1% of them are teacher educators.

	Frequency	Percent
Teacher	257	66.9
Educator	127	33.1
Female	224	58.3
Male	160	41.7

	Frequency	Percent
Teacher	257	66.9
Educator	127	33.1
Total	384	100.0

5.2 Inferential Statistics

The table below shows the summary statistics of variables in two groups of school teachers and teacher educators based on the research question, and the results of independent samples t- test for the variables:

The results of independent samples t- test for teacher and teacher educator

Variables	Teaching	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	P-value
Total Need	Teacher	257	116.5136	10.11230	.63079	-2.531	382	.012
	Educator	127	119.0394	6.99592	.62079			
F1	Teacher	257	27.4319	3.27697	.20441	-3.746	382	.000
	Educator	127	28.7559	3.22125	.28584			
F2	Teacher	257	14.1479	3.57748	.22316	-1.122	382	.263
	Educator	127	14.6063	4.12533	.36606			
F3	Teacher	257	12.2646	1.66537	.10388	-6.018	382	.000
	Educator	127	13.2520	1.14065	.10122			
F4	Teacher	257	7.6926	1.46404	.09132	-3.437	382	.001
	Educator	127	8.2283	1.38122	.12256			
F5	Teacher	257	15.1595	2.38850	.14899	4.364	382	.000
	Educator	127	14.0236	2.42168	.21489			
F6	Teacher	257	17.2412	2.01076	.12543	.233	382	.816
	Educator	127	17.1890	2.17756	.19323			

As mentioned above, the mean of variables Total Need, F1 (Professional Development Program), F3 (Skill Need) and F4 (Social and Cultural Knowledge) in the teacher group is significantly lower than that of educator group, but the mean of variable F5 (Knowledge Need) in the teacher group is significantly higher than that of educator group. Also the difference between two groups is significant for variables Total Need, F1 (Professional Development Program), F3 (Skill Need), F4 (Social and Cultural Knowledge) and F5 (Knowledge Need) ($p < 0.05$), But the difference between two groups is not significant for variables F2 (Quality Development Program) and F6 (Expertise) ($p > 0.05$).

6. Discussion

Jordan(1997) states that needs analysis should be the basis for the kind of teaching and learning that takes place. The perceptions of language needs of different parties have been investigated in different needs analyses studies and differing perceptions have been revealed. But, unfortunately no comprehensive study was done to investigate English teachers' perceptions of needs. This study aimed at investigating the perceptions of needs from teacher educators' and school teachers' perspectives.

Elliot (1991) declares that teachers consider teacher education too theoretical and useless (as cited in Korthagen, Loughran & Russel, 2006, p. 1027). Based on the findings of this study teacher educators and teachers have got different viewpoints on teachers' professional needs. Teacher educators are those "whose main responsibility is for the delivery of subject methods courses and professional studies inputs and supervising the practicum" (Lanier & Little, 1985, p. 77). Although, they play a very critical role in curriculum development and educating prospective English teachers, their perceptions of teachers' needs are different from those of school teachers. In spite of that we should keep in mind that "perception may vary according to one's standpoint" (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p.56). But, teacher educators' perceptions and viewpoints influence teacher education syllabuses, materials, and learning which takes place.

Korthagen, Loughran and Russell (2006) declare that a basic problem which is how to connect theory and practice was still not being addressed adequately (p.1021). Northfield and Gunstone (1977, p.49) advise teacher educators to have close connections with schools and the teaching profession (as cited in Korthagen et al., 2006, p.1034). But, at the present, our teacher educators maintain a distant connection with schools and teaching profession. This study has specified disagreements between teacher educators and school teachers. Based on the findings, they do not agree on Professional Development Program, Skill Need, Social and Cultural Knowledge and Knowledge Need, and agree only on Quality Development Program and Expertise. These differences are obstacles in the way of teachers' needs satisfaction. More study should be done to work on differences and find ways to remove them. These differences might originate whether from teacher educators' lack of awareness of teaching context, current students, teachers' obsessions and professional needs or from outdated teacher education. Furthermore, teacher educators or others who have not experienced teaching context in schools or have not attended professional development programs might have different attitudes from teachers who have experienced the vicissitudes of teaching and

have attended professional development programs. As a matter of fact, what happens in schools and in professional development programs is different from what should happen or what is ideal. The professional development programs are required to be organized under the supervision of several experienced teachers and knowledgeable teacher educators to have the quality to address teachers' professional needs. Moreover, a thorough needs analysis on teachers' knowledge and skill needs at the state level is required to determine their real needs and the findings should be applied to our teacher education. If the above suggestions are fulfilled, it is hopeful to have a better, revised and reformed teacher education.

7. Conclusions

This study aimed at investigating the perceptions of professional needs of English teachers from teacher educators' and school teachers' perspectives. These perceptions could give some hints to teacher educators and education system in revising, progressing, and improving the current teacher education in our country. In order to find out different groups' perceptions of needs, the main research question was tested to see whether there was any significant difference between teacher educators and school teachers' points of view on English teachers' professional needs. First of all, five teacher educators and five school teachers were interviewed. Then, their interviews were transcribed and content analyzed. Finally, based on the interviews and literature a questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire was delivered to both teachers and teacher educators and the data collected inputted into SPSS (version 16). Based on the results, the difference between two groups is significant for Professional Development Program, Skill Need, Social and Cultural Knowledge, and Knowledge Need ($p < 0.05$), but the difference between two groups is not significant for Quality Development Program, and Expertise ($p > 0.05$).

The differences between teacher educators and school teachers on teachers' professional needs as Richterich (1984) refers show that people build their images of their needs based on the data relating to themselves and their environment (as cited in Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p.56) and also imply that teacher educators are not completely aware of teachers' needs. Northfield and Gunstone (1977, p. 49) also advise teacher educators to maintain close connections with schools and the teaching profession (as cited in Korthagen et al., 2006, p. 1034). When teacher educators are fully aware of real teaching context and teachers' educational needs, they will surely revise and might even revolutionize teacher education.

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Title

The Role of Learning Strategies on the Students' Academic Achievement

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between students' learning strategies and their academic achievement. The research method was descriptive-correlation. Statistical population was about 300 female and 200 male students in English literature majors from Islamic Azad University, Ardabil Branch who were freshmen and seniors. The sample included 81 females and 56 males who were selected randomly via Krejcie and Morgan table considering $\alpha = .05$. The instrument of this research was the learning strategies dimension of motivated strategies for learning questionnaire. Reliability of the questionnaire and its subscales was calculated using Cronbach's Alpha. The average of scores was scores that students received during all semesters. For this reason, researchers gave the notation above the questionnaire to ask from students their averages. The participants were asked to complete the questionnaire in their class at the same

time. Gathered data were analyzed using Pearson product moment and regression, enter method. Regression analysis represented that 34 percent of variance for achievement of English learners could be explained by learning strategies subscales containing rehearsal, elaboration, organization, critical thinking, and metacognitive self-regulation, ($R = .58$, $R^2 = .34$, adjusted $R^2 = .31$ and $F_{(6,130)} = 13.32$).

Keywords: English as a foreign language, Learning strategies, Metacognitive self-regulation, Academic achievement

1. Introduction

In the area of English learning many experts agreed that in the same class there were students who differ from each other in learning English language. So, nowadays focus of instructional experts was shifting from the teacher-centered classroom to a more learner-centered classroom (Sheikholeslami & Khayer, 2006). The goal of teachers and trainers was shifting the focus of learners as dependent learner to independent and autonomous learner in learning (Sadighi & Zarafshan, 2006).

To become an independent and autonomous learner in learning and for continual learning which are essential for English learning; learners need learning strategies that helps students to maintain their language ability. In recent years a major outcome of research into the strategies used by successful language learners is the conclusion that learners should be taught not only the language but also directed toward strategies they could use to promote more effective learning (Rubin, Chamot, Harris, & Anderson, 2007).

In the same vein, Chamot (2005) stated that learning strategies are procedures that facilitate a learning task. Strategies are most often conscious and goal-driven, especially in the beginning stages of tackling an unfamiliar language task. Once a learning strategy becomes familiar through repeated use, it may be used with some automaticity.

Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1986) stated that strategy is a generic plan or agenda which is consisted of a number of operations and it is designed and executed in order to reach a particular goal. Each strategy contains a number of tactics, which refer to a certain treatment or techniques that served that strategy. Also they claimed that cognitive strategies are defined as the solutions which learners use in order to learn, remember, remind, or comprehend something.

Oxford (1990) defines learning strategies as the specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective and more transferrable to new situations. Bialystok (1978) defined language learning strategies as “optional means for exploiting available information to improve competence in a second language” (p. 71).

The results obtained in different studies indicated that learning strategies have relationship with academic achievement (O’Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990; Rubin et al., 2007; Thu, 2009; Yilmaz, 2010; Wenden 1991; Vermunt, 1998). In other words they believed that learning strategies have a significant effect on the learners’ success in all fields and particularly in English learning.

According to (Vermunt, 1998) instruction does not automatically lead to learning; learning rather depends on the learning strategies set by the learners themselves. The results obtained from different studies indicate that there is a positive and meaningful relationship between the application of learning strategies and learners’ progress (Pintrich & DeGroot, 1990; Pintrich & Garcia, 1991).

As research indicates, the frequent use of learning strategies in language classroom turns out to be a significant factor in the success of EFL learners, which may contribute to further aspects involved in second language acquisition.

In the theory of Pintrich, learning strategies includes 2 subscales: cognitive learning strategies and metacognitive self-regulatory strategies. Kivinen (2003) claimed that cognitive strategies help learners in coding and decoding of new learning materials as well as structuring knowledge. Rubin (1981) conducted a study to identify cognitive strategies in second language learning and introduced the distinction between direct and indirect language learning strategies. Cognitive strategies include rehearsal, elaboration, organization, and critical thinking.

Seif (2008) says that rehearsal strategy is used by the learners so that information is actively accessed in the short-term memory and it will have the chance of being transferred to long-term memory. The simplest way of rehearsal aims to keep the information in the short-term memory until it is used, and it can be either in the form of murmuring or saying something aloud.

Through elaboration, learners add something to or extend what they need to learn. His goal is linking new information to the previously learned and so better learning and remembering of the subject (Seif, 2008). Slavin (2006) states that some of the most important

tactics of elaboration of complex subjects include: note-taking, summarizing, marking, writing in the margin, and analogy.

Seif (2008) argued that the best and the most comprehensive type of learning strategy is organization which is usually used in learning complex complicated and detailed subjects. Also Seif (2008) in other study proposed that the simplest form of organization is that the data is put in certain categories so to learn and to remember them more rapidly. O'Malley's and Chamot (1990) believed that organization is previewing the main ideas and concepts of the material to be learned, often by skimming the text for the organizing principle.

Wollfolk (2001) considers critical thinking the evaluation of results through logical investigation of issues, documents, and solutions. Slavin (2006) thinks critical thinking is the ability to make logical decisions about what needs to be performed and what needs to be believed. Johnson (2002) says that critical thinking provides the person the possibility to search the truth in a load of resources and subjects and to reach one's goal, i.e. reaching the most comprehensive understanding.

Wollfolk (2001) argued that meta-cognition or metacognitive self-regulatory theory means awareness about self-learning and its control. Meta-cognitive knowledge is the specialized portion of a learner's acquired knowledge which consists of what learners know about learning, and to the extent a learner has made distinctions, language learning. So meta-cognitive knowledge plays an important role in many cognitive activities related to language use.

The significance of the relationship between sub-scales of learning strategies with educational progress has been supported in most of the studies and theories, as such significance can be explained for rehearsal and educational progress by the opinions of individuals such as Suhrk and Zimmerman (1994) and Seif (2008) elaboration and educational progress by the opinions of individuals like Slavin (2006) organization and educational progress based on the viewpoints of Seif (2008) and critical thinking and educational progress based on the ideas of Durkin (2008); Johnson (2002); Jones (2005); Seif (2008); Slavin (2006) and Wollfolk (2001).

The results gained by studies of Artino (2008); Haffman and spatariu (2008); Bradford and Steve (2008) have demonstrated that the understanding of an individual of his abilities and awareness of cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies have positive influence on educational performance. In addition, researchers like Sperling, Howard, Miller, and Murphy (2002) have showed that an increase in meta-cognitive knowledge leads to an increase in people's capability in using other cognitive strategies and this will enhance their performance.

But Wolfolk (2001) says that in the presence of meta-cognitive strategies, these variables do not have a significant role in predicting educational progress, because meta-cognitive strategies are awareness of learning and controlling it, tools for controlling and directing cognitive strategies and their implementation to achieve goals (Flavell & Miller, 1998; Seif, 2008) and researchers such as Artino (2008); Bradford and Steve (2008); Huffman and Spataru (2008) believed that meta-cognitive strategies have an important role in educational progress, as Wang et al. (1990) found that in 172 research documents including 228 factors that had effects on learning, meta-cognitive strategies had the most influence. Saglam and Kilich (2010); Yaghobkhani and Ghiasvand (2010) found that meta-cognitive strategies have higher contribution than that of cognitive strategies in predicting educational progress.

In spite of aforementioned subjects, research and articles in this area in Iran is negligible. So, in this study researchers intend to answer the following main research questions:

Is there any relationship between learners' learning strategies with their academic achievement?

2. Materials and Methods

The method of current study is descriptive-correlation in terms of the analysis technique. Statistical population of this research was about 300 female and 200 male students in English literature majors from Islamic Azad University, Ardabil Branch who were freshmen and seniors. The sample included 81 (59.1 %) females and 56 (40.9 %) males who were selected randomly. The alpha level was set at .05. The number of sample was calculated via Krejcie and Morgan table. The instrument of this research was the learning strategies dimension of motivated strategies for learning questionnaire (MSLQ) instrument. Table 1 illustrates the learning strategies components including 6 subscales. Items were scored on a 7-point Likert scale, from 1 (not at all true) to 7 (very true).

Table 1 *Coefficient alphas and 5 subscales of the learning strategies*

Scale	Items	Reliability*	Reliability**
Rehearsal	39,46,59,72	.69	.67
Elaboration	53,62,64,67,69,81	.75	.92
Organization	32,42,49,63	.64	.64
Critical thinking	38,47,51,66,71	.80	.86
Metacognitive	33r,36,41,44,54,55,56,57r,61,76,78,79	.79	.70

r, revised scoring * **Source:** (Duncan & McKeachie, 2005); ** present study

The reliability of questionnaire and its subscales was calculated using Cronbach's Alpha (Table 1). The calculated values showed that the questionnaire and subscales of questionnaire enjoyed high internal consistency. Also academic achievement was obtained through asking an average from students directly. The average of scores was scores that students received during all semesters. For this reason, researchers gave the notation above the questionnaire to ask from students their averages. The questionnaire was distributed in classrooms when the teacher was present in the class. The participants were asked to complete the questionnaire in their class at the same time. There was no limitation of time and it took about 25 minutes for respondents to mark the items in the questionnaire. Gathered data were analyzed using Pearson product moment and regression, enter method. Also the normality of the data distribution was examined through Kolmogorov-Smirnov test.

3. Results and Discussion

Figure 1, illustrates that the mean scores of females in all subscales of learning strategy including rehearsal, elaboration, organization, critical thinking, and metacognitive self-regulation were higher than the mean scores of males' learning strategy component and its subscales.

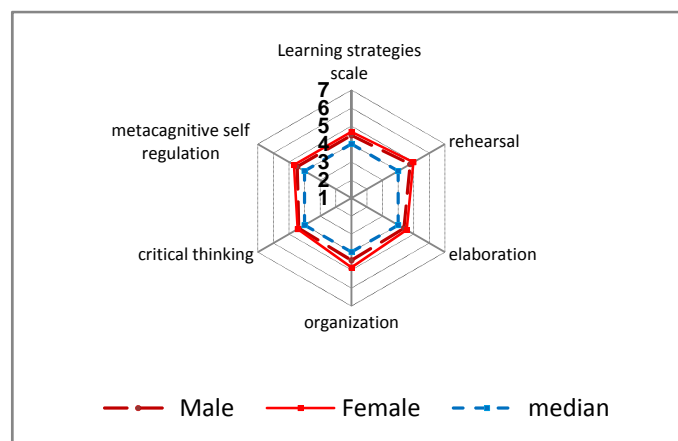


Figure 1. Status of the learning strategies and its subscales (1-7 scaling)

The mean scores of females and males in all subscales of learning strategy component were above the median (4). The number of 4 was the conceptual mean score because the questionnaire was 7-point Likert scale whose median was 4.

Table 2 *One-sample kolmogorov-smirnov test for normality*

Scale	Most Extreme Differences			K-S _Z	Sig	Distributio n
	Absolute	Positiv e	Negative			
Learning Strategies	.064	.052	-.064	.748	.63	Normal
Rehearsal	.116	.056	-.116	1.36	.05	Normal
Elaboration	.068	.038	-.068	.800	.54	Normal
Organization	.071	.071	-.065	.826	.50	Normal
Critical Thinking	.077	.040	-.077	.902	.39	Normal
Metacognitive	.047	.047	-.040	.553	.92	Normal
Academic achievement	.080	.080	-.057	.933	.35	Normal

N = 137

As it is clear in Table 2, amounts of Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z calculated based on $p > .05$ indicated that distribution of the total variables was normal.

Table 3 *Predicting the academic achievement based on the subscales of learning strategies*

Model	S.S.	Df	M.S.	F	Sig.
Regression	194.32	5	38.86	13.32	.000
Residual	382.38	131	2.92		
Total	576.71	136			

Model	Coefficients				T	Sig.
	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients			
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
Constant	9.46	.71			13.24	.000
Rehearsal	.075	.05	.177		1.49	.138
Elaboration	-.010	.03	-.037		-.29	.768
Organization	.014	.05	.036		.28	.779
Critical Thinking	.039	.02	.224		1.71	.090
Metacognitive	.084	.03	.260		2.40	.018

R = .58, R² = .34, Adj. R² = .31

Predictors: (constant), Rehearsal, Elaboration, Organization, Critical thinking, and Metacognitive Self-Regulation

Dependent Variable: academic achievement

According to Table 3, $R = .58$, $R^2 = .34$, adjusted $R^2 = .31$ and $F_{(5,131)} = 13.32$ were statistically significant ($p < .01$). So it can be concluded that the learning strategies subscales including rehearsal, elaboration, organization, critical thinking, and metacognitive self regulation predict students' language learning statistically significant. In other words, 34 percent of variance for achievement of English learners could be explained via rehearsal, elaboration, organization, critical thinking, and metacognitive self-regulation. In the subscales of learning strategies, the share of metacognitive self-regulation ($Beta = .26$) for predicting academic achievement was statistically significant. But the shares of rehearsal,

elaboration, organization, and critical thinking ($Beta = .177$, $Beta = -.037$, $Beta = .036$, and $Beta = .224$) respectively were not statistically significant.

The findings of present research have supported by some theories and studies. As O'Malley and Chamot (1990); Oxford (1990); Seif (2008); Weinstein and Mayer (1986); Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1986) indicated that learning strategies facilitate, simplify, and accelerate learning, enable generalization of learning and its methods to new contexts; and, similar to the findings of this research, researchers such as Rubin et al. (2007); Thu (2009) and Yilmaz (2010) believed that learning strategies have a significant effect on the learners' success in all fields and particularly in English learning. Traditional theorists of this field had also emphasized this point (Wenden & Rubin, 1987; Vermunt, 1998).

Furthermore, a review of the literature on learning strategies reveals that some theorists have studied such strategies from cognitive strategies and meta-cognitive strategies perspectives, and in this respect too, the findings of this research is identical to existing theories in such a way that Kivinin (2003) has emphasized the role of cognitive strategies in information processing and mind organization and relating the new contents to the existing contents in cognitive structure and making the learning meaningful.

Although the relationship between sub-scales of learning strategies and achievement has been confirmed in the most of the studies, such as Suhnk and Zimmerman (1994) and Seif (2008) about rehearsal and academic achievement; Seif (2008) and Slavin (2006) about elaboration and academic achievement; Seif (2008) about organization and academic achievement; and Durkin (2008); Johson (2002); Jones (2005); Seif (2008); Slavin (2006) and Wollfolk (2001) about critical thinking and academic achievement; But Wollfolk (2001) says that in the presence of meta-cognitive strategies, these variables do not have a significant role in predicting educational progress, because meta-cognitive strategies are awareness of learning and controlling it, tools for controlling and directing cognitive strategies and their implementation to achieve goals (Flavell & Miller, 1998; Seif, 2008) and researchers such as Artino (2008); Bradford and Steve (2008); Huffman and Spatariu (2008) believed that meta-cognitive strategies have an important role in educational progress, as Wang et al. (1990) found that in 172 research documents including 228 factors that had effects on learning, meta-cognitive strategies had the most influence. Kilich (2010); Yaghobkhani and Ghiasvand (2010) found that meta-cognitive strategies have higher contribution than that of cognitive strategies in predicting educational progress.

From learning strategies subscales, metacognitive self-regulation was a highest contribution in academic achievement. So with regarding the meaning of metacognitive self-

regulation students should learn: During class time don't miss important points, when reading for their course, they make up questions to help focus their reading, when they became confused about something in class, they go back and try to figure it out, if course readings are difficult to understand, they change the way they read the material, they try to work with classmates to complete the course assignments, they ask themselves questions to make sure that understand the materials, they try to change the way they study in order to fit the course requirements and the instructor's teaching style, when they study for class, they set goals for themselves in order to direct their activities in each study period, and if they get confused taking notes in class, they make sure they sort it out afterwards. One of the major limits of this research in the data gathering process was the completely random sampling of the research. The data were gathered using paper-pencil tool and in the class environment, and although the questionnaires were distributed in different intervals and in various courses of this major, still there were students who were absent at the time of handing over the questionnaires.

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Title

A Qualitative Study on the Impact of Students' Self-Efficacy on Their Ability to Achieve Speaking Skills

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Abstract

The paper was an attempt to examine the relationship between students' self-efficacy and their success in ability to develop speaking skills. Observing the low English speaking skills of Iranian students of a language center located in the North of Iran motivated the researcher to set out this study. The researcher examined the relationship between the students' self-efficacy and their success in speaking skills. For this purpose 80 students were selected, from two English language institutes. In order to avoid the probable effect of age on the students' ability to speak, the students chosen were all between 17 and 18 years old. Along the same line, the students were divided into two groups (based on their last term level of achievement on the English course). The subsequent data analysis and statistical calculation via correlation revealed here is a significant relationship between students' success and self-efficacy.

Keywords: Self-efficacy, Attribution, Self-regulatory, Goal-setting

1. Introduction

Efficacy is essentially individuals' future-oriented judgment about their competence rather than their actual level of competence (Ghanizadeh & Moafian, 2011). A simple glance at the present studies on the students' low achievement in enhancing their skills in speaking English as their foreign language reveals that most students experience failure. People who regard themselves as highly efficacious act, think, and feel differently from those who perceive

themselves as inefficacious. They produce their own future, rather than simply foretell it. Many factors may get involved, the role of intellectual abilities of the students, motivation, attribution and a myriad of others. However, whether they are predominant is controversial (Rahemi, 2007). Among the determining factors suggested in different theories, learners' self-efficacy has proved to be a much more consistent predictor of behavior than any of the other closely related variables (Bandura, 1986, cited in Rahemi, 2007, p. 99). While there are ample reasons to view the reason of students' success or failure in their ability to speak English as a foreign language, it seems the area, learner's self-efficacy, has not received the due attention in Iran. This study was designed with the hope that its results could sensitize Iranian teachers to their students' internal feelings and beliefs about themselves and the effect they may exert on their teaching.

2. Review of the Related Literature

The concept of self-efficacy, introduced and developed by Albert Bandura (1977), is based on the social cognitive theory, which is defined by Bandura (1986) as "beliefs in one's capability to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations" (p. 392). Self-efficacy is based on what Bandura (1989) argues that individuals' act is based on multiple influences from both the internal and external worlds. Self-efficacy has a direct relationship with the concept of confidence. For example, an individual who feels adept in his occupation is likely to have confidence in several of the specific tasks that are to be performed as well as feeling able to handle and use judgment in dealing with unanticipated circumstances (McElory, 2002). Put differently, Bandura's (1986) key point as regards the role of self-efficacy beliefs in human functioning is that "people's level of motivation, affective states, and actions are based more on what they believe than on what is objectively true" (p. 392).

Self-efficacious learners, as Barnhardt (1997) puts, feel confident about solving a problem because they have developed an approach to problem solving that has worked in the past. They attribute their success mainly to their own efforts and strategies, believe that their own abilities will improve as they learn more and recognize that errors are part of learning. Students with low self-efficacy, in contrast, believing themselves to have inherent low ability, choose less demanding tasks and do not try hard because they believe that any effort will reveal their own lack of ability.

2.1 Types of Efficacy

McAuley and Mikalko (1998) in their review of self-efficacy and its measurement suggested that different types of self-efficacy can be represented as either task self-efficacy or regulatory self-efficacy. The task self-efficacy refers to the beliefs that an individual has the ability to perform a specified behavior, while the regulatory self-efficacy refers to the beliefs in one's ability to manage difficulties inherent in performing complex behavior. Task self-efficacy with regard to physical activity has been commonly measured with items asking about beliefs in one's ability to be physically active at some prescribed intensity, frequency and duration. The regulatory self-efficacy for physical activity, in contrast, has been commonly measured with items asking about one's belief in his or her ability to be active despite common barriers to physical activity such as bad weather and fatigue (barriers efficacy). In line with helping learners to achieve regulatory self-efficacy, Bandura (1997) claims, selecting and creating environments provide a good support for individuals desired behavior.

Baron (2004) further introduces three types of self-efficacy: self-regulatory self-efficacy (ability to resist peer pressure, avoid high-risk activities); social self-efficacy (ability to form and maintain relationships, be assertive, engage in leisure time activities); and academic self-efficacy (ability to do course work, regulate learning activities, meet expectations).

2.2 Importance of Self-Efficacy

Bandura (1982) emphasized that the one with higher self-efficacy would have higher confidence level when encountering difficulties, and as it is expected a person with high confidence will perform better. Because self-efficacy is the important factor of behavioral performance, task performance or personal achievement should have direct relationship with self-efficacy.

2.3 Sources of Self-Efficacy

Perceived efficacy on the part of learners, according to Bandura (1997), results from four determinants or sources of feeling: mastery experience, vicarious experience, social-verbal persuasion and arousal or physiological and emotional states. Mastery performance or enactive mastery, which is the most influential source of self-efficacy, refers to knowledge and skill gained through experience and perseverance. In other words, if success comes too easily, the learner is likely to feel less mastery. When small failures are encountered, the individual has the opportunity to make adjustments to take actions and exercise better control over what is taking place (Bandura, 1997). As a result of sustained effort, a sense of efficacy is achieved. The second prominent influence, vicarious experience emanates from observing

the experience of others. Here, the experience of others acts as a model and as a level of comparison (Bandura, 1997). Observing people who perform a behavior successfully, the learners are felt with successful manners of action. In contrast, observing people similar to oneself fail lowers an individual's confidence and subsequently undermines their future effort. How effective vicarious experience is in increasing feelings of self-efficacy is often linked to the similarities of personal characteristics of the observer and the person being observed (McElory, 2002). Those who are similar to the observer regarding age, ethnicity and educational and socioeconomic level often serve as the most effective models and are more likely to increase the observer's feelings of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Social-verbal persuasion refers to the fact that when a learner is persuaded, his/her beliefs in his/her capabilities foster. Negative persuasion, in contrast, may tend to defeat and lower self-beliefs. A study of undergraduate students who randomly received either negative or neutral feedback from someone in a supervisory role found that those who received negative feedback were more likely to report lower self-efficacy on subsequent tasks (Baron, 1988, cited in McElory, 2002). As McElory (2002) contends, "for social persuasion to be effective, it should come from someone who the individual feels is a reliable source of feedback" (p. 13). This is particularly influential when individuals are supported by managers who provide constructive feedback while avoiding placing employees prematurely into situations that are not ready to handle (Malone, 2001, cited in McElory, 2002, p. 13).

Bandura (1997) steadfastly pursues that psychological and affective states, such as stress anxiety, also provide information about individuals' self-evaluation of competence. Similarly, a person's physical reaction to difficult situations can influence how prepared that person feels to effectively handle the situation (McElory, 2002). If a person feels stressed, he or she is likely to doubt his or her ability to carry out the task. Thus, helping an individual to alter his or her perception of somatic reactions to difficult situations such as feelings related to stress, fear, or embarrassment, can greatly affect feelings of self-efficacy (Cioffi, 1991). Another important affective factor, according to Pintrich and Schunk (2001, cited in Ghanizadeh & Moafian, 2011) is attribution. For example, if success is attributed to internal or controllable causes such as ability or effort, efficacy will be enhanced. Nevertheless, if success is attributed to external uncontrollable factors such as chance, self-efficacy may be diminished (cited in Woolfolk Hoy & Burke Spero, 2000). Heider (1958) who proposed the concept of attribution thought that human would try to look for a reasonable explanations when an even or behavior was seen happening (cited in Jeng & Shin, 2008). To him, when the reason of behavioral result is attributed to environmental factors, it is called external (or

situational) attribution, while the reason was thought to come from the actor himself or herself, it was internal attribution (or personal attribution). What is undeniable in Heider's attribution is that when a person has external attribution, he or she gets lower control level itself. Besides, this seems to be unfavorable for him or her. According to Jeng and Shin (2008), if self-efficacy was checked by the view of favorable attribution, it could be inferred that the one with favorable attribution should have higher self-efficacy than that with unfavorable attribution (p. 531).

2.4 Self-Efficacy and Goal Setting

As mention earlier, self-efficacy refers to beliefs about abilities to execute and regulate important actions in life. Along the same line, self-efficacy can be defined as the confidence in personal ability which affects task performance. Hence, self-efficacy, as a strong predictor of accomplishment, entails high level of confidence. Accordingly, the effect of skills can be achieved by self-efficacy, which according to Bandura plays the role of mediator.

Next to all sight illumination, Zimmerman, Bandura, and Martinez-Pons (1992) found self-efficacy influenced achievement both directly and indirectly by raising standards and goals (cited in Cheng & Chiou, 2010)

One of the basic needs of students is having a high level of confidence in successfully completing a task (Chamot, 1993, cited in Ghanizadeh & Moafian, 2011). Students confident in their academic skills expect high marks on related exams and papers (Ghanizadeh & Moafian, 2011, p. 99). As Siegle (2000) indicates, self-efficacy is specific to the task being attempted. That is, it reflects how confident students are about performing specific tasks. For example, high self-efficacy in mathematics does not necessarily accompany high self-efficacy in spelling.

While there are many reasons to consider the learners' English self-efficacy as powerful enough to predict EFL performance, it seems that the area has not received the due attention in Iran. This study was designed with the hope that the results of paper could sensitize Iranian teachers to their students' internal feelings and beliefs about themselves and the effect they may exert on their performance in EFL classes. To this end, the following research question was designed:

Is there any relationship between the student's ability to speak in English as their foreign language and their self-efficacy?

In order to reject or affirm, the following null hypothesis is formulated:

There is no relationship between students' ability to speak in English and their level of self-efficacy.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

The population of this study comprises eighty students of two language centers in a province located in the north of Iran—Guilan. The rationale for selecting the students was that the researcher was once the head director of these centers and more importantly, these students are taught by teachers who were once the researcher's students at university. Thus, the teacher expects them to cooperate with him fairly.

3.2 Instrument

Observation, the teacher's report of his experience, and interviews with students were used as three means of data collection.

3.3 Procedures and Data Collection

The study was conducted through a qualitative research method. In the study three sets of data were collected. The first set of data was collected through interviews held with the teachers and students. The video-recordings were also employed for the analysis of data. The study, of course, was conducted in two centers of Iranian English Language Centers in Anzali, a city in the north of Iran, between February and April, 2012. Two criteria were involved in the selection of the institutes: credibility and feasibility. Iranian English language Centers were among the most creditable institutes in the city and since most teachers were among the researcher's students at university, there was felt a warm cooperation in the atmospheres of institutes. To guarantee the reliable evaluation by the learners, the researcher explained the purpose of interview was to reveal how the students felt about their ability to speak in English.

3.4. Data Analysis

The data analysis was done through an 'iterative process' where data collection and data analysis are continuously revised and refocused based on the emergent themes (Dornyei, 2007). Then, the sections which were relevant to the purpose of study's research question were sorted out for the data analysis and for the discussion parts.

4. Results and Discussion

As described earlier, the researcher employed a qualitative research method. The heuristic nature of a qualitative research leads us to a qualitative content analysis. Further to say, although the level of explicitness in data collection procedures is also low, the data are more impressionistic and interpretive than numerical.

After data collection, growing ideas, the last step in content analysis is data interpretation (Dorney, 2007). What is highly underlined through a content analysis approach is the issue that all of the major processes such as data collection, data analysis, and data interpretation are iterative. As a result, data analysis and data interpretation, i.e. the study's findings, will be presented together in this section. Capturing the impact of self-efficacy on students' success in the ability to speak leads the author to the following concluding remarks:

As the author previously mentioned self-efficacy is commonly defined as the belief in one's capabilities to achieve a goal or an outcome. In the paper, students with a strong sense of efficacy are more likely to challenge themselves with difficult tasks and be intrinsically motivated. These students will put forth a high degree of effort in order to meet their commitments, and attribute failure to things which are in their control, rather than blaming external factors. Self-efficacious students also recover quickly from setbacks, and ultimately are likely to achieve their personal goals. Students with low self-efficacy, on the other hand, believe they cannot be successful and thus are less likely to make a concerted, extended effort and may consider challenging tasks as threats that are to be avoided. Thus, students with poor self-efficacy have low aspirations which may result in disappointing academic performances becoming part of a self-fulfilling feedback cycle.

As found in this study, the self-efficacy levels of the students are high but this does not mean that they will always be at the high level. It is very important that this high level is maintained. In order to ensure this, teachers should always give encouragement to students to maintain their level and/or further enhance their confidence level since level of self-efficacy depends on the difficulty level of a particular task.

1. The higher the level of studies they are in, the more difficult and challenging their tasks will be. They will have to do more oral presentations to defend their ideas, thus they have to be more critical and analytical in thinking. In order to express their opinion critically, they need to be more apt in speaking English and by knowing the right way to keep the conversation going will enable them to speak fluently.

2. The researcher believes that language teachers should highlight to the students about achievement strategies, which is part of communication strategies, to foster acquisition in oral communication. In this interaction the learner decides to keep the original communicative goal and attempts to compensate for insufficient means for achieving it. The strategies are approximation (for example, 'story book' is substituted for 'novel'), paraphrase (for example, 'it can be used to cut fruits' is substituted for 'knife'), word coinage (for example, substituting 'house of the king' for 'palace'), conscious transfer, the deliberate use of the L1 (for example, by literally translating an L1 expression), appeal for assistance and mime
3. Good communication ability is a skill that must be acquired by every student especially engineering and technology students at tertiary level. With this ability they will have a better future in their careers and lives as it is also considered as an important surviving skill in this era of globalization. Self-efficacy is hypothesized to affect individual's task choices, effort, persistence and achievement (Bandura, 1997; Schunk, 1995). Compared with learners who doubt their capabilities, those who feel self-efficacious about learning or performing a task competently are apt to participate more readily, work harder, persist longer when they encounter difficulties, and eventually, achieve a higher level of self-efficacy.
4. As language educators, we must be cognizant of what factors contribute to the perceived speaking ability of these students and the reasons behind them so that they can be helped should they face any problems in the future. Enhancing students' self-efficacy beliefs may help them achieve more in the English language learning process. It is hoped that the findings of this study will provide the educators with a better way to understand the students, especially engineering and technology students, in order to guide them to be better speakers of English.

5. Conclusions

To quote Bandura, “many students have difficulty in school not because they are incapable of performing successfully, but because they are incapable of believing that they can perform successfully, that they have learned to see themselves as incapable of handling academic skills” (p. 390).

On a word, the result of the present study reveals that self-efficacy plays a vital role in motivating students’ ability to speak. For a teacher to exert positive impact on the performance of students, it is recommended that efficacy-raising practices be employed. Research shows that the type of learning environment and teaching method can improve self efficacy in the classroom (Bandura, 1994). In addition to those pedagogies, collaborative learning and the use of electronic applications showed a positive correlation with increased self-efficacy in their student sample..

Bandura also concludes that cooperative learning strategies have the dual outcome of improving both self-efficacy and academic achievement. "Cooperative learning structures, in which students work together and help one another also tend to promote more positive self-evaluations of capability and higher academic attainments than do individualistic or competitive ones" (Bandura, 1994). Along the same vein, Margolis and McCabe (2006), in their article on “*Improving Self-efficacy and Motivation: What to do, What to say*” suggest practical solutions to improve the self-efficacy of struggling learners. In the following, some of them are outlined:

➤ **Use moderately- difficult tasks**

If the task is too easy will be boring or embarrassing and may communicate the feeling that the teacher doubts their abilities; a too-difficult task will re-enforce low self-efficacy. The target for difficulty is slightly above the students' current ability level.

➤ **Use peer models**

Students can learn by watching a peer succeed at a task. Peers may be drawn from groups as defined by gender, ethnicity, social circles, interests, achievement level, clothing, or age.

➤ **Teach specific learning strategies**

Giving students a concrete plan of attack for working on an assignment, rather than simply turning them loose. This may apply to overall study skills, such as preparing for an exam, or to a specific assignment or project.

➤ **Capitalize on students' interests**

Tie the course material or concepts to student interests such as sports, pop culture, movies or technology.

➤ **Allow students to make their own choices**

Set up some areas of the course that allow students to make their own decisions, such as with flexible grading, assignment options or self-determined due dates.

➤ **Encourage students to try**

Give them consistent, credible and specific encouragement, such as, "You can do this. We've set up an outline for how to write a lab report and a schedule for what to do each week - now follow the plan and you will be successful."

➤ **Give frequent, focused feedback**

Giving praise and encouragement is very important, however it must be credible. Use praise when earned and avoid hyperbole. When giving feedback on student performance, compare to past performances by the same student, don't make comparisons between students.

➤ **Encourage accurate attributions**

Help students understand that they don't fail because they're dumb, they fail because they didn't follow instructions, they didn't spend enough time on the task, or they didn't follow through on the learning strategy.

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Title

Vocabulary Focused Language Learning on IELTS Writing Skill Development: A Case Study

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Abstract

In the current study the role of learning limited range of vocabulary on the IELTS writing skill proficiency has been explored. Participant included an Elementary English student whose first language is Persian and who has once took the IELTS test with the overall band score 6.0 and the writing band score 5.5. In order to answer the research questions, the researcher has employed qualitative research study as the methodology and case study as the research strategy. Successively, the participant was about to write a story on his own using the vocabulary of a vocabulary book along with their use and collocation. The student's writings were then analyzed every session to see if there was any changes in the frequency of used words by the researcher. Finally, a reliable IELTS writing test was taken from the student and it was seen although the student seemed to have some collocation mistakes, his writing skill has been improved. As a result of the

second IELTS exam taken three months later after the first one, it has been seen that the participant's writing band score has been increased one mark to 6.5.

Keywords: IELTS Writing, Writing Development, Essay writing, Vocabulary based Language Teaching

1. Introduction

In light of a formal introduction of the study, the researcher would like to offer a summary of his study, which is being conducted to explore the enhancement of IELTS writing proficiency with an emphasis on the effect of only the most frequently used vocabularies in IELTS writing.

2. Statement of the Problem

The real problem for the IELTS candidates is; they should expand their own word dominations, in a short period of time. It has been apparent in writing courses that students tend to struggle with choosing the right words and having a large diversity of word domination. Studying several vocabulary books seems too challenging for them and they are likely to be overwhelmed by the huge number of words they are required to learn. Thus, It is assumed that if the students work and reflect on the most frequently used vocabularies in IELTS essay writings, they may not have the above problem, since they only work and reflect on some limited range of vocabularies along with their use. More specifically, this study is going to focus on the assessment of the applicability of the restricted range of English vocabularies in the total functioning in IELTS writing module.

3. Significance of the study

The significance of this research is three-fold. Firstly, a great deal of attention is paid to developing student's confidence. When students find themselves capable of using such various vocabularies at their writings, they will gain some self-confidence to write about whatever they are asked. Secondly, students are encouraged to manipulate with the vocabularies, focus on those words that they already know and avoid becoming stuck. They know how to use the words in context. They will also understand how the collocation rules work. Thirdly, as the knowledge of vocabulary is required as an important key for the writing to be overlooked; it helps students get a higher score along with improving their writing in

IELTS test with their current knowledge of English. This study will test the following research questions.

Q1. How does the limited range of vocabularies help the students increase their frequency of words in their writings?

Q2. How does the limited range of vocabularies improve the students' writing proficiency and score in IELTS writing exam?

4. Literature Review

The researcher ultimate goal is to bring the reader up to date with current literature on a topic. Dellinger, A. (2005). It was important for the researcher to know how this study deviates from what has already been done. Indeed, he would like to provide the foundation for contributing to the knowledge base.

4.1 What is IELTS?

IELTS, the International English Language Testing System, is designed to assess the language ability of candidates who need to study or work where English is the language of communication. (UCLES, 2007).

4.2 IELTS Writing Module

The Writing Module takes 60 minutes. There are two tasks to complete. It is suggested that about 20 minutes is spent on Task 1, which requires candidates to write at least 150 words. Task 2 requires at least 250 words and should take about 40 minutes. Candidates may write on the Question Paper but this cannot be taken from the test room and will not be seen by the examiner. Answers must be given on the Answer Sheet and must be written in full. Notes are not acceptable as answers.

4.3 General Training Writing

In Task 1 candidates are asked to respond to a given problem with a letter requesting information or explaining a situation. As it was mentioned above, the IELTS official assessment criteria for Task 1 and Task 2 are the following (UCLES, 2007):

- Engage in personal correspondence
- Elicit and provide general factual information
- Express needs, wants, likes and dislikes
- Express opinions (views, complaints etc.)

In Task 2 candidates are presented with a point of view or argument or problem. Candidates are assessed on their ability to:

- Provide general factual information
- Outline a problem and present a solution
- Present and possibly justifies an opinion, assessment or hypothesis
- Present and possibly evaluate and challenge ideas, evidence and argument

4.4 The Process Approach for Teaching Writing

Murray, D. (1972), defines process writing as a process of discovery through language. It is the process of exploration of what we should know and what we feel about what we know through language. In other words, he believes, it is the process of using language to learn about our world, to evaluate what we learn about our world, to communicate what we learn about our world. He has also introduced ten applications of teaching process, not product for the composition curriculum that would be investigated on in the fifth chapter where the implication might be used to prove the result of the study.

In “Teach Writing as a Process Not Product” Murray, D. (1972) writes that the literature education of many writing teachers has trained us to view student writing as a fixed product. His argument is that student writing should instead be thought of as a developing process. Murray calls writing a “process of discovery,” a way to learn about and evaluate the world as well as a method of communication, and he divides the writing process into three recognizable parts: prewriting, writing, and revising. For Murray, prewriting involves narrowing down a topic, recognizing audience, and selecting a format. He defines the stage of writing as the creation of a first draft, the quickest “and the most frightening [part of the writing process], for it is a commitment.” Line edits are the final stage of revision for Murray, which first involves reconsideration of the piece on every level. Murray examines ways for the teacher to encourage students on process; including “shutting up,” letting the student take the lead in selecting topics and doing his or her own prewriting. He also discusses possible consequences of teaching process, including a greater emphasis on students reading their peers’ work, using their own language, writing multiple drafts and in various forms, taking more time with their work, and working at their own pace. Implications for the teacher include treating each draft as a new paper, not grading drafts, only looking at mechanics last, and recognizing that not all these rules work for all students. Murray finishes his argument with an appeal for student potential, to recognize “what they may do... what they may produce, if they are given the opportunity to see writing as a process.”

4.5 Effects of Repeated Word Exposures on Incidental Vocabulary Learning

Past research has shown that the number of times an unknown word is met in reading affects whether its meaning will be acquired and retained (e.g. Saragiet al. 1978; Jenkins et al. 1984;

Rott 1999; Webb 2007). There is no clear conclusion, though, regarding the number of encounters needed (e.g. Saragiet al. 1978; Nation 1982; Jenkins et al. 1984; Rott 1999; Zahar et al. 2001). This uncertainty is not surprising, as results are presumably influenced by a number of mediating variables, including learners' proficiency level (Zahar et al. 2001; Tekmen and Daloglu 2006), context informativeness (Nagy et al. 1987; Shuet al. 1995; Webb 2007, 2008), and word properties (Nagy et al. 1987; Shu et al. 1995). Thus, the goal of research should be not to identify a definitive number of exposures needed but rather to understand a complex process involving multiple, interacting variables.

4.6 IELTS-related Writing Research

As a high-stakes test IELTS has always attracted attention from researchers including those who have focused just on the writing component. Much of the research has been generated by the IELTS partners themselves thus demonstrating their commitment to the continual improvement of the test (see for example Taylor & Falvey (2007) for a collection of IDP and British Council joint-funded research reports on IELTS Writing). In 2005, the assessment criteria and rating scales were revised in IELTS Writing largely as a consequence of these and other research findings. Many of the inevitable criticisms that a high-stakes test such as IELTS attracts were addressed in 2005 but some issues concerning cognitive validity still remain.

Of the two tasks in IELTS Academic Writing most research has been conducted on Task 2, the short essay. Being the longer of the two in terms of time allocation (40 minutes) and word length (250 words) it generates a greater sample of L2 writing. There have therefore been several *a posteriori* studies on Task 2 candidate scripts (see Mayor, Hewings, North, Swann & Coffin 2006). Task 2 also carries the heavier weighting in scoring, one of the justifications for Moore & Morton's (2006) *a priori* study on test task authenticity. Weir et al (2007) were the first to use a specially designed cognitive validity-based questionnaire in their study of comparability of word-processed and pen & paper IELTS writing. In that study, they compared candidate scores on two Task 2 prompts (*a posteriori*) as well as a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the questionnaire responses (*a priori*). This questionnaire forms the basis of one of the research instruments used in my study.

5. Method

5.1 Method and Research Design

For investigating on these research questions, the researcher had used a qualitative approach. Qualitative research attempts to interpret phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), and understanding what it means for the participants, not the researcher (Creswell, 2009). Also, the research strategy used in this study is a case study because, it will help me explore in depth the activity or process that a participant follows a teaching method (Cresswell, 2009).

5.2 Participant

In the current study, the process of choosing participant was based on both nonprobability sampling_ because the researcher is going to solve a qualitative problem and discover what occurs (Honnigmann, 1982, p.84); and purposeful sampling since, the researcher would like to focus on one learner whose first language is Persian (Farsi) and he had studied English nearly for 4 years, before. Moreover, the sampling is purposeful because, this student was chosen first by age; the researcher wanted to look at the student who is younger than 50 in order to avoid a small group of elderly people who never progressed; and second by his level of English; he wanted to see how an average student might be improved.

At this point, one young Iranian student named Pouyan Jahangiri was beginning to stand out as the best choice for this study. Not only he was young but also his former IELTS TRF has shown that he is in Elementary level of English. The serious problem of Pouyan`s writing and his willingness to participate in this study made the researcher confident that he would be an appropriate participant to be included in this study. The research interests in this study require that the researcher`s participant progressed into higher ESL levels and his data are, undoubtedly, influenced by this choice.

6. Instrumentations

The researcher has therefore decided to do a research on one of his students and taught him to learn a limited range of vocabulary. The writings of the participant were based on the vocabularies from the books titled "504 Absolutely Essential words by Bromberg (2005) and Common Mistakes in English (Grammar Reference) by Fitikides, T. J. (2004) that are known to contain the most essential words in English and the most common mistakes students may have in their writings regarding the use of the words and structures. The student`s writings had been given to the researcher before any session via email so that the researcher could reflect on them for the latter sessions. It should again be mentioned that only 21 lessons of 504 have been taught.

7. Procedure

In short, the researcher will use two types of approaches to answer the research questions. First, in the perceptual approach, participants' perceptions of writing development will be explored in relation to, using limited range of vocabularies through interviews. Second, in the factual approach, the data regarding the practice of writing and using the limited range of vocabularies will be gathered through observation, document analysis, and interviews. This factual approach and perceptual approach not only complement, but also counter-check each other. The use of these two approaches can maximize the validity and reliability of the research.

The private IELTS writing class met once a week for ninety minutes each time. During IELTS private writing sessions, the researcher has completely worked on IELTS essay and graph writing however, since the central focus of the researcher is how to deal with improving IELTS writing through the vocabularies, he is not going to discuss on how writing course is taught to the participant. At the very first session the researcher asked the participant to take an IELTS test with his former knowledge and information to see how he would improve through out the sessions. Every session; the researcher chose some of the most frequently used words from the book (504 Essentially words) and also told the participant to associate the words with each other and set aside some time for investigating on the collocations of those words in order to make a small story.

Of course, the researcher through an exact investigation of did the selection of the most frequently used words from the book "Essential words for IELTS". Also, the idea of making story by the words should be looked upon since it might have two main advantages. Firstly, making story would help the participant make the passive structures and grammatical points, active while trying to establish connection and set cohesion with them. Secondly, participant would be able to train him/ her to write about any topic he might be taken in the day of IELTS exam. Observations of the participant's writing were conducted during the sessions and field notes were taken during the observations. The researcher was also the supervisor who usually provided feedback and advice to the participant about his work. However, during the observations, the researcher's role was a participant observer. He quietly sat beside of the participant and offered help to him only when assistance, such as some grammatical points to the participant which are not as part of our study.

Of course, the researcher tries to look upon at the writing skill as a process not product. Also, the reason why the researcher chose to observe the participant quietly was because he

did not want to affect the results of the study. The researcher also wrote some notes about what the participant did to prepare the story for each session, what techniques and strategies he used in his story, the problems that he faced in his writing, as well as his feelings about his own writing, after each session. Consequently, he had the participant take the IELTS writing post-test again. At the end of the course, the tutor interviewed with the participant about his perspectives of the tutor method of teaching and analyzes the data, which were gathered from his study. Moreover, the researcher has asked the student to take the IELTS exam again to see how he has been improved through these sessions and strategies.

8. Results

8.1 Review of Initial Research Questions

As a reminder, there were two research questions that are going to discuss based on the data gathered.

How does the limited range of vocabularies help the students increase their frequency of words in their writings?

Working on a limited range of vocabulary has affected student's writing therefore, the frequency of words in the student's writing has been improved, however, it has been seen that the participants has still have the problem of using the learnt words in context as we can see in the last writing exam that was taken from the student. To illustrate, in the sentence, "they should help and highly respect to each other", it has been widely clear that the participant has not used the collocation correctly. The above matter might have 2 main reasons.

Firstly, the technique of memorizing the use of the words along with writing a story, using those words might not be helpful. Consequently, some people argue that all language is collocation – which we do not really share and use grammatical patterns at all. What seems clear is that there is quite a lot of constraint in actual use of vocabulary items; we do not always have free use of patterns. According to Nation, P. (2001), high collocational skills characterize a native speaker. Teaching collocational awareness is not easy, but he suggested it would be helpful to:

- Make use of fluency practice, enabling learners to become used to holding longer word strings in their short-term memory.
- Divide material into meaningful chunks.
- Encourage extensive reading.

Secondly, it might be possible that student memories only some of the words along with their use but it might not possible for the student to learn all the vocabularies with their collocations by only one time and that is using them in a story. Therefore, the students need repeated attention to vocabulary.

Useful vocabulary needs to be met again and again to ensure it is learned. In the early stages of learning the meetings need to be reasonably close together, preferably within a few days, so that too much forgetting does not occur. Later meetings can be very widely spaced with several weeks between each meeting.

For repetition, following what has been said, the main finding was that increasing exposures does help, consistent with the common understanding that vocabulary learning is a gradual process (Nagy 1987; Schmitt 2000), and that the effect remains for at least two weeks. So, there should be a review for the words already known after that period.

-How does the limited range of vocabularies improve the students' writing proficiency and score in IELTS writing exam?

It has been seen that the student's IELTS writing score has been improved since; the student had taken the IELTS exam before having the IELTS preparation course held by the researcher. The exam was taken in 04/ November/ 2010. The overall band score was 6.0 with the writing band score 5.5. However, the participant took another IELTS score within 3 months and half and the result was surprisingly deferent. The overall band score of the test taken in 19/ February/ 2011 was 6 but with the writing band score 6.5. It has been seen that the student's writing score has been changed 1 mark during 3 months.

Consequently, this conclusion may be come up; working on limited range of vocabularies improve the student's writing proficiency and as the result his IELTS writing band score. The above claim would be, due to the following reason:

The researcher sees a process approach to teaching writing rather than a product approach. For decades writing was taught in a manner that the teachers only teach the students the outline of writing an essay. In other words, the instructors were teaching the product, while ignoring the essential process of writing. This method of teaching held back the student as well as the teacher. There is now a large shift-taking place in the way writing is being taught. This shift involves the emphasis of composition being moved from the product of writing and being placed on the process.

Of course, the intent of the course was to teach student how to be better writers and better thinkers, not to tell them what to think. The researcher believes that writing teachers should not brainwash their students. Hence, teaching the writing process became my primary

goal, by establishing an environment to stimulate students to think and to engage in the steps of writing needed to produce an essay. The student was allowed to write about what he knows and what he cares about: himself and his families, friends, and neighbors, etc. That's why the researcher had the student write a story for each session using the vocabulary of 504 Essential Words and Common Mistakes in English.

It was supposed that by using of process approach to teaching writing, not only the student's writing would be improved, but also the role of the teacher would be transferred from that of a utensil to a mentor and the teacher would gain a more clear knowledge of student's problem in writing.

The findings of this study have implications for theoretical development and practical applications. In considering the theoretical development, more research needs doing with a sample of Persian speakers of English, outside or within Iran, to build on the understanding of the extent to which attributes of Persian speakers of English interfere with the intelligibility of English Language criteria.

In terms of practical applications, the findings of this study can act as an intelligible model to assist both learners and teachers in English language learning and teaching. Accordingly, some of the implications of this study are as follows:

Implication No. 1: Since participant claimed to have gained many benefits by using the limited range of vocabulary in their writings, ESL/EFL language teachers and course designers might consider this teaching technique as a regular part of writing curriculum.

Implication No. 2: The story a student writes is his/ her own writings. So the student examines his/ her own evolving writing. Plus, it is the responsibility of the student to explore his/ her own world and discover his/ her own meaning with the words given to him/ her.

Implication No. 3: The student is encouraged to check the use of words and correlation by which the words are used. So that he learns the vocabulary in context and he/ she would enrich his/ her writing.

Implication No. 4: learning vocabulary has always been a struggling issue for the students. By the technique of using the learnt vocabulary in a story, the teachers will improve both the student's writing and word domination at a same time.

Implication No. 5: Evidence found in this study support the use of model essays to teach some prefabricated statements. This technique seems to have helped participants learn a number of initiating statements that might be used to start a paragraph. So, participant found this useful and effective. Therefore, teachers might consider using model and sample essays to introduce organization and expressions to the students.

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Title

Iranian EFL Students' Writing Performance Based on Types of Topic Progression Technique

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Abstract

The present study investigated the types of topic progression technique (by using Lautmatti's (1978) framework) used in 30 paragraphs written by 30 Iranian intermediate students. Each student was asked to write a type of paragraph containing listing organization- paragraphs of comparison and contrast or paragraphs of cause-effect- on the given topics. The study used Jacobs et. al. (1981) scoring scheme to score each student's paragraph. The study aimed at investigating the students' writing performance based on types of topic progression technique. As the result of the ANOVA test shows, students' writing performance depends on types on topic progression technique, and paragraphs containing sequential progression obtained the highest scores.

Keywords: Lautmatti's framework, Jacobs' scoring scheme, Types of topic progression technique, Paragraphs of comparison and contrast, Paragraphs of cause-effect, ANOVA statistical Test

1. Introduction

Today, proficiency in writing is a very important skill. Academic writing is characterized by specific standards, such as coherence- presenting one's ideas in a coherent and unified

manner. Non-native speakers of English are usually said to fail to write coherently; the problem of incoherence in writing, involving poor structure and lack of fluent connection of ideas, impedes comprehension more seriously than errors containing discreet grammatical and lexical items (Lukmani, 1989).

This research study focused on the determination of coherence in EFL students' writings based on a framework introduced by Lautmatti (1978) named Topical Structure Analysis (TSA) _ concerned with the sentence topics, their repetition and their progression through a paragraph. His framework is practical in detecting the digression, which is a common problem in students' paragraph writings and occurs when students use irrelevant examples or inappropriate supporting ideas. The knowledge of the types of progressions used in the TSA can help teachers determine whether students' paragraphs meet the standards of high quality writing. Through TSA, it is possible to scan through a paragraph and simply look for repetitions of key words in order to decide whether it is a piece of coherent or incoherent writing. This study also used Jacobs et. al. (1981) scoring scheme to evaluate and score student's paragraphs. Through conducting this research study, it would be apparent that which topic progression technique is dominant in the paragraphs with the highest scores. So, it can give English teachers ideas on what teaching strategies would be more appropriate to help students improve their writing skills and address writing problems at the level of discourse.

This study is going to use Latuamatti's (1978) framework to answer the following question: Is the Iranian EFL students' writing performance in paragraphs containing listing organization based on types of topic progression technique?

The null hypothesis in this research study is as follow: The Iranian EFL students' writing performance in paragraphs containing listing organization is not based on types of topic progression technique.

2. Review of Related Literature

Several researchers (Lautamatti, 1978; Witte, 1983; Schneider & Connor, 1991; Kim, 1996; Simpson, 2000; Almaden, 2006; Carreon, 2006; Shan Fan, 2008; Ghapanchi & Alavi, 2011a, 2011,b) examined coherence in paragraphs using TSA which was proposed by Lautamatti (1978). He conducted TSA by analyzing the relation of "topic" and "comment" in sentences. Topic is the main idea of the sentence and comment is what is said about the topic. In TSA, researchers look at sequences of sentences and examine how the sentence topics develop through the text to build meaning (Kim, 1996). Lautmatti (1978) introduced three types of

topic progression in a text: parallel, sequential and extended parallel progression. In parallel progression, successive sentences have the same sentence topics; the topics of the various sentences are referentially identical, using repeated lexical words, synonyms, near-synonyms or pronouns. Writers who use parallel progression technique are fully aware of the content of their writing and the manner by which they can further explore that subject (Kim, 1996). In sequential progression technique, the sentence topics are always different; the comment part of the previous sentence often becomes the topic of the following sentence. Extended parallel progression is a kind of parallel progression which is temporarily interrupted by a sequential progression. As Cerniglia, et. al. (1990, p. 238) indicated, extended parallel progression “often develops an idea well but also brings the reader back to the main idea to achieve a closure”. Extended parallel progression shows the ability of the students in their discussion to go back to the main topic (Carreon, 2006). Simpson (2000) revealed the fourth type of progression identified as extended sequential progression, which occurs when the rhyme element of a clause is taken up as the theme of a non- consecutive clause.

Schneider and Connor (1991) and Witte (1983) conducted research studies, on Topical Structure Analysis of low rated and high rated essays, whose findings are contradictory; Schneider and Connor found that the low-, medium- and high-rated essays differed significantly in the proportion of parallel and sequential progression. The medium- and low-rated essays contained a greater proportion of parallel topics than did the high-rated essays, which contained a greater proportion of sequential progression. But, Witte (1983) found that there are more sequential progressions in low rated essays in comparison to high-rated essays; Witte (1983) found a significant difference in the percentage of sequential progressions: 15 percent more of the t-units appeared in sequential progressions in the low-score essays than in the high-score revisions. That is, high-rated essays had more parallel and extended parallel progressions than the low-rated essays, which used more sequential progression. Schneider and Connor looked for the cause of the discrepancy between the results of their research and those of Witte's. They suggested that imprecision may have contributed to Wites' different conclusion.

Using Lautamatti's framework, Almaden (2006) investigated the topical progression in paragraphs written by Filipino ESL students. He found that parallel progression was the most preferred progression in the paragraphs, extended parallel progression was the second one, sequential progression was the third most preferred, and extended sequential progression was used least in the students' paragraphs.

Carreon's (2006) study contains a TSA of 20 student journals. As the results show, the most frequently occurring progressions are those that contain sequential patterns- the simple sequential and the extended sequential progressions. So, in general, students develop their topics coherently by the high use of sequential progressions in its varied forms.

In his study, Kim (1996) investigated the TSA of Korean and American university students' writings. He noticed that American students used more parallel and extended parallel progressions than those written by Korean students. Therefore, the total number of topics per paragraph in writings written by American students is smaller than that of Korean students' writings. On the other hand, the paragraphs written by Korean students used more sequential progressions.

Shan Fan (2008), in his master thesis, evaluated the use of TSA as a revision strategy for Taiwanese EFL graduate students and as an alternative approach for detecting their coherence problems. He also used some questionnaires on TSA to elicit students' attitudes towards learning this strategy. The findings showed that TSA instruction has positive effect on students' revising process. By analyzing the students' writing samples, different patterns and improvement in information organization were identified. All types of progressions, parallel, sequential, and extended parallel progressions, increased after having received TSA instruction. Sequential progression was the most frequently found progression in the students' writings.

3. Method

This study investigated the types of topic progression technique used in 30 paragraphs containing listing organization (paragraphs of comparison & contrast and paragraphs of cause-effect) written by 30 Iranian intermediate students. The characteristics of participants, data collection procedure, instruments, methodological framework, data analysis procedure and the design of the study are explained here.

3.1. Participants

Thirty under-graduate students, twelve males and eighteen females, from Hakim Sabzevari University, participated in this study. All of the university students, at the age range of nineteen to twenty-four, majored in English. All of them had taken writing courses and had prior experience in writing academic English paragraphs. The writing course, which they had passed, made them familiar with the standards of writing, including the general skills of writing as well as basic structure (the thesis statement, specific support, organization, unity, coherence and cohesion).

In their final examination session of their writing course, all of the participants were asked to write a paragraph with listing organization (a paragraph of comparison and contrast or a paragraph of cause-effect) on the given topics.

3.2. Instruments

Before gathering the students' paragraphs, a version of TOEFL test, which its reliability (.97) and the validity (.94) are mentioned in Estiri's Master thesis, was administered to 30 junior students to determine their proficiency level and their homogeneity. The students are in intermediate level of proficiency. The mean, score range and standard deviations of the test are reported in Table 1.

Since Ghapanchi and Alavi (2011a, 2011b) showed that there is a relation between paragraph organization and types of topic progression technique, participants were asked to write paragraphs containing a certain type of organization, listing, to obtain homogenous results. Lautamatti's framework (1978) is used in the study to analyze topic progression techniques used in the students' paragraphs.

Jacobs et al. (1981) composition scoring scheme was used for marking and assessing the students' paragraphs. This scoring scheme contains five parts including content, organization, language, vocabulary and mechanics. Each of these parts consists of some levels from excellent to very poor. A proficient writing professor rated the compositions. Each composition was given a score for each of these five criteria. These scores were added together to form the final score (from 0 to 100) for each composition.

For statistical analysis, descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were computed to assess whether the Iranian EFL students' writing performance in paragraphs containing listing organization is based on types of topic progression technique.

3.3. Data Analysis Procedure

Following Schneider and Connor (1991), t-unit, rather than sentence, is used as the unit for conducting TSA. Since t-units distinguish between simple sentences and compound sentences, they provide a more valid basis of comparison. In Schneider and Connor (1991) words, t-units is any independent clause and all its required modifiers, or any non-independent clause punctuated as a sentence (as indicated by end punctuation), or any imperative structure.


In conducting TSA, the t-units in each paragraph were numbered, and then the topic of each unit was determined. The determination of topic was based on the use of interpretation (Witte, 1983; Schneider & Connor, 1991) and "As for" device (Hoenich, 2009). After

determining the topical subject, these elements were plotted onto a table. The clause number was indicated on the left side of the table. The topical subject in the corresponding clause was written across each clause number. Words which had equivalent meaning fell under one topical subject. New topics were indented to the right. The types of progression identified by Lautamatti (1978) and Simpson (2000) - parallel progression, sequential progression, extended parallel progression and extended sequential progression- could be seen. In the present study, since the aim was determining the dominant type of progression in high rated paragraphs, the dominant type of progression was taken into account and a fifth type of progression, indefinite progression, was used in the cases when two types of progression in a paragraph were equally the dominant type of progression. The following paragraph taken from the samples is provided as an instance of how the procedure was done:

There are some certain contrast between Iran and Danmark. First of all, Iranian people have Islam religion but Danmark's people have Christinity religion. More over, in Iran, people speak in Persian but in Danmark people speak Danish. The second reason is that although population in Iran is more than 70000000, population in Danmark is about 5116273. Statistic suggest that forest area in Iran is more than 30%, but as we see in this table, forest area in Danmark is exactly 10 percent. Finally, as the geographist said average temperature in Iran is about 30c in summer and 0 c in winter but in Danmark average tempreture is 16.6 in summer and -.4 in winter.

1. certain contrast between Iran and Danmark
2. Iranian people
3. Danmark's people
4. people (in Iran)
5. people in Denmark
6. population in Danmark*
7. forest area in Iran*
8. forest area in Denmark
9. average temperature*
In Iran
10. average
tempreture in Denmrk

t-unit	Parallel progression	Sequential progression	Extended parallel progression	Extended sequential progression
10	0	4	2	3

Note:  represents sequential progression

* represents extended sequential progression

3.4. Design

Since the researcher had no control over the selection and the manipulation of the independent variable (types of topic progression technique used in students' paragraphs), the design of this research study is ex post facto. The researcher looks at the type or the degree of relationships between two variables rather than the cause and effect relationship.

4. Results

A version of TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) was given to the participants to determine the homogeneity of them. The students were supposed to answer to the grammar, the vocabulary and the reading parts of this test. The scores were out of 100. Descriptive statistic results for the TOEFL are given in Table 1. It is important to emphasize that the results of the TOEFL test didn't influence the process of subject selection. The test was just used to investigate the students' proficiency level. As it is evident, the level of proficiency of the students is the intermediate one.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for TOEFL Scores

N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
30	50.00	34.00	84.00	59.68	14.60	213.16

4.1. Descriptive Statistics for the Types of Topic Progression Technique Used in Paragraphs of Comparison and Contrast and Cause-effect

The frequency of the use of each type of topic progression technique in two types of paragraphs (paragraphs of comparison and contrast and paragraphs of cause-effect) is presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for the Use of Topic Progression Techniques in Paragraphs of Comparison and Contrast and Cause-effect

		Frequency		Percent		Valid Percent		Cumulative Percent	
		Comp. & con.	Cause-effect	Comp. & con.	Cause-effect	Comp. & con.	Cause-effect	Comp. & con.	Cause-effect
Valid	p.	72	73	11.6	23.5	11.6	23.5	11.6	23.5
	s.	238	108	38.4	34.7	38.4	34.7	50.1	58.2
	e.p.	113	58	18.3	18.6	18.3	18.6	68.3	76.8
	e.s.	196	72	31.7	23.2	31.7	23.2	100.0	100.0
	Total	619	311	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0		

4.2. Investigating the Iranian EFL Students' Writing Performance based on Types of Topic Progression Technique

To investigate if the distribution of students' writing scores based on the Jacobs et. al. scoring scheme is normal, Colmogroph-Smearnof test is used. The result of this statistical test is presented in Table 3.

Table 3

The Investigation of Writing Scores' Normality

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Z	Sig.
Scores	30	83.58	8.59	.91	.36

As the Table 3 shows, the mean score of 30 participants' writing is 83.58, and the standard deviation equals 8.59. According to the significance level, .36, it is evident that this variable (students' writing score) contains normal distribution.

Topic progression technique used in students' paragraphs is analyzed in five levels (parallel progression, sequential progression, extended parallel progression, extended sequential progression and the indefinite one, which occurs when two types of progression are equally the dominant type in students' paragraphs). One-Way ANOVA is used to compare the dominant types of topic progression technique in students' paragraphs. The result of this statistical test is shown in Table 4.

Table 4

The Result of One-Way ANNOVA

Type of Progression	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
P. P.	4	72.25	1.25	18.24	<.0001
Seq. P	15	89.23	5.83		
E. P. P.	4	74	1.28		
E. Seq. P	4	88.50	3.78		
Indef.	3	76.66	3.05		

Table 4 shows that the topic progression techniques in five levels are meaningfully different. (F=18.24, p<.001)

To investigate the difference in topic progression technique, according to the inequality of five levels of progression, Scheffe statistical test was used. The results of Scheffe statistical test show that sequential topic progression technique is the dominant type of progression and parallel progression is the least type of progression used.

5. Conclusion

The frequencies of types of topic progression techniques used in two types of paragraphs containing listing organization_ namely, paragraphs of comparison and contrast and paragraphs of cause-effect_ were determined. The ANOVA test was used to investigate the Iranian EFL students' writing performance based on types of topic progression technique.

As it can be seen, sequential progression was the dominant type of progression in the high rated paragraphs. The finding of this study is consistent with that of Ghapanchi and Alavi (2011a, 2011b). Their finding showed that in paragraphs containing listing organization, sequential progression is the dominant type of progression. As Carreon (2006) mentioned, sequential and extended sequential progression add details to the topic mentioned earlier in a rhyme of a clause. So, they increase the number of different topics in a paragraph and connect the ideas across it.

The result of this study is also consistent with that of Schneider and Connor (1991), who concluded that the medium- and low-rated essays contained a greater proportion of parallel topics than did the high-rated essays, which contained a greater proportion of sequential progression. But, the findings of Witte's (1983) research study on Topical Structure Analysis of low-rated and high-rated essays are contradictory; he found that there are more sequential progressions in low rated essays in comparison to high-rated essays. Schneider and Connor considered the lack of a formal criterion for categorizing progression as the cause of the discrepancy between the results of their research and those of Witte. According to the present study and Ghapanchi and Alavi (2011,b), this contradictory result might be assigned to the lack of the consideration of paragraphs with specific organization in the study and analyzing different paragraphs with different type of organization.

This study is generalizable, but since the collection process of participants wasn't done randomly, this should be done cautiously.

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Title

Investigating the EFL Learners' Perceptions of the Role of Prior Knowledge in Reading Comprehension

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Abstract

This study was conducted on 56 EFL students in Kuhdasht (Lorestan province, Iran) to investigate their perceptions of the role of prior knowledge in reading comprehension. After a reading proficiency pretest, the students were selected and then divided into four groups of mid novice, high novice, mid intermediate and high intermediate proficiency levels. All were engaged in reading several General English and ESP texts for about two months. Then, a post-test covering both GE and ESP texts was administered, and a questionnaire was ultimately given to them to fill in and demonstrate their perceptions of the areas of prior knowledge necessary for their reading comprehension. Through the analysis of the questionnaire, two different judgements were found. While the two groups of novice students gave the top ranking to the prior linguistic knowledge, the other two tended to give the priority to either prior conceptual knowledge or sociocultural knowledge. In other words, the lower the proficiency level, the more the tendency there would be to choose prior linguistic knowledge, and the higher the proficiency level, the more the tendency would be seen toward prior conceptual and sociocultural knowledge. The findings suggest that for low proficiency-level students, the linguistic aspects of language are important for comprehension. As knowledge of English vocabulary, syntax and formal structures increases, students find these aspects less difficult to understand and find conceptual and sociocultural knowledge important for processing texts.

Keywords: Perception, Prior knowledge, Linguistic, Conceptual, Sociocultural, Readability

1. Introduction

For most of the people all around the globe, reading is by far the most important among the four language skills. The superabundance of different text-book materials and other reading sources like magazines, journals, newspapers, etc, and the amount of time devoted to going through all these written sources of information denote the fact that reading is more significant than the other three language skills. In fact, the other three language skills can be fostered by the positive achievements in the reading skill. Failure to the reading skill prevents access to future educational opportunities and academic settings. Even in the ordinary lives of people outside the academic systems, reading can have numerous benefits; for instance, mothers who cannot read are less able to protect their children from illnesses.

One of the prime factors which is always involved in the active interaction between the reader's mind and the written text to be effectively made sense of, is the reader's prior knowledge or back-ground information. Prior knowledge plays an important role in comprehending texts and it has been widely accepted in the whole reading research community all around the world.

People make use of their prior knowledge when they read a subject matter in a written text. The prior knowledge is the facilitator of the understanding process of the reader. People's fast speed in reading and their good understanding would be more guaranteed than if each unit of information was due to be processed in isolation without referring to the related prior knowledge to decide what connection the item has with the rest of the passage. A substantial body of research has supported this point.

Calling to mind what is already known about a topic is, actually, activating the relevant prior knowledge. Teachers who activate relevant prior knowledge promote learning by enhancing the comprehension of the text, especially when the information in the text is compatible with the prior knowledge. Because comprehension is essentially a process by which meaning is constructed by using the background information as well as the information from the text and context, it is critical that readers be aware of what they already know about what they will read. Prior knowledge enables the readers to predict the contents of the texts and confirm their predictions through reading. Relating prior knowledge to texts is one means of actively processing information from the texts as well as facilitating recall from them.

Reading is one of the most important factors through which most of the EFL learners learn English. Nevertheless, most learners of English or any other language face a great deal of difficulty while reading texts. This problem could be rooted in the fact that learners may lack appropriate prior knowledge or background information, or that they have it but they cannot activate it. The prior knowledge theory suggests that providing readers with suitable background information regarding the written texts before the process of reading will facilitate their comprehension. Such additional prior knowledge information might help readers develop and activate the appropriate schemata which cause to make the necessary connection between the known and the new information. Having proper information about the relationship between EFL learners' prior knowledge and their reading comprehension will help finding a useful way to identify the appropriate text readability for the students at different levels. The study of the impacts of EFL learners' prior knowledge on comprehending texts has usually been conducted through experiments about L2 learners' reading performance. Little has been reported in the related literature about EFL learners' perceptions of their prior knowledge in terms of its contributions to reading comprehension.

Although in the reading research most significant emphasis seems to be focused on the use of prior knowledge to make sense of the reading materials, it would help us have a better understanding of its use if we can have a clear idea of what prior knowledge is, or what kind of prior knowledge readers think that they use in comprehending texts. In other words, if the nature of prior knowledge for reading comprehension is properly perceived by different L2 learners at different levels, there will be a great contribution for them to comprehend different reading texts more effectively.

The prior knowledge necessary for effectively decoding the written materials, as it is shown by most reading research more elaborated later on, consists of linguistic, conceptual, and socio-cultural knowledge which contribute to reading comprehension. Although the reading research has shown that linguistic, conceptual and socio-cultural knowledge vary in their contributions to reading comprehension, little is known as to how such variations are perceived by the learners themselves. This project is an effort made to find out how learners perceive their own problems regarding the relevant prior knowledge to make sense of texts.

2. Background

The study of the influence of prior knowledge structure or schemata on comprehension and recall is called the schema theoretical research (James, 1988). Based on what James (1988)

described schema theory, the process of comprehension is under the idea that input is put upon preexisting knowledge so that a match is made.

The thinking of Gestalt psychologists studying mental organization in the 1930s shows the stressing of whole rather than individual parts. This suggests that if some individual part(s) is/are missed for any reason, the organization of the whole can compensate for it. All the preexisting knowledge stored in one's mind can act as a whole. If, while reading, some element(s) in the reading passage is/are unknown, by anchoring the reading passage to what has been previously acquired in mind, the misunderstanding will be removed. Later in the century, David Pearson promoted the idea of the importance of prior knowledge in learning by stating that new propositions in the texts are anchored to general concepts that are stored in the mind (Anderson and Pearson, 1984).

Based on Alayne (1999), categorical rules or scripts are possessed by all human beings to interpret the world. The process of the new information is according to how well it fits into these rules which are called schema. These schemata are used for both the interpretation and prediction of a situation occurring in our environment. The information that does not fit into these schemas may not be comprehended or may not be interpreted correctly.

According to Bachman (1990), in designing and developing language test tasks, test designers and developers should make certain assumptions or presuppositions about the background information the test takers bring with them to the test task. If it happens that these presuppositions do not fit a particular group of test takers, then the result will be the test tasks which are 'context-reduced', for example, passages that contain technical information or concepts not familiar to the test takers. But, to the extent that the test takers share these presuppositions with the test writers, the test task would be 'context-embedded' (p. 133). This is the case even if the test taker has this knowledge but cannot recall it. The relevant information, or the prior knowledge the test taker is going to activate while taking the test is referred to as his 'presuppositional pool' by Backman (1990, p.134).

Researchers working in the field of reading and comprehension have arrived at certain information about a group of readers who are described as being strategic and, similarly, those who are non-strategic. They have found that those readers are called "strategic readers" who "have a purpose in reading", and the fact that they "monitor their comprehension as they read, and they reflect on their reading" (Dole, 2000, p. 56). Some personal reading questions are introduced by Arieta (2003) for the readers at the onset of a reading assignment. Questions like the type of reading, the time allocated to reading, the purpose of reading, what the reader already knows about the reading, etc.

Some researchers had subjects read texts on topics with which they were or were not very familiar. For example, Johanna Kaakinen and her colleagues (2003) had subjects read a text about four common diseases (e.g., flu) for which they were already familiar with the symptoms, and a text about four uncommon diseases (e.g., typhus) for which they likely were not. For each text, there was additional information about the diseases that subjects likely did not know.

A study by David Hambrick (2003) is notable because it looked at real-world learning and did so over a longer period of time than is typical in such studies. First, Hambrick tested college students for their knowledge of basketball. This test took place in the middle of the college basketball season. Two and one-half months later (at the end of the season), subjects completed questionnaires about their exposure to basketball (e.g., game attendance, watching television, and reading magazines or newspapers) and also took tests that measured their knowledge of specific men's basketball events from the prior two and one-half months. The results showed (not surprisingly) that subjects who reported an interest in the game also reported that they had greater exposure to basketball information. The more interesting finding was that, for a given level of exposure, greater prior basketball knowledge was associated with more new basketball knowledge. That is, the people who already knew a lot about basketball tended to remember more basketball-related news than people with the same exposure to this news but less prior knowledge.

Narvaez (2002) identifies 'cultural schema effects' and 'theme comprehension elements' that may impede comprehension for L2 learners. Some other researchers like Bensoussan (1998) and Carrell (1988) argue that L2 readers' inadequate L2 proficiency may cause them to over-rely on their prior conceptual and socio-cultural knowledge to compensate for their insufficient L2 proficiency. Pitchard (1990) found that L2 readers appeared to use different reading strategies to read familiar and unfamiliar texts. Thus, given the analyses regarding prior knowledge and its variations namely, linguistic, conceptual, and socio-cultural, this research project is directed to find out what prior knowledge has been perceived to be the most important for EFL learners with different levels of language proficiencies.

3. Method

3.1. subjects

In this study, 56 students were selected among the pre-university high school students and the students studying English Translation as their major in the Comprehensive Applied Science

University in Kuhdasht. Before choosing these students, a 25 multiple-choice standard reading comprehension proficiency pretest based on the TOEFL sample tests, The Best, NTC's, and Barron's was conducted on 69 students. Based on the results obtained from the pretest, 56 of those getting a range of scores from 7 to 22 were ultimately chosen as the subjects in this study. These 56 students were culturally and linguistically homogeneous in the sense that they were all Iranian students whose native language was Persian. But, they were heterogeneous for two reasons: they were different in age, ranging from 16 to 24, and they were at different levels of proficiency from mid novice to high intermediate. The homogeneity of the subjects would provide the necessary basis for the generalization of findings to the whole population from which the sample was drawn. The heterogeneity of the subjects would contribute to the representativeness of the sample.

3.2. materials

The materials adopted for this study included standard reading comprehension pretest results involving six reading comprehension passages taken from TOEFL sample tests. After the pretest, there was some teaching treatment. The teaching treatment was followed by a post-test administered on the students which involved 25 multiple-choice reading comprehension questions based on 5 reading passages. The reading passages were a combination of general reading comprehension texts and some ESP passages, respectively drawn from the books *Reading Skillfully* and *English for Students of History*.

A few minutes after the post-test, a questionnaire was given to the students to fill in and, accordingly, demonstrate their perceptions of the areas of difficulties in their reading comprehension. The choice of using a questionnaire was mainly due to its high reliability, low cost and ideal feasibility. The designing of the questionnaire was on the basis of the analyses regarding prior knowledge and its divisions, namely, linguistic, conceptual and socio-cultural knowledge. In order to have responses that refer to other factors which are different from the three categories, one extra alternative, '*other factors*', was added, if chosen, the reason should be noted by the student.

The questionnaire was in Persian and it consisted of four multiple-choice questions, each having five or more than five choices to be selected by the subjects. The subjects were allowed to choose more than one choice. They were allowed to provide their own answers if they found the choices provided incapable of describing their own situation by choosing the alternative '*other factors*'. In order to minimize errors in representing the subjects' perceptions of the causes of the difficulty they had encountered in reading comprehension,

the technique of triangulation was adopted; four different questions were used to explore the same issue from four different angles (Jiang, 2000).

In the questionnaire, the first question was a general one. It was designed to identify the cause(s) the subjects believed might create the difficulty they encounter in reading comprehension. The subjects were given the following six choices:

- a) unknown EFL vocabulary
- b) too complicated syntax and/or formal structure
- c) unfamiliar content
- d) lack of necessary socio-cultural background information
- e) unusual sentence length
- f) other factors such as: (Please specify!)

The second question was meant to identify the perceived major cause(s) for such a failure in reading comprehension. Question two had seven choices which were as follow:

- a) unable to decide on the sense in which a word is used when the word may be used in several different senses
- b) unable to understand the idioms in the text
- c) unable to understand the subject content
- d) lack of necessary sociocultural background knowledge
- e) unable to understand the syntax and/or the formal structure used in the text
- f) unusual sentence length
- g) other factors such as: (Please specify!)

The third question was set to search for the major factor(s) that may cause the EFL reader to have impaired performance in reading:

- a) nervousness
- b) difficult or boring content
- c) shortage of time
- d) lack of necessary socio-cultural knowledge
- e) other factors such as: (Please specify!)

The fourth and the last question in the questionnaire concerned the opposite of what the first three questions addressed. It tried to find out the factors subjects perceived to make a text easy to understand. The following were the list of choices provided for this question:

- a) absence of unknown EFL vocabulary
- b) simple EFL syntax
- c) interesting content

- d) familiar sociocultural background
- e) other factors such as: (Please specify!)

In short, because of the triangulation methodology, question one addressed the issue directly; question two aimed at the same issue but excluded the prior knowledge of vocabulary; question three went a step further to excluding linguistic knowledge; and question four investigated the same issue but from the opposite direction.

3.3. Procedure

On the basis of the scores obtained from the standard proficiency test and the ultimate selection of 56 subjects, based on a range of scores from 7 to 22 out of the 25 multiple-choice questions in the pretest, they were put into four groups almost equal in number but different in proficiency levels; mid novice, high novice, mid intermediate, and high intermediate. Each group were put in a different classroom and all the four classes of students were taught the general English (GE) reading comprehension texts and some English for specific purpose history reading comprehension (ESP) texts. The teaching treatment contained a period of fourteen two-hour sessions for each group, lasting for nearly a whole two months; two sessions per week for each classroom. The whole logic behind the teaching treatment was to make the students get involved with different reading comprehension texts, and make them aware of aspects of prior linguistic knowledge, at the one side, and conceptual and sociocultural knowledge, at the other, needed to make sense of the reading passages. Therefore, at the time of filling in the questionnaire, the students must have certainly been more sure about deciding on which aspect of the prior knowledge was needed for the facilitation of their reading comprehension. This increased the validity of the right perception on the part of the students regarding the given categories of prior knowledge in the questionnaire as the most important for their comprehending.

Right after the treatment, a same multiple-choice post-test was administered on all the four classes covering both GE and ESP texts. There were two purposes behind administering the post-test. The first was that same reason for the teaching treatment, i.e., to have more real experiences of being entangled with texts. The second was to see whether the students' scores on the post-test duplicated their different proficiencies. Then, the questionnaire was given to all the students to fill in and, accordingly, demonstrate their perceptions of the areas of prior knowledge needed for their reading comprehension.

The whole classification of the subjects and the treatments they underwent are illustrated in the following table:

Subjects (after receiving the proficiency pre-test)			
Novice		Intermediate	
Mid Novice GE & ESP treatment	High Novice GE & ESP treatment	Mid Intermediate GE & ESP treatment	High Intermediate GE & ESP treatment
the Post-Test & the Questionnaire			
QC & PTR	QC & PTR	QC & PTR	QC & PTR

GE: General English

ESP: English for Specific Purposes

QC: Questionnaire Categories

PTR: Post-Test Results

4. Results and discussion

As it was pointed out above, four groups of subjects took part in this study, each having a different proficiency level. The proficiency levels of the four groups ranged from mid novice to high intermediate. After the questionnaires were given to all the four groups and they filled them in, the multiple responses given to the multiple-choice questions by the students were put under the statistical devices such as *The Expected Value of a Discrete Random Variable, Relative Frequency, percentage, Central Tendency (Mean) and graphs*. The alternatives of each multiple-choice question of the four questions in the questionnaire were chosen differently by different groups. This shows that due to the different proficiency levels of each group, their perceptions of the areas of prior knowledge posed in the questionnaire differ from each other. As questions 1, 2 and 4 were all directed at EFL readers' perceptions of their prior linguistic, conceptual and sociocultural knowledge in relation to their contributions to reading comprehension, the multiple responses all the four groups provided can be presented globally in the following Table. The average percentages devoted to the four categories by the four groups of students are also graphically represented in the following Figure.

The average expected values and relative frequencies of the four categorical responses to questions 1, 2 and 4 from mid novice to high intermediate students.

C. of c.	Mid Novice (n=14)			High Novice (n=15)			Mid Intermediate (n=13)			High Intermediate (n=14)		
	E.val.	R.fre.	Ran.	E.val.	R.fre.	Ran.	E.val.	R.fre.	Ran.	E.val.	R.fre.	Ran.
Lin.	10.588	0.443	1	7.714	0.347	1	4.932	0.263	3	4.270	0.183	3
Con.	5.011	0.251	2	5.115	0.244	3	8.207	0.392	1	9.582	0.357	2
Soc.	4.530	0.203	3	6.007	0.280	2	6.402	0.309	2	11.531	0.415	1
Oth.	2.538	0.103	4	2.477	0.129	4	1.311	0.036	4	1.404	0.045	4
Tot.	22.667	1		21.313	1		20.852	1		26.787	1	

Note: 1) E. val.: Expected values

2) R.fre.: Relative frequencies

3) Ran.: Ranks

4) C. of c.: Category of choices

5) Lin.: Linguistic knowledge

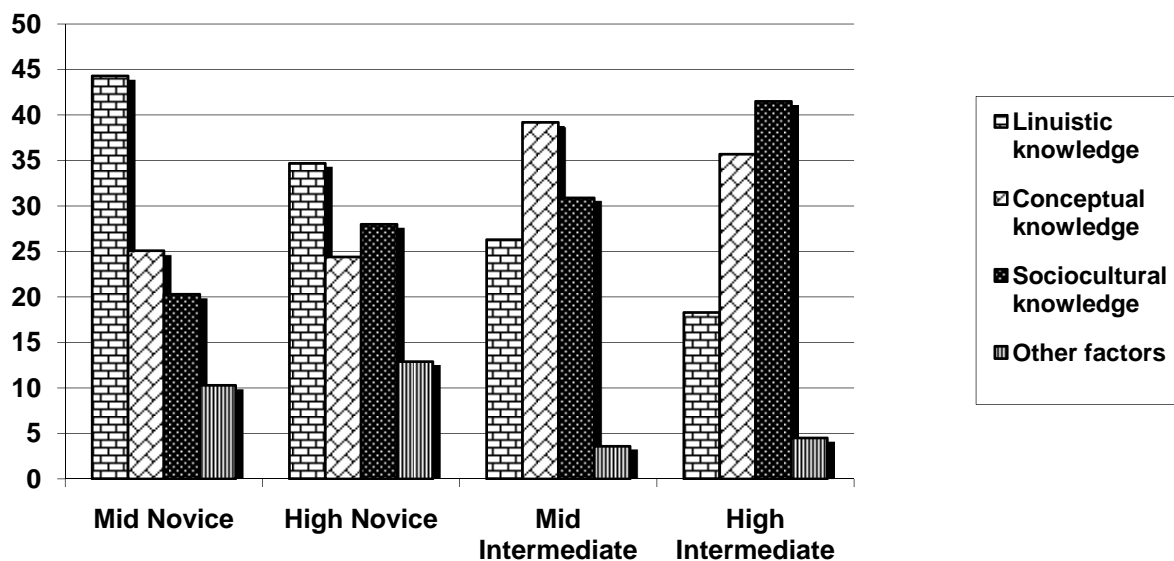
6) Con.: Conceptual knowledge

7) Soc.: Socio-cultural knowledge

8) Oth.: Other factors

9) Tot.: Total

The Graph related to the above Table (the vertical line represents the average percentage devoted to each category, and the horizontal line shows the groups of the students.)



As both the Table and Figure indicate, the mid and high novice students perceived the prior linguistic knowledge as the most important, whereas the mid intermediate and high intermediate ones perceived the prior conceptual knowledge and the sociocultural knowledge, respectively, as the most significant in processing texts. The mid and high novice students placed the prior conceptual and sociocultural knowledge, respectively, in the second ranking of importance, while it was the prior sociocultural knowledge and conceptual knowledge which got the second ranking for the mid and high intermediate ones, respectively.

5. Conclusion

The present study, which was conducted on 56 novice and intermediate students, gave a fairly clear picture of their perceptions of prior linguistic, conceptual, and sociocultural knowledge in terms of their contributions to reading comprehension. The results indicated two different tendencies for the participating groups of subjects. While the two groups of *novice* students gave the top ranking to the choices concerning the prior linguistic knowledge or the linguistic characteristics of texts, the other two *intermediate* groups tended to give the top priority to either prior conceptual knowledge or sociocultural knowledge presumed by the text.

Taking a closer look at the Table and Figure, we can see that the mid novice students, dominantly, gave the first ranking to the linguistic knowledge, the second ranking to the conceptual knowledge, and, with a difference of 4.8% to the second, the third ranking to the sociocultural knowledge. For the high novice students, the first priority was again given to the linguistic knowledge, the second to the sociocultural knowledge, and, with a difference of

about 3.6% to the second, the third to the conceptual knowledge. This shows that low proficiency-level subjects consider the prior linguistic knowledge as the most effective for comprehending texts. Only the secondary importance was attached to the other two categories, i.e., conceptual and sociocultural prior knowledge. Of course, it should be indicated that the mid novice students, with a difference of 9.6 percent, attached more importance to the prior linguistic knowledge than the high novice students, although both of them gave the first ranking to this category.

As it is demonstrated in the Table and Figure, the prior linguistic knowledge dropped from the first position by the novice students to the third position by the intermediate students. The mid intermediate students gave the first ranking to the category of prior linguistic knowledge, the second ranking, with a difference of 8.3%, to the sociocultural knowledge, and the third to the linguistic knowledge. The high intermediate students' first ranking was devoted to the prior sociocultural knowledge, the second to the prior conceptual knowledge (with a difference of 5.8%), and the third to linguistic knowledge. This information shows that higher than novice proficiency-level students perceive prior conceptual and sociocultural knowledge as the most important for the comprehension of texts, while only the secondary importance goes to the prior linguistic knowledge. It is worth noting that although both the mid intermediate and the high intermediate students placed the prior linguistic knowledge in the third position, this category has been regarded as more important for the mid intermediate students than for the high intermediate ones.

Based on what the above Table and Figure show, all the four groups of subjects participating in this study attached the least importance to the category of 'other factors', therefore, the ranking of this category was in the fourth position. This shows that only few students took the trouble to mention any factor(s) other than linguistic, conceptual and sociocultural knowledge to be influential in the process of reading comprehension.

This supports the idea that for low proficiency-level students, only the linguistic aspects of language are important for comprehension. In other words, it can be said that at lower levels of processing texts, comprehension is more related to linguistic prior knowledge than higher levels in which it is more related to prior conceptual and sociocultural knowledge. As the prior knowledge of English vocabulary, syntax and formal structures (linguistic knowledge) increases, students find these aspects less difficult to understand. However, this does not mean that the importance of the knowledge of syntax, vocabulary and formal structures decreases with higher level students. What it may suggest is that students, having acquired the basic knowledge of English syntax, vocabulary and formal structures, may not be aware

of their importance in reading comprehension, or their importance may be diminished for them.

The scores obtained from the post-test further supports the above-mentioned findings. The mid and high novice students' mean scores (8.42 and 10.13, respectively) were lower than those of the mid and high intermediate students (12.23 and 14.28, respectively). The mid and high novice students whose mean scores were lower than those of the mid and high intermediate ones placed the linguistic prior knowledge in the first position of importance for comprehending texts while those whose mean scores were higher, i.e., mid and high intermediate students, placed the prior conceptual and sociocultural knowledge in the first positions of importance. Therefore, the lower the proficiency level of the subjects are, the more the tendency there would be to choose the prior linguistic knowledge and, similarly, it proves the other way round, that is, the higher the proficiency level, the more tendency toward the prior conceptual and sociocultural knowledge.

With the findings obtained from this study, the teachers as practitioners in the classrooms can facilitate the process of EFL reading comprehension for students at different proficiency levels. Based on the perceptions of students at lower levels of proficiencies, the teachers should try to give the proper amount of prior linguistic knowledge in line with the linguistic difficulty of the EFL texts and, accordingly, based on the perceptions of students at higher levels of proficiency, they should expose the proper amount of the prior conceptual and sociocultural knowledge in accordance with the conceptual and sociocultural potentiality of the texts. For example, by giving short oral or written relevant conceptual or sociocultural summaries to the students prior to reading the texts, the teacher will facilitate reading comprehension for the students.

If the students perceive the prior linguistic knowledge as the most important for processing texts, then by giving the necessary related background linguistic knowledge to them, they will be positively motivated to try to comprehend the texts. By the same token, if the students perceive the prior conceptual and sociocultural knowledge as the most important in comprehending texts, the teacher should tap into their relevant prior conceptual and sociocultural knowledge and bring it close to the conceptual and sociocultural domain of the text. In this way, the students will have high attitudes to make efforts to process the texts.

Some guidelines can also be induced for textbook writers and material developers based on the findings of this project. If the books are designed for lower-level EFL learners, the developers should consider the linguistic levels of the students and based on their linguistic proficiencies design the texts of the books. If the linguistic level of texts is beyond the current

proficiency level of the students, some linguistic explanations must be included for the students before they read the texts. By putting some topic explanations, pictorial contexts, etc in textbooks, the writers can also deliver the right amount of conceptual and/or sociocultural information necessary for higher-level EFL students prior to their reading comprehension.

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Title

A Sociopragmatic Study of Speech Act of Suggestion in Persian EFL Learners

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Abstract

This research study aims at extracting and categorizing the range of strategies used in performing the speech act of suggestion by Persian EFL learners. Its first objective is to see if Persian suggestions are formulaic in pragmatic structure as in English suggestions are said to be, (Holmes, 1990). The other issue worth paying attention in the study is the investigation of the effect of the values assigned to the two context-external variables of social distance and social dominance on the frequency of the suggestion intensifiers. To this end, Persian suggestion utterances are collected via a Discourse completion Test (DCT). The research findings indicate that Persian suggestions are as formulaic in pragmatic structures. Also, the values assigned to the two context-external variables may be found to have significant effect on the frequency of the intensifier in different situations.

Keywords: Speech act of suggestion. Sociopragmatics, Persian EFL learners

1. Introduction

(Austin 1962), (Searle, 1969) and (Searle, 1975) claim that speech acts operate by universal pragmatic principles whereas (Green 1975) and (Wierzbicka, 1985) claim for the existence of possible variation in verbalization and conceptualization across languages. Due to the great controversy existing among the linguists and philosophers in viewing language universals and the importance of such notions in the formation of a language theory in general and second language acquisition in particular (Blum-Kulkn,1982), a good number of empirical

studies have been conducted across different languages which have sometimes confirmed the idea of universality of pragmatic principles and on other occasions have ended up in contrary findings to such claims (Hancher,1979) (Wolfson,1981) (Banerjee,& Carrel,1988) (Hinkel,1997) (Afghari, 2007).

Cross-cultural speech Act Realization patterns project initiated in 1982 (Blum-Kulka et al, 1989) was an attempt to analyze speech acts across a range of languages and cultures aiming at investigating the existence of any possible pragmatic universals and their characteristics. As Blum-Kulka et al, (1989) point out, studies of speech acts need to move away from western languages and include as many non-western languages and cultures in their scope of study as possible.

2. Speech Act of Suggestion in L2 Pragmatics

Pragmatics, according to Crystal (1985) is the study of language from the point of view of users especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication (p.240). Pragmatic or functional use of language such as suggestions, invitations, requests, apologies, refusals and agreements are essential components of language learners. [Communicative competence] (Hymes, 1972). Performing speech acts involves both socio-cultural and sociolinguistic knowledge (Cohen, 1996). Socio-cultural knowledge determines when to perform a speech act and which one is appropriate in a given circumstance and sociolinguistic knowledge determines the actual linguistic realization of each speech act appropriate to the particular situation. Of particular relevance to the present study is the second component of speech act performance, which some authors would call pragmalinguistic knowledge (e.g., Thomas, 1983 and Kasper & Rose, 2002). Pragmalinguistic knowledge refers to the knowledge about available strategic and linguistic resources for communicating interpersonal meanings.

As Kasper (1996) puts it "such resources include pragmatic strategies like directness and indirectness , routines and a large range of linguistic forms which can intensify or soften communicative acts" some speech acts , such as requests , refusals, compliments, apologies, greetings, complaints, and expressions of gratitude ,have been extensively investigated in the field of interlanguage or cross-cultural pragmatics(e.g. ,Blum-Kulka et al,1989, Cohen & Olshain, 1993, and Wolfson & Judd ,1983).

The speech act of suggestion, however, has not been as widely studied (Schmidt & Richards, 1980). Among the small number of studies related to the speech act of suggestions, Rentell (1949) compared the degree of deference in the speech acts of requests and suggestions and investigated how the factors of age and sex of the speaker and hearer affected the degree of deference in requests and suggestions produced by Spanish ESL learners, she found that utterances used to request conveyed more deference than utterance used to suggest. Recently, two more studies on the speech act of suggestions in interlanguage development have been conducted. Bell (1998) examined the production of three speech acts – Requests, Suggestions, and disagreements – by a group of high – beginning level Korean ESL Learners. Compared to requests and suggestions, these students demonstrated an increase in the level of politeness in their expression of disagreements, but their disagreements were still too direct and unmitigated.

In sum, the L2 pragmatics literature on suggestions is quite limited. This small body of studies, however, indicates that English learners have difficulty formulating sociolinguistically appropriate suggestions. Their suggestions are often direct, unmitigated, less polite than NSS, or even rude. The findings of these studies raise questions about how English learners acquire their knowledge of suggestions and what they have actually been taught.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

Sixty students (30 males and 30 females) take part in this study. The participants are all native Persian –speaking university students majoring in TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) at Yazd University. The rationale behind choosing university student is that in most studies carried out on speech acts, the participants had been university students, thus, for the sake of comparability of the results of this study with the findings of the other studies carried out around the world; it can be decided to collect the data from a sample of a similar population i.e., university students.

3.2 Data Collection

The data in this study is collected through a controlled elicitation method called open questionnaire which is a modified version of "Discourse completion Test" used in Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization patterns Project (Blum-Kulka, 1982). The DCT used in this study includes a brief description of the situation and a one- participant dialogue. In other words, the questionnaire includes 10 fixed discourse situations, which a university student is

likely to encounter in his/her daily language interactions. Each situation consists of a brief description of the addressee's characteristics important to this study namely, social distance, social dominance.

The two main social factors specifically included in the situations i.e. social distance and social dominance are selected because they have been found to play a decisive role in the speech act realization patterns within the cross-cultural (Brown and Levinson, 1987). Following Searle's (1976) dichotomy of – distance/+distance, the social distance perceived between the interlocutors in the study is also a binary valued variable. That is to say, the interlocutors either had a close relationship (-distance) or hardly knew each other (+distance). The social dominance or the power relationship between the participants in the study is assigned three values: status equal (e.g. student-student) speaker dominance (e.g. student-his/her younger sister/brother) and hearer dominance (e.g. student-professor).

4. Data Analysis

The collected data in the study can be classified into five different structures for suggestions. Let's....., modals, performative verbs, conditionals and pseudo clefts. These five structures were commonly used for suggestions in the data. A more detailed examination of these forms will facilitate an understanding of why context is important with respect to their use.

4.1. Let's.....

The structure let's..... is described as an inclusive imperative " which " includes the speaker with the addressee (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, 1999, p.233). According to Leech (1983), let's is typically used to propose a joint action by speaker and hearer. However, it sometimes veers towards second person quasi –imperative meaning, in proposing action which is clearly intended to be carried out by the hearer.

For example: *Let's shut the door*

4.2. Modals

Celce -Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) observe that speakers use modals to perform a variety of social functions, for example, expressing politeness or indirectness when making requests, giving advice, or granting permission .They ordered modals based on the speaker's degree of authority or the urgency of the advice.

For instance:

You must see a doctor.

You should/ought to see a doctor.

You could / might see a doctor.

4.3. Performative verbs

Speech act theory distinguishes between direct and indirect speech acts, whereby explicit performatives are associated with the performance of direct speech acts. As a result of the focus on such performatives in speech act theory, learners have frequently been taught the most direct way of expressing a speech act via the use of performative verbs.

For example: *I suggest that you*

4.4. Conditionals

Conditionals are often considered an indirect way of making suggestions, showing the politeness of the speaker. (Brown and Levinson (1987) named the subordinator *if* in conditionals a possibility maker.

By including a notion of possibility, suggestions may sound more polite.

For example: *If you take a taxi, you, I, ll arrives sooner.*

4.5. Pseudo cleft constructions

Another construction associated with suggestion in the what – cleft-as in....what you need to do isor what I would suggest is.....These pseudo cleft sentences are considered "as mechanisms for agent de-emphasis "by Hudson (1990 p.288).Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1994) refer to wh-cleft as important focus constructions that give special emphasis to the constructions following some form of the verb *be*.

A cleft performs the function of emphasizing and drawing the hearer's attention to the most important part of a suggestion. Although people who make suggestions often have good intentions, suggestions are to some extent face –threatening. (Brown and Levinson, 1987).Most people want to delay the possibly unpleasant information to the very end. Therefore, the function of the wh-cleft construction include giving the speaker thinking time, emphasizing the content, and delaying unpleasant information (Celce –Murcia & Larsen-Freeman,1999 and Leech,1983).

For example: *All you have to do is.....*

5. Results

Overall analysis of the data be collected through the DCT questionnaire in the study shows Persian suggestions are as formulaic as are English suggestions. In the CCSARP project people suggest either directly or by using modals or performative verbs such as (pishnehad

medam)."I suggest or indirectly by using pseudo cleft constructions such as what-cleft and all-cleft. Here, we can have tables of frequency of this suggestion structures.

Table 1

Frequency distribution of the five main suggestion act formulas produced by all participants in 10 situations

Let's	Modals	Performative	Conditionals	Pseudo cleft	Total
1501	124	120	51	4	1800
83.8%	6.8%	6.6%	2.7%	0.1%	100%

Table 2 *Syntactic structure in different situations*

Syntactic structures	Situation	
	Occurrence	Frequency
1. Let's...	52	10.3
2. Modals	61	12.0
a. Passive with modals	0	0
b. You have to...	26	5.2
c. You need to...	21	4.2
d. You should...	13	2.6
e. You ought to...	1	0.2
f. You must...	0	0
3. Wh-questions	9	1.8
4. Conditionals	17	3.4
5. Performatives	11	2.2
6. Pseudo clefts	10	2.0
7. Extraposed <i>to</i> -clauses	3	0.6
8. Yes–no questions	0	0
9. Imperatives	0	0

Table 3*Frequency of syntactic structures in social distance*

Syntactic structures	Situation	
	Occurrence	Frequency
1. You need to ...	21	4.2
2. You should...	13	2.6
3. Conditionals	17	3.4
4. Performative verbs	11	2.2
5. Imperatives	15	3.0
6. Pseudo clefts	10	2.0
7. Passive with modals	0	0

6. Discussion and conclusion

Most of the sociopragmatics studies seem to be both culturally and geographically restricted to western societies and cultures (Blum-kulka et al,1984) .This is a study trying to expand the scope of these studies to include a non-western culture .In other words , by studying the realization of patterns of speech act of English suggestions by Persian learners, the findings of the previous studies carried out on suggestions can be tested against the data collected in a non- western language and culture for the purpose of assessing the universality of such findings. In this study the findings as we can observe above show that:

- (1) *Let's...* is the most frequently used structure for suggestions
- (2) The use of modals "*have to*" and "*need to*" for suggestions is more common than "*should*"
- (3) The formulaic use of *Wh*-questions such as *what about/How about...?* And *Why don't you.../Why not...?* is not frequent at all.
- (4) Conditionals are more common in a more formal context; and
- (5) Performative verbs and pseudo cleft sentences are also commonly used in socially distant situation.

Finally, the investigation of the possible effects of the two context- external variables, namely, the social distance and dominance between the interlocutors, on the frequency of the syntactic structures of suggestions revealed that – as also suggested by the previous studies – the most suggestion forms were offered to close friends with no dominance over the suggestion giver (situations 1 and 6) and the least suggestion forms were offered to strangers with no dominance over suggestion giver (situations 3 and 10).

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Title

A General Approach to Focus on Form Instruction

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Abstract

Language teachers are constantly searching for the most effective methods of teaching. Teaching language to nonnative speakers of English involves certain problems and challenges at all levels of instruction. Regarding the unsatisfactory consequences of focus on forms and focus on meaning instructions and their inevitable inadequacies, focus on form instruction was considered as a better candidate for classroom instruction. Focus on form instruction does not only pay attention to the importance of the communicative language teaching, but it also maintains the value of occasional and overt study of L2 grammatical forms. It is considered a more promising pedagogical choice than focus on forms and focus on meaning because of its communicatively-need oriented attention to form and its saliency in the language acquisition process. Focus on form may be considered as essential to push learners beyond communicatively effective language toward target-like second language proficiency. It may also be part of a more efficient language learning experience as it can speed up natural acquisition processes.

Key word: Focus on form instruction

1. Introduction

This chapter, in briefly reviewing the history of language teaching methods, provides a background for discussion of focus on form instruction and its effects on language learning.

1.1. Traditional language teaching

Whereas today English is the world's most widely studied foreign language, five hundred years ago it was Latin as it was the dominant language of education, commerce, religion, and government in the western world (Richards and Rogers, 2001).

Interested in the literary works of Latin, Latin grammarians tried to impose its grammar on any other language which they studied (Chastain, 1988; Richard and Rogers, 2001). To them, morphology, the study of words, was more important than the study of language structures (syntax) or the study of sounds (phonology) (Richards and Rogers, 2001). They tried to analyze sentences of a language, label the parts with their names, and produce rules that explain how these parts may be combined. Each grammar point was listed, rules on its use were explained, and it was illustrated by some sample sentences. These rules were mainly prescriptive rather than descriptive in nature (Cook, 2005). Oral work was reduced to the minimum, while a handful of written exercises came as a sort of appendix to the rules. The immediate aim was for students to apply the given rules by means of proper exercises (Richards and Rogers, 2001). Grammar translation method is an example of traditional language teaching approach.

1.2. Descriptive/behavioristic language teaching

In the 1940s and 1950s, due to the criticisms directed toward traditional language teaching, the structural or descriptive school of linguistics was established along with a behavioristic paradigm among psychologists (Richards and Rogers, 2001).

According to this view, language is a fundamental part of total human behavior which could be dismantled into structurally related elements for encoding of meaning, the elements being phonemes, morphemes, words, structures, and sentence types. Learning the language consists of mastering the language elements and learning the rules by which these elements are combined. It also claimed that language learning is a process of imitation, practice, reinforcement and habit formation and that children would shape their knowledge through various schedules of reinforcement (Brown, 2000; Schmitt, 2002).

Audio-lingual and Oral/Situational language teaching methods were the two main examples of this view in which language is regarded as a rule governed phenomenon which can be learned through mechanical habit formation.

1.3. Generative/cognitive language teaching

In the 1960s, the generative-transformational school of linguistics along with a cognitive approach in psychology emerged through the influence of Chomsky. His revolution turned linguists, psychologists, and language teachers toward the role of mind and abstract mental processes in teaching.

According to this view, language is a creative, rule-governed phenomenon. It regards language learning as consisting of perception, acquisition, organization and storage of knowledge. It also assigns a central and dominant role to the mental processes that are subject to the individual's control. Therefore based on this view, the main emphasis is on the learner's conscious awareness of rules, and the central attention is paid to the formal properties of language (Chastain, 1988).

According to this approach, teaching all expressions and sentences that students need is impossible as language is found to be infinitely varied. Therefore, the only achievable goal is to teach the system that makes language production possible (Richards and Rogers, 2001).

Methods following this approach, such as Community Language Learning, Silent way, Total Physical Response, and Suggestopedia retained the drills of audio-lingual method but they also added some dozens of rule explanations and reliance on grammatical sequencing of materials.

1.4. Communicative language teaching (CLT)

Until recently, language teaching and learning focused on linguistic forms and on the descriptions of language structures.

Rather than considering language learning as a process of general language structure accumulation, CLT regards language as an instrument of social interaction. Language learning is learning to communicate and every attempt to communicate is encouraged from the very beginning (Chastain, 1988).

Putting emphasis on the semantic and communicative aspect rather than the grammatical characteristics of language, this theory leads to a specification and organization of language teaching content by categories of meaning and function (i.e. purpose for which people communicate; such as making requests, thanks,...) rather than by elements of structure and grammar. So, less attention is paid to the overt presentation and discussion of language elements (Brown, 2001; Richards and Rogers, 2001).

Communicative language teaching (CLT) is a communicative orientation that emphasizes affective, cognitive, and social factors, and its activities are inner directed and learner centered. Communicative competence (i.e. the ability to use the linguistic system

appropriately and affectively) is the desired goal (Chastain, 1988). With the rise of communicative methodology in the late 1970s, it was suggested that teaching grammar was not only unhelpful but also it might be regarded as detrimental. So, the role of language instruction in second language classes was downplayed (Nassaji and Fotos, 2004).

1.5. ‘Comprehensible Input Hypothesis’

Theoretically, the debate was first introduced by Krashen’s (1981) distinction between conscious learning and unconscious acquisition of language. According to his acquisition/learning hypothesis, individuals may acquire a second language or may learn it. Those who pick up the rules of language subconsciously as they take part in communication acquire a second language whereas language learning is the result of learning the rules of language consciously in classroom situations (Chastain, 1988).

Krashen (1981, 1985) also proposed that the goal of instruction is not to produce native-like speakers but to help them take advantage of the natural input available to them. Then, Krashen(1985) introduced his ‘comprehensible input’ hypothesis which deals with how individuals internalize and acquire language. Based on this hypothesis, if input is understood and there is enough of it, the necessary grammar and vocabulary are automatically provided. According to Krashen, the availability of input, which is comprehensible (i.e. $i+1$ or what is slightly beyond the learner’s current level of language proficiency) to the learner is the only necessary and sufficient condition for language learning to take place. He believes that positive evidence in the input, motivating particular structure, could stimulate the acquisition of that structure.

But Krashen’s hypothesis, despite its appeal, did not go unopposed. The basic argument is that no matter how much correction learners receive, the complete set of evidence for building up a native-like grammar with all its complexities is not available in the input. It had been mentioned that those learners who do not have the advantage of language instruction, though fluent, developed wild grammars and produced untarget-like output (White, Spada, Lightbown, Ranta, 1991).

1.6. ‘Noticing Hypothesis’

SLA research, however, goes beyond general interest in the need for comprehensible input (Chastain, 1988). The fact that learners don’t utilize the input to which they are exposed as intake for learning led Schmidt (1990) to suggest that conscious awareness of a previously unlearned L_2 form or what he calls ‘noticing’ is a necessary condition for language learning to occur. Schmidt’s ‘noticing’ hypothesis runs counter to Krashen’s ‘comprehensible input’

hypothesis as it claims that ‘intake is the part of the input that the learner notices’ (Schmidt, 1990, p. 139).

1.7. Language instruction

Following the concept of noticing as a pedagogical device for language acquisition to take place, Ellis (2001) introduced formal instruction as a view of language instruction which helps learners to develop awareness of target language features (noticing). According to Ellis, once consciousness of a particular feature has been raised through formal instruction, learners remain aware of the target language feature and notice it in subsequent communicative input events which are considered to be crucial for further language processing, leading to the acquisition of the feature.

In general, instruction appears to offer three advantages over naturalistic SLA: (a) it speeds up the rate of learning, (b) it affects acquisition processes, leading to long term accuracy, and (c) it appears to raise the ultimate level of attainment (Doughty and Long, 2003). Form-focused instruction is regarded as one of the main types of formal instruction which is used to draw learners’ attention to language form, either explicitly or implicitly (Spada, 1997).

This section offers a brief review, determining the strengths and limitations for language learning of a focus on forms, a focus on meaning, and a focus on form..

1.8. Focus on forms

Focus on forms instruction is aimed at teaching specific grammatical structures. It is very similar to traditional grammar instruction whose primary emphasis is on the teaching of language forms in isolation. It also involves the pre-selection of particular forms based on a linguistic syllabus and the intensive and systematic treatment of those structures. The instruction progresses as the learners show mastery of sequentially-presented grammatical forms (Long, 1991: Long and Robinson, 1998: Ellis, Basturkmen and Loewen, 2002). But it is considered as a non-communicative approach as it doesn’t foster L₂ development which enables learners to function in real-world communication (Poole, 2005). So there exists no correspondence between the forms practiced and any kind of real-world meaning. Lack of any scope for the development of fluency is one of the most important consequences of such a rigid approach (Seedhouse, 1997).

1.9. Focus on meaning

According to Long (1991) and Long and Robinson (1998) focus on meaning instruction refers to a communicative approach to language teaching which spends little or no time on the discrete points of language. Instead, the main purposes of such an approach are to use

language in real-life situations, to emphasize meaning over form, and comprehension and fluency over production and accuracy. The basic philosophy behind meaning-focused language instruction is that people learn languages best by using it as a medium of communication. According to this view, language instruction is organized in terms of the purposes for which people are learning language and the kinds of language performances that are necessary to meet those purposes.

Whereas learners are able to acquire linguistic structures without any instructional intervention, they don't usually achieve high levels of linguistic knowledge within an entirely meaning-focused instruction (Spada, 1997). They were found to have consistent difficulties with the basic structures of language as they cannot readily infer knowledge of language system from the communicative activities they do. This also happens as teachers accept every inaccurate interlanguage form without any comment or correction (Seedhouse, 1997).

1.10. Focus on form

The emphasis on the role of language instruction along with Schmidt's 'noticing' hypothesis as the two main prerequisites for the acquisition of language made Long (1991) & Long and Robinson (1998) to feel that when students encounter problems and difficulties in their production and comprehension of language, it is the responsibility of their teachers and peers to help them notice their erroneous forms and supply them with the correct and appropriate forms. But this should not encourage teachers to focus on teaching specific grammatical items, leading to focus on forms instruction. They should aim to help students use language in a way that motivates realistic communicative use. But this should also be different from the purely communicative instruction or what is termed as focus on meaning instruction in which little or no attention is directed to the study of discrete parts of language, instead, the main focus is on the use of language communicatively (Poole, 2005).

So in terms of how to teach grammar and vocabulary, it is felt that the world of foreign/second language teaching methodology has found itself endorsing extreme positions.

To solve this problem, Long (1991) & Long and Robinson (1998) introduced the notion of focus on form instruction which, on one hand, highlights the significance of communicative language use and learner-centeredness, and on the other hand, emphasizes the overt study of problematic areas of L₂ forms. It is regarded as a kind of instruction which emphasizes the importance of communicative language teaching such as authentic communication, and also puts emphasis on occasional and overt study of L₂ grammatical structures (Poole, 2005). According to Long (1991) and Long and Robinson (1998), it tries to maintain a balance between focus on forms and focus on meaning through motivating

teachers and learners to attend to form when necessary, yet within a communicative classroom environment. It has a dual, simultaneous focus on form and accuracy as well as meaning and fluency. It is also seen as a psycholinguistically plausible approach as it emphasizes the kind of attention to form that occurs in real-world situation, as it addresses learners' linguistic problems, and as it motivates noticing which is considered necessary for acquisition (Seedhouse, 1997).

2. How to Maintain a Focus on Form

Focus on form can be accomplished by providing opportunities for learners to negotiate topics which are meaningful to them. Teachers should allow learners, by reducing their own role in correction and scaffolding of learners' utterances, to manage the interaction (Seedhouse, 1997). They can also apply focus on form instruction in their classrooms by using principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) when they want to design activities and do assessment. Small size classes are regarded better candidates as they permit the teachers to work individually with students and students individually with their peers. Teachers and students are also required to be proficient enough in English as to avoid any kind of code-switching during the course of interaction (Poole, 2005).

3. Types of Focus on Form

3.1. Input flooding (providing a plethora of natural examples of the form in focus in a text, on the assumption that the very high frequency of the structure in question will attract the learner's attention to the relevant formal regularities) (Doughty and Williams, 1998a)

3.2. Task-essential language (the necessity of using specific forms to complete a task) (Doughty and Williams, 1998b)

3.3. Input enhancement (directing the learner's attention to a specific form in a text by highlighting, underlining, coloring, rule giving, ...) (Long and Robinson, 1998)

3.4. Negotiation (asking and answering questions about how a special form is learnt and taught) (Lightbown, 1998)

3.5. Recast (corrective reformulation of children's utterances that preserve the child's intended meaning) (Long and Robinson, 1998)

3.6. Output enhancement (Promoting students to produce output coating specific forms) (Doughty and Williams, 1998a)

3.7. Interaction enhancement (an instructional treatment making students produce output by providing interactional modifications in order to help students notice a mismatch between their interlanguage and target language form) (Doughty and Williams, 1998b)

3.8. Dictogloss (a procedure encouraging students to reflect on their own output by reconstructing a text which is read to them) (Swain, 1998)

3.9. Consciousness-raising tasks (tasks promoting the occurrence of a stimulus event in conscious awareness and its subsequent storage in long term memory) (Harley, 1998)

3.10. Input processing (interpreting input with the goal of incorporating the knowledge into one's interlanguage) (Williams and Evans, 1998)

3.11. Garden path (a technique telling learners in advance about a linguistic regularity plus its exception by pointing out the error made at the moment of generality) (Doughty and Williams, 1998b)

4. Types of focus on form instruction

Table 2.3: Types of focus on form instruction

-
1. Planned (proactive) focus on form
 2. Incidental focus on form
 - 2.1. Reactive
 - 2.1.1. Conversational
 - 2.1.2. Didactic
 - 2.2. Preemptive
 - 2.2.1. Conversational
 - 2.2.2. Didactic
-

(Ellis, Basturkmen, Loewen, 2001 a, 2001b, 2002)

4.1. Planned (proactive) focus on form: This kind of focus on form involves the use of communicative tasks designed to elicit the use of particular linguistic structure in a meaning-based context. The teacher decides in advance what forms should be focused on. The form is selected based on the teacher's familiarity with the students and the general perception of the students' interlanguage needs or based on the systematic investigation of the areas in which the students have problems (Ellis, Basturkmen, Loewen, 2002; Nassaji, 2000).

4.2. Incidental focus on form: It involves the use of communicative tasks which are designed to elicit the use of general rather than specific forms. The forms are focused on in the process of communication, peripherally, and then the focus returns to communicative

activity again (Ellis, Basturkmen, Loewen, 2002; Nassaji, 2000). It has two main kinds, reactive and preemptive focus on form.

4.2.1. Reactive focus on form: It refers to the treatment of learners' errors in a communicative context. It arises when learners produce utterances containing an actual error, which is then addressed by the teacher but sometimes by another learner. Thus it supplies the learners with negative evidence. It addresses a performance problem (which may or may not reflect a competence problem) and usually takes the form of a sequence, involving a trigger, an indicator of a problem, and a resolution (Ellis, Basturkmen, Loewen, 2001b, 2002).

4.2.2. Preemptive involves attempts to make a specific form the topic of conversation even though no error has occurred. It is initiated by means of a query that students addresses to the teacher. The participants take a time-out from communication to talk about some linguistic features. It involves the teacher or the learner initiating attention to form even though no specific problem in production has occurred. It addresses an actual gap in the learners' knowledge, and usually consists of exchanges involving a query and a response (Ellis, Basturkmen, Loewen, 2001b, 2002).

Both reactive and preemptive are divided into two main categories, conversational and didactic focus on form.

4.2.2.1. Conversational focus on form: It involves the attention to form arose as the result of a communication problem.

4.2.2.2. Didactic focus on form: It involves an error treatment which consists of a pedagogic "time-out" from meaning-focused communication (Ellis, Basturkmen, Loewen, 2002).

5. Experimental background of focus on form

Van Patten (1990) examined whether or not learners could consciously attend to both form and meaning when they were processing the input. Results suggested that learners had great difficulty in attending to both form and content, raising important questions about the role of consciousness in input processing.

Nobuyoshi and Ellis (1993) had done a small scale study, suggesting that focused communication tasks such as "pushing" learners to produce more accurate output through teacher's request for clarification would contribute to L₂ acquisition. It was also found that pushing learners toward more accurate production led to both immediate and overtime improved performance.

Swain (1998) investigated the relationship between metatalk and second language learning in French immersion classes. The instruction about how to perform the task (dictogloss) was modeled for the two classes. The metatalk used for the metalinguistic group included the rules and metalinguistic terminology, while the metatalk for the comparison group didn't include rules and metalinguistic terminology. Results showed that explicit statement of rules and metalinguistic terminology helped capture students' attention and focused it on their own language use and provided them with an opportunity to reflect on and use their linguistic knowledge.

Ellis, Basturkmen, Loewen (2001a) examined the effectiveness of incidental and transitory focus on form on learners' uptake in twelve hours of communicative ESL teaching. Results indicate that learners had more uptakes in reactive and student-initiated focus on form episodes. It was also found that the complexity of an episode and the nature of form being focused (whether meaning or grammar) would reflect the level of uptakes.

Ellis, Basturkmen, Loewen (2001b) investigated the effectiveness of preemptive focus on form in a 12-hour meaning-focused instruction. Results indicated that the majority of the episodes containing preemptive focus on form were initiated by students. Learners were more likely to uptake a form (i.e. incorporate it into an utterance of their own,) When it is raised by one of their peers. It was also found that in these preemptive focus on form episodes, learners dealt with form explicitly. Despite this, they didn't appear to interfere with the communicative flow of the teaching.

Poole and Sheorey (2002), in their case study, examined the spontaneous spoken output of an advanced Indian user of English in order to explore the validity of Schmidt's noticing hypothesis and also the value of focus on form instruction. The results indicated that the subject could notice and correct later all the errors he had committed during his spontaneous output, showing that his learned knowledge about the forms had not been fully internalized, casting doubts as to whether noticing could lead to acquisition of noticed language forms.

Burgess and Etherington (2002) investigated forty eight EAP teachers' attitudes to grammar and its teaching and learning within an EAP context. Results indicate that the majority of teachers appreciated the value of grammar for their students and show favorable attitude to focus on form approaches.

Gass, Svetics and Lemelin (2003) studied the effect of attention on the learning of different parts of language and how this differential effect interacted with linguistic proficiency. The results showed that attention had the greatest effect on syntax and the least

on lexis. It was also found that attention was most effective during the early stages and the least effective during the later stages.

Park (2003) in his experimental study investigated if, and how, externally-created salience might lead to learners' internally generated salience. The findings showed that increasing the perceptual salience of target forms did not lead to learners' noticing of forms. It was also found that noticing was affected by several factors such as learner readiness, knowledge of first language, and second language learning experience.

Poole (2003) in his study described the types of forms learners attend to during form-focused instruction. Analysis of the data, gathered from nineteen international students studying in an advanced ESL writing class in a United States university, indicated that the majority of forms they attended to were lexical in nature. It was also found that focus on form instruction might not be valuable for second language grammatical learning.

Lyster (2004a) in his article presents a comparative analysis of five quasi-experimental studies, investigating the effects of form-focused instruction on four areas of French known to be difficult for Anglophone learners; perfect vs. imperfect past tense, conditional mood, second person pronouns, and grammatical gender. Findings suggested that effective form-focused instruction included a balanced distribution of opportunities for noticing, language awareness, and controlled practice with feedback.

Lyster (2004b) in his quasi-experimental classroom study investigated the effects of form-focused instruction and corrective feedback on immersion students' ability to accurately assign grammatical gender in French. Analyses of data showed a significant increase in the ability of students exposed to form-focused instruction to correctly assign grammatical gender. It was also found that form-focused instruction is more effective when combined with prompts than with recasts or no feedback.

Farrokhi (2005) examined the possibility of integrating form-focused instruction and communicative interaction at the level of error correction. The database was drawn from transcripts of thirty one hours of classroom lessons including 752 error correction episodes. Findings revealed that 'marked recast' was a good corrective feedback that combines focus on form and focus on meaning at the level of error correction.

Loewen (2005) examined the effectiveness of incidental focus on form in promoting L₂ learning. Analysis of seventeen hours of naturally occurring, meaning focused instruction in twelve adult classes in a private language school in New Zealand revealed that learners could remember the targeted form sixty percent of the time one day after the FFEs (form-focused episodes) and fifty percent of the time two weeks later. So incidental focus on form

might be beneficial to learners especially when they incorporated the targeted linguistic item into their own production.

Lee (2007) had done a research investigating the effect of textual enhancement. He concluded that it aided the learning of the target forms while having unfavorable meaning comprehension.

Haung (2008) had done a research in which he used EFL learners' analytical grammatical knowledge to design a post-task approach to foster learners' self-initiated attention. Students were asked to transcribe their dialogues cooperatively and then to reflect on different aspects of their oral production individually. It was found that learners paid close attention to their mistakes according to their individual learning needs and proficiency levels.

Farrokhi, Ansarin, and Mohamadnia (2008) investigated how five experienced EFL teachers initiated focus on form episodes to raise attention to form in elementary and advanced levels, through observing seventy hours of communicatively-oriented instruction between the teachers and their students. They also examined the frequency and type of focus on form episodes, i.e. vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. The results suggested that the proficiency of the learners did not affect the rate of learner-initiated focus on form episodes. This study also indicated that the overall distribution of the linguistic focus on form episodes varied across proficiencies.

6. Discussion and Conclusions

Although various differences in these studies make direct comparison among them difficult, an examination of several factors is instrumental in identifying the directions for future research. First, though clearly a desirable proficiency level, in most of the studies investigating the effects of focus on form and its techniques on language learning, participants were at advanced level of language proficiency (Poole, 2005). Second, most of the studies providing insights into the efficacy of focus on form have taken place in well-funded, adequately-supplied with teaching and learning materials, generally free of classroom discipline problems and just in a few countries, such as the United States, New Zealand, and Japan (Poole and Sheorey, 2002). Finally, previous studies on the effect of focus on form on language learning mostly used short term treatment with rather limited exposure to the input (Williams, 1999; Leow, 1997). Further investigations in this line of research are still needed to shed more light on these issues. They should also investigate whether or not focus on form instruction leads to more language acquisition. This seems crucial, since no matter how often

students are exposed to form during a focus on form instruction; the true value of it lies in its ability to improve the quantity and quality of language acquisition.

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Appendix

The open questionnaire (**Discourse Completion Test**) was used in the design to collect EFL learner's suggestion utterances.

Age:

Sex:

Degree:

Native language:

University major:

Please read the following description of situations and then write what you would **SAY** in each situation.

1. You and your friend are in a book fair and he wants to buy a book for his Sociolinguistics course, but there are different books about it in this fair. What would you say when you want to suggest him the best book?
2. Your classmates are going to visit your hometown due to its historic value. They need some items of information about it. What would you say to them in order to suggest the best places of your city?

3. You as the representative of the class are going to talk with your professor to postpone the mid-term exam and suggest a new date for it. What would you say to your professor to suggest the new date?
4. You are about to meet your close friend at the university library to talk about his thesis topic. Seemingly, he doesn't like to work on methodology. What would you say to him to suggest working on SLA?
5. You are invited by a high school principal to talk with a number of students about their future university course. What would you say to them to suggest TEFL?
6. You and your brother are on the way home and he is driving very badly and he may have a very bad accident. What would you say to him to suggest a better driving?
7. You are supposed to meet your supervisor in his office to talk about your thesis, but he's not in his office. What would you say to him, if you phone him to set another appointment?
8. Your father is going to buy a car, but he doesn't know anything about the features of a good car. He needs your suggestion because you have a good hand in this matter. What would you say to him?
9. Your neighbour wants to plant a tree in his house and he asks you to suggest him to plant a beautiful tree. What would you say to him to suggest a cypress tree?
10. In a question-and-answer session with the president of the university, you want to tell him a suggestion about the new location of the central library. What would you say to state your suggestion?

Title

Grammatical Collocation in Writing Production of EFL Learners: A Study of L2 Collocation Learning

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Biodata

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Abstract

Although collocation is an essential feature of English language and one of the most problematic aspects of second language acquisition, it has been ignored by most linguists and language teachers. Therefore, the present research aimed at evaluating the rate of grammatical collocations in Iranian EFL learners' writing production across L1 and L2. Furthermore, L1 effect on L2 grammatical collocational use in the learner' writing samples was examined. To this end, 200 Persian EFL learners at BA level were selected. These participants were taking paragraph writing and essay writing courses in two successive educational years. Three kinds of materials including mid-term, final exam, and also the assignments of EFL learners were utilized in order to examine the research questions. Due to the nominal nature of data, chi-square test was used for data analysis. Then the rate of grammatical collocations was calculated. Moreover, frequency and rate of grammatical collocations in L1 and L2 paragraphs were compared. L1 collocations were at higher frequency and rate. The results also showed that L1 had both positive and negative effect on L2 grammatical collocations.

Keywords: Collocation, Grammatical collocation, L1, L2

1. Introduction

For a long time, a lot of efforts in applied language research have been made on the grammatical, phonological, and orthographical level, while the lexical level did not arouse

the same degree of interest. By neglecting importance of lexical approach in second language learning, a serious linguistic obstacle is presented to many English non-native students. Because, for more efficient communication, they must learn thousands of words that speakers and writers of English use.

Although vocabulary teaching and learning were ignored in certain methods of language teaching for some decades, there is now a wide spread agreement upon the need for language learners to improve their knowledge of vocabulary (Allen, 1983; Laufer, 1986; Coady, 1997; Zimmerman, 1997; Shand, 1999). Indeed, it is accepted that choosing our words carefully in certain situations is more important than choosing grammatical structures (Harmer, 1999).

In the 1990s, Lewis (2000) proposed the lexical approach as a means to help second language learners in vocabulary acquisition domain. This approach emphasizes teaching words already in their chunks as opposed to individual items. Indeed, the lexical approach distinguishes between group of single words with fixed meanings and lexis, which includes not only the individual words but also the chunks and word combinations that are stored in our mental lexicon. Generally, the lexical approach has directed special attention to formulaic expressions and conventionalized utterances including collocations which are necessary to achieve native-like competence in the second language.

Collocation, a habitual or recurrent word combination, has been considered as one of the ways that differentiate native speakers from non-native learners. It seems that automation of collocations enables native speakers to spontaneously identify and associate words with other particular words to make meaningful semantic units (Williams, 2002). Clearly it is difficult for non-native speakers to identify these collocations. One of the possible sources of collocational errors committed by EFL learners seems to be cross linguistic influence. That is, there are variations among collocational patterns of languages but L2 learners ignore them and they transfer collocational structures of their mother tongue to the target language, which often produce semantically or syntactically incorrect or awkward sentences. L2 learners intend to translate L1 collocations into L2 ones assuming that there is a one – to – one correspondence between the L1 and L2 collocational patterns. Since cross linguistic influence can play a decisive role in productive skills such as writing, and significance of utilizing collocations is more noticeable in this skill, emphasis of collocational patterns on this skill assumes a considerable importance. Indeed, if collocational structures as part of L2 vocabulary knowledge can not be acquired, deviant or odd combinations in speech or writing will be emerged through the process of transfer. EFL learners, lacking of this automation may

make non native errors when they produce utterances. According to Tanja Deveci (2004), since EFL learners memorize sets of words in isolation, they tend to utilize these single words in their writings. For this reason when they encounter these words in combinations, they can not understand them. Moreover, learners may resort to general rules for collocations that do not work for all collocations. They might create a deviant structure in place of two regular structures on the basis of student's experience of the target language. Indeed, learners use overgeneralization when the item does not carry any obvious contrast to them (Li, 2005). Furthermore, perhaps some EFL learners avoid using collocational phrases in order to prevent committing errors which may cause the rate of collocations decreases in their productive skills such as writing. Accordingly, analysis of miss-collocations may be an efficient way to help EFL learners to overcome these problems. Recently, many scholars and language teachers have been concerned with error analysis as well as its implications for teaching strategies related to collocations for EFL learners. Richards (1971), for example, argued that error analysis can be performed to identify strategies used by learners in their language learning to discover the causes of learners' errors and to access information on general difficulties in language learning as an aid to language teaching. It is worth mentioning that both intralingual and interlingual challenges can be presented by the task of learning collocations.

Hence, error analysis in collocations may serve as an essential way to improve L2 writing proficiency. Moreover, the researcher as a language teacher has observed that grammatical collocations in general and verb-preposition in particular seem to be one of the most problematic domains in EFL learner's writings. For these reasons this research analyzes grammatical collocational errors that constantly occur in English essays and paragraphs of EFL learners which are under the influence of L1 collocational patterns. The researcher also found the rate of collocations in EFL writings rather low as compared to other linguistic structures. It seems that assigning the rate of grammatical collocations contribute to ameliorate L2 learners' writings. Therefore, this study intends to scrutinize EFL learners' rate of production in writing from dimension of *grammatical* collocations.

More specifically, by doing a systematic study and analysis of grammatical collocations, it can be also indicated if L1 collocations have positive effect on providing L2 collocations or it causes collocational errors in L2. Accordingly, the aim of this study is to investigate the effect of L1 collocations on L2 collocations. This may lead to positive and negative effects on learning collocations. To this end, the current study addressed the following questions:

1. What is the rate of grammatical collocations in the writing production of EFL learners?
2. Is there any cross linguistic influence of L1 collocation on L2 grammatical collocation in the writing production of EFL learners?
3. Is there any difference between the rate of grammatical collocation across L1 and L2 writing tasks?

2. Literature Review

The importance of learning and using collocations to master foreign language communicatively has recently attracted the attention of many researchers. Consequently, it is essential to make students aware of chunks, providing for them opportunities to identify, organize and record these. Identifying chunks is not always easy, and at least at the beginning, students need a lot of guidance. On the other hand, one problematic question that remains unresolved concerns whether or not having a large store of vocabulary and a basic knowledge of grammar are enough for fluent and successful communication in second language acquisition (Rudzka, Channell, Ostry, and Putseys, 1985). But it is usually the case that the majority of EFL learners, even advanced ones, have various problems in their oral or written productions (Bahns and Eldaw 1993; Rudzka, et al, *ibid*; Taiwo, 2004). This is in spite of the fact that they apparently seem to have sufficient lexical or grammatical knowledge. Such erroneous utterances like '*the manager of the university*', '*heavy tea*'; '*to take fish*' are not due to poor lexical or grammatical knowledge. These problems arise partly from lack of knowledge about the companies that words keep, i.e., collocation (Koosha & Jafarpour, 2006).

Gitsaki (1996) underscored that the study of collocation should include grammar which contrasts with the two aforementioned approaches: the lexical and semantic ones. Lexis and grammar cannot be separated and, consequently, two categories are defined lexical and grammatical collocation, which represent two distinctive but related aspects of one phenomenon.

A grammatical collocation, in contrast to a lexical collocation, is a phrase that consists of a noun, an adjective, or a verb plus a preposition or grammatical structure such as an infinitive or clause (Benson et al., 1986). Chomsky (1965) gave the following example of a grammatical collocation: *decide on a boat*, meaning 'choose (to buy) a boat', but on the other

hand, *decide on a boat*, meaning ‘make a decision while on a boat’ is a free combination. Native speakers of English feel that the components of *decide on* collocate with each other, and they will most likely reject violations of collocability such as *decide at a boat*.

Moehkardi (2002) asserted the problems of verb transitivity and phrasal verbs seem overwhelming. In relation to English verb transitivity, learner may get confused to decide (a) which verbs are always transitive or always intransitive, and which ones can occur in both types, and (b) which structure (infinitive with or without to, gerund or that-clause) can follow certain transitive verb. It takes time for learners to memorize which verbs require which structure or which alternative structure is possible.

The other problem in grammatical collocation is that of pattern verb+ adverbial particles combinations. The combinations are confusing to English learners, including Indonesian students, due to the following problems:

a. Many English verb + adverbial particle combinations have more than one meaning, such as *make up* (‘to decide’ ‘to invent’ and ‘to put on cosmetics’ and the ‘cosmetics itself’) and are often idiomatic. The seemingly endless list of such combinations with their various meanings is indeed threatening.

b. Adverbial particles, whose forms are similar to preposition, of the phrasal verbs seem to be random. Therefore, learners tend to transfer the prepositions of their L1 phrasal verbs to English ones which is in fact troublesome. The transfer of the L1 prepositions may cause mistakes because of the different concept between the L1 prepositions to the English. For example, the Indonesian expression ‘*tertarik dengan*’ is literally transferred to English ‘interested with’; whereas ‘interested in’ will be difficult to remember because preposition ‘in’ is equivalent to Indonesian ‘di’.

c. Moreover, it is sometimes difficult to decide whether the verbs of phrasal verbs are transitive or intransitive before they can decide whether the phrasal verbs can be separated (such as, *call your dog off*) or not (*take in lodgers*). Learners will likely generalize the rule of separating the transitive verb from its preposition and insert the object. For example: *It was too late to call in an electrician* can also be expressed – *It was too late to call an electrician in* or *It was too late to call him in*.

This sentence pattern of phrasal verb “call in” will be over-generalized in the inseparable phrasal transitive verb, such as “call on” (ask to speak) *The chairman called on Mr. Sudjana to give report*. *The chairman called on him to give report* (which is still correct); Learners may also produce *The chairman called him on to give report* (which is incorrect) (Thomson and Martinet, 1980).

d. To give more confusion, the fact that there is sometimes no direct equivalent in the L1, some phrasal verbs can give learners more difficulties in understanding their meanings, such as “I am *done in*.”

Lagoeki (1990) believed that English prepositions are notoriously difficult for ESL/EFL learners to master because of L1 interference. For native speakers, prepositions present little difficulty, but for a foreign/second language learner they are confusing and largely problematic. For instance, we say, *we are at the hospital*; or *we visit a friend who is in the hospital. We lie in bed but on the couch. We watch a film at the theater but on television*. All these indicating that prepositions have strong collocational relations with other elements of language, and thus they are problematic for the EFL learners.

Gledhill (2000) claimed that many researchers systematically eliminate grammatical collocations from their analyses, considering collocation between lexical items to be the only sort worthy of examination.

It seems likely that one reason that researchers have not been interested in grammatical collocations is that such pairs lack the striking salience of collocations like significant difference or control group; however, I would argue that this lack of salience makes it all the more important that researchers bring such items to teachers’ and learners’ attention, since they are otherwise likely to be passed over unnoticed (Durrant, 2008).

Kaur and Hegelheimer (2005) stated that “formal writing in an academic setting required L2 learners to have a strong linguistic foundation, including a vast range of lexical skills”. They called attention to the fact that L2 learners did not have as much exposure to the target language as native speakers do, so they had a more limited command of the language as well as of vocabulary. Hinkel (2004) affirmed that “if non-native speakers college and university students were to succeed in competition for grades and attain their educational objectives, the level of accuracy in their writing needed to at least attempt to approximate that of native speakers of similar academic standing”. Hinkel also commented that “written academic discourse was highly conventionalized and its features [were] recurrent”.

Mounya (2010), who investigated the role of teaching collocations in raising foreign language writing proficiency, argued that a strong linear correlation exists between writing proficiency and using collocations. Thus, he recommended the adaptation of a Communicative-Collocational Approach to teaching writing which entails teaching writing through a communicative approach by developing students' collocational competence.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

To collect the required data, 200 EFL students at BA level from University of Kashan were selected through purposive sampling. The rationale behind this sampling was basically practical issues. These EFL learners' characteristics were more or less similar to typical EFL university students of Iran. In other words, these learners did not differ considerably from other EFL learners of universities in Iran. All learners were sophomores, majoring in English literature and translation. More specifically, 120 EFL learners were passing the paragraph writing course and 80 ones were passing the essay writing course. The first group (120 learners) were studying in educational year of 2008 and the second (80 learners) were in educational year of 2009. The participants were both male and female English learners and ranged in age from 19 to 21.

3.2. Instruments

Three kinds of materials were used in the writing classes to collect considerable samples of EFL learners' writings. These materials including assignments, mid-term papers and final exam papers were used in the paragraph and essay writing courses.

3.3. Procedures

Two groups were asked to write the paragraphs and essays in two successive educational years (2008 and 2009). During the semester, the books titled *paragraph development* by Arnaudet and Barret (1990) and *practical writer with readings* by Bailey and Powell (1989) were taught for the paragraph writing course and essay writing course.

The 40 participants in the educational year of 2008 were asked to write three paragraphs on the topics of "*Why is it difficult to write in English*", "*Three major causes of divorce*" and "*Night shift students*". For every topic, they had one month time to write these assignments. Indeed, they had more opportunities to refer to different resources and develop their paragraphs.

30 other participants at the next educational year (2009) were also asked to write paragraphs, both in English and Persian on the common topic of "*Environment*". These paragraphs were examined with the aim of comparing L1 and L2 grammatical collocations and also L1 impact on producing grammatical collocational phrases.

In the next step, mid-term exam including 40 essays was administered at the same educational year. The time limit that allocated for the exam was about 60 minutes.

Meanwhile, there was a common topic "*Death rate of car accident in Iran is high*" for 40 EFL learners.

Next, final exam was given at the end of the two semesters (2008 and 2009). The time limit allocated for the essays was 90 minutes on the common topic "*Modern technologies have had several effects on our way of learning*". For paragraphs with the topic of "*characteristics of a good partner*" written by other learners, 60 minutes was also devoted.

The final exam papers seemed to be more vital and challenging than other papers for learners because they tried their best to use more technical and complicated structures including grammatical collocational expressions.

It is noteworthy that the data collected including assignments and exams covered diverse topics to evaluate the grammatical collocation structures thoroughly.

Furthermore, since the researcher intended to analyze the real rate of grammatical collocations in their writing productions, the EFL learners were asked to write these paragraphs and essays without being aware of the researcher's purpose.

The research started at the beginning of the educational year of 2008 when learners initiated writing their assignments, and then it continued until the next educational year. In fact, mid-term and final exams were taken during the semester in the year 2009. After collecting the papers, the researcher began identifying grammatical collocational structures and phrases including only verb-preposition category.

In the next stage, the researcher had to find the most authentic source in order to evaluate EFL learners' collocations in their writing. To this end, *Oxford Collocations Dictionary for students of English* (2002) was used. By referring to this dictionary, the researcher was able to separate the proper grammatical collocate words from improper ones. Furthermore, some structures that were not collocations including free combinations were extracted from the data. Then frequency of the remaining expressions was calculated.

Besides, in order to evaluate the rate of grammatical collocations, the number of words, sentences and texts in each paragraph or essay were specified. Indeed, the number of words, sentences, and texts could show the rate of collocations in learners' writing.

3.5. Data Analysis

After identifying grammatical collocations (verb-preposition structures), the necessary statistical analyses were performed in order to extract the rate of grammatical collocations in the writing production of EFL learners. Due to nominal nature of data which was in terms of frequency counts rather than scores, the Chi-Square test was employed for the data analysis. That is, after gathering the data they were displayed in frequency tables.

4. Results and discussion

Grammatical collocations involve only **verb-preposition** combinations. The results of verb-preposition collocations in all writing samples collected (200 writing samples) are summarized in table1.

Table1. Results of frequency, percentage, and chi-square of *verb-preposition* collocations used by EFL learners in 200 writing samples

<i>Writing Tasks</i>	<i>Frequency and percentage of Correct collocations</i>	<i>Frequency and percentage of Incorrect collocations</i>	<i>Frequency and percentage of Free combinations</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>X²</i>
80 essays	315(79%)	68(17%)	16(4%)	383	229.96
120 paragraphs	153 (75%)	37 (18%)	14 (7%)	190	
Total	468(78%)	105(17%)	30(5%)	573	

$d_f = 1$ $\alpha = 0.05$ (3.84146)

$\alpha = 0.01$ (6.63490)

As it is shown in Table1, 573 verb-preposition collocations utilized by EFL learners in 200 academic writing samples, whereby 78% of them were correct; 17% were incorrect and 5% were free combinations. The results of chi-square also indicate that there is a significant difference between the frequency of correct and incorrect verb-preposition collocations in 200 writing samples.

Table2. Rate of grammatical collocations used by EFL learners in 200 writing samples

<i>collocations</i>	<i>Rate of collocations per words (26299)</i>	<i>Rate of collocations per sentences (3266)</i>	<i>Rate of collocations per texts (200)</i>
Correct	0.01	0.14	2.34
Incorrect	0.003	0.03	0.52
Total	0.021	0.17	2.86

As shown in Table2, the rates of grammatical collocations in 200 writing samples are 0.021, 0.17 and 2.86 per word, per sentence, and per text, respectively.

Table3. Results of Frequency, percentage, and chi-square of L1 influence on correct verb-preposition collocations used by EFL learners in 200 writing samples

<i>Writing Tasks</i>	<i>Frequency and percentage of LI influence</i>	<i>Frequency and percentage of No LI influence</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>X²</i>
essays	233 (75%)	77 (25%)	310	142.46
paragraphs	125 (83%)	25(17%)	150	
Total	358 (78%)	102(22%)	460	

$d_{f=1}$ $\alpha = 0.05$ (3..84146)

$\alpha = 0.01$ (6.63490)

The results of chi-square indicate that there is a significant difference between the frequency of correct verb-preposition collocations influenced by L1 and correct verb-preposition collocations not influenced by L1.

While EFL learners used incorrect verb-preposition collocations such as "*originate from*", "*attend to*", "*affect on*," "*end to*", "*enjoy from*" and "*influence on*", it sounds obvious that these collocations may be greatly influenced by L1, particularly as compared to their correct forms. For example, neither of verbs like *originate*, *attend*, *affect* and *enjoy* needed preposition. Additionally, the negative effect of L1 was likely exerted on combinations like *end to* and *influence on* instead of use of *end in* or *influence in* is rather obvious.

Table4. Results of frequency, percentage, and chi-square of *LI influence* on *incorrect verb-preposition* collocations used by EFL learners in 200 writing samples

<i>Writing Tasks</i>	<i>Frequency and percentage of LI influence</i>	<i>Frequency and percentage of No LI influence</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>X²</i>
essays	62(79%)	16(21%)	78	23.42
paragraphs	19(58%)	14(42%)	33	
Total	81(73%)	30(27%)	111	

$d_{f=1}$ $\alpha = 0.05$ (3..84146)

$\alpha = 0.01$ (6.63490)

The results of chi-square indicate that there is a significant difference between the frequency of incorrect verb-preposition collocations influenced by L1 and incorrect verb-preposition collocations not influenced by L1.

Table5. Results of frequency, rate, and chi-square test of L1 and L2 grammatical collocations in 30 paragraphs

<i>Type of collocation</i>	<i>Frequency of collocations</i>	<i>Rate of collocations per word</i>	<i>Rate of collocations per sentence</i>	<i>Rate of collocations per text</i>	<i>X²</i>
<i>Persian preposition-verb</i>	31	0.019	0.19	1.03	2.88
<i>English verb-preposition</i>	19	0.01	0.1	0.63	

As pointed out in Table 5, the rate of Persian grammatical collocations is 0.019, 0.19 and 1.03 per 1590 words, 157 sentences and 30 texts. Moreover, the rate of English grammatical collocations is 0.01, 0.1 and 0.63 per 1584 words, 189 sentences, and 30 texts respectively. Results of chi-square also indicate that there is no significant difference between the rate of Persian and English grammatical collocations in 30 paragraphs.

As for the grammatical collocations, the frequency of correct grammatical collocations was more than that of incorrect ones. Accordingly, the result may be interpreted in two ways: first, higher frequency of correct grammatical collocations can be attributed to L1 positive influence. In other words, when there is no certainty in utilizing correct verb-preposition collocations, EFL learners might resort to L1 resources. As shown in Table 3, in most cases L1 had a positive effect on utilizing correct verb-preposition collocations. It could be concluded that L1 played a more effective role in utilizing correct verb-preposition collocations.

The next inference drawn from the data is that EFL learners might be more efficient in using correct verb-preposition collocations; because they have been exposed to this kind of collocations more than other ones and verb-preposition collocation has also fewer tokens than other categories. In other words, since the number of verb-preposition collocations is generally less than that of lexical ones, the higher frequency of correct use seem to be natural and rather expected. EFL learners might acquire verb-preposition collocations better due to limited number of grammatical collocations and consequently higher exposure of EFL learners to this kind of collocations.

The results do not support the research done by Mahmoud (2005) that revealed the Arabic students produced 151(36%) correct collocations, 39(9.28%) of which were grammatical and 269(64%) incorrect collocations, 45(10.71%) of which were grammatical. Mahmoud (2005) argued that most of incorrect grammatical collocations seem to be due to negative interlingual transfer from Arabic.

To sum, positive L1 transfer and limited number of some grammatical collocations were emerged as possible explanations for the accuracy of using collocations by EFL learners.

More specifically, the answer to the first research question is 0.021, 0.17, and 2.86 per 26299 words, 3266 sentences and 200 texts, respectively. Moreover, as the results show, the answer to the second research question is yes. Eventually, as illustrated in Table5, the critical value of X^2 with 1 degree of freedom is 3.84 for the 0.05 level and 6.63 for the 0.01 level.

According to the obtained data ($X^2 = 2.88$), the claim that there is a difference between the rate of collocations across L1 and L2 writing tasks is rejected.

5. Conclusion

The findings of the present study may lead to the view that one of the main objectives of the writing course should be collocation instruction. Each individual word may be known to the learners, but they probably do not know the whole collocation. This lack of collocational knowledge can considerably affect on the writing skill. In other words, teachers should take into account the importance of collocations in their teaching and learning to improve EFL learners' productive skills such as writing. Changing the learners' attitude towards collocation particularly in more problematic parts may broaden vocabulary skill. According to this research the greatest problem of Iranian EFL learners in collocation was related to noun-verb collocations. Teachers can concentrate on this area and consider numerous classroom activities and exercises in order to promote the use of this kind of collocation, particularly in writing skill.

Moreover, syllabus designer and material developers can benefit from the current study. Collocation is one of the most important and problematic parts for EFL learners. The reason for this is not that L2 learners are incapable of learning collocation, but most likely they have never exposed in formal and explicit way to the lexical and grammatical collocations of target language.

In addition to direct teaching tasks, a bilingual list of collocations could be included in the course books. This is in line with the students' tendency to transfer collocations from their mother tongue (Persian). The English books used in Iran high schools contain single word lists at the end of each unit. These single words could be replaced by word combinations or collocations. Such bilingual lists of collocations might help in counteracting interlingual errors. They could be a source of input for direct acquisition. Since collocations are fixed units, as opposed to free single items, they could be listed with their Persian equivalents at the end of each unit or at the end of each course book instead of single word lists.

It is necessary to mention that translators can also profit from the present study. Due to the lack of collocational knowledge, serious problems are created in translation. So, translators should be aware of collocations and consider their equivalences in both L1 and L2 to enhance the quality of their translations. In addition to the monolingual collocation

dictionaries (e.g. Oxford collocations dictionary for the students of English, 2002) bilingual English-Persian and Persian-English dictionaries of collocations are needed.

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Title

Comparing TEFL and English Translation Learners' Beliefs about Language Learning in the Iranian Context

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Abstract

Foreign language learners have different beliefs about language learning which shape their expectations. This paper reports on a study of beliefs held by 116 English as a foreign language and English Translation learners at an Iranian university. The study also examined if background variable (academic major) would influence learners' language learning beliefs. The Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI), consisting of 34 items was administered to TEFL and English Translation students enrolled in Fall semester, 2012 at Islamic Azad University, Kermanshah Branch. Data were analyzed using descriptive analyses of the BALLI. Some interesting similarities and differences were identified

between TEFL students and English Translation students in terms of the beliefs' structure and the strength of the beliefs at each item level. Results indicated that participants reported holding strong and similar beliefs in all categories of BALLI.

Keywords: Learner beliefs about language learning, Iranian EFL learners, Field of English studies

1. Introduction

Many factors contribute to the process of second or foreign language learning. Research on learners' characteristics that greatly influence the individuals' success on language learning has been a main concern among language learning researchers in the last two decades. Therefore, numerous studies have been designed to investigate learners' variables which affect the language learners. Learners' beliefs about language learning are among these learners' characteristics which according to Bernat and Gvozdenko (2005) are a result of a number of factors that shape one's thinking and belief formation, including past experiences, culture, context, and numerous personal factors.

Beliefs are defined as "psychologically held understandings, premises, or propositions about the world that are felt to be true" (Richardson, 1996 p.102), and said to act as strong filters of reality (Arnold, 1999). In the language acquisition context, beliefs have been defined as 'implicit theories', 'self-constructed representational systems, and "general assumptions that students hold about themselves as learners, about factors influencing learning, and about the nature of learning and teaching"' (Victori & Lockheart, 1995 p.224). Hence, learners' beliefs play an important role in the process of language learning, because it has been observed that successful learners develop insightful beliefs about language learning processes, their own abilities, and the use of effective learning strategies, which have a facilitative effect on learning. Rifkin, 2000; Tumposky, 1991; Benson & Voller, 1999; White, 1999; and Tanaka & Ellise, 2003).

Scrutinizing second/foreign language learning research has proved that beliefs are fix within the learners and very difficult to change (Kern, 1995; Weinstein, 1994; Peacock, 2001). Furthermore, interdisciplinary research presents this idea that beliefs are integrated with many factors such as personality traits (Bernat, Carter & Hall, 2009). As a result, researchers attempted to explore how these beliefs differ in language learners. These individual differences embrace a wide range such as gender, age, nationality, learning style,

personality type, situational influences motivation, (Bernat & Gvozdenko, 2005; Wenden, 1991; Horwitz, 1999; Rifkin, 2000; Bernat & Lloyd, 2007).

2. Review of the Related Literature

Horwitz designed a questionnaire to measure learners' beliefs regarding language learning in 1985. The Beliefs about Language Learning Instrument or BALLI is a 34-item Likert type scale which learners mark the degree of agreement or disagreement. Questions of enquiry embrace learner's beliefs about the existence of aptitude, effective learning and communication strategies, the role of age and gender in language learning, the importance of vocabulary, grammar, and practice among others (Horwitz, 1985, 1987, 1988). After the introduction of BALLI, various researchers have attempted to disclose the effects of learners' beliefs on the process of language learning. The relationship of these beliefs have been investigated with factors such as strategy use (Yang, 1999); anxiety (Tsai, 2004; Kunt, 1998; Banya & Chen, 1997); motivation (Kim-Yoon, 2000; Banya & Chen, 1997); learner autonomy (Cotterall, 1995; Wenden, 1991); attitude (Banya & Chen, 1997); achievement (Banya & Chen, 1997); gender (Bacon & Finnemann, 1992; Siebert, 2003; Banya & Chen, 1997), personality traits (Bernat, 2006); and language proficiency (Huang & Tsai, 2003; Peacock, 1998, 1999; Mantle-Bromley, 1995; Tanaka & Ellis, 2003). According to Bernat (2006) these studies have produced important insights. For example, they found that learners who held unrealistic beliefs or misconceptions about language learning were more anxious than those who held more positive and realistic beliefs.

Studying 332 Korean university EFL students' beliefs about language learning, their language learning strategies, and the relationships among their beliefs, strategy use, and L2 proficiency, Park (1995) found three variables predicted students TOEFL scores to some extent. At the same time, Truitt (1995) discovered different beliefs among Korean EFL learners. Truitt interpreted these differences as possibly culturally-based. Scrutinizing Korean students' beliefs from another perspective, Chung (1999) investigated the effect of prior beliefs on the ability of second language (L2) listeners to understand texts. 137 Korean students participated in his research. The results showed that students' prior beliefs had no significant effect on the ability to comprehend persuasive texts.

Similarly, Horwitz (1999) studied similarities and differences of eight different international studies which adopted BALLI. She found the Asian and Turkish heritage students believed learning a foreign language was equal to vocabulary learning associated

with better job opportunities. Furthermore, most of the students emphasized the importance of pronunciation and deemphasized the importance of grammar. Horwitz (1999) maintained that in addition to culture the differences likely reflect the relative status of language learning in the various contexts and indicate that social, political, and economic forces could also influence learner beliefs.

In a similar study, Mori (1999) investigated the beliefs of 187 university students enrolled in Japanese language at various proficiency levels in the US. She examined the relationship between epistemological beliefs (i.e. beliefs about learning in general) and beliefs about language learning and also the relationship between beliefs and L2 achievement. The results of the study revealed that learners who believed that L2 learning was easy manifested higher levels of achievement. In addition, this study revealed that there were belief differences between novices and advanced learners. Advanced learners were less likely to believe in simple, unambiguous knowledge or the existence of absolute, single answers than novice learners.

In a similar manner, Shimo (2002) studied the beliefs of 5 Japanese students studying at an American university. They believed that good pronunciations and listening comprehension skills were the keys to improve their listening comprehension skills. Moreover, these learners believed that the English learning environments in Japan could not provide enough opportunities to promote their listening comprehension competence. Along the same line of thought, Bernat (2004) used BALLI to investigate the beliefs of 20 Vietnamese ESL learners. The results showed that the respondents indicated the importance of practice and repetition as well as cultural understanding. Similarly, Chiou (2006) research findings about English listening beliefs revealed that the students stressed the importance of excellent English pronunciation and cultural understanding.

Likewise, Banya & Chen (1997) have conducted a study using BALLI to explore the relationship of beliefs about language learning of 224 Taiwanese EFL learners and factors such as motivation, attitude, motivational intensity, strategy use, anxiety, and English achievement. The results showed that all above mentioned variables were influenced by students' beliefs, with attitude being the variable most greatly influenced by beliefs, while anxiety was negatively related to beliefs. To put it in different words, learners with positive beliefs about foreign language learning tend to have stronger motivation, hold favorable attitude and higher motivational intensity, use more strategies, are less anxious, and have better language achievement.

Similarly, to investigate a sample of 250 Taiwanese remote junior high school EFL learners' language learning beliefs, Chang and Shen (2006) used (BALLI). The results revealed that the participants endorsed various beliefs and language learning strategies and a moderate correlation was found between them.

With respect to gender, Bernat & Lloyd (2007) found no significant belief differences among males and females in relation to language learning. In the same manner, Fatehi (2010) examined the correlation between Iranian students' beliefs, attitudes and norms and students learning, the influence of gender, age and field of study. The results of this study showed to what extent age; gender and field of study affect students' beliefs about English learning.

In a similar study Rieger (2009) used a modified Hungarian version of Horwitz's (1987) BALLI to investigate not only gender effect, but also the differences in learners' beliefs based on their target language. The results showed a number of significant differences based on the gender and target language of respondents.

As stated before, a number of studies have focused on learner beliefs and learning strategies among American university students engaged in learning various foreign languages since the last three decades. For instance, Adapting BALLI to 257 middle school students about learning French and Spanish in Kansas City, Kansas, Mantle-Bromely (1995) found out that many students had misconceptions about their second language learning. For example, a surprising 44% of the participants believed that language learning was mainly learning new vocabulary, and 34% believed that language learning was mostly a matter of translation from English.

Along the same line, BALLI findings of Siebert (2003) study obtained in a US context revealed that students generally recognize the existence of foreign language aptitude, place strong emphasis on pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary acquisition.

In a somewhat similar vein, Mokhtari (2007) compared the language learning strategies and beliefs about language learning of 166 university students learning Persian in American universities. In descriptive analyses of the BALLI, results showed that participants reported holding strong beliefs in the categories of "motivation and expectation" and "foreign language aptitude". Moreover, a majority of the participants also reported strong beliefs about the importance of learning Persian and strong motivations for learning Persian, particularly to get to know native speakers of Persian better.

Research regarding the effect of field of study differences among Iranian EFL learners' beliefs about language learning is sparse. There have to date been very few studies of the

relationship between learner beliefs and their field of study (academic major). Little research can be found in this area. The aim of this study is to compare the beliefs held by Iranian students majoring in TEFL and English Translation. Therefore, this study fills an important gap in current research on the language beliefs of learners of English as a foreign language in Iranian context which has so far remained untouched. Thus the purpose of the present study is to investigate the following research question:

Is there any significant difference between language learning beliefs of Iranian English translation and TEFL learners?

Hence, the null hypothesis put forward is:

There is no significant difference between language learning beliefs of Iranian English translation and TEFL learners.

3. Method

3.1 Participants

The participants of the study were 116 BA language learners studying at a university in Kermanshah, Iran. The BALLI inventory was administered to 54 teaching English as a foreign language and 62 English translation learners. All students had received at least seven years of formal English instruction in high school and guidance school. The 116 participants represented both genders. Participants were all native speakers of Persian ranged from 18 to 38 years of age with a medium age of 26. There were 14 males and 102 females.

3.2 Instrumentation

The instrument used as a research tool in the present study is a translated Iranian version of Horwitz's (1987) inventory. As mentioned above, the survey instrument is a 34-item questionnaire, the BALLI (Horwitz, 1987). Horwitz (1987) defines five major areas dealt with by the inventory: foreign language aptitude; difficulty of language learning; the nature of language learning; and learning and communication strategies and motivation. The statements on a Likert scale should be either expressing a positive/favorable or a negative/unfavorable attitude towards the object of interest.

3.3 Procedure

Students from TEFL and Translation department were requested to answer all BALLI items anonymously. Then, the gathered data was entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, Version 19). For ease of viewing, the BALLI item ratings were collapsed

into three categories, representing agree, neutral and disagree as well as difficult, neutral and easy. Descriptive analysis in the form of percentages was computed.

4. Results and discussion

The main purpose of this study was to compare Iranian TEFL and English translation learners' beliefs about language learning. The results of the BALLI have disclosed some interesting findings, which shed light into the Iranian learners' beliefs about the nature of the English language including its difficulty, the existence of language aptitude, learning and communication strategies, and motivation to succeed. The findings are represented by frequency of responses in the tables below. For the purposes of reporting the BALLI findings, student responses have been categorized into 5 areas based on Horwitz' (1987) taxonomy. Scales have been collapsed for ease of reporting (e.g. Tumposky, 1991; Peacock, 1999; Tercanlioglu, 2005). Numerical data represented by frequencies has been rounded to the nearest whole.

4.1 Foreign Language Aptitude

BALLI items 1, 2, 5, 10, 29, 15, 22, 32, 34 relate to the effects of age on FLA, general existence of specialized abilities for language learning, and beliefs about the characteristics of successful and unsuccessful language learners. Thus, these items address the issue of individual potential for achievement in language learning. With reference to age in BALLI Item 1, 89% of translation respondents and 88% of TEFL respondents in this study either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that "It is easier for children than adults to learn a foreign language", indicating a popular belief that children are better language learners than adults. Thus students hold beliefs consistent with research studies showing a positive effect of young age on - for example, phonological development (Patkowski, 1980; 1982; 1990); and fluency (Donato, Antonek & Tucker, 1996).

The present participants also endorsed the concept of the existence of special abilities for foreign language learning. In item 2, 83% translation respondents and 85% of TEFL respondents indicated that some people have a special ability for learning foreign languages. In contrast, in item 15, only 33% of translation and 45% TEFL students agreed that they have this special ability. More than 42% of both groups had a neutral position in this regard and were not certain about their abilities. Interestingly, although in the current study only 40% of learners believed that they did possess a special aptitude for foreign language learning, 82% (Item 34) believed that everyone can learn to speak a foreign language.

Items 5 and 22 indicate respectively whether language aptitude is culture or gender specific. Here, 25% translation respondents and 18% of TEFL respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that people from their country were good at learning foreign languages; however, the rest (42% translation and 38% of TEFL) of respondents were uncertain. Interestingly, 33% of translation and 44% of TEFL learners believed that Iranian were not successful in foreign language learning. In terms of gender, 18% translation and 31% of TEFL learners believed that women are better than men at learning foreign languages. 45% both groups took a neutral position and 47% translation respondents and 25% of TEFL respondents completely disagreed. With regard to almost reversed proportion of males (12%) to females (88%) in the study; with females representing a majority, it seems a bit strange. It is therefore supposed that respondents favored their own gender with respect to ability in language learning while the data reveals the other way round.

Further, with reference to the effects of intelligence on language learning (Item 32), 62% of translation and 78% TEFL learners' respondents believed that "people who speak more than one language are very intelligent", however 33% translation and 14% TEFL were uncertain of the effects of one's IQ on acquiring additional languages. Both groups had similar ideas; however, only in this particular item there were at least 13% differences between their answers. In item 10, 50% of translation learners were uncertain if it is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one while 60% TEFL learners believed that learning a foreign language facilitates learning another language. It seems that both groups had similar idea in this regard.

The last item was item number 29. 71% of translation and 63% TEFL respondents did not believe that being good at mathematics or science meant that one would not be good at learning foreign languages, suggesting that the majority of respondents do not make a distinction between an aptitude for the sciences versus an aptitude for the humanities-type subjects - a distinction put forward by Gardner (1983) in his Multiple Intelligence theory distinguishing linguistic intelligence from logical/mathematical intelligence. None of translation students agreed with this idea and only 10% of TEFL were strongly agreed. Nearly 30% of translation and 17% TEFL students took a neutral position.

4.2 Difficulty of Language Learning

BALLI items 3, 4, 14, 24, and 28 scrutinize the general difficulty of learning a foreign language and the specific difficulty of the students' particular target language. In Item 3, 50% of translation respondents and 65% of TEFL respondents believed that some languages are easier than others, though 15% of both groups did not make such a distinction. In terms of

the difficulty of the English language in item 4, 48% translation respondents regarded English as a language of medium difficulty, though 35% believed it was either difficult or very difficult. Only 17% of respondents regarded English as an easy or very easy language to learn. On the other hand, 25% TEFL learners believed that English language was difficult or very difficult. 55% considered English as a language of medium difficulty. 20% of TEFL learners believed that English language was difficult or very difficult. In item 14 which investigates student expectations of the length of time it takes to learn a foreign language most students had similar ideas. Regarding Translation respondents, if someone spent 1 hour per day learning a language, 12% believed it would take less than one year, 22% believed it would take one to two years to learn it, 45% believed it would take 3-5 years to learn it, and 5% believed it would take 4-10 years to learn it, while 16% believed that one cannot learn a new language by studying it for one hour a day. However, TEFL learners had different ideas. If someone spent 1 hour per day learning a language, 17% believed it would take less than one year, 25% believed it would take one to two years to learn it, 34% believed it would take 3-5 years to learn it, and 8% believed it would take 4-10 years to learn it, while 16% believed that one cannot learn a new language by studying it for one hour a day. The students in both groups had different ideas toward this item. According to Bernat (2006) the disparity of responses could likely be explained by the subjective nature of the question, namely, that the question gives no other clues as to the learners' exposure to the language outside the '1-hour block', which could likely affect the rate of acquisition. Item 24 and 28 indicate the relative difficulty of different language skills.

With respect to the difficulty of oral productive and aural receptive skills (item 24), 23% of translation respondents believed that it is easier to speak than to understand a foreign language, however, 67% disagreed. A further 20% were uncertain whether speaking or listening for comprehension was easier. On the other hand, 18% TEFL respondents believed that it is easier to speak than to understand, however, 52% disagreed. 30% were uncertain whether speaking or listening for comprehension was easier with a slightly greater number than translation respondents. Similarly, in item 28, more than 55% of both respondents agreed that it is easier to read than write in a foreign language, however, 22% disagreed. A further 20% neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement.

4.3 The Nature of Language Learning

BALLI items 8, 11, 16, 20, 25, and 26 include a broad range of issues related to the nature of the language learning process. BALLI items 8 and 11 referred to the role of cultural contact in language learning. Here 78% translation, compared with 64% of TEFL respondents,

believed that it is necessary to know the culture of the foreign language under study in order to speak the language, reflecting an understanding of the importance of gaining a linguistic pragmatic awareness for effective communication. Nearly 10% of both groups were disagreed to the importance of culture. More than 64% respondents agreed with the statement that "It is best to learn English in an English-speaking country", recognizing the inherent value of learning language in real context, where there is a greater exposure to the foreign language, its culture and its people. Next, Item 16 related to the importance of vocabulary learning when acquiring a new language. 75% of translation respondents in this study, and 78% in TEFL's, believed that learning new words is the most important part of language learning, while 12% of both groups neither agreed nor disagreed on this issue, and 13% translation and TEFL 9% disagreed with the statement. The results among respondents in both groups seem to indicate a similarity in the learners' beliefs about the importance of vocabulary acquisition in relation to other factors in language learning. Another very similar beliefs was observed in Item 20, where respondents were asked to rate the importance of learning grammar. 50% translation students and 58% of TEFL believed that the most important part of learning a foreign language was learning grammar, though a similar proportion of students (25%) undecided. A further 26% translation respondent and 14% TEFL were disagreed respectively in both groups. These findings, which reflect an almost even distribution, may likely be due to a recent shift in language teaching methodologies. Item 25 determines if the learner views language learning as different from other types of learning. 54% of translation respondents and 47% in TEFL group disagreed that people who are good at academic subjects are not good at foreign languages. 24% translation and 18% TEFL respectively, did not agree nor disagree. However, 22% translation and 35% TEFL were agreed on the matter. Finally, Item 26 asks learners whether they believe the most important part of learning English is learning to translate from the learners' own mother tongue. Responses indicate that 32% of both translation and TEFL learners do not believe translating to be a highly valued learning strategy. Further, 35% of TEFL and 28% translation learners had in fact emphasized translation as a very important part of language learning. More than 30% were uncertain about the role of translation.

4.4 Learning and Communication Strategies

BALLI items 7, 9, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, and 21 address learning and communication strategies and are probably the most directly related to a student's actual language learning practices. Items 17 and 21 refer to learning strategies, and items 7, 9, 12, and 13 concern communication strategies. First, with reference to 'traditional' learning strategies (item 21),

the majority of students, 95% TEFL and 91% translations endorsed repetition and practice with cassettes/tapes or CD, though 2% of TEFL and 6% of Translation neither agreed nor disagreed about their relative importance. This finding highlights the learners' perception of the importance of 'self-access learning' and the belief about autonomous learning - themes which have emerged in recent years in FLA and TEFL methodology literature (Benson & Voller, 1997). However, in Item 17, 90% of both respondents agreed that it is "important to repeat and practice a lot". Similarly, 90% of both respondents admitted that they enjoyed practicing English with the foreigners they meet, while 10% were neutral (item 12). With regard to item 18, 43% of translation respondents and 29% of TEFL reported feeling shy in communicating with foreigners, though 45% and 48% respectively, did not. Communicative apprehension, whether in L1 or L2, can be a result of a number of factors, including one's personality traits and states, such as introversion and anxiety. However, it is encouraging to find that 90% of TEFL and 85% of translation learners believed that "It is OK to guess if you don't know a word English" (item 13). It likely means that learners feel confident that they can work out the meaning of unfamiliar words from the context of the utterance or written text, and not feel anxious about having to understand each individual word. In item 9, 63% translation and slightly less in TEFL 56% disagreed with the notion that one should not say anything in English until one can say it grammatically correctly. Nonetheless, 88% translation and slightly less in 83% TEFL of respondents believed it is important to speak English with an "excellent pronunciation" (item 7). These findings seem to suggest that learners view it both important to speak with an excellent pronunciation as well as with grammatical correctness. Finally, item 19 assessed the learners' belief on whether one can correct incorrectly acquired language forms. To the statement "If beginning students are allowed to make mistakes in English, it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later on", 45% of both groups responded in disagreement, however 27% of translation and 35% of TEFL believed that if their mistakes were not corrected immediately, they might become permanent mistakes in their mind.

4.5 Motivation and Expectations

BALLI items 6, 30, 33, 27, 23, and 31 concern desires and opportunities the students associate with the learning of their target language. In this category, most responses except item 27 appear to show the learners' enthusiasm for their language learning objectives. For instance, in item 23, 85% of translation respondents and 90% of TEFL agreed that they wanted to learn to speak English very well, consequently in item 6, 46% TEFL and 50% of translation believed that they would eventually speak English very well. In both groups (18%

and 20% respectively) of learners did not believe in their success in learning English. Moreover, only 30% in both groups believed the importance of English speaking to find better job opportunities (item27), reflecting the lack of instrumental motivation in both groups. However, integrative motivation was also evident from responses to Items 33 and 31, where 73% (and 90% respectively) of learners agreed that they would like to learn English to get to know and understand the natives better. Furthermore, in this study, 73% of the EFL learners expressed the desire to get to know English better (Item 33) and 90% indicated that they wanted to have English friends (Item31). Finally, in item 30, 60% of translation and 80% of TEFL respondents believed that the importance of acquiring the ability to speak English highly. With increasing globalization in commerce, science and technology, increased movement of capital, labor, and tourism, and its widespread use in media and entertainment, English has become the vehicle for international communication. In summary, the analysis of findings in this study has revealed many similar trends in Iranian learners' beliefs.

Overall, student responses regarding foreign language aptitude were all either similar or very similar (see Table 1). Both groups believed in child supremacy with respect to the age factor, and both endorsed the concept of foreign language aptitude. However, they differed slightly (16%) on the issue whether people who speak more than one language are very intelligent.

Table 1 *Foreign Language Aptitude Frequencies of Response*

Items	Majors	A	N	D	
1	It is easier for children than adults to learn a second language.	Translation	89	6	3
	TEFL	88	7	5	
2	Some people have a special ability for learning second language.	Translation	83	3	14
		TEFL	85	9	6
5	People in my country are very good at learning second languages.	Translation	25	42	33
		TEFL	16	38	44
10	It is easier for someone who already speaks foreign language to learn another one.	Translation	50	28	22
		TEFL	60	25	15
29	People who are good at mathematics or science are not good at learning foreign languages.	Translation	0	29	71
		TEFL	10	17	63
15	I have a special ability for learning foreign languages.	Translation	33	55	12
		TEFL	45	42	13
22	Women are better than men at learning	Translation	18	45	47
		TEFL	31	44	25
32	People who speak more than one language are very intelligent.	Translation	62	33	5
		TEFL	78	14	18
34	Everyone can learn to speak a second language.	Translation	82	18	0
		TEFL	92	4	4

Note: Values represent percentages. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. A=collapsed scores for Strongly Agree and Agree; N= Neutral; D=collapsed scores for Disagree and Strongly Disagree.

With respect to the difficulty of language learning (Table 2), both translation and TEFL participants held very similar views. Their estimates on the difficulty of the English language, as well as the length of time it takes to learn it, were very close, with the exception of the 3-5 year period.

Table 2 *Difficulty of Language Learning Frequencies of Response*

Items		Majors	A	N	D
3	Some languages are easier than others.	Translation	50	39	11
		TEFL	65	20	15
4	The English language is A = A very difficult or difficult language; N = language of medium difficulty; D = A very easy or easy language	Translation	35	48	17
		TEFL	25	55	20
14	If someone spent one hour a day learning a language, how long would it take them to speak it very well? Less than 1 year Translation 12% TEFL 17% - 1 to 2 years Translation 22% TEFL 25% - 3 to 5 years Translation 45% TEFL 34% - 5 to 10 years Translation 5% TEFL 8% You can't learn a language in 1 hour a day. Translation 16% TEFL 16%				
24	It is easier to speak than understand a foreign language	Translation	23	20	67
		TEFL	18	30	52
28	It is easier to read than to write a foreign language.	Translation	55	19	26
		TEFL	58	20	22

Note: Values represent percentages. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. A=collapsed scores for Strongly Agree and Agree; N= Neutral; D=collapsed scores for Disagree and Strongly Disagree.

Next, the nature of language learning showed a number of close similarities (Table 3). Both study groups agreed on the importance of vocabulary and grammar learning. Both believed that it is best to study a foreign language in the native country and become familiar with the native culture of that country.

Table 3 *The Nature of Language Learning Frequencies of Response*

Items		Majors	A	N	D
8	It is necessary to learn about English-speaking cultures to speak English	Translation	78	10	12
		TEFL	64	25	11
11	It is best to learn English in an English-speaking country.	Translation	64	14	12
		TEFL	68	12	20

16	The most important part of learning a foreign language is learning new words.	Translation	75	12	13
		TEFL	78	13	9
20	The most important part of learning a foreign language is learning grammar.	Translation	50	24	26
		TEFL	58	26	14
25	Learning a foreign language is different from learning other academic subjects.	Translation	22	24	54
		TEFL	35	18	47
26	The most important part of learning English is learning to translate from my own language.	Translation	28	40	32
		TEFL	35	30	35

Note: Values represent percentages. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. A=collapsed scores for Strongly Agree and Agree; N= Neutral; D=collapsed scores for Disagree and Strongly Disagree

Beliefs concerning learning and communication strategies (Table 4) in both groups were also similar. Both groups held very similar beliefs with respect to not speaking in a foreign language unless correctly, guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words, the importance of practice in FL; and were similar in the areas of pronunciation, correction of errors, and practicing with audio equipment. However, the respondents differed in their reported degree of shyness in speaking English with native speakers.

Table 4 *Learning and Communication Strategies Frequencies of Response*

Items		Majors	A	N	D
7	It is important to speak English with an excellent pronunciation.	Translation	88	10	0
		TEFL	83	11	7
9	You shouldn't say anything in English until you can say it correctly.	Translation	25	12	63
		TEFL	30	14	56
12	I enjoy practicing English [with the English people I meet].*	Translation	85	8	7
		TEFL	90	10	0
13	It's OK to guess if you don't know a word in English.	Translation	85	5	10
		TEFL	90	6	4
17	It is important to repeat and practice a lot	Translation	90	5	0
		TEFL	93	3	4
18	I feel shy speaking English with other people.	Translation	43	12	45
		TEFL	29	23	48
19	If beginning students are allowed to make mistakes in English it will be difficult for them to speak correctly later on.	Translation	27	25	48
		TEFL	35	18	42
21	It is important to practice with cassettes/tapes, or CDs.	Translation	91	6	3
		TEFL	95	2	3

Note: Values represent percentages. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.100. A=collapsed scores for Strongly Agree and Agree; N= Neutral; D=collapsed scores for Disagree and Strongly Disagree.

Finally, student responses regarding their motivations and expectation for success (Table 5) showed marked similarities to items relating to personal motivation for learning English and their expectation for ultimate success. However, they differed in their degree of speaking English importance in finding or having better job opportunities. Regarding the role of English language ability in finding job, more than 32% of both groups refuted the impact of English speaking and give little value to this item. Only 23% of translation and 35% TEFL students were agreed in this regard.

Table 5 *Motivation and Expectations Frequencies of Response*

Items		Majors	A	N	D
6	I believe I will learn to speak English very well.	Translation	46	36	18
		TEFL	50	30	20
30	People in my country feel that it is important to speak English	Translation	60	29	11
		TEFL	80	10	10
33	I would like to learn English so that I can get to know English people better.	Translation	73	19	8
		TEFL	73	21	6
27	If I learn to speak English very well, I will have better job opportunities.	Translation	28	40	32
		TEFL	35	30	35
23	I want to learn to speak English very well.	Translation	85	8	7
		TEFL	90	4	6
31	I would like to have English friends.	Translation	95	5	0
		TEFL	90	7	3

Note: Values represent percentages. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

5. Conclusion

The main purpose of this study was to compare the overall trends of English translation and TEFL learners' beliefs in the Iranian context. Therefore, it can be claimed that the current study was the first research attempt to compare and present empirical evidence reflecting university EFL learners' beliefs about foreign language learning in Iranian contexts. Analyzing learners' beliefs paved the way to understanding their thinking, expectations, and actions in the different field of studies. The results revealed that the beliefs held by participants were found to be similar in all the items in the BALLI. Thus, it can be concluded that English translation and TEFL learners in Iranian context do not differ in their language learning beliefs. The Iranian university students in this study were highly motivated for learning English integratively. For instance, participants believed that learning the English language is very important because they would get to know the English native speakers as well as their culture better. This shows that students were motivated to learn English more for social interaction rather than academic purposes or better job opportunities. Furthermore,

because of the dominant grammar-translation method used in teaching English in Iran, many of these students believed on the importance of teaching through translation and grammar in learning English.

In addition, the participants strongly expressed a desire to learn to speak English well and make English speaking friends. These participants also acknowledged the importance of cultural knowledge, learning environment, pronunciation, and guessing in speaking English.

5.1. Applications and Pedagogical Implications

The findings of this study have both theoretical and pedagogical implications for research on foreign language teaching and learning and practice of English instruction in Iran. Theoretically, this study explored language learning beliefs about English language learning of Iranian university students, the most commonly taught language in Iran. It has been argued that learners' prescriptive beliefs about how to best learn a foreign language represent their awareness of language learning and have the potential for developing self regulation. Such beliefs indicate that learners have begun to reflect on what they are doing in line with their goals, and this awareness may ultimately lead to self regulation.

Participants of this study show high integrative motivation and self perceptions of foreign language aptitude. They believe that they will learn to speak English very well and they strongly believe that by learning English they can get to know English native speakers and their culture better. Therefore, instructors can help students by discussing the value of knowing English and the importance of socio-cultural elements in learning English. Material developers and educational policy-makers should also develop a curriculum that reflects the needs of these culture-oriented students.

Iranian language learners in this study believe that "learning a foreign language is not solely the matter of translating from English". Also, they believe that learning English is acquiring the grammar rules. Therefore, instead of using solely Grammar-Translation method, English instructors should use a communicative language teaching method which is more learner-centered, more practice-oriented and emphasizes social interaction for the development of students' proficiency more than other methods. This way, instructors can help students by providing frequent positive feedback, creating a non-threatening environment in which students feel comfortable speaking English. Moreover, Horwitz (1987) believed that teachers' discussions at the beginning of an EFL course related to their beliefs and expectations helped to clear up some of their students' misconceptions about language learning. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that EFL teachers' consciousness of learners' beliefs and expectations "may contribute to a more conducive learning environment and to

more effective learning" (Chawhan & Oliver, 2000:25). To put it in nutshell, it should be mentioned that learners' beliefs toward foreign language learning should be considered as an important learners variables. Teachers should be sensitive in selecting teaching methods and techniques, which are crucial in affecting their students' language learning beliefs.

5.2. Suggestions for Further Research

One of the limitations of this study was the imbalance of gender among respondents - there were 102 females and 14 males. It should also be noted, that data was obtained from a sample population of learners at only one particular university in Iran; and thus it may be possible that different outcomes may be produced by different population samples. Nonetheless, caution should be exercised in generalizing the current findings beyond this student population, or indeed to other wider populations. Whether the same findings would be found at other universities remains unknown. Therefore, replication of this study with a different sample population, if possible a larger sample is suggested. Finally, it is worth noticing to remember that a construct as cognitively and affectively rich as one's belief system is hard to assess by a set of responses to normative statements. Thus the beliefs about language learning held by the respondents are only those specified in the BALLI instrument. Application of other instruments and techniques to collect data regarding learners beliefs about language learning is recommended too.

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Title

The Relationship of Burnout, Engagement, and Employment with Academic Achievement of Iranian EFL University Students

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship of burnout, engagement, and employment with academic achievement of Iranian EFL students. The participants included 275 EFL students from Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman, Iran. The total sample was comprised of 10% freshmen, 34% sophomores, 26% juniors, and 28% seniors. A questionnaire including Maslach Burnout Inventory – Student Survey and Utrecht Work Engagement Scale for Students, adopted from Schaufeli, Martínez, Marques Pinto, Salanova, & Bakker (2002), was used in this study. In order to find out about the students' academic achievement and employment, they were asked to mention information regarding their total grade point average (GPA), employment, and hours of employment. The results showed that burnout was negatively related to academic achievement while engagement was positively related to that. Neither employment nor the hours of employment had any significant effect on the academic achievement of students. In addition, no significant relationship was found between students' age, gender, and study year on one hand and their academic achievement on the other hand.

Keywords: Academic Achievement; Burnout; Employment; Engagement

1. Introduction

A person's education is closely linked to their life chance, income, and well being (Battle & Lewis, 2000) so that Academic achievement is of significant importance for students. Students with less academic achievement are more likely to be at risk of dropping out of school, later unemployment, (Woodward & Fergusson, 2000), psychopathology (Velez, Jhonson, & Cohen, 1989), substance abuse (Wichstrom, 1998), and delinquent behavior (Yoshikawa, 1995). Therefore, it is important to have a clear understanding of what benefits or hinders one's educational attainment. Many factors can have effect on students' academic achievement including burnout, engagement, and employment. The burnout and engagement processes are hypothesized to be the erosion of, or the enhancement of the three constructs of energy, identification, and efficacy (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Some research has found that burnout and engagement can appear in academic context and affect students' well-being (e.g., Schaufeli, Martínez, Marqués-Pinto, Salanova, & Bakker, 2002a; Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, & Bakker, 2002b). Student burnout can lead to higher absenteeism, lower motivation to do required course work, and higher percentage dropout (Meier & Schmeck, 1985; Ramist, 1981). These factors can result in students' lower academic achievement. On the other hand, student engagement leads to higher academic achievement by initiating high level of energy and mental resilience while studying, deriving a sense of significance, enthusiasm, and inspiration from study, and finally being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one's study (Schaufeli et al., 2002a). Some students work during their academic studies. Students' employment can have deteriorating as well as beneficial effects on students depending on the reason of working, whether the occupation is related to their field of study and the hours of employment. This study intends to further explore the effect of burnout, engagement, and employment on the academic achievement of Iranian EFL students.

1.1. Student Burnout

The term "burnout" was first introduced by the psychoanalyst Freudenberg (1974) who defined it as "to fail, to wear out, or to become exhausted by making excessive demands on energy, strength, or resources (p. 159). The concept of burnout was further popularized with the development of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Maslach defined burnout as "a syndrome of emotional exhaustion and cynicism that occurs frequently among individuals who do 'people-work' of some kind" (Maslach & Jackson, 1981).

Originally, the universal use of Malach Burnout Inventory (MBI) (Maslach & Jackson, 1981) limited burnout study to jobs requiring direct service relationship contact (e.g.

human service, nursing, & law enforcement) which was due to the high workplace demands and shortage of personnel in the helping professions (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). The development of Maslach Burnout Inventory-General Survey (MBI-GS) by Schaufeli, Leiter, Maslach, and Jackson (1996) made it possible to study burnout in a broader number of occupations.

In recent years, burnout study has been expanded to almost every job, and even to non-occupational groups such as students (Balogun, Helgemore, Pellegrini, & Hoerberlein, 1996; Jacobs & Dodd, 2003; Schaufeli et al., 2002b). Burnout among students refers to feeling exhausted because of study demands, having a cynical and detached attitude toward one's study, and feeling incompetent as a student (Schaufeli, et al., 2002a).

McCarthy, Pretty, and Catano (1990) and Schaufeli et al. (2002a) found that there is a negative relationship between student burnout and academic achievement. Langemo's study (1990) showed that academic qualification is related to burnout. Nowack and Hanson's (1983) research showed that burnout in college students is negatively correlated with performance. Maslach and Jackson's research (1981) indicated that if students have serious emotional exhaustion, they will be emotionally fatigued, used up, irritable, frustrated, or even worn out, and they will have lower academic performance (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). However, some other studies indicate that there is little effect of burnout on the students' academic performance (Balogun, et al., 1996; Garden, 1991).

1.2. Student Engagement

Recently, research on burnout has focused on its positive side, that is, engagement. Schaufeli et al. (2002b) defined engagement as "a positive fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (p. 72). Vigor is characterized by high levels of energy and resilience, the willingness to invest effort, not being easily fatigued, and persistence in the face of difficulties; dedication refers to a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge; absorption refers to being totally and happily immersed in one's work and having difficulties detaching oneself from it so that time passes quickly and one forgets everything else that is around. Student engagement refers to a high level of energy and mental resilience when studying (vigor), deriving a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration from study (dedication), and being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one's study (absorption) (Schaufeli et al., 2002a).

Schaufeli et al. (2002a) found that engagement was positively related to students' academic success. Vasalampi, Salmela-Aro, and Nurmi (2009) found out that school engagement predicted success in the educational transition after upper secondary school,

whereas school burnout predicted delay in studies and low educational aspirations after upper secondary school.

1.3. Student Employment

Students work for different reasons. They might work out of poverty, financial hardship, inadequate income and debt (Curtis & Shani, 2002; Ford, Bosworth, & Wilson 1995), or they might work in order to use their time better, develop useful skills, and apply what they have learnt (Haultain, 2009).

Marsh (1991) found that the reason of working had a significant impact on students' academic performance. Those working to save for college did not experience negative effects on their academic performance, whereas those who worked for recreational spending of money did. Besides, as Ford et al (1995) suggested, when paid work is related to students' field of study, it might be beneficial for their academic knowledge and career prospects. So, studies in higher education have identified the benefits associated with term-time employment, including the gaining of valuable work experience and the development of confidence and personal and professional skills (Curtis & Shani, 2002; Ford et al., 1995; Lee, Mitchell, Holtom, McDaniel, & Hill, 1999). On the other hand, Term-time employment has been associated with low levels of academic achievement as a consequence of missed lectures or late submission of assignments leading students to perceive that their academic grades were lower than they would have been if they had not been working (Curtis & Shani, 2002; Marsh, 1991; Pearce, 2004). One reason postulated for negative academic outcomes is tiredness as a consequence of term-time work which impacts on the student's ability to attend lectures and the effect that this has on their overall attention to academic work (Oakey, Oleksik, & SurrIDGE, 2003). Some studies show that the number of hours spent in paid employment each week is positively associated with a sense of conflict between work and education among adolescents and young adults (Hammer, Grigsby, & Woods, 1998; Markel & Frone, 1998). Some other studies have shown that employment has no effect on students' academic achievement (e.g. Derous & Ryan, 2008; McInnis & Harley, 2002; Nonis & Hudson, 2006). Derous and Ryan (2008) found that while work–study interference mediated the relationship between hours worked and wellbeing, there was no relationship between work–study interference and academic performance or study attitudes.

This study aimed at finding answer for the following research questions:

1. Is there any relationship between the students' burnout and their academic achievement?

2. Is there any relationship between the students' engagement and their academic success?
3. Do employment and hours of employment have any effect on students' academic achievement?

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The participants of the present study were 275 university students majoring in English literature and English translation at Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman, Iran. In Iran, the formal length of the university study program is 4 years. Of this total sample 80% was female and 20% was male. The mean age of the whole students was 21.6 years (SD= 2.4). 16.7% of the participants had a part time job related to their field of study (i.e. English Teaching or English translation work), and 78.9% of the participants had either no jobs or unrelated jobs. Since only 2.2% of the participants had an unrelated job to their field of study, they were also considered as not having a job. The minimum number of hours students worked during the week was 4 hours and the maximum was 42 hours.

3.2. Instrumentation

A seven-point likert scale was used to measure students' burnout and engagement. All the scales were translated to Persian through the process of back-translation by MA students of translation at Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman. The two scales used to measure students' burnout and engagement, were adopted from Schaufeli et al., (2002a):

3.2.1. MBI-SS Inventory

MBI-SS (Schaufeli et al., 2002a) is an adapted version of the MBI-GS to be used among students. The instrument consists of 15 items with three subscales: five items to measure exhaustion (e.g. "I feel emotionally drained by my studies."), four items to measure cynicism (e.g. "I have become less enthusiastic about my studies."),and six items to measure professional efficacy (e.g. " in my opinion, I am a good student."). High scores on EX and CY and low scores on EF are indicative for burnout (Schaufeli et al., 2002a).

3.2.2. UWES-S

UWES-S (Schaufeli et al., 2002a) is a revised version used to measure students' engagement. The scale includes 14 items with three subscales: five items to measure vigor (e.g. "when I'm studying, I feel mentally strong"), five items to measure dedication (e.g. "my studies inspire me"), and four items to measure absorption (e.g. "time flies when I'm studying").

The alpha cronbach for the translated versions with a sample of 20 was found to be 0.88, 0.87, and 0.79 for MBI-SS subscales and 0.91, 0.87, and 0.78 for UWES-S subscales respectively. All the internal consistencies were at a desirable level above the criterion of 0.70 (Nunnaly & Bernstein, 1994).

Students' academic achievement was assessed by asking the participants to report their total grade point average (GPA) in their final university report. In Iran, students' grading system ranges from 0 (lowest) to 20 (highest).

3.3. Data Collection

A questionnaire including questions regarding student burnout, engagement, GPA, and some demographical information was distributed among EFL students at Shahid Bahonar University of Kerman, Iran. To avoid bias, burnout and engagement items were combined randomly. The author gave instruction about the questions and explained the purpose of the study. She assured them that the questionnaires would be corrected anonymously and the results of the survey would remain confidential. Then Students were given about 10-15 minutes to complete the questionnaires.

4. Results

4.1. Correlational analysis among study variables

Table 1 shows the standard deviations, and internal consistencies (Cronbach's α) calculated for the scales in the study. According to the table, the correlation coefficients between study constructs ranged from -0.70 for correlation between dedication and cynicism to 0.80 for correlation between vigor and dedication.

As table 1 shows, Age was found to be only weakly positively correlated with vigor (0.12) which indicates that older students are more vigorous in comparison with younger students.

Study year was positively correlated to cynicism and reduced professional efficacy (0.22, 0.12) and negatively related to dedication (-0.14). This implies that the students in their last academic years are more cynical, experience more reduced efficacy, and are less dedicated to their studies. However, no significant relationship was found between study year and academic achievement.

Academic achievement was positively and significantly correlated with vigor, dedication, and absorption (0.26, 0.25, and 0.18) and negatively and significantly correlated with exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced efficacy (-0.25, -0.26, -0.42). This indicates that the

more vigorous, dedicated, and absorbed the students feel, the better their academic performance will be (and vice versa). On the other hand, the students with more exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced efficacy have poorer academic performance (and vice versa).

The correlation between all the three dimensions of burnout and engagement was high and ranged from 0.52 to 0.80. Therefore, they can be added up to a single measure.

Exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced efficacy were significantly negatively correlated with vigor, cynicism, and reduced efficacy, respectively (-0.65, -0.70, -0.45). This shows that the students who experience burnout also have reduced engagement levels in their studies and the students who have a higher level of engagement have a lower level of burnout.

4.2. Gender difference and academic achievement

Table 2 presents the results of the t-test to determine the significant difference of the academic achievement between the female and male respondents.

As presented in the table, the mean of the male respondents' academic achievement is 15.9405 whereas the mean of the females' academic achievement is 16.3419. The t-value of -1.852 has a significance value of 0.065. Although the mean of the female is higher than that of the male, the difference is not sufficient to reject the null hypothesis. This conclusion is based on the significance value of the t-test which is higher than 0.05.

4.3. Employment and academic achievement

Tables 3 and 4 demonstrate the results of the academic achievement in relation to employment and hours of employment.

The F-value according to table 3 is 3.518 and the p-value is 0.062. The results of One-way ANOVA shows that since the achieved p-value is lower than the null hypothesis of 0.05, there is no significant difference in the academic achievement of the employed and unemployed students.

According to table 4, the correlation coefficient is -0.276 which is not significant. Therefore, there is no significant relationship between hours employed and academic achievement.

4.4. Regression analysis

Table 5 demonstrates the results of multiple regression analysis to predict the effect of burnout and engagement components on the academic achievement of the students.

As it is shown in table 5, regression analysis predicted that among burnout components, only reduced personal accomplishment was significantly negatively related to academic achievement ($\beta = -0.399$, $t = -5.025$), and none of the engagement components were significantly related to academic achievement.

5. Discussion

Regarding the relationship between students' burnout and their academic achievement, it was found that all burnout components were significantly negatively related to academic achievement. This implies that the more exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced personal efficacy students experience, the less achievement they will get in their academic studies. This confirms findings of previous research which have shown that burnout is associated with performance (McCarthy et al., 1990; Motowidlo, Packard, & Manning, 1986; Nowack & Hanson, 1981; Schaufeli et al., 2002a; Yang, 2004). However, the findings were in conflict with some other studies. For example, Garden (1991) research indicated that there was a negative relationship between burnout and perceived performance of undergraduate students but not between burnout and the actual performance of the students. Balogun et al. (1996) found no relationship between burnout and cumulative grade point average. Jacobs and Dodd (2003) also found that GPA was negatively related to emotional exhaustion but not significantly related to depersonalization or personal accomplishment.

Regarding the relationship between students' engagement and their academic achievement, the results showed that there was a significant positive relation between all engagement components and academic achievement which implies that the more vigorous, dedicated, and absorbed students feel, the better their academic achievement will be. This finding is partly in line with Schaufeli et al.'s (2002a) study which showed that efficacy and vigor were positively related to academic performance.

Concerning the relation of employment with students' academic achievement, it was found that neither employment nor the hours of employment had a significant effect on the students' academic achievement. This finding is in line with some other studies which are indicative of little effect of employment on academic performance of high school and university students (Lillydahl, 1990; Rothstein, 2007; Ruhm, 1997; Turner, 1994; Warren, LePore, & Mare, 2000). However, the results are in conflict with some other studies which showed that increasing work hours during college had a negative effect on college students' grades (Brennan, Callender, Duaso, Little, & Van Dyke, 2005; Kalenkoski & Pabilonia, 2006; Oettinger, 2005; Tyler, 2003).

In addition, the findings of this study revealed that, study year had no relation with academic performance. However, Students in their last academic years are more cynical, experience more reduced efficacy, and are less dedicated to their studies. This result is partly in line with

Krause's (2005) study which showed that there was evidence of engagement of first year students.

Among the demographical characteristics of students, only age was weakly positively related to vigor. This might imply that the older the students are more vigorous in their academic studies. Overall, the little effect of demographic characteristics on academic achievement may be attributed to the fact that the present sample is small and homogenous focusing on particular students. Several studies have shown that the more homogenous the study population, the fewer gender differences appear (De Vries & Van Heck, 2002; Lewis & Wessely, 1992). In addition, most studies reporting a significant relationship between demographic attributes and burnout and engagement have a large sample size (typically, between 500 and 1000).

Finally, the findings of this study showed that all burnout components (i.e. emotional exhaustion, cynicism), were negatively related to all engagement components (i.e. vigor, dedication, and absorption). This confirms the findings of earlier research in terms of the negative effect of burnout on engagement (Langelaan, Bakker, Van Doornen, & Schaufeli, 2006; Schaufeli et al., 2002a; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Uludağ and Yaratana, 2010; Zhang et al., 2007).

6. Conclusion

Findings from this study reveal that burnout has a negative effect on EFL students' academic achievement while engagement has a positive effect on that. The findings also suggest that when students encounter emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced professional efficacy, their vigor, dedication, and absorption decreases (and vice versa). This result is not surprising since the adverse nature of burnout decreases engagement. Furthermore as Maslach & Leiter (1997) mentioned, students with burnout encounter Lower motivation, inefficacy and dissatisfaction and get disengaged from their studies. Therefore the results demonstrate the need for students to be aware of the consequences of burnout and engagement on their academic studies and try to decrease their level of burnout and increase their level of engagement in their academic studies. Maslach (1982) mentioned the ways of handling burnout from an individual, social, and organizational perspective before it becomes uncontrollable. Also as Yang (2004) suggested, teachers should try to increase students' sense of mastery to reduce student burnout. Students in their last academic years experience burnout more than the students in their first academic years. This might happen as a result of

heavy study loads or lack of interest in lessons in higher levels. Administrators of EFL departments can minimize this effect by offering more selective courses to select according to students' needs and interests. They can also assign counselors to provide guidance and counseling especially to students in higher academic years.

However, this study had some limitations that should be noted. First of all this study was limited to EFL students at one university in Iran. The results cannot be generalized to all university students around the world. Second, this study relied on a single source of data collection (i.e. students' response to a questionnaire administered only once. This kind of data collection might be susceptible to self-presentation bias. Further studies should include more qualitative tools such as interviews, and think-aloud protocols. Finally, students' level of academic burnout and engagement may vary whether they are at the beginning, middle, or end of the semester so that future investigations should include longitudinal approaches into this issue.

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Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, Internal consistencies, and Correlations among age, study year, academic achievement, burnout, and engagement (n = 275)

Note: values in boldface type are reliability coefficients. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Age	21.6	2.46	–								
2. Study year	2.73	0.98	0.31**	–							
3. Academic achievement	16.25	1.43	-0.10	-0.04	–						
4. Emotional exhaustion	17.88	6.37	0.00	0.10	-	0.88					
5. Cynicism	12.93	5.70	0.05	0.22**	-	0.25**	0.87				
6. Reduced efficacy	19.12	5.85	0.00	0.12*	-	0.26**	0.52**	0.55**	0.79		
7. Vigor	22.50	5.91	0.12*	-0.04	0.26**	-	-	-	0.91		
8. Dedication	23.70	6.3	0.05	-0.14*	0.25**	-	-	-	0.65**	0.55**	0.61**
9. Absorption	17.90	4.43	0.02	-0.98	0.18**	-	-	-	0.64**	0.70**	0.60**
						0.53**	0.49**	0.45**	0.79**	0.73**	0.78

Table 2

The result of t-test to compute the significant difference between the academic achievement of the respondents and gender

Gender	Mean	Mean Diff.	P-Value (2-tailed)	T	Analysis
Male	15.9405				
		-0.40136	0.065	-1.852	Not.Sig
Female	16.3419				

Table 3

The results of ANOVA to compute the significant difference of academic achievement between employed and unemployed students

Employment	M	SD	P-value	F	P
Employed	16.1839	1.37234			
			0.062	3.518	NS
Unemployed	16.6369	1.63401			

Table 4

Pearson moment correlation coefficient between academic achievement and hours of employment

	N	M	SD	Sig. (2-tailed)	Pearson correlation
Hours of employment	51	11.3725	7.60253		
Academic achievement	48	16.2567	1.42784	0.057	-0.276

Table 5

Multiple regression analysis for academic achievement

Dependent variable	variables	Beta	T	p
Academic achievement (R ² =0.17; F=8.759; P=0.000)	burnout			
	Exhaustion	-0.055	-0.571	0.568
	Cynicism	-0.076	-0.751	0.453
	Reduced accomplishment	-0.399	-5.025	0.000
	engagement			
	Vigor	0.074	0.576	0.565
	Dedication	-0.127	-1.017	0.310
	Absorption	-0.045	-0.435	0.664

Note: t-values of 1.96 or above are significant

Title

Lexical Exposure and Meaning Awareness in Iranian EFL Learners' Semantic Restructuring

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Abstract

The present study investigated some issues in the area of semantic transfer and form-meaning mapping. It explores the role of lexical exposure and creating semantic awareness in the same-translation words, and compares the effectiveness of two instructional techniques in such semantic awareness. To this aim, 33 lower-intermediate and 34 upper-intermediate adult Iranian EFL learners were first given a core-meaning test to ensure their knowledge of the core-meanings of the target words, and then a semantic pretest to examine the effect of lexical exposure on their semantic development. The results of the pretest indicated the insufficiency of lexical exposure for developing semantic restructuring. Next, the learners at both levels were divided into two groups, each representing one instructional condition: componential analysis and translation (CAT), componential analysis and L2 definition (CAD). During a semester, each group was assigned its own instructional materials. Finally, a posttest was administered to the learners examining their learning of the instructions. The findings revealed that creating semantic awareness was significantly effective in general, and that the CAT group slightly outperformed the CAD group at both levels. Pedagogical implications for English vocabulary learning and teaching are discussed.

Keywords: Form-meaning mapping, Semantic Transfer Hypothesis, Semantic restructuring & development, Componential analysis, Semantic awareness

1. Introduction

Research is abundant in the field of vocabulary learning. Among the issues investigated, studies on how L2 lexical information is represented in mental lexicon have resulted in some different views. One view contends that learners acquire new meanings of L2 words from the very beginning of L2 acquisition (e.g., Bogaards, 2001; R. Ellis, 1995). Another view postulates that preexisting meanings from L1 are mapped to L2 words at the early stages of L2 acquisition, but as L2 learners' proficiency enhances, semantic restructuring will occur (e.g. Strick, 1980; Giacobbe, 1992). The third view claims that the process of restructuring may not happen for majority of words even at advanced levels since L1 lemma (features of syntax and semantics) may remain as a means of L2 lexical processing which may eventually lead to lexical fossilization and cause lexical and semantic errors (Jiang, 2004). One type of such errors concern the same-translation words, that is, L2 word pairs and groups whose members share a common L1 translation, for example, the two English words *home* and *house* sharing the same translation خانه (*khaneh*) in the Persian language. Assuming these two words as the exact synonyms, Iranian EFL learners may use *house* in the context where it looks awkward or where *home* is the correct choice like "I hate being away from house too long" instead of "I hate being away from home too long."

Regarding this type of error, two points can be discussed. One is extent to which lexical exposure would be an important factor in drawing learners' attention to semantic differences between the same-translation words and developing semantic restructuring. By lexical exposure, here it means learners' exposure to L2 forms and meanings through L2 studying over time. The second point is how to help L2 learners be semantically conscious of these distinctions, irrespective of the role of lexical exposure. One solution could be to raise L2 learners' awareness about the semantic differences between the same-translation words. This may be carried out by designing special instructions which assists learners not to see L2 words through the lens of their L1 and give the words a new semantic identity. Referring to Larson (1997), each of the same-translation words can have some central components and some contrastive components and the meaning components of words may be isolated by componential analysis. To fit our purpose here, this kind of analysis can be done through L2-L1 translations of words and through their L2 definitions, hence componential analysis and translation (CAT) and componential analysis and L2 definition (CAD). The first technique is to divide the general L1 translation or generic component (to use Larson's term, 1997) into distinguishing translations which specify the contrastive components of the same-translation

words. As depicted in the following, the general Persian translation زمین (*zamin*), which shares among the three words *earth*, *land*, and *ground*, is branched out into three distinguishing translations, each representing the contrastive components (which are underlined) of one of the three English words:

↗ 1. *earth* ↘ ↗ زمین به عنوان کره ↘
 (General translation) → زمین → 2. *land* → **(distinguishing translations)** → زمین برای ساخت و ساز و کشاورزی ↘
 ↘ 3. *ground* ↗ ↘ زمین زیر یا در مقایسه با هوا ↗

In the second technique, the componential analysis is done through English definitions which help learners semantically differentiate one word from the other members in the same-translation groups as observed in the following:

1. *earth* ↘ ↗ the planet we live on
 (Same-translation group): 2. *land* → **(L2 definitions)** → an area especially when used for farming or building.
 3. *ground* ↗ ↘ the surface of the Earth compared to the air

To the best of the current researcher's knowledge, Iranian EFL learners are hardly provided with an opportunity to compare the same-translation words in their classrooms or textbooks. Therefore, using each of these two techniques may be helpful in its own way, but a comparison of their efficiency in creating semantic awareness may also be insightful, in particular with relation to learners' L2 proficiency.

The present study is an investigation into lexical and semantic errors made in the domain of the same-translation words. It explores the role of lexical exposure and creating semantic awareness in the lexical and semantic development of adult Iranian EFL learners, and it also makes a comparison between two instructional techniques in terms of their effectiveness in raising the learners' semantic awareness. Thus, the current study is intended to answer the following questions: 1. To what extent has lexical exposure succeeded in drawing Iranian EFL learners' attention to semantic differences between the same-translation words? 2. To what extent does creating semantic awareness in Iranian EFL learners make a difference in acquiring distinctions between the same-translation words? 3. Which instructional techniques (between CAT and CAD) can result in a better semantic restructuring among Iranian EFL learners?

2. Literature Review

The process of mapping of L2 words to L1 meanings or concepts is not new in the area of second language vocabulary acquisition. Ausubel (1964) maintains that learning an L2 should be easier for adults than for children since adults "need not acquire thousands of new

concepts but merely the new verbal symbols representing these concepts” (p. 421). More recently, some researchers have noted that L2 words are initially mapped to the existing concepts but as a learner gains more L2 experience and proficiency, there will be a process of conceptual restructuring which leads to the remapping of linguistic forms to new concepts (e.g. Giacobbe, 1992; Ringbom, 1983). Some models have also been represented to depict the idea of mapping forms to meaning or concepts. Among them is de Groot’s distributed conceptual feature model (de Groot, 1992; Kroll & de Groot, 1997), which allows the restructuring of conceptual features in the process of L2 vocabulary acquisition.

Another model is Jiang’s (2000) psycholinguistic three-stage model of L2 vocabulary acquisition. Relying on Levelt’s (1989) model of lexical representation, a lexical entry contains four types of information in its two components in his model: semantic and syntactic information in the lemma component, and morphological and formal information in the lexeme component. Formal, L1 lemma mediation, and L2 integration are three stages through which most L2 words proceed. In the first stage, a lexical entry is established in L2 lexicon only containing formal specifications and a pointer that links the word to its L1 translation. With continued L2 exposure, the semantic features in L1 lemma are gradually copied to L2 form signaling the coming of the second stage. Thus, in the second stage lexical processing and production are mediated by the L1 translation and an L2 word is used with more fluency and automaticity. The third stage is characterized with integration and domination of L2-specific information in its entry, little influence from L1 translation, and more automaticity as well as idiomaticity of L2 word. The central claim of Jiang’s (2000) model is Semantic Transfer Hypothesis (STH), “the assertion that semantic content residing in a L2 word is transferred from the L1, or that a concept onto which a L2 word is mapped is a L1 concept” (Jiang, 2004, p. 419). While there is a view that learners acquire new meanings when they are learning new words (e.g. Ellis, 1995; Bogaards, 2001), the basis of STH is that L2 words are mapped to preexisting meanings of L1 whenever such meanings are available.

Jiang (2002, 2004) carried out some studies to demonstrate the presence of L1 semantic features in processing L2 words. In 2002, he conducted two semantic judgment tasks in which native English speakers and Chinese-English bilinguals were asked to rate the degree of semantic relatedness of English word pairs in the first experiment and to decide whether two English words were related in meaning in the second experiment. The results showed that, unlike the native speakers, the nonnative speakers were found to provide higher rating scores on or responded faster to the same-translation pairs than to different-translation pairs. He interpreted the finding as strong evidence in support of the presence of L1 semantic

content in L2 lexical entries. In 2004, Jiang provided a replication of his previous study (2002). This second study, whose nonnative participants consisted of Korean ESL speakers this time, resulted in the same findings as the first study did, hence reinforced the evidence in support of STH.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

The participants in the study consisted of 4 classes of adult Iranian EFL learners (all females) who studied English at two levels of proficiency in a language school in Isfahan, Iran. They had been two classes of lower-intermediate learners with two years of English study prior to the present research and two classes of upper-intermediate learners with 4 years of study. The lower-intermediate participants included 33 learners ranging between the ages of 19 and 23 and the upper-intermediate participants were 34 learners between the ages of 19 and 26. Almost all participants had been spending their years of study in the given language school. During that time, learners at each level followed the same curriculum prescribed by the school, had almost the same teachers, and were preparing for the same exams. The teaching procedures in these classes stress communication and teachers conduct the lessons mostly in English but occasionally they may have recourse to Persian to put a meaning across.

3.2 Materials

In this study, the materials at each level included two written pretests, a series of pedagogical activities based on two different instructional techniques, and one written posttest. The pretests consisted of a core-meaning test and a semantic test. The core-meaning test was simply a list of English sentences in which one word had been boldfaced. The word was a member of a word pair or group which shared the same Persian translation. The participants were supposed to provide the meaning of the boldfaced words in Persian to ensure whether or not they had learned the core meanings of them. The acquired words, in fact, were to comprise the target vocabulary in the second pretest, that is, the semantic test. Based on the results of the core-meaning test, the semantic pretest was specifically designed to evaluate to what extent the participants were aware of the semantic differences between the same-translation words. It was a multiple-choice test consisting of items in which the participants were expected to select the better or right option from choices sharing the same Persian translation. The second instrument in the study was some pedagogical activities particularly planned to make the learners aware of the semantic differences between the same-translation

words. The target vocabulary in the activities was selected on the basis of the semantic pretest. The word pairs and groups, whose members were the same-translation words, formed the objects of the instructions on the condition that each pair or group's received correct answers in the semantic pretest averaged 50% or less.

The instructional materials were of two types: one based on componential analysis and L2 definition (CAD) and the other based on componential analysis and translation (CAT). A typical CAD lesson included a text or a set of sentences in which the same-translation words of a group were embedded in boldfaced forms. The text was used as an input to draw learners' attention to the semantic differences between target words. The learners were asked to read the text and ponder over the distinctions among the boldfaced words. Then, the learners practiced an activity in which they tried to match the words with their L2 definitions. Next, the learners worked on some exercises to ensure their understanding. Finally, they were asked to provide their own examples for each word in order to boost their learning. Here is a typical example of a short CAD lesson: the word group consists of *earth*, *land*, and *ground* sharing the same translation زمین (*zamin*) in Persian.

A. Read the following sentences and pay attention to the differences among the boldfaced words.

1. The moon goes around the **earth**.
2. They bought some **land** and built their own house.
3. It has been raining and the **ground** is wet.

B. Now, match the words with their definitions or usages.

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. earth | a. an area especially when used for farming or building. |
| 2. land | b. the surface of the Earth compared to the air. |
| 3. ground | c. the planet we live on. |

C. Complete the following sentences with the words in the box below.

earth, land, ground

1. The is too dirty to sit on.
2. The space shuttle will return to next week.
3. A supermarket is being built on the near the school.

D. Give your own examples with earth, land, and ground. -----

The CAT activities was almost the same as CAD's except for the fact that the learners are not provided with the L2 definitions, but they are first reminded of the general translation of the word group and then this core-meaning is divided into some distinguishing translations. Each of these translations was an accurate meaning of the word which

differentiated it from the other words in the group. The following is an example of a short lesson of CAT:

A. Read the following sentences and complete sentence 4.

1. The moon goes around the **earth**.
2. They bought some **land** and built their own house.
3. It has been raining and the **ground** is wet.
4. The three words “.....,, and” share the same translation “.....” in Persian.

B. Look at sentences 1, 2, and 3 above again and pay attention to the differences among the boldfaced words. Then match the words with their more accurate translations or usages.

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ↗ 1. earth | a. زمین برای ساخت و ساز و کشاورزی |
| → 2. land | b. زمین زیر پا |
| ↘ 3. ground | c. زمین به عنوان کره |

C. Complete the following sentences with the words in the box below.

earth, land, ground

1. The is too dirty to sit on.
2. The space shuttle will return to next week.
3. A supermarket is being built on the near the school.

D. Give your own English examples with earth, land, ground. -----

The third instrument in the study was a posttest at each level which was designed based on the target vocabulary in the instructional materials to appraise the participants' learning of the instructions. The design of the posttest was the same as that of the pretest.

3.3 Procedures

The participants, who were at two different proficiency levels, took their core-meaning and semantic pretest respectively. Then, at both levels each class was assigned to one instructional treatment: componential analysis and translation (CAT) and componential analysis and L2 definition (CAD). At the lower-intermediate level, the CAD group consisted of 16 learners, and the CAT group included 17 learners. At the upper-intermediate level, both CAD and CAT groups consisted of 17 learners. As the participants were attending their regular class, each group was given a short lesson on the semantic instructions depending on their proficiency and type of treatment.

The study adopted an incidental acquisition design, hence the learners were not told they were participating in an experiment at the end of which they would be tested. While both groups at each level had the same teachers and used the same curriculum, each lesson of the

study was conducted at the end of regular class time during a semester (15 weeks). One lesson of the instructions took about 15 to 20 minutes three times a week. One week after the semester ended, the learners at both proficiency levels were unexpectedly given their own semantic posttests. They were tested on their ability to distinguish the semantic differences among English word pairs and groups, each sharing one Persian translation. A correct answer received one point, an incorrect answer or a blank received a zero.

4. Data Analysis

In order to examine to what extent lexical exposure has assisted the learners to realize semantic differences between the same-translation words, the semantic pretest's scores were collected and subjected to descriptive and statistical analyses. The descriptive results illustrated that the total means of upper and lower intermediate were 56.24 and 45.06 respectively. The statistical results in Table 4.1 also show that there was a difference between the learners' performances of the two levels ($df: 58.065, p: .000, \alpha = 0.01$).

Table 4.1. *The Results of Statistical Analysis for the First Research Question*

		Independent Samples Test								
		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	
Pretest Score	Equal variances assumed	5.044	.028	9.975	65	.000	11.175	1.120	8.937	13.412
	Equal variances not assumed			9.928	58.065	.000	11.175	1.126	8.922	13.428

In order to examine to what extent creating semantic awareness makes a difference in the learners' lexical and semantic development, the pre and post test's data were subjected to descriptive and statistical analyses. The results in Tables 4.2 and 4.3 all show that there was a difference between the performances of pretest and posttest for both the CAT group and the CAD group at each level. To see the results at each level separately, see Tables 4.4 and 4.5 in the appendix.

Table 4.2. *Compared Means of Pre & Post Tests at Both Level*

Paired Samples Statistics					
	Lower	Mean	Upper		Mean
Pair1	Pre_CAT	.4551	Pair1	Pre_CAT	.5710
	Post_CAT	.8686		Post_CAT	.9296
Pair2	Pre_CAD	.4552	Pair2	Pre_CAD	.5710
	Post_CAD	.8222		Post_CAD	.8971

Table 4.3. *The Results of Statistical Analysis for the Second Research Question*

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects		Dependent Variable: Mean Of scores			
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	.102 ^a	3	.034	29.692	.000
Intercept	51.776	1	51.776	45043.424	.000
Group	.026	1	.026	22.677	.000
Level	.077	1	.077	67.174	.000
group * Level	.001	1	.001	.693	.408
Error	.072	63	.001		
Total	52.087	67			
Corrected Total	.175	66			

a. R Squared = .586 (Adjusted R Squared = .566)

In order to compare the results of CAT and CAD activities in raising learners' semantic awareness, the data, taken from the CAT and CAD groups' posttests at each level, were subjected to statistical analysis. The results in Tables 4.6 and 4.7 show that there was a difference between the CAT and CAD groups at both upper-intermediate level and lower-intermediate levels. To see the descriptive statistics of the groups at each level, see Tables 4.8 and 4.9 in the appendixes.

Table 4.6. *The Result of Statistical Analysis for the Third Research Question at Upper-Intermediate Level*

Independent Samples Test						
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Upper Intermediate Post Test	Equal variances assumed	3.015	.092	3.170	32	.003
	Equal variances not assumed			3.170	29.154	.004

Table 4.7. *The Result of Statistical Analysis for the Third Research Question at Lower-Intermediate Level*

Independent Samples Test	
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		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Lower Intermediate Post Test	Equal variances assumed	.204	.655	3.544	31	.001
	Equal variances not assumed			3.548	30.969	.001

5. Results and Discussion

The results of the pretest showed that in comparison to lower-intermediate learners, the two years of further lexical exposure in the upper-intermediate learners had made a fairly remarkable difference in their semantic restructuring for the better. Despite this, even after four years of study, the upper-intermediate learners still had difficulties in distinguishing between the same-translation words. This may indicate that although exposure to English was found to be an important factor in helping the learners to detect the differences in meanings, it was not sufficient enough for thriving learners' semantic knowledge for a considerable number of the groups and pairs containing the same-translation words. Among 44 word pairs and groups, 25 of them were deemed as weak cases at the upper level, and for the lower level it reached up to 34 (see the appendix, Table 4.10). The findings for the posttest revealed that practicing meaning-focused activities by the learners significantly improved their semantic knowledge of the same-translation words so that no weak pairs and groups were discerned after the treatment. Also, the comparison between the results of CAT and CAD conditions uncovered that the former brought about slightly better outcomes in creating semantic awareness for both lower and upper-intermediate learners.

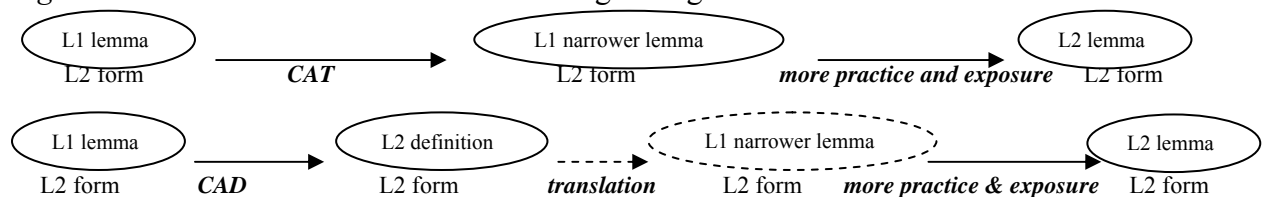
The results of the first research question of this study suggested a viewpoint that, in fact, makes compromises between the two views on form-meaning mapping. On the one hand, the findings revealed that gaining proficiency had led to significant semantic understanding about the same-translation words, suggesting that lexical exposure has a more important role than what Jiang (2004) contends. Therefore, we need to hesitate when saying that for *majority* of words L1 lemma mediation may become a steady way of lexical processing in L2 learners. On the other hand, the upper-intermediate learners could not show a good semantic mastery over a considerable number of target word groups. So the outcomes of the present research was not in line with the view that form-meaning mapping is peculiar to the first learning stages and dies down as proficiency increases (e.g. Strick, 1980; Giocobbe, 1992). In brief, while being a significant factor in relation to the same-translation

words, exposure to L2 words may not be quantitatively sufficient and qualitatively efficient for Iranian EFL learners to reach an acceptable semantic restructuring.

The findings of the second question back up the importance of semantics-driven vocabulary instruction mentioned by Jiang (2004). The developing and implementing instructional materials, which specifically focused on the differences between the same-translation words, resulted in significantly successful learning in the learners in this study. Prior to the treatment, the learners, the upper-intermediate in specific, had probably been exposed to each single word in the target groups through reading, listening, etc.; however, they had not been provided with an opportunity to compare and contrast them via exercises and activities. As semantic development has been shown to be a long and slow process (e.g., Verhallen & Schoonen, 1993), these instructions acted as acceleration for some words that might have required more exposure over years to reach substantial semantic restructuring in a classroom condition, and as deterrents to overcome semantic fossilization for some other words.

The findings of the third research question showed that offering L1 translations so as to clarify the subtle distinctions between same-translation words can be considered as an efficient strategy. Juxtaposing distinguishing translations of the same-translation words provided a unique opportunity which the learners had not experienced before. To justify the superiority of CAT from the angle of Jiang' (2000) model, it can be postulated that replacing an L1 lemma with an L2 definition in CAD might be translated into L1 again especially by learners with lower proficiency. A graphic presentation of this idea is shown in Figure 6. 1.

Figure 6. 1. Process of Semantic Restructuring through CAT and CAD



Previous research indicated that a major predictor of vocabulary knowledge and vocabulary acquisition is the frequency of a word (Culligan, 2008; Matikainen, 2011; Milton, 2009); however, the findings of this study showed the learners did not have good knowledge about some of the frequent-used target words. It seems that each time the learners encountered or produced these words, only their broad L1 translations were activated but their L2 meaning specifications went unnoticed. Therefore, it should not be taken for granted that learners' familiarity of the core-meaning (L1 translation) of a word is tantamount to

learners' complete knowledge of the semantic features, usages, limitations of that word. Additionally, as researchers (e.g., Singleton, 1999; Jiang, 2002), have often pointed out that transfer does not always lead to overt errors since a large number of L2 words may have a high level of semantic overlap with their L1 translations, the same-translation words may not often cause any lexical problems unless a learner erroneously uses the word in the context where another word with the same L1 translation is the right choice.

Laufer (1990) also points to the difficulty of semantic mastery over the same-translation words under the title of divergence. Not unlike the same-translation words discussed in this study, divergence occurs when one L1 word corresponds to several words in the L2. Laufer states that divergence especially can be problematic for learners because they need to learn and retain the meaning and the proper usage of several vocabulary items for one word in their L1, and as a result, they must select a "narrower lexical grid" than in their first language. Evidence of this difficulty has also been reported by some researchers (e.g., Dagut, 1977; Laforest, 1980) where some learner errors appeared to have been caused by divergence.

Providing creating semantic awareness through instructions made a substantial change in the learners' explicit lexical knowledge in this study. However, as Jiang (2000 & 2002) pointed out, this knowledge may be stored in the learners' general memory system, outside lexical entries, and needs to be represented within lexical entries so that integrated information can be retrieved automatically in spontaneous communication. Based on this view, the learners in this study should be provided with further opportunities to use the target words more in contexts. That way, their explicit lexical knowledge gradually becomes an integrated part of their lexical entries and part of their automatic competence. Having done this, the learners may take one step further towards what Jiang (2004) discussed as semantic autonomy, the semantic system of L2 learner which is necessary for lexical competence, and has two features: uniquely coded in L2 and shared by native speakers of that particular L2.

6. Conclusion

This study made an attempt to shed some lights on the available views about form-meaning mapping and semantic transfer as well as offering pedagogically important points regarding the same-translation words. Raising L2 learners' awareness of the differences between the same-translation words, as far as the present researcher knows, has not found its importance and place in pedagogical materials yet. Thus, juxtaposing the same-translation words and

uncovering their differences either through CAT or CAD instructional techniques along with some appropriate exercises would be novel and informative instructions for learners and lead them to a better lexical competence. In the end, it should be said that further studies can be carried out in the field of semantic and lexical learning and teaching. This study only included lower and upper-intermediate learners, but further research can explore the extent of semantic development in advanced learners. In addition, investigations can be done to examine the effects of a wider range of semantization strategies on semantic restructuring in learners of different levels of proficiency and with different language backgrounds. The role of lexical exposure and creating semantic awareness can also be examined in other areas of vocabulary learning with learners at different ages.

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Appendixes

1. Tables

Table 4.4. *The Results of Semantic Awareness at Lower Intermediate Level.*

Paired Samples Test					
		Paired Differences			Sig. (2- tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	
Pair 1	Pre DTG - Post DTG	-.41346	.02236	.00542	.000
Pair 2	Pre EDG - Post EDG	-.36706	.02066	.00517	.000

Table 4.5. *The Results of Semantic Awareness at Upper Intermediate Level.*

Paired Samples Test				
		Paired Differences		Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	
Pair 1	Pre CAT - Post CAT	-.35862	.01700	.000
Pair 2	Pre CAD - Post CAD	-.32605	.00980	.000

Table 4.8. *The Descriptive Statistics for the Third Research Question*

Group Statistics						
	Group		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Upper Intermediate Post Test	dimension1	CAT	17	52.06	1.391	.337
		CAD	17	50.24	1.921	.466

Table 4.9. *The Descriptive Statistics for the Third Research Question*

Group Statistics						
	Group		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Lower Intermediate Post Test	dimension1	CAT	17	66.8824	2.93433	.71168
		CAD	16	63.3125	2.84532	.71133

2. Stimulus Materials

Table 4.10. *The Percentage of Correct Answer in Word Groups at Both Levels*

Groups	Groups	Upper 100%	groups	Groups	Lower 100%	
1*	Shore	38.23	1*	Shore	24.24	
	Beach	55.88		Beach	69.69	
	Coast	47.05		Coast	33.33	
	Ground	47.05		Ground	36.36	
2*	Land	47.05	2*	Land	42.42	
	Earth	50		Earth	48.48	
	Migrate	11.76		Migrate	18.18	
3*	Immigrate	41.17	3*	Immigrate	21.21	
	Emigrate	38.23		Emigrate	27.27	
	Burglar	44.11		Burglar	30.30	
4*	Thief	50	4*	Thief	33.33	
	Robber	52.94		Robber	45.45	
	Close	100		Close	96.96	
	Tie	64.70		5*	Tie	18.18
	Screw	58.82			Screw	12.12
	Tall	55.88			Tall	36.36
	5*	High		82.35	6*	High
Long		88.23	Long	78.78		
Illness		44.11	Illness	30.30		
Disease		58.52	7*	Disease		54.54
Sickness		41.17		Sickness		24.24
Untie		52.94		Untie		39.39
5*	Unscrew	41.17	8*	Unscrew	36.36	
	Open	91.17		Open	87.87	

	Skin	100		Skin	93.93
	Peel	64.70		Peel	30.30
	Bark	70.58		Bark	27.27
	Big	82.35		Big	66.66
	Large	85.29		Large	75.75
	Great	67.64		Great	66.66
	Rob	23.52		Rob	15.15
6*	Steal	55.88	10*	Steal	42.42
	Mug	44.11		Mug	24.24
	Door	91.17		Door	90.90
	Lid	82.35		Lid	66.66
7*	Home	55.88		Home	36.36
	House	41.17	11*	House	39.39
8*	Shade	44.11	12*	Shade	12.12
	Shadow	47.05		Shadow	9.09
	Foot	76.47	9*	Foot	45.45
	Leg	73.52		Leg	48.48
9*	Drown	41.17	13*	Drown	36.36
	Sink	52.94		Sink	39.39
	Economy	73.52	14*	Economy	48.48
	Economics	70.58		Economics	51.51
	Strength	79.41		Strength	66.66
	Force	85.29		Force	72.72
	Hand	91.17		Hand	81.81
	Arm	79.41		Arm	72.72
10*	Spill	50	15*	Spill	36.36
	Pour	44.11		Pour	42.42
11*	Wound	20.58	16*	Wound	18.18
	Injure	61.76		Injure	33.33
	Hat	85.29		Hat	78.78
	Cap	91.17		Cap	87.87
12*	Sound	47.05	17*	Sound	48.48
	Voice	50		Voice	42.42
	Channel	91.17		Channel	75.75
	Canal	70.58		Canal	57.57
13*	Schedule	47.05	18*	Schedule	39.39
	Program	44.11		Program	42.42
14*	Put on	47.05	19*	Put on	42.42
	Wear	50		Wear	42.42
15*	Focus	38.23	20*	Focus	24.24
	Concentrate	44.11		Concentrate	18.18
16	Start	20.58	21*	Start	21.21
	Turn on	76.47		Turn on	51.51
	Between	73.52	22*	Between	48.48
	Among	70.58		Among	51.51
	Bake	79.41		Bake	63.63
	Cook	85.29		Cook	66.66
17*	Resource	11.76	23*	Resource	6.06
	Source	44.11		Source	12.12
	Dissolve	47.05	24*	Dissolve	45.45
	Solve	82.35		Solve	51.51
	Law	50	25*	Law	48.48

	Rule	58.52		Rule	48.48
18*	Benefit	20.58	26*	Benefit	39.39
	Profit	44.11		Profit	30.30
19*	Comprehension	47.05	27*	Comprehension	45.45
	Understanding	41.17		Understanding	33.33
20*	Primary	20.58	28*	Primary	18.18
	Primitive	20.58		Primitive	21.21
	Rent	61.76		Rent	54.54
	Fare	50		Fare	51.51
21*	Profession	44.11	29*	Profession	42.42
	Occupation	47.05		Occupation	30.30
	Language	97.05		Language	90.90
	Tongue	94.11		Tongue	87.87
22*	Cord	44.11	30*	Cord	33.33
	Wire	52.94		Wire	39.39
23*	Race	41.11	31*	Race	39.39
	Match	52.94		Match	45.45
24*	Ruin	44.11	32*	Ruin	33.33
	Destroy	47.05		Destroy	54.54
25*	Production	47.05	33*	Production	33.33
	Product	44.11		Product	21.21
	Politics	52.94	34*	Politics	45.45
	Policy	67.64		Policy	42.42

*Word pairs and groups included in the post-tests are marked by an asterisk.

Title

Analyzing Discourse Differences of Iranian Male and Female's Syntactic Structures in Text Messaging via Cell Phones

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Abstract

There have been a growing number of researches in discourse studies in the EFL contexts and especially those in forms of academic writing. In recent years we have seen a growing concern about telecommunication and online services throughout the world. Majority of people all over the world use cell phone services especially messaging systems every day. In this study we try to investigate the differences between Iranian males and females in using syntactic structures and their forms through sending and receiving cell-phone short text messages. A complete and thoroughly analysis of the messages sent through cell phones showed that there are some explicit differences between different groups of people, especially in forming questions and the length of the sentences written. From the long list of the results we discovered in this study. Some Iranian women mostly prefer to use long and complex sentences in their short messages to their male/female relatives. Males often use simple sentences with minimum application of subordinate clauses, whether they are texting to their relatives or foreigners by the phone. In making questions, women mostly try to type their questions after a predicative sentence (as a further explanation for the question), while men directly stick to the point and usually start their messages interrogatively, and when commenting, they usually put it after the question.

Keywords: Discourse analysis, Question formation, Syntactic structures, Text messaging, cell-phone

1. Introduction

At the beginning of the 21st century we witness the comprehensive introduction of different modern technologies and the development of digital telecommunication devices such as cell-phones, hand-held computers, laptops, and tablets. Our new generation has experienced lots of changes in comparison with their ancestors.

These devices have been credited with fostering accurate, easy flow of data, establishing connection between people in global circles and from faraway places with low accessibility to high standards of modern communication and suffering from poor economic, social, health and living infrastructures. These high-tech devices are also believed to be as tools of empowering masses and establishing democracy among all people and creating facilities for cross-group communication and integration (Katz, 2006:117).

With the development of these electronic writing devices, we encounter some sort of fear which is linked to the youth cultural standards. This fear appears to be different in different parts of the world, for example in western countries the loss of standard grammatical forms, i.e. literacy but in Africa these concerns are related to loss of oral tradition and disturbing knowledge categories. In other words, they can show the possibility of renewing vernacular languages (Onguene Essono, 2004).

Such pre-suppositions include cell-phones as a modern instrument that make people free from barriers of time and place (Katz and Aakhus, 2002) and may cause them to present themselves in a developed world. The linguistic characteristics of electronic communication, both synchronous and asynchronous, have got the attention of discourse analysts and composition theorists mostly focusing on net-speak neologisms, prefixes, compounds, abbreviations, emotional expressions and discourse conventions (e.g. Baron, 1998; Bolton 1991; Crystal, 001; Yus, 2001; Posteguillo, 2003; Turney et al. 2003).

2. Literature Review

2.1. Text messaging

New communication technologies have commonly been seen as modernizing tools, i.e. their use in developing contexts would be commonly adopted in ways that would bring these countries into “modern” standards through new connectivity.

Today we can see many students use various electronic communication systems at home and also in their workplace, so we have to look deeper into these types of media to help students learn “their particular characteristics” in the same way as spoken English, writing essays through the use of cell-phones (Murray 1988: 4).

Using the mobile services and facilities is a daily routine for anyone around the globe, especially text-messaging which is a cheap and effective medium with great popularity among teenagers and youths and most recently children (Drouin & Davis, 2009; Ofcom, 2010; Pew Internet Survey, 2009).

Text messaging began in Europe in 1993, with commercialization of the GSM mobile phone network. Text-messaging which is also known by millions of people as SMS (short messaging service) or simply “texting” refers to transmission of texts and writings between cell phones. The most common type of messaging involves a one-to-one SMS with users known to each other, advertisements or other types of digital services. An SMS is always considered as computer-mediated communication (CMC), which is not computer-based, but text-based and technologically can transfer features other CMC types cannot (Bieswanger, 2008).

Pew Internet Survey (2009) has estimated that nearly 70% of American teenagers own a cell-phone and half of them send various messages every day. Ofcom also reckons that 1 out of 3 of children in the range of 8 to 11 regularly use a cell-phone and send an average of 22 messages each week. In The US, from 2005 onward 69% of the total population own cell phones. Approximately 4% of all people in The US and 18% of those aged 18-24 use texting daily (Traugott, Joos, Ling, & Qian, 2006).

Popularity of texting in Europe and Asia has been especially high among teenagers and young adults. In Europe and Asia, mobile phones are well-established. For example, 95% of Norwegians own mobiles, including 100% of teenagers. Approximately 70% of Norwegians aged 19-24 report daily use of text messaging (Ling & Haddon, 2008).

However, as of late 2005, cell phones were used on US university campuses more than twice as much for voice functions as for texting (Baron & Ling, in preparation).

Linguistic analyses of texting became available for several languages (e.g., German: Döring, 2002; Swedish: Hårdaf Segerstad, 2002; Norwegian: Ling, 2005, British English: Thurlow & Brown, 2003). Among the stylistic features noted are: abbreviations, acronyms, emoticons, misspellings, and also omission of vowels, subject pronouns, and punctuation. Since texting in The US is comparatively new, collecting texting data in the early 2000s was really problematic.

Because there are so many special features in text language, the overestimated view is to consider them as non-standard. Crystal (2008) has noted that the most significant feature of text messaging is a beautiful combination of standard and non-standard forms. The language young guys' use in CMC has been labeled as “teen-talk”, or more specifically “textism, textese” or “text speak” (in the case of SMS), and also “net-speak, netling” (in computer-based communication).

Message exchange in CMC can be divided into two categories: 1) synchronous and 2) asynchronous. Both are used in applications such as e-mails, instant messaging (IM) and social network sites (like Facebook, Tweeter, etc.) (Baronb, 2004).

Asynchronous communication urges a multi-participant text-based discourse, which makes it an excellent means for sending and receiving information to support professional development. This type of discourse seems to share the characteristics of both written and oral communication (Yates 1996).

Among the asynchronous messages are E-mails and texts but sometimes both maybe considered as near-synchronous. Texts don't need any quick response, they can be transmitted fast and make text conversation possible. In young's sociolinguistic analyses the form of dialog exchanges are significant (Kasesniemi & Rautiainen, 2002).

2.2. Discourse analysis

For those who are not familiar with the term “discourse”, there can be some confusion and misunderstanding as to what it means, since the term can be used in a variety of ways and is multifaceted, depending on the aim of the research and depending on the various regional schools of discourse research all over the world.

As Georga kopoulos & Goutos, (1997) define discourse analysis as the study of language used for communication in different contexts. These cases facilitate reflexive investigations as “clinical gaze” which sometimes block possible ways of mutual understanding.

Some discourse analysts reject the notion that languages are figurative or a neutral mirror for representing the world and people's feelings and meanings. On the contrary, they see languages as social actions and focus on how language frameworks are established to show the exact sense of world in special ways, institutional relations and practices (Wetherell et al., 2001).

Language is considered as a lens for showing “reality” according to the interest of its users (Maybin, 2001), for producing versions of social reality, and for persuading others (Wetherell et. al., 2001). Having roots in both socio-linguistics and ethno-methodology, discourse analysis aims at describing forms, practices, patterns, structures, and functions of

everyday conversation and chats, and also the procedures and mechanisms by which participants in verbal exchanges lend and attribute order, coherence, and meaning. Communication can be verbal and non-verbal (written), highly empirical in methodology, and sticks to its representation and manifestation as close as possible to the actual verbal material of the collected data.

Differences in gender are apparent in written communication; we can determine the gender of a person by the style and format of using certain written words.

In an interaction between a man and a woman, we may ask “why women can’t be more like men?” and this causes lots of misunderstandings. According to Schrage (1999) there are factors which highlight the differences between sexes, for instance, as was told in the article, there are biological causes and also some sense of competition exists between men and women. In addition, culture also plays a great role in this issue.

Hall (2002) in one of his statements says that there are so many styles of communication. And the styles are from different factors “where we’re from, how and where we were brought up, the educational background, age, and even our gender” (p.87). Men and women have even different styles of speaking on specific subjects. Coates (1986, p.23) states that “research has proved that men are like to be as leading directives based on hierarchical, to dominate and interrupt everything in the whole group”.

Tanner (2002) discussed another important issue, “why there are differences in genders’ communication”. There are some reasons that reject these differences because they belong to the same society and are from the same family branch. These differences arise from the games boys and girls play in childhood and among their groups, for instance, when boys form a big group and one is a leader. But girls tend smaller groups and usually talk more about their feelings, opinions& ideas (Tanner, 2002).

2.3. Men and women’s differences

Because of the humane relationship between us, one of our major part of life is dedicated to communication and our interaction is based on mutual communication and social identities are inseparable. For a better understanding of communication and to avoid misunderstanding, we should know more &more about the differences of males and females.

Physiological and biological differences affect communication and its styles. From the physiological point of view, men and women have different reactions in a same situation (stressors). Biologically that part of brain which connects the left and right hemispheres has different sizes known as collosum. Women can use both hemispheres at the same time; they

can be both logical and emotional at the same time. But men can only use one hemisphere each time; they can be either logical or emotional (*Communication styles*, Lathrop, nd.).

Different studies have shown that gender differences exist and they should be considered thoroughly to avoid misunderstanding. Studies also prove that communication differences affect women more than men's' daily duties and they should be aware about it.

As matter of fact, women tend to be expressive, supportive, facilitative, egalitarian and cooperative in order to provide relationships, share ideas, and communicate with others in person (Aries, 1987, 1996, p. 121). Accordingly, men and women have different levels of behavior. Women convey their own ideas and feelings and cooperate with others far more than men who want to be leaders and directors.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants:

In this research 60 native speaker of Persian (Farsi) language, 30 males and 30 females they were between 20 to 50 years old and asked to report their messages they saved in their cell phone inboxes. Their messages were differentiated on the basis of how close the sender and receiver of the message was toward each other.

3.2. Instrument:

The 60 participants were asked to provide some text messages. All in all, around 150 messages were gathered and after analyzing by referees only 100 of them were chosen which contained a request from a relative/close partner about a daily need or a party. The messages were all written in Persian (Farsi) language and were collected from those who use SMS service a lot every day.

After collecting the messages and before analyzing them, all the written materials (SMS) were checked to be grammatically correct (based on Persian language grammar). And finally when they were confirmed by 2 referees, they were classified according to the place of noun/adjectival/adverbial phrases and clauses they contained. In the end, they were categorized and counted for the length of phrases and whether they were simple, compound and complex clauses.

4. Results and discussion

For example:

Types	of	Men's type of question/sentences used	Females' type of question/sentences used
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questions		
Informing their mate about having a guest in their house	1. Salam azizam emshab yeki az doostam khone miad.	1. Salam chand vaght bood ke doostam nayoum ade bood khoonamon goftam beheshoon ke emshab biyan.
Asking their friend/relative about buying food for the party	1. Chi zi vase khordan nadarim, sarerahet age mishe ghaza az maghaze begir.	1. Chand vaghte ke forsat nadashtam beram bazaar, momkene mehman dasht e bashiim, sare rahet kharid koun.

With the rise of the new technologies in the 21st century, Iranians were not an exception to this movement and they followed the changes, too. In this research 60 native Persian (Farsi) language speakers, (30 males and 30 females) were asked to send us their messages they saved in their cell phone inboxes. The participants were between 20 to 50 years old. We categorized them into two main (male & female) groups, with two sub-groups; young males/females (20 to 35) and old males/females (35 to 50).

Their messages were differentiated on the basis of how close the sender and receiver of the message were toward each other. Approximately 150 messages were gathered and after being reviewed by referees just 100 of them were taken which included a request from the part of a close relative/partner about a daily need or invitation to a party. The messages were all written in Persian (Farsi) language and were collected from those who use SMS service a lot everyday.

All the messages (SMS) were analyzed to be grammatically correct (based on Persian language grammar). And finally when they were confirmed by 2 referees, they were classified according to the following important issues. In the end, they were categorized and counted for the length of phrases and whether they were complex or simple clauses.

- 1) How many nouns/adj./adv./ clauses were used in SMSs?
- 2) The length of phrases and clauses written.
- 3) The frequency of using simple / compound / complex clauses.
- 4) Does gender have a significant effect on writing an SMS?
- 5) The age of the senders/ receivers of messages

As this study was conducted among Iranian male and female citizens, from all the text messages sent and received by participants, we get the following results:

1. Women in this study use complex and compound sentences more than men and they tend to provide any request or need with a subordinate clause for more information, specifically when they are chatting through SMS with their friends and the foreigners when especially they don't know the other party very much.
2. Among our female participants two groups (young girls vs. old women) popped up with different styles and usages of text messaging technology. Young girls used text messaging most of the time and they preferred to communicate via SMS more than talking with others on the phone. But the other group (older women) who were in their 30s or more used SMS services less than the 1st group and used this service when they needed to express their ideas or ask for something from someone else.
3. On the other hand, young boys in this study tend to provide less complementary sentences for their requests for something and they usually use smaller/shorter forms of sentences or clauses. Accordingly, when they ask something from foreigners (not close relatives), depending on their relationship level and social position toward the receiver of the message; they form two different kinds of writing.
4. When old men under our study are asking a person with a superior position to them, they usually use both compound and complex sentences, somehow we found out more long sentences in women's writings than men.
5. When old men of the study are asking a request through text messaging from a person with a lower position, they mostly use direct questions (order) and there are minor signs of asking for "a favor" or any kind of forms like that, because they believed that these forms debilitate their social position, pride, age or anything else and they do not use supportive statements like their women counterparts in their interactions.
6. Our young boys usually use short sentences (less formative) when sending messages to their friends or close relatives and expect the other part (the receiver) to understand the message using his/her own talent. They justify that the receiver should comprehend the request without any further information.
7. Young boys of the study use emoticons (pictorial icons available in SMS section of a cell phone) more than old men.
8. Young girls in this study use very much more emoticons than young boys while texting.

9. Old women often do not know about these facilities in their cell phones and we can say that they never ever use emoticons in their short messages.
10. One of other main concerns for men (especially old men) is the financial aspect of sending SMS. It seems that as men grow older, spending money becomes more important and crucial to them. Economy is an important issue in today's life all over the world. Paying cell phone bills appears to be somehow hard & difficult for old men these days.
11. Paying cell phone bills does not seem to be so important and crucial to females (both young and old).
12. In many cases, we witnessed young girls send some messages they received and they "forwarded" all of them to their other close relatives and friends, no matter the length of the messages nor the cost of forwarding all the messages.
13. All women (both young girls and adult women) actually prefer voice (talking on the phone) to using/sending SMS.

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Title

The Effect of Teaching English Discoursal Cohesive Markers Through Simple Prose on Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners' Writing

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Abstract

Cohesion is one of the most salient features of text. Based on recent studies on cohesion, some scholars believe that there is a positive relation between cohesion and writing quality. Therefore, this study aims at investigating the relationship between teaching cohesion explicitly through simple prose to Iranian intermediate EFL learners and their writing improvement in terms of the correct use of cohesive ties. Sixty Iranian intermediate EFL learners were selected to participate in this study. A standardized test, PET was conducted in order to ensure that the participants were homogeneous regarding their EFL proficiency. A pretest was also administered on the writing ability of participants prior to the treatment. Twelve sessions of instruction each lasting for about 60 minutes comprised the whole treatment to the learners. After the treatment, a post-test was conducted to determine learning improvement compared to pre-test. The results of the study through independent t-test revealed that, there was no significant relationship between explicit teaching of discoursal cohesive markers and the writing quality of Iranian intermediate EFL learners before and after the treatment. The findings

of the present study although statistically did not reveal any statistically significant results, they showed an indication of the efficacy of the treatment. Therefore it is suggested that definitely more emphasis should be placed on the explicit teaching of cohesive markers during the practices of TEFL.

Keywords: Cohesion, Cohesive markers, Simple prose, Explicit

1. Introduction

Since we are in the communicative era of TEFL, by taking the communicative context into account, some elements of texts like *cohesion*, and *coherence* deserve special attention. For a long time, the analysis of cohesion in texts has been a key topic in the study of discourse. Generally speaking, “Cohesion refers to the relations of meaning that exists within a text. It is part of the system of language which has the potentials for meaning enhancement in texts” (Olateju, 2006, p. 317). Halliday and Hasan (1976) have also noted that “cohesion occurs where the interpretation of some elements in the discourse is dependent on that of another” (p. 4).

In the Iranian EFL context, learners have become familiar with discoursal cohesive markers through separate imperfect grammatical instructions during their studies from secondary school up to the university level. Consequently, because of this separateness in their EFL education they have problems with understanding the relations and connectedness among sentence elements in written discourse. Therefore, more emphasis is required to be put on the correct use of discoursal cohesive markers.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Cohesion

Apparently, one of the most important studies on cohesion has been conducted by Halliday and Hasan (1976), but actually, Jacobson’s work (n.d.) on repetition and patterning in the text emphasizing text parallelism was a starting point in drawing pedagogical attention to cohesion (cited in Malmkjær & Anderson, 2006).

Some discourse researchers with computational and cognitive backgrounds agree that texts are structural units which demonstrate cohesion and coherence (Egg, Redeker, Kühnlein, & Berzlánovich, 2011).

Cohesion is one of the main elements in discourse. Therefore, if someone does not have enough proficiency regarding text grammar, i.e., inward rules for joining sentences in texts,

s/he lacks adequate grammar which can be defined as inward rules for connecting writing elements in literature (White, 2007).

In addition, analysis of cohesion is one of the main features of writing process. Sometimes, the kinds and repetition of cohesive ties reveal that the creative skills of student writers positively affect the stylistic and organizational characteristics of the text they write (Witte & Faigley, 1981).

Cohesion takes into account the meaningful connection of linguistic elements in composed texts based on grammatical rules of each language (Malmkjær & Anderson, 2006). Generally, cohesion is more professional and almost uncommon for many people when it is compared with other general concepts such as grammar, content and text length. Cohesion explains micro-local level of organization between individual clauses and also makes connections between these clauses (Bae, 2001).

Based on the plethora of information on cohesion, it has been proved that some researchers (e.g., Britton, Gulgoz & Glynn, 1993; cited in Graesser & McNamara, 2010) adjust low versus high cohesive texts and also consider the effect of cohesion operation on psychological measures. In most of the studies, cohesion is increased by improving referential cohesion and discourse markers or other connectives. On one hand, referential cohesion is potentially compromised when there are pronouns and when the same discourse entity is referred to different noun-phrases. On the other hand, when the pronouns are substituted with head nouns and a specific discourse unit refers to this head noun, referential cohesion is enhanced (Graesser, McNamara, 2010).

However, the analysis of writing also suggests that while cohesive relations may eventually influence writing quality in some ways, there is no indication to suggest that a large number (or a small number) of cohesive ties of an especial kind will positively influence writing quality. The subject matter, occasion, medium, and audience of the context, each limits discourse in different ways (Witte & Faigley, 1981).

As mentioned above, cohesion can be categorized into distinctive labels; reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunctions, and lexical cohesion. It is proved that the criteria behind these categories are hypothetical but they provide applicable instruments to describe and analyze the texts. In text, these categories are determined by some features like repetition, omissions, and also existence of special words which determine the interpretation of a text is dependent on other constituents. (see Appendix for details of types of cohesion)

2.2. Recent Findings on Cohesion

Cohesion can be better understood if it is better taught. Implicitly or explicitly, cohesion is taught via different activities like classroom attention or grading learners' compositions. Many of these activities are not explicitly planned to teach cohesion, but require students to form cohesive ties (Witte & Faigley, 1981). In the same article, Witte and Faigley (1981) also stated that: open sentence-combining exercises, for example, offer as much practice in forming cohesive ties as they do in manipulating syntactic structures, a fact which may explain the success of certain sentence-combining experiments as well as the failure of research to link syntactic measures such as T-unit and clause length to writing quality (p. 201).

Some studies found no important connection between cohesion and writing quality. For example, Evola et al. (1980) determined that cohesive devices are negligible indicators of language level of proficiency. Crowhurst (1987) reported that there is no relation between frequency of cohesive ties and any grade level of learners. (cited in Jafarpur, 1991)

In a study in Iran, considering language proficiency, the outcomes were neither new nor interesting, because it was entirely clear that English-major participants would usually achieve better results than their non-English-major counterparts. The discrepancies due to test format, however, were so interesting. All the participants, regardless of their majors, achieved higher scores on the cohesive ties format (although the English-major subjects did better). This disparity in production can be attributed to the fact that, in standard fixed-ratio format, deletions with systematic interims may be essential to the meaning of the text and may occasionally cease to provide any clue to the meaning and subsequently to the words to be afforded. In the cohesive ties format, since one of the components of any pair of cohesive ties is left undamaged, sufficient context is accommodated for testees to afford the correct words (Parvaz & Nodoushan, 2006).

Based on another study in China, it has been found that the term *personal reference* is widely used, and *lexical reiteration* is fairly used. Additionally, all other cohesive devices were rarely used. The frequencies of use of the two classes, i.e., contrastive and experimental classes were also the same. Based on some examiners in China, English compositions of the Chinese undergraduate students were in an exactly similar situation. Hence, it was evident that as far as this aspect is concerned, non-English-major graduate students did not have ample discrepancies from undergraduates who were comparatively better at English writing. Therefore, to enhance their ability in this respect, it was essential to provide some instruction on cohesive devices regarding the second item above (Xing-hong, 2007).

Yet in another study in China, Zhang (2010) reported that among 4845 written compositions of non-English major students who took part in the 2004 National Entrance Test of English for MA candidates in China, one hundred sample compositions were selected. After analyzing the data, following pieces of information were found: (1) Chinese college students employed different types of cohesive devices among which lexical category was the most frequent type followed by reference and conjunction. Substitution and ellipsis were barely used. And (2) the qualitative analysis revealed that composition scores and total number of cohesive ties were positively co-related, and lexical synonym and personal reference were the best indicators of the students' compositions quality.

These empirical studies demonstrated that cohesion is an important element of writing and that L1 and L2 learners of English have considerable difficulty in using cohesive devices (Liu & Braine, 2005). Based on the above studies by different researchers on the effect of cohesion in writing and reading, no further discussion was conducted on how teaching cohesion through simple prose can be effective or ineffective on writing quality of EFL learners. The present study reports on the use of simple prose to teach cohesion explicitly to Iranian EFL learners at intermediate level of proficiency to determine the impacts of the conscious use of cohesion on writing. This study is based on the premise that the knowledge derived from this investigation will provide insights into the nature of the writing quality of Iranian EFL learners. The investigation of the role of simple prose in EFL learners' writing ability continues to be revealing for the better understanding of the nature of cohesion. In order to examine the relationship between simple prose and the conscious use of cohesion the following question is addressed:

1. Does the explicit teaching of English discoursal cohesive markers through simple prose have any effect on the Iranian Intermediate EFL learners' writing?

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The population from which the subjects of the present study were chosen included Iranian junior EFL students of English translation at Neghab's Payam-E-Nour university. They were students of first semester who had studied English text books introduced by Iran's ministry of education before being accepted to this university. The total number of participants in this study was sixty and since two groups were needed for this study, i.e. experimental group and control group, learners were divided in this manner: thirty participants: fifteen males and females were selected as the control group and thirty others with the equal division of fifteen

males and fifteen females, were assigned to the experimental group too. The participants were selected according to stratified random sampling, and there was no age limitation in this way of division, and also all the learners had the same mother tongue, i.e. Persian.

3.2. Instruments

This study made use of some instrument for the purpose of data collection:

1. First of all, a proficiency test was held in order to homogenize learners' level of proficiency. The test selected for this purpose was *Preliminary English Test* (PET) by Cambridge University Press (2009). The allocated time for this test was 120 minutes. Passing score for this test was between 70-84 and pass with merit score, ranged from 85 to 100.

2. During the pre-test as one of the fundamental steps in this study, in order to measure participants' abilities in writing before the treatment, descriptive paragraph writing was assigned to the participants to write on the subjects selected by the researcher. The selected source for this part was Academic Writing of IELTS (2010). There were two tasks in this writing:

Task1. Participants needed to write at least 150 words about the information of a table or a graph in about 20 minutes.

Task2. They were required to write an essay in 40 minutes and in about 250 words on a subject matter.

3. The other instrument used in this study was prose texts. Texts were selected because the focus of the present study was on teaching English discoursal cohesive markers through simple prose. These texts were chosen from the following books:

1. *Introductory Steps to Understanding* (1998)

2. *Anecdotes in American English* (1980)

4. A post-test based of IELTS Academic Writing, in 60 minutes (20 minutes for task 1 and 40 minutes for task 2) was assigned to the participants in order to determine the amount of learners' progress in writing at the end of the experiment. Since the main focus of the present study was based on discourse markers, there was a need to measure these markers in two processes, first in the pre-test and then in the post-test. The comparison of pre-test and post-test results indicated the amount of progress the learners had made.

3.3. Procedures

To conduct the experiment, twelve sessions with every session lasting for about 60 minutes were needed. Two texts were taught to the students every session as the treatment. For the first session, the proficiency test of PET by Cambridge University Press (2009) was

administered to the learners in 120 minutes and also the investigator introduced the study and its purposes to the participants. For the second session, a pre-test based on IELTS Academic Writing (2010) was administered to both, the experimental and control groups, on two tasks and in about 60 minutes.

In the third session and before presenting texts, i.e. prose, to the participants, the present investigator explained some cohesion ties that learners had learned in their last years of studies such as pronominals, and he also gave a general explanation regarding English cohesion and cohesive markers to the participants. The first category which was introduced in the third session was *reference*. The researcher explained reference in about 10 minutes and wrote some examples on the board about the subject matter, and also to make it clear he showed some examples of reference in the participants' texts. The introduced materials were pronominals, proper nouns, demonstratives, and comparatives.

For the fourth session participants got familiar with *conjunction* in English. In a preliminary activity, the researcher wrote two or more conjunctive types on the board and asked learners to give some more examples. After such an activity the present investigator presented the texts to show conjunctives. Then, it was the participants' turn to find other examples of the conjunctions in their texts.

Ellipsis was the third category of cohesion which was worked on, during the fifth session. After the general explanation of ellipsis, i.e., the description of deleted structure in three types of it (a noun is deleted in noun ellipsis, a verb is deleted in verbal ellipsis, and a clause is deleted in clausal ellipsis) by the researcher about noun ellipsis, verbal ellipsis, and clausal ellipsis, learners were requested to find some examples in two texts which were distributed to them in that session on the ellipsis.

In the sixth session the researcher asked the participants to explain *substitution*, in order to find out if they had any information previously. Then the researcher himself made it clear that substitution is divided into two types:

1. Nominal substitution, and
2. Verbal substitution.

The students worked analytically on two other texts to clarify and to learn about substitution.

The seventh session was conducted by working on *lexical ties*, based on the Redeker's, Egg's, and Berzlanovich's classification (2008). The teaching of lexical cohesion was divided into three categories as follow:

- Repetition

- Systematic semantic relations and
- Non-systematic semantic relations (collocation).

Following this system the researcher preferred to work on the repetition and collocation in the seventh session, so he asked learners to find some examples in the two texts which were assigned to them that session.

The eighth session continued focusing on systematic semantic relations including hyponymy, hyperonymy, co-hyponymy, meronymy, holonymy, co-meronymy, synonymy, and antonymy. The researcher introduced pairs of words on each subcategory and then he asked the participants to codify the texts for systematic semantic relation.

Since two texts were covered by the participants in every session and on the especial subcategory of cohesion, for the ninth session the researcher asked the learners to bring all of their papers in order to work on all of the subtitles of cohesion, i.e. they were required to investigate all components of cohesion on the all 20 supplied texts.

The tenth session was spent introducing cohesion and its subcategories to the control group based on separated sentences and examples of lexical cohesion out of text.

The participants needed the researcher's assistance in the eleventh session and before the final examination in order to:

- (1) to check the progress of the learners during the studying process regarding the marked discoursal cohesive markers
- (2) to solve their remaining problems within sentence connectors
- (3) to help to organize their thoughts concerning finding cohesive devices in selected texts
- (4) to monitor their progress in the process of teaching cohesion and, finally
- (5) to find out if everybody in the two groups had understood cohesion ties or not.

The procedure finished in the twelfth session by administrating a post-test based on IELTS Academic Writing to both, the experimental and the control groups in about 60 minutes.

The results of the research and its implications will be discussed in detail in the discussion part.

4. Data Analysis

4.1. PET

The first stage of the statistical procedure of this study began with analyzing the data collected from proficiency English test, in order to check the homogeneity of two groups.

The following table shows the summary of descriptive statistics for both the control and the experimental groups:

Table 4.1 *Descriptive Statistics for Proficiency English Test (PET)*

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
1 experiment	30	80.07	4.756	.868
2 control	30	79.43	4.790	.875

As it is seen in Table 4.1, there is no significant difference between the statistics of the two groups, but in order to compare their means an independent t-test was also conducted and following information was revealed:

Table 4.2 *Independent Samples Test for PET*

	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
Equal variances assumed	.004	.950	.514	58	.609	.633	1.232
Equal variances not assumed			.514	57.997	.609	.633	1.232

The observed value is .514 and the significance level is .609, and since .609 is higher than *P Value*, i.e., $p = .609 > 0.05$, then it is revealed that there is no significant difference between the control and the experimental groups regarding the analysis of proficiency English test. This test was conducted in order to determine that the participants of this study are at the same level of proficiency, intermediate in this case.

4.2. Pre-test

The second stage during the statistical analysis of the findings of the study was to scrutinize the results of the pre-test in order to check the degree of similarity at proficiency level of the participants in writing and at the same time to determine the impacts of the treatment when post-test is compared with the results of the pre-test. The writing section of IELTS was administered to the both groups of the participants and the following data was gathered:

Table 4.3 *Descriptive Statistics for Pre-Test*

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
1 experiment	30	3.40	1.133	.207
2 control	30	3.20	1.031	.188

As it is clear from the above table, the distinction of means between the two groups of the participants were not so great, but in order to achieve the most valuable data, an independent t-test was applied and following information was revealed:

Table 4.4 *Independent Samples Test for Pre-Test*

	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
Equal variances assumed	.913	.343	.715	58	.477	.200	.280
Equal variances not assumed			.715	57.491	.477	.200	.280

It is shown in Table 4.4 that, at 58 degrees of freedom, the level of significance is .477 and since $.477 > p = 0.05$, then there is no great statistical distinction between the results of the control and the experimental groups' performances.

Since the most emphasis of this study is on cohesive devices, the analysis of cohesive categories was applied in pre-test, too. First, all types of cohesive devices were numbered in the participants writings in pre-test tasks and then the descriptive statistics was conducted on cohesive side of their writing. The following table shows the descriptive analysis of cohesive devices in pre-test for the control group:

Table 4.5 *Descriptive Statistics of Cohesive Devices in Pre-Test for Control Group*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
reference	30	33.00	66.00	47.8333	9.41782	88.695
conjunction	30	9.00	29.00	19.9000	4.36562	19.059
ellipsis	30	.00	1.00	.0333	.18257	.033
substitution	30	.00	1.00	.1333	.34575	.120
lexical	30	1.00	15.00	7.0333	3.70911	13.757
Valid N (listwise)	30					

Also an analysis was also done on cohesive devices of the experimental group in pre-test and following information was reported:

Table 4.6 *Descriptive Statistics of Cohesive Devices in Pre-Test for Experimental Group*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
reference	30	31.00	77.00	48.0000	10.69321	114.345
conjunction	30	17.00	36.00	24.1333	4.50848	20.326
ellipsis	30	.00	1.00	.1333	.34575	.120
substitution	30	.00	1.00	.1333	.34575	.120
lexical	30	1.00	7.00	3.6333	1.75152	3.068
Valid N (listwise)	30					

And finally in order to check the mean differences between the two groups, a t-test was administered on the cohesive devices of both groups in pre-test and the following information was found.

Table 4.7 *Descriptive Statistics of Cohesive Devices for Experiment and Control Groups in Pre-Test*

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
1 experiment	30	75.50	13.962	2.549
2 control	30	74.93	11.674	2.131

As it is shown in the above table, the difference between means is small, but to gain more details, the following table shows the results of a t-test on cohesive devices:

Table 4.8 *Independent Samples Test of Cohesive Devices for the Experiment and the Control Groups in Pre-Test*

	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
Equal variances assumed	1.978	.165	.171	58	.865	.567	3.323
Equal variances not assumed			.171	56.235	.865	.567	3.323

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of the two groups since at $df=58$, $p=.865 > 0.05$, then the number of cohesive devices in the two groups are almost the same.

4.3. Post-test

In post-test, the writing section of IELTS was administered to the participants in order to assess their progress as a result of the treatment of the present study. Specially, the purpose of the post-test was to examine the amount of scores dispersion after the treatment. The following information was collected from the post-test.

Table 4.9 *Descriptive Statistics for Post-Test*

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
1 experiment	30	4.0667	1.31131	.23941
2 control	30	3.5333	1.16658	.21299

Obviously, in comparison with the pre-test, the participants had some progress in their writing because of some instructions on cohesive devices. Of course the mean score of the experimental group which was exposed to simple prose in order to learn cohesive devices was higher than their mean score in pre-test but the result of their means comparison was not significant. The following table reveals that there was not a treatment effect on the groups' performance, since regarding 58 degrees of freedom the amount of *P*-value at 0.05 level of probability the level of significant was .101 which is higher than *P Value*, i.e., $.101 > 0.05$. Thus it can be understood that while the mean score of the experimental group in post-test was more than the mean score of the control group but there was not sufficiently remarkable difference between these two groups on the post-test results. It is also realized that the

explicit teaching of discoursal cohesive markers through simple prose does not have any significant effect on the participants' performance in writing.

Table 4.10 *Independent Samples Test for Post-Test*

	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
Equal variances assumed	.202	.655	1.664	58	.101	.53333	.32044
Equal variances not assumed			1.664	57.224	.102	.53333	.32044

In order to check the amount of learners' progress in cohesive markers in post-test, the following information was gathered after the statistical analysis:

Analysis of the performance of the experimental group on cohesive devices revealed the following information:

Table 4.12 *Descriptive Statistics of Cohesive Devices in Post-Test for Experimental group*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
reference	30	35.00	78.00	53.9000	9.32313	86.921
conjunction	30	24.00	48.00	31.4000	5.78106	33.421
ellipsis	30	.00	5.00	1.9333	1.50707	2.271
substitution	30	.00	4.00	1.3000	1.23596	1.528
lexical	30	2.00	11.00	7.0000	2.33415	5.448
Valid N (listwise)	30					

To check the differences of mean scores for the two groups, the following t-test was calculated:

Table 4.13 *Descriptive Statistics of Cohesive Devices for Experiment and Control Groups in Post-Test*

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
1 experiment	30	95.63	12.030	2.196

Table 4.11 *Descriptive Statistics of Cohesive Devices in Post-Test for Control Group*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
reference	30	37.00	69.00	53.6333	9.57541	91.689
conjunction	30	18.00	40.00	27.2667	5.56425	30.961
ellipsis	30	.00	3.00	.6667	.95893	.920
substitution	30	.00	2.00	.3000	.53498	.286
lexical	30	3.00	17.00	8.3333	3.43745	11.816
Valid N (listwise)	30					
2 control	30	90.20		11.998	2.191	

Table 4.14 *Independent Samples Test of Cohesive Devices for Experiment and Control Groups in Post-Test*

	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
Equal variances assumed	.093	.762	1.752	58	.085	5.433	3.102
Equal variances not assumed			1.752	58.000	.085	5.433	3.102

In this analysis, the level of significance is .085 which is more than *P*-value, i.e., $.085 > 0.05$. In the case of cohesive devices, the treatment had a great impact on the participants in using more quantity of devices in post-test in comparison with the numbers of cohesive devices in pre-test but the amount of its effectiveness on the writing abilities of the participants in both groups was not significant.

5. Discussion

As mentioned previously, the present study aimed at providing answers to the addressed research question: ``does the explicit teaching of English discorsal cohesive markers through simple prose have any effect on the Iranian intermediate EFL learners' writing?``

In other words, the study aimed at examining the impact of teaching English discorsal cohesive markers on Iranian intermediate EFL learners writing ability.

The findings of the data analysis revealed that explicit teaching of discorsal cohesive markers does have any significant effect on the learners writing. The step by step analysis of some major differences between mean scores of the two groups is a witness to the positive impact of the treatment. The following table shows the mean scores of both groups in pre-test and post-test. The comparison indicates that there are no significant changes between the mean scores of the two groups.

Table 5.1 *Mean Scores Comparison of Pre-Test & Post-Test*

Groups	N	mean	Std.Deviation	Std.Error Mean
Pre-test 1 control	30	3.20	1.031	.188
2 experiment	30	3.40	1.133	.207
Post-test 1 control	30	3.5333	1.16658	.21229

2 experiment	30	4.0667	1.31131	.23941
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But the statistical analysis on the number of *cohesive devices* which were employed by the two groups in pre-test and post-test shows a great distinction between these groups based on the number of cohesive devices which were used by the participants.

Table 5.2 *Mean Score Comparison of Cohesive Devices in Pre-Test & Post-Test*

Groups	N	Mean	Std.Deviation	Std.Error Mean
1 control	30	74.93	11.674	2.131
Pre-test 2 experiment	30	75.50	13.962	2.549
1 control	30	90.20	11.998	2.191
Post-test 2 experiment	30	95.63	12.030	2.196

It can be concluded from the above statistics that the teaching of cohesive devices is helpful but not sufficient by itself in improving the writing quality of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. The findings of this study based on the analysis of mean scores of the two groups in post-test showed that *reference* was the most frequent cohesive device, i.e., 53.76, and substitution was the least frequent cohesive device, i.e., 0.8, used by Iranian EFL Learners. The mean scores of other cohesive devices used by the participants were as following: conjunction, 29.23, ellipsis, 1.265, and lexical, 7.66.

6. Conclusion

This study had two main purposes:

- (1) to check the possible increase in the frequency of use of cohesive devices after the treatment by the learners,
- (2) to check learners' progress in writing skill after applying the treatment.

The present study examined the role of simple prose in teaching cohesion explicitly for the Iranian EFL learners. The findings of the study revealed that (a) there was no significant relationship between teaching discoursal cohesive markers explicitly resulting in the improvement of writing. This finding was reported as a result of analysis of the numbers of cohesive devices which were used by the participants in pre-test and post-test, and also an

independent sample test held in order to check the mean dispersion of two groups in progress. And (b) this study also found that the high frequency of the use of cohesive devices in learners' writing did not have any significant impact on the participants' writing ability, since on the basis of the statistical analysis, the mean scores of the control and experiment groups were almost similar. As a result, the major finding of this study was that there is no significant correlation between the frequent use of cohesive devices and writing quality.

According to the findings and discussions mentioned earlier, the present study provides some implications for both writing teachers and EFL students. Since cohesion is an effective connector to make complex and related infinite stretches of sentences, then more emphasis should be placed on it. English language teachers, who are informed of the poor, separate, and incomplete sentences of their students at the beginning stages of EFL learning, can help them, even if not significantly as a result of emphasizing cohesive markers. Additionally, they may focus on teaching learners how to use correct cohesive devices. Group comparison was also one of the important challenges of this study since the comparison of the control and experimental groups' findings revealed little improvement of writing quality for the experiment group on post-test after applying the treatment rather than the control group. This study illuminated the number of cohesive devices used by the learners in pre-test and post-tests respectively. Before offering the final suggestion, it is helpful to comment that a piece of writing with more frequent use of cohesive devices cannot be regarded necessarily as being a coherent one. And finally, the greatest implication of this study is that cohesion can be better understood if it is taught (Witte & Faigley, 1980), i.e., no matter how much time and energy, or what kind of exercises and strategies are devoted to teach cohesion explicitly or implicitly, it is the awareness of this structure that can be helpful in writing .

Given the small number of sample size, it is difficult and somehow problematic to generalize the findings of this study to other L2 learners' writing contexts. Moreover, there are other criteria on scoring the IELTS writing tasks, cohesion is one of those criteria. Thus, just emphasizing the effect of cohesive devices to check the writing quality of the learners in pre-test and post-test is not a good criterion in this respect.

Although the participants in this study did not show significant progress in their writing based on the explicit teaching of cohesion but since cohesion is one of the important trait of acceptable writing, definitely there is a need for further research. Some of the related topics that could be taken into account in the future are as following:

1. This study was done based on intermediate EFL learners and further research can be carried out on the bases of other EFL or ESL Learners with beginning or advanced levels of proficiency.
2. Although some research has been carried out on the relation of cohesive devices on reading like Parvaz and Nodoushan's (2006), the ground of cohesion analysis can be expanded to other skills like speaking and listening.
3. Since this study was limited to cohesion as a basis on writing, other aspects of text like *coherence* can also be paid attention to.
4. This study was concerned about the number of cohesive markers employed by the learners; further research also can be suggested in order to find out the reasons for the use of certain devices.

Since the frequency of lexical ties employed by the participants in this study was low, it might be useful to devote more time and energy to the learners to select a wide range of vocabulary.

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Appendix

In the following table adopted from (Cook, 1989; Halliday & Hasan, 1976, 1989; McCarthy, 1991; Renkema, 1993), types of cohesion are introduced and exemplified (cited in Bae, 2001, p. 56).

Reference: elements which turn to other elements in order to interpret.

- (1) Pronominals: e.g., our, their, her, his
- (2) Proper nouns: e.g., George, Michael
- (3) Demonstratives: e.g., that/those, here/there
- (4) Comparatives: e.g., difference, similarity, superlatives

Conjunction: elements which link two independent sentences.

- (1) Additive: e.g., by the way, or
- (2) Adversative: e.g., however, rather
- (3) Causal: e.g., therefore, thus
- (4) Temporal: e.g., finally, soon

Ellipsis: elements which are distinguished by reader/speaker but are unwritten or unspoken.

- (1) Noun ellipsis: delete nouns, e.g., ``He liked the blue hat; I myself liked the white`` (p, 6).
- (2) Verbal ellipsis: delete verbs, e.g., ``Tom drew a small boat and April a big boat`` (p, 6).
- (3) Clausal ellipsis: delete clauses, e.g., ``A: will you go? B: Yes; A: Would you like something to drink? B: Sure`` (p, 6).

Substitution: the replacement of word or structure by a dummy word.

- (1) Noun substitution: e.g., ``Tom drew a big boat and April drew a small one`` (p, 6).
- (2) Verb substitution: e.g., ``he wanted to draw pictures there, and they really did`` (p, 6).

Lexical ties:

- (1) Collocation: e.g., have fun, go home
- (2) Repetition: e.g., write/wrote/written
- (3) Synonym: e.g., chaos/irregular
- (4) Antonym: e.g., long/short
- (5) Hyponymy (general-specific relations): e.g., furniture/chair
- (6) Meronymy (part-whole relations): e.g., body/hand/foot

Title

Form-focused Instruction and Understanding Bilingual Mental Lexicon: A Case of the Hegemony of Semantic Transfer

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Abstract

This paper sets out to examine the hegemony of semantic transfer with respect to a cross-linguistic issue in the framework of two form-focused approaches to vocabulary teaching. The target population of the research included seventy six juniors at the Islamic Azad University, Roudehen Branch. The study is primarily bidirectional with respect to the objectives it pursues. On one hand, it investigated the impact of the provided interventionist treatments on the learners’ depth of knowledge regarding the two sets of lexicalized and non-lexicalized items pedagogically. On the other hand, it attempted to flesh out the overarching issue of L1 lexicalization in terms of its underlying psycholinguistic significance. The result of the independent *t*-test indicated a significant difference between the two experimental groups dealing with both groups of lexicalized and non-lexicalized vocabulary items. The obtained results related to the paired *t*-test split file

demonstrated a significant difference between the mean scores obtained for the two sets of words in favor of non-lexicalized items in the first interventionist group. The gain results pertinent to the second interventionist group were representative of the fact that the learners had greater familiarity with lexicalized items at pre-testing, and they were more successful in learning lexicalized items comparing with the non-lexicalized ones at post-testing. However, no significant difference was found with respect to the gain scores (pre to post testing differences) in this interventionist group. The findings are interpreted in terms of several theoretical and psycholinguistic foundations as well as practical elaborations that act in concert to serve the major objectives of the article.

Keywords: Form-focused instruction, L1 lexicalization, Bilingual mental lexicon, Noticing

1. Introduction

The study of lexis was neglected for a long period of time in spite of the fact that the existing large corpora denotes the idea that lexical errors are the most prevalent among second language learners. Instead, many teachers and researchers focused their attention on some other fields like syntax and phonology as issues deserving more scrutiny (Luchini and Serati, 2010). However, research carried out in FLA justifies the fact that efficient communication emerges as a result of enriched and appropriate knowledge of vocabulary rather than the acquisition of grammatical rules (Vermeer, 1992; Coady, 1993; Rott, 1999 as cited in Zaid, 2009).

The importance of vocabulary acquisition could be pinpointed by referring to many scholars who were immersed in the field of vocabulary teaching and learning. Widdowson (1989, p.135), believed that communicative competence could not be regarded as a matter of “knowing rules but a matter of knowing a stock of partially pre-assembled patterns. He argues that rules are not generative but regulative and subservient and they are useless unless they can be used for lexis.” The above mentioned clarifications presented the fact that one of the major pitfalls facing foreign language learners involves a huge number of words they need to acquire. In spite of the fact that such a requirement is widely accepted by several scholars, the existing research proposals are allocated to the description of vocabulary learning strategies, the learners’ breadth of lexical knowledge and passive and active ramifications of vocabulary knowledge without considering the underlying psycholinguistic

mechanisms involved in the bilingual learners' mental lexicon. Consequently, the strategies and the methods provided in academic courses are not really efficient and even they appear to be demotivating.

As mentioned by Schmidt (2010) the issues which are considered to be worthy of investigation in the field of L2 vocabulary acquisition could be primarily classified into three types as follows: Firstly, the nature of the lexical item under investigation. Secondly, its utilization in language use. Thirdly, the strategies or techniques that facilitate its acquisition. Although the complex nature of the vocabulary knowledge is recognized by many scholars, we have a few if any empirical work designed to scrutinize vocabulary knowledge from a cross-linguistic perspective with reference to the inherent nature of words.

This piece of research, however, revolves around an issue referred to as L1 lexicalization in the field of second language vocabulary acquisition. The researchers attempted to explore the bilingual mental lexicon, with a particular emphasis on the overarching issue of L1 lexicalization empirically with respect to two different form-focused instructional interventions. In other words, the major cornerstone of this study as L1 lexicalization acts as a projector resembling the hegemony of semantic transfer phenomenon. This paper examines the role of L1 lexicon in L2 vocabulary acquisition, and suggests that the transfer hegemony is pivotal in understanding the bilingual mental lexicon and the learners' lack of convergence on the foreign language. In order to pinpoint the significance of the issue of L1 lexicalization as the major theme of this research proposal, it is beneficial to initially explicate the differences between first and second language vocabulary acquisition and subsequently provide a more palpable view of the lexical transfer phenomenon.

2. Background literature

According to Bly-Vroman (1990, as cited in Stringer, 2008, p. 233) the differences between L1 and L2 acquisition could be clarified in terms of the idea of Fundamental Difference Hypothesis. In fact, the development of L1 is directed by “an innate domain-specific acquisition system, comprising knowledge of Universal Grammar (UG), which delimits the possibilities for a natural human grammar, and ‘domain specific learning procedures’ which make possible the acquisition of an abstract formal system of great complexity.”

However, the L2 acquisition involves a totally different process due to the lack of continued access to universal grammar and the presence of a priori knowledge of grammatical principles associated with the learners' L1. Consequently, the learner resorts to

problem-solving systems rather than LAD as he becomes involved in learning. The basic tenant of the fundamental Difference Hypothesis could be crystallized in the following schematization.

The fundamental difference hypothesis (adapted from Bley- Vroman, 1990: 14)

	HYPOTHESIS SPACE	LEARNNG MECHANISMS
L1 ACQUISITION	Universal Grammar	Language Acquisition Device
L2 ACQUISITION	L1 knowledge	General problem-solving skills

The above mentioned hypothesis helps us to have a more vivid perspective regarding the transfer accounts involved in the acquisition of L2 lexicon. As mentioned by Stringer (2008, p. 233), “despite the increased importance attributed to syntactic and phonological transfer in recent years (Schwartz and Sprouse, 1994, 1996; Archibald, 1998; Brown, 2000), transfer accounts have largely ignored the acquisition of the lexicon.”

To our knowledge, research on the influence of L1 lexicalization pattern on L2 lexical acquisition and use is sparse. The current study is centralized on the effect of the cross-linguistic issue of L1 lexicalization on L2 lexical acquisition. Such a scrutiny is followed with respect to two form-focused explicit interventions referred to as glossing in the form of direct contrasting with L1 and morphological awareness. To shed light on the fact, it seems necessary to crystallize L2 lexical acquisition with respect to the issue of L1 lexicalization. According to Jiang (2004), L2 vocabulary acquisition involves three successive stages which are as follows: word association stage, L1 lemma mediation stage and full integration stage.

In second language acquisition the adult language learner is deprived of having simultaneous access to a rich conceptual or semantic system in L2. Instead, he resorts to the existing linguistic and conceptual system of his L1 which has now an intermediating role in the process of L2 acquisition. Jiang (2000) referred to this stage as the hybrid-entry stage due to the fact that an L2 entry state at this stage is an amalgamation of L2 linguistic and conceptual information and the syntax and semantic system pertinent to the learner’s L1. Subsequently, the learner becomes involved in a lexical processing activity which could be termed as L1 lemma mediation stage since lexical processing at L2 is mediated by the lemma information provided as a result of the act of translation from L2 to L1. The existence of such a hybrid entry stage is of great significance since it makes L2 vocabulary acquisition different from L1 lexical development.

Accordingly, the L2 vocabulary acquisition encompasses a process of mapping the already available meanings or concepts in the learners’ L1 to the novel lexical item in their

L2. However, such an extrapolation from already existing mappings to mappings to new concepts may not occur for a majority of words, and consequently, L1 lemma mediation often instantiates as the steady state of lexical performance in advanced learners (Jiang, 2004).

As mentioned by Paribakht (2005) an unfamiliar L2 word not lexicalized in the learners' L1 does not exist as a lemma package for the learner. Therefore, it seems plausible that the absence of such a lemma package with respect to non-lexicalized items may affect the quality of L2 lexical acquisition. Therefore, it could be speculated that better understanding of the role of L1 lexicalization in L2 lexical acquisition may pave the way toward a deeper understanding of the stages that particular words might move through.

The term lexicalization is defined by Brinton and Traugott (2005), as the process through which new items which are regarded to be 'lexical' come into existence. As Brinton 2002 (as cited in Brinton and Traugott, 2005) mentioned several definitions could be found in the literature regarding the concept of lexicalization from an onomasiological perspective. The three definitions which are the most prevalent are as follows: First, lexicalization could be simply defined as the common process of word formation instantiated as compounding, conversion and derivation which augments the breadth of a vocabulary of a language and simultaneously enriches the resources pertinent to any special field. Second, lexicalization encompasses the processes of fusion leading to decrease in compositionality. Lexicalization as fusion usually referred to as "conflation" or "coding" (Brinton and Traugott, 2005, p.32). Third, lexicalization involves a process of separation which increases autonomy. All these processes may be characterized as processes of institutionalization. Brinton and Traugott (2005, p. 45) defined institutionalization as "the spread of a usage to the community and its establishment as the norm."

The issue of L1 lexicalization stands as an area of difficulty in the field of L2 vocabulary acquisition and as a result it has inherently profound pedagogical implications for explicit vocabulary learning. Furthermore, any new findings in this regard may assist to formulate a general theory depicting the mental processes involved in lexical achievement and retrieval at both receptive and productive levels stressed by Chacon Bettran, Abello – contess and Toreblanca Lopez (2010).

This research proposal attempted to evaluate the effect of two different form-focused instructions pivoting around glossing in the form of direct contrasting and metamorphological awareness as two explicit strategies on the behavior of lexicalized and non-lexicalized vocabulary items. Perhaps, the selection of either strategy could be justified in reference to the noticing hypothesis which encourages the processes through which learners notice the

input as a result of which the input becomes intake. Moreover, both strategies belong to the category of form-focused activities. In fact, the idea of form-focused instruction has just recently been applied to the field of vocabulary acquisition and teaching.

Ellis, 1990 (as cited in Ellis, 2008), referred to noticing as a pedagogical device for language acquisition. He subsequently asserted the idea that formal explicit instruction as a facilitative tool helps the learners to foster awareness of target language features. As soon as the learner notices a particular feature in L2, he would be able to detect the noticed feature in subsequent communicative input events. Such a process is helpful in further processing which ultimately leads to the acquisition of that specific feature.

According to Doughty and William (1998), interventionist explicit instruction brings three salutary offshoots to the field of SLA compared with naturalistic setting: first: it accelerates the rate of learning, second: it may have some impact on long term accuracy pertinent to learning processes and finally, it raises the ultimate level of attainment. Additionally, Web (2008) reported that many recent researchers like Laufer, 1991, 2001; Laufer and Paribakht (1998) as well as Web (2008) suggested the idea that this is the explicit vocabulary teaching and learning which could be responsible for the vast majority of L2 vocabulary learning. It is of utmost significance to mention the fact that form-focused instruction is considered as one of the prominent interventionist instruction which draws the learners' attention to language form in explicit or implicit fashion (Spada, 1997). The two interventions provided in this study as direct contrasting with L1 and morphological awareness crystallizes form-focused instruction in an explicit fashion.

Form-focused instruction is defined by Ellis (2008, p. 963) as a type of teaching which "requires some attempt to focus learners' attention on specific properties of the L2 so that they will learn them." As such it stands in conformity with the goals of communicative language teaching which were centralized on the provision of comprehensible input and meaning-centered tasks in second language acquisition. However, in order to boost the learners' grammatical competence, it was suggested by many applied linguists to include tasks that demands deeper attention to form as well. (Ellis, 2001; Housen and Pierrard, 2005). The idea puts emphasis on the role of explicit instruction along with Schmidt's noticing hypothesis. As mentioned by Long and Robinson (1998), it is the responsibility of teachers to help the learners recognize the incongruities dealing with complex tasks by focusing the learners' attention on problematic areas. Such an instruction provides attention to the discrete forms of the language when necessary and encourages teacher and learners negotiation. FFI could be classified into two types: Focus on form and focus on forms. Unlike focus on forms

which disregards meaning, the focus on form hypothesis puts emphasis on the provision of meaningful contexts. In other words, such an approach emphasizes a form-meaning connection and teaches vocabulary within contexts.

However, as mentioned by Laufer and Girsai, (2008), the lions' share of the FFI research is devoted to the teaching of grammar and not vocabulary and only recently researchers, have employed FFI for vocabulary instruction. (Hill and Laufer, 2003; Laufer, 2005, 2006). It is worth mentioning that "the overall conclusion of the researches conducted so far in the area of vocabulary learning is that FFI, notwithstanding whether the focus on Form or whether the focus on Forms approach is employed, is a useful and effective way of vocabulary teaching" (Jahangard, 2010, p. 45).

In the present research, the form-focused instruction was adopted to teach lexicalized and non-lexicalized vocabulary items. It is evident that the two receptive activities as L1 glossing in the form of direct contrasting with L1 and meta-morphological treatment belong to the category of focus-on-forms activities. Whereas, the contextualized productive activities of reconstruction in the form of paraphrasing, sentence translation and sentence making (providing cross-linguistic information as to the meaning of the sentences comprising the intended words with focused attention on contextualized meaning) replicate focus on form activities. Both interventions were accompanied with similar output practices and corrective feedback activities.

Despite the fact that glossing could be traced in Middle Ages, it is surprising that it has remained unexplored. Lomicka (1998), stated that glosses are referred to as brief definitions, translations, or explanations of a word provided to facilitate the two cognitive processes of reading and comprehension for L2 learners. As mentioned by Laufer and Girsai (2008) as the learner becomes involved in L2-L1 translation activities, he subconsciously notices the meaning and the word form at the initial levels which are followed by the process of attending to the use of the selected lexical items at productive levels. Subsequent research on proficient bilinguals revealed the fact that lexical and semantic information becomes active in LI during comprehension and production in L2 (Kroll and Sunderman, 2003 as cited in Barcroft, 2004). It is believed that glossing has a considerable effect on the intake of vocabulary as a result of increased saliency and the formation of associations which leads to a more effective storage of items. Nisbet (2010, p.13), believed that "when students know a particular word in their native language, learning an English label is a relatively straightforward, easy process."

However, we have no research proposal allocated to the effect of such an overarching attentive procedure on the acquisition of lexicalized and non-lexicalized vocabulary items pursuing the impact of the cross-linguistic issue of L1 lexicalization. Such a scarcity motivated the researcher to select L2 –L1 glossing in the form of direct contrasting as the first treatment for teaching lexicalized and non-lexicalized items in this study.

The second pedagogical intervention provided in this study was focused on the learners' metalinguistic vocabulary knowledge. Generally speaking, metalinguistic knowledge is defined by Roehr and Ganem-Gutierrez (2008, p. 2) as "a learners' explicit knowledge about the syntactic, morphological, lexical, phonological, and pragmatic features of the L2." It is of utmost significance to know that explicit knowledge could be specialized as a type of knowledge that "could be brought into awareness, that is potentially available for verbal report, and that is represented declaratively" stated by Roehr and Ganem-Gutierrez (2008, p. 2). According to Anderson, 2005; Hulstijn, 2005 (as cited in Roehr and Ganem-Gutierrez, 2008) that type of knowledge contradicts with implicit knowledge which cannot be brought into awareness.

As one of the potential strategies for explicit instruction of words, one can directly refer to the utilization of morphological awareness for learning novel lexical items. Morphological awareness involves the recognition and manipulation of morphemic structure of words. It involves the three processes of inflectional morphology, derivational morphology and lexical compounding, Carlisle, 1995 (as cited in Rispen, MC Bride-Chang and Reitsma, 2008).

Kue and Anderson, 2006 (as cited in Zahedi and Fallah, 2011) defined morphological awareness as the ability to use the knowledge of word formation rules and the pairings between sounds and meanings (e. g. *adulthoods* = *adult* + *-hood* + *-s*), learning the meanings of roots, affixes (*adult*= *mature human being*, *-hood*= the state of being, *-s*= to indicate plural nouns) and synthesizing the meaningful parts into novel meanings (*motherhood*, *fatherhood*, *brotherhood*). The practice of this dissecting - synthesizing method is called morphological analysis.

The present paper focused University –level foreign language learners' meta-morphological awareness as an explicit learning approach, supported by the noticing hypothesis inspired by Schmidt (1990, 2001 as cited in Schmitt, 2010) in connection with the overarching psycholinguistic issue of first language lexicalization. The issue of L1 lexicalization has been represented as a factor of difficulty in foreign language vocabulary acquisition in general and has been hypothesized to be affected by the learners' metalinguistic knowledge more specifically. The metamorphological awareness was

specifically examined with regard to the knowledge of derivational morphology which involves the construction of a new word by the combination of a word stem and a suffix.

As mentioned by Shaw (2011) morphological knowledge can pave the way to recognize both grammatical and semantic relationships between related word forms. Grammatically, a lemma is a single base word and all of its syntactic inflections. Understanding that *decide*, *decides*, *decided*, and *deciding* are all related grammatically is not obvious to all students. However, a lemmatized search accompanied with derivational knowledge of morphology may be helpful in recognizing all grammatically pertinent forms of a word and may be useful in making those connections. “This can especially be useful in the difficult task of inflecting phrasal verbs and idiomatic expressions” (Shaw, 2011, p.38).

Bellomo (2009) conducted an investigation to scrutinize the effectiveness of morphological analysis as a vocabulary strategy for L1 and L2 college students. The obtained findings were suggestive of the utility of morphological analysis as a vocabulary acquisition strategy regardless of language origin. Similarly, the result of the study conducted by Bowers and Kirby (2009) evinced the beneficial effects of morphological instruction on vocabulary acquisition. However, it is not evident whether or not such knowledge is helpful in recognizing the words not lexicalized in the learners’ L1 both receptively and productively.

3. Research objectives

It is evident that teachers implement several methods to teach vocabulary. In the same way, skillful learners resort to a multi-form set of vocabulary-learning strategies. By scrutinizing the existing reviews of literature regarding different methods of vocabulary instruction including implicit and explicit ones, we become easily convinced that some methods of vocabulary instruction may be more efficient than others. However, no single study was devoted to the investigation of vocabulary teaching and learning strategies in reference to the psycholinguistic mechanisms underlying L2 lexical acquisition. In other words, no experimental study was conducted with respect to the cross-linguistic issue of L1 lexicalization neither in EFL nor in ESL educational environment. Further research is obtrusively required in this area to fill the existing gap regarding this issue which is not treated in an explicit manner.

The learners’ lexical gains could be affected by several factors involved in cognitive processing pertinent to L1 and L2. In fact, the major objective of this research, however, was to investigate the bilingual mental lexicon with the enthusiasm of scrutinizing lexical

acquisition from an overarching perspective linking L1 to L2. Such a psycholinguistic scrutiny was carried out with the intention of being helpful in refining the existing mental models. Furthermore, the researcher tried to provide a comparative view regarding the impact of two different interventionist approaches to the acquisition of the two sets of words from a pedagogical perspective. Hence, the following research questions were raised:

- 1) What is the relationship between the learners' degree of familiarity with the two sets of English words lexicalized and non-lexicalized in their L1, their receptive and productive knowledge, and the two sets and their receptive and productive knowledge at pre-testing?
- 2) Is there any significant difference between the two interventionist groups receiving basic dictionary form L1 glossing and metamorphological treatments dealing with L2 words lexicalized and non-lexicalized in Persian?
- 3) How does L1 lexicalization as an overarching issue affect the learners' lexical gains in the two interventionist groups?

4. Methodology

4.1 Participants

This research involved a group of seventy six undergraduate university students majoring English Translation studying at the Islamic Azad University, Roudehen Branch. The intermediate level learners were selected based on the results obtained from the 2000 level of Version one of the Vocabulary Levels Test (Nation, 2000). Accordingly, the learners whose mean score on the 2000 word level was 28 or more out of a possible 30 which is the indicative of the mastery of intermediate level were selected as the participants of the study. The mean score of the selected group on the 2000 word level of version 1 of the Vocabulary Levels Test (Nation, 2000) was 28.12 out of thirty. Therefore, the selected individuals were regarded as the participants of a homogeneous sample and they formed the two interventionist groups of this study.

4.2 Target words

The target words for the study encompassed seventy six English words (38 lexicalized and 38 non-lexicalized items). The words were categorized into lexicalized and non-lexicalized ones, with approximately equal number of nouns, verbs and adjectives in each group. The lexical items were selected from the reading texts that were relatively difficult for intermediate level learners.

In accordance with the definition provided by Paribakht (2005), the non-lexicalized words were defined as those that could be paraphrased in Persian but do not have a fixed one word or compound equivalent in Persian based on several bilingual dictionaries and the judgments of several educated bilingual native speakers of Persian. All target words including lexicalized and non-lexicalized ones were polysyllabic to satisfy the requirement of the second type of treatment as morphological analysis.

The final selection encompassed words which were considered to be relatively difficult for intermediate students (e.g. Panacea, Surmount). This list was also a representative of three word classes including nouns, verbs and adjectives which were equal in number in both groups. The selected words in both groups belong to the second tier of the three-tiered vocabulary framework proposed by Beck, McKeown, and Kucan (2002) which included academic vocabulary utilized in sophisticated academic discourse across variety of domains.

4.3 Instruments

The measurement devices employed in this study were as follows: The receptive version of the vocabulary breadth test, the productive version of the vocabulary breadth test, a vocabulary test encompassing lexicalized and non-lexicalized items and VKS (vocabulary Knowledge scale). The following section will be devoted to the description of the above mentioned devices sequentially.

4.3.1 Receptive version of VLT

Nations' Vocabulary Levels Test was the first instrument utilized in this research project with the purpose of assessing the learners' receptive knowledge of vocabulary. The participants who passed the 2000 level with the score of 28 out of the possible 30 were selected as the participants of this study. It encompasses samples from five levels of frequency which are as follows: The 2000 most frequent words, the 3000 most frequent words, the 5000 thousand, the University World List and the 10000 thousand most frequent words. Learners are expected to match groups of three words out of six with their paraphrases.

The following formula developed by Laufer (1987), was implemented for estimating the students' passive (receptive) vocabulary level.

$$\{(2000 \text{ passive score} * 2) + 3000 \text{ passive score} + \text{Academic vocabulary score} + 5000 \text{ passive score} + [(3000 \text{ passive score} + 5000 \text{ score}) / 2] + [5000 \text{ passive score} + 10000 \text{ passive score}] / 2 * 4\} / 330 * 10000$$

4.3.2 Productive version of VLT

This test is developed by Laufer and Nation (1999) with the purpose of measuring the learners' productive vocabulary size. The major difference between this test and VLT is that

items are not provided but rather elicited in short sentences. However, the first letters of the target word are provided to avoid the elicitation of non-target words which may fit the sentence context.

Like the previously mentioned test, VLT, this test also consisted of five frequency levels, each comprising 18 items, with a maximum score of 90. The items are scored dichotomously in that each correct response received one point and each incorrect or blank one received zero. Furthermore, items with incorrect grammatical form (e. g present instead of past) or unobtrusive error marked as correct.

The following formula adopted by Laufer (1987), was employed in the way of measuring students' active vocabulary level.

$$\{(2000 \text{ active score} * 2) + 3000 \text{ active score} + 5000 \text{ active score} + \text{University word List score} + [(3000 \text{ active score} + 5000 \text{ active score}) / 2] + [(5000 \text{ active score} + 10000 \text{ active score}) / 2 * 4] + 10000 \text{ active score}\} / 198 * 10000$$

The reliability of the both parts including the receptive and productive sections was calculated by employing KR-21 formula. The estimated reliabilities were .72 and .77 for the receptive and productive sections respectively.

4.3.3 The lexicalized/ non-lexicalized vocabulary test

The lexicalized/non lexicalized vocabulary test was devised by the researcher to examine the participants' knowledge of lexicalized and non-lexicalized words before and after the treatment. The test encompassed seventy-six items of lexicalized and non-lexicalized vocabularies which were arranged randomly. Since the list of target words included some polysemous words, in order to elicit the participants' knowledge of the target meanings, the target words were presented in sentence contexts without defining the words. Three professors were consulted in devising the test. The reliability of this test was calculated by Cronbach's alpha and it was estimated as .84.

4.3.4 Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS)

VKS scale was selected as a measure of assessing the learners' depth of vocabulary knowledge from an incremental (developmental) approach to compare the performance of the participants dealing with the two sets of words before and after the treatment. The participants were provided with a vocabulary task devised by the researcher on the basis of the modified form of the vocabulary knowledge scale (VKS; Paribakht and Wesche, 1996). As mentioned by Schmitt (2010, p. 218), "VKS is the best known and most widely used depth of knowledge scale for the most complete description of the instrument." He further

provided the following description regarding the fundamental features and application of the VKS.

The VKS has the advantage of utilizing both self - report and performance data, which provides information about the participants' level of awareness ranging from total unfamiliarity to the capability to implement the word with semantic and syntactic accuracy in a sentence. As mentioned by Wesch and Paribakht, (1996) the VKS could be utilized purposefully to capture the initial development of knowledge of both groups of lexicalized and non-lexicalized vocabulary items since it is proved to have sufficient sensitivity to muster incremental gains in the initial stages of special words.

Paribakht and Wesche (1993) reported that the learners proved able to respond the VKS with certainty, and the result of the scrutiny detecting patterns of change in knowledge of the target words during their course of study in two interventions revealed that it could appropriately capture progression in the development of knowledge of particular words.

As mentioned by Schmitt (2010) Wesche and Paribakht recently reintroduced this measurement approach as being appropriate for showing comparative gains obtained as a result of different instructional interventions. More importantly, "it revealed significant intra-group gains and also proved to be sensitive to inter-group differences in content vocabulary gains" stated by Paribakht and Wesche (1993, p. 30). Wesche and Paribakht (1996) presented that VKS is sensitive enough to both intra-group and inter-group gains. Such a feature is evidently in conformity with the goals of this research which seeks a bimodal comparative analysis regarding a cross-linguistic issue (L1 lexicalization) both pedagogically and in terms of its underlying psycholinguistic mechanism involved in learning. The first facet pinpoints the issue pedagogically in reference to inter-group relationships. Whereas, the second facet analyzes the intra-group relationships between lexicalized and non-lexicalized items in different groups in a distinct manner.

4.4 Scoring

As mentioned by Wesche and Paribakht (1996), VKS score utilizes an amalgamation of two types of knowledge referred to as self-reported and demonstrated ability. The elicitation categories I and II lead to scores 1 (total unfamiliarity with form and meaning) and 2 (initial familiarity with form but lack of knowledge with respect to meaning) respectively. In the modified version of the scale the elicitation category III may lead to the score of 2 (if the synonym or translation is wrong) or 3 (if it is judged as being partially acceptable in situations in which the learner knows one of the basic constituents particularly in reference to non-lexicalized words; For instance, defining 'simulcast' as broadcasting a program) or 4 (if

it is correct). At this level, the researcher intended to make distinction among learners regarding their receptive knowledge by devising three scoring categories presenting lack of knowledge, partial knowledge and full knowledge of a word. In other words, the learner receives the score of 4 if the provided answer presents all the basic lexical constituents of a word at receptive level.

Unacceptable receptive responses at IV category likewise result in a score of 2. The partial knowledge of the learner in category IV leads to the score of 3 and the full knowledge receives the score of 4 respectively. Category V deals with the students' initial productive knowledge at sentence level. The produced sentences at this level are evaluated only dealing with those learners who passed the receptive self-reported categories successfully. If knowledge of a meaning of the word is shown in a category V response but the word is not appropriately used in the sentence context, a score of 4 is given. A score of 5 is given if the word is utilized in the sentence in a way that presents the learner's knowledge of its meaning in that context but it has the wrong grammatical category (e.g., a target noun utilized as a verb- He announced his retire'), or if a mistakenly conjugated or derived form is provided (e.g., 'catched' for 'caught'). A score of 6 reflects both semantically and grammatically correct application of the target word - even if other parts of the sentence encompass wrong forms.

5. Procedure

The informants of this study were initially judged as being at the intermediate level of vocabulary knowledge based on their performance on the 2000 word level assessed by VLT. One week before commencing the treatment, the pre-test designed based on VKS was administered to both groups and the results were recorded for later comparison with the post-test results. Both groups were taught for 12 weeks, each week contained one session and each session was 90 minutes long.

The learners in the experimental groups were provided with two different activities as L1 glossing (a recognition task) and morphological analysis (a manipulation task) regarding both groups of lexicalized and non-lexicalized ones at receptive level to be comparable with each other. The major rationale behind selecting these two activities at receptive level followed by similar contextualized exercises at productive could be justified in terms of the noticing hypothesis as intention and noticing as consciousness (higher level of understanding) proposed by Schmitt (2001) who believed nothing could be learned unless it has been noticed. Technically speaking, the two pedagogical interventions utilized in this study are

consistent with the distinctions made by Schmidt (2010) between the two terms of consciousness as intention and consciousness as awareness (understanding). Furthermore, both types of treatments could be supported by the features of form-focused instruction.

The beneficiary impact of the first intervention as L1 glossing could be rationalized with respect to the idea of consciousness as intention in which paying attention through explicit teaching is transparently fruitful to help the learners notice the non-salient cues or complex ones which are the source of difficulty due to the cross-linguistic distinctions existing between the learners' L1 and L2. Clearly, it could be speculated that words not lexicalized in learners' L1 could epitomize such a case with respect to the differences involved in mental processing. Another reason for the selection of such a strategy is to be able to detect the hegemony of transfer phenomenon in a situation in which the learners' attention is directed toward their L1.

Initially, the learners in the first interventionist group were provided with a technical theoretical elaboration of the issue of L1 lexicalization and institutionalization that served as a criterion centralizing their attention on the existing differences between lexicalized and non-lexicalized items. The provision of such a description seems quite logical since all the learners were the participants of a course of morphology. They were initially asked to read the sentences including bold-typed lexicalized and non-lexicalized items. The major aim of such a task was to draw learners' attention to the target words to make sure they noticed the selected lexical items. As mentioned by Gass (1988 as cited in Paribakht and Wesche, 1997) selective attention is the first stage in the acquisition of the word that ascertains the noticing process.

In order to provide the learners with a comparative view crystallizing the significance of the issue of L1 lexicalization, a glossing activity was provided. Accordingly, the learners were expected to work with the target items accompanied with their equivalents and explanations (provided for non-lexicalized items), together with equivalents of two to four other words not included in the available contexts through a matching activity. The intended words were provided at the foot of the page in no particular order. The participants were required to match each lexicalized or non-lexicalized word with its equivalent or paraphrase in their L1 to grasp the lexical cues signifying the cross-linguistic distinctions between their mother tongue and English as a foreign language.

The task was primarily aimed at helping the participants learn the conceptual meaning of the words by finding their equivalents in L1. However, the ultimate goal pursued by the task was to raise learners' consciousness regarding the issue of lexicalization in reference to each

individual word in their L1. Such a consciousness –raising activity was conducted by asking the learners to choose between the two options of L (lexicalized) or NL (non-lexicalized) for each selected lexical item. According to Paribakht and Wesch (1997), this activity belongs to the category of recognition exercises due to the fact that the learners are provided with the necessary elements and they are expected to match the lexicalized and non-lexicalized words with their equivalents or definitions.

Subsequently, the learners were asked to work with the unknown words including lexicalized and non-lexicalized ones by translating the sentences including the selected items. In other words, the participants in this interventionist group as direct contrasting with L1 were involved in a sentence translation task as well. Here, a necessity was felt to make the glossing activity (provided in the form of direct contrasting with L1) obtrusively meaningful. To achieve such an inclination, the learners were involved in a translation task as an opportunity to consider the expressive possibilities of the target language and to discover that it is not always possible to attain exact equivalence to lexical items. Finally, the participants were expected to generate original sentences in L2 by using the intended words if they could.

The second pedagogical intervention as morphological treatment could be rationalized in reference to the idea of consciousness as higher level of awareness (understanding). As mentioned by Schmidt (2010, p. 6) “knowledge of rules and metalinguistic awareness of all kinds belong to higher level of awareness” referred to as understanding which is regarded to be facilitative for SLA. Therefore, the second pedagogical intervention which involved metalinguistic analysis of lexicalized and non-lexicalized words is in line with the idea of consciousness as higher level of awareness (understanding) explicated by Schmidt (2010).

The instruction in this group was intended to implement morphological analysis as a tool to develop a skill not limited to the teaching of the selected specified words. At the end of the instruction the participants in this group were expected to have awareness of several productive and semi-productive word families, stems, meaningful affixes and base forms derivational and inflectional affixes pertinent to several words including the specifically selected lexicalized and non-lexicalized vocabulary items. Perhaps, the learners were initially provided with theoretical descriptions pertinent to the above mentioned concepts like root, stem, derivational and inflectional affixes and combining forms as the basic terminologies of morphology. Such a procedure was accompanied with practical activities in a consecutive manner.

The learners in the second experimental group were involved in an individual activity to draw their attention to the derivational morphology of English. Before initiating with the

completion task which was carried out individually, the whole class was provided with some explicit instruction regarding the roots, stems and the derivational affixes relevant to the selected words presented each session. The instructor attempted to draw the learners' attention to the selected constituents by providing some further examples of the words encompassing the intended morphological constituents. Subsequently, learners in this experimental group were given a photocopy of the target contextualized words containing the bold-faced lexicalized and non-lexicalized items each session. The major aim of such a task was to draw learners' attention to the target words to make sure they noticed the selected lexical items. Next, the learners were expected to provide the meaning of the selected words by dissecting both sets of items into their meaningful constituents and finally write the whole meaning after the analysis. Such an activity could be classified as a manipulation exercise. The justification lying behind such a classification is that the learners are required to rearrange and organize the selected lexicalized and non-lexicalized items by utilizing their knowledge of morphology (stems, roots and affixes) as stated by Paribakht and Wesch (1997). Accordingly, the instructor intended to focus the learners' attention on the derived forms that make each word different and the part of speech of each related word.

Once weekly for the rest of the semester learners in this experimental group were assigned 8-9 new words and asked, for each new word, to repeat each step of the activity in class. However, the morphological treatment in this group was not limited to the analysis of the selected words as it involved the conceptual acquisition of several roots, derivational, inflectional affixes and combining forms. Like the first interventionist group, the interventionist activities in this group were accompanied with some output activities such as reconstruction and sentence making in which the participants were asked to work on the intended words by reconstructing the contextualized sentences through paraphrasing and finally they were expected to provide original sentences if they could.

The requirement of the sentence writing task in both groups could be justified in terms of the idea sparked by Joe, 1995, 1998 (as cited in Laufer, 2001, p. 47) as "the original uses of words has been shown to lead to retention of these words." Similarly, as Lee (2004) noted, attempts to implement newly learned words in writing after explicit instruction significantly increased the likelihood of recognition vocabulary diverting to productive vocabulary. That is, at least one of the advantages of writing activities for vocabulary acquisition is that they, besides reinforcing already-learned vocabulary, help recognition vocabulary become productive. Accordingly, it seems logical to speculate that switching to

activities which require production of the target word such as implementing it in written sentences may improve the chances of further recall. It is worthy of mentioning that the inclusion of such a productive activity is consistent with the idea of pushed output hypothesis formulated by Swain, 1995 (as cited in Gass and Selinker, 2008) which predicted the fact that production practice pushes learners to implement their linguistic abilities as they try to make themselves more comprehensible. Consequently, it could be assumed that productive activities play a significant role in the acquisition of syntax and morphology.

It is evident that the interventions provided in the two groups were concordant with form-focused instructions. In fact, the form-focused instruction in the two interventionist groups consisted of a special amalgamation of receptive and productive tasks which were accompanied by oral corrective feedback. Each treatment was considered to amplify a variant aspect of lexical competence and the tasks in each group were arranged from the less demanding to the most demanding one.

In fact, the two receptive activities as L1 glossing in the form of direct contrasting with L1 and meta-morphological treatment belong to the category of focus-on-forms activities. Whereas, the productive contextualized activities of reconstruction in the form of paraphrasing, sentence translation and sentence making (providing cross-linguistic information as to the meaning of the sentences comprising the intended words with focused attention on contextualized meaning) replicate focus on form activities.

The learners in both groups were provided with some oral positive and negative corrective feedbacks which were primarily focused on the grammaticality of the produced sentences, semantic appropriateness of the target words in contextualized sentences, optimum pronunciation and questions related to the collocations of the selected words in both interventionist groups. The learners in both groups were demanded to submit their papers for further analysis by the instructor in each individual instructional session. In fact, such an evaluation did not have any effect on their final assessment. Ultimately, the learners in both groups were administered a post-test (the same as pre-test to be comparable with each other by mirroring the same features) to be evaluated and compared with respect to the amount of gain lexical knowledge by the end of the instructional course.

6. Results

In order to find the relationship between the learners' degree of awareness of the lexicalized and non-lexicalized items at pre-testing and their size of vocabulary knowledge a

correlational analysis was conducted between the two tests. The obtained results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Correlations between the learners' degree of familiarity with lexicalized and non-lexicalized items and their receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge

	<i>N</i>	<i>Lexicalized</i>	<i>Non-lexicalized</i>	<i>Receptive</i>	<i>Productive</i>
Lexicalized	114	1	.51**	.068	.20*
Non-lexicalized	114		1	.014	.10
Receptive	114			1	.41**
Productive	114				1

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

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

Table 1 presents Pearson correlations among participants breadth of vocabulary knowledge including receptive and productive knowledge and their degree of familiarity with the two sets of lexicalized and non-lexicalized items at pre-testing before being exposed to the treatment. As can be seen in the table there was no significant relationship between the learners' receptive vocabulary knowledge and their degree of familiarity with the two sets of words. There was a weak positive correlation between the learners' productive knowledge and their knowledge of lexicalized words ($p < .05$). In other words, learners with a larger productive vocabulary were found to have more familiarity with the lexicalized words. However, neither their receptive nor their productive knowledge was predictive of their degree of familiarity with the non-lexicalized items. Accordingly, it could be speculated that a larger breadth of vocabulary including receptive and productive knowledge than the range presented by the participants of the study is probably required for a more successful performance related to the target words before being exposed to the treatment. Furthermore, a modest positive correlation was found between the learners' knowledge of the two sets of words at the beginning of the instruction ($p < .01$). Additionally, a modest positive correlation was reported between the learners' receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge ($P < .01$).

The descriptive statistics related to the two experimental groups with respect to lexicalized and non-lexicalized items at pre and post testing sessions are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics related to the pre/post test scores pertinent to the two interventionist groups

<i>Groups</i>	<i>Pairs</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>
	Lexicalized Pre	36	59.69	6.25	1.04
Glossing	Lexicalized Post	36	164.25	28.21	4.70

	Non-lexicalized Pre	36	52.58	6.88	1.14
	Non-lexicalized Post	36	148.47	26.26	4.37
	Lexicalized Pre	40	56.70	6.71	1.06
Morphological	Lexicalized Post	40	141.70	33.71	5.33
	Non-lexicalized Pre	40	52.58	5.65	.89
	Non-lexicalized Post	40	134.25	26.53	4.19

In order to see whether or not the provided treatments were effective in each interventionist group a matched *t*-test split file was conducted to observe the significance of the mean differences between pre-and post testing scores in each group. The obtained results are shown in table 3.

Table 3. Results of split-file paired *t*-test for pre-post lexicalized/non-lexicalized items in the two interventionist groups

Groups	VKS scores	Paired Differences				** (p< .01)
		Mean	SD	df	p	
Glossing	Pair1 (lexicalized Pre/lexicalized Post)	-104.556	27.62	35	.000**	As can be see n in
	Pair2 (Non-Lexicalized Pre/ Non-lexicalized Post)	-95.88	27.43	35	.000**	
Morphological	Pair1 (lexicalized pre/lexicalized Post)	-85.00	31.75	39	.000**	
	Pair2 (Non-Lexicalized Pre/Non-lexicalized Post)	-81.67	25.39	39	.000**	

Table 3, the *t*-test result with (p< .01) indicates a significant difference between the mean scores of the learners at pre and post-testing sessions in both interventionist groups dealing with both sets of words. In other words, both treatments were effective in helping the learners grow their depth of lexical knowledge in reference to both groups of words. In order to find out whether or not the mean differences between the two groups are significant with respect to lexicalized items an independent *t*-test analysis was conducted. The result of the *t*-test analysis between the first interventionist group involved in glossing and the second interventionist group received morphological treatment dealing with lexicalized items are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Results of independent *t*-test analysis for lexicalized items

Variables	Scores	Levene's Test For Equality of variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	sig	t	df	sig
Lexicalized Pre	Equal variances assumed	.39	.53	2	74	.049 *

	Equal variances not assumed			2.07	73.90	.048 *
Lexicalized	Equal variances assumed	2.18	.14	3.14	74	.002**
Post	Equal variances not assumed			3.17	73.63	.002**
Gain score	Equal variances assumed	1.18	.28	2.85	74	.006**
Lexicalized	Equal variances not assumed			2.87	73.92	.005**

** (p < .01) * (p < .05)

As can be seen in Table 4 the independent sample *t*-test result with (df = 74) and (P = .049) regarding lexicalized items presented the fact that the participants in the two groups were significantly different with regard to their knowledge of lexicalized vocabulary items at pre-testing. The obtained *t*-test result at post-testing with (df = 74) and (P=.002) with regard to the same group of participants is representative of a significant difference between the two interventionist groups. In order to be able to compare the two groups in reference to their gain knowledge from pre to post-testing a *t*-test analysis was conducted with regard to the gain scores. The result obtained presented that the measured rates of learning of the lexicalized set of items from pre to post-testing sessions was significantly different (p < .006). In other words, the learners involved in the first experimental group outperformed their counterparts in the second group with respect to lexicalized items.

In order to find out whether or not the mean differences between the two groups are significant with respect to non-lexicalized items an independent *t*-test analysis was conducted. The results of the *t*-test analysis between the first interventionist group involved in glossing and the second group involved in morphological analysis dealing with non-lexicalized items are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Results of independent *t*-test analysis for non-lexicalized items

Variables	Scores	Levene's Test For Equality of variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	sig	t	df	sig
Non-Lexicalized Pre	Equal variances assumed	.46	.49	.006	74	.99
	Equal variances not assumed			.006	67.94	.99
Non-Lexicalized Post	Equal variances assumed	.093	.76	2.34	74	.02*
	Equal variances not assumed			2.34	73.31	.02*
Gain score Non -Lexicalized	Equal variances assumed	.016	.89	2.34	74	.02*
	Equal variances not assumed			2.33	71.58	.02*

* (p < .05)

Table 5 demonstrates that the participants involved in the two interventionist groups did not have any significant differences in reference to their degree of familiarity with non-lexicalized items at pre-testing with (df = 74). However, the obtained *t*-test analyses with (df= 74) and (P= .02) at post-testing and with regard to the gain score (pre to post testing

differences) present the idea that the difference between the two groups was significant in reference to their degrees of achievement regarding the non-lexicalized vocabulary items ($p < .05$). In other words, the learners involved in the first experimental group outperformed their counterparts in the second group with respect to non-lexicalized items.

In order to answer the research questions pertinent to the overarching issue of L1 lexicalization a split-file *t*-test analysis was conducted to see whether or not the performance of the students differ significantly regarding the two sets of items in terms of the intra-relationships between the two groups in each individual interventionist group. The results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Results of split-file paired *t*-test for lexicalized/non-lexicalized items in the two interventionist groups

Groups	VKS scores	Paired Differences			
		Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Glossing	Pair1 lexicalized Pre/Non lexicalized Pre	7.11	6.32	6.74	.000**
	Pair2 Lexicalized Post/ Non-lexicalized Post	15.77	17.98	5.26	.000**
	Pair3 Gain score lexicalized/gain score non lexicalized	-8.66	20.66	-2.51	.017**
Morphological	Pair1 Lexicalized pre/Non-lexicalized Pre	4.12	5.9	4.39	.000**
	Pair2 Lexicalized Post/Non-lexicalized Post	7.45	15.13	3.11	.000**
	Pair3 Gain score lexicalized/gain score non lexicalized	-3.32	15.63	-1.34	.18

** ($p < .01$)

Table 6 presents that the learners in both interventionist groups had greater knowledge of lexicalized items in comparison with their non-lexicalized counter parts at pre-testing ($p < .01$). The obtained *t*-test results were also significantly higher for lexicalized words at post-testing ($p < .01$). However, the measured rate of learning (pre to post-testing difference) was significantly different only in the first interventionist group with ($P < .01$). In other words, the learners' degree of achievement in the second interventionist group that received morphological treatment was not significant regarding the two sets of lexicalized and non-lexicalized items.

7. Discussion and conclusion

The obtained *t*-test results demonstrated a significant difference between the mean scores of the lexicalized and non-lexicalized items at pre and post testing sessions. In other words, both

instructional treatments (glossing in the form of direct contrasting with L1 and morphological analysis) resulted in significant gains in learners' vocabulary knowledge with regard to both groups of lexicalized and non-lexicalized target words. Generally speaking, the findings of this investigation could be supportive of the idea that intervention in the form of explicit instruction brings salutary effects to the field of second language vocabulary acquisition and teaching.

Consequently, the obtained results in favor of explicit instruction in this study are consistent with the findings reported by different scholars in the field of explicit vocabulary acquisition. It is interesting to mention that extensive research during the past 20 years suggested the fact that learners benefit more from explicit vocabulary teaching comparing with incidental vocabulary learning through extensive reading. (Hinkel, 2006; Nation, 2005; Sokeman, 1997 as cited in Nisbet, 2010). In the same way, Web (2008) reported that many recent researchers like Laufer, 1991, 2001; Laufer and Paribakht (1998) as well as Web (2008) suggested the idea that this is the explicit vocabulary teaching and learning which could be responsible for the vast majority of L2 vocabulary learning.

In order to elaborate on the priority of the two interventions provided in this study with regard to their degree of effectiveness on the two sets of words, it seems necessary to evaluate the obtained gains from a comparative view. The *t*-test analysis related to the gain score relevant to the participants of the first interventionist group who were exposed to the explicit treatment of glossing in the form of direct contrasting with L1 and the one pertinent to the second interventionist group who received morphological treatment presented a significant difference between the degrees of achievement in the two groups. Accordingly, both instructional treatments (glossing in the form of direct contrasting with L1 and morphological treatment) resulted in significant gains in learners' vocabulary knowledge with regard to both sets of lexicalized and non-lexicalized target words, but that the first intervention which focused on the learners' L1 in a comparative manner led to greater gains. It should be remembered, however, that both types of provided interventions reflected form-focused instruction encompassing an amalgamation of focus-on-form and focus on forms practices. Furthermore, the pushed out-put practices and corrective feedback activities were identical in both interventionist groups.

The obtained findings may be theoretically rationalized in reference to the idea of noticing as intention. The learners in the first group were more successful in detecting the non-salient cues or complex ones related to the target words which were considered to be complicated due to the differences existing between Persian and English. In other words, the

cross-linguistic comparisons between the participants' mother tongue and the target language were more revealing. Besides, it could be speculated that the comparative discussion over the target words which were intentionally directed toward the issue of L1 lexicalization led to a stronger retention of the words at receptive level. Consequently, the learners may have been more successful in grasping the meanings appropriately and with reference to all the basic constituents of the words. Such a case is more tangible dealing with non-lexicalized items which are regarded to be more complex semantically.

Based on the post-communicative priority of the saliency of form as it anchors to meaning, and the primacy of noticing in the acquisition process, we may hypothesize that the stance towards L1 should reflect the goals of instruction. Accordingly, selective use of contrastive analysis as a teaching technique for especial groups of words offers beneficiary results. As such outright prohibitions on learners' L1 seem to be unfounded, irrational and imprudent.

The morphological awareness provided in the second experimental group as a treatment replicating the idea of consciousness as awareness (higher level of understanding) is shown to be less successful in helping the students grow their depth of lexical items accurately compared with the first group. Morphological awareness as an explicit strategy proved to be effective both as a mnemonic aid and a general strategy dealing with usual vocabulary items with regard to several studies like Bowers and Kirby (2009) and Bellomo (2009). However, its success was a matter of degree in this study particularly with respect to non-lexicalized items carrying more complex lexical constituents.

As it is mentioned before, this study is bidirectional in reference to the goals it pursues. The first ramification of this study is focused on the cross-linguistic issue of L1 lexicalization with respect to two different pedagogical frameworks. However, the second ramification pinpoints the significance of the issue dealing with the underlying psycholinguistic processes involved in bilingual mental lexicon. It should be remembered; however, that such a scrutiny was carried out with respect to the identical methodology followed in each interventionist group for teaching lexicalized and non-lexicalized items in a distinct manner.

Based on the obtained data in the first experimental group it could be recognized that the participants had greater familiarity with lexicalized words at pre-testing in comparison with the non-lexicalized items. Similarly, the comparative analysis of the data at post-testing demonstrated greater achievement in favor of lexicalized items. More importantly, the result of the *t*-test split file analysis of the gain scores (pre to post-testing difference) related to the two sets of words, presented significant difference in favor of lexicalized items in this group.

By referring to the above mentioned findings, it could be speculated that lexicalization of a word appears to be a significant factor affecting foreign language learners' vocabulary achievement. The complexity of non-lexicalized items could be rationalized theoretically dealing with several psycholinguistic hypotheses and models like lexicalization model devised by Jiang (2004) and the idea of semantic transfer proposed by Ellis, 1985 (as cited in Jiang 2004) to elaborate on the underlying learning mechanisms involved in bilingual mental lexicon.

According to Jiang (2004) the adult language learner resorts to the existing linguistic and conceptual system of his L1 in the process of L2 acquisition through the act of translating the items from L2 to L1. This stage is termed as the hybrid-entry stage due to the fact that an L2 entry state at this level is an amalgamation of L2 linguistic and conceptual information and the syntax and semantic system pertinent to the learner's L1. From a processing perspective such a stance could be termed as L1 lemma mediation stage since lexical processing at L2 is mediated by the lemma information provided as a result of the act of translation from L2 to L1. The existence of such a hybrid entry stage is of great significance because it makes L2 vocabulary acquisition different from L1 vocabulary acquisition. Subsequently, it could be speculated that the learners' greater difficulty with the acquisition of non-lexicalized items may arise as a result of the learners' failure to access an exact equivalent for the intended L2 item at the hybrid- entry stage.

This speculation could be also logically justified with regard to the idea of semantic transfer proposed by Ellis, 1985 (as cited in Jiang 2004, p.104). He described L2 vocabulary acquisition as a process encompassing "a mapping of the new word form onto pre-existing conceptual meanings or onto L1 translation equivalents as approximants." Here, it seems quite transparent to assume that the occurrence of semantic transfer totally depends on the existence of similar relevant lexical concepts in both languages (Jiang, 2004). Such an idea gives credence to the assumption that the teaching and learning of non-lexicalized words could be considered more deeply as a factor of difficulty.

The results pertinent to the effect of L1 lexicalization in the first experimental group are consistent with the results reported by Paribakht (2005) and Chen and Truscott (2010) who treated the issue of L1 lexicalization in different non-interventionist situations. However, the findings of this study may suggest the idea that L1 lexicalization is a significant factor in lexical acquisition in particular L1- based interventionist situations as well.

The obtained *t*-test split file analysis related to the second interventionist group presented a significant difference between the mean of the two sets of words at pre-testing. In

other words, learners had higher degree of familiarity with lexicalized items before being exposed to the treatment. Similarly, the analysis of the obtained data demonstrated greater achievement in favor of lexicalized items at post-testing. However, unlike the results related to the first interventionist group, the *t*-test analysis of the gain score (pre to post-testing difference) is not significantly different in this group.

The obtained findings related to the experimental groups in this study may imply the idea that the importance of the issue of the cross-linguistic factor of L1 lexicalization increases as the learner glides toward higher levels in terms of the depth of lexical knowledge. In other words, the direct influence of the learners' L1 becomes more palpable in situations in which much more learning occurs in its deeper sense.

This study could be regarded as a complement for the other two studies carried out by Paribakht (2005) and Chen and Truscott (2010) in reference to the acquisition of non-lexicalized words while inferencing and incidental learning. Accordingly, the findings of this study may confirm the idea of L1 lexicalization proposed by Jiang (2004) in explicit interventionist atmospheres pursuing form- focused instruction. Hence, the empirical findings of this research proposal could be interpreted as a piece of evidence supporting the hegemony of transfer phenomenon in the bilingual mental lexicon and as such it might pave the way toward a more palpable understanding of the nature of the learners' lexical knowledge and might then prove to be helpful to pedagogy.

In fact, further research is needed to improve the characteristics of the tests as measuring and research tools and to determine the effect of different teaching and learning strategies on the development of the learners' passive and active levels of knowledge of vocabularies with respect to the issue of L1 lexicalization. Furthermore, the overarching issue of lexicalization could be further detected with reference to the learners' cognitive styles or specialized learning strategies. Another suggestion would be to adopt a more comparative view regarding L1 lexicalization. In fact, it is not evident whether or not similar results could be obtained with learners at higher levels of vocabulary knowledge. Therefore, a comparative study with learners at different levels of language proficiency could be conducted to monitor the issue of L1 lexicalization. Perhaps, such a longitudinal study will provide deeper understanding of the issue under investigation by examining the performance of the learners at different levels with a more magnifying glass.

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Title

On the Effect of Background Knowledge and IQ on Reading Comprehension and Recall Process of a Group of Iranian Intermediate Students

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Biodata

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Abstract

The study reported here sought to find further evidence of the role of background knowledge as well as IQ in EFL reading comprehension and recall. The study was conducted in three succeeding phases. First, 90 subjects took the TOEFL test. The results enabled the researcher to select 20 subjects in intermediate level for the study. In the second phase, an IQ test was administered to measure the intelligence level of the subjects. In the third phase, a questionnaire and four reading comprehension texts were administered. The students were supposed to read the questions on the questionnaire and answer them to decide their level of familiarity. Then, based on their answers two texts were considered familiar and two unfamiliar. The subjects were supposed to read the texts and write their recalls on a separate sheet of paper. Finally, the recall protocols were analyzed. The result of the t-tests showed that background knowledge had effects on reading comprehension and the recall of the texts. The correlation procedures further showed that IQ and recall were correlated but it was not significant.

Keywords: Background knowledge, Reading comprehension, Recall process, IQ

1. Introduction

By far, reading is perhaps the most important of the four skills, particularly in EFL/ESL situation. In language classes, particularly in advanced level, reading occupies the most class time for a variety of purposes. Thus, the ability to read well and comprehensibly

has been recognized as a prerequisite to advanced proficiency English. Quite simply, without having reading proficiency, second language learners are not capable of performing well communicatively. As a result, theoreticians have generally attempted to devise new plans and approaches to meet such educational needs.

Early work in second language reading, assumed a passive, bottom-up view of second language reading. This view holds that the reader reconstructs the intended meaning by recognizing the printed letters and words and builds up meaning from smallest units in the text or at “bottom” to larger units at the “top”. In 1970, background knowledge was recognized to have a great role in second language reading. Especially the lack of cultural familiarity with reading texts influences negatively the total comprehension. According to Fries (in Patricia L. Carrell, 1987), a failure to relate the linguistic meaning of reading passages to cultural factors would result in deficiency in comprehension. This is cultural-specific knowledge which is now known as “schemata”.

About a decade ago, the emergence of psycholinguistic models of reading had a strong influence on second language learning. According to this model, the reader predicts meaning and then confirms the predictions by relating them to his past experiences and knowledge of the language. This is in line with what schema theory has suggested.

Different studies show the crucial role of background knowledge in comprehension and recall of the text. In relation to comprehension and retrieval of a text, Orasana (1986) states that “the knowledge a reader brings to a text is a principle determiner of how that text will be comprehended, and what may be learned and remembered” (P. 32). He also mentions that “schema theory would predict that propositions which are rated as important in light of the schema are more likely to be learned and remembered” (P. 41). Anderson et al. (1983) concluded “a schema influences learning and memory when activated before reading and retrieval when accessed after reading” (P. 275). Hammadou (1991) reported “readers with more knowledge about the topic showed more logical (correct) inferences based on the text and fewer illogical (incorrect) inferences” (P: 34).

Background knowledge as a predictor of successful comprehension and recall of the texts has been investigated through various procedures; one most prevalent technique is recall protocols. Recall protocol is a technique by which the amount of comprehension is measured by analyzing the idea units retrieved from the text. Bernhardt (1983, 1991) and Swaffar et al. (1991), among others (Carrell, 1983, 1984a, 1984b; Wells, 1986), suggest the use of recall protocols as a measure of holistic or overall reading comprehension.

The study reported here designed to find further evidence on the effect of background knowledge and IQ on reading comprehension and recall of the texts. Quite a number of studies have been carried out with reference to reading and in particular to reading in a foreign language. Moreover, many studies have been carried out regarding the processes and factors which affect the reading comprehension among which is the role of background knowledge in retrieval of the text. In spite of these studies the role of background knowledge and IQ in retrieving expected information is not yet known to the best of knowledge of present researcher. So, it can become a significant research topic to be investigated through this study. So many students especially at university levels have comprehension problems. More studies regarding the comprehension problems are needed to provide both the teacher and learners with a good understanding of the nature of the problem and factors involved with it. So to serve this purpose and also due to few studies in relation to the effect of schema theory and IQ on recall of the text in Iran, this study has been carried out.

The positive finding related to the effect of background knowledge on reading comprehension and retrieval of the texts led the researcher to consider one main positive directive hypotheses and one subsidiary hypothesis for this study.

H: There is a positive relationship between background knowledge and recall of the text in intermediate learners.

H: There is a positive relationship between IQ and recall of the texts in intermediate learners.

1.2 Significance of the Study

It is needless to say that the result of the research can have logical effects in educational settings such as, universities, ESP courses and institutes. The result of this study would be of help to teachers to provide their students with the necessary background knowledge and information before teaching text materials. It will also be of help to ESP courses whose aim is providing the students with subject materials within their specialization domain. Those involved in material preparation for these courses will also take advantage out of this result. Furthermore, teachers may find it useful to assess student's comprehension with such tools such as free recall method. Each student's recall protocol might indicate common linguistic and conceptual difficulties experienced through the reading.

2. Method

2.1 Participants

The subjects for this study were 90 EFL students at the Iran Language Institute (ILI). These students have been studying English as a foreign language for at least three years. On the basis of a sample TOFEL proficiency test 20 subjects with the score among 225 to 425 were considered at the intermediate level. Both sexes – about 50 girls and 40 boys- took part in this study. To have a check over probable intertwining variables, only subjects whose native language was Persian and their age level was between 18 to 30 were selected.

2.2 Instrumentations

In this study, the following tests have been used.

(1) TOFEL TEST:

The experimental TOFEL published by Browns was used to determine the proficiency level. The statistical features of the test relating to reliability and validity have been reported by the publisher and it is claimed to be highly valid and reliable. This test was administered to decide the level of subjects for this study and on the base of this test the subjects were considered intermediate learners. The score on this test has been calculated based on the method available in the BROWN TOFEL book available in the market. It includes three sections; listening comprehension (50 questions), vocabulary and structure (40 questions), and reading comprehension and vocabulary (60 questions). The total time is 120 minutes. All three sections of the test were administered simultaneously.

(2) IQ TEST:

The Advanced Progressive Matrices Sets one and two (or APM) was used as a measure of IQ level. It is constructed in 1943 and in 1947 a revision was prepared for general use. In 1962 edition, twelve problems have been taken out so the total scores on the revised set advanced from 0 to 36. These 36 problems increase in difficulty more steadily and become considerably more complex.

The test showed a high retest reliability of 0.91 with adults of more than average intellectual capacity and above 18. This test is also quite suitable for eliciting the higher intellectual functions and for assessing superior intellectual efficiency, as the publisher declares (Test Manual, 1962).

(3) FOUR READING COMPREHENSION TEXTS:

These texts were chosen from some reading comprehension books available in the market. The length and the readability of these texts are almost the same (see table 1. below). Many factors have been established to measure the readability but in fact their aim, construction and validity are not very different (Alderson & Urquhart, 1987). One typical readability is the Fog Index which is used in this study.

$$\frac{\text{No. word}}{\text{No. sentences}} + \frac{\text{no. 3syllable words}}{\text{no. words}} \times \frac{100}{1} \times 0.4$$

And the result is interpreted as 12- = easy, 13-16 = undergraduate, 16+ = postgraduate. This formula is based on the number of words in a sentence.

These texts were to be read and recalled by the students. Two of these texts –Robin Hood (RH) and Family Size and Economic Development (FSED)- were hypothesized to be familiar and the other two –Professional Sport (PS) and Earth Day (ED)- were hypothesized to be unfamiliar.

Table 1 *The readability and length of the texts*

Texts	Text length	Readability
ROBBIN HOOD	330 Words	22.7
FAMILY SIZE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	319	21.5
PROFESSIONAL SPORTS	321	20.3
EARTH DAY	322	20

(4) A Questionnaire:

To determine the amount of familiarity of subjects with the texts, the researcher gave a questionnaire with 10 questions on the reading passages –three questions on Robin Hood, three questions on Professional Sports, two questions on Earth Day, and two questions on Family Size And Economic Development- was used. The results were used to once again divide them into homogeneous groups in relation to familiarity and unfamiliarity with the texts.

3. Procedure

In the first phase of the study, a TOFEL exam was given to about ninety students at the ILI. Before the exam, the students were provided with enough information about the test. Based on the results 20 students with the score 225 to 425 were considered intermediate learners.

In the second phase of this study which was held on a separate session, these twenty subjects took an IQ test. The subjects were briefed on the content and the way to answer the questions. The time limit was announced and the results were collected. This test was corrected based on the number of correct answers as suggested by the test developers. The range of scores was between zero to 36.

In the third phase of this study which was also held on a separate day, first a questionnaire was given to each subject and they were told to answer the questions on the paper. They were also told that they can easily leave blank any questions they did not know. The purpose of this was to determine how familiar the subjects had been with the text. After completing this questionnaire, they were supplied with the first reading text. An empty sheet was also given to them to write their recalls on it. They were already informed of what they were supposed to do. The subjects were asked to consider the following points when writing the recalls.

- (1) The students should not read the text longer than ten minutes and they should not go back to the text while they are writing the recalls.
- (2) The subjects should write their recalls on a separate sheet.
- (3) They should write their recalls in full sentences.
- (4) They should write their recalls in English.
- (5) They should write whatever they remember about the text.
- (6) They have enough time to write their recalls.
- (7) Grammatical and spelling mistakes are not important.

The same procedure was followed for the rest of the texts. Then, the questionnaires and the recall protocols were collected. The questionnaires were rated. The score above 50 was considered familiar and below that unfamiliar. The two texts –Robin Hood and Family Size and Economic Development were proved to be familiar as it was hypothesized and the other two texts –Earth Day and Professional Sports- were also proved to be unfamiliar.

As put forward by Alderson (1984), the idea unit is the unit of text analysis and widely used in reading comprehension oriented research. Thus, as a test of comprehension students can be asked to write a recall protocol of a text they have read which in turn is scored in terms of the number of idea unit it contains. So in order to correct the recall protocols, each text was parsed into idea units. For the ease of scoring, an effort was made to establish a unit in which there was only one bit of information expected to be significant for the analysis as recommended by Alderson (1984). It was

also set that every parallel or paraphrased sentences are to be accepted. So all recall protocols were analyzed and graded based on these idea units. In RH text which was 330 words in length, there were 36 idea units; in FSED text which was 319 words in length, there were 28 idea units; in PS text which was 321 words in length, there were 30 idea units; in ED text which was 322 words in length, there were 28 idea units (see Table 2). These idea units were verified by two independent judges.

Table 2 *The number of Idea Units in Each Text*

Texts	Length	Number of Idea Units
RH	330	36
FSED	319	28
PS	321	30
ED	322	28

Table 3 *Examples of idea units*

Examples of idea units are given as follows.

Robin Hood text (2 idea units)

Robin Hood is a legendary hero/ who lived in Sherwood Forest, in Nottingham, with his band of followers. / (As illustrated above the sentence contains 2 idea units as separated off by two virgules.)

Family Size and Economic Development (1 idea unit)

Poor people often have larger families than middle class and upper class people./

Based on this criterion, any sentence presented in this way was given a point. For example one of the students recalled the first idea unit in Robin Hood this way; “*Robin Hood was a hero and he lived in Nottingham with his friends.*” Or for the second text one wrote; “*there are more children in poor families than high- class families*”. Both of these students got a point for their recall. Two scorers scored the recall protocols and using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation, the inter-rater reliability was found to be .85.

4. Data Analysis

The data gathered were analyzed using the SPSS statistical software. At first, descriptive data for the IQ and recall protocols were computed. As stated already, the main aim of this study was to confirm that the background knowledge of the subjects had a role on their reading comprehension and recall protocols. The design of the study made the application one matched t-test necessary. The aim was to compare the means of two familiar and unfamiliar texts. The value of the t-observed for the comparisons of means and that of t-critical were

calculated and tested for the significance of the comparisons. The alpha for achieving significance was set at 0.05. Finally, correlational procedures were used to examine the direction and magnitude of the relationship between IQ and the recall protocols.

5. Result and Discussions

To investigate the probable effect of background knowledge on reading comprehension and recall of the Iranian EFL students, four reading texts were selected- two familiar and two unfamiliar.

Table 4. indicates the mean score for two familiar and unfamiliar texts turned out to be 12.4 which is greater than the t-critical. Table 5. illustrates the correlation matrix for IQ and recall protocols.

Table 4. *The result of t-tests for Familiar and Unfamiliar texts in intermediate group*

<i>Group</i>	<i>N</i>	\bar{X}	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	d.f.
Intermediate	20	12.4	4.796	1.979	19

0.05

Table 5 *Correlations between IQ and recall protocols*

RECALL	RH	FSED	PS	ED
IQ	0.1623	0.2915	0.1557	0.0621

.05

6. Conclusion

As it can be seen in the fourth table, the observed t is 1.979 with the d.f. of 19 is significant at 0.05 level; therefore this hypothesis is confirmed. The intermediate students did remember the familiar texts better than the unfamiliar ones. And this finding is in line with the previous findings regarding the role of background knowledge in reading comprehension and their recall of the texts.

In addition, the researcher found an additional result. As it is indicated in table 5.the correlation between IQ and recall are to some extent interesting and a bit strange since no significant relation is shown. In other words, the subjects' intelligence has no role or effect on comprehension and recall of the texts. This finding is not in line with previous

findings. Jacobsons (1996) gave a series of IQ and achievement tests to 212 children. The children with low average IQ scores are likely to be at least two years behind in reading comprehension. The researcher believes that there can be three main reasons for this finding: the first reason is the number of the subjects; with a greater population of subjects the result can be more reliable. Better results can be obtained in correlation with a population above 30. The second reason can be the unfamiliarity of the subjects with the test. This lack of subjects' familiarity with the test format can also affect their performance to a great extent and therefore, on their performance on IQ test. The third reason can be the time limitations. The subjects were supposed to take the test in forty minutes. According to test developers, this can be considered as a kind of speed test of measuring intelligence. If more time had been given to the subjects, the results could have been different.

The findings of this study may have some implication for teachers, syllabus designers and evaluators.

Teachers may find it useful to assess student comprehension with free recall method. Since it is argued that recall protocol is an attentive for testing reading and listening comprehension. Each student's verbal report might tell the teacher how the individual approaches the reading comprehension task and what aspects of the particular text seem to cause comprehension difficulties. Similarly, each student's recall protocol might indicate common linguistic and conceptual difficulties experienced through the reading or those which are specific to the individual. Thus, teachers can gain insights in the nature of their student's comprehension and therefore can meet their student's needs effectively.

Material designers can also take advantage of these findings too. The learner's background knowledge (linguistic and non-linguistic) should be taken into consideration in material selection. As indicated in this study, both linguistic and extra-linguistic knowledge can influence the speed and success in EFL reading comprehension. Thus, syllabus designers and material developers may make careful provision in moving in line with meeting the readers' extra-linguistic knowledge when designing some materials for them.

The results can also be useful in material designs especially for ESP courses whose aims are to make students familiar with the texts in their specialization. The closer the material is to the student's fields of specialty. The more familiar the students are with the texts and consequently have a better understanding. Therefore, syllabus and material

designers should make the texts in compatible with the student's specialization as much as possible.

On the level of classroom practice, the results clearly provide support to the use of previewing activities, indicating that if such activities are appropriately structured and sufficiently be learner sensitive they can play a significant role in aiding learners to comprehend the materials better.

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Title

A Contrastive Rhetorical Analysis of Persian and English Narrative Genre in Short Stories

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Abstract

The purpose of the present study was to compare the rhetorical organization or macro-structure of Persian and English narrative genre used in short stories. To conduct such a study two short stories, one in English and one in Persian, of the same length and written by famous writers were chosen. Following Hatch's (1994) approach, the researchers analyzed the two short stories regarding their components. The results of the analysis showed that narrative genres in Persian and English short stories shared similar components, though some parts might be different in some respects such as: whether they provided the readers with detailed versus brief elaboration, or direct versus indirect description. In the paper, the components of the short stories, similar and different ones, and their relationship and interaction are shown in two separate models.

Keywords: Genre, narrative, contrastive, rhetorical, macro-structure.

1. Introduction

Contrastive analysis has been the focus of many studies in recent years. The word contrast with reference to different phenomena across languages first appeared when Pickbourn (1789) first used it to contrast English verbs with verbs in other languages. As Krzeszowski (1985) believes the early contrastive analysis did not focus on methodological problems. But modern linguistic theories that flourished in the 20th century caused great interest in methodological application of contrastive studies.

Contrastive analysis is the systematic study of two languages in contrast with regard to certain characteristics in a specific framework. Contrastive analysis as Fisiak (1981) defined is a subdiscipline of linguistics which is concerned with comparison of two or more languages or subsystems of languages to determine both similarities and differences which exist between them. Fallahi (1991) suggests a similar definition that says " Contrastive analysis (CA) is a branch of linguistics that brings two language systems together, sets them against each other, and seeks to define the similarities and the differences between them" (6). Though contrastive analysis aims at finding both similarities and differences among languages James (1980) thinks that the term contrastive indicates more interest in differences between languages than in their likeness. Yarmohammadi (2002) considers contrastive analysis as a subdiscipline of linguistics that sets two or more language systems or subsystems together against one another in order to determine the differences and similarities between them in terms of some specified linguistic features. Yarmohammadi (2002) believes that most contrastive studies follow four steps: first, a description of the aspects of the languages to be compared is needed; as Krzeszowski (1990) states " No comparison is possible without a prior description of the elements to be compared " (35). The second step is juxtaposition where one decides about what to be compared with what. The third step is the actual comparison and contrast of the two systems of languages. And the final stage is prediction in which one ends with a series of statements about similarities and differences between the two languages in that domain.

Texts written for specific purposes are of different types and take disparate forms known as genre. Early definitions of "genre" categorize it as discourse that is "fixed and immutable" (Freedman & Medway, 1994). According to Swale (1990), " Indeed today, genre is quite easily used to refer to a distinctive category of discourse of any type, spoken or written, with or without literary aspirations " (33). Connor (1996) defines genre as:

[G]enres are not static, stylistically homogeneous texts. Although texts, according to Bakhtin, have ordered, unified forms (for example, stories have a structure) they

are also 'intertextual': that is, texts are ongoing processes of discourse production and reception that are always tied to other texts or utterances in a culture. (p.128)

The genres that appear in the classical literature on rhetoric are narrative, descriptive, procedural and persuasive. Each genre has a different structure that can be described ; besides, each genre gives writers considerable flexibility in structuring text. According to Shaughnessy (1977) narrative genre is about what happened and has temporal organization. Hatch (1994) thinks that narration is the most universal genre, since all cultures have storytelling tradition. Storytelling episodes are collected in many languages and based on such data; researchers claim that there is some basic universal templates for narratives. Major narrative genres are myth, legend and tale; therefore, short stories belong to the genre of narrative. Each genre consists of certain templates, but in different languages those sections may vary. Swale (1990) believes that genres vary significantly according to the complexity of rhetorical purposes.

The two texts which are supposed to be analyzed and compared with each other should be of the same genre in order to yield more reliable results. If that genre, under analysis, is not of the same frequency in the two languages, for instance Hortatory (exhortational) texts are common in Iran, but uncommon in the U.S. (Houghton & Hoey, 1984); therefore, a comparison of that text type in these two cultures would yield skewed or invalid results since these types of texts appear with very different frequencies in the two cultures. Therefore, data for contrastive rhetorical analysis are parallel texts which match each other for genre, text type, and even frequency of the genre in the languages in contrast.

Contrastive and discourse analysts aims at analyzing texts with regard to certain criteria associated with the models they employ. Many researchers have looked at the structure of a text in a rather different manner (Hatch, 1994). Text "theories" like the one of Grosze Sidner' s (1986) discourse theory, Mann and Thompsons's (1987) rhetorical structure theory, or genre analysis and other models . Rhetorical genre analysis is a kind of analyzing each genre at macro-level and dividing the text to its templates. Hatch (1994) believes that the goal of text analysis is to show how the structure of discourse reflects the intentions and goals of the speaker or writer. Some people in the field misunderstand the concept of rhetorical genre analysis with that of rhetorical structure theory. Hatch (1991) states that, " The two types of analyses share some of their goals (e.g., discovering the structure) and differ in others (e.g., whether the analysis should center on conventions or templates, or on the intentions and goals of authors and readers, or on both) (195).

Literature on text analysis can be divided into two groups. The first one includes the studies that aim at providing a detailed linguistic analysis of texts in terms of lexis and syntax. This approach has mostly referred to as analysis at micro-structure. The second group covers the studies related to the analysis and description of the rhetorical organization of various texts. This approach has been labeled as macro-structure analysis of texts. Therefore, rhetorical structure theory analyses the text at micro-level; while, rhetorical genre analysis aims at analyzing the text at macro-level; the former is associated with bottom-up approach and the latter uses top-down by specifying the components and their order in flexible templates. One can analyze a text using a specific approach according to the purpose for which he wants to analyze the text.

In the present study which aims at comparing and contrasting the rhetorical structure of English and Persian narrative genre, the rhetorical genre analysis is used. Therefore, the analysis is done at macro-level and in reality a top down approach is used.

2. Significance of the Study

Many famous researchers have worked in the area of contrastive analysis; furthermore, many of them spent much time on contrasting rhetorical genre among the same text types of different languages in order to find similar and different patterns of them and this shows the significance of the issue under discussion. Furthermore, the results about the organization of narrative genre revealed through contrastive rhetorical studies can be applied in the areas of foreign language methodology and translations of stories.

3. Literature Review

For years after the introduction of the idea of contrastive rhetorical analysis little progress was made in this type of text analysis. During the 1970s the development of text linguistics or discourse analysis gave contrastive rhetorical analysis a more scientific base (Leki, 1991). Many researchers have made use of rhetorical genre analysis (or other similar analyzing models) to compare text organizations and patterns of the same genres in different languages. Leki (1991) believes that all the studies which tend to analyze texts of different languages constitute one line of inquiry in contrastive rhetorical analysis, which has been to analyze the form the texts take from various cultures. Each genre has a specific template, patterns, and components which belong to that genre, however, even the templates and components which are associated with a specific genre may vary in the same genre of different languages. The

similarities and differences in this area can be investigated and obvious through contrastive studies that seek to analyze text organizations of the same genre among languages.

Hatch (1994) believes that there is some universal template for the narrative genre. In order to inform listeners or readers about the world of story narratives usually begin with an orientation which includes the time of story, its spatial setting, and the characters and their roles. In the opening section usually the verbs are stative or intransitives that describe the setting and the main character. Then the story is followed by the hero's goal, the problems on his way and the actions which show how the hero works out the problem to reach the goal. This part usually consists of a set of action clauses arranged in temporal order. Therefore the narrative genre requires steps to resolve the problem, the resolution or climax, and a concluding part which functions like a bridge to bring readers and listeners back, this last part is known as coda.

Soter (1988), in a study of narrative texts by Vietnamese, Arabic-speaking Lebanese and English-speaking writers, found a significant difference with respect to the beginning episode of a narrative. The Vietnamese narratives gave much more emphasis to the beginning episode than the other two types, often developing into a " story about story " with an elaborate framework in which someone is introduced as the teller of the story and so on.

The notion that rhetorical organization of languages differs is not only relevant in itself, but more particularly because much of the work has been based on the study of expository prose (Connor and Kaplan, 1987).

Dantas-Whitney and Grabe (1987) analyzed editorials in Brazilian Portuguese and in English at macro-level using three criteria: the presence or absence of narratives, the orientation (which is the relationship between the writer and reader), and the formality of the presentation of the information. They found that the Portuguese and English texts were similar on the first and third characteristics but differed on the orientation they exhibited. The English tendency was information-oriented with a responsibility on the part of the writer to accommodate the reader, whereas the Portuguese orientation was interactional, interpersonal, using more concrete and colloquial language.

Grabe (1987) conducted a study of English subgenres of expository prose. After reviewing the previous studies done in this area, he noticed that cross-linguistic comparisons of this type are extremely limited. If clear and objectively defined linguistic features of texts can distinguish among text types in English and also these same features may be defined for other languages to a certain degree; therefore, findings of such studies can contribute to the descriptive characterization of text types across languages.

Hinds (1987) after working on a contrastive analysis argues that Chinese is becoming a writer-responsible language having been a reader-responsible. Such analyses are provocative in their implications for claims about oral and literate cultures. Similarly, from an examination of translations of Hebrew to English and English to Hebrew, Zeller Mayer (1988) concludes that by evoking shared context between reader and writer, Hebrew writing requires more reader involvement than does English.

Indrasuta (1988) carried out a complex analysis on American and Thai narrative genre. One of the variables examined concerned the setting episode in narrative texts. The finding was that Thai writers made more use of backdrop as opposed to integral settings. A backdrop setting is more abstract, more psychological, whereas an integral setting is tied to concrete time, place and character.

In a contrastive study done to find out the similarities and differences between episodic boundaries of English and Japanese stories, Seig (2004) studied the episodic structure of narratives at the example of the picture book "Frog, Where are you?" by Mercer Mayer. The main goal of her study was to examine the linguistic devices used to mark episode boundaries. The subjects consisted of fifty American and fifty Japanese university students who were either asked to tell the story from the book (book format) or by seeing the pictures on a long scroll of paper (scroll format). Through coding each transcript for intonation units that would mark episode boundaries, analyses revealed similar patterns with regard to their relation in the episode of the following aspects: 1) intonation units, 2) the position of frontal adverbial clauses, 3) reference to the boy character, 4) reference to the dog character, and 5) reference to the frog character. Differences between the book and the scroll formats were only found in the length of intonation units, that is that both English and Japanese narrators used more intonation units in the book format. A measure of the number of words showed that, on average, English speakers used more words than Japanese speakers, in both languages books stories consisted of more words than scroll stories, and English scroll stories consisted of more words than Japanese book and scroll stories. English and Japanese narrators differed in their use of pronoun mention, ellipsis, and reference in subject position. Seig concludes that the variation of the format has an influence on the perception of the narrators. One example is that seeing all the pictures at once in the scroll format might influence segmentation processes causing narrators of scroll stories to include fewer details per picture.

Bickner and Peyasantiwong (1988) looked at differences between American and Thai rhetoric. The point on which the authors emphasized in their contrastive study was about the conclusion episode in the expository text type. Among other things, they found that both

groups of writers include a conclusion in their essays, but its realization tended to be different. In the American texts, conclusions tended to be both backward-looking, with a summary of the main points, and also forward-looking with speculation about possible consequences or inferences but in Thai writing this speculation aspect was absent and the writers focused on summarizing only. Therefore, in this shaped rhetorical element, the conclusion episode shows language-specific variation.

Cortazzi (1994) cites several frameworks which show that a great variety of narrative structures exist from culture to culture. A study by Sherzer (cited in Cortazzi) reveals distinctly different rhetorical elements in the narratives of the Kuna, natives of islands off Panama. Kuna narratives feature a sense of place that is less constant compared to English narratives.

In a similar study Afzali (2002) conducted an experiment to see whether the component of Persian and English short stories differ from each other or not. In order to find the answer to her question, she analyzed equal number of Persian and English short stories to find the organization of each. Finally, she came to know that there exists a significance difference in the template of narrative genre between the two languages.

4. Objective of the study

The purpose of the present study is to compare the rhetorical organization of Persian and English narrative genre which is used in short stories and this is possible through careful rhetorical analysis of each. The current study aims at finding an answer for the following question:

Is the narrative genre template used in Persian and English short stories similar or different from each other?

5. Method

5.1 Material

In order to conduct a contrastive study that aims to analyze the rhetorical organization of Persian and English narrative genre, two short stories are chosen. The two stories are of the same length and written by skilled writers of each culture. The English story is "The Haunted House" by Charles Dickens; and, the Persian story is "Cheragh-e Akhar" by Sadegh Choobak.

5.2 Procedure

In order to analyze the rhetorical organization of narrative genre in English and Persian short stories, the template discussed by Hatch (1994) which includes certain components for narratives is sought via a macro-level analysis, and thus a top-down approach is employed.

Hatch (1994) believes that the templates associated with most of short stories include some parts such as opening, body and coda; and each part contains certain components. The opening part may include setting of time and place as well as character identification and their roles. The body covers hero's goal, the problems on his way to reach the goal, his action, climax and resolution. Besides, coda is the ending part that functions like a bridge to bring readers and listeners back.

This study investigates the parallel texts of the same genre to see if they have the parts and components that exist in the template of Hatch (1994)'s model and the way those elements are presented in each text is analyzed and discussed as well.

The researchers in the present study follow the four steps introduced by Yarmohammadi (2002). He believes that most contrastive studies go through four steps: 1- description, 2- juxtaposition, 3- compare and contrast, 4- prediction. Therefore, in this study at first the English and Persian short stories are studied, analyzed and described separately; therefore, a description of their components and the way they are presented in each text are mentioned. Secondly, the same parts of the parallel texts are juxtaposed and set against one another. Then, the parts of the two stories are compared and contrasted actually. Finally, the results of the previous step help the researchers end up with a series of statements about the similarities and differences that exist between English and Persian short stories.

6. Data Analysis

First, the English story is studied to investigate its rhetorical organization. The major character of the story is the narrator himself (John). He has started the story in a way as if the reader already knows him. He has only provided the reader with a limited description of his present condition. But he has introduced other characters and their roles with much elaboration and efficient descriptions in a way so that the reader thinks he is present in the scene. One instance of character identification in the opening part can be seen when the narrator wants to introduce the gentleman in the train: "That opposite man had had, through the night -- as that opposite man always has -- several legs too many, and all of them too long. In addition to this unreasonable conduct (which was only to be expected of him), he

had had a pencil and a pocket-book, and had been perpetually listening and taking notes. It had appeared to me that these aggravating notes related to the jolts and bumps of the carriage, and I should have resigned myself to his taking them, under a general supposition that he was in the civil-engineering way of life, if he had not sat staring straight over my head whenever he listened. He was a goggle-eyed gentleman of a perplexed aspect, and his demeanour became unbearable".

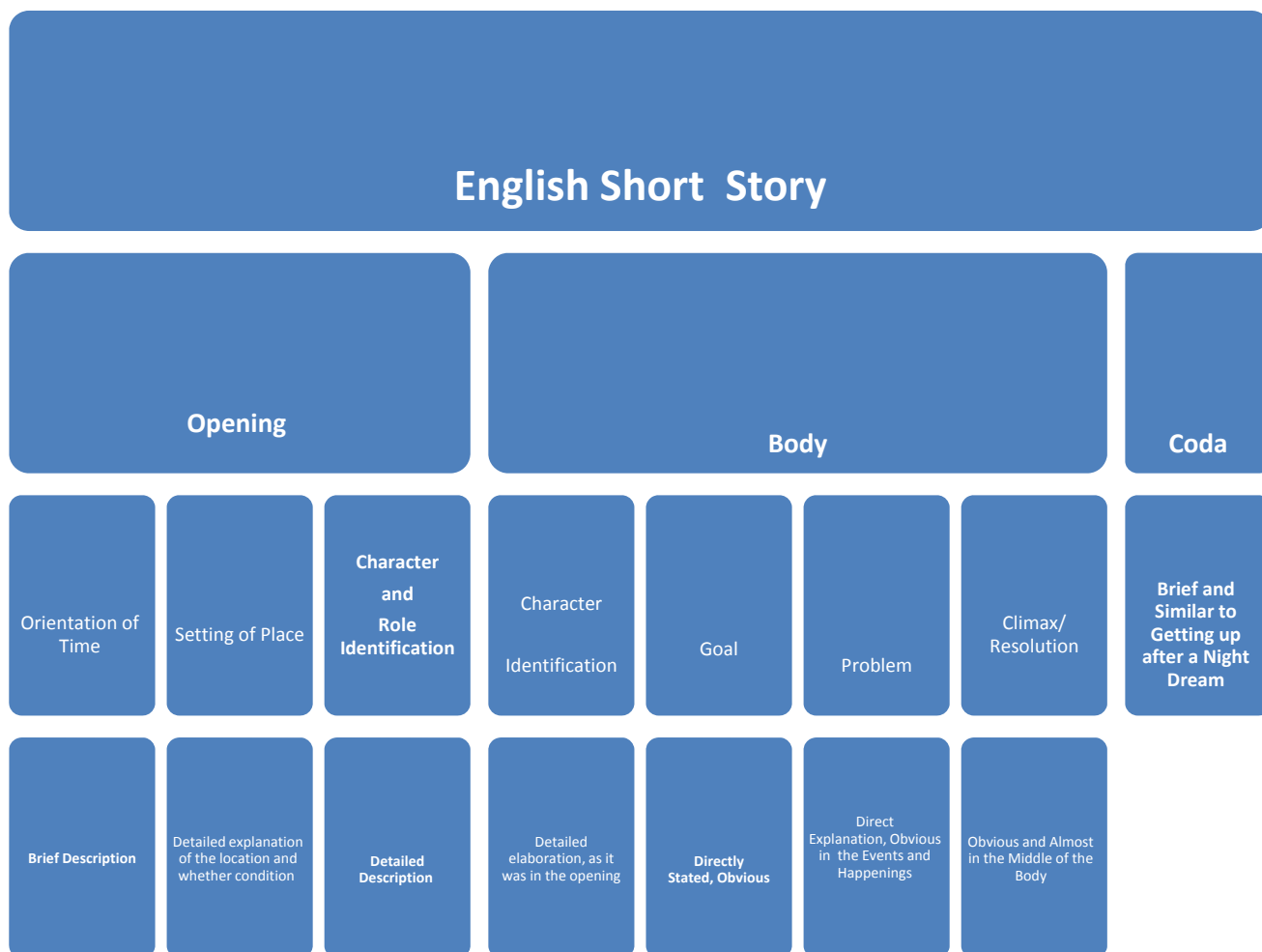
The narrator has described the setting of place with detailed elaboration so that the reader can visualize them easily as if he is in the scene. But little parts have been devoted to the orientation of the time of the story. Thus, the description of the time of the story is very brief. Since, most parts of the opening are descriptions of the setting of the scenes in which characters are present most of the verbs are stative. Little actions occur in the story; thus, many verbs are intransitive; and most of the scenes show hero's encounters.

In addition, in the body of the story a great part has been devoted to character identification, since many of the characters enter the story in this part. Even at this section, the narrator provides readers with detailed description of character's personality and appearance. In the body, a series of events come about that stimulates readers' curiosity and sense of following the story to find out what happens next which shows the writer's power in narrating the story skillfully. The goal is to discover the real nature of the haunted house which is supposed to be revealed by the hero of the story John who is the narrator too. The hero's intention to achieve his goal has been emphasized in certain parts of the body.

The problems for the hero on the way to achieve his goal are the unusual events happening in the house without any visible cause of events. From the time that the hero experiences surprising things in his room and starts his journey to the unknown world of imagination the reader is very much curious to seek answers for his questions about the nature of the house and the events happening in it; therefore, the story reaches its climax and smoothly passes the resolution to solve the problems. All the parts constructing body- goal, problem, climax, and resolution- are narrated with detailed descriptions of the actions and the scenes in which they occur gradually and step by step to let the reader follow the course events within this temporal organization easily.

However the ending of the story is brief and does not wear detailed descriptions like its previous sections. Unlike, the opening and the body, the coda is described briefly and the story ends in an unexpected manner as if everything has been a night dream; the reader is astonished with the sudden and brief ending of the story. Figure 1 represents the rhetorical organization of English narrative genre employed in short stories.

Figure 1. Rhetorical Analysis of English narrative genre template of short story



Analyzing the Persian story, one notices that it starts as if the reader has already been in the scene and knows the characters well and is familiar with the location and none of these elements require explanation and introduction at the beginning. The opening of the story is brief and indirect. It seems as if the story starts at the middle of events, the narrator does not provide reader with any description of time orientation at first. Little explanation is presented about the setting of the place in the opening part. Furthermore, very brief part of the opening is devoted to character identification; but, once the narrator wants to involve the reader with the course of events in the story, he provides a sufficient description of the scene of the story and roles associated with each character in order to clarify reader's mind.

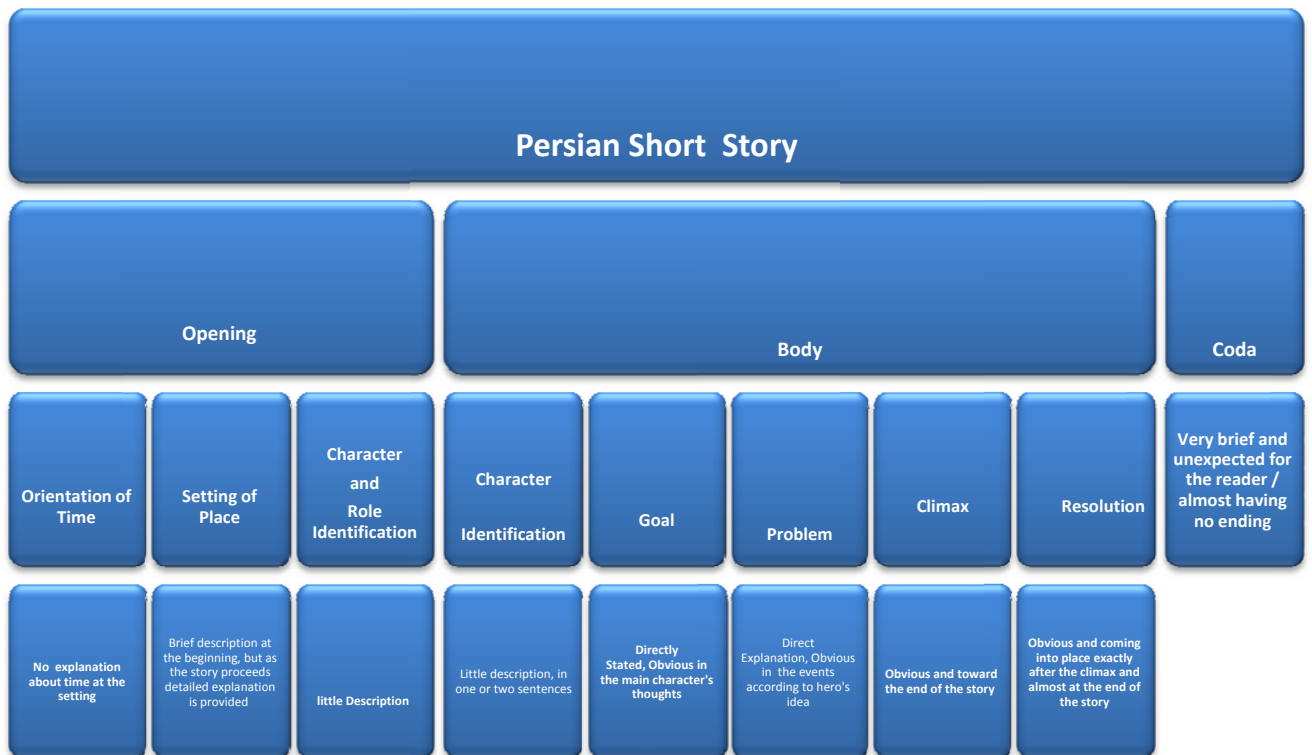
The narrator first starts the story and let characters enter the story without introducing them, but, when he comes to the course of the story, he introduces each character, the roles

attributed to each, and even their physical appearance so well that the reader can visualize them in the mind clearly.

The body of this story, like many other works done in narrative genre, consists of certain parts such as hero's goal, problem, climax, and resolution. The major character-hero- is Javad who aims at changing the world and people's idea by an essential revolution that encompasses any trivial action to reach the ideal. Hero's goal is mentioned directly at the beginning of the body. Another section of the body is devoted to the problems that the hero thinks of in his mind or encounters on the deck on his trip to India. But like other narratives the hero reaches his goal (or at least some part of it) near the end of the story. The story reaches its climax when Javad is going to take Seied's box and carrying it toward the edge of the ship. Finally, when he lets the box fall into the sea without any problem, the reader feels comfort in his mind, the hero himself feels relaxed and easy-minded, and the story passes its resolution.

The ending of the story is too briefly presented to the readers that makes them think the story had no ending at all. The ending in narrative genre usually take forms such as conclusion, summary of the events, or even moral suggestions. As in the English story though the ending is brief, it seems to be a kind of conclusion about the situation that sums up the previous events in order to prepare the reader's mind for an end to the story; while, the readers of the Persian story are not ready to come into the end of the story, they expect the story to continue. It sounds that the writer has not devoted any or sufficient section to the ending of the story. The writer wants the reader to conclude about the end of the story. Figure 2 shows the template and organization of Persian narrative genre which has been reveal through rhetorical genre analysis.

Figure 2. Rhetorical Analysis of Persian narrative genre template of short story



In the body of the English story the narrator himself narrates everything, but, in the Persian story the writer sometimes acts like a camera and let the reader enter the scene, and locates him among characters in order to let him directly listen to the conversation among them in their own words so that he can judge their personalities, cultures, and beliefs; while, in the English story the narrator does not provide the reader with such an opportunity. It seems that the Persian narrative genre is more reader-responsible, and the narrator involves the reader in many occasions, but the English narrative genre puts most of the responsibilities on the part of the writer and little reader's involvement is observed. Of course, one should note that in the Persian story the narrator sometimes imposes his ideas about characters on the reader, and even provides the reader with the thoughts passing the characters' minds from his own point of view. In this sense, he wants to help naïve readers realize the internal characteristics of each character's personality. Therefore, he shares his judgment about characters with readers.

In the body of both Persian and English stories, the narrator has made use of skillful techniques that arouse the sense of curiosity and suspend in an aesthetic manner which shows the writers' power in narrating the stories.

7. Conclusion

Each genre has a specific organization which is associated to it, but the same genres in different languages may have different structures. Contrastive analysis aims at discovering

similarities as well as differences among languages with regard to certain and identified features; for this reason an appropriate approach must be employed which can serve to analyze the text with regard to the purpose for which the data is studied. Following the same line Hatch (1994) believes that, "There are major differences in various methods of discourse analysis. They are reflections of differences in focus, goals, and range of phenomena that each method addresses" (196).

In addition, considering all components of narrative genre in the two stories that have been studied, analyzed, compared and contrasted via rhetorical genre analysis conducted in this study, one can notice that narrative genre in short stories of English and Persian share similar components in common, though some parts may be different in some aspects, for instance, whether they provide readers with detailed elaboration vs. brief, or direct vs. indirect descriptions and so on. Therefore, with regard to the research question mentioned as the objective of this study "Is the narrative genre template used in Persian and English short stories similar or different from each other?", the researchers found out that the templates of English and Persian narrative genre of the short stories share the same elements, but the way their components are presented to the readers are different.

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Title

The Role of Emotions in Reading Literary Texts: Fact or Fiction?

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Abstract

Considering the role of emotions while reading literary texts, the current research was designed to investigate first whether or not the participants' emotional involvement can improve their comprehension of short stories and second, if emotional involvement while reading short stories assist students in recognizing literary elements, such as irony, symbol, theme and foreshadowing. To this end, 79 Persian speakers (30 males and 49 females) selected from the population of sophomores in one of Iranian Universities participated in the study. A questionnaire based on Miall and Kuiken's (2002) categorization of feelings was designed to assist the students in involving their emotions while reading literary texts. There were two experimental groups and a control group. Initially, a pretest was assigned to these groups to ensure that they are homogeneous. The designed questionnaire was employed in teaching literary texts in experimental groups. At the end of the semester, a posttest was assigned to all participants. An ANOVA test indicated statistically significant difference across control and experimental groups in comprehending short stories. The Tukey HSD test was also applied to investigate where those differences lie. To address the second research question, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used; however, MANOVA test did not show any statistically significant difference across control and experimental groups in recognizing literary elements.

Keywords: Teaching literature, Emotions, Literary elements

1. Introduction

A multitude number of EFL learners suffer from not being able to read literary texts independently. As a result, they are deprived of enjoying the numerous values associated with literary reading. These values include the use of imagination, the readers' appreciation of stylistic features, and the appropriateness of literature for the individuality of reader, and its value for coping with problems, as well as for relaxation and entertainment (Miall and Kuiken, 2002). This inadequacy may stem from the circumstance that the majority of the models of text comprehension focus on the cognitive aspects of reading process to the exclusion of the emotional factors involved while reading texts (Kneepkens and Zwaan, 1994). However, as Zembylas (2005, p. 466) points out "emotion is the least investigated aspect of research on teaching, yet it is probably the aspect most often mentioned as being important and deserving more attention". Essentially, they are not considered the by products of learning, but an indispensable ingredient of learning process. In other words, emotions play an important role in creating meaning (Hirsh, 2009, Mar, et al., 2010).

As for literary studies, with the emergence of reader-response theory, proposed by Purves and Beach (1972), Bleich (1978) and Rosenblatt (1978), the object of the text researches has shifted from the writer or the text to the reader or the interaction between the reader and the text (Miall & Kuiken, 1998). After all reading narrative fiction has been considered a profoundly emotional experience (Mar, et al., 2010).

The consequence has been that, traditional hermeneutic research methods of literary reading gave their place to empirical methods grounded in cognitive psychology and sociology (Schooten & de Glopper, 2003). Furthermore, literary education has begun investigating the response of students while reading literary texts and the goal of modern literary education has accordingly been to enhance the response of the students to the text. In this respect, feeling, as a constituent of human being, has been put in the spotlight in the empirical studies of literature by a number of researchers like Oatley (1994), Kneepkens and Zwaan (1994), Miall and Kuiken (2002) and Schooten and de Glopper (2003).

The field of teaching English as a Second Language has also adopted the role of affect and emotions in learning since the late 1970s and 1980s (Brown & White, 2010). Despite the emergence of Reader-response theory which stresses the active role of reader, literature teachers ignore the role of reader's emotions and organize classes in such a way as to arrive at an accepted meaning of the studied texts. In other words, there is an incongruency between the "democratic pedagogy" stimulated by reader-response theories and the present lecturer-centered literature classes in which teacher's literary, cultural and pedagogical

knowledge still plays the dominant role (Poyas, 2004; p.80). Furthermore, literary work is viewed as a “separate, free-standing object, offering the same perspective to each reader” (Poyas, 2004; p.64). Therefore, literary education has failed keeping abreast with pedagogical theories, while Reader-response theory can be applied to help students read and write more efficiently (Harkin, 2005).

It is worth pointing out that there are certain ways in which emotional experience can influence cognitive processing. In this respect, one of the functions of feelings is their “selective role” which causes the reader focus his/her attention on certain types of information. Kneepkens and Zwaan (1994, p. 129) has also proposed that emotions can “back up” cognitive processes when these processes are inadequate in creating coherent mental representation of the text and the situation described by the text. In this case, the emotional impression enters the scene and helps the readers to decide which information is relevant and must be activated. On the basis of their view, the metaphor Zoro has been used in the title of the present article. However, the back-up role of emotions while reading the texts has scarcely been validated empirically (Kneepkens & Zwaan, 1994, p.129). Furthermore, although as Dijkstra et al. (1994) assert, one of the most crucial characteristics of literature, compared to other types of discourse, is the emotional impact it can leave on the reader, the experiments investigating the role of emotions in processing literary texts has been quite scarce in literature (Harkins, 2005; Schooten & Glopper, 2003). On the authority of Miall (2008, p.379), “a complaint that Jane P. Tompkins made in 1977, that critics were ignoring personal feelings during reading, is still largely valid”.

Considering the paucity of research in the realm of the role of emotions while reading literary texts, the current study has been designed to address the following questions: 1) To what extent can participants’ emotional involvement while reading improve their comprehending of short stories? 2) To what extent does emotional involvement while reading short stories assist students in recognizing literary elements, such as irony, symbol, theme and foreshadowing? Accordingly, the following null hypotheses were formulated: 1) There is not any difference between control and experimental groups in comprehending short stories, and 2) Emotional involvement while reading short stories does not assist students in recognizing literary elements. At this point, it is noteworthy to mention that in this study, the definition of emotions as defined by Brown and White (2010, p. 333) has been adopted. They define emotions as " valanced responses to external stimuli and/or internal mental representations."

2. Background

Generally speaking, emotions play three important roles in cognitive development: first, they help building academic constructs in the brain and pave the ground for symbolic thought processes. Second, emotions are involved in making sense and meaning from the symbols constructed in the child's environment. Third, emotional development is shaped in the socio-cultural environment of the young child (Hirsh, 2009). Therefore, the cognitive processing of a situation determines the emotional experience on the one hand, and it may influence cognitive processing on the other (Kneepkens and Zwaan, 1994).

Regarding literary texts, emotions play two important roles: their first function is their selective role which precedes cognitive processes by focusing the readers' attention on specific types of information to the exclusion of other types of information that are more relevant to the reader's original goal. There seems to be a relation between the amount of attention and interest. As a result, attention given to interesting information requires fewer resources than attention given to uninteresting information (Kneepkens & Zwaan, 1994). In this sense, some researchers (e. g. Roseman, 1991) have found out that the attention given to interesting texts requires fewer cognitive resources than the one given to uninteresting information. Wade et al. (1994) also observed that subjects spend much time and effort on reading the important but uninteresting information. By contrast, attention given to the unimportant, interesting information was given without effort (Kneepkens & Zwaan, 1994).

Likewise, Ainley, Hillman & Hidi (2002), using interactive computer techniques, investigated the role of interest in reading literary texts. They found that gender was the factor most closely associated with topic interest and text titles played important roles in triggering students' interest. Furthermore, it was revealed that there was not any relationship between topic interest and individual interest in literature. In this regard, Mar, et al. (2010, p.1) also believe that affect and mood can affect the book that people choose and while reading the narrative itself, it arouses and changes emotions either through the events and characters depicted in the narrative or through triggering the "emotionally valenced memories". The second function of emotions while reading literary texts is that emotions experienced while reading may play important role in cognitive processes through "the making of inferences, invoking the readers' memory, or relating empathically to a character" (Miall, 2011, p.323). More to the point, the readers' mood can be a determining factor in understanding a text. It has been argued that people are always in a certain mood. Hence, this causes people remember events of the story that are consistent with their mood while reading

(Bower, et al. 1998). For instance, happy readers remember more happy events while sad readers remember more sad events (Kneepkens & Zwaan, 1994).

Generally speaking, three particular aspects of literary reading have been subject to the work of feeling the first of which is the response to foregrounding. In this relation, as Miall & Kuiken (1994) showed in a range of studies with short stories, foregrounding arouses more feelings in readers. The second aspect of literary reading which has been studied is the experience of being transported during reading which refers to the ability of a literary text to attract and hold one's attention. In this respect, Laszlo (1999) asked participants to underline all the adjectives in a literary text, but they did not manage to do so since once they started reading the text, the text attracted all their attention. The third investigated aspect of literary reading is the participants' empathic response to characters in fiction. In this relation, Miall (2008, p.388) states that: to empathize, in the terms of Prinz's (2004) levels of emotion, includes both the bodily and experiential aspects of the character's feelings together with those prototypical aspects that situate the feeling for us as the product and outcome of natural and cultural laws. To empathize in this sense is both to simulate the experience of the character at that moment and to realize her as an example of the laws of feeling

To sum up, as the review of literature indicates, the majority of the studies have made their attempts to account for changes in feelings while reading literary texts; furthermore, these studies merely emphasize the important role that feelings play in cognitive processing. Nevertheless, they have never proposed practical techniques that teachers can employ in their classes in order to involve the students' feelings. Consequently, the current research has firstly been set up to devise a way to help the participants to involve their emotions while reading literary texts and secondly to investigate the effect of involving their feelings firstly on their comprehension and secondly on their ability to recognise literary elements such as irony, symbol, theme and foreshadowing. To this end, Miall & Kuiken's (2002, p.223) outline of different types of feeling that are, according to empirical research, involved during literary reading has been employed. This selection has stemmed from the circumstance that a literary text is considered as a "complex dialogic action game whereby manifold relations hold between dialogic purposes and communicative means, and multiple-layered texture of participants with different communicative worlds is brought into play" (Weizman, 2004, p.242), and this model has been an appropriate reflection of this multilayered emotional involvement of reading. They categorize such feelings into four domains: 1) "evaluative feelings toward the text, such as the overall enjoyment, pleasure, or satisfaction of reading a short story"; 2) "narrative feelings toward specific aspects of the fictional event sequence,

such as empathy with a character or resonance with the mood of a setting"; 3) "aesthetic feelings in response to the formal (generic, narrative, or stylistic) components of a text, such as being struck by an apt metaphor"; 4) "self-modifying feelings that restructure the reader's understanding of the textual narrative and, simultaneously, the reader's sense of self". Based on this categorization of feeling, the experimenter designed a questionnaire to stimulate the students to involve their feelings and examine the effect of this emotional involvement on their reading comprehension, as well as, their ability to recognise literary elements.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

A total of seventy-nine Persian speakers' students (30 males and 49 females) selected from the population of sophomores majoring in English literature, Translation studies and TEFL (Teaching English as a foreign language) studying at one of Iranian universities participated in the current study. Twenty-eight of these participants were assigned to control group thirty of them were recruited to the first experimental group and twenty-one of them served as second experimental group. The reason for this imbalance stemmed from the fact that participating in this study was voluntarily; therefore, in each group the above mentioned number of students participated in the study. It is noteworthy that despite their differences in their majors, the participants in both experimental and control groups had similar background in exposure to literature. The students in all of the groups had passed *An Introduction to Literature I* (in which they study short stories and become familiar with short story elements) & *An Introduction to literature II* (in which the elements of poetry are taught), and, at the time of the experiment, they had enrolled for a two-credit hour course *Reading Simple Prose Texts* whose objective is to expose the students to literary essays and expand their knowledge about literary elements. Nevertheless, to ensure the homogeneity of the groups, a pre-test measuring the participants' literary comprehension was assigned to all three groups. The result of this pre-test has been reported in the data analysis section.

3.2. Materials

Throughout the semester twelve chapters of *Currents in Literature: British Volume* were taught to the students in both experimental and control groups. Furthermore, four short stories written by well-known authors were used in order to test and compare the reading abilities of the participants in experimental and control groups. The stories were selected to be representative of horror, romance, humour and detective genres. Other factors which make

these stories good candidates for the present research include cultural factor, difficulty and discourse structure of these stories. For example, *Bontsha the Silent* is a story which may cause cultural misinterpretation. Furthermore, the care was taken to include stories with various levels of difficulty. One of the stories *The Butcher's Wife* by Tony Birch belongs to the detective genre and another one *Bontsha the Silent* by I.L. Peretz belongs to humorous genre. *The Monkey's Paw* by W.W. Jacobs and *The Jilting of Granny Weatherall* by Katherine Anne Porter served as the representative of horror and romance genres consecutively.

The rationale behind selection of these stories stemmed from the circumstance that all of these stories were replete with literary elements as well as suspense; therefore, they could be good cases for examining the effect of emotional involvement on comprehending literary texts.

3.3. Instruments

A multiple-choice pre-test containing forty items was used in order to examine whether or not the control and experimental groups are homogeneous. This test majorly tested the students' ability to understand literary texts and to recognise literary elements.

Another instrument used in this study was a questionnaire which was designed on the basis of Miall & Kuiken's (2002) classification of different types of feelings. The first part of this questionnaire inquired about the participants' narrative feelings while reading the literary texts and contained three questions as follows: 1) For which character of the story do you feel sympathy? Why? ; 2) For which character of the story do you feel empathy? (You have had similar experiences) and 3) At each stage of the story if there are parts which reminds you of something or arise your feelings(e.g. fear, disgust, surprise, enjoyment, anxiety, interest,...), please write them down and explain why this part has arisen your feelings. Please highlight these parts in the story. Item four of the questionnaire asked about the aesthetic feelings of the participants by asking the following question :(4) Underline the parts of the story which mostly arouses feelings in you and explain why. Is it the form (generic, narrative, stylistic) of the sentence which is appealing to you or some other aspects? Items five, six, seven, eight and nine focused on evaluative feelings of the respondents as follows: 5) how does the title sound to you? (Interesting or uninteresting?); 6) what does the title remind you of? Describe your feelings; 7) after reading the story, how did you feel about the story? (Enjoyment, pleasure or satisfaction). State your reasons; 8) Was the ending of the story fair? If yes, why? If no, why? 9) how do you feel about the characters? How do you feel about the events? And finally the last question was related to the participants' self-modifying feelings: 10) Did the

story create any change about your attitude towards real-life situation? (Meaning you had some ideas about particular aspects of life, and reading this story has caused them change.

Four post-tests containing 20 items each testing the participants' short stories comprehension constituted the other instruments employed in the current study. These tests were to measure the participants' comprehension ability, as well as their ability to make inferences and recognise literary elements.

3.4. Procedures

At the very beginning of the 14- week semester a pre-test was assigned to the participants in all groups to make sure that they are homogeneous. The questions of this test were literary ones which contained comprehension questions as well as questions regarding literary devices.

A questionnaire was designed on the basis of Miall & Kuiken's (2002) categorization of feelings. The participants in the experimental group were asked to respond to this questionnaire before coming to the class and while reading the texts of *Currents in Literature: British volume*, which was the major textbook of the course, at home. As pointed out before, the questionnaire contained ten questions asking participants about their narrative feelings, aesthetic feelings, evaluative feelings and self-modifying feelings. This was due to the fact that, as Miall & Kuiken (2002) state, these four types of feelings are involved in the interpretive processes of literary reading. The respondents were asked to read the stories and write about their feelings before coming to the class and talk about their feelings in the classroom. In this way, they were taught to involve their emotions while reading literary texts. However, the participants in the control group just read the texts without involving their emotions. Finally, at the end of the semester, the participants in both experimental and control groups were asked to read the four short stories (*The Monkey's Paw*, *Bontsha the silent*, *The Butcher's Wife* and *The jilting of Granny Weatherall*) independently. Subsequently, a post-test, measuring their comprehension was assigned to both control and experimental groups and using ANOVA test their means were compared to each other.

To investigate whether or not emotional involvement while reading short stories assist students in recognizing literary elements, initially, the items testing literary elements (irony, symbol, theme and foreshadowing) were selected and marked for all of the students in both control and experimental groups. Then, a MANOVA test was run to examine the likely difference across groups.

4. Data analysis

As mentioned above, before embarking on the experiment, in order to make sure that the control and experimental groups are homogeneous a pre-test, testing participants' ability to comprehend literary texts, was assigned to them, and their means were computed. Table 1 displays the mean and standard deviation of the scores of the participants.

Table 1. Means and standard deviations of the participants' pre-test scores

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Control group	28	12.00	18.50	15.8036	1.81092
Experimental 1	30	11.00	18.50	15.5167	1.93196
Experimental 2	22	13.00	18.00	15.1364	1.30185
Valid N (listwise)	22				

As the means indicate, the three participating groups are rather homogeneous.

Next, in order to test the first hypothesis, i.e. there is not any difference between the scores in the control and experimental groups, a one-way between groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to explore the impact of emotional questionnaire on the literary comprehension of experimental groups, as measured by a multiple choice test designed to assess their comprehension. The following table indicates the descriptive statistics of the post- test scores of the participants in control and experimental groups.

Table2. Means and standard deviations of the participants' post-test scores

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Bontsha experimental	30	9.0667	3.33149	.60824	7.8227	10.3107	4.00	16.00
Bontsha control	28	6.7500	2.93920	.55546	5.6103	7.8897	2.00	13.00
Butcher' wife experimental	30	12.7241	2.68457	.49851	11.7030	13.7453	8.00	18.00
Butcher' wife control	28	9.0000	2.68594	.49877	7.9783	10.0217	2.00	13.00
Jilting experimental	21	11.5714	2.13475	.46584	10.5997	12.5432	7.00	16.00
Jilting control	28	8.2143	2.46992	.46677	7.2565	9.1720	4.00	13.00
Monkey's experimental	21	12.6500	2.05900	.46041	11.6864	13.6136	10.00	18.00
Monkey's control	28	8.5000	2.64197	.51813	7.4329	9.5671	2.00	12.00
Total	214	9.6588	3.34624	.23036	9.2046	10.1129	2.00	18.00

Table 3. The results of ANOVA Test

grades					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	881.614	7	125.945	17.395	.000
Within Groups	1469.817	203	7.240		
Total	2351.431	210			

As Table 3 indicates, there is a statistically significant difference at the $p \leq 0.05$ level in comprehension scores of control and experimental groups. However, ANOVA test does not show where exactly these differences lie. To specify the exact differences, a Tukey HSD post-hoc test was applied. The following table displays the results of Tukey HSD post-hoc test.

Table 4. The results of Tukey HSD post-hoc test

Groups	Mean difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Bontsha's experimental and control	2.31667	.70706	.027
Butcher's experimental and control	3/72414	.70664	.000
Jilting's experimental and control	3.35714	.77677	.001
Monkey's experimental and control	4.15000	.80031	.000

The Tukey HSD test revealed that the mean score for Bontsha experimental ($M=9.0667$, $SD=3.33149$) is not statistically different from Bontsha control. However, in other cases the tukey HSD showed statistically significant difference across experimental and control groups. The effect size calculated, using eta squared, is 0.37 which in Cohen's (1988, pp.284-7) terms would be considered a large effect size.

To address the second research question, i.e. the effect of the designed emotional questionnaire on the recognition of literary elements, such as irony, symbol, theme and foreshadowing a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), which is an extension of analysis of variance for use when we have more than one dependent variable, was used. In this case our experimental and control groups were considered as our independent variables and literary elements (irony, symbol, theme and foreshadowing) were considered as our dependent variables. MANOVA compares the groups and tells us whether the mean differences between the groups on the combination of dependent variables are likely to have occurred by chance. In this relation, preliminary assumption testing was conducted to check for normality, linearity, univariate and multivariate outliers, homogeneity of variance, covariance matrices, and multi collinearity, with no serious violations noted. Table 5 indicates the results of MANOVA.

Table 5. The results of MANOVA Test

Wilks' Lambda	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
Bontsha and Butcher's elements	.978	.411	3.000	54.000	.745
Jilting and Monkey's elements	.977	.359	3.000	46.000	.783

As Table 5 indicates, there is not a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups on the combined dependent variables (i.e. the mean scores of irony, symbol, theme and foreshadowing). Thus, emotional involvement has not had any impact on the participants' ability to recognize literary elements.

5. Discussion and conclusion

As it was demonstrated, the findings of the current study indicate that emotional involvement of the participants can help them improve their literary comprehension. These findings are consistent with the findings of Kneepkens & Zwaan (1994) who found out that emotions may help improving cognitive processes by directing the attention of readers and helping them to determine the relevance of an information to the situation. Therefore, Kneepkens and Zwaan call for helping students to activate their emotions while reading literary texts. By the same token, Dijkstra et al's (1994) accounts for this finding by asserting that emotions can help the reader to capture the events that are more crucial for the characters in the stories. Furthermore, the findings are in line with the assumptions of the structure affect theory (Brewer and Lichtenstein, 1988) that assumes a systematic relation between story structure and affective reactions.

On the other hand, the findings of the current research indicate that emotional involvement of the participants do not help them in recognizing literary devices. This finding is again consistent with Dijkstra et al's assertion (1994, p.144) denoting the fact that "literary devices may suppress the diegetic effect experienced by the reader because they are oriented towards the literary text itself rather than the events and their possible consequences for the characters involved". He goes on to say that, for example, an author willing to create suspense in a story should avoid implementing literary devices, such as metaphors and unusual syntax. The analysis of the questionnaire responded by participants may shed some light on the ways that these questions could have assisted the participants in improving their comprehension. In this respect, the holistic perspective proposed by Patton (2002) was used in order to analyse the qualitative data. Seen in this perspective, the whole phenomenon under study is considered as a complex system which is more than the sum of its parts (Patton, 2002).

As for the first question (For which character of the story do you feel sympathy? Why?), in *Monkey's paw* 40% of the respondents have felt sympathy with Herbert, 10% with the White family, 15% with Mr White and 30% with Mrs White. However, in *The jilting of Granny Weatherall*, 98% have felt sympathy with granny and 2% with Cornelia. In this connection, in the *Butcher's wife*, 82.5% of the participants have felt sympathy with the Butcher's wife and 17.5% with the children. Moreover, in *Bontsha the silent*, 97% of the participants have felt sympathy with Bontsha. On accounting for the reasons for which they have felt sympathy, all of the respondents have narrated a similar story or event that has happened to them. Answering to this question could have contributed to their comprehension since, as Miall (2011, p.33) asserts, one emotional factor that plays an important role in directing cognitive activities is "self-reference" which lays the foundation of the immediate response to an emotional experience through making a link to autobiographical memory. In this relation, Seilman and Larsen (1989, p.184) suggest that being an active participant in an event play an important role in its relevance; in other words, literary reading "seems to connect particularly with knowledge that is personal in the sense that one is an agent, a responsible subject interacting with one's environment". Thus, that may explain the reason that directing the attention of the students to feel sympathy with the characters could have facilitated their cognitive understanding.

At this juncture, the striking point is that in *Bontsha the silent*, 97% of respondents have felt sympathy with Bontsha and, as the data analysis indicates, emotional involvement of the participants did not show any effect on improving their comprehension. Nevertheless, Pretz, the author of this story intends to criticize and condemn Bontsha's silence; however, the students have not only failed grasping this point, but also ironically have felt sympathy with Bontsha. The participants' sympathy with Bontsha in *Bontsha the silent* may be due to the fact that, as Weigand (2004) asserts, emotions are affected by education and cultural circumstances. Furthermore, they can be changed or transferred by societal traditions. For instance, members of different cultures learn to be afraid or enjoy different things (Bazanella, 2004). In this case, the respondents' feeling sympathy with Bontsha may have its roots in the respondents' culture. Since in Persian culture silence is a token of politeness, the respondents in this experiment have ironically attributed Bontsha's silence to his politeness rather than foolishness.

The reasons that questions 2,3,5,6,7,8,9 asking about feeling empathy, types of emotion, interest, reminding and ending of the stories consecutively may have caused improving story comprehension may be that, as Larsen and Seilman (1988) on the authority

of Miall (2011,p.332) assert, literary reading goes beyond a purely 'schema- or knowledge-based approach' since they can arouse personal resonance in the reader and this is what Spiro (1982, p.417) refers to as "long-term evaluative understanding" or interpretation on the basis of feelings that helps constructing the self. Thinking about these questions, may promote understanding due to the role that emotions play in anticipating the events. As Miall (2011, p.336) states, "feeling is interposed between perception and action, it gives us time to judge".

Analysing question number 4 asking about the parts that arouse the participants' emotions, it was observed that the descriptive passages and foregrounded parts arouse their emotions more than dialogues and narrative sections. Miall (2011, p.333) accounts for this fact by stating that Descriptive passages (compared with accounts of action or dialogue) may present a degree of uncertainty, challenging the reader to locate a meaning for them through the feelings they evoke. Descriptions of the environment, whether natural or man-made, often appear to connote a significance for the human actors (the forest was gloomy; the sunlight flooded the bedroom), one that is left implicit. Such uncertainty is more likely to evoke readers' feelings, which readily cross the boundary between....

Another crucial factor playing an important role in arousing one's emotion while reading descriptive parts, according to Miall (2011), is foregrounding. This is because foregrounding is defamiliarizing, hence causes higher degrees of uncertainty, and it seems likely that ambiguous literary texts usually arouse readers' emotions.

The responses to the 10th question asking about self-modifying feelings show that the majority of the respondents have stated that reading the stories have modified their attitudes toward real-life situation. In this relation, Ellis's (2005) concept of "integrative capacity of feelings" may shed some light on the reason. On the authority of Miall (2011, p.339), Ellis (2005) considers "integrative capacity of feeling" as one that plays important roles in literary reading. Ellis enumerates three ways to consider integration, i.e., evocations, boundary crossings and modification. By evocation Ellis means "the positioning of emotions within personal history". This factor explains why empathy with characters can facilitate comprehending literary texts. The third integrative process, i.e., modification, refers to "the capacity of feeling to modify or reconfigure other significant feelings in a process that may serve to reconceptualise a recognized situation" (Miall, 2011, p.341). He cites the example of the modification that causes catharsis.

To sum up, emotional involvement in this experiment indicate improvement in literary comprehension of the participants in this experiment since as Danes (2004, p.25) asserts, "cognition evokes emotion (it is 'emotiogenic'), and emotion affects cognition". What

this finding brings us to is that emotions, as one of the most elementary human abilities, cannot be abstracted from our personal and social lives. However, "they should not be left growing as wild plants. They need to be pruned and cultivated as beneficial flowers" (Danes, 2004, p.31). Therefore, the questionnaire designed in this experiment could have been considered as a way of pruning and cultivating the emotional abilities of the participants. Future researchers can devise innovative ways to arouse readers' emotions while reading poems, dramas and other literary genres and subgenres.

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Title

Crosbian Nihilistic Reading of Sadegh Hedayat's *Three Drops of Blood* and Franz Kafka's *The Trial*

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Abstract

Nihilism as a philosophical concept is an inner feature, related to the mind of the man. This study aims at showing the futility of life that causes hopelessness in man's life through surveying the two selected works from world literature: Franz Kafka's *The Trial* and Sadegh Hedayat's *Three Drops of Blood*. The works signify the internal problems, tensions, and valueless feelings of man toward living in the world. This article shows that the two works under analysis, despite their being the products of noticeably different times, places, languages, and cultures, similarly deal with the concept of nihilism as a -if not the- dominant subject matter. It also proves that each of the two works tends to support its nihilism through a certain set of nihilistic arguments or themes, these sets remarkably overlap at some places, which -again considering the abovementioned discrepancies- further strengthens the two works thematic affinity, this time in terms of their attitudes towards their nihilism.

Key words: Nihilism, Absurd, Literary works

1. Introduction

Derived from the Latin word *nihil*, which means “nothing”; it appears in the verb “annihilate,” meaning to bring to nothing, to destroy completely. The doctrine of nihilism asserts that all values are baseless, there are no moral distinctions, and existence is meaningless. Moreover, nihilists and the most important of them Friedrich Nietzsche (1844) rejects religious teachings in favor of scientific rationalism and utilitarianism. Critics of this philosophy maintain that nihilism constitutes a serious social menace, as it intends to negate all moral principles and reject religious values. A true nihilist does not believe in anything, does not have any loyalties and any purpose other than, perhaps, an impulse to destroy.

The term nihilism is sometimes used with anomie to explain the general mood of despair at a perceived pointless of existence that one may develop upon realizing there are no necessary norms, rules, or laws. Movements, among others, have been identified by deconstructionism and futurism as commentators as nihilistic at various times in various contexts.

This article contains the necessary definitions and assumptions for the study, and is primarily based on the first two chapters of Donald A. Crosby’s *The Specter of the Absurd: Sources and criticisms of Modern Nihilism* (1988). Crosby’s book can be divided into two parts: a descriptive and a critical one. In the first part, Crosby exclusively seeks to describe, as objectively as possible, the different types of nihilism and then the arguments for the most important type, i.e. *belief in life’s absurdity* (which is termed existential nihilism by Crosby), put forward by its adherents “as in literature and art, in daily life and practical affairs, and in philosophy”. Much of this first part of Crosby’s work constitutes a good deal of this study.

2. Method

For the nihilistic study of these works, the article, at the first, compares *Three Drops of Blood* and *The Trial* by utilizing some of Crosby's nihilistic arguments written in his book that finds the traces of nihilism through the characters and the environment they are living into it. Then it contrasts these two works by using the other arguments those are discussed separately in these works. The conclusion, in this article, includes Venn-diagram-based comparisons of the pair of the analyzed texts in order to show their overlapping nihilistic arguments or themes.

3. Discussion

It is noteworthy that the nihilistic arguments retold by Crosby are universal and timeless enough to let the reader deduce a set of criteria for recognizing cases of belief of Crosby’s

book refers to the sources or arguments (regardless of their time) behind the modern nihilism at issue in his book.

In the chapter two of his book, Crosby provides the reader with “some of the most prominent” arguments “that have been, or could be given in support of the nihilistic position”. Despite the fact that Crosby mentions a lot of these arguments, he does not claim to have done justice to all of the arguments for nihilism and asserts that by mentioning the selected arguments he aims to “portray [...] the nihilistic frame of mind”.

The Trial and *Three Drops of Blood* are two modern literary works. *The Trial* deals with a much different situation, in which a man’s freedom, and possibly even his life, literally hangs in the balance. The events of *The Trial* exist certainly as a metaphor in that outside societal forces cause the protagonists insecurities about existence. Besides of it, in *Three Drops of Blood*, the narrator of the story speaks about the bad conditions of his life in an asylum where he lives. By some evidences, in this article, it is shown that a range of nihilistic arguments – mostly corresponding to some of those mentioned by Crosby- is present in a number of them.

3.1 Argument Related to Reason

In this part, Crosby mentions that there are no transperspectival truths or meanings, i.e., that all claims to truth and structures of meaning are relative to the idiosyncratic assumptions and standpoints of particular persons, groups, epochs, or systems. Among explicit adherents of this sort of argument, according to Crosby, are Friedrich W. Nietzsche, Fritz Mauthner, Max Stirner, and Oswald Spengler.

“It is said that there is no ground of certainty or complete justification of belief on which we can base our claims to knowledge, and that without such a ground our arguments and appeals must be sucked into an infinite regress” (Crosby, 1988, p.42). This argument assumes the *knowledge* of something as equal to the certainty of that thing, and goes on to show that man can never be certain about anything.

Both within the novel and by nature of the body of critique which surrounds it, *The Trial* raises instant questions about the nature of meaning, interpretation and reality which ultimately remain unanswered and unanswerable. The first line of the novel indicates the radical pessimism, and skepticism concerning the human reason’s inability to reach certainty:

*Someone must have telling lies about Joseph K. for one morning
without having done anything wrong; he was arrested (p.1).*

By the first line of the novel, the reader is thrown into a bewildering profusion of textual meaning that is as puzzling to the reader as it is to Joseph K.. The novel begins in media,

thrust into a confusing lack of narrative explanation in the same way that Joseph is thrust into his case without understanding what the facts of it are.

Neither K. nor the reader will ever receive satisfactory answers to the causes of his arrest, and the reader is even more at a loss than he since his essential identity will remain hidden from them throughout the novel.

Another nihilistic argument relating to reason is that human reason is unable to “attain certain and comprehensible knowledge of the world”(Crosby, 1988), and that “[n]o consensus has ever been achieved on the great recurring questions, despite our most deeply probing investigations” (Crosby, 1988, p.77). This thesis exists in the statement by the lawyer, Huld:

Try to gain some insight into the size of the court organism and how, to some extent, it remains in a state of suspension, and that even if you alter something in one place you'll draw the ground out from under your feet and might fall, whereas if an enormous organism like the court is disrupted in any one place it finds it easy to provide a substitute for itself somewhere else (p.117).

Likewise, according to Crosby, this statement reiterates the nihilistic thesis that “the mind’s ravenous appetite for clarity and comprehensiveness of understanding [concerning humans’ overwhelming questions] has found no nourishment”.

While searching for truth and certainty, Joseph K. now having been torn by skepticism and relativism, ends up in nihilism, so that nothing is really important for him at the end of the story at the time of his death.

Just as in *The Trial* so in *Three Drops of Blood* also, the narrator’s unknowingness concerning his world is frequently emphasized in the story. The first important example occurs in the first sentence of the narrator when he says that he is not sure about his illness and also his freedom for a later week. He does not know that he was ill or not and if he was ill he is now cured or not?!

Am I really completely cured now, as the warder promised I would be? And Shall I be free in a week? Have I in fact been ill? (p.1)

After questioning the illness about himself, the narrator begins casting doubt on the place and the doubt that they want to kill him in the lunatic asylum.

Thus, numerous questions either remain unanswered or receive ambiguous or confusing answers: Is there any cat really? Does this story state a process of a crime? Or Does any crime occur?

For a nihilist, Since s/he has chosen to read the story allegorically, both the character's epistemological uncertainty about their world , and the reader's epistemological uncertainty about the meaning of the story as a text indicate and mirror his/her epistemological uncertainty about the meaning of the universe itself as well as of his/her existence in it. The multitude of understanding questions which overwhelm the reader while trying to read the story can be said to represent human beings "great recurring questions" about the nature, and purpose of their existence, questions for which no generally – accepted , totally satisfying answers have been found yet. Crosby's nihilism in modern life is seen in this story through the unknowingness and dark point of man's life. Crosby's concept can be added here briefly.

3.2. Argument Related to Alienation

Crosby mentions three connections between the theme of the impossibility of human community on the one hand, and nihilism on the other. Alienation becomes a way of life as people realize connecting in the postmodern world is an unrealistic dream .Kafka's characters have not surrendered to this alienation, however. If, as Jean Paul Sartre famously argues, people must define themselves through choices and living, then many of Kafka's characters have chosen to be individuals apart from their communication.

Kafka provides effective settings for his novel, *The Trial*, by presenting his protagonist in isolated environment. Joseph K. experiences very slight contact with other people and the relationship he has with the others exist at a superficial level.

In this novel, Joseph K. is placed on trial for an offense about which he is told nothing. As he attempts to discover the reason for his indictment he experiences a great deal of inner torment and feelings of estrangement from those with whom he comes in contact.

In addition to establishing the protagonist as an observer, the separation also creates an excellent forum for the Existentialist philosophies of the authors to take over. Joseph K. is given the freedom to discover the meaning of his existence without the influence of other people's opinions. The characters summarily discount the validity of other's views, and they avoid the possibility of new and opposing perspectives. If K. had intimate contact with others, their thoughts would be skewed and any conclusion they happened upon about his existence would be much less pure and individual. At the end, by failing to understand the nature of the court, he dies in ignorance. *The Trial* is a great lament for humanity's inhumanity. It is a novel mourning a world of isolation, justice and reason that it nevertheless knows existed in mind but never in time.

Similarly, in *Three Drops of Blood* also alienation is a fact that man suffers of it a lot in the world. During the story it is seen that nobody commiserate for the narrator. There is no

family or intimate friend around him now. It seems that all of his relatives have left him for ever or he is exiled to this place. It is shown in his statement when he says:

It's been a whole year now since anyone come to see me or bring me flowers (p.1).

For one year, he wants pen and paper; these are instruments for writing and communicating, but they do not give him them. After, one year they give him a pen and paper but he does not have anything to write. In asylum, he does not establish connection with the lunatics; even he can not tolerate them:

It's a whole year now that I have been living with these crazy people. There's absolutely nothing we have in common. I am a whole world apart from them (p.1).

In Crosby's viewpoint toward nihilism, he demonstrates that “it is essential to a meaningful life that people matter to or may matter to each other”. In the story, it is seen that Mirza Ahmad khan has just one friend, Siyavosh who had been so intimate with him. The narrator relates that, during the whole year, Siyavosh has come to visit him just one time that in the last lines of the story Mirza Ahmad khan narrators that by singing the poem in the room by himself, Rokhsareh and her mother leave the room annoyed and in the yard, he sees Siyavosh and Rokhsareh who were kissing each other. In the mind of the narrator, his best friend, Siyavosh, also commits treason against him and leaves him alone.

3.3 Argument Related to God in *The Trial*

“The thrust of this argument is that without belief in God as its creator and sustainer, the world can no longer be regarded as a *universe* but must be seen rather as a jumble of discordant events that exhibit no underlying unity, pattern, or significance” (Crosby, 1988, p.39).

Meanwhile, based upon the Venn diagram, through comparing and contrasting the aforementioned argumentative, still, this novel says that, the one referred to as God is dealt with in such a pejorative manner that makes one acknowledge the fact that God is out there only to be criticized and condemned on the man's part. This is what has provoked the critics to comment for against – what they believe to be- atheism in this novel. Wilhelm Emrich (1968, p. 32) as an American literature philosopher in his book writes: “Although a sense of atheism can certainly be inferred here and there in this novel, what counts concerning be inferred here and there in this novel, what counts concerning the ‘God’ in the novel, is not so much the man's theism or atheism as it is the way the characters have taken special advantage of the concept of God to subscribe to the theme of absurdity”.

This is what the writer of this article tends to confirm: the absurdity of the whole project of "God" who is allegedly the creator of everything; this is the idea of the nihilists that is seen in this novel. Joseph K.'s trial indicates to the reader to accept the idea that since the work of the one who is believed to be the creator and sustainer of every thing is futile, meaningless and injustice that how could a created being's life posses any purpose, meaning or value?

The above mentioned condemnatory and fault-finding view on God's deeds and the justice along with the implication for their and consequently for human life's-absurdity can also be seen at the end of the story:

The logic cannot be refuted, but someone who wants to live will not resist it. Where was the judge he'd never seen? Where was the high court he had never reached? (p.266)

Kafka reaches with great profundity the tragic conclusion that life ultimately lacks meaning and purpose.

3.4 Argument Related to Will in *The Trial*

The other argument is argument related to *Will*. Here, Crosby considers two main types of argument relating to the will that can have nihilistic "the first moves from *determinism* or *fatalism* (or at least form a claim of fundamental weakness or inadequacy of the human will) to nihilism, while the second arrives at a nihilistic conclusion on the basis of a doctrine of radical, unrestricted freedom". In this article, it is only concerned with the first type, namely, the arguments for determinism. Believing in determinism, says Crosby (1988, p.87), removes any "sense of personal responsibility for the direction of one's own life" by making one the spectator of her/ his own pre-designed or predestined life. *The Trial* is a novel which seems to give early expression to the horrors of the modern world. It deals with the arbitrary nature of power threatening the freedom of the individual and crushing of every attempt to understand its working.

Joseph K.'s offense is never explained to him, and the illogical nature of his helplessly vulnerable condition is pursued relentlessly throughout the narrative. Indeed, it gets worse with each of his efforts to understand or do anything about it. He appeals to all forms of bureaucratic authority for help and clarification, but gets nowhere.

Of course, no trial in the ordinary sense of that word takes place. He never discovers the precise charge which is made against him. Once he is arrested, an examining magistrate inquires into the case against him- and the process (*De Prozess* is the German title of the novel) gradually merges into the verdict. This process shows the deterministic fate of man which leads him to despair and defeat.

At times, the court seems to be inviting K. to assume a Kantian autonomy, to confront his possible guilt directly without intermediaries. But at other times, it seems to be identifying him as an individual who is guilty by nature, whether or not he has committed any actual crime. A force or entity beyond the control and of the individual arbitrarily determines his destiny, justly or unjustly. A man has no alternative but to accept his destiny. The people are dominated by environment, psychological, or biological determinism. Through the novel, the thrasher asserts that the guard's punishment is as just as it is inevitable, implying again that whatever the court ordains must be accepted. Deterministic matter of the trial through the world is seen also in the statement of K. when he speaks to the woman in the empty court room:

Those books must be law books, and that's how this court does things, not only to try people who are innocent but even to try them without letting them know what's going on (p.59).

In the final line of the novel, K. dies - an end that has proved to be inescapable no matter which style of theological maneuvering he has chosen. Rivka Horwitz (1995) in his article writes: "By accepting and believing in the power of law, K's society has allowed itself to be structured by nothing more or less than guilt".

3.5. Argument Related to Suffering in *Three Drops of Blood*

Crosby, in his book, speaks about the other argument; the one related to *Suffering*. This argument is shown here as a dominant subject matter in *Three Drops of Blood*. According to Crosby these arguments first draw the attention to-as the arguers find it- "the pitiful fragility of human life, its susceptibility at any moment to wrenching *pain*, catastrophic *loss*, or *death*" and then conclude that human life, "full with so much actual and potential suffering" can have no meaning.

In addition to the above - mentioned physical pain and suffering, our ever-accompanying mental anguish, conflict, and dissatisfaction (produced, for example, by the attainableness of our apparently never-ending ideals, "the misery of our guilt, remorse, and an ever - present sense of frustration and failure") are also mentioned as other causes of a great deal of suffering which can bring us to the absurdity of life. As Crosby says, these arguments draw attention to "the pitiful fragility of human life". He says: "So much routine suffering and deprivation makes the conclusion seem unavoidable that, when all things are said and done, our lives are fundamentally absurd". In *Three Drops of Blood*, there are two kinds of sufferings: physical and mental suffering. Physical suffering is seen when the narrator describes the bad pitiful circumstances of some mad persons who hurt themselves. It

indicates the extreme sufferings of these people, seeing these images also suffers Mirza Ahmad a lot. The narrator relates his suffering by saying that:

What long days and terrible hours I have spent here. In the summer, dressed in buff shirt and trousers, we sit together in the little room under the house where it's cool, and in the winter we sit round the garden in the sun. It's a whole year now that I have been living with these crazy people. There's absolutely nothing we have in common. I am a whole world apart from them. But the moans, the silences, the oaths, the crying, and the laughing of these people will always fill my sleep with nightmares (p.2).

The narrator's speaking in this part achieves his extreme fear from the world and the people of the world. Ahmad is the tragic victim of a society that has shut its eyes to the inevitable madness of him without any attention to his mental feelings and his feelings towards love.

During the story, the mental suffering of the narrator is seen when the melancholic spiritual matters of this man show his hard suffering in the world. Michael Graig Hillmann and Homa Katouzian (1991), in their common article, write: "the protagonist in *Three Drops of Blood* is caught between his consciousness of the meaninglessness and futility of life and his impulse to import meaning or imply that meaning existence brought creative communication; through writing. At the same time, the nightmarish horror of lives of suffering perceived as lived for no purpose is heightened by the very imagination of characters who can dream of an ideal order with which to contrast the hellish, senseless state of their own lives".

3.6. Humankind's Futile Existence in *Three Drops of Blood*

Perhaps the clearest part of *Three Drops of Blood* which confirms the idea of the absurdity of human life is seen through reiterating the futility of any search for life's meaning. Mirza Ahmad Khan, while narrating of his useless endeavors to discover the purpose or/and meaning of human life. In the following statement, he includes his futile quest for the meaning of life:

The deep blue sky, the green garden, flowers blossoming on the hill; a soft breeze carries their scent. But what's the good! I can no longer enjoy anything. All these are good for poets and children and the kind of people who remains children till the end of their lives (p.2).

Hedayat's fiction is a vaguely disturbing parable of the nihilism which absurdism affirm is so closely conjoined with futility of man's life in the world. *Three Drops of Blood* participates in the fatalistic, philosophically sad, and pessimistic end of the life of man in the world.

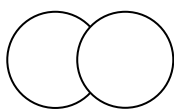
4. Findings

By reading Crosby's words, it can say that the story like *Three Drops of Blood* and *The Trial*, as a short story, dramatizes doubt and unknowingness or the attainableness of certainty. This unknowingness uncertainty initially operates at two epistemological levels: A) the main character's uncertainty about the meaning of their world; and, B) the reader's uncertainty about the meaning of the story as a fictitious or "secondary world". These two levels, for a true nihilist, can induce another third one, which contains nihilistic implications for life's meaning. C) Our epistemological uncertainty about the meaning of the real, "primary world" outside, and our existence in it. This study is written with the aim of first, showing the philosophical theme of nihilism as a common subject matter in the two selected works from world literature, and second showing the extent to which they draw on common nihilistic arguments or themes to support their overarching thesis of absurdity.

As inferred from the analytical parts, the two texts under discussion in this study- despite their being the product of totally different places, cultures, languages and partly different times – are similar concerned with nihilism as a philosophical literary theme. What is more, although each work tends to support its nihilism through a certain set of nihilistic arguments or themes, such sets overlap some places, which further strengthen the idea of the two work's thematic affinity in terms of their treating nihilism.

Considering, one important general result of this study can be the fact that nihilism-as a philosophical literary theme- should not be sought for as an individual or isolated theme in literary texts, but it should be regarded as the explicit manifestation of a possible set or series of underlying arguments or themes, which -remembering all the materials are involved in evitable interrelations. Comparing the results of the analyses in these literary works proves the fact that the two have a noticeably close affinity in terms of both their containing and their dealing with the philosophical theme of nihilism. Among their similar nihilistic preoccupations, one is that the protagonist in these works is condemned Joseph K. is condemned to die and Mirza Ahmad is condemned to be in asylum. None of them do know about their guilt; they suffer from the conditions that the others have made for them. The other similarity resemblances, as the study shows, include lack of communication or

alienation as a dominant matter that the reader feels a lot in these works. The two texts also, being concerned with reason that is concerned in *Three Drops of Blood* as uncertainty of everything that which – along with other related issues in each text- serves to strengthen the identical thesis of human life’s absurdity in both texts.



Note: “Venn - diagram, according” to the concise Oxford Dictionary is “a diagram representing mathematical or logical sets as circles, common elements of the sets being represented by intersections of the circles”. In other words, Venn - diagram is “used to show areas of overlap between [two] or among [more than two] elements. “The term has been named after the English logician, John Venn (1834-1923). The following two diagrams show those according to which this dissertation discusses the above mentioned overlaps.

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Title

Optional Structural Shifts in Translation; a Critical Discourse Analysis Approach

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Abstract

The notion of shift in translation is an important concept in translation studies. The investigation of shifts has a long-standing tradition in translation studies. In general, shifts have been divided into two kinds, Obligatory and Optional. The main aim of this study was to examine the optional structural shifts that were employed in translating texts from English to Persian, and to see which of the optional structural shifts were more frequent. Optional shifts indicate that the translator has some choices among two or more items; however, s/he chooses one item on the basis of his culture, beliefs, and ideology. As the results showed, the most frequent shift employed in both translations of the English novel, “The Kite Runner”, used in the corpus of the study was Temporal Shift. As using a specific tense enables the reader or the listener to reproduce the temporal relations of the situations in a text in his/her mind, therefore, it can be concluded that, by changing the tense of the story, the translators changed the style of the text.

Keywords: Translation shift, Metatext, Prototext, Ideology, Temporal shift, Rank shift

1. Introduction

Any text is more than simply a text. A text can be read and interpreted in different ways. A text, for example, can be regarded as being directed at the readerships of different social and cultural groups, different institutions as well as different languages because these readerships

share ideologies or beliefs relating to certain issues. According to Hatim and Mason (1997), translation is “an act of communication” permanently dealing with at least two different languages along with a broad network of elements including cultural, historical, political and ideological differences. Mwepu (2002) is also of the opinion that a translator has a degree of control at an individual level too. He will assess the source text and determine whether it is consistent with his personal ideology or ‘habitus’ (a whole made of his beliefs, values, experience and ethos). If the product of language use is consistent with the translator’s habitus he will tend to maintain its discourse. If it is inconsistent with his personal ideology, he may adopt different approaches: maintain it due to its informative quality and incorporate it into his habitus, adjust it or reject it. In the case of rejection, the translator will attempt to use new devices so as to modify the content of the discourse (Mwepu, 2002). Based on this approach, it can be said that in translating a text from an SL to a TL, many changes are taken place. In other words translation is a change of form (Larson, 1984) and this formal change takes place at different levels within a text. Studies done in this area have named the phenomenon differently e.g. skewing (Larson 1984), Transposition (Vinay&Darbelnet, 2000), and shifts (Catford, 1965).

2. Shifts in Translation

Among many of the translation studies some whose focus were on the text alone concentrated on the formal changes rather than meaning e.g. Catford’s shifts, transpositions by Vinay and Darbelnet, etc. Translation as an interlingual practice necessitates moving from the form of the SL to the TL. In other words translation is a change of form (Larson, 1984) and this formal change takes place at different levels within a text. Shifts are all the mandatory actions of the translator (those dictated by the structural discrepancies between the two language systems involved in this process) and the optional ones (those dictated by his personal and stylistic preferences) to which he resorts consciously for the purpose of natural and communicative rendition of an SL text into another language. Studies done in this area had named the phenomenon differently e.g. skewing (Larson 1984), Transposition (Vinay and Darbelnet, 2000), and shifts (Catford, 1965), from which some were prescriptive and practice- oriented, trying to formulate these shifts from one language to another.

2.1 Catford’s Shifts

Category shifts are subdivided into four kinds: Structural Shifts, Class Shifts, Unit Shifts or Rank Shifts, Inter-systemic Shifts.

According to Vinay and Darbelnet(2000), transpositions are classified as optional and obligatory. The same is true about the Catford (1965) shifts. According to the evidences, structure shifts and intra-system shifts can be classified as obligatory shifts. Unit and class shifts following Vinay and Darbelnet (2000) can be classified as optional shifts in which the translator has some choices among two or more items. In other words, unit shifts and class shifts are determinant of whether a translation is free or literal, covert or overt, semantic or communicative. In translating from English into Persian one must be aware of the SVO structure of English and change it to SOV in Persian unless you decide to change the style. In the case of intra-system shifts one must be aware of both language's systems and grammars to apply the shift correctly. By defining more unit shifts to translation, it moves from literalness toward being free. Thus the translator on the basis of his intention(s) has the option to determine the kind of his translation by choosing among the alternatives such as the followings:

- To define or not define a shift.
- To choose among the existing choices in the case of optional shifts.

3. CDA and Translation Studies

Reading the relevance of CDA and translation studies, Calzada-Perez (2003) considers translation studies an area to which CDA is of particular relevance. In fact, among many ways of influencing minds of others, translation seems to be a very useful instrument to manipulate reality and shape minds in favor of a power group. Thus, she assumes translation studies as a tool that dig into ideological phenomena for a variety of reasons.

Wodak (2007) believes that for CDA, language has no power of its own but it gains power by the use powerful people make of it. According to Wodak, (2007), in agreement with its critical theory predecessors, CDA emphasizes the need for interdisciplinary work in order to gain proper understanding of how language functions in consisting and transmitting knowledge, in organizing social institutions, or in exercising power.

Before starting the discussion on internal links between Translation Studies and Critical Discourse Analysis, it is noteworthy to mention the elements that relate discourse theory to translation.

Now let's review the critical aspects of translation studies: Fairclough (1995) describes the aim of CDA as to make the ideological loading of particular ways of using language and the relations of power which underline them 'more visible'. In CDA this is usually done on the basis of discourse in one language and one culture.in the case of translation, however,

textual features, ideological contexts, and underlying relations of power apply both to the source text and culture and to the target text and culture. The discipline of translation studies has developed concepts with which it is possible to describe and explain target text profiles, the translation strategies used, the appropriateness of those strategies, the conditions under which the translator operated, and the effects a text has had in its receiving culture. According to Vermeer (1989), texts are produced and received with a specific purpose, or function in mind and this is the main argument underlying functionalist approaches to translation. The basic assumptions are as following: translation is a specific kind of communicative action; each action has a specific purpose, and therefore, the most decisive criterion for any translation is its purpose.

4. Ideology and Translation

According to Tymoczko (2003), 'some of the most searching and revealing discussions of translation in the last decade have focused on questions of ideology'. For her, the ideology of translation is an amalgam of the content of the source text and the various speech acts instantiated in the source text relevant to the source context, layered together with the representation of the content, its relevance to the receptor audience, and the various speech acts of the translation itself addressing the target context, as well as resonances and discrepancies between those two 'utterances', (Tymoczko, 2003).

Tymoczko (2003) is of the opinion that: Ideological effects will differ in every case of translation - even in translations of the same text - because of the translator's particular choices on all these various levels - on the levels of representation of the subject matter, as well as representation of the relevant locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary effects of the source text [...].

5. Ideology and Translation

Thompson (1990) discusses the concepts of ideology and culture and the relations between these concepts and certain aspects of mass communication. He points out that the concept of ideology first appeared in late 18th century France and has thus been in use for about two centuries. The term has been given a range of functions and meanings at different times. For Thomson, ideology refers to social forms and processes within which, and by means of which, symbolic forms circulate in the social world. Ideology, for CDA, is seen as an important

means of establishing and maintaining unequal power relations. CDA takes a particular interest in the ways in which language mediates ideology in a variety of social institutions.

6. The Study

To focus more clearly on the process of research, the following research questions were formulated.

Which optional structural shifts are most frequently used in the two translations of the English novel “*The Kite Runner*”?

Are these optional structural shifts ideologically significant?

If yes, what are the implications?

In the process of doing this research the following hypothesis was formulated.

“Optional structural shifts are not ideologically significant.”

6.1 Theoretical Framework

The present research was carried out in descriptive area of translation studies, and was corpus-based. This study adopted Critical Discourse Analysis as its approach and used Farahzad’s (2007) model. According to the model, based on Fairclough (1997), the words and sentences that are used in a text are ideologically contested. The theoretical framework of this study was Catford’s theory (1965) of shifts in translation, and Farahzad’s model (2007).

The corpus consisted of an English novel and two of its Persian translations.

English Element: “*The Kite Runner*”, by Khaled Hosseini.

Persian Element: Two translations. One by Mehdi Ghabraee, the other one by Ziba Ganji and Parisa Soleimanzadeh.

In order to carry out this study, 150 pages of each translation, included 3492 sentences and 41557 words, were studied to find the related data.

The sentence was taken as the unit of translation, based on Catford’s theory and Farahzad’s model.

6.2 Procedure

To conduct the procedure for the research, the researcher the following steps:

The data was collected from the corpus of the study. One hundred and fifty pages of each one of three books (the original and two of its translations) were read and examined. The sentence was taken as the unit of comparison in the corpus. Persian equivalent sentences were copied one by one under their English counterparts, to be compared and contrasted. After comparing 3492 English sentences to their two Persian equivalents, the instances of optional

structural shifts were identified and extracted. The segments were studied several times to see, based on Catford's theory (1965), which kind of optional structural shifts were employed. After classifying each shift under one of the four related categories, they were tabulated. The most frequently used shift was identified. The results are examined, considering socio cultural and ideological nuances.

To give a better glimpse of the analysis, some examples of the extracted data are presented in related tables.

7.Data Analysis

Sentences that contained structural shifts were selected and analyzed. As expected, several shifts were identified and classified that were optional structural shifts, according to the definition given by Catford(1965), between English and Persian texts. About 1025 sentences were identified in both translations that contained shifts at the level of structure.

There were 480 sentences found in the first version, translated by Ghabraee, and 545 sentences in the second, translated by Ganji and Soleimanzadeh. The optional structural shifts, identified during the above-mentioned procedure, are classified into separate categories that are presented as the results of the descriptive level. The identified categories included temporal shifts, rank shifts, active-passive shifts, positive-negative shifts.

In order to examine the frequency of optional structural shifts at different levels, the collected data is presented in two sections, one related to Ghabraee's translation, and the other one related to Ganji and Soleimanzadeh's translation. As the number of identified sentences is very large, the following tables show only sample instances.

7.1 Section One (Ghabraee's Translation)

7.1.1 Temporal Shift

Table, 7.1.1. Sample Instances of Temporal Shift, in Mehdi Ghabraee's Translation

English	Persian	Shift
He <u>took</u> you for someone else.	تو را با یکی دیگر اشتباه گرفته بود.	Past Perfect
my classmates <u>had died</u> of it.	به خاطر آپاندیس مُرد... .	Past Simple
"I <u>picked out your present myself.</u> "	«هدیهات را خودم انتخاب کرده‌ام.»	Present Perfect
That <u>was</u> the thing about kite flying.	بادبادکپیرانی همیشه همین طور است	Present Simple
<u>I shook hands with them.</u>	با هاشان دست می‌دادم	Past Continuous

Considering the collected data, the whole body of which is given in the appendix. In Ghabraee's translation, from among 302 optional temporal shifts, 42 were translated to past perfect, 108 to past simple, 67 to present perfect, 57 to present simple, and 28 to past continuous.

7.1.2 Rank Shifts

Table, 7.1.2. Sample Instances of Rank Shift, in Ghabraee's Translation

English	Persian	Shift
<u>When we were children,</u>	کودکي زمان	Phrase
<u>after dark...</u>	نمي شد هاتاهواتاريک آن وقت	Sentence

Considering all the obtained data, the whole body of which is given in the appendix, from among 518 structural shifts detected in Ghabraee's translation, 101 are in this category, and among these 101 segments, 62 were from phrase into sentence, and 39 were from sentence into phrase.

7.1.3. Active-Passive Shift

Table, 7.1.3. Sample Instances of Active-Passive Shift, in Ghabraee's Translation

English	Persian	Shift
<u>propelled by a crisp breeze.</u>	ميراند آنهارا پيش خنکي نسيم.	Active
<u>Baba had bought in...</u>	از کلکته شده خريداري	Passive

Based on the collected data, the whole body of which is given in the appendix, from among 518 structural shifts found in the first translation 50 were contained in Active-Passive category, of which, 28 passive sentences were translated into active, and 22 active sentences were translated into passive.

7.1.4. Positive-Negative Shift

Table, 7.1.4. Sample Instances of Positive-Negative Shift, in Ghabraee's Translation

English	Persian	Shift
<u>it was the prettiest house in all</u>	توکابل خانهاي قشنگتر از اين نيست	Negative
<u>Haven't I been good</u>	مگر باتو حسن بدرفتاري کرده ام	Positive

As it was seen in the collected data, the whole body of which is given in the appendix, 26 segments of 518 in the first version of the translation were related to shifts in positive and negative sentences. Among these 26 sentences, 17 were from positive into negative and 9 from negative into positive.

7.2 Section Two (Ganji and Soleimanzadeh's Translation)

7.2.1. Temporal Shifts

Table, 7.2.1. Sample Instances of Temporal Shift, in Ganji and Soleimanzadeh's Translation

English	Persian	Shift
He <u>took</u> you for someone else.	تو را با یکی دیگر اشتباه گرفته بود.	Past Perfect
Baba <u>had surprised</u> Hassan	حسن را غافلگیر کرد.	Past Simple
“I <u>picked out your present myself.</u> ”	«هدیه‌ات را خودم انتخاب کرده‌ام.»	Present Perfect
Hassan <u>never missed</u> any of the five daily prayers.	حسن همیشه اول وقت نماز می‌خواند.	Present Simple
he <u>walked</u> to the driver's side	به طرف در راننده می‌رفت.	Past Continuous

In Ganji and Soleimanzadeh's translation, 361 temporal shifts were identified, of these, 76 into past perfect, 70 were made into past simple, 84 into present perfect, 91 into present simple, and 40 into past continuous.

7.2.2. Rank Shift

Table, 7.2.2. Sample Instances of Rank Shift, in Ganji and Soleimanzadeh's Translation

English	Persian	Shift
man who <u>had memorized</u> the Koran,	حافظ قرآن	Phrase
<u>Soon.</u>	چیزی نگذشت	Sentence

And this translation, 84 segments were identified, 51 were translated from phrase into sentence, and 33 from sentence into phrase.

7.2.3 Active-Passive Shift

Table, 7.2.3. Sample Instances of Active-Passive Shift, in Ganji and Soleimanzadeh's Translation

English	Persian	Shift
<u>handpicked by Baba.</u>	بابا با دست خودش در اصفهان سوا کرده بود.	Active
<u>I'd changed my mind.</u>	نظرم عوض شده.	Passive

In this translation, among 555 structural shifts just 37 of them were placed in this category. Twenty four of them were from passive into active, and 13 were the opposite.

7.2.4. Positive-Negative Shift

Table, 7.2.4. Sample Instances of Positive-Negative Shift, in Ganji and Soleimanzadeh's Translation

English	Persian	Shift
The most I <u>managed</u> was five.	مال من بیشتر از پنج بار نشد.	Negative
I still <u>hadn't breathed</u> out.	هنوز نفسم را حبس کرده‌ام.	Positive

In Ganji and Soleimanzadeh's translation, out of 555 sentences, 49 segments related to this category were found. 33 positive sentences translated into negative and 16 vice versa.

8. Results and Discussions

In this part the results are summed up and discussed.

8.1 Discussion of Temporal Shifts

The first category studied in this research was Temporal Shift. According to Farahzad (2007), “the change of tense in a metatext leads to a temporal difference.

When a past tense translated into its present tense form, the state of affairs alerts (p. 46). In the original book, “*The Kite Runner*” the use of past perfect shows that something happened in far past before another action in past, whereas, in Ghabraee’s translation they were translated into past simple. This shows that the actions did not happen in far past, so they are more tangible, and in Ganji and Soleimanzadeh’s translation they were translated into present simple which shows an existing state of affairs, without any reference to the past. According to Farahzad (2007), such temporal shifts bear ideological implications.

8.2 Discussion of Rank Shift

The second most frequent category studied in this research was Rank Shift. Based on structural shifts introduced by Catford(1965), this category does not belong to structural shifts, however, because of the frequency of this kind of shift in these translations and also the effects it had had on the structure of a sentence, it was also analyzed in this study. By Rank Shift, the researcher meant to change a sentence into a phrase or vice versa. In both translations, the translators changed the phrases into full sentences. Therefore, it can be said that the concept was transferred in structured sentences. This made the concept of the text more explicit, and reduced the economy of the text. Consequently they changed the style of the source text writer. In other words, by changing phrases into sentences, the economy of the text was decreased, and the style was totally changed.

8.3 Discussion of Active-Passive Shifts

According to Farahzad (2007), “the passive voice is normally used when ‘the action’ is prominent, not ‘the agent’.” (p. 45). According to Fairclough (cited in Farahzad, 2007), “passive sentences leave causality and agency unclear” (p.45). In both translations agent was more prominent, in other words, most of the passive voice sentences were activated in the metatext, and agents became foregrounded. This shift was optional; therefore, it gains ideological values.

8.4 Discussion of Positive-Negative Shifts

Another category considered in this study was about shifts occurred in positive or negative sentences. According to Fairclough (cited in Farahzad, 2007), “negation is the basic way we have of distinguishing what is not the case in reality from what is the case”. When a positive sentence is translated into a negative, a different aspect of reality is highlighted (Farahzad,

2007, p. 45). As the data showed, the translators used negative structures more than positive. Such a shift of perspective in a meta-text can have ideological impact because it emphasizes the negative aspect of an action or process. Although the number was small the effects were tangible.

9. Conclusions

When a translator uses a specific tense more than any other tense, or in other words, she/he changes the tense of the text into a particular tense, it makes the readers or the listeners imagine that they participate in the events, in the same period of time as the characters of the story. So each specific tense shows its semantic features in the text. Using a specific tense enables the reader or the listener to reproduce the temporal relations of the mentioned situations of the text, in his/her mind. This shows that tense is not an independent phenomenon.

In Ghabraee's translation, he translated sentences into past simple, although the most frequent tense in the source text was past perfect, and in Ganji and Soleimanzadeh's translation most of the past perfect sentences were translated into present simple. The story of "*The Kite Runner*" happened in far past, and this is inspired by using past perfect sentences. Changing past perfect explicate that the story did not belong to far past and the reader or the listener feels closer to the narrative. Moreover, when they are translated into present simple based on Munro (1995), using present simple to talk about a past action, is to create a "Virtual Reality". It means that by using this tense the reader or the listener puts him/herself in the center of a position which ended in past. The aim of this usage of present simple is to make the reader or the listener involved in the experience of an action. It is seen that, by using present simple instead past perfect, not only the translators inspired the concept of past, but also they had been successful in making the concept more objective for the addressee(s). Based on the obtained results, the second most frequent shift was Rank Shift. In both translations, the translators changed the phrases into full sentences. Therefore, it can be said that the translator preferred more to say the concept in structured sentences. This made the concept of the text more explicit, and reduced the economy of the text. Therefore it changed the style of the source text writer. In other words, by changing phrases into sentences, the economy of the text was decreased, and the style was totally changed.

One of the most outstanding features of "*The Kite Runner*" is the author's characterization. In both translations most of the passive sentences were translated into active

voice sentences. So most of the passive voice sentences were activated in the metatext and agents became foregrounded. Therefore, the translators made characters more prominent than they were in the original version. The other dominant shift made in both translations was translating most positive sentences into negative. By such a shift of perspective, the translators highlighted a different aspect of reality, and emphasized the negative aspect of actions.

According to Fairclough (cited in Bahrampoor, 2001, p. 54), CDA has got seven objectives, and based on the above mentioned factors, I have reached to the four of them as the following:

1. Text or speech units are comprehended differently by different people. In other words, people do not have the same understanding of a single discourse.
2. Reading (perception and interpretation of a text) can be false reading (incorrect interpretation). As it was obvious in both translations, there were two different interpretations from the same metatext.
3. By doing this research, the deep and complex structure of producing a discourse was expressed and it was also conveyed that meaning is a relative and unstable phenomenon and is always changing. It is never complete and can be comprehended differently on the basis of social, cultural, political, and historical factors.
4. The research showed the relationship between discourse and ideology. All discourses (written or spoken) are never neutral. They always bear ideological implications.

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Title

The Relationship between Grammatical Proficiency and Translating Competence in Persian-English Translation in EFL students.

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Abstract

This study is designed to survey the possible relationship between the knowledge of English grammar in learners of English language (EFL) and their translating competence from Persian into English. Therefore, correlational analyses were conducted to determine the degree of the relationship. Moreover, based on the results of the TPTs, the frequency of different kinds of grammatical errors were classified to answer the second question of the study which focused on the classification of errors done by the subjects. In this research 30 subjects were selected and tested. In so doing, two kinds of tests were administered to the subjects: a Multiple-Choice Grammar Test and a Translation Production Test (TPT). Subjects were to translate from Persian into English. All necessary vocabularies were glossed since only students' knowledge of grammar was of our primary interest in this study. Regarding the first question of the study, the result

indicates that, there is a significant relationship between grammatical proficiency and translating competence (0.89). Therefore, English language grammatical knowledge has a positive impact on Persian-English translating competence. Regarding the second research question, the researcher has found out totally 780 errors in TPT papers. Among them, errors regarding **Tense** (with the frequency of 245 about 31.23 percent) enjoys the most translation problems and errors, and those related to the category of **Conjunctions** (with the frequency of 17: about 2.1 percent) includes the least occurring type of errors.

Keywords: Translating competence, Translation Problem, TPT, Grammatical proficiency

1. Introduction

Translation is an activity of enormous importance in the modern world and it is a subject of interest not only to linguistics, professional and amateur translators and language teachers, but also to engineers and mathematician.

Campble (2005, cited in Anderman and Rogers, p. 28) holds that the high frequency need of translation has emerged mainly because the world has constantly grown smaller over the years, and nations are now increasingly drawn closer together. According to Harris (1983, pp. 5-6, cited in Al-salman, 2007, p.151) 60% of all the world's technical documentation is produced in English.

Al-salman (2007, cited in Asian EFL Journal, p.151) explains the needs of translation into English: "While acknowledging that the global market has given rise to the use of English as an international language, it is imperative that the need for translation into English and vice versa has become a pressing necessity."

The present study aims to investigate possible relationship between the knowledge of English grammar in learners of English language (EFL) and their translation competence from Persian into English. Therefore, correlational analyses were conducted to determine the degree of the relationship. Moreover, based on the results of the TPTs, the frequency of different kinds of grammatical mistakes were classified to answer the second question of the study which focused on the classification of errors done by the subjects in detail and suggest further implications for teaching.

2. Review of literature

2.1 The Concept of Evaluation, Quality, and Assessment in Translation

2.1.1 Evaluation: Davis (2004, p. 31) on the issue of evaluation maintains, "Evaluation is always a tricky matter in which subjectively plays an important part." K-fouri (2004, cited in Translation Journal, p. 3) emphasizes on evaluation in his article and says "it now encompasses not only examinations but also the educational system as a whole and even extra-academic."

2.1.2 Quality and Assessment:The linking of *translation*, *quality* and *assessment* are also close and, in the discussion of quality in translation, these three terms continue to be considered jointly. To confirm the definitions of *quality* and *assessment* concurrently, it is good to refer to Riss (1971). Riss (1971/2001, p. 90 cited in Lauscher 2000, p. 141) makes it clear that translation is "...the version of a source text in the target language where the primary effort has been to produce a text corresponding to the original". Implicitly, then, *quality* must inevitably be measured in comparative terms.

2.2 Translation Problem

Nord (1991, p. 151 cited in Melis and Albir 2001, p. 281) defines translation problem "as an objective problem which every translator [...] has to solve during a particular translation task."

2.3 Translation Competence

Waddington (2001, cited in Meta, p. 313) describes 'translation competence' as what "... consists of two different aspects, the ability to transfer the content of the source text and the ability to express this content adequately in the target language."

Based on PACTE 1998 and 2000 (cited in Melis and Albir 2001, p. 280) translation competence consists of six subcompetencies: 1) *Communicative competence*, 2) *Extra-linguistic competence*, 3) *Transfer competence*, 4) *Instrumental/professional competence*, 5) *Psychophysiological competence*, 6) *Strategic competence*.

As Alves (2003, p. 54) believes, these sub-competencies are (1) inter-related; (2) do not always develop in parallel; (3) are organized hierarchically; (4) variations occur in relation to translation direction, language combinations, and the learning context.

2.4 Why do we Translate into the Second language?

Newbert (1981, cited in Adab 2005, p. 227) argues that translators are normally expected to translate into their mother tongue for many well reasons, including native-speaker language competence, familiarity with the cognitive mapping of conceptual referents and etc. In addition, according to Rogers (2005, cited in Anderman & Rogers, 2005, p. 259) characteristics of translation into the non-native language are as following:

1)Objective: non-native language; production; accuracy training, 2)Focus on form(syntax and morphology), 3)Lexical knowledge as a test of memory, 4)Linguistic encoding.

2.5 Grammatical Categories in Translation

Jakobson (1959/2000 cited in Venuti 2000, pp. 116-118) claims that it is more difficult to remain faithful to the original when we translate into language if a certain grammatical category from a language "devoid of such a category". In the following, some general categories in English grammar are described in general:

2.5.1 Overt Grammar: According to the definition made by Brown & Miller (1996, p. 64) some categories are overt in that "at least one term of category is identified by a formal marker of some sort."

2.5.2 Covert Grammar: Brown & Miller (p. 66) consider *Covert* Grammar in that "no term in the category can be identified with a formal marker; on the other hand, co-occurrence restrictions or other grammatical phenomena enable us to establish the existence of the category."

2.5.3 Generative Grammar: Yule (1996, p. 101) proposed a new theory called 'generative grammar' which claims that "speakers generate the more or less complicated surface structure of sentences through a series of transformations of basic structure called 'Kernels' or 'deep structure'."

2.6 Grammar and Translation

As Jakobson (1959/2000, cited in Venuti 2000, p. 115) observes "no lack of grammatical device in the language translated into makes impossible a literal translation of the entire conceptual information contained in the original." Catford (1974, p. 32) distinguished Grammar translation and Lexical translation and believes that they are in verse of each other. **Grammar translation** is restricted translation in which the SL grammar of a text is placed by equivalent TL grammar, but with no replacement of lexis. **Lexical translation** is restricted translation in which the SL lexis of a text is replaced by equivalent TL lexis, but with no replacement of grammar.

3. Method

3.1 subjects

57 students were selected from different authentic institutes. Among them, 30 Iranian EFL students (including 12 male and 13 female) could pass TOEFL Grammar Multiple Choice

Test successfully and took the TPT texts. None of them had passed any courses in translation (neither in university nor in any institutes).

3.2. Instruments

3.2.1 A Grammar Multiple-Choice Test

This test included 45 TOEFL English grammar test items. It was released by Educational Testing Service (TOEFL) in 2006. The time allowed for taking the test was 50 minutes. This test was going to fulfill two purposes: to homogenize the students in terms of their knowledge and English grammar and also to test their English grammar proficiency.

Consequently, the grammar test was chosen, contained some major grammatical points such as: *Tense* (past, present, future, passive voice, etc.), *Clauses*, *Conditional sentences*, *Cojunctions* and *Articles*, *Prepositions*, *Pronoun*, *Verbals*, and *Parts of speech* that were included in the TPT texts. However, in the grammar test there were other grammatical points such as: *Tag questions*, *Imperative and exclamative sentences*, which did not exist in the TPT texts.

3.2.2 A Translation production test (TPT)

The TPT comprised two Persian texts. Subjects were asked to translate them into English. The purpose is to measure the subjects' translating competence. The texts included the most important grammatical points such as: *Tense* (past, present, future, passive voice, etc.), *Clauses*, *Conditional sentences*, *Cojunctions*, *Articles*, *Prepositions*, *Pronoun*, *Verbals*, and *Parts of speech*. The time of the (TPT) test was estimated to be 60 minutes. To determine the level of students' proficiency in English grammar all the necessary vocabularies for translating the texts from Persian into English were glossed. In scoring the translations, the author used the model proposed by Farahzad (1992), on the basis of: "Appropriateness" and "accuracy".

4. Procedure

4.1 A pilot study

As for the appropriateness in terms of both 'translatability' and 'time management', the author first administered a pilot test to three subjects before final administration. The results of the pilot study showed that a Grammar Multiple-Choice Test needed 50 minutes and the Translation Production Test required an hour.

4.2 Test Administration

In order to investigate the research questions, the subjects were presented with two tests, i.e. a Grammar Multiple- Choice Test and a Translation Production Test. Those who had answered 30 or more of the 45 questions (more than 6 of 9) from a Grammar Multiple-Choice Test were of our concern, and were asked to translate the TPTs in the next session a week later. The selected subjects were asked to translate the two translation texts from Persian into English in sufficient time of 60 minutes (based on the results of the pilot study). Students were not allowed to use any dictionary, since all the necessary vocabularies were glossed. In addition, two raters who had experience in assessing translation were also involved in this study. Afterward, the *Pearson Moment Formula* and also *Spearman rank order correlation coefficient* were applied and the inter-rater reliability between the two raters was calculated. Then, the results of two different exams were compared, concerning the first research question and based on the results of the TPTs, the frequency of different kinds of grammatical mistakes were classified to answer the second question of the study.

5. Scoring

In scoring the TPTs, the researcher applied Farahzad (1992) model. As Farahzad (1992, cited in Dollerrup & Loddegarad 1992, p. 276) states the unit of the translation in scoring was considered to be ‘Sentence’ and the ‘Verb’ to be sentence mark. It is clearly showed in table 1.

	Scoring criteria	percent
1	Accuracy	50 percent
2	Appropriateness	50 percent

Table 1, the TPT scoring scheme

In this regard, the first criteria, accuracy, is used as the basis for scoring. However, steps such as: *Transcription of proper names, Spelling, Word choice, Capitalization, cohesion and style* were not considered in evaluating TPTs. Since the total sentences involved in these texts were 90, (text 1: 42 sentences and text 2: 48 sentences) the TPT papers were scored at the scale of 90 based on the above criteria, by two individual raters.

6. Data Analysis

To answer the research question of the current study, several statistical analyses were performed in (SPSS/pc + Command, 200) and the diagram was done by (Matlab, 2000) & Microspft Office Excell 2003.

6.1 Analysis A

The first analysis is related to inter-rater reliability for the scores of translation production tests used to measure the students' translating competence. To this end, the Pearson's Moment Formula was applied first. The correlation between the two raters calculated to be (+0.83).

Table 2, indicates that the inter-rater correlation for TPTs is quite high. Further, the inter-rater reliability for the scores of translation production tests was also computed by the other formula. In so doing, the researcher arranged the data in ranked (ordinal) form and utilized the nonparametric Spearman rank order correlation coefficient to compute the inter-rater reliability. A coefficient of correlation of (+0.83) calculated by the formula shows a high degree of agreement between the judges. In fact, the results of both analyses are almost the same.

Raters	Mean	Variance	St. Deviation	Correlation
Rater1	64.60	49.8375	7.05	0.83
Rater2	64.93	53.4436	7.31	

Table 2, inter-rater reliability for the scores of translation production test

Table3, shows the results of each TPT text out of 90 for each subject and their related scores of grammar test out of 45.

Subjects	Text 1	Text 2	Total Score	Grammar Score
1)	34/42	43/48	77/90	44/45
2)	33/42	44/48	75/90	43/45
3)	35/42	40/48	75/90	42/45
4)	31/42	41/48	72/90	42/45
5)	32/42	41/48	73/90	43/45
6)	32/42	38/48	70/90	42/45
7)	32/42	39/48	71/90	41/45
8)	30/42	39/48	69/90	41/45
9)	34/42	37/48	71/90	40/45
10)	31/42	37/48	68/90	39/45
11)	34/42	38/48	72/90	41/45
12)	33/42	35/48	68/90	40/45
13)	30/42	36/48	66/90	39/45
14)	31/42	36/48	67/90	38/45
15)	30/42	35/48	65/90	38/45
16)	28/42	36/48	64/90	37/45
17)	32/42	34/48	66/90	36/45
18)	29/42	34/48	63/90	35/45

19)	27/42	33/48	60/90	35/45
20)	28/42	32/48	60/90	35/45
21)	29/42	32/48	60/90	34/45
22)	28/42	31/48	59/90	34/45
23)	26/42	31/48	57/90	33/45
24)	26/42	32/48	58/90	33/45
25)	25/42	33/48	58/90	32/45
26)	24/42	30/48	54/90	31/45
27)	25/42	31/48	56/90	31/45
28)	25/42	30/48	55/90	55/45
29)	26/42	31/48	56/90	56/45
30)	24/42	29/48	53/90	53/45

Table3, the distribution of the scores of TPTs and grammar tests for each individual subject

Table 4, signifies the results of TPT scores and Grammar scores and the relationship between them more clearly.

Grammar Score	Total Score	TPT Score	
30	30	30	Valid
0	0	0	Missing
82.2633	71.7000	62.1333	Mean
84.4000	72.5000	65.5000	Median
9.97910	7.84615	12.52785	Std. Deviation
66.60	59.00	30.00	Minimum
97.70	85.50	77.00	Maximum
73.3000	64.0000	58.0000	25 Percentiles
84.4000	72.5000	65.5000	50
91.1000	79.0000	71.0000	75

Table 4, the statistical index of translation and grammar tests

Tables 5 and 6, shows the distributin of translation score and grammar score.

Cumulative Percent	Valid Percent	Percent	Frequency	Grammar Score	
10.0	10.0	10.0	3	66.60	Valid
16.7	6.7	6.7	2	68.80	
20.0	3.3	3.3	1	71.10	
26.7	6.7	6.7	2	73.30	
33.3	6.7	6.7	2	75.50	
43.3	10.0	10.0	3	77.70	
46.7	3.3	3.3	1	80.00	
53.3	6.7	6.7	2	84.40	
60.0	6.7	6.7	2	86.60	
63.3	3.3	3.3	1	87.20	
70.0	6.7	6.7	2	88.80	
80.0	10.0	10.0	3	91.10	

90.0	10.0	10.0	3	93.30
96.7	6.7	6.7	2	95.50
100.0	3.3	3.3	1	97.70
	100.0	100.0	30	Total

Table 5, the distribution of grammar score

Cumulative Percent	Valid Percent	Percent	Frequency	Translation Score
3.3	3.3	3.3	1	59.00 Valid
6.7	3.3	3.3	1	60.00
10.0	3.3	3.3	1	61.00
16.7	6.7	6.7	2	62.00
20.0	3.3	3.3	1	63.00
26.7	6.7	6.7	2	64.00
30.0	3.3	3.3	1	65.50
40.0	10.0	10.0	3	67.00
43.3	3.3	3.3	1	70.00
46.7	3.3	3.3	1	71.00
50.0	3.3	3.3	1	72.00
56.7	6.7	6.7	2	73.00
60.0	3.3	3.3	1	74.00
66.7	6.7	6.7	2	75.50
70.0	3.3	3.3	1	77.00
73.3	3.3	3.3	1	78.00
80.0	6.7	6.7	2	79.00
86.7	6.7	6.7	2	80.00
90.0	3.3	3.3	1	81.00
96.7	6.7	6.7	2	83.00
100.0	3.3	3.3	1	85.50
	100.0	100.0	30	Total

Table 6, the distribution of translation score

Table 7, shows the magnitude based on the Pearson's Moment Formula, between the scores of TPTs (translation competence) and English grammar proficiency.

Scores	Mean	Variance	St. Deviation	Correlation
TPT	46.6	43.7268	6.6126	0.89
Grammar	37	20.3793	4.5143	

Table 7, the pattern of correlation between the scores of English grammar proficiency and translation production tests.

6.2 Analysis B

Another aspect of this study is to examine kinds of grammatical errors that were more frequent in these translations. To this purpose, the researcher tried to classify the errors made by her subjects into several grammatical categories from which these errors resulted.

- 1) **Article:** the, a, an.
- 2) **Pronoun:** subjective, objective, reflective, possessive, demonstrative, reciprocal, relative, subject complement, and pronoun agreement.
- 3) **Preposition:** prepositional expressions, nouns with preposition, verbs with preposition, prepositions combined with an object.
- 4) **Tense:** present time forms, past time forms, future time forms, passive voice, modals, auxiliaries, subject-verb agreement, double negation, and tense consistency.
- 5) **Clause:** conditional clause, indirect speech, independent and dependent clauses and subordinations.
- 6) **Conjunction:** adverbial, correlative, transitional.
- 7) **Verbal:** infinitive, gerund, verb word.
- 8) **Parts of Speech:** noun, adjective, adverb.
- 9) **Non-sense:** that is non-meaningful sentences.
- 10) **Deletion:** sentence deletion.

However, the researcher did not consider some other grammatical items such as **Dictation, Transcription of proper names, Spelling, Word choice, Capitalization** in evaluating. Table 8, shows the distribution of errors in TPT papers.

Grammatical Categories	Frequency of Errors	Percent
1) Article	116	15.12
2) Pronoun	65	8.3
3) Preposition	82	10.31
4) Tense	245	31.23
5) Clause	110	14.15
6) Conjunction	17	2.1
7) Verbal	53	6.56
8) Parts of Speech	41	5.21
9) Non-sense	20	2.6
10) Deletion	31	3.7

Table 8, distribution of errors in TPT papers

The researcher found out totally 780 errors in TPT papers. Among them, as presented in the Table8, errors regarding **Tense** (with the frequency of 245: about 31.23 percent) enjoys the most and those regarded to the category of **Conjunctions** (with the frequency of 17: about 2.1 percent) includes the least occurring type of errors.

As presented in Table5, errors regarding '**Articles**' included 116. The subjects were not careful enough in using articles (a, an, the). In fact, there were evidences that they forgot to use articles or they used them in an improper place .

An incorrect form: "on a evening she decided to go"

A correct form: " in the evening"

As for '**Pronoun**', that comprised 8.3 percent of errors, the researcher found out that these translation problems were resulted from "deleting subjective pronoun" especially in clause sentences. May be that is as a result of the influence of the mother language on English grammar. However, in some cases their problem was related to 'objective pronoun' and 'Subject compliment'. For example,

An incorrect form: "It is him who says ...,"

A correct form: "It is **he** who says ...,"

As for the '**reflective pronoun**', we can refer to the following error done by two of my subjects:

An incorrect form: "He lets myself get use to him."

A correct form: "He lets **me** get used to him."

Another category is '**Preposition**'. It enjoyed the frequency of 82 and included the 10.31 percent of the whole errors. The major problem in this regard was "verbs with proposition". For example; in the last sentence of the Text 1: "there was no one to fall in love **with.**", some of the subjects had written: "there was no one to fall in love"; or in Text 2, for example instead of "rush **into**", "rush to"; and instead of "they hear **from** s.th", "they hear of s.th" had been written by the subjects.

'**Tense**' contained the most frequency of the errors in this study. It comprised 245 errors and enjoyed 31.23 percent of the whole. Among the errors in this category, we can refer to the use of 'causatives' and the improper use of the passive voice'. In fact, in some cases, the students made a transitive verb into the passive form, or made an intransitive verb to the passive while there is no need to use the passive voice of the verb. For example, some of the subjects used passive voice incorrectly: "Her brother has been said to his wife ..." while the correct form is : "Her brother **had marked** (said) to his wife".Moreover, they wrote: "then, the time is stopped." However, the correct form is "then, the time stops."

On the other hand, there are examples that they had to change the verb to the passive form but they did not recognize the point. Here is an example:

An incorrect form: "nobody surprised."

A correct form: "nobody **was surprised.**"

Further, they had made a mistake in using the correct tense of sentences, using present perfect instead of past perfect and vica versa and also an incorrect use of Modals:

An incorrect form: "She has made her decision and nothing in the world may make her change her mind."

A correct form: "She **had made** her decision and nothing in the world **could** make her change her mind."

Other errors in 'Tense' category is that they forgot to use s for the third person in present simple. These errors were considered as minors. May be it is because of not being careful enough in writing or may be it is as a result of delivering their paper as soon as possible. In addition, there were also a few errors in the area of multiple negations especially with 'any', 'no', and 'never'.

Next category is '**Clause**'. It consisted of 110 errors, which included 14.15 percent of the errors done by the subjects in the study. For the gross errors in this category, we can refer to 'the conditional form of sentence'. In case of 'conditional form of sentence', Aronson (1984: 55-56), says: "use the past unreal form to describe an imagined situation to describe unreal clauses." Therefore, based on his statements we have to use only "**had been** form of be". That is why we should use the third type of conditional sentence, that is: "Perhaps if her mother **had been** alive, she **would have reacted** to the news." However, some of the subjects used the first or the second type of the conditional sentence in the text that are all incorrect.

Another problem in this category is related to '**indirect speech**'. This kind of grammatical point is available in both texts. However, subjects had the least difficulty with getting the point. Independent and dependent clauses were also considered as sources of error. See the following example:

An incorrect form: "I do not know exactly which I feel."

A correct form: "I do not know exactly **how** I feel."

Subjects had also problems with '**conjunction**'. As defined by Aronson (1984: 144), "conjunctions are used to combine thoughts and to extend sentences." In the study, this category enjoyed only 2.1 percent of the errors with the frequency of 17. In fact, students had few problems with this grammar point. Mistakes were seen in 'correlative conjunctions' and 'transitional conjunctions'. For example, in some cases, subject did not use the same 'verb tense' for sentences which were connected with "**and**" as a kind of 'correlative conjunctions'. Further, a few subjects had made mistake by using improper 'transitional conjunction'. In other words, they were misplaced conjunctions such as: "Therefore, Consequently, etc.": "In this picture, I'm wearing Magna'eh. Therefore, I put the pictures next to each other."

In fact, there is no need to use any kind of 'transitional conjunctions'.

Mistakes related to '**Verbals**' consisted 6.56 percent of errors. In fact, subjects were not enough careful about the infinitive, gerund, and verb word. Some of the errors were related to the use of verb "suggest" that needs a verb with "ing" form. we have:

An incorrect form: "He only suggests to see each other..."

A correct forms: "He only suggests **seeing** each other..."

"He only suggests **that we see** each other..."

The same is true for the verb "insist on".

A few subjects also made a mistake when using verb "let". It needs a verb word:

An incorrect form: "He lets me to get used to it slowly."

A correct form: "He lets me **get** used to it slowly."

As for '**parts of speech**', which included 5.21 percent of the errors, it is good to note that in some cases subjects deleted 'adverb' without any reason. Or for the 'adjective', some errors and mistakes were also found. Subjects' major errors regarding adjective were found in the first sentence of the Text 2, in that subjects mostly deleted "same" before "photo":

An incorrect form: "This is photo I took a few years a go."

A correct form: "This is the **same photo** I took a few years a go."

'**Non-sense sentences**' were also seen in the translations of the texts. However, the researcher did not expect to find out such sentences. These sentences included 2.6 percent of the errors. For example, we can refer to the following:

An incorrect form: "I put the pictures next to each other. They are as the same things."

A correct form: "I put the pictures next to each other. They are **the same**."

And:

An incorrect form: "I wonder if I want to make the woman in question? "

A correct form: "Do I want to be that woman or not? (to be in her shoes?)"

'**Deletion**' is the last category of the error classification. It included 3.7 percent of the errors recognized in TPTs. The results show that there are 31 sentences that were deleted by the subjects in translation papers. However, there were many deletion of Adverbs, adjectives, subjects, etc., in TPT papers. Here the omission of 'sentence' only is of our concern. In fact, most of those deleted sentences were the ones that were grammatically important, such as Clauses.

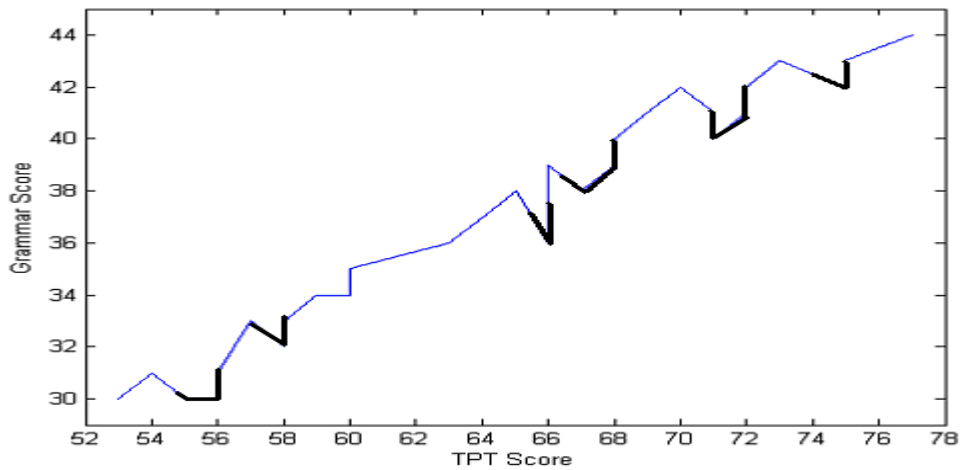
The other analysis of the study is to investigate the results of the texts used in TPTs. Due to compare the marks of the texts, the researcher had to bring each mark on the scale of 100

since the first texts was from 42 and the other was from 48. Then the results can be comparable on the same scale. These are shown in table 9.

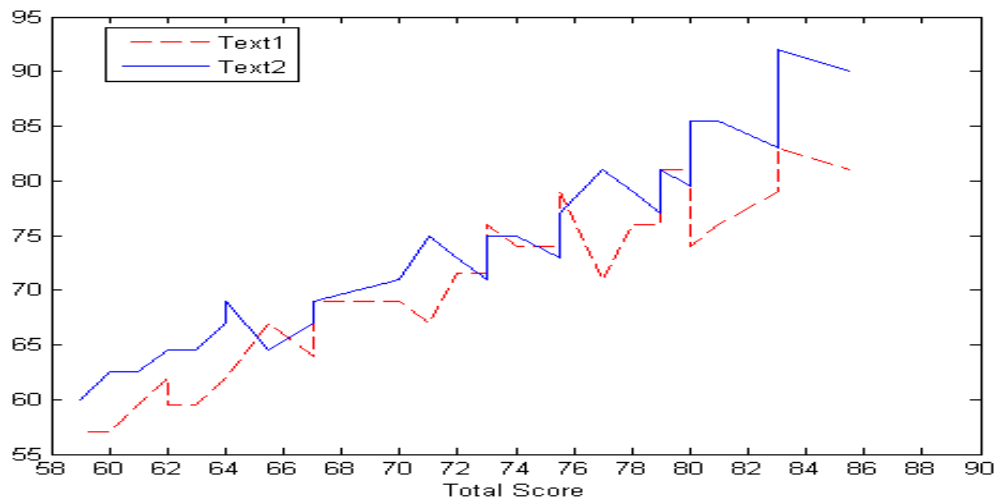
Subjects	Text 1	Text 2	Total Score	Grammar Score
1)	81/100	90/100	85.5/100	98/100
2)	79/100	92/100	83/100	95.5/100
3)	83/100	83/100	83/100	93/100
4)	74/100	85.5/100	80/100	93/100
5)	76/100	85.5/100	81/100	95.5/100
6)	76/100	79/100	78/100	93/100
7)	76/100	81/100	79/100	91/100
8)	71/100	81/100	77/100	91/100
9)	81/100	77/100	79/100	89/100
10)	74/100	77/100	75.5/100	87/100
11)	81/100	79.5/100	80/100	91/100
12)	79/100	73/100	75.5/100	89/100
13)	71.5/100	75/100	73/100	87/100
14)	74/100	75/100	74/100	84/100
15)	71.5/100	73/100	72/100	84/100
16)	67/100	75/100	71/100	82/100
17)	76/100	71/100	73/100	80/100
18)	69/100	71/100	70/100	78/100
19)	64/100	69/100	67/100	78/100
20)	67/100	67/100	67/100	78/100
21)	69/100	67/100	67/100	75.5/100
22)	67/100	64.5/100	65.5/100	75.5/100
23)	62/100	64.5/100	63/100	73/100
24)	62/100	67/100	64/100	73/100
25)	59.5/100	69/100	64/100	71/100
26)	57/100	62.5/100	60/100	69/100
27)	59.5/100	64.5/100	62/100	69/100
28)	59.5/100	62.5/100	61/100	67/100
29)	62/100	64.5/100	62/100	67/100
30)	57/100	60/100	59/100	67/100

Table 9, the distribution of the scores of TPTs and grammar tests foreach individual subject on the scale of 100.

As it is presented in the Table 9, the results of Text 2 are mostly higher than Text 1 except for the subjects number 11, 12, 14, 17, or at least are the same, as in subjects number 3 and 67. However, such a fact was not expected to be investigated in this study. May be that is as a result of text difficulty or text length or etc. However, it is a good idea for further research in these areas. Following diagrams show the fact clearly.



*Diagram1, linear graph of TPT scores and grammar scores
highlighted points and lines show cases of exceptions*



*Diagram 2, Linear graph of TPT Scores between the Scores of Text 1 and Text 2
The Scores of Text 2, are mostly higher than Text 1.*

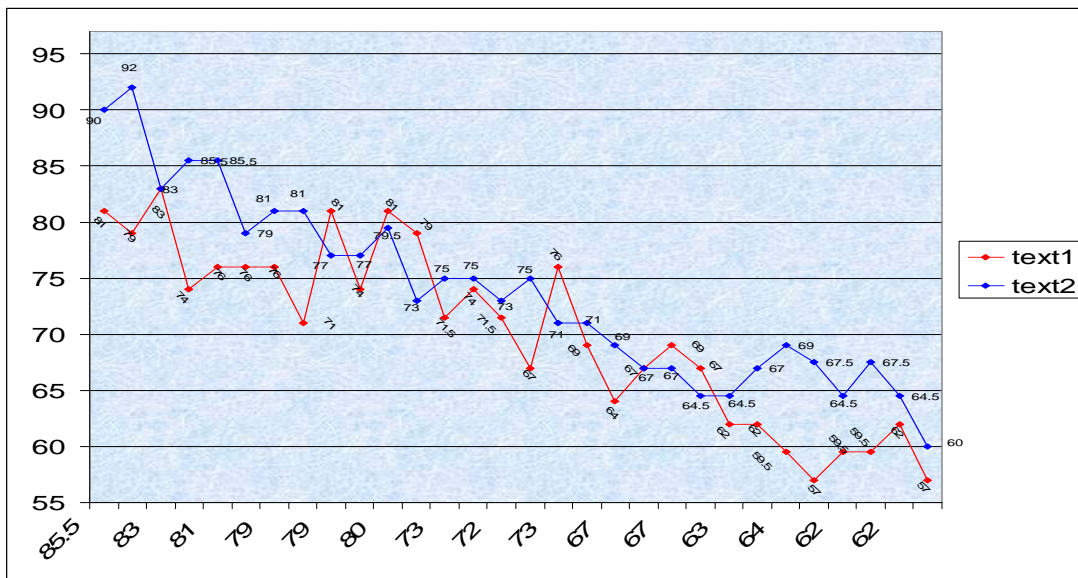


Diagram 3, Linear graph of TPT score with the exact marks of each text.

7. Conclusion

The research carried out revealed the impact of grammatical proficiency on Persian-English translating competence. Regarding the first question of the study, The correlational matrix (0.89) also revealed that there is a positive, significant relationship between grammatical knowledge and translating competence Therefore, English language grammatical proficiency has a positive impact on Persian-English translating competence.

Those participants who scored higher on English grammar proficiency test, had a higher command of translation. It can be concluded that improving the students' English grammatical knowledge could have positive effect upon improving their translation from Persian into English.

To address the second research question, it was observed that there were totally 780 errors in TPT papers. Among them, , errors regarding *Tense* (with the frequency of 245, about 31.23 percent) comprised the most and those regarded to the category of *Conjunctions* (with the frequency of 17, about 2.1 percent) included the least occurring type of errors. Pronouns (with the frequency of 65: about 8.3 percent), prepositions (with the frequency of 82, about 10.31 percent), clauses with the frequency of 14, about 14.15percent), verbals (with the frequency of 53 about 6.56 percent), parts of speech (with the frequency of 41, about 5.21 percent), non-sense sentences (with the frequency of 20 about 2.6 percent), deletion (with the frequency of 31 about 3.7 percent) contained other types of errors done by the subjects.

Based on the findings of the current study, the following implications apply to the impact of grammatical proficiency and Persian-English translating competence:

- Since the subjects' grammatical proficiency has shown to be correlated to their Persian-English translation competence, grammar exercises and translation based on grammatical structures is useful in teaching translation classes. So, teachers had better use an English grammar-oriented approach in their Persian-English translation classes specially in courses such as translation principles, and translation of simple texts.
- Another issue to be considered is related to English teaching book writers. It is beneficial to use translation tasks for improving grammatical proficiency in teaching general English at early stage of college education with grammar texts books, which contain translation –oriented approach in teaching grammar. On the other hand, this point can be applied on the other way, i.e., for translation principles and methodology, text books with more grammar-oriented approach. It can be great assistance to the translation students for developing their translation ability and for EFL students for learning better the foreign language.

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Title

Expertise and Explicitation in Translation Studies Is there any relationship?

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Abstract

Explicitation is a frequently observed phenomenon in translation studies and it is defined by Klaudy (1998) as the process of making explicit in the target language information which is implicit in the source language. It is even claimed by Kulka (1986), Baker (1996) and Braithwaite (1996) to be a universal of translation. In recent years a large number of quantitative studies in different language pairs have been conducted on explicitation. Such studies only proved that translations are more explicit than non-translated texts. These studies are Baker and Olohan 2000 and Papai 2001 just to name a few. However, very few studies showed the relevance of expertise and explicitation in translation. As in English- Persian pairs there is no study done on this issue, the present study attempted to find the possible relations between expertise and explicitation in English to Persian translation. In this study, two pairs of translations of two English novels were chosen, one is done

by an experienced and the other by a non-experienced translator, were chosen. After the comparison of the original texts with the translations as well as the comparison of the translated texts with each other, all of the instances of explicitation, based on Halliday's categorization of cohesion in English (1976), were identified and categorized. The frequency of explicitation of each type of cohesive markers, that is to say, substitutions, ellipsis and conjunctions in the translations done by the experienced and non-experienced translators were compared and analyzed. Finally the study found no clear cut relation between expertise and explicitation in English to Persian translation.

Keywords: Explicitation, Expertise, Cohesion, Ellipsis, Conjunction, Substitution

1. Introduction

Explicitation is the technique of making explicit in the target text information that is implicit in the source text. According to Vinay and Darbelnet (1958, p.8), the first scholars who studied explicitation, explicitation is the process of introducing information into the target language which is present only implicitly in the source language but can be derived from the context or situation.

The first systematic study of explicitation, however, was done by Blum Kulka in 1986 which is also known as "explicitation hypothesis". According to Blum Kulka (1986, p. 19), it is the process of translation that is responsible for the explicitation in translation:

The process of interpretation performed by the translator on the source text might lead to a target language text which is more redundant than the source text. This redundancy can be expressed by a rise in the level of cohesive explicitness in the target language text this argument may be stated as "*the explicitation hypothesis*".

Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997) define explicitation as the phenomenon that frequently leads to TT stating ST information in more explicit form than the original.

House (2002) postulates "explicitness vs. implicitness" as properties of texts within her cross-cultural pragmatics, alongside "directness vs. indirectness; orientation towards self-vs orientation towards other; orientation towards content vs. persons; ad-hoc formulations vs. verbal routines".

Papai (2004) believes that to discuss explicitation we need to interpret this notion both in terms of the translation process and translation product. In terms of process, explicitation is a translation technique involving a shift from ST concerning structure or context. It is a

technique of resolving ambiguity, improving and increasing cohesiveness of the ST and also of adding linguistic and extra linguistic information. The ultimate motivation is the translator's conscious or sub conscious effort to meet the target readers' expectations. In terms of product, explicitation is a text feature contributing to a higher level of explicitness in comparison with non- translated texts. It can be manifested in linguistic features used at higher frequency than in non- translated texts or in added linguistic and extra linguistic information.

Overas (1998) in an interesting study has investigated a number of different cohesive markers in translations between English and Norwegian and found that added connectives and replacement of connectives with more explicit ones are forms of cohesive explicitation in translation. According to Overas, additions, specifications, neutralizing metaphorical expressions and shifts from metaphor to simile are instances of explicitation in English-Norwegian translation.

Hahn (1996, cited in Nicole Baumgarten 2008) in his text and register linguistics argues that explicitness is described as a property of texts and discourses. According to Hahn, explicitation results from the need for denotational precision and referential specificity in specific types of communicative interaction such as written communication and risk management. Explicit texts are independent of their contexts of text production and reception in the sense that every link to their contexts of text production is unambiguously encoded in the text/discourse.

The notably different understanding of "explicitation" in Interpreting Studies and Translation Studies becomes obvious in Pochhacker's view that "quite apart from its postulated status as a universal feature of translation explicitation may be needed as strategy to circumvent linguistic and sociocultural differences (Pochhacker 2004).

In her study, Kinga Klaudy (1998) proposes the most comprehensive types of explicitation. She distinguishes four types of explicitation: obligatory, optional, pragmatic and translation-inherent explicitation. Obligatory explicitation is dictated by the syntactic and semantic structure of languages. The most obvious cases of obligatory explicitation are caused by "missing categories". Optional explicitation is dictated by differences in the text-building strategies and stylistic preferences between languages. Pragmatic explicitation is dictated by differences between cultures. For example names of villages and rivers which are well known to SL community may mean nothing to the target language audience. And finally, translation inherent explicitation is caused by the nature of translation process itself.

There is no agreement among scholars about the reasons behind explicitation. Some scholars, like Blum Kulka 1986, believe that explicitation is due to the inherent process of interpretation performed by the translators. Others believe that explicitation is because of the constraints of the language systems and the differences between stylistic and text building strategies and cultural differences (Klaudy 1993). Other scholars, such as Laviosa Braithwaite (1996), maintain that explicitation is one of the universals of translation so they see no reason to provide explanations to it. Still, other scholars see explicitation as a norm-governed phenomenon, Overas (1998) and Weissbrod (1992) are among those scholars.

Translating is a communicative act and is influenced by a variety of factors. The translator's professional knowledge and personal experience are among those factors that influence the act of translating. Although very often other professional categories are also involved and influence the final shape of the text, the person who translates obviously plays an important role in the whole translation process. That is to say, the translator's competence and also his previous experience in translation shape the final outcome of the text (Dimitrova 2005, p. 1).

It has been argued by Englund Dimitrova (2005) that there is a relationship between the translator's amount of experience and the frequency of explicitation in the translated texts. However, the results found from different studies go in opposing directions. Some researchers like Laviosa Braithwaite (1998) assume that explicitation is the characteristic of translations produced by translators with little experience. Blum Kulka (1986) believes that explicitation can be found in the translations of both novice and experienced translators. Overas (1998) and Weissbrod (1992) argue that explicitation is the result of translations made by experienced translators. As can be seen there is no consensus in literature about the possible relation between expertise and explicitation in translation studies.

2. Background

According to Blum Kulka's explicitation hypothesis (1986), translations are generally more explicit than texts originally written in one language. A lot of studies such as Baker (1996), Olohan (2004) and Papai (2004) have been done to support this hypothesis. According to Baker (2000), there are personal styles of translating. At the same time textual analysis reveals that there are similarities in the application of certain translation procedures, including explicitation, between different translations. However few studies have considered the role of the translator's amount of experience in the translation product. Studies that have

been done on the issue of explicitation and expertise have produced very diverse outcomes. Some scholars such as Overas (1998) and Weissbrod (1992) believe professional translators use explicitation more than novice translators and other scholars believe otherwise. Therefore, the issue of possible relationship between the translators' experience and the frequency of explicitation in the TT seems to be an interesting research question in its own right. In English – Persian translation there is no research done on the issue of expertise and explicitation. The present research will be the first study in this case.

3. Methodology

This study will take Blum Kulka's (1986) explicitation hypothesis as its theoretical framework. According to Blum Kulka all translated texts exhibit a higher degree of explicitness than non-translated target language texts of a comparable type. In order to find the instances of explicitation, this study will take into account Halliday and Hasan's (1976) categorization of cohesive markers in English. According to Halliday and Hasan, there are five cohesive markers in the English language: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunctions and lexical cohesion. The present study will take three of the cohesive markers mentioned above: substitution, ellipsis and conjunction, in order to find instances of cohesive ties within the original texts. In the literature of explicitation there is an agreement that all translations are more explicit than non-translations. This shows the importance of explicitation in the literature. The translator as a communicator has a decisive influence in the process of translation. However, there is no consensus among the scholars about the possible role of expertise in the frequency of explicitation in the translation product. The present study will be an attempt to investigate the role of expertise in translation between English and Persian. The findings of this study will also be useful for translator training programs.

In this study, the researcher assumes that translated texts are more explicit than non-translated texts. In other words, the study took Blum Kulka's explicitation hypothesis which postulates that all translated texts exhibit a higher degree of explicitness than non-translated texts. Explicitation is a widely believed notion in translation studies which frequently leads to TT stating ST information in a more explicit form than the original. It is also assumed that experienced translators do more explicitation in the translation process and product than non-experienced translators do. Some scholars such as Overas (1998) and Weissbrod (1992) also regard explicitation as one of the characteristics of professional translators.

4. Cohesion

Cohesion is defined by Halliday and Hasan (1976) as the set of possibilities that exist in the language for making the text hang together. Cohesion is a potential for relating one element in the text to another, wherever they are and without any implication that everything in the text has some part in it. Cohesion distinguishes text from non-text by interrelating linguistic elements across sentences. Cohesion does not concern what a text means but “how the text is constructed as an edifice.

4.1. Cohesive Ties

Cohesive ties are semantic links that, according to Halliday and Hasan (1976), contribute to making a text coherent. A cohesive tie is a semantic relation defined by the dependence of one element on another, the two elements being separated by at least one sentence boundary.

4.2. Substitution and Ellipsis

According to Halliday and Hasan (1976) substitution is the replacement of one item by another, and ellipsis is the omission of an item. Essentially the two are the same process; ellipsis can be interpreted as that form of substitution in which the item is replaced by nothing.

5. Data

This part of research includes materials from three English novels and their translations each done by experienced and non-experienced translators. The novels are as follows: 1) "The Namesake" by Jhumpa Lahiri. 2) "The Da Vinci code" by Dan Brown. These novels are translated two times by experienced and non-experienced translators. Jhumpa Lahiri's "The Namesake" is translated twice by experienced and non-experienced translators. The translations are done at the same time in 1383 AH (2004), once by Amir Mahdi Haghghat and another time by Gita Garkani, so they are not likely influenced by each other. Amir Mahdi Haghghat was born in 1353 AH (1974). This was his fourth translation. He can be considered as an inexperienced translator. Gita Garkani, on the other hand, translated more than ten books and she is a professional translator. She was born in 1337 AH (1958). 2) Dan Brown's "The Da Vinci code" was translated twice into Persian. Hussein Shahrabi and Somayyeh Ganji translated this book in 1384 AH (2005). They are novice translators and translated two books until 1384 AH (2005). Noshin Rishhari also translated this book in 1384 AH (2005). She is an experienced translator and translated more than 16 books until 1384 AH

(2005). The data presented above is obtained from the website of the Iranian National Library.

The direction of analysis is from English to Persian and the number of words analyzed in this section amounts to 85000 words. Having adopted Halliday's definition of cohesion in hand the researcher scanned a body of 85000 English words, searching for instances of ellipsis, substitutions and conjunctions. Then he concordanced the conjunctions, substitution and elliptical instances found with their corresponding Persian translations in order to find out what the experienced and non-experienced translators did when they faced with instances of ellipsis, substitutions and conjunctions in the original text. To put it more simply, the researcher determined whether cohesive markers in the original text were rendered explicitly or transferred without explicitation in the translated texts.

5.1. Ellipsis

Ellipsis is a kind of cohesive device referring to the omission of the phrase already mentioned specifically. Ellipsis is a relation within the text, which the omitted item is replaced by nothing. According to Halliday, the great majority of ellipsis is anaphoric. Substitution and ellipsis are the very characteristic features of the spoken text and is usually confined to "contiguous passages" (Halliday 1994: 310); but, of course exist within written text so that the presupposed reference is not unnecessarily repeated. Because of this anaphoric referencing function, it creates a sense of cohesion throughout the passage. Because most cases of ellipsis are anaphoric to something written in a previous clause, the effect is highly cohesive.

Here is the detailed analysis of our corpus "The Namesake" "همنام" and "The Davichi Code" "رمز داوینچی" and their two translations by experienced and novice translators.

1. One woman's name, she gathers from bits of conversation, is Beverly. **Another** is Lois. Carl lies to her left. (Page, 30).

کم کم از لا به لای حرف هاشان اسمشان را می فهمد. یکی بورلی است. یکی اوییس، سمت چپی هم کارول. (ترجمه امیر مهدی حقیقت ، صفحه 1383، 9).

از میان گفتگو ها متوجه می شود اسم یکی از زن ها بورلی است. دیگری لوئیز است. کارول در سمت چپ او خوابیده. (ترجمه گیتا گرکانی ، صفحه 1383، 11).

Here the ellipsis has occurred. "Another" is the head of a noun clause. The non-elliptical form of this sentence is "**Another woman's name**" is Lois. Both experienced and novice translators rendered the elliptical form untouched. That is to say, both translators did not make explicit the elliptical clause here.

2. "How about a little walk?"

“Yes, all right,” Ashima says.

"یک کم قدم بزنیم؟"
اشیما می گوید: "آره، بدم نمی آید." (حقیقت ، ص 15).
"با کمی قدم زدن چه طوری؟"
"بله ، بسیار خوب." (گرکانی، ص 14).

Here the whole sentence after “Yes” is omitted. The non-explicit form of this sentence will be the following sentence: “Yes, *let’s walk a little*.” Again, the ellipsis here has survived the process of translation without undergoing any change. The novice and experienced translators did not explicitate the elliptical forms.

3. “How about a little walk?”

“I cannot.” (Page: 6).

"یه کم قدم بزنیم؟"
"نه، ازم نمی آید." (حقیقت، ص 16).
"با کمی قدم زدن چه طوری؟"
"نمی توانم." (گرکانی، ص 14).

Here again “*I cannot*” is the short form of “*I cannot walk*”, which was not made explicit by both novice and experienced translators. This ellipsis is the form of clausal ellipsis in Halliday’s term.

4. Squeeze my hand. Squeeze as tight as you like. (p: 7)

"دستم را بچسب. هر قدر دوست داری محکم فشار بده." (حقیقت، 16)
"دست مرا فشار بده. هر قدر دلت می خواهد محکم فشار بده." (گرکانی، 14)

The phrase “*my hand*” is omitted in “Squeeze (*my hand*) as tight as possible”. Both novice and experienced translators rendered it without any explicitation

5. “Already married?”

“No”. (16)

"ببینم یعنی هنوز هیچی نشده ، زن گرفته ای؟"
"نه." (حقیقت 26).
"ازدواج کرده ای؟"
"نه." (گرکانی 25).

The phrase “*I am not already married*” is omitted in the above sentence. The writer omitted

the whole sentence after “no”. As seen above, the translators translated the sentence untouched without explicitation.

6. “I’m awake,” Ashoke says, though his voice is still small from fatigue.

“Me too.”(p 45)

"من سر حالم." صداهش هنوز خواب الوده و بی حال است.

آشیمای می گوید: " من هم." (حقیقت 63)

آشوک می گوید "من بیدارم". هر چند صدایش ضعیف و خسته است.

" من هم همین طور." (گرکانی 65)

“*I am awake too.*” This sentence again is rendered without explicitation.

7. Please, I am fine.” He puts a hand to his throat, against the knot of his tie.

‘Sure?’”(p 204)

"ممنون من راحتم."

"مطمئنی؟" (حقیقت 258) " خواهش می کنم، من مشکلی ندارم."

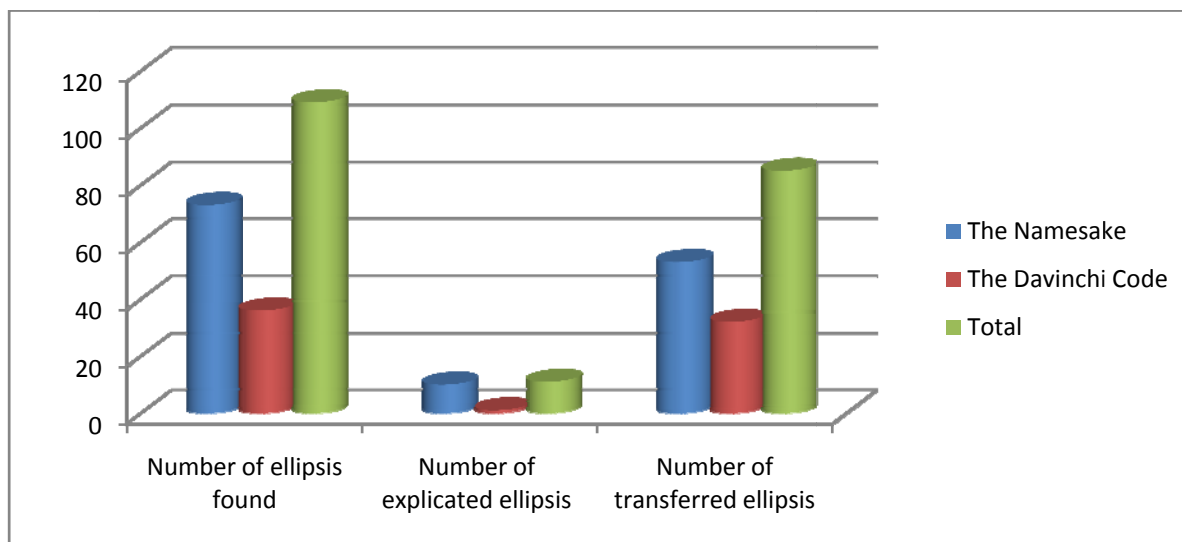
"حتما؟" (گرکانی 275)

“*Are you sure that you are fine?*” The elliptical sentence is rendered elliptically by both translators.

Table1: Ellipsis, Transferred, and Explicitated

Text	Studied Words	Number of ellipsis found	Number of explicitated ellipsis by both translators	Number of Transferred ellipsis by both translators
The Namesake	42000	73	10	53
The Da Vinci Code	41250	36	1	32
Total	83250	109	11	85

Graph 1: Ellipsis, Explicitated and Transferred



As it is shown above, nearly 109 cases of ellipsis were found in the text. Among 109 cases of ellipsis only 11 cases were made explicit in the process of translation by both experienced and novice translators. The majority of cases, that is nearly 85 cases, were transferred elliptically. The translators, no matter whether they are experienced or novice, did not make the elliptical cases found in the source text explicit in the process of translation. This is

mainly because of the communicative preferences between languages and also other restrictions of the Persian language.

5.2.Substitutions

Substitution is a kind of cohesive marker, which implies the replacement of one item by another. It is a relation in wording rather than in meaning

1. What can he see?" "Can he see us?"

"I think so."(p 23)

"الان چی می بیند؟ می تواند مرا ببیند؟"

"گمانم آره."(حقیقت 37)

"چه چیزی می تواند ببیند؟ می تواند ما را ببیند؟"

" فکر می کنم."(گرکانی 37)

In this example the translators did not choose to make the reference of the word "so" explicit and rendered the sentence elliptically.

2. "I want to buy it for you."

"You do not have to do that."(P205)

" می خواهم واست بخرمش."

" نباید این کار را بکنی."(حقیقت 259)

" من می خاهم این را برایت بخرم."

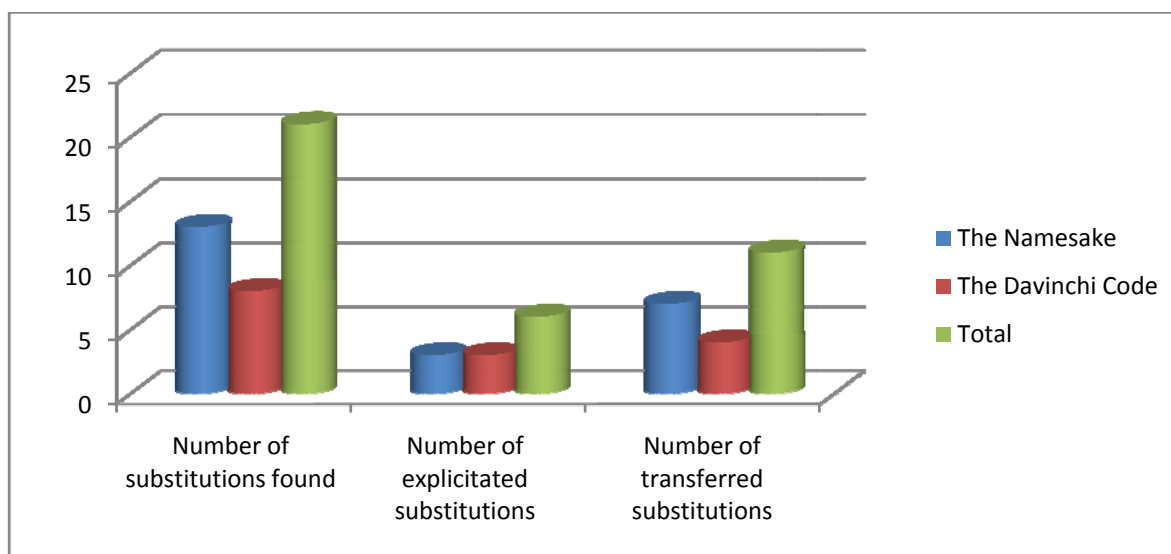
"نبايد اين كار را بكنی."(گرکانی 276)

"Do that" refers to buy which was left implicit in the translations of both experienced and novice translators.

Table2: Number of Substitutions Found, number of explicitated and transferred substitutions

Text	Studies Words	Number of substitutions found	Number of explicitated substitutions	Number of transferred substitutions
The Namesake	42000	13	3	7
The Da Vinci Code	41250	8	3	4
Total	83250	21	6	11

Graph2 :. Substitutions, Explicitated and Transferred



As indicated above, from the total of 21 substitutions in the source text 11 cases were transferred. That is to say more than half of the substitutions were transferred in the target text. The remaining 4 cases of substitutions were treated differently by the experienced and novice translators. Since the majority of the cases of substitutions were transferred by the translators, it can be stated that the restrictions and communicative preferences of the Persian language requires the transference of substitutions in the target texts.

5.3. Conjunctions

Halliday defines conjunction as “a clause or clause complex, or some longer stretch of text, (which) may be related to what follows it by one or other of a specific set of semantic relations” (Halliday,1976).

1. Like a kiss or caress in a Hindi movie, a husband’s name is sth intimate and therefore unspoken, cleverly patched over. **And so**, instead of saying Ashoke’s name, she utters the interrogative that has come to replace it. (P: 2).

و برای همین به هسچ وجه نباید به زبان بیاید. (حقیقت 10)
و بنابراین به جای گفتن نام اشوک... (گرکانی 8)

In this example and all of the instances below the conjunctions were rendered explicitly in both translations.

2. “Goddamnit, goddamn you, this is hell,” she hears one of them say. **And then** a man’s voice:” I love you sweet heart.”(p3)

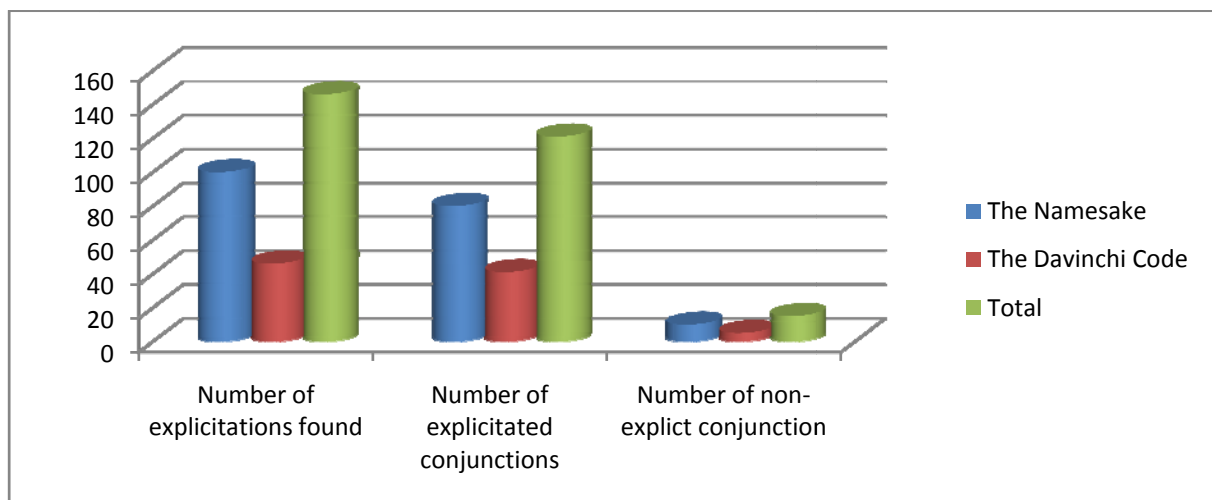
بعد صدای مردی می آید (حقیقت 11)
و بعد صدای یک مرد (گرکانی 9)

In this example the conjunction “And so “between sentences were translated explicitly in translations.

Table 3: Number of Conjunctions Found, number of explicitated and non explicit conjunctions

Text	Studied Words	Number of conjunctions found	Number of explicitated conjunctions	Number of non explicit conjunction
The Namesake	42000	100	80	10
The Da vinchi Code	41250	46	41	5
Total	83250	146	121	15

Graph 3: Conjunctions, Explicit and Non-explicit



The table demonstrates that the majority of the cases of conjunctions in the source text were translated explicitly in the process of translation, and only very few cases of conjunctions left implicit in the translation. Both experienced and novice translators acted almost the same in the translation process and finally they gave up nearly the same target texts.

6. Conclusion

The study depicted that not only the translators, regardless of their experience, did not make the ellipsis and substitutions found in the source text explicit; but also they transferred the majority of ellipsis and substitutions found in the source text untouched. To put it in another way, the study showed that in order to achieve a text which is easy to process and less ambiguous the dogma of explicitation sometimes needs to be abandoned. Focusing on true explicitation, the study maintains that explicitation has nothing to do with additions and explicitation does not necessarily lead to longer texts. The study found that the ultimate function of explicitation theory is achieving a kind of a text that is easy to process; a kind of a text that is in line with target language norms and stylistics preferences. These rules are so strict and firm that leave no room for the concept of expertise to play a vital role while translating a text. That is to say translators, no matter they are experienced or not observe these rule equally. To facilitate readability, to observe the communicative preferences across languages and to reduce processing costs, the translators did not make the ellipsis and substitutions found in the source text explicit in the translation product.

The present study claimed that in the process of translating a text, translators regardless of their experience want to help the readers and produce a reader friendly text. This is mainly because translators are writers and readers at the same time. In other words, the process of translation involves translators to be communicators at the same time. And a communication occurs when seven standards of textuality one of which is “acceptability” to be met by the translators.

According to the present study, “naturalness” is another important factor that necessities the existence or non-existence of explicitation. Explicitation is a “tool” available in the hands of the translators in order to adapt the target text to the norm of naturalness and expectations of the readers. That is to say, one of the functions of explicitation is to produce a natural text in the view of the target text readers. The study believes that explicitation/implication are nothing more than “tools” in the translators’ hands in specific and in the communities’ hands in general to generate a communicatively competent text in the target language and to adopt to the very soul of the readers. This is because a translation is judged acceptable in target language community if it reads fluently.

The study claims that explicitation as a feature of translated texts is observed to a degree that does not harm the communicative preferences of languages. For example, explicating ellipsis and substitutions in the translated text should be done to an extent that does not clash with target language linguistic or stylistic norms. The study depicted that explicitation exists if and only if the structure and the communicative and stylistic preferences of the language

allows it to exist. In other words, explicitation should be in harmony with the stylistic and structural preferences of any language. It should be pointed out that there is no difference whether the explicitation is obligatory, optional, pragmatic or translation inherent explicitation.

According to the present study, “acceptability” is another salient factor that necessitates the existence or non-existence of explicitation in translated texts. If translators explicitate every instance of ellipsis and substitutions in the process of translation they will come up with a bizarre and atypical text in the translated language. All four kinds of explicitation aim at achieving a text that is natural and acceptable in the receptor language. In other words this is the communicative and stylistic preferences of languages that necessitate the existence of obligatory, optional, pragmatic and translation inherent explicitations.

It can be inferred that observing communicative preferences across languages is the ultimate function of the explicitation hypothesis and this has nothing to do with the experience of translators.

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Title

A Study of African American Vernacular Dialect Translation into Persian in *The adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

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Abstract

In this descriptive study, it was intended to examine in detail the translation of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) dialect as a social dialect into Persian. To set the stage, Twain's use of AAVE dialect in *The adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and its two Persian translations produced by Golestan (1970) and Darya Bandari (1990) were selected. One hundred excerpts which contained seven distinct features of AAVE dialect were extracted from the original text along with their Persian translations. Analyzing these samples, within the framework of Sienkiewicz (as cited in Berezowski, 1997), the results showed that since it is practically not feasible to render AAVE dialect into Persian, both translators have used colloquial Persian language to render this specific dialect. This study also demonstrated that both translators' renderings of the seven different features conform to syntactical and phonological structures of the Persian language. Among these features just copula and to some extent sound loss are translatable into Persian.

Keywords: Literary translation, Dialect translation, African American dialect

1. Introduction

Literary translation is a kind of recreating a specific literary work in a new language (Wechsler, 1998). There is no denying that the accomplishment of such a type of translation is not an easy task, since it entails the transfer of a diversity of features from the source text to the target text such as meaning, form, mood, tone, style and effect (Landers, 1999). However, the knotty nature of literary translation becomes more prominent when an author decides to write a literary work by using a particular variety of a specific language. Many authors use intentionally a specific variety of a language in order to portray and establish authenticity of characters, historical and geographical settings (Berthele, 2000). Here, the role of translator is very important because s/he must attempt to express something which is language-specific. Hatim and Mason (1990) have distinguished five language variations or dialects: geographical dialect, temporal dialect, social dialect, standard dialect, and idiolect.

Careful consideration of some translations of literary works, which included a specific dialect, would obviously reveal that translators tackle this problem in different ways. Some translators simply ignore the dialect and translate it as standard language in the target language. On the other hand, there are some translators who try to transfer the dialect but unfortunately they are not successful in their work. There are different reasons such as translators' limited knowledge about a specific dialect or the absence of equivalent dialect in the target language behind this failure. So what should a translator do in such situations? This research aims at finding a practical solution for this problem.

In this study, it is intended to examine in detail the translation of African American Vernacular English (AAVE) dialect as a social dialect into Persian. To set the stage, Twain's use of AAVE dialect in *The adventures of Huckleberry Finn* has been selected. The main reason for using this corpus was that "*The adventures of Huckleberry Finn*" is special and significant not only for the adventurous plot, the moral dilemmas, and sociopolitical issues it touches on but also its style is unique. Considering the matter of style, this artistic work is one of the first novels written in dialect (Shlensky, 2008). Two Persian versions by Golestan (1970) and Darya Bandari (1990) were also chosen.

Regarding the objectives of this study, the theoretical framework of this study was the one proposed by Sienkiewicz (as cited in Berezowski, 1997, p. 35). Considering the case, he has distinguished four basic strategies for rendering dialect:

- a) Image for image substitution, i.e. selecting TL varieties capable of fulfilling the function performed by the original dialects (e.g. Yiddish accented Polish for Yiddish accented English)
- b) Approximate variety substitution, i.e. selecting a TL variety which is judged to be equivalent to the SL dialect only in some respects, while diverging from it in others (e.g. colloquial Polish substituted for Polish accented English of Pennsylvania coal miners)
- c) Neutralization, i.e. replacing the nonstandard SL Variety with a TL standard (e.g. standard Polish substituted for Yiddish accented American English)
- d) Amplification, i.e. introducing differentiation where it does not exist in the ST text

In the light of all aforementioned statements, this study aimed at seeking answers to the following questions:

1. Considering the procedures proposed by Sienkiewicz (as cited in Berezowski, 1997) for translating dialect, which one has been used for the translation of AAVE dialect in “The adventures of Huckleberry Finn”?
2. Regarding two translations of the corpus, which features of AAVE are translatable into Persian?

2. Review of Literature

This part offers different scholars’ opinions about the translatability or untranslatability of dialect, possible procedures proposed by scholars for the treatment of dialect in translation, and finally studies done abroad and in Iran.

2.1. Translatability or Untranslatability of Dialect

There are different opinions about translatability or untranslatability of dialect. Newmark (1988, p. 195) has claimed that translation of dialect “... is sometimes set up as the ultimate impossibility in translation, which it is not”.

On the other hand, considering dialect as a supposedly substandard or inferior speech pattern varying in pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, or syntax from the societally accepted norm, Landers (2001) stated that dialect is untranslatable since it is always tied, geographically and culturally, to a milieu that does not exist in the target language setting.

Stog (2006) has also asserted that there is no completely satisfactory way of translating the varieties of dialects mentioned by the author due to the difficulty of finding equivalent varieties that properly associate with a place or social group in the target culture.

House (as cited in Pinto, 2009) has pointed out that dealing with a linguistic variety in the source text evokes and explores extralinguistic knowledge and since the linguistic

elements are both culturally conditioned and socially regulated, it may lead some translators to consider the translation of accents and dialects is impossible.

2.2. Dialect in Translation

In this section three various proposed approaches for translating dialect by translation scholars in general are introduced and some related studies available in literature presented. These procedures are as follows: substitution of SL dialect for a dialect that existed in the TL, substitution of SL dialect for the standard variety of the TL, and substitution of the SL dialect for a TL variety that is not equivalent.

2.2.1. Substitution of SL dialect for a dialect that existed in the TL

This approach is generally referred to as the dialect-for-dialect approach. Different scholars have different attitudes towards this strategy. For example, Newmark (1988) was against the use of this strategy. He pointed that a necessary prerequisite for resorting to this procedure is a good command of the target language nonstandard variety on the part of the translator himself/herself.

According to Azavedo (1998), this strategy was problematic, since nonstandard varieties tended to encode social or regional connotations that did not necessarily have one-to-one homologs in the nonstandard varieties of other languages.

Pym (2000) also disapproved of this strategy. He cited the example of exchanging Scottish English for French-Canadian Joul and stated that “both might be working-class and nationalistic, but they are by no means equivalent...why should someone in Scotland speak JOUAL?” (p. 69).

Hervey, Higgins, and Haywood (2004) also discussed this matter in their book on Spanish translation and saw the dialect-for-dialect substitution as a form of cultural transplantation and as such, it “runs the risk of incongruity In the TT.” (P. 113).

2.2.2. Substitution of SL Dialect for the Standard Variety of the TL

This strategy is commonly called *neutralization*. According to Azavedo (1998), a rather obvious, but common, strategy to handle representations of non-standard speech is to simply replace the SL dialect with the standard variety of the TL. Nevertheless, he also added that in such a replacement, the representation of characters, as well as their relationships, not only with each but also with the reader, is substantially altered.

Sanchez (1999) has also considered the use of the standard variety as the easiest solution since it does not include the difficulties of using a dialect-for-dialect substitution.

Crowley (2003) recommended that in carrying out dialect translation, it is better if translators focus on the functional aspect of the dialect. He also stated that conveying the

function of the dialect can be done only by rendering the SL dialect into the standard variety of the TL.

Han (as cited in Li, Guo, & Yuan, 2008) indicated that when carrying out dialect translation, it is impossible to keep word equivalence because of different semantic and syntactic systems. Therefore, he asserted that it is better to replace the SL dialect with the standard variety of the TL, and help the target reader in understanding the text.

2.2.3. Substitution of the SL Dialect for a non-standard TL variety that is not equivalent

This strategy replaces the SL variety with a TL variety that is not equivalent but which is at the same time is non-standard (such as the colloquial form of the TL).

According to Berezowski (1997), this strategy enables the reader to realize that the particular character does not speak standard language, therefore stands out from the other characters and is regionally or socially determined; but at the same time, unlike the “dialect for dialect substitution”, it does not carry all the connotations of the specific TL dialect.

A slightly different approach was proposed by Hatim and Mason (1990) who argued that, instead of opting for a particular regional variety, one should modify ‘the standard itself’. Such a modification, then, could be made through non-standard handling of the grammar or deliberate variation of the lexis in the target language.

Hervey et al. (2004) also pointed out that it may be “the safest decision...to make relatively sparing use of TL features that are recognizably dialectal without being clearly recognizable as belonging to a specific dialect” (p. 113).

2.3. Research on Dialect Translation

The following sections offer some related studies available in literature done abroad and in Iran.

2.3.1. Studies Done Abroad

Wekker and Wekker (1991) carried out a study on the feasibility of using Surinamese Dutch for the translation of AAVE dialect in *The Color Purple*. In their detailed study, they considered ten linguistic characteristics of AAVE.

They concluded that in terms of linguistic and socio-cultural aspects, Surinamese Dutch served as an adequate equivalent for the translation of AAVE into Dutch in terms of the similarity of linguistic and social-cultural aspects of these two languages.

Considering the translation of AAVE dialect into German, Berthele (2000) stated that:

It is possible to render AAVE with a sociolect or dialect that represents analogous (low) social strata or even analogous regional linguistic identity. But the analogy is,

never complete; there is no perfect equivalent of Black in the German-speaking world (p. 608).

Wu and Chang (2008) also conducted a research into the subject of translation of seven unique syntactic categories of AAVE into Chinese. To set the stage, they chose *The Color Purple* and its three Chinese translations.

Their analysis of the syntactic features rendered in the translation into Chinese showed that the translators tend to minimize the uniqueness of AAVE by using grammatical Chinese renderings. They concluded that since the translators used the syntactic structures and expressions of Chinese language to render AAVE texts, the distinctive linguistic characteristics of AAVE inevitably disappear in the target texts.

2.3.2. Studies Done in Iran

Sharififar and Bahrami (2011) conducted a corpus-based study on translation of seven unique syntactic categories of AAVE into Persian.

In their study, the parallel corpus consisted of Stowe's use of Black dialect in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and its two Persian translations produced by Jazani (2009) and Samadi (1984). Analyzing the "coupled pairs", extracted from the original text and its translations, they found out that these two translators' renderings of the seven syntactic features conform to the idiomatic expressions and syntactic structures of the target language. They also concluded that the readability of the two Persian translations remained high since both translators have rendered all the dialectical parts into the formal or standard Persian, a translation strategy which is the most familiar and least noticeable to the reader. And finally, they contended that none of these translators really introduced the linguistic characteristics of AAVE to their readers.

3. Methodology

This section presents the methodology used for carrying out the present study and the manner this was accomplished.

3.1. Procedure and Data Collection

In order to collect the required data, the original English text was read along with its two Persian versions. Then one hundred excerpts which contained seven distinct features of AAVE dialect based on the categorization proposed by Rickford (1999) along with their Persian translations were extracted. It should be mentioned that although there were several works in the area of AAVE dialect features by different scholars (e.g. Dillard, 1973; Green,

2002), the researcher chose the Rickford's classification because on the one hand its features were common among all classifications. On the other hand, the frequency of occurrence of these features was also high in this specific artistic work. These features were as follow:

- 1- Use of negative concord, popularly called "double negation"
- 2- Use of ain't as a general negative indicator
- 3- Differences in subject-verb agreement patterns
- 4- Use of past tense forms instead of past participle and vice versa.
- 5- Omission of "copula" in the present tense.
- 6- Use of *Done* as an indicator of an action that is completed
- 7- Sound loss

A lot of sounds are systematically reduced in AAVE such as:

- Word-final consonant clusters are shortened so that "hand" and "post" become *han'* and *pos'*.
- Phoneme "r" is frequently dropped in AAVE dialect and for this reason, "sir" is pronounced *si*.
- The final *ng* in gerund forms are reduced to *n*. Accordingly, "walking" becomes '*walkin*'.
- Adjacent consonants are transpositioned so that "ask" becomes *aks* and "wasp" becomes *waps*, which means that metathesis also takes place in AAVE.

It should be also mentioned that due to space constraints, only 25 extracts were selected to be analyzed.

3.2. Data analysis

After collecting the data, the researcher analyzed them on the basis of Sienkiewicz's (as cited in Berezowski, 1997) framework for rendering dialect. Then the strategies applied by each translator were determined. And finally, the translatability or untranslatability of AAVE dialect features into Persian was studied.

4. Results and discussion

This section deals with the detailed analyses of 25 excerpts which contained the seven distinctive features of AAVE dialect along with their Persian translations.

4.1. Samples

1. Negative Concord

1. (p. 225)

He said it **warn't no** use talking, heathens don't amount to shucks alongside of pirates to work a camp-meeting with.

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 196)

گفت سخنرانی مذهبی فایده ای ندارد، در این جور بازارها نقل کفار و اشقیایا به گرد دزدهای دریائی هم نمی رسد.

Transliteration: He said the religious speech is not useful, in these arenas the story of the infidels is far behind pirates.

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 148)

ترجمه نشده است. (Not translated into Persian).

2. (p. 261)

What was the use to tell Jim these warn't real kings and dukes? It **wouldn't** a done **no** good.

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 221)

چه فایده داشت که به جیم بگویم اینها پادشاه و دوک راست راستی نیستند؟ هیچ فایده نداشت.

Transliteration: What was the use to tell Jim that they are not real dukes and kings?

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 173)

ترجمه نشده است. (Not translated into Persian).

3. (p. 441)

It **warn't no** slouch of an idea; and it **warn't no** slouch of a grindstone nuther; but we allowed we'd tackle it.

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 340)

فکر خیلی خوبی نبود، سنگش هم تعریفی نداشت، ولی گفتیم می رویم امتحان می کنیم.

Transliteration: It was not a good idea, the stone was not good either, but we said we should go and try.

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 275)

ترجمه نشده است. (Not translated into Persian).

4. (p. 450)

I didn't mind the lickings, because they **didn't** amount to **nothing**; but I minded the trouble we had to lay in another lot.

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 347)

من از کتکش نمی ترسیدم، چون کتکش چیزی نبود، ولی دوباره راه افتادن و مار جمع کردن خیلی زحمت داشت.

Transliteration: I am not afraid of its punishments because it was not hard, but it was difficult to go and gather snakes.

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 280)

Analysis

As the examples indicate, in Golestan's translation, all cases including double negative feature have been completely ignored. Considering Darya Bandari's translation, while the extracts containing this typical feature were translated into Persian properly, the translation of double negative feature has not been taken into account. In summary, regardless of other stylistics analyses of the two Persian versions, the two translators have been negligent in dealing with translation of negative concord.

2. Use of Ain't

1. (p. 260)

"Now, de duke, he's a tolerable likely man in some ways."

"Yes, a duke's different. But not very different. This one's a middling hard lot for a duke. When he's drunk there **ain't** no near-sighted man could tell him from a king."

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 221)

"ولی خوب، دوک پاره ای وقتا بد آدمی هم نیست."

"آره، دوکها فرق می کنن، ولی نه زیاد. این دوک ما همچین نیمکش وسطه. وقتی عرق خورده با پادشاهها مو نمی زنه."

Transliteration: "Well, duke sometimes is not a bad man."

"Yes, dukes are different, but not much. He is moderate. When he is drunk he is similar to kings."

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 172)

ترجمه نشده است. (Not translated into Persian).

2. (p. 294)

"The thing is for you to treat him kind, and not be saying things to make him remember he **ain't** in his own country and amongst his own folks."

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 245)

"مساله اینه که تو باید باش مهربونی کنی، نه اینکه یه چیزائی بگی که یادش بندازی از مملکت و خانواده خودش دوره."

Transliteration: "The problem is that you should treat him kindly, not that tell him things which remind him of his family and country."

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 192)

ترجمه نشده است. (Not translated into Persian).

3. (p. 323)

You may say what you want to, but in my opinion she had more sand in her than any girl I ever see; in my opinion she was just full of sand. It sounds like flattery, but it **ain't** no flattery.

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 263)

شما هر چه می خواهید بگوئید، ولی به نظر من ماری جین از همه دخترهائی که من به عمرم دیده بودم بیشتر جنم داشت، به نظر من اطلا سر تا پا جنم بود. این حرف بوی چاپلوسی می دهد، ولی چاپلوسی نیست.

Transliteration: You say whatever you want, but in my opinion Mary Jane was courageous than all the girls whom I had ever seen in my life. She was full of courage. This statement smells flattery but it is not flattery.

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 209)

ترجمه نشده است. (Not translated into Persian).

4. (p. 326)

“Well, these kind of mumps is a kind of a harrow, as you may say- and it **ain't** no slouch of a harrow, nuther, you come to get it hitched on good.”

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 265)

"این جور اوریون هم مثل سگ هار می مونه، وقتی می گیره بدجوری می گیره."

Transliteration: “this kind of mumps is like a rabid dog. When it bites, it bites badly”

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 210)

ترجمه نشده است. (Not translated into Persian).

Analysis

Considering these examples, it should be mentioned that Golestan has either dropped or completely ignored sentences containing this feature but Darya Bandari has translated these extracts properly by making use of negative, positive and interrogative sentences.

One must bear in mind that unlike English, Persian doesn't have straightforward negative indicator like “ain't”. Therefore, even a negative sentence in Farsi would not indicate the use of “ain't” in ST.

3. Differences in subject-verb agreement patterns

1. (p. 31)

‘Yo’ ole **father doan**’ know yit what he’s a-gwyne to do. Sometimes he spec he’ll go ‘way, en den agin he spec he’ll stay.’

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 54)

"بابات هنوز خودشم نمی دونه چه کار می خواد بکنه. بعضی وقتا می خواد بره، بعضی وقتا می خواد بمونه."

Transliteration: "Your father does not still know what he wants to do. He himself sometimes wants to go. He sometimes wants to stay"

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 26)

"پدرت هنوز نمیدونه چیکار بکنه. گاهی فکر میکنه بره، گاهی فکر میکنه بمونه."

Transliteration: "Your father does not still know what to do; he sometimes thinks he should go, sometimes he thinks he should stay"

2. (p. 119)

'Oh, my lordy, lordy! Raf'? Dey ain' no raf' no mo'; she done broke loose en gone I-en here we is!'

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 113)

"وای خدا! گفنی کلک؟ کدوم کلک؟ بندش پاره شد با آب رفت! ما هم این تو مونده ایم!"

Transliteration: "oh God! You said raft? Which raft? Its rope was torn and it was washed by water. We are here."

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 83)

"اوه! خدا جون، خدا جون! کلک؟ دیگه کو کلک؟ بندش پاره شد و آب بردش! ما اینجا گیر افتادیم!"

Transliteration: oh! Dear God, dear God! Raft? Where is that raft? Its rope was torn and it was washed by water. We get entangled here."

3. (p. 234)

The **stores** and **houses was** most all old, shackly, dried up frame concerns that hadn't ever been painted.

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 203)

دکانها و خانه ها، همه، ساختمانهای چوبی کهنه و زهوار در رفته بودند و به عمرشان رنگ نخورده بودند.

Transliteration: Shops and houses, all, were worn out and old wooden constructions and they never were painted through their life.

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 155)

خانه ها همه قدیمی و زوار در رفته بودند.

Transliteration: Houses were all worn out and old.

Analysis

Verbs do not always agree with their respective subjects in number and person in AAVE dialect. However, while existing in SL, this feature does not appear in Persian versions of *The*

adventures of Huckleberry Finn. Of course, the present researcher does not imply that this feature should be transferred exactly into Persian and in this regard the researcher is in favor of the two Persian translations. Such a claim is based on Newmark's (1988) viewpoint that "bad grammar" is not a relevant linguistic feature of a dialect, and a dialect is not a deviation from standard language; a dialect is "a self-contained variety of language" (p. 195). In light of aforementioned statements, rendering this feature into Persian equals bad grammar for instance: the translation of ' *I goes home.*' into *من به خانه می رود* is a deviation from standard Persian not a variation of dialect.

4. Past tense forms are used for past participle and vice versa.

1. (p. 70)

A little ripply, cool breeze **begun** to blow, and that was as good as saying the night was about done.

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 79)

نسیم خنک ملایمی کم کمک شروع شد و من فهمیدم که شب دیگر تمام شده.

Transliteration: A mild cool breeze blew and I understood that the night was over.

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 52)

نسیمی نرم و خنک راه افتاد که ملایم میگفت شب بآخر رسیده.

Transliteration: A soft and cool breeze blew which gently said that the night was over.

2. (p. 194)

The men ripped around awhile, and then rode away. As soon as they was out of sight I **sung out** to buck and told him.

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 176)

مردها کمی آنجا چرخیدند، بعد دور شدند. همین که مردها ناپدید شدند من باک را صدا زدم، گفتم که رفته اند.

Transliteration: The men were turning around and they went away. As soon as the men disappeared I called Buck and said they have gone.

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 129)

اسب سوارها یک کمی آن اطراف گشتند اما بعدش رفتند. همین که از دید دور شدند من به بک صدا زدم و گفتم که آنها رفته اند.

Transliteration: The horsemen were turning around for a while but then they went. As soon as I lost my sight of them I called Buck and said that they have gone.

3. (p. 195)

Sometimes I heard guns away off in the woods; and twice I **seen** little gangs of men gallop

past the log store with guns.

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 177)

گاهی صدای تیر تفنگ از تو جنگل می آمد، دو بار دسته های کوچک آدمها را دیدم که با تفنگ چهار نعل از جلو مغازه گذشتند.

Transliteration: Sometimes the sound of a gun was heard from the forest, I saw two times small groups of people who scampered with gun in front of the shops.

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 130)

گاهی از دور صدای تیر می رسید و گاهی میدیدم چند اسب سوار از جلو انبار به تاخت می روند.

Transliteration: Sometimes the sound of a gun was heard from distant and sometimes I saw several horsemen who galloped in front of barn.

4. (p. 302)

I **run** in the parlor and took a swift look around, and the only place I see to hide the bag was in the coffin.

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 248)

دویدم رفتم تو اتاق نشیمن و نگاهی به اطراف انداختم، دیدم تنها جایی که می توانم کیسه را قایم کنم تابوت است.

Transliteration: I run and went into the living room and I looked around myself. I saw that the only place where I could hide the bag was the coffin.

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 179)

دویدم توی اتاق و نگاهی به اطراف انداختم و دیدم تنها جایکه میشود پول را در آن پنهان کرد تابوت است.

Transliteration: I run into the room and looked around myself and I saw that the only place where I could hide the money was the coffin.

Analysis

According to Dillard (1973), "Tense, although an obligatory category in Standard English can be omitted in AAVE" (p. 41). He declared that even without a tense marking a sentence "I never see." Instead of "I have never seen." May be perfectly grammatical provided that "the surrounding clauses or sentences give the needed time cues" (p. 42). Considering such a rendering, the two translators have paid enough attention to the time cues. However, still another problem lies ahead. In source text the past participle has been used instead of simple past or vice versa as an indicator of AAVE dialect. Such an issue has been neglected in both Persian versions. To put it in other words, Persian translators have made use of simple past in all cases without paying attention to different uses of source text.

5. Copula

1. (p. 10)

He got up and stretched his neck out about a minute, listening. Then he says:

“Who there?”

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 39)

جیم بلند شد و یک دقیقه ای گردنش را دراز کرد و گوش داد. بعد گفت: "کی بود؟"

Transliteration: Jim got up and stretched his neck for one minute and listened. Then he said:

“Who is that?”

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 13)

بلند شد و یک دقیقه ای گردن کشید و گوش داد. بعد گفت: "کیه؟"

Transliteration: He got up, stretched his neck for one minute and listened. Then he said “Who

is that?”

2. (p. 132)

“Yit dey say **Sollermun de wises’ man** dat ever live’. I doan’ take no stock in dat.”

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 121)

"ولی می گن آدم از سلیمون عاقل تر نداریم. من باورم نمی شه."

Transliteration: “But they say that there is no one wiser than Solomon. I cannot believe it.”

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 91)

"اونوقت میگن عقل کسی بیای عقل حضرت سلیمون نمیرسه. حتما چرند میگن."

Transliteration: “Then they say no one is wiser than Solomon. They talk nonsense.”

3. (p. 398)

I hunched Tom, and whispers:

‘You going, right here in the daybreak? That warn’t the plan?

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 312)

من سقلمه ای به تام زدم و زیر لب گفتم:

"کله سحر کجا می خوای بری؟ اینکه تو نقشه نبود."

Transliteration: I punched Tom and whispered:

“Where do you want to go at dawn? It was not part of the plan.”

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 252)

من ته آرنج به تام زدم و یواش گفتم:

"وسط روز میخوای بری؟ قرار ما که اینجور نبود."

Transliteration: I elbowed Tom and whispered:

“Where do you want to go in the middle of the day? Our arrangement was not set in this way.”

Analysis

This feature within the glasses of this study has two stories to tell. First, regarding the translation of this feature in the two Persian versions, the translation of copula has been neglected. Such a translation has been at the mercy of meaning, form and tense properties and so on in target language rather than the identification of copula in source language. For example “who there?” has been translated into “کی بود”.

Second, it should be mentioned that the transfer of this feature is possible into Persian. For example when we have a sentence such as “He cold”, regarding this feature, we can have such an equivalent “سردشه”. Copula, in this translation has been recognized and translated into Persian.

6. Use of Done and Be Done

1. (p. 250)

Well, all through the circus they **done** the most astonishing things; and all the time that clown carried on so it most killed the people.

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 214)

خلاصه در تمام مدت سیرک خیلی کارهای عجیب و غریب می کردند و دلچک هم ول کن نبود و مردم را از خنده می کشت.

Transliteration: Briefly, during the circus they did strange works and even the clown did not quit and his imitations killed people.

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 165)

در تمام مدت بازیکنها کارهای خیلی عجیب می کردند و در تمام مدت دلچک همچنان ادا در میاورد که همه را از خنده روده بر کرد.

Transliteration: All the times players did strange works and all the time the clown still tried to imitate which caused all people to laugh very much.

2. (p. 260)

“S’ pose he contracted to do a thing, and you paid him, and didn’t set down there and see that he done it-what did he do? He always **done** the other thing.”

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 221)

"یا مثلاً آگه باش قرارداد می بستى كه به كارى انجام بده، پول هم بش می دادى، ولى نمى گرفتى همون جا بشينى تا كارو انجام بده- چه كار می كرد؟ همیشه به كار ديگه می كرد."

Transliteration: "For example if you contract him to do a work and give him money, you would not sit there waiting for him to do the job! What did he do? He always did another work."

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 172)

ترجمه نشده است. (Not translated into Persian).

3. (p. 261)

I went to sleep, and Jim didn't call me when it was my turn. He often **done** that.

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 221)

من گرفتم خوابیدم و كشيک من كه شد جيم مرا بيدار نكرد. خيلى وقتها اين كار را می كرد.

Transliteration: I slept and when it was my turn to watch, Jim did not wake me up. Most of the times he did it.

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 173)

رفتم بخوابم و وقتى نوبت كشيک من شد، جيم صدايم نزد.

Transliteration: I went to sleep when it was my turn to watch, Jim did not wake me up.

4. (p. 473)

"Why, dog my cats, they must a ben a house-full o' niggers in there every night for four weeks to a **done** all that work, Sister Phelps."

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 363)

"خواهر فلپس، اگر منو كشتين، تو اين كلبه چار هفته تموم به لشكر غلام سياه هر شب می رفتن اين كارارو می كردن."

Transliteration: "Sister Phelps, if you kill me, in this shack for four whole weeks an army of black slaves every night they went doing these works.

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 293)

ترجمه نشده است. (Not translated into Persian).

Analysis

Done and *be done* in AAVE dialect serve as collocational verbs that can be replaced with the verbs such as make, have and so on. *Done* marks an action that is completed and *be done* is used for future/conditional perfect. As the examples indicate, the translations depict that, the Persian language lacks an indicator such as *done* or *be done*. And at least if there are any, the

use of that indicator would result in an idiosyncrasy in standard Persian that is related to a deviation from a language instead of a variation of a language in the form of dialect.

7. Sound loss

1. (p. 261)

“Well, anyways, I doan’ hanker for no mo’ un um, Huck. Dese is all I kin stan’.”

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 221)

“آره هک، ولی خلاصه ش من دیگه حوصله دوک و پادشاه ندارم. همینا هم زیادی هستن.”

Transliteration: “Yes Huck, briefly I am not in the mode of duke and king no more. I cannot stand them.”

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 173)

ترجمه نشده است. (Not translated into Persian)

2. (p. 261)

He was often moaning and mourning that way nights, when he judged I was asleep, and saying, ‘Po’ little ‘Liza-beth! Po’ little Johnny! It’s mighty hard; I spec’ I ain’t ever gwyne to see you no mo’, no mo’!’.

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 222)

شبها جیم همیشه این جور ی نک ونال می کرد، یعنی وقتی که خیال می کرد من خوابم می گفت: " الیزابت کوچولوی من، جانی کوچولوی من، دیگه گمون نکنم هیچ وقت شما را ببینم، هیچ وقت!"

Transliteration: At nights Jim always was moaning, in other words when he thought I was asleep he said: “Elizabeth my little kid, my little Johnny. I do not think that I see you! Never.”

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 173)

بیشتر وقتها شب ها که فکر می کرد من خوابم ناله و گریه میکرد، و میگفت " بیچاره الیزابت، بیچاره جانی طفلک. چه سخته. گمون نمی کنم دیگه شماها را ببینم. نه دیگه!"

Transliteration: Most of the times, at nights when he thought I was asleep he would moan and cry and said “Poor Elizabeth, poor little Johnny. How hard it is. I don’t think again I see you! No more.”

3. (p. 422)

“Mars Sid, I felt um- I felt um, sah; dey was all over me. Dad fetch it, I jis’ whisht I could get my han’s on one er dem witches jis’ wunst- on’y jis’ wunst- it’s all I’d ast. But mos’ly I wisht dey’d lemme ‘lone, I does.”

I. Translation of Darya Bandari, (p. 328)

"آقای سید، تنم خورد بهشون، هوار شدن سرم. به خدا اگه دستم به یکی از این جادوگرا می رسید... دلم می خواست فقط
یه دفه دستم به یکی شون می رسید. ولی بیشتر دلم می خواست این جادوگرا دست از سرم ور می داشتن."

Transliteration: “Mr. Sid, my body hit them. They surrounded me. I swear by God if my hand reaches one of the magicians...I desire I could just get one of them. But more than that I desire these magicians would let me alone.”

II. Translation of Golestan, (p. 266)

(Not translated into Persian). ترجمه نشده است.

4.2.7.2 Analysis

In the light of the observations mentioned above, it can be concluded that the two translations are not always successful in transferring this typical feature due to phonological differences. However, it is worth mentioning that the intentional use of colloquial language in rendering this literary work has been in favour of the successful transfer of this feature into Persian. This is because of the fact that colloquial Persian also makes use of sound loss. Such process is not necessarily dependent upon word for word translation.

4.2. Results and Discussion

Regarding the analysis of the above examples, this section presents answers to the research questions.

4.2.1 Discussing the results in terms of the first research question

Considering the procedures proposed by Sienkiewicz (as cited in Berezowski, 1997) for translating dialect, which one has been used for the translation of AAVE dialect in “*The adventures of Huckleberry Finn*”?

Regarding this question, the study showed that both translators have used the same procedure, i.e. approximate variety substitution, for the treatment of AAVE dialect in translation into Persian. In other words, they have presented their translations in Persian colloquial language, which has unique lexical, phonological, orthographical and syntactical specifics.

4.2.2 Discussing the results in terms of the second research question

Regarding two translations of “*The adventures of Huckleberry Finn*”, which features of AAVE, are translatable into Persian?

The analysis of the above examples indicated that due to different language systems, syntactically and phonologically, Persian language is not well capable of transferring AAVE dialect characteristics. Consequently, different features of AAVE inevitably have disappeared in the target texts and Persian readers cannot grasp the unique features of this dialect. Considering this question, just copula and to some extent sound loss are translatable into Persian.

5. Conclusion

Studying translation of AAVE dialect in detail in *The adventures of Huckleberry Finn* as a social dialect into Persian, the researcher reached the following final conclusions:

Considering translation of seven distinct characteristics of AAVE dialect into Persian, the findings of this study demonstrated that due to language discrepancies both translators have not been able to reproduce in their translations these typical features of AAVE dialect. Actually, they conformed to the syntactic and phonological structures of Persian language to render AAVE dialect. Consequently, there is no trace of the uniqueness of AAVE dialect in both Persian versions. This point indicates that their translations are not faithful to the original text. Regarding this matter, they just introduce a literary masterpiece to the Persian-speaking people.

In the light of all aforementioned analyses conducted in the previous part, it can be grasped that approximate variety substitution is the best solution for rendering AAVE dialect into Persian in this literary work since:

1- Regarding image for image substitution, it is practically impossible to find an appropriate equivalent dialect in Persian language for AAVE dialect and create the same equivalent effect on the target audience like that source audience.

2- Considering neutralization, although it is a possible strategy that will perhaps contribute to better understanding but in this case in particular it would mean a considerable loss to the whole novel and would rob the TT of uniqueness of this special dialect. It should be also mentioned that this procedure is not a faithful solution. An author, after all, has chosen to use dialect in order to convey the characters' attitudes, education and society, create a sense of place and background, and provide sound and texture for the reader and dismissing this choice shows a kind disrespect for the author and his work.

3. Since this literary work has not been written in a neutral language, therefore amplification cannot come into consideration.

Considering the results, it can be also concluded that both translators are successful in conveying the meaning of the novel and Persian readers are capable of understanding the gist of story easily. In other words, the level of readability in both Persian versions is high, but such rendering inevitably results in fluent translation. Venuti (1995) has warned translators that a fluent translation can produce detrimental effect on minimizing the foreignness in the source text.

And finally, taking the results of this study into account, it is advised that in such situations, in which it is not practically feasible to transfer a specific dialect to a particular language, translators can make use of a preface or postscript to the translation in order to initiate target readers into the author's intentional use of that specific dialect as well as its characteristics so that readers have a chance to get acquainted with the unique characteristics of that dialect and to appreciate the writer's deliberate attempt at using of a particular language variety.

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